



Kuwait Crown Prince meets Prince of Wales, conveys Amir's message Page 4



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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

THE speech of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, delivered by his representative His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah at the United Nations, highlighted the roadmap of Kuwait's foreign policy for the new era. It is based on the historic principles guiding Ku-

wait's relations with sisterly and friendly countries, the international community, and global institutions.

His Highness the Crown Prince used a distinctive and firm tone to challenge the international organization on urgent issues, especially in light of the ongoing crises in the Middle East. The worsening situation in the region reflects the failure of international institutions in fulfilling their duties as defined in the UN Charter, particularly the Security Council, whose role has been weakened by the use of the veto power.

The Crown Prince's call for reforming the United Nations and the Security Council is a message that cannot be ignored so that lasting global peace and stability can be achieved.

The speech of His Highness the Amir's representative at the United Nations presented a clear vision of the new Kuwait, drawn by a seasoned expert in inter-

national politics with deep knowledge of influential global capitals, especially Washington. His Highness the Crown Prince is a highly experienced diplomat with significant international influence. He addresses the global community with clarity and reason, fully aware of when decisive action is needed on issues concerning Kuwait, the Gulf, and the Arab world, which are core pillars of Kuwait's policy.

Yes, the New York trip provided Kuwait with a valuable opportunity to play a behind-the-scenes role in bridging differing viewpoints.

His Highness the Crown Prince's meetings with presidents and representatives were notably effective, in terms of strengthening Kuwait's global influence and establishing a prominent international position that the country has long sought.

Because politics can only be strong when paired with

a knowledge-based economy, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled met with officials from several international companies who shared their needs in Kuwait.

His Highness expressed Kuwait's support for expanding the presence of these companies in the country, highlighting how this would diversify economic partnerships, open new areas of cooperation, benefit from their expertise to train and qualify youth, and transfer knowledge and modern technology to Kuwait.

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Kuwait foils 'terror' plot

Explosives found as Arab national targets worship sites

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29, (KUNA): Kuwaiti security forces have arrested an Arab national over suspected links to a banned group that seeks to tamper with national security and destabilize the political system, the Interior Ministry said on Monday.

Thorough investigations reveal that the suspect

'Suppression' denied

Assembly archives online

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: After a period of suspension, the parliamentary documents service has returned to the official National Assembly website.

The archive now includes all records related to previous assemblies such as proposals, parliamentary questions, grilling motions submitted by MPs, as well as decrees, government draft laws, and committee reports, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to informed sources, the temporary suspension of access to parliamentary documents had nothing to do with the alleged intent to undermine Kuwait's long-standing parliamentary history.

The sources wondered about some reactions that hastily drew inaccurate conclusions without proper verification.

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Day by Day

KUWAIT is rich in resources, and all it needs is quick action especially when it comes to benefiting the people and facilitating their dealings with their government institutions. The entire world is suffering from inflation, and people everywhere are seeking safe havens to live in and transfer their talents and wealth, so that they can enjoy a decent life.

As the saying goes, life is about give and take. Some Gulf countries have embraced this approach by opening their doors to talented individuals and attracting investment capital as a practical application of mutual benefit. As for us in Kuwait, what have we done?

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



Greater Spotted Eagle in flight captured by Kuwaiti photographer Dr. Mahdi Ghloum, wins second place at the Siena International Photo Awards.

Kuwaiti photographer wins Siena environmental photo, film awards

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29, (KUNA): Kuwaiti photographer Dr. Mahdi Ghloum won two awards at the Siena International Photo Awards, held in the city of Siena, central Italy, with participation from elite global photographers.

Dr. Ghloum stated on Monday that he competed in two main categories: Environmental Photography and Aerial Environmental Documentary Films, noting that his image of the Greater Spotted Eagle won second place in the latter category.

He added that the second award was an Award of Excellence for an aerial documen-

tary film on the migration of birds crossing Kuwait's skies annually, highlighting their environmental role and the importance of preserving natural habitats.

He remarked that the winning photos and films will be showcased in international exhibitions viewed by global audiences, demonstrating Kuwait's environmental significance as a major and vital passage for migratory route for birds on the world stage.

Dr. Ghloum emphasized that his message through this work

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Kuwaiti photographer Dr. Mahdi Ghloum poses with his awards at the Siena International Photo Awards.

Kuwait seeks to expand tourism appeal with launch of voluntary guide initiative

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29, (KUNA): The Ministry of Information launched Monday, the "Voluntary Tourist Guidance" service through the government app "Sahel," allowing citizens to volunteer as tour guides and support Kuwait's tourism sector.

This initiative, led by Minister Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, seeks to strengthen Kuwait's tourism appeal,

engage youth in offering cultural experiences, highlight national identity, and showcase hospitality, while supporting the country's broader strategy to enhance its international image.

In cooperation with Kuwait's Voluntary Work Center, the program will build a national database of volunteer guides, involving them in events,

tours, and welcoming visitors in collaboration with relevant authorities, ensuring organized participation in cultural activities.

Applicants can register easily through "Sahel" by submitting resumes, candidates will undergo interviews and skills assessments, then receive training to prepare them effectively.

12 held over stadium riot

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: Security forces arrested 12 individuals involved in the riots that broke out during the match between Kuwait Sports Club and Qadisiya Sports Club at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium on Friday, as part of the Zain Premier League, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister **Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah** received on Monday **Palestine** Ambassador to the country, **Rami Tabboub**.

In a statement, the Ministry of Interior said that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef discussed with Ambassador Tabboub ways to develop existing coordination frameworks between the two sides to serve common interests and contribute to supporting security and stability.

In turn, Ambassador Tabboub conveyed the greetings of the Palestinian leadership to the State of Kuwait, expressing his deep appreciation for Kuwait's steadfast and supportive positions on the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people in various regional forums. (KUNA)

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KUWAIT CITY: Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador **Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah** received on Monday **Lesotho** Ambassador to the country, **Manthabiseng Phohleli**.

During the meeting, the bilateral ties and ways of boosting cooperation were touched on. (KUNA)



Photo by Rezk Tawfik

File photo shows Kuwait roads shrouded in dust.

Fierce winds, dust till Wednesday

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29, (KUNA): Director of the Meteorological Department Dhirar Al-Ali says Kuwait will experience active winds from Monday through Wednesday.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Al-Ali explained that weather maps and numerical models show Kuwait will be affected by an extension of a high-pressure system from the northwest, bringing moderate to strong north-

westerly winds exceeding 55 kilometers per hour. These winds will stir up dust, reducing visibility in some areas and causing occasional high waves. The dust is expected to settle gradually by evening, with weather improving and stabilizing by Wednesday evening. Maximum temperatures during this period will range from 39°C to 42°C, while minimum temperatures will be between 26°C and 29°C.

Solar lights modern Kuwait cities

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29, (KUNA): Kuwait's Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), as part of collective efforts across various sectors and institutions toward sustainable development and enhancing energy efficiency, seeks to leverage renewable energy and its associated sources when implementing infrastructure projects.

This is particularly important in power supply and road lighting, which are key components for achieving energy efficiency and sustainability.

PAHW aims to enhance diversity of renewable energy sources, particularly solar power, in its modern proj-

ects through ambitious development plans aligned with New Kuwait's 2035 Vision. The authority is placing significant emphasis on achieving energy sustainability and optimizing its consumption.

As a practical application, PAHW launched the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak housing development project, which includes the installation of street lighting powered by solar energy. This project was completed in July, in collaboration with the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy.

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H.E. the Ambassador of Bangladesh to Kuwait, Major General Syed Tareq Hussain, presents two calligraphy works to Dr. Badr Ma'jun Al Dhafiri, Head of Kuwait Grand Mosque Authority, marking Bangladesh's first artistic contribution to the mosque.



Bangladesh Embassy photos

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:21	Asr	15:03
Sunrise ..	05:40	Maghrib ..	17:37
Zohr	11:38	Isha	18:54

Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-45 km/h with a chance for rising dust over northern areas.			
By Night: Rather hot to mild with light to moderate northwest-erly wind, with speeds of 10-35 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	42	29	
Kuwait Airport	41	29	
Abdaly	42	22	
Jahra	42	28	
Failaka Island	37	26	
Salmiyah	38	29	
Ahmadi	39	26	
Nuwaisib	39	26	
Wafra	40	25	
Salmay	38	21	



Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali meets citizens at diwaniya to discuss development projects and civil society engagement.

Sheikh Abdullah affirms governorate’s commitment to development

Capital Governor engages citizens to shape service improvements

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali affirmed that the governorate plays a pivotal role in advancing development by coordinating with all relevant ministries to implement projects according to established plans aimed at improving services.

Sheikh Abdullah said this while speaking to reporters at the governorate’s diwaniya, where he listened to the opinions and suggestions of residents.

The meeting was attended by several citizens including the Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism Editor-in-Chief Ahmed Al-Jarallah, who is closely monitoring all projects aimed at improving services provided to citizens and residents.

He reiterated the Capital Governorate’s commitment to continuing its efforts to meet citizens’ aspirations, and expressed gratitude to all parties contributing to these goals.

The governor said the end of the summer marks the start of a new season filled with ambition and achievements to better serve the people of the Capital Governorate.

He highlighted the importance of such gatherings as a fundamental platform for exchanging constructive views and ideas that enhance the role of civil society in Kuwait, adding, “We continue to hold these diwanis regularly to meet with citizens and hear their opinions and suggestions. Through these meetings, we aim to develop and improve services and address the problems and challenges faced by residents of the governorate.”

GCC Committees approve new initiatives in energy and water

Kuwait’s grid imports 3.056 mln MWh from Gulf Network

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: The 31st meeting of the GCC Electricity and Water Cooperation Committee, hosted by Kuwait yesterday, affirmed the importance of strengthening cooperation among GCC countries in electricity and water sectors.

The meeting supported strategic initiatives and projects that enhance supply security and diversify energy sources, in line with sustainable development goals and national visions of member states.

At the conclusion, the committee recommended approving the merger of the Gulf Electricity Forum with the

Gulf Water Forum and completing the necessary implementation steps.

Recommendations from the Organizing and Advisory Committee, including continued financial and technical support for the Electricity Interconnection Authority, updating fee mechanisms and periodic reports, and forming a joint working group to explore water interconnection projects among GCC countries were adopted as well.

The meeting recommended initiating the preparation of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) for signing by the end of March 2026, aiming to promote joint research and development.

Participants also emphasized the importance of encouraging member states to actively participate in conferences,

workshops, and seminars related to electricity and water, showcasing their national experiences and achievements.

The meeting approved a new executive program in collaboration with the Gulf Statistical Center, the World Bank, and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) to support new and renewable energy projects.

It was agreed that the Kingdom of Bahrain will host the next committee meeting next year, with an emphasis on maintaining the regularity of the annual Preparatory Committee meetings.

The meeting was chaired by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy Dr. Adel Al-Zamil, and attended by representatives of the GCC Secretariat General, led by Assistant Secretary-General for Economic and Development Affairs Dr. Khalid bin Ali Al-Sunaidi.

Meanwhile, monthly statistical reports issued by the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy for the period from April to August this year revealed that the total energy imported by the electricity grid from the Gulf Interconnection Network was 3.056 million megawatt-hours.

According to the reports, the amount of energy exported during April reached 599,151 megawatt-hours, in May, it reached 560,872 megawatt-hours, in June, it reached 612,692 megawatt-hours, in July, it reached 668,845 megawatt-hours, and in August, it reached 614,565 megawatt-hours.

In parallel, the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has postponed the deadline for submitting bids for the consultancy tender on the gas turbine units project at the Nuwaiseeb site, Phase One, to October 28.

Reconnaissance Research, ISSI sign MoU to deepen Kuwait–Pakistan strategic dialogue

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: Reconnaissance Research and the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), Pakistan’s premier foreign policy research institute, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a framework for sustained cooperation in research, analysis, and intellectual exchange.

The signing ceremony took place at Reconnaissance Research headquarters in Kuwait City, in the presence of H.E. Dr. Zafar Iqbal, Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait, Abdulaziz M. Al-Anjeri, Founder and CEO of Reconnaissance Research, and Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General of ISSI.

The MoU outlines joint activities such as collaborative research, delegation visits, policy conferences, training, and the exchange of publications. It reflects both institutions’ commitment to strengthening bilateral ties and fostering dialogue between Kuwait, Pakistan, and the wider region.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood commended Reconnaissance Research for promoting dialogue in the Gulf and praised Ambassador Dr. Zafar Iqbal’s role in facilitating the partnership. He underlined that the agreement builds on historic Pakistan–Kuwait relations and opens new avenues for institutional collaboration.

Abdulaziz Al-Anjeri described the MoU as a milestone that places both institutions at the forefront of shaping Gulf–South Asia relations. “In an era of accelerating geopolitical change, Pakistan’s role as a pivotal player in regional stability cannot be overlooked. This partnership ensures that Kuwait and Pakistan engage constructively on issues vital to our shared future,” he said. He also announced plans for a dedicated unit at Reconnaissance Research to follow up on the MoU.

H.E. Dr. Zafar Iqbal welcomed the initiative,



Dr. Zafar Iqbal, Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait with Abdulaziz M. Al-Anjeri, Founder and CEO of Reconnaissance Research.



Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General of ISSI



Reconnaissance Research logo

noting that think tank collaborations are essential to deepening mutual understanding and pledged his continued support.

This MoU underscores Kuwait’s and Pakistan’s readiness to build bridges, deepen dialogue, and produce scholarship attuned to today’s shifting geopolitics.

Other Voices

If I were an Israeli Zionist

By Ahmad alsarraf

IF I were an Israeli Zionist, I would never hesitate to carefully plan and actively pursue geographic expansion at the expense of my Arab neighbors. This is not only because they are in their weakest state, but also because my survival, the survival of my state and people, and our security from any future aggression or threat cannot be ensured without expansion.

I am not a strategic expert, but I have seen what the Zionist extremists have seen. I have come to realize that Israel’s official territory, according to the 1949 armistice lines, does not exceed 22,000 square kilometers and will not become more secure even with the addition of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. The total area may reach around 30,000 square kilometers, remaining relatively small geographically, with a very narrow depth compared to the major regional powers surrounding Israel.

The last thing I read on this topic was about the “military entanglement” between Hezbollah and Iran on one side, and Israel on the other, as well as the possibility of a 12-day war between the US and Israel against Iran.

This situation has made the entire country vulnerable to missile attacks, significantly limiting its military maneuverability, especially considering the proximity of a number of large cities and settlements near the border, which lie within easy range of missile strikes from multiple directions.

The current calm along Israel’s borders with its neighbors, often the result of international circumstances, is far from guaranteed. The fear of a multi-front war remains a constant concern for Israelis. From a Zionist perspective, many see no solution to this threat other than geographic expansion, and the displacement, or even elimination, of Palestinians by any means deemed necessary.

There is no guarantee that Hezbollah will not replenish its missile arsenal, that the Syrian front will remain quiet, or that the Iranian regime will not escalate its support for Palestinian, Yemeni, and Lebanese groups. The possibility of a future confrontation with Hezbollah in southern Lebanon remains a constant threat to Israel. The geographic exposure of northern Israeli towns leaves them highly vulnerable to precision missiles, infiltration operations, or large-scale shelling, particularly given the limited strategic depth and the dense concentration of Israeli communities near the border.

In light of these facts and risks, Israel is compelled, often through the use of force, to seize more Arab land and incorporate it into what it claims as the Promised Land. This serves to fulfill biblical narratives that are exploited by the ruling elite to convince the majority about a divine right to the territory once promised by God.

Moreover, while some Israelis view their country’s nuclear arsenal as a guarantee for the state’s long-term survival, it also poses a huge threat to Israel itself. Given the country’s limited geographic size, any deployment or retaliation involving nuclear weapons would endanger Israel nearly as much as its neighbors.

The only way out of this dilemma, from an Israeli Zionist perspective, is through geographic expansion at the expense of others, driven not only by security concerns but also by the need for water and other vital resources.

For this reason, the so-called experts in political analysis and security strategy must reassess their assumptions, abandon their complacency and illusions, and stop denying the fact that Israel pursues expansion while claiming to seek peace. Zionist ideology, as interpreted by its adherents, is rooted in a deep obsession with biblical myths that blinds them, not only to the harm they cause others, but even to the long-term consequences for themselves.

One olive at a time: Big savings for government

“FROM time to time, the government considers imposing taxes on citizens and residents to generate revenue. However, there is another way for the government to raise billions of dinars without increasing the financial burden on people,” columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“For example, a foreign airline served food that included a few olives. Management decided to reduce the olives to just one per passenger. With around 200 passengers on each flight, the company saved 200 olives per flight. Assuming the airline operates three flights daily, that amounts to 600 olives saved each day, or 18,000 olives per month, measured in kilograms. Using this weight, we can calculate the cost of the olives provided to passengers.



Al-Dawas

“It later became clear that the company “reduced its losses” by \$20,000 simply by cutting out a single olive per passenger. Praise be to God! A company manages to reduce its deficit, while our government struggles to cut public spending.

“The question now is - If an airline can reduce its costs in this way, what if the government trimmed some of its enormous expenditures? The savings could amount to hundreds of millions, or even billions of dinars, which is a far more effective method than placing the burden on citizens by imposing new taxes that harm their livelihoods.

“Based on this example, we ask the government - Why doesn’t it apply the simple economic lesson of reducing the budget deficit instead of imposing new taxes? The government’s mistake lies in focusing on increasing the price of gasoline, for instance, by some fils to boost revenue, without considering that professionals and tradespeople will then raise their prices in response, driving up the cost of living and accelerating inflation.

“Once prices rise, they rarely come back down. It is hard to imagine a day when your car mechanic says, “I have given you a discount,” or a restaurant owner says, “Here is your bill... with a reduction.” The same goes for painters, carpenters, and shopkeepers. The result is a steady increase in the cost of living for citizens.

“So, when will the government learn?”

“As for the idea of selling government institutions to private merchants, i.e., privatization, as a way to cut costs, that’s a separate issue. It has both benefits and drawbacks, according to economic analyses. We may explore that topic at another time.”

“Quality education is the deepest foundation of any civilizational project aiming for sustainable development,” sustainability expert **Dr. Sami Al-Adwani** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“I am not exaggerating when I say that the quality of education determines the fate of nations, and that qualified human capital is the most valuable resource countries possess. Global data supports this fact. Approximately 74 percent of global economic growth over the past fifty years has resulted directly from investment in human capital, while the contribution of oil and gas has been no more than five percent.

“The challenge we face today is not merely ensuring access to education or increasing enrollment rates, but rather transitioning to sustainable education that makes learning a life-long process.

“Several experts have emphasized that what is needed is the preparation of learners who can adapt, possess critical thinking, analytical, and problem-solving skills, and respond flexibly to crises.

“Jobs and professions in the twenty-first century are evolving faster than ever before. Without this type of education, we risk preparing our children for a world that no longer exists.

“In Kuwait, education remains our foremost national concern. The crisis that has persisted since the invasion is now undeniable, evident in the decline of teacher competency, the lack of international standards in colleges of education, and the chronic failure of continuing education programs.

“Reforming this system does not require discovering new solutions,

but rather the bold will to implement what is already known and clear. This includes the establishment of a professional teacher licensing system, internationally accredited colleges of education, and a comprehensive professional development framework that continues beyond graduation.

“In the 1970s and 1980s, Kuwait led the regional educational scene by attracting top teachers and elevating the status of education and educators.

“Opportunities still exist today to recapture that spirit. The real difference lies not in the scale of the challenges, but in the level of commitment. That era was marked by strong will and clear vision. Today, we face several challenges, and failure to address them risks institutional complacency that will only deepen our crisis. Therefore, any serious reform must restore education as a supreme national priority.

“This can only be achieved through a legal framework that ensures continuity, such as establishing a Supreme Council for Education chaired by the Prime Minister, while empowering independent institutions like the National Bureau for Academic Accreditation and the National Center for Education Development to carry out their missions free from bureaucracy and favoritism.

“Kuwait stands at a critical economic crossroads. Continued reliance on government employment is unsustainable. By 2035, the number of government employees will need to be reduced by nearly half. This means that economic diversification cannot be achieved without education that cultivates productive and innovative individuals.

“Education goes beyond building schools and universities; it demands sustainability and continuous development. If we aspire to a prosperous future, we must prioritize investing in people, as they are the true wealth and the only guarantee of a society’s lasting sustainability.”



“I believe that an excessive fear of rejection, exclusion, and social isolation can sometimes lead to various psychological problems, especially in individuals who are overly kind, shy, and indecisive when making personal decisions. This kind of pathological fear can give rise to numerous psychological complexes during adolescence and even into adulthood,” columnist **Khaled Al-Jenfawi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Several factors contribute to this heightened fear of rejection and social exclusion in today’s turbulent world, including:

❑ Negative parenting - A child may experience negative parenting during childhood from parents who lack self-confidence and may have unresolved psychological issues. These parents might vent their frustrations through excessive harshness or by belittling their children with severe and humiliating criticism, all while refusing to learn about healthy parenting methods.

“As a result, the child may develop a weak personality and become indecisive, potentially leading to pathological self-hatred later in life. These negative feelings cause them to constantly fear expressing their true opinions and to avoid conflict – even with those who are rude.

❑ Low self-esteem - Over time, a person’s self-esteem can weaken, and a deep fear of family or social rejection becomes ingrained. Individuals with low self-esteem often sacrifice their rights, time, and energy to please others, especially those who are indifferent to their feelings.

❑ Lack of social skills - Exposure to a chaotic family environment can cause some children, during adolescence and even into adulthood, to lack effective communication skills and struggle to form meaningful friendships. This inability to integrate positively into social groups often leads to chronic stress and psychological disorders rooted in their fear of social rejection.

❑ Pathological need for approval and acceptance - Some individuals go to great lengths to gain approval from everyone they encounter in their personal and professional lives, often at the expense of their self-respect and self-esteem. This behavior stems from a deep-rooted fear of family rejection, abandonment, or social ostracism.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali with Public Works officials.



Capital Governorate photos Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali reviews plan.

Capital Governor reviews Damascus Street project progress

Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali conducted an inspection tour on Saturday evening to monitor the progress of the Damascus Street development and rehabilitation project, in the presence of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works Eng. Eid Al-Rashidi, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

During the tour, the governor was briefed on the ongoing phases of the project, which is considered one of the most prominent strategic projects in infrastructure development and road network improvement. The project aims to enhance traffic flow and reduce congestion.

Sheikh Abdullah emphasized that cooperation and coordinated efforts among the relevant authorities are essential to completing vital projects on schedule, meeting traffic demands, and in line with the objectives of the New Kuwait 2035 vision.

At the end of the tour, the Capital Governor praised the Ministry of Public Works for its efforts in implementing and developing infrastructure projects to the highest engineering standards.

He highlighted that these projects reflect the state’s commitment to sustainable development and improving the quality of life for both citizens and residents.

Social Affairs, Municipality launch drive to remove illegal dumpsters

Legal measures initiated against offenders

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: The Ministry of Social Affairs, in coordination with Kuwait Municipality, has launched a large-scale field campaign to remove illegal garbage dumpsters scattered throughout various roads and streets.

The campaign aims to preserve the country’s civilized appearance and ensure smoother traffic flow.

In a press release, the ministry explained that the campaign was launched under the directives of the Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, and in response to growing concerns about the negative impact of these dumpsters on the public landscape, as well as the traffic congestion and obstructions they cause in certain areas.

Field inspection teams have already begun work on the ground by taking legal action against violators as a deterrent measure.

These efforts are part of a joint action plan with relevant authorities aimed at intensifying road monitoring and preventing irregular practices that



MoSA photo

Ministry of Social Affairs, in coordination with Kuwait Municipality launched a field campaign to remove random bins to preserve the general appearance.

disrupt public order or hinder the state’s efforts to maintain a clean and orderly environment.

The ministry stressed that preserving the country’s civilized appearance is not solely the responsibility of government agencies, but a shared duty

that requires the cooperation of individuals and institutions alike.

It called for increased community awareness and active participation to support these national efforts.

Interior Ministry foils large drug smuggling operation

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29, (KUNA): The Ministry of Interior represented by the General Department for Combating Narcotics, announced the seizure of approximately half a million Captagon pills, 100,000 Lyrica capsules, and two firearms in the possession of two illegal residents.

In a press release Monday, the ministry said that the operation was launched following information received from a friendly country about the arrival of a

large shipment of narcotics into the country.

The investigations resulted in identifying the recipients of the shipment, and it turned out that they had a history of drug offenses, it added.

The ministry affirmed that the operation reflects the readiness and high vigilance of the security forces, stressing that it will continue to firmly confront all attempts to smuggle narcotics into the country.

Heirs win lawsuit

Court of Appeals upholds acquittal in narcotics case

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: The Second Circuit of the Court of Appeals upheld the verdict issued by the Fourth Circuit of the Criminal Court, which acquitted an individual of possessing narcotic substances with intent to traffic and use, and ordered the confiscation of the seized items.

The Public Prosecution had charged the defendant with possessing heroin for trafficking and morphine and amphetamine for personal use.

However, the court ruled in favor of the defendant following the defense presented by Lawyer Mohammed Mohsen Al-Mutairi, who argued that the arrest and search procedures were invalid as they were conducted before obtaining authorization from the Public Prosecution. He also requested cell tower data for the arresting officer’s phone.

Lawyer Al-Mutairi revealed that the search of his client’s residence occurred prior to legal authorization, which led the court to exclude the officer’s testimony as inadmissible.

In its ruling, the court stated: “What is based on falsehood is itself false.

Meanwhile, the Court of Appeals issued a final ruling obligating a judicial receiver to pay the heirs KD 100,000, which is the rent owed on their properties for the entire rental period, after he deliberately withheld the proceeds without legal justification.

The heirs had requested the court to appoint a judicial receiver to manage their properties, collect rents, and deliver them monthly.

However, the receiver refused to hand over the rent and withheld the amounts, leading the heirs to file a lawsuit against him through Lawyer Mubarak Al-Nuwaibit.

The court convicted the receiver and ordered him to pay the full amount for the disputed period, affirming the heirs’ right to recover the full rent on their properties.

Mol enforces road safety

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: Ministry of Interior’s Traffic and Operations Sector, represented by the Jahra Traffic Department, with the support of the Patrol and Traffic Investigation Units (Security Surveillance), conducted a traffic enforcement campaign on Friday, September 26 on Subiya Road towards Boubyan Island, the Sheikh Jaber Bridge, and Doha Link Road, targeting violations related to reckless driving, drifting, and illegal gatherings, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

The campaign, which was part of the ongoing efforts by the Ministry of Interior to ensure road safety and deter reckless driving, resulted in issuance of 114 traffic citations, impoundment of 22 vehicles and six motorcycles, and the arrest of seven individuals.

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His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah visits the Kuwait Investment Office in London.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with His Royal Highness Prince William, Crown Prince of the United Kingdom, at Windsor Castle.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives the heads of the State of Kuwait's offices accredited to the United Kingdom.

Sheikh Sabah Khaled praises role of Kuwait Investment Office in global markets

Kuwait Crown Prince meets Prince of Wales, conveys Amir’s message

LONDON, Sept 29, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met on Monday Prince of Wales William at Windsor Palace.

His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to King Charles III of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

During the meeting, the bilateral and historic ties between two friendly countries and ways of enhancing cooperation were touched on.

The meeting was attended by the Director General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and the Ambassador of Kuwait to the UK, Bader Abdullah Al-Munaikh.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Monday visited the Kuwait Investment Office in London.

His Highness the Crown Prince was received by Managing Director of the Kuwait Investment Authority, Sheikh Saud Salem Abdulaziz Al-Sabah, and CEO of the Kuwait Investment Office in London, Abdulmohsen Al-Mukhaizeem.

During the visit, His Highness was briefed on the history of the office’s establishment, its areas of investment in global markets, and the pivotal role it plays in supporting the national economy and diversifying sources of income.

His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his wishes for continued success.

His Highness also praised the sincere efforts made by the Kuwaiti people working in the office to manage, develop and preserve the country’s investments, stressing the political leadership’s directives to continue working to enhance returns and achieve strategic goals that reflect Kuwait’s prestigious economic and financial standing.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya, the Director General of



Crown Prince Diwan photos
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives a number of distinguished Kuwaiti students studying in the United Kingdom.

the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs at the Amiri Diwan Mazen Al-Essa, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Minister’s Office Affairs Ambassador Bader Al-Taneeb, Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ambassador Sadiq Marafi, and the Ambassador of Kuwait to the UK Bader Al-Munaikh accompanied His Highness during the visit.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and in the presence of Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, received on Sunday Heads of Kuwait’s offices accredited to the UK.

His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and praised their performance in their assigned roles in representing Kuwait abroad, affirming the political leadership’s appreciation for their efforts.

The meeting was attended by Director General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs at the Amiri Diwan Mazen Al-Essa, Undersecretary at the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince Abdullah Al-Otaibi, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Minister’s Office Affairs Ambassador Bader Al-Taneeb, Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ambassador Sadiq Marafi, Kuwaiti Ambassador to the UK Bader Al-Munaikh, and Managing Director of the General Investment Authority Sheikh Saud Salem Abdulaziz Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and in the presence of Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, received on Sunday A number of distinguished Kuwaiti students studying in the UK.

His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

His Highness also urged them to continue to work hard and exert maximum efforts to achieve the highest levels of success.

The meeting was attended by Director General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs at the Amiri Diwan Mazen Al-Essa, Undersecretary at the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince Abdullah Al-Otaibi, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Minister’s Office Affairs Ambassador Bader Al-Taneeb, Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ambassador Sadiq Marafi, Kuwaiti Ambassador to the UK Bader Al-Munaikh, and Managing Director of the General Investment Authority Sheikh Saud Salem Abdulaziz Al-Sabah.

Council approves Mubarakiya, Omariya Zoo site reallocation

Key redevelopment and land-use plans endorsed

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: The Municipal Council, during its session on Monday chaired by Abdullah Al-Mahri, approved several important proposals and requests listed on its agenda.

The approved items included:
■ The request by the Municipality’s Projects Sector to install shaded and air-conditioned walkways as part of the redevelopment of the area damaged by the Mubarakiya fire in Qibla, Block 7.

■ The request by the Ministry of Finance to amend a previous Municipal Council decision dated July 8, 2024, for reallocation of the Omariya Zoo site from public treasury land to state property to help cover the actuarial deficit in social security.

■ The redevelopment and reorganization of Plots 1, 2, 3, and 4, located in Qibla, Block 13, under Plan No. M/39544.

■ The request by the Ministry of Defense to amend a 2020 decision related to two Land Forces sites in the southern region.

■ A proposal by member Munira Al-Amir to require that all Kuwait Municipality transactions submitted to the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) be reviewed by the Legal Department to ensure compliance with Municipal Council’s decisions.

■ The request by the Public Authority for Sports to allocate a 12,000-square-meter site for the Kuwait Swimming Federation in the Sabah Al-Salem area, within Plot No. 4.

■ The request by the Public Authority for Industry to amend a prior decision by the committee in charge of carrying out the responsibilities of the Municipal Council to amend the boundaries and

add an area to the site of the wastewater and industrial water treatment plant in Subhan, Plot 11.

■ The proposal submitted by member Walid Al-Dagher to create an entrance and exit for the Al-Qurain Markets area.

■ The proposal submitted by Dr. Hassan Kamal to evaluate and update the traffic study for Plots 1, 2, and 3 in the Sabah Al-Salem area.

■ The reorganization of Plots 337 and 338 in Plot 8 of Jabriya.

■ Two requests of the Ministry of Social Affairs - first to allocate a 180-square-meter gas cylinder exchange site, including a service lane, in Abu Fatira, Block 2, and second to approve external protrusions at the entrance of the Rawda and Hawally Cooperative Society’s central market in Block 2, provided they are not used commercially.

■ The request to establish the boundaries of the central market building based on its current status and amend the site plan to expand the total area of the market to 4,420 square meters.

The Municipal Council did not approve the following items during the meeting:

■ The letter submitted by the United Real Estate Group requesting a change of use to commercial for the property located on Al-Othman Street in Hawally, Area 185, Plots 19, 20, and 21.

■ The proposal submitted by Municipal Council Chairman Abdullah Al-Muhri to add a café license to restaurant licenses in plots located in investment-use areas, after the Kuwait Municipality did not approve it.

Meanwhile, the request to cancel the pumping station site belonging to the Ministry of Public Works and to allocate the conversion station site to the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy in the Nuzha area, Block 1, was filed but not approved.

Also, the Municipal Council referred the response to member Abdullah Al-Enezi’s question about the location of the tree belt planned around

Al-Mutlaa Residential City to the Jahra Committee for further study and invited relevant authorities to participate.

Under the “New Business” item, some members requested to open a discussion on extending the tender contract, which began in 2017, for landfilling waste and rubble at Kuwait Municipality landfill sites. The council approved referring this request to the Legal and Financial Committee for review.

In addition, a request concerning delays in issuing building permits from the Municipality’s Engineering Licensing Department was submitted, and the council approved referring it to the Reform and Development Committee for discussion.

Furthermore, in response to inquiries from Municipal Council Member Sharifa Al-Shalfan about the Ministry of Finance’s State Property Department’s actions following the transfer of the Omariya Zoo site allocation, Engineer Suleiman Al-Rashed of the municipality’s Master Plan Department stated that the Ministry of Finance has informed the municipality’s executive body it will develop the site as a zoo, as originally planned. He clarified that the only change is the reallocation of the site from the State Treasury to the State Property Department, which is still under the Ministry of Finance.

Eng. Al-Rashed explained that the entire process began with the Municipal Council’s approval on July 8, 2024, to transfer the affiliation of Omariya Zoo site from the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) to the Public Institution for Social Security to help cover the actuarial deficit.

He also mentioned that an alternative site for the Omariya Zoo has been allocated in Jahra Governorate, covering a total area of one million square meters.

Meanwhile, the acting Deputy Director General for Capital and Jahra Governorate Affairs, Nizar Al-Awad, revealed that PAAAFR has a contract to plant 30 kilometers of afforestation in Al-Mutlaa, indicating that the delay in

implementation is due to ongoing infrastructure construction work.

Al-Awad said, “Minister of Municipality Abdul Latif Al-Mishari has been closely monitoring the project. A committee comprising representatives from the municipality, the Ministry of Public Works, the Public Authority for Housing Welfare, and PAAAFR has been formed to expedite the afforestation contract’s implementation and to clean the site.”

In addition, during a discussion about the request to shade and air-condition the fire-damaged part of Mubarakiya, Deputy Director General of the Projects Sector at the municipality Maysa Boushahri explained that the initiative was made at the behest of His Majesty. As a result, the project consultant was instructed to incorporate air-conditioning elements into the redevelopment plan.

Boushahri said the consultant recommended using electronically operated glass windows as part of the air-conditioning system.

She emphasized that the air-conditioning concept was introduced after construction had already begun, highlighting that it helps accelerate project completion and that the enclosed design aims to conserve energy and reduce electrical consumption.

Also, the Municipal Council member Engineer Alia Al-Farsi commented on the shading and air conditioning plans for the Mubarakiya area.

She praised the idea of shading and air conditioning but expressed concern that fully enclosing the market with glass on all sides would strip it of some of its unique character as a historic heritage site, “where natural elements like sun, rain, and wind blend with the lingering scents of perfumes, incense, and other goods”.

Al-Farsi urged the municipality’s Project Management Department to benefit from the experiences of neighboring Gulf countries, which have successfully shaded and air-conditioned their traditional markets without enclosing them entirely, citing Souq Msheireb in Qatar as an example.

Purification plant moves forward

CAPT opens bids for Mol detention center designs

By Mohamed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) opened bids for the “Completion of Study and Design Works” tender related to the Ministry of Interior’s General Detention Building project during a meeting held last Monday.

Six bids were accepted, while one bid was excluded based on Article 45 of the Public Tenders Law.

The agency also decided to refer the bid documents to the Ministry of Public Works, the relevant authority, for review and submission of the necessary recommendations within 30 days.

It is worth mentioning that the “Completion of Study and Design Works” tender is part of a larger construction project implemented by the Ministry of Public Works on behalf of the Ministry of Interior. The project aims to deliver a state-of-the-art detention facility designed to accommodate up to 5,000 inmates of both genders, incorporating the latest technical and engineering standards while balancing humanitarian and security considerations.

Meanwhile, CAPT, by majority vote, approved the Ministry of

Public Works’ request to award the consulting services contract for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the South Mutlaa City purification plant and its associated works to the lowest bidder, at a total cost of KD 2.537 million for a period of 42 months.

The consulting services contract is linked to the construction, operation, and maintenance of the South Mutlaa City purification plant and its associated works, marking a significant advancement in the field of wastewater purification and treatment.

It aims to establish a purification plant and pumping station with a capacity of up to 400,000 m³/day to treat wastewater from South Mutlaa City. It will also include an electrical substation, administrative buildings, laboratories, and essential infrastructure for the treatment facility, along with a sludge treatment plant designed to generate electricity.

This electricity, supplemented by wind and solar energy, will help power the plant. The project also includes a control and distribution system for treated water, with pipelines extending to the irrigation network in South Mutlaa Housing City and the Abdali farms.

Army Chief meets UK Senior Defense Adviser for Mideast

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29, (KUNA): Army Chief of the General Staff Lt. Gen. Khaled Al-Shraiaan on Monday received the UK Senior Defense Adviser for the Middle East, Vice Admiral Edward Ahlgren, and his delegation.

Al-Shraiaan underlined the deep, historic Kuwait-UK ties and the steady growth of military co-

operation, the Army General Staff said.

The meeting discussed issues of mutual interest, especially ways to develop and strengthen military collaboration, with Deputy Chief of the General Staff Maj. Gen. (Pilot) Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and senior officers in attendance.

Kuwait’s NAMAA dispatches food baskets to northern Gaza

RAMALLAH, Sept 29, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti based NAMAA Charity Society announced Sunday the implementation of a project to distribute food baskets to displaced persons in northern Gaza, in cooperation with its partners approved by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A statement by NAMAA said the project comes in response to urgent humanitarian needs.

Food baskets were provided to 155 families (approximately 930 individuals) of affected workers and displaced families in areas suffering from difficult living conditions due to ongoing displacement and economic pressures.

The society affirmed its commitment to ensuring that support reaches those who

deserve it efficiently and transparently.

For his part, the head of the development and relief sector at the society, Khaled Al-Shaamri, said in a statement to KUNA that they have “ensured that the distribution is organized to reach eligible families directly, taking into account the specific needs of each family.”

Al-Shaamri added, “this initiative represents an extension of Namaa Charity’s humanitarian approach, which combines strategic planning with effective field implementation.”

Al-Shaamri noted, “the success of this initiative would not have been possible without the directives of Kuwait wise leadership, which has made Kuwait a model for humanitarian work at the regional and international levels.”

News in Brief

Currency kiosk bidding soars: The recent tender issued by the Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) for five currency exchange kiosks at Kuwait International Airport witnessed fierce competition among exchange companies, with one bidder winning by offering 800 percent higher bid than its rivals, reports Al-Rai daily.

The bidding figures show that the winning company intensified the competition by submitting significantly higher rental offers, more than double those of its nearest rivals.

For one of the five locations, the company offered approximately KD 900,000 for a three-year lease, while the second-lowest bid was nearly 50 percent lower.

For another location, the company proposed a monthly rent of around KD 25,000 for a kiosk, whereas other competing offers were less than a quarter of that amount.

□ □ □

Citizenship fraud cases surge: This year has seen a major escalation in resolving citizenship fraud cases, with results reaching unprecedented levels, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to informed sources, the pace of work on uncovering

citizenship fraud surged in 2025. The number of fraudulent cases resolved in the first nine months of the year is three times the total handled in 2024.

In 2024, the Supreme Citizenship Investigation Committee revoked citizenship in about 100 cases per session. In 2025, that figure has jumped to around 350 cases per session. By year-end, the total number of revocations and related actions may reach four times last year’s total.

The sources praised all involved authorities for their coordination and professionalism, as well as improved accuracy in reviewing applications and cases, stressing that revocations are only issued when evidence is conclusive and irrefutable, ensuring no individual is wrongfully affected.

They also highlighted the continued operation of the dedicated hotline for receiving reports and information, affirming that every case is handled with rigorous investigation and a commitment to reaching absolute certainty.

The sources stressed that these decisive measures are part of a comprehensive strategy to reform the citizenship system and protect the integrity of national identity, as well as to permanently close the door on any attempts to manipulate or falsify citizenship records.



Attendees sample a variety of Thai dishes.



Oraiwan Korto, the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Thailand



'Thai Street Food Festival' organized by the embassy.

Live cooking demonstrations highlight culinary traditions

'Thai Street Food Festival' showcases culture, flavors in Kuwait

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: Oraiwan Korto, the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Thailand, highlighted the cultural significance of Thai street food, describing it as an essential part of Thai culture.

She invited attendees to enjoy live cooking demonstrations and sample a variety of Thai dishes, including "Tom Yum" soup, which was added to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list in 2024.

Korto said this during the "Thai Street Food Festival" organized by the embassy at its headquarters recently.

The event aimed to raise awareness about Thai cuisine and boost confidence in the wide variety of Thai food products available in Kuwait. It attracted a large audience, including members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of international organizations,



media professionals, and business representatives.

A range of activities were held during the event, including live cooking demonstrations, tastings of

traditional Thai street food and desserts, as well as cultural games highlighting Thai tourist attractions and culinary heritage.

The embassy also partnered with



Photos during the event.

Lulu Hypermarket to offer samples of Thai products available in Kuwait.

The festival reflects the embassy's commitment to promoting authentic Thai food and products, which are

known for their high quality and reasonable prices.

The embassy expressed hope that the event would give attendees a chance to experience the street food

culture that plays a vital role in the daily lives of the Thai people, and encouraged everyone to visit Thailand to explore and enjoy this rich cultural heritage firsthand.

Continued from Page 1

Thank you

Because this goal can only be achieved with capable national talent, His Highness the Crown Prince sent a clear message to Kuwaiti students in the United Kingdom and all overseas students by saying, "Kuwait relies on your energies and capabilities to build its future."

There is no doubt that the recent achievements in New York and London will open more international doors for Kuwait after a long period during which the country hesitated to engage for reasons known to all.

Today, Kuwait has recovered, thanks to sound governance based on wisdom and determination. Kuwait is once again the jewel it once was. Indeed, the ambition of the current political leadership goes far beyond merely restoring Kuwait's position as "the Pearl of the Gulf".

Assembly archives

They confirmed that the documents are once again accessible to citizens and researchers, thus offering a window into decades of democratic experience, adding that evaluating or criticizing the parliamentary process is a legitimate right of every citizen, provided it is done with the aim of offering constructive feedback that serves the public interest.

12 held

In a statement posted on its official X account, the Ministry of Interior explained that the match witnessed verbal altercations, clashes, and physical confrontations between members of both teams, leading to public disorder and a crowd storming the pitch. Special security forces intervened to disperse the crowd and brought the situation under control.

The 12 individuals, including the presidents of both clubs, three administrative staff members, and seven relatives of the administrators, have been referred to the concerned authorities in connection with the Ardiya misdemeanor case. They were detained and charged with insulting a public official during the performance of their duties, resisting a public official, and committing acts of assault and verbal abuse.

The ministry affirmed that it will not tolerate any violations that disrupt public order or threaten the safety of spectators at sporting events, and it will take firm action against such behavior.

Kuwaiti photographer

is to show that photography and documentation are not just visual arts, but influential tools for spreading environmental awareness and promoting a more sustainable ecological future.

The Siena International Photo Awards was first launched in 2015, and on September 27 this year, winners in ten categories were honored, including environmental photography, documentary films, adventure, natural beauty, motion sports, and marine life.

Solar lights

It serves as a gateway for executing many similar projects in the future.

PAHW aims to progress in a gradual manner to achieve noticeable diversity in the use of energy sources

by integrating renewable energy into all of its future projects. Starting with the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak project, the authority plans to implement similar projects in the cities of South Saad Al-Abdullah and South Sabah Al-Ahmad.

Nasser Khuraibet, PAHW's Deputy Director-General for Planning and Design, told to KUNA the authority aims to progressively diversify energy sources by integrating eco-friendly energy into all future projects, starting with the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak project, and continuing with similar projects in South Saad Al-Abdullah and South Sabah Al-Ahmad.

He added that implementing housing projects that integrate renewable energy affirms the leading role of PAHW in supporting the national transition toward eco-friendly energy and in developing the infrastructure of housing cities.

He explained that PAHW's shift toward renewable energy in future projects was part of its policy based on the Vision "New Kuwait 2035," which prioritizes improving quality of life in new cities, preserving environment and enhancing the efficiency of national resources.

Khuraibet emphasized PAHW's pioneering role in developing cities through projects that incorporate renewable energy, green building technologies, smart urban planning, and reduced electricity consumption.

He noted that the authority does not rely solely on traditional designs for its projects but continuously seeks to adopt innovative solutions that support sustainability.

He highlighted the positive contribution of the street lighting installation project in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak in feeding renewable energy and similar future projects, reflecting the authority's active shift toward incorporating clean and eco-friendly energy technologies into its upcoming housing projects.

On project specifics, Khuraibet said the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak project involved the installation of 434 solar-powered streetlight poles of various heights, which match the urban design of the neighborhood. The project was implemented according to the highest technical and engineering standards.

He pointed out that the total number of poles in the project was 3,164, of which 434 were solar-powered, accounting for 13.7 percent. This serves as a preliminary step for expanding the scope of future projects.

He considered the project a qualitative leap in smart infrastructure, especially given the increasing electrical loads monitored by the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy. He also mentioned that electricity savings from the solar-powered poles amounted to 104,854 KW/h, contributing directly to energy reduction and carbon emission reduction.

Khuraibet explained that the modern lighting poles with solar power "not only save energy but also reduce operational and maintenance costs. They enhance the flexibility of the power system in new residential areas, especially in emergencies or power outages, thus improving its resilience and operational efficiency."

He expressed PAHW's determination to continue adopting pioneering environmental initiatives and

to strengthen cooperation with both government and private sectors to expand the use of renewable energy in its projects, thus contributing to Kuwait's aspirations for a low-carbon economy and sustainable urban development.

He praised the role of local experts responsible for these high-efficiency transformations, which contribute to achieving environmental and economic objectives of future projects.

For her part, spokesperson for the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Engineer Fatma Hayat, told KUNA the ministry is keen on approving projects that fully rely on renewable energy.

She indicated that the ministry is currently evaluating opportunities to replicate the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak project to meet Kuwait's needs.

Regarding the contribution of renewable energy to housing projects, given its sustainability and how it integrates with traditional energy sources, as well as the feeding mechanism for residential infrastructure projects via this modern technology, Hayat explained that renewable energy technology was divided into several types, with solar power being the most prominent.

She elaborated that solar energy was used in various applications, most notably street lighting.

In this regard, two main types of solar street lighting systems were implemented: hybrid and the standalone. The ministry uses a balanced mix of these systems depending on the nature of each location to ensure efficiency and sustainability.

Hayat added that the hybrid system combines solar power and the traditional power grid to ensure continuous lighting, and this system was adopted in the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak lighting project due to its suitability for urban areas and ensuring uninterrupted lighting.

On the standalone system, she noted that it works entirely on solar energy through panels and batteries, without needing to be connected to a power grid. It is a highly effective solution for remote areas or areas where it is difficult to extend electrical networks. This system has been used in Boubyan Island and part of the road leading to Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port.

She stated that integrating renewable energy with the traditional grid is the ministry's optimal option at this stage to reduce pressure and ensure continuous service.

The ministry was currently conducting a study to adopt renewable energy as the primary source for some newly designed projects while providing a backup grid to ensure the highest levels of reliability and operational flexibility.

Hayat emphasized that the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak lighting project, which operates part of its poles on solar energy and ensures continuity through the hybrid system, effectively contributes to reducing electrical loads.

She said that the success of the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak project, implemented by PAHW in collaboration with the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, served as a successful practical model that can be utilized for larger future projects.

'Determination' defines Kuwaiti athletes: envoy



KUNA photo
Kuwait Ambassador to India Mishal Al-Shemali with the Kuwaiti Paralympic team participating in the 2025 World Para Athletics Championships in New Delhi.

Kuwait paralympians aim high in India

NEW DELHI, Sept 29, (KUNA): Kuwait Ambassador to India Mishal Al-Shemali met on Monday with the Kuwaiti Paralympic team, which arrived in the Indian capital to participate in the 2025 World Para Athletics Championships, taking place from September 22 to October 5.

The Kuwait delegation, led by Nasser Al-Ajmi, includes athletes Nasser Hamoud Faraj and Faisal Mubarak Surour, who will compete in track and field events.

In a statement to KUNA, Ambassador Al-Shemali said that the participation of Kuwaiti athletes with disabilities in the World Para Athletics Championships is a prime example of the willpower and determination of the Kuwaiti people, and their genuine desire to raise the flag of their country high at all international sporting events.

The Ambassador emphasized that he observed a strong determination among the Kuwaiti athletes to achieve success at this global sporting event and represent Kuwait with pride. He wished the team all the best and success in their participation and in representing Kuwait admirably.

India is hosting the 12th edition of the World Para Athletics Championships at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi, with more than 1,000 athletes with disabilities from around the world competing in over 160 track and field events.

Commerce ministry rejects social media reports on food supply distribution fraud

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has denied reports circulating in some media outlets and on social media regarding alleged fraud in the distribution

of certain food supplies.

In a statement, the ministry clarified that chicken is distributed as part of the food supply ration by weight, specifically by the kilogram per person, according to approved regulations, and not based on a specific number of chickens, as has been mistakenly reported.

only reported.

It urged all media outlets and members of the public to ensure accuracy when sharing information and emphasized the importance of verifying details directly with the ministry, especially regarding the food rations allocated to supply card holders.

Kuwait strengthens global aviation ties

WASHINGTON, Sept 29, (KUNA): A delegation from Kuwait Public Authority for Civil Aviation continued its participation late Sunday at the General Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) held in the city of Montreal, Canada, until October third.

A statement by Kuwait's Civil Aviation said that the delegation, headed by Chairman Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, had held meetings with the Japanese and South Korean delegations, exploring ways to enhance cooperation and boost existing agreements.

During the meeting with the South Korean delegation, the sides encouraged the operation of direct flights between the two countries to boost ties and increase operational and flight numbers.

In a statement, Sheikh Humoud affirmed that the meetings reflected Kuwait's keenness to build its relations network within the international civil aviation domain.

ICAO had honored Kuwait last Tuesday for its efforts in civil aviation security, enhancing execution of ICAO principles, and attaining international standard practices.

We need a serious negotiation: Schumer

Congressional leaders meet with Trump in late effort to avoid government shutdown

WASHINGTON, Sept 29, (AP): Democratic and Republican congressional leaders are heading to the White House for a meeting with US President Donald Trump on Monday in a late effort to avoid a government shutdown, but both sides have shown hardly any willingness to budge from their entrenched positions.

If government funding legislation is not passed by Congress and signed by Trump on Tuesday night, many government offices across the nation will be temporarily shuttered and non-exempt federal employees will be furloughed, adding to the strain on workers and the nation's economy.

Republicans are daring Democrats to vote against legislation that would keep government funding mostly at current levels, but Democrats so far have held firm. They are using one of their few points of leverage to demand that Congress take up legislation to extend health care benefits.

"The meeting is a first step, but only a first step. We need a serious negotia-

tion," Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said in an interview Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Trump has shown little interest in entertaining Democrats' demands on health care, even as he agreed to hold a sit-down meeting Monday afternoon with Schumer, along with Senate Majority Leader John Thune, House Speaker Mike Johnson and House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries. The Republican president has said repeatedly that he fully expects the government to enter a shutdown this week.

"If it has to shut down, it'll have to shut down," Trump said Friday. "But they're the ones that are shutting down government."

The Trump administration has tried to pressure Democratic lawmakers into backing away from their demands, warning that federal employees could be permanently laid off in the midst of a funding lapse.

"Chuck Schumer said a few months ago that a government shutdown would be chaotic, harmful and painful. He's



US President Donald Trump walks to speak with reporters after greeting supporters before departing the White House on Sept 26, in Washington. (AP)

right, and that's why we shouldn't do it," Thune, a South Dakota Republican, said Sunday on "Meet the Press."

to negotiate. They say that because Republicans control the White House and Congress, Americans will mostly blame them for any shutdown.

But to hold on to their negotiating leverage, Senate Democrats will likely have to vote against a bill to temporarily extend government funding on Tuesday, just hours before a shutdown - an uncomfortable position for a party that has long denounced shutdowns as pointless and destructive.

The bill has already passed the Republican-controlled House and would keep the government funded for seven more weeks while Congress works on annual spending legislation.

Any legislation to fund the government will need support from at least 60 senators. That means that at least eight Democrats would have to vote for the short-term funding bill, because Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky is expected to vote against it.

During the last potential government shutdown in March, Schumer and nine other Democrats voted to

break a filibuster and allow a Republican-led funding bill to advance to a final vote. The New York Democrat faced fierce backlash from many in his own party for that decision, with some even calling for him to step down as Democratic leader.

This time, Schumer appears resolute. "We're hearing from the American people that they need help on health care and as for these massive layoffs, guess what? Simple one-sentence answer: They're doing it anyway," he said.

Democrats are pushing for an extension to Affordable Care Act tax credits that have subsidized health insurance for millions of people since the COVID-19 pandemic. The credits, which are designed to expand coverage for low- and middle-income people, are set to expire at the end of the year.

Some Republicans are open to extending the tax credits, but want changes. Thune said Sunday that the program is "desperately in need of reform" and Republicans want to address "waste, fraud and abuse."



Emergency crews respond to a shooting and fire at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in Grand Blanc, Mich on Sept 28. (AP)

FBI probes targeted Michigan Church shooting that kills 4

An ex-Marine smashed a pickup into a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints church in Michigan, opened fire and set the building ablaze during a crowded Sunday service and then was fatally shot by police. At least four people were killed and eight wounded, and authorities were searching the building ruins for more victims.

The attack occurred about 10:25 am while hundreds of people were in the building in Grand Blanc

Township, outside Flint.

The man got out of the pickup with two American flags raised in the truck bed and started shooting, Police Chief William Renye told reporters. The attacker apparently used gas to start the fire and also had explosive devices but it wasn't clear if he used them, said James Dier of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Authorities identified the shooter as Thomas Jacob Sanford, 40, of

the neighboring small town of Burton. The FBI is leading the investigation and considered it an "act of targeted violence," said Ruben Coleman, a special agent in charge for the bureau.

Officers responding to a 911 call were at the church within 30 seconds, Renye said. After the suspect left the church, two officers pursued him and "engaged in gunfire," killing him about eight minutes later, the chief said. (AP)

Russian President Putin ready to meet Trump in Moscow: Kremlin

MOSCOW, Sept 29, (Agencies): Russian President Vladimir Putin is willing to meet with US President Donald Trump in Moscow, but the decision rests with the US side, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Sunday.

Peskov told Russia's TASS news agency that the invitation extended by Putin to Trump remains on the table.

Peskov added that Putin is ready and willing to hold the meeting with Trump in Moscow. "Everything depends on Trump's decision," he said.

In August, following their meeting in Alaska, Putin proposed holding their next meeting in Moscow. The US leader described the proposal as possible, though he acknowledged that he would face criticism for it.



Also:

WASHINGTON: US Vice President JD Vance said Sunday that the White House is considering a plan for European NATO allies to purchase US-made Tomahawk cruise missiles and transfer them to Ukraine, but the final call rests with US President Donald Trump.

"I know that we're having conversations this very minute about that is-

When asked whether he was personally comfortable with Ukraine receiving Tomahawk missiles and "the threat that that would pose," Vance started sidestepping the question, saying that Trump will make the "final determination...on what's in the best interest of the United States of America."

According to US media outlets, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky proposed the deal during his meeting with Trump on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York last week. And he said Trump told him, "We'll work on it."

Vance stressed that the Trump administration adopted a broader policy shift that presses Europe to take on more of the burden. "We're no longer just giving tons of money and weapons. What we're doing is asking the Europeans to buy that weaponry."

Meanwhile, he called on Russia to "come to the table and actually talk seriously about peace."

Tomahawk is a US-made, long-range, subsonic land-attack cruise missile with an operational range of 460-2,500 km, depending on the variant. This range could enable strikes on areas near Moscow if the missiles were deployed from parts of Europe.

Intense training helps Democratic women gain state lawmaking seats

WASHINGTON, Sept 29, (AP): Kimberly Pope Adams was an auditor working in Virginia when she got a call from a Democratic state Senator who had heard Adams was interested in running for office.

Sen. Danica Roem encouraged Adams to attend a six-month training program with the state's chapter of Emerge, a national group focusing on preparing Democratic women to run for office. Adams said the training was detailed, covering campaign finance, communications, media and overall strategy.

"It just made us all better women, better candidates after going through it," she said of her cohort. "I learned such granular information."

Adams lost that first election by just 53 votes following a recount. She's seeking the competitive seat again this November.

"Intentionality has paid off for Democratic women candidates," said Debbie Walsh, director of The Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.

The relative lack of similar efforts is showing for their Republican counterparts. The center recently found that Democratic women are now nearly equal in number to Democratic men in state legislatures, up from the 34.1%



Cedrita Demus, (second right), who is considering running for Tallahassee, Fla. city commissioner district, applauds during the Emerge America Southern Regional Boot Camp, a camp designed for Democratic women to improve their political campaigns, in New Orleans, Aug 10. (AP)

they comprised in 2016. But women only make up 21.3% of all Republicans in state legislatures, a statistic that experts say is the result of a systemic failure to invest in female candidates.

Many advocates for women's representation say it's important that wom-

en's voices are present during policy discussions. Democrats tend to agree, believing representation from a variety of demographics and viewpoints is valuable to leadership. Republicans tend to believe the best candidate will rise to the top whoever that may be, Walsh said.



Independent lawmaker Ákos Hadházy gives a speech during a protest outside Hatvanpuszta, a country estate linked to alleged corruption involving Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, near Alcsútdoboz in Hungary on Sept 27. (AP)

Protesters rally at opulent Hungarian estate linked to Orbán

Hundreds of demonstrators gathered in rural Hungary at a country estate that has increasingly become a symbol of alleged corruption involving the country's populist prime minister, Viktor Orbán.

Hatvanpuszta, once an agricultural manor house erected in the 19th century by a member of the Habsburg family, lies around 6 kilometers (4 miles) from the villages of Alcsútdoboz and Felcsút, where Orbán spent his youth.

The historic estate west of Budapest has attracted increasing public attention in recent years due to extensive construction and redevelopment works. Orbán has denied accusations that the estate is a luxury retreat for himself and his circle, and has called it a "half-finished farm." He has also told journalists asking about Hatvanpuszta to direct their questions to his father, the owner.

Demonstrators gathered outside

the gates of the complex, holding signs with anti-government slogans and zebra balloons - symbolizing the exotic animals like zebras, antelope and buffalo that are kept near the grounds.

"A lot of money flows to them, everything is given to an inner circle," said protester Éva Gábor, who believes a class of government-connected elites have been enriched through preferential treatment by Orbán's administration. (AP)

Moldova's PAS wins clear parliamentary majority

CHISINAU, Moldova, Sept 29, (AP): Moldova's pro-Western governing party won a clear parliamentary majority, defeating pro-Russian groups in a week-end election that was widely viewed as a stark choice between East and West.

With nearly all polling station reports counted on Monday, electoral data showed the pro-EU Party of Action and Solidarity, or PAS, had 50.1% of the vote, while the pro-Russian Patriotic Electoral Bloc has 24.2%. The Russia-friendly Alternativa Bloc came third, followed by the populist Our Party. The right-wing Democracy at Home party also won enough votes to enter parliament.

The tense ballot Sunday pitted the governing PAS against several Russia-friendly opponents but no viable pro-European partners. Electoral data indicate the party will hold a clear majority of about 55 of the 101 seats in the legislature. The election was widely viewed as a geopolitical choice for Moldovans: between a path to the European Union or a drift back into Moscow's fold.

Landlocked between war-torn Ukraine and European Union member Romania, Moldova, a Soviet republic until it proclaimed independence in 1991, has in recent years taken a clear Westward path, turning the country into



Igor Grosu, president of Moldova's parliament and leader of the pro-EU Party of Action and Solidarity speaks to the media after the parliamentary election, in Chisinau, Moldova on Sept 29. (AP)

a geopolitical battleground between Russia and Europe.

At the PAS campaign headquarters on Monday morning in the capital Chisinau, party leader Igor Grosu described the election as another battle against "enemies of our country that once seemed impossible to defeat," saying the race was a "final battle for the future."

"It was not only PAS that won these elections, it was the people who won," he said. "The Russian Federation threw into battle everything it had that was most vile - mountains of money, mountains of lies, mountains of illegalities. It used criminals to try to turn our entire country into a haven for crime. It filled everything with hatred."

Denmark reports drone sightings at several armed forces' locations

COPENHAGEN, Denmark, Sept 29, (AP): Denmark's defense ministry said Sunday that it had again observed drones at several of its armed forces' locations overnight, a day after the NATO alliance announced that it would enhance its vigilance in the Baltic Sea region.

The ministry said in a statement that it had "several capacities deployed" after drone sightings from Saturday into Sunday night. It didn't offer any further details about the specifics of the deployment, the number of drones or locations.

This is the latest unexplained drone activity after several sightings, including over five Danish airports last week, raising concerns about security in northern Europe amid suspected growing Russian aggression.

Following a NATO meeting in Riga, Latvia, on Saturday, Col Martin O'Donnell, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe spokesperson, announced that "we will conduct even more enhanced vigilance with new multi-domain assets in the Baltic Sea region, which includes Denmark, under Baltic Sentry."

He also said that NATO leaders were in constant contact with Danish officials following the drone sightings.

As Denmark gears up for the upcoming European Union Summit in Copenhagen, the Danish transportation ministry said Sunday that "all civilian drone flying in Danish airspace will be prohibited" from Monday to Friday to "remove the risk that enemy drones can be confused with legal drones and vice versa."



A mobile radar installation is seen at the Danish military site on Amager, Plonegaarden, near the village of Dragoer and on the coast of Oresund, the sea between Denmark and Sweden, on Sept 26. (AP)

"We cannot accept that foreign drones create uncertainty and disturbances in society, as we have experienced recently. At the same time, Denmark will host EU leaders in the coming week, where we will have extra focus on security," Danish transportation minister Thomas Danielsen said in a statement.

"A violation of the prohibition can result in a fine or imprisonment for up to two years," according to the statement.

Thailand PM vows to tackle Cambodia border conflict, constitutional reforms

BANGKOK, Sept. 29, (Agencies): Thailand's new prime minister told lawmakers on Monday that his government would address the country's economic woes, find solutions to the ongoing border conflict with Cambodia through diplomacy and push for a new and more democratic constitution.

Anutin Charnvirakul faces a self-imposed deadline. He had promised to call elections in four months in exchange for the People's Party - which holds the most seats in Parliament - supporting his bid to become prime minister. He was elected in Parliament earlier this month. The party has a progressive platform and has long sought to change the existing constitution imposed under military rule, saying it wants to make it more democratic. Anutin had promised to call a referendum for an elected constituent assembly to draft a new charter.

He said in his inaugural speech in Parliament on Monday that his government will support the referendum and public participation to uphold the country's constitutional monarchy.

Anutin also promised to tackle corruption and crime and "restore faith and happiness to the Thai people."

Anutin is constricted in what he can do by the four-month deadline, but also the terms of his deal with the People's Party, which declared it would act as the opposition in the legislature, potentially voting against Anutin's initiatives.

The Thai government will also seek to relieve household debt and reduce the rising cost of electricity, gasoline and transport, and move to alleviate fallout from trade wars and US tariff policy, Anutin said.

He told lawmakers he will push for a referendum on whether Thailand should revoke the existing memorandum of understanding on border issues with Cambodia.



Thailand's Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul, center, smiles with lawmakers before he presents the policy statement at the Parliament in Bangkok, Thailand on Sept 29. (AP)

Choe and Wang exchange views on regional, international affairs

Top diplomats of North Korea and China agree to deepen ties, resist hegemonism

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 29, (Agencies): The foreign ministers of North Korea and China agreed to deepen bilateral ties and resist hegemonism or unilateralism, a likely reference to their pushbacks against the United States.

Their meeting in Beijing on Sunday came about three weeks after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Chinese President Xi Jinping held their first summit in more than six years and pledged mutual support and enhanced cooperation. Kim and Xi earlier attended a massive Beijing military parade marking the end of the World War II, with other world leaders including Russian President Vladimir Putin.

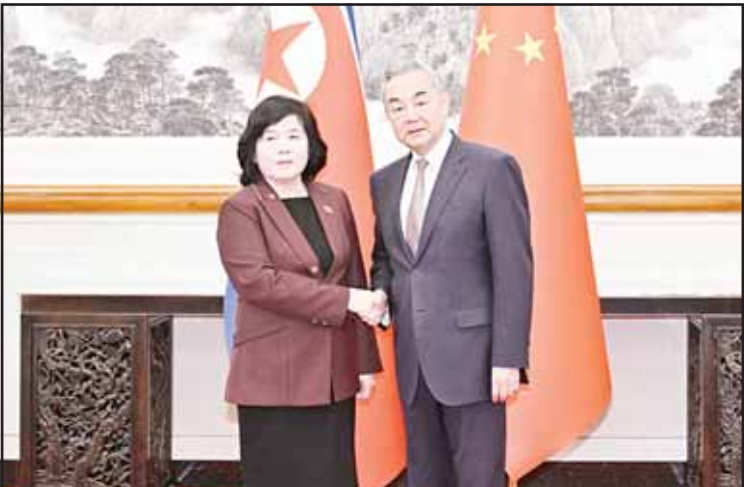
The joint appearance of Kim, Xi and Putin, the first of its kind, displayed a potential three-way unity against the United States, though it's unclear how far China would go in such an anti-US partnership.

In a meeting with her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui cited Kim as saying that further bolstering ties with China is North Korea's unwavering position. Choe expressed an intent to deepen and develop friendly ties with China in line with the spirits of Kim-Xi summit, the North's Korean Central News Agency reported Monday.

Wang said China maintains a firm position that it intends to solidify bilateral ties, saying it's necessary to boost strategic communications and exchanges, KCNA said.

China's Xinhua News Agency cited Wang as saying China oppose "all forms of hegemonism" and stands ready to strengthen cooperation with North Korea in international and regional affairs. It quoted Choe as saying that North Korea "is willing to closely cooperate with China in multilateral affairs, jointly resist unilateralism and power politics and promote a fairer and more just world order."

The comments likely referred to their countries' separate confrontations with the United States - China over strategic competitions with the US and North Korea over its nuclear weapons program.



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, holds talks with Foreign Minister of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Choe Son Hui in Beijing, capital of China on Sept 28. (Xinhua)

KCNA said Choe and Wang exchanged views on regional and international affairs reached a complete consensus on the issues, but didn't elaborate.

Kim's attendance at the Beijing military parade was his first attendance at a

major multilateral event during his 14-year rule.

In recent years, North Korea has been focusing on expanding cooperation with Russia by supplying combat troops and munitions to support its war against Ukraine. But experts say Kim now feels the need to improve ties with China, North Korea's biggest trading partner and aid benefactor, as he has to brace for the war's end. They say China, for its part, would want to maintain influence over North Korea, as bilateral ties reportedly cooled in the past few years.

Attention has turned to the makeup of the delegation China might send to North Korea when it commemorates the 80th founding anniversary of its ruling Workers' Party next month. North Korea is expected to mark the anniversary with its own military parade to display new weapons targeting the US and its allies.

Wang also briefed on the domestic situation in China, noting that since China and North Korea are both socialist countries with common ideals and goals, the two sides should enhance exchanges of experience in governance and administration to promote the development of their respective socialist causes.

Wang said that China appreciates the North Korea's firm support for China's core interests and major concerns, as well as its backing of the concept of building a community with a shared future for humanity, and of the concept of building a community with a shared future for humanity, and of the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, Global Civilization Initiative, and Global Governance Initiative proposed by China.

Choe said that China's commemorative events to mark the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War have fully demonstrated China's historical achievements, comprehensive national strength and international status.

The historic meeting held by the top leaders of the two parties and the two countries has provided strategic guidance and strong impetus to deepen relations between the North Korea and China, Choe added.



Demonstrators block a road during protests against diesel price hikes following fuel subsidy cuts by President Daniel Noboa's government, in Otavalo, Ecuador on Sept 24. (AP)

One dead, 12 injured during violent clash over fuel prices in Ecuador

A violent clash Sunday in Ecuador between law enforcement authorities and indigenous people protesting the end of a fuel subsidy left one civilian dead and 12 soldiers injured.

The military and the national indigenous organization behind the demonstrations traded blame for the violence that developed in the Andean community north of the capital, Quito. Ecuador's ministries of Defense and Interior did not immediately acknowledge the protester's death.

The Regional Foundation for Human Rights Advice in a statement said the male protester "died after being shot." The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador, the largest indigenous organization in the country, in a separate statement said the 46-year-old man was killed as the result of government "repression" that left another demonstrator "in critical condition."

Ecuador's Prosecutor's Office in a post on X said it will open an investigation with a team specialized in the unlawful use of force to "guarantee the objectivity of the process."

The Armed Forces also reported on X that the 12 soldiers were injured while guarding a convoy transporting food to areas of northern Ecuador. The post said the soldiers were "ambushed" by "infiltrated" groups but did not elaborate further. (AP)

Taleban release US citizen from Afghan jail

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 29, (AP): The Taliban on Sunday freed a US citizen from an Afghan prison, weeks after they said they had reached an agreement with US envoys on a prisoner exchange as part of an effort to normalize relations. The deputy spokesperson for the Taliban Foreign Ministry, Zia Ahmad Takal, identified the man as Amir Amiri. He did not say when Amiri was detained, why, or where.

An official with knowledge of the release said Amiri had been detained in Afghanistan since December 2024 and was on his way back to the US. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the details with the media.

Qatar facilitated Amiri's release in the latest diplomatic achievement resulting from its security partnership with the US that has secured the freedom of four other Americans from Taliban detention this year. The energy-rich nation on the Arabian Peninsula also helped in releasing a British couple who were imprisoned for months.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio welcomed Amiri's release, saying it marked the administration's determination, reinforced by US President Donald Trump's recent executive



In this photo released by Qatar's Foreign Ministry, US citizen Amir Amiri, (left), poses next to an unidentified woman, aboard a plane in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Sept 28, after being released from an Afghan prison. With him, (from right), are a Qatari diplomat, Deputy Assistant to the US President Sebastian Gorka, and US Special Envoy for Hostage Response Adam Boehler. (AP)

order, to protect American nationals from wrongful detention abroad.

"While this marks an important step forward, additional Americans remain unjustly detained in Afghanistan. President Trump will not rest until all our captive citizens are back home."

Ahmad Habibi, the brother of Mahmood Habibi, a US citizen held by the Taliban for more than three years, said he and his family were grateful to hear the news about Amiri, and they remained hopeful that Mahmood would also return home.

Asia

Typhoon Bualoi kills 12 in Vietnam: Heavy rain and strong winds from the former Typhoon Bualoi flooded roads, knocked off roofs and caused at least 12 deaths in central Vietnam before weakening to a tropical storm that moved Monday into Laos, state media reported.

The storm tore through communities, damaging houses, schools and power poles, sweeping away temporary bridges and flooding roads and low-water crossings across several provinces. Flooding in cities submerged vehicles, and many highland communities were cut off.

State media said rescue teams were searching for 17 missing fishermen. By midmorning, the storm's center was over land near the border of Nghe An province and Laos, with winds of 74 kph (46 mph). In the afternoon it pushed deep into Laos and weakened into a tropical depression, according to the National Center for Hydro-Meteorological Forecasting, with winds of 39-61 kph (24-38 mph).

Vietnamese authorities had earlier grounded fishing boats and suspended operations at four coastal airports. Nine of the deaths occurred in the scenic province of Ninh Binh, where strong winds collapsed houses. Vietnamese prime minister is **Pham Minh Chinh**.

A local official in Thanh Hoa province, Nguyen Ngoc Hung, died when a tree fell on him as he returned home after a night of storm preparations, reports said. One person was killed after being swept away by floodwaters in Hue city. Another fatality was reported in Danang. (AP)

3 miners die in Vietnam gas incident: Three coal miners were confirmed dead and two others were injured in a gas incident at a coal mine in northern Vietnam's Quang



Chinh

Ninh province on Sunday morning, Vietnam News Agency reported.

The incident occurred while a group of five workers were carrying out their task at an underground mine operated by the Duong Huy Coal Company, according to the report.

By 12:30 pm, two workers had been brought out of the site and transferred to a hospital for emergency treatment.

At 1:30 pm, rescuers recovered the bodies of the three remaining workers, who had died of exposure to toxic gas, the report said. (Xinhua)

Car crash near Tokyo kills driver, injures 9: A van carrying kindergartners on Monday crashed into a residential property in Chiba Prefecture near Tokyo, killing the driver and lightly injuring nine children, local media reported.

The vehicle crossed into the opposite lane and crashed into a wall around a house at around 8:50 am local time in a residential area in the city of Kamagaya, Chiba Prefecture, Kyodo News reported, citing local police and firefighters.

Nine children sustained minor injuries like nosebleeds and cuts in their mouths in the accident, while a teacher in her 50s with them was not injured, the report said.

The male driver, who appeared to be in his 40s, was rushed to hospital unconscious and pronounced dead later, it added. (Xinhua)

6 killed in Myanmar flooding: Six people were killed after flooding triggered by heavy rain in central Myanmar's Magway region, an official from the Natmauk Town Fire Services Department told Xinhua on Monday.

The flooding occurred in Meizalpin village in Natmauk town, Magway region. Creek water levels rose on Saturday and Sunday, sweeping away two houses, he said.

A family of six in one house died, while the other house was destroyed with no casualties, he added.

The water level receded on Monday morning, he said, adding that it was the first time the town had experienced such flooding. (Xinhua)

Youth protests over stadium spending and health system decline in Morocco

CASABLANCA, Morocco, Sept. 29, (AP): Youth-led demonstrators clashed with police and blocked the highway over the weekend in some of Morocco's largest anti-government protests in years, denouncing what they called the government's misplaced priorities.

Hundreds of young Moroccans took to the streets of at least 11 cities across the North African nation, denouncing corruption and blasting the government for pouring money into international sporting events while neglecting health and education. They drew a direct link between the country's struggling health care system and its investments in the lead-up to the 2030 FIFA World Cup, shouting slogans including, "Stadiums are here, but where are the hospitals?"

Morocco is building at least three new stadiums and renovating or expanding at least half a dozen others, preparing to co-host the event. It will also host the Africa Cup of Nations later this year.

Police in plainclothes and riot gear disrupted protests in several cities, including Rabat and Marrakech, and arrested demonstrators, including in Casablanca, an Associated Press reporter witnessed.

Plainclothes police officers were seen arresting protesters as they gave interviews to the press, videos published by local outlets show. Police on the ground and the Justice



Security forces disperse and arrest protesters during a demonstration demanding healthcare and education reforms, in Rabat, Morocco, on Sept 27. (AP)

Ministry did not respond to AP's questions about the arrests or the number of demonstrators.

Since at least a decade ago, protests in Morocco have often centered on regional inequities and the government's priorities in Rabat. This weekend's nationwide rallies coalesced around popular anger seen earlier this year in isolated incidents throughout Morocco, including in areas still reeling from the deadly 2023 earthquake. Unrest swelled most recently after eight women died giving birth in a public hospital in Agadir, a large coastal city 300 miles (483 kilometers) south of Rabat.

The Moroccan Association for Human Rights said that more than 120 people were arrested over the weekend and transferred to police stations, adding that the arrests "confirm the crackdown on free voices and restriction of the right to freedom of expression." Unlike past protests driven by unions or political parties, these protests were publicized largely on social media platforms such as TikTok and Discord, popular among gamers and teenagers, by a leaderless movement.

Africa

Guinea to hold presidential election on Dec 28: Guineans will hold a presidential election on Dec. 28, its first since the country's leader Gen. Mamadi Doumbouya took power in a 2021 coup, according to a presidential decree read on state television.

The announcement was made on Saturday, a day after the Supreme Court validated the results of a constitutional referendum that could allow Doumbouya to run for president.

Guinea is one of several West African countries where the military has taken power and delayed a return to civilian rule. Gen. Mamadi Doumbouya, in power since 2021, agreed in 2022 to launch a democratic transition after a Dec. 31, 2024, deadline. The ruling junta's failure to meet the deadline led to opposition protests that paralyzed Guinea's capital Conakry in January.

Doumbouya initially said he would not run for president, but the draft constitution approved last week allows junta members to run for office, and extends the presidential mandate from five to seven years, renewable twice. (AP)

Namibia soldiers help battle wildfire in park: Namibia has sent more than 500 soldiers to help battle a huge wildfire that has burned across 30% of the country's best-known national park.

The office of President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah said Sunday that an unknown number of wildlife have been killed in the fire, which started last Monday and has spread across the vast Etosha National Park in the north of the



Guinea's interim President, Gen Mamadi Doumbouya, departs with his wife after casting his vote in the constitutional referendum in Conakry, Guinea on Sept 21. (AP)

country.

The park is home to hundreds of species of wildlife, including critically endangered black rhinos. The president's office said the fire had also spread into villages on the outskirts of the park, but no human casualties have been reported. It said the cause of the fire was not yet certain.

Video on national broadcaster NBC showed swaths of blackened trees and grass and antelope escaping from the fire. Authorities have sent helicopters and trucks with water tanks to fight the fires. They deployed 500 soldiers on Sunday to help with the operation and join a first contingent of 40 soldiers who had been sent to the park on Saturday, according to the president's office. (AP)

Dollar stabilizes at KD 0.305

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29, (KUNA): The US dollar exchange rate against the Kuwaiti dinar remained steady at KD 0.305 on Monday, while the euro held at KD 0.357, unchanged from the previous day.

According to the Central Bank of Kuwait's daily bulletin, the British pound edged up by 0.18 percent to KD 0.409, while the Swiss franc rose 0.17 percent to KD 0.383. The Japanese yen maintained stability at KD 0.002.

Business

Undersecretary Marwa Al-Juaidan visits ABK booth at exhibition

ABK concludes participation in Auto World Show 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: As part of its commitment to contributing to the success of highly popular events, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) concluded its participation in the Auto World Show 2025 for the third consecutive year, providing its customers with banking services and financing solutions tailored to their needs.

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Marwa Al-Juaidan, visited ABK's booth and was briefed by staff on the unique solutions and offers provided to all segments of customers in the local market.

The booth witnessed significant visitor turnout, with employees keen to respond to all inquiries related to car offers and exclusive discounts offered by the Bank in collaboration with its local dealership partners across the country.

On this occasion, Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, stated, "Our presence at Auto World Show, one of the



Johair Marafi, General Manager – Retail Banking

Marafi

■ Our participation reaffirms our commitment to engaging with customers and keeping pace with developments. We will continue to surprise them and establish more partnerships to provide them exclusive and distinctive offers.



The bank's pavilion at the exhibition.

largest automotive exhibitions in Kuwait, once again confirms our commitment to engaging with cus-

tomers and keeping pace with developments, enabling us to create innovative promotional campaigns

that enhance customer satisfaction

and strengthen our competitive position in the banking sector at all levels."

Marafi added, "We always strive to be close to our customers and car

enthusiasts, seizing every opportunity to provide those interested in purchasing new cars with the strongest offers that make ownership easier, in line with the highest financing standards in the local market."

She expressed her delight with the high visitor turnout at ABK's booth, reflecting the Bank's strong reputation, noting that the coming period will see continued efforts to surprise customers and meet their aspirations and financial needs. She expressed the intention of signing more cooperation agreements with automotive companies, helping customers acquire their dream cars in the easiest way possible.

In conclusion, Marafi highlighted that ABK is working on forging partnerships with several car dealerships, with bank staff present at showrooms in many areas to serve customers, provide them with the best services, and attract them to choose ABK as their ideal option for carrying out a wide range of financial and banking transactions.

Exports to GCC states total KD 913.3 mln

Kuwait's non-oil exports hit KD 1.59 bln in H1 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29, (KUNA): Kuwait's non-oil exports reached KD 1.59 billion (USD 5.17 billion) in the first half of 2025, commerce and industry ministry data showed on Sunday.

Kuwaiti non-oil exports to Gulf Cooperation Council states were worth KD 913.3 million (USD 2.85 billion) in the same period, while exports to Arab countries reached KD 207.4 million (673.99 million), according to a ministry statement.

Non-oil Kuwaiti exports to European countries hit KD 438.9 million (USD 1.65 billion) in the first half of this year, while exports to the African continent stood at KD 661,000 (USD 2.2 million), the ministry data showed.

Total Kuwaiti non-oil exports to The Americas in the same period reached KD 992,000 (USD 3.2 million), while the figure for Asia and Australia combined was worth KD 29.9 million (USD 97.3 million), added the statement.

New branch to focus on innovation

Al Habtoor Research Centre opens new branch in Dubai

DUBAI, Sept 29: Following two years of continued success at its headquarters in Cairo, the Al Habtoor Research Centre has announced the expansion of its strategic operations with the opening of a new branch in Dubai. This move reflects the Centre's vision to strengthen its position as one of the region's leading research institutions and to extend its presence on a global scale.

Dubai was chosen for its supportive environment for innovation and scientific research, as well as its status as a global hub for trade and the economy, and a diverse society that brings together talent from across the world. These factors make it the ideal location to launch the next phase of the Centre's journey.

The Dubai branch will focus on areas of innovation, scientific research, and medical studies, in line with global trends supporting advanced sciences and modern technologies. It will also work to establish new partnerships with international universities, advanced research centres, and innovation communities throughout the emirate, further consolidating the Centre's role as a driver of strategic thinking on future-oriented issues.

Meanwhile, the headquarters in Cairo will continue to attract new researchers in the Centre's core areas of interest, including political and economic studies, as well as the development of early warning systems and strategic analysis programmes. This dual structure positions the Centre as both a regional research hub in Cairo and a gateway to innovation and global engagement in Dubai.

On this milestone, Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor, Founding Chairman of the Al Habtoor Group, said: "Since establishing the Al Habtoor Research Centre in Cairo two years ago, we have demonstrated our ability to deliver robust studies and analyses that serve our region and support decision-makers. Today, with the launch of the Dubai branch, we open a new window to the world, combining the strength of scientific research with the horizons of innovation, reaffirming our commitment to serving humanity and shaping the future. I am confident that this dual presence, with our headquarters in Cairo and our Dubai branch, will enable the Centre to broaden its horizons and build a research network that brings together leading minds from the region and beyond."



Al Habtoor Research Centre strengthens international presence with launch of new Dubai branch.

Boursa Kuwait closes higher

All Share Index hits 8,805.79 points

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Monday's session on a positive note, with the All Share Index climbing 50.32 points, or 0.57 percent, to close at 8,805.79 points.

Trading activity saw 707.9 million shares change hands across 31,835 transactions,

with a total value of KD 132.7 million (USD 404.7 million).

The Main Market Index advanced 41.20 points, or 0.50 percent, settling at 8,211.52 points. This came on the back of 539.5 million shares traded through 22,505 transactions, amounting to KD 71.5 million (USD 218 million).

The Premier Market Index also recorded gains, rising 55.09 points, or 0.59 percent,

to reach 9,389.02 points. It witnessed 168.3 million shares traded in 9,330 transactions, valued at KD 61.2 million (USD 186.6 million).

Similarly, the Main 50 Index closed higher, adding 48.83 points, or 0.58 percent, to stand at 8,494.13 points. The index registered trading of 402 million shares across 14,095 transactions, with a value of KD 53.9 million (USD 164.3 million).

Project to feature residences, serviced apartments, offices & exclusive town houses

Dar Global reveals \$1 bln Trump Plaza project in Jeddah

DUBAI, Sept 29, (AP): Dar Global, a London-listed luxury real estate developer, said on Monday that it plans to launch a Trump Plaza in the Saudi Red Sea city of Jeddah in the second collaboration with the Trump Organization, following the success of Trump Tower Jeddah.

The announcement by the company, which is listed on the London Stock Exchange, said the \$1 billion landmark development is to rise along King Abdulaziz Road in the heart of the city.

Dar Global said the project will have a Central Park-inspired green spine as an anchor, "bringing Manhattan-style vibrancy" to Jeddah.

It is the second collaboration in the coastal Saudi city with The Trump Organization and Dar Global said Trump Plaza Jeddah will represent the second Trump-branded development in Saudi Arabia, following the launch of Trump Tower Jeddah

in December last year.

Trump's company struck many real estate licensing deals overseas before he entered the White House in 2017, including for hotels and residential towers in Canada, Dubai, Mexico, India and Turkey.

Trump's close ties to Saudi Arabia's crown prince and day-to-day ruler, Mohammed bin Salman, drew heavy criticism after the 2018 killing of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi columnist for the Washington Post who had written critically about the monarchy.

Dar Global is the international arm of Dar Al Arkan, a large Saudi developer. It says it has \$7.5 billion worth of projects under development in the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, the United Kingdom, Spain and Saudi Arabia.

Dar Global said Trump Plaza Jeddah will trans-

form the city's skyline into a world-class community that will include premium residences, serviced apartments, Grade-A office space, and exclusive townhouses.

Designed to redefine urban living in Saudi Arabia, the development will integrate living, working, and leisure into one seamless destination, the statement said.

"This project embodies our vision of excellence by blending world-class hospitality, modern living, and dynamic business environments," Dar Global's statement quoted Eric Trump, Executive Vice President of The Trump Organization, as saying.

"Together with Dar Global, we are creating a destination that will set a new benchmark for prestige and innovation in the kingdom," he said.

Regional corporates record 6.3% revenue growth, led by non-oil sectors

PwC: Middle East firms improve NWC days by six in 2024

RIYADH, Sept 29: Companies across the Middle East released significant liquidity in 2024, with net working capital (NWC) days improving by six days – a 5.6% gain – according to PwC's 2025 Middle East's Working Capital Study. The report highlights that while corporates are benefitting from sustained revenue growth, rising costs and increased short-term debt are placing renewed pressure on profitability and financial resilience.

Middle East corporates achieved a 6.3% year-on-year (YoY) increase in revenue in 2024, driven primarily by non-oil sectors. The UAE's non-oil revenue grew by 16.8% and Saudi Arabia's by 8.0%, underscoring the region's diversification drive. Since 2020, companies in the region have recorded an impressive 11.5% compounded annual growth rate, further supported by record initial public offering (IPO) volumes and resilient mergers and acquisitions (M&A) activity.

Yet, the findings reveal a growing reliance on financing. Short-term debt rose by 23.8% in 2024, pushing interest expenses to a five-year high at 3.1% of revenue. Despite overall Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA) margins improving by 30 basis points, profitability remains under pressure from rising Selling, General and Adminis-

- Online conversation volume about GCC banks reaches 2.8 million mentions across six markets
- Yet, consumer sentiment declines as service delays, digital failures, and fraud concerns escalate

trative (SG&A) expenses and higher financing burdens.

PwC estimates that US\$54.7 billion remains trapped on the balance sheets of publicly listed companies, representing a major opportunity to unlock cash and strengthen balance sheets. However, just 9.4% of companies in the study sustained improvements in NWC days for three consecutive years, pointing to challenges in embedding long-term efficiency.

Mo Farzadi, Partner, Performance and Restructuring Services Leader, PwC Middle East, said: "In a year marked by heightened geopolitical uncertainty and supply chain disruption, effective working capital management remains a strategic priority in the Middle East. Companies that take a disciplined approach to cash conver-

sion can unlock liquidity, build resilience, and respond more confidently to market pressures. Sustainable improvements in working capital continue to be a powerful enabler of growth and long-term value."

Priorities for 2025

PwC's study recommends five key actions for Middle East corporates to build resilience and unlock value in the next 12 months:

1. Get the basics right – Fix foundational gaps in invoicing, stock visibility and payment processes.
 2. Measure and cascade KPIs – Link strategic targets to day-to-day operational metrics.
 3. Tailor systems and AI to real needs – Align technology with actual working capital drivers.
 4. Use working capital to reduce debt – Free up internal cash to lower reliance on external financing.
 5. Embed a cash culture – Build ownership and financial discipline at every level of the business.
- PwC states that as capital costs remain elevated, working capital efficiency must be treated as a long-term capability rather than a short-term initiative. Companies that invest in sustained improvement will be best positioned to strengthen balance sheets, improve resilience, and unlock future growth opportunities.

Oil rebound and non-oil momentum drive regional resilience

ICAEW Q3 economic update: GCC growth supported by Kuwait and Qatar advances

DUBAI, Sept 29: The GCC is set for stronger growth in 2025 and 2026, as higher oil output, robust non-oil sectors, and resilient domestic demand strengthen the region's outlook, according to the latest ICAEW Economic Insight Q3 2025 report, produced by Oxford Economics.

GCC GDP is forecast to grow by 4.1% in 2025, nearly double last year's pace, before accelerating to 4.6% in 2026. The trajectory reflects both oil and non-oil gains, reinforcing the region's resilience to global trade tensions, tariff headwinds and softer oil prices.

GCC: Oil rebound, non-oil resilience and fiscal contrasts

The sharp increase in oil production has lifted energy-sector growth forecasts to 4.9% in 2025 and 6% in 2026. Non-oil sectors are also expected to expand by 4% in 2025, driven by strong labour markets, credit growth and continued diversification efforts.

While global GDP growth is expected to slow to 2.7% in 2025, the GCC remains an outperformer. Saudi Arabia's non-oil exports rose 16.5% y/y in H1, while the UAE recorded a surge of nearly 45% y/y, underscoring the region's growing role in global trade. Fiscal positions remain mixed: deficits are forecast in Saudi Arabia,

- GCC: Regional GDP forecast at 4.1% in 2025, rising to 4.6% in 2026, as oil output rebounds and non-oil growth sustains momentum
- Kuwait: Growth of 4% in 2025, supported by oil gains and new debt law unlocking fiscal flexibility
- Qatar: Economy projected to expand 2.7% in 2025, accelerating to 4.8% in 2026 on North Field LNG expansion
- UAE and Saudi Arabia: Non-oil sectors continue to drive diversification, supporting broader regional resilience

Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman, while Qatar and the UAE are projected to maintain surpluses. Headline GCC inflation is projected at 2.1% in 2025, rising moderately to 2.6% in 2026.

Kuwait: Political breakthrough supports fiscal reform

Kuwait's GDP is expected to grow 4% in 2025, fuelled by a 7% expansion in the oil sector. Crucially, the passage of a new debt law has ended years of political gridlock, giving the government greater fiscal flexibility to finance investment and stabilise public finances. This reform marks an important step in sustaining growth while enabling longer-term diversification.

Qatar: LNG expansion anchors medium-term growth

Qatar's economy is forecast to expand 2.7% in 2025, before accelerating to 4.8% in 2026 with the expansion of the North Field LNG projects, which will significantly boost production capacity and fiscal surpluses.

UAE and Saudi Arabia: Non-oil momentum supports diversification

Beyond oil, the region's largest economies continue to demonstrate the role of diversification in sustaining resilience. The UAE economy is set to grow 5.1% in 2025, with non-oil GDP rising 4.7%, now accounting for 77% of total GDP. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia is forecast to expand 4.2%, with non-oil sectors sustaining annual growth of around 5%, driven by construction, trade, and financial services. Together, these dynamics show how non-oil growth momentum is shaping the GCC's broader economic outlook.

Retailer expands training programs for truck drivers, technicians

Walmart hosts skills-first workforce initiative with 300 experts

BENTONVILLE, Sept 29, (AP): As artificial intelligence and demographic changes reshape the U.S. job market, the nation’s largest private employer is trying to identify the skills its workers and the broader labor force might need for the future.

Walmart on Thursday hosted more than 300 workplace experts and representatives from other companies participating in the Skills-First Workforce Initiative, a project to develop and fill stable jobs based on what people know how to do instead of whether they attended college.

The retailer already has launched its own employee training and certification programs to meet Walmart’s need for truck drivers and maintenance technicians, two roles for which U.S. companies say they can’t recruit fast enough as experienced tradespeople retire.

Walmart says it plans to offer a similar AI skills program next year through a new collaboration with OpenAI, the company behind ChatGPT.

The Associated Press sat down with Walmart CEO Doug McMillon at the company’s sprawling headquarters in Bentonville, Arkansas, to talk about AI and the American workforce. The interview has been edited for clarity and length.

McMillon: I would say pretty much a steady state. Turnover numbers are coming down. I’m remembering what happened during the pandemic and relative to that experience, things feel much more stable now. I think the pace of change in the employment market is just smaller and easier to manage.

McMillon: We continue to invest in wages. So I think that’s helping some, and that process will continue. As it relates to AI and the future of employment, I think for the most part, our folks are enthusiastic about it because they’ve seen new tools that they’re receiving that are making their jobs better. That’s helping them take fewer steps.

And our sales are growing so much. I think people are optimistic about the future of what their life can look like.

McMillon: I think no one knows how this is going to play out exactly. And the way it feels to me is that basically every job gets changed. And I think the best way to think about it is getting “plussed up.” So how can I lean in the role that I have, regardless what that role is, to adopt new tools, leverage them and



Walmart CEO Doug McMillon speaks at the Opportunity Summit Thursday, Sept. 25, 2025, in Bentonville, Ark. (AP)

make things better than they would’ve otherwise been?

As I look across our company, we have everything from store associates to supply chain associates. Of the 2.1 million people (globally), something less than 75,000 of them are home office jobs. All the other ones are working in a store, a club, a distribution center. And I think those jobs change more gradually. We are still going to want to serve customers and members with people. The change as it relates to the home office jobs probably happens faster.

McMillon: I don’t know there’ll be a moment where we all have clarity. I think the way for all of us to approach it, especially here at Walmart, is just in a very transparent, honest, human, straightforward way, talking to people real time about what we’re learning and what we’re doing and why we’re doing it.

That’s the way that we plan to lead through this.

McMillon: One of the biggest areas of change in the last decade is related to associates that work in our stores, picking orders for delivery and pickup for our customers. And we have something north of 200,000 people doing that job, and yet we have about the same (total) number of people working in Walmart U.S.

How did we do that? Other tasks and other jobs changed, which enabled us to create new jobs that paid more and have fewer of the older jobs that went away. I hope what happens as we lead through this is that there will be pluses and minuses, but the net ends up being even more people because we have more ideas of how to grow.

McMillon: The first thing that comes to mind is store managers. Being a store manager is such a great job and such a challenging job. And it’s a job that pays well, and it pays well for a reason. You’re interacting with the community with large numbers of people. You have a large number of associates. You have big sales numbers to deliver. And those skills that the store manager has are both human and technical. I think the skills that we have as human beings are valuable. They always have been, and that’ll be even more true in the future.

McMillon: To some degree, it’s a lack of awareness. I think most Americans probably don’t know what a tech makes that helps take care of our stores and clubs and that we can help them learn how to be a tech. The same thing’s true for our drivers. So we have a need to get the word out so that people know there are some great jobs.

McMillon: We’ve been able to do that so far, and I expect that we’ll continue to find great people that want to join the company and our turnover rates are down, which is helpful.

McMillon: I think as we all work to learn and navigate the future towards a world where AI fulfills its promise, the best way to do that is to work together and to share information and learn together. It’ll speed up our ability to get ahead of this so that we can do a better job of setting our associates up for success. And that’s ultimately what we’re trying to do. The change that’s happening in the world is going to happen. Our choice is to lean in, learn (and) help lead so there are better outcomes for everybody involved.

DAX and CAC 40 up 0.2%

Global stocks mostly higher as Wall St rebound lifts sentiment

BANGKOK, Sept 29, (AP): Shares were mostly higher Monday in Europe and Asia after Wall Street broke its three-day losing streak, trimming its losses for last week.

China factory data are due out on Tuesday and a quarterly business sentiment survey by the Bank of Japan comes on Wednesday.

The next big event for Wall Street could be a looming shutdown of the U.S. government, with a deadline set for this week. But such political impasses have had limited impact on the market before.

U.S. jobs data also will be in the spotlight.

The future for the S&P 500 was up 0.5% while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.4%.

In Germany, the DAX edged 0.2% higher to 23,795.28, while the CAC 40 in Paris also rose 0.2% to 7,885.82. Britain’s FTSE picked up 0.5% to 9,328.70.

In Asian trading, Tokyo’s Nikkei 225 was the regional outlier, giving up 0.7% to 45,043.75.

Chinese markets advanced, with the Hang Seng in Hong Kong adding 0.9% to 26,622.88, while the Shanghai Composite index gained 0.9% to 3,862.53.

Australia’s S&P/ASX 200 rose 0.9% to 8,862.80, while the Kospi in South Korea surged 1.3% to 3,431.21.

On Friday, U.S. stocks trimmed their losses for the week after a report showed that inflation is behaving roughly as economists expected, even if it’s still high.

The S&P 500 rose 0.6% and the Dow industrials gained 0.7%. The Nasdaq composite added 0.4%. All three indexes pulled closer to the all-time highs they set at the start of the week.

Stocks got some help from the report showing inflation in the United States accelerated to 2.7% last month from 2.6% in July, according to the measure of prices that the Federal Reserve likes to use. While that’s above the Fed’s 2% target, it was precisely what economists had forecast.

That offered some hope that the Fed could continue cutting interest rates in order to give

the economy a boost. Without such cuts, growing criticism that stock prices have become too expensive by rising too quickly would become even more powerful.

The Fed just delivered its first rate cut of the year last week but is not promising more because they could worsen inflation.

Another report said sentiment among U.S. consumers was weaker than economists expected. The survey from the University of Michigan said consumers are frustrated with high prices, but their expectations for inflation over the coming 12 months also ticked down to 4.7% from 4.8%.

One factor threatening to push inflation higher, adding to consumer woes, is President Donald Trump’s tariffs, and he announced more late Thursday. They include taxes on imports of some pharmaceutical drugs, kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanities, upholstered furniture and heavy trucks starting on Oct. 1.

Details were sparse about the coming tariffs, as is often the case with Trump’s pronouncements on his social media network. That left analysts unsure of their ultimate effects, and the announcement created ripples in the U.S. stock market instead of huge waves.

Paccar, the company based in Bellevue, Washington, that’s behind the market-dominant Peterbilt and Kenworth truck brands, revved 5.2% higher, for example.

Big U.S. pharmaceutical companies nudged higher. Eli Lilly rose 1.4%, and Pfizer added 0.7%.

In other trading early Monday, U.S. benchmark crude oil lost 87 cents to \$64.85 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, declined 80 cents to \$68.42 per barrel.

Reports that the OPEC plus oil producing nations might raise their production limits next month have added to worries over oversupply, analysts said.

The U.S. dollar slipped to 148.50 Japanese yen from 149.51 yen. The euro rose to \$1.1725 from \$1.1703.



Currency traders work near a screen showing the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI), top center left, and the foreign exchange rate between U.S. dollar and South Korean won, top center, at the foreign exchange dealing room of the Hana Bank headquarters in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, Sept. 25, 2025. (AP)

UK Treasury chief warns of ‘harsh global headwinds’ from wars and Trump tariffs

Rachel Reeves signals possible tax hikes in upcoming autumn budget

LIVERPOOL, Sept 29, (AP): Britain’s Treasury chief warned Monday that “harsh global headwinds” from wars in Ukraine and the Middle East and U.S. President Donald Trump’s tariffs have worsened the U.K.’s economic outlook since the governing Labour Party won power last year.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves told Labour’s annual conference that her economic plans must be “fit for an uncertain world,” a hint she will raise taxes in her autumn budget on Nov. 26.

“In the last year the world has changed, and we are not immune to that change,” she told the BBC before the speech. “Whether it is wars in Europe and the Middle East, whether it is increased barriers to trade because of tariffs coming from the United States, whether it is the global cost of borrowing, we’re not immune to any of those things.”

Since ending 14 years of Conservative rule in July 2024, Labour has struggled to deliver the economic growth it promised. Inflation remains stubbornly high and the economic outlook subdued, frustrating efforts to repair tattered public services and ease the cost of living.

Labour pledged during the election not to raise taxes on working people, but has since hiked levies on employers.

Reeves told the BBC she was “determined not to increase those key taxes that working people pay,” stopping short of ruling out any hikes at all.

In her speech, interrupted by repeated standing ovations from hundreds of Labour members - and by a lone pro-Palestinian protester - Reeves leavened her sober assessment of the country’s fi-



Britain’s Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves gives her keynote speech during the annual Labour Party conference in Liverpool, England, Monday, Sept. 29, 2025. (AP)

nances with a touch of optimism. She outlined the government’s investments in defense, transport, energy and education, claiming they were making a difference to millions of people.

She pledged to end long-term youth unemployment, saying everyone under 25 who has been unemployed for 18 months will be offered guaranteed paid work. One in eight 16-24-year-olds in Britain - about 1 million people - is currently not in education, work, or training.

Reeves also said the government was working on an “ambitious agreement on youth mobility” with the 27-nation European Union. British citizens lost the right to move and work freely in the EU when the country left the bloc in 2020.

Thousands of Labour members are in Liverpool, northwest England, for the party conference -- a mix of policy forum and pep rally that this year is lacking in pizzazz.

Labour lags behind Nigel Farage’s hard-right Reform UK party in opinion polls, and some party members are losing faith in Prime Minister Keir

Starmer, even though there may be four years until the next election.

Many are rallying around Andy Burnham, the ambitious Labour mayor of Manchester, who said Sunday that the party is in “peril” and needs to change direction.

Reeves took aim at those in Labour, such as Burnham, who argue the government should borrow more to spend more on public services. She cited former Conservative Prime Minister Liz Truss’ disastrous 2022 plan for unfunded tax cuts, which sent the value of the pound plunging and the cost of government borrowing soaring.

“When spending gets out of control, when market confidence is lost ... it is felt immediately in the growing cost of essentials, and rising interest rates,” Reeves said.

The threat posed by Reform is top issue among Labour delegates at the four-day conference, which ends Wednesday. Farage’s party has only five lawmakers in the 650 seat House of Commons, and Labour has more than 400. Nonetheless, Starmer said Reform is now Labour’s chief opponent, not the main opposition Conservatives.

Starmer has described the fight between Labour and Reform as “a battle for the soul of this country.” On Sunday he accused Farage of sowing division with plans by Reform to deport immigrants who are in the U.K. legally. Starmer said such a policy would be “racist” and “immoral.”

The U.K. government has toughened its own language about immigration, though. Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood is expected to announce plans on Monday to raise the bar immigrants must meet to gain permanent residency. Under the proposals, people will have to have a “high standard” of English, “a spotless criminal record” and give back to their communities to get the right to settle in the U.K.

Lufthansa Group to cut 4,000 jobs by 2030 with help of AI

FRANKFURT, Sept 29, (AP): Lufthansa Group said Monday that it would shed 4,000 jobs by 2030 with the help of artificial intelligence, digitalization and consolidating work among member airlines - even as the company reported strong demand for air travel and predicted stronger profits in years ahead.

Most of the lost jobs would be in Germany, and the focus would be on administrative rather than operational roles, the company said.

Lufthansa said it was moving to deepen the integration among member airlines and is “reviewing which activities will be no longer necessary in the future, for instance due to duplication of work.”

Lufthansa Group includes Germany’s biggest airline, Lufthansa, as well as Austrian Airlines, Swiss, Brussels Airlines and others.

It said in a statement that “profound changes brought about by digitalization and artificial intelligence” would increase efficiency across business areas and activities.

The airline group laid out its strategic plans at a presentation for investors and analysts in Munich, saying it was seeing strong demand for air travel amid limits on offerings of flights due to stretched supply chains for planes and engines. That means a tight market that is keeping planes full and boosting revenue.

Silver Lake, Saudi PIF, and Affinity Partners leading record-breaking deal

Electronic Arts to be acquired in \$52.5 billion private equity buyout

WASHINGTON, Sept 29: Electronic Arts, maker of video games like “Madden NFL,” “Battlefield,” and “The Sims,” is being acquired for \$52.5 billion in what could become the largest-ever buyout funded by private-equity firms.

The private equity firm Silver Lake Partners, Saudi Arabia’s sovereign wealth fund PIF, and Affinity Partners will pay EA’s stockholders \$210 per share. The companies value the deal at about \$55 billion, including debt. Affinity Partners is run by President Donald Trump’s son-in-law, Jared Kushner.

PIF, which was already the largest insider stakeholder in Electronic Arts, will be rolling over its existing 9.9% stake in the company.

The commitment to the massive deal is inline with recent activity by Saudi Arabia’s sovereign wealth fund, wrote Andrew Marok of Raymond James.

“The Saudi PIF has been a very active player in the video gaming market since 2022, taking minority stakes in most scaled public video gaming publishers, and also outright purchases of companies like ESL, FACEIT, and Scopely,” he wrote. “The PIF has made its intentions to scale its gaming arm, Savvy Gaming Group, clear, and the EA deal would represent the biggest such move to date by some distance.”

PIF is also a minority investor in Nintendo.

Electronic Arts would be taken private and its headquarters will remain in Redwood City, California.

The total value of the deal eclipses the \$32 billion



Attendees line up at the Electronic Arts booth to play the Battlefield 3 video game at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles on June 8, 2011. (AP)

price paid to take Texas utility TXU private in 2007.

If the transaction closes as anticipated, it will end EA’s 36-year history as a publicly traded company that began with its shares ending its first day of trading at a split-adjusted 52 cents.

The IPO came seven years after EA was founded by former Apple employee William “Trip” Hawkins, who began playing analog versions of baseball and football made by “Strat-O-Matic” as a teenager during the 1960s.

CEO Andrew Wilson has led the company since 2013 and he will remain in that role, the firms said Monday.

“Electronic Arts is an extraordinary company

with a world-class management team and a bold vision for the future,” said Kushner, who serves as CEO of Affinity Partners. “I’ve admired their ability to create iconic, lasting experiences, and as someone who grew up playing their games - and now enjoys them with his kids - I couldn’t be more excited about what’s ahead.”

This marks the second high-profile deal involving Silver Lake and a technology company with a legion of loyal fans in recent weeks. Silver Lake is also part of a newly formed joint venture spearheaded by Oracle involved in a deal to take over the U.S. oversight of TikTok’s social video platform, although all the details of that complex transaction haven’t been divulged yet.

Silver Lake has also previously bought out two other well-known technology companies, the now-defunct video calling service Skype in a \$1.9 billion deal completed in 2009, and a \$24.9 billion buyout of personal computer maker Dell in 2013. After Dell restructured its operations as a private company, it returned to the stock market with publicly traded shares in 2018.

By going private, EA will be able to reprogram its operations without being subjected to the investment pressures and scrutiny that sometimes compel publicly held companies to make short-sighted decisions aimed at meeting quarterly financial targets. Although its video games still have a fervent following, EA’s annual revenues have been stagnant during the past three fiscal years, hovering from \$7.4 billion to \$7.6 billion.

Study challenges Tobin's Q as measure of investment incentives

Corporate America investing less despite record profits and innovation



Trader Fred Demarco, left, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025. (AP)

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By David Ikenberry
University of Colorado Boulder

For years, I’ve puzzled over a question that seems to defy common sense: If stock markets are hitting records and tech innovation seems endless, why aren’t companies pouring money back into new projects?

Yes, they’re still investing - but the pace of business spending is slower than you’d expect, especially outside of AI.

And if you’ve noticed headlines about sluggish business spending even as corporate profits soar, you’re not alone. It’s a puzzle that’s confounded economists, policymakers and investors for decades. Back in 1975, U.S.

public companies reinvested an average of 25 cents for every dollar on their balance sheets. Today, that figure is closer to 12 cents.

In other words, corporate America is flush with cash, but it’s surprisingly stingy about reinvesting in its own future. What happened?

I’m an economist, and my colleague Gustavo Grullon and I recently published a study in the *Journal of Finance* that turns the field’s conventional wisdom on its head. Our research suggests the issue isn’t cautious executives or jittery markets - it’s about how economists have historically measured companies’ incentives to invest in the first place.

For decades, economists have relied on a simple but appealing ratio - Tobin’s Q, named after the famous economist James Tobin - to gauge whether companies should ramp up investment. They calculate this by dividing a

company’s market value - what it would take to purchase the firm outright with cash - by its replacement value, or how much it would cost to rebuild the company from scratch. The result is called “Q.” The higher the Q, the theory goes, the more incentive executives have to invest.

But reality hasn’t conformed to fit the theory. Over the past half-century, Tobin’s Q has gone up, yet investment rates have gone down sharply.

Why the disconnect? Our research points to one key culprit: excess capacity. Many U.S. companies already have more factories, machines or service capability than they can use. By not correcting for this issue, the traditional Tobin’s Q will overstate the incentive that companies have to grow.

To see this, consider a commercial real estate company that owns a portfolio of office buildings. In recent

years, with the rise of e-commerce and remote work, many of their properties have been running well below capacity. Now suppose a few new tenants start paying rent and begin absorbing a portion of that empty space. Stock prices will rise in response to seeing these new cash flows, which in turn will lead Q to rise.

Traditionally, this increase in Q would suggest that it’s a good time to invest in new buildings - but the reality is quite different with idle capacity still in the system. Why pour money into building another office tower if existing ones still have empty floors?

This key idea is that what matters isn’t the average value of all assets - it’s the marginal value of adding one more dollar of investment. And because capacity utilization has been steadily eroding over the past half-century, many firms see little reason to invest.

That last point may come as a surprise, but the U.S. economy, with all its factories and offices, isn’t nearly as abuzz with activity as it was after, say, World War II. Today, many sectors operate well below full throttle. This growing slack in the system over time helps explain why companies have pulled back on their rate of investment, even as profits and market values climb.

Why has capacity utilization fallen so much over the past half-century? It’s not entirely clear, but what economists call “structural economic rigidities” - things such as regulatory hurdles, labor market frictions or shifts in cost structure - seem to be part of the answer. These factors can drag businesses into a state of chronic underuse, especially after recessions.

This isn’t just an academic debate. The implications are profound, whether you closely follow Wall Street or just enjoy armchair economic policy debates. For one thing, this dynamic might help explain why tax cuts haven’t spurred investment the way supporters have hoped.

Take the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which slashed the top corporate tax rate from 35% to 21% and introduced full expensing for equipment investments. Supporters promised a wave of new investment.

But when my colleague and I looked at the numbers, we found the opposite. In the four years before the tax cuts, publicly traded U.S. firms had an aggregate investment rate, including intangibles, of 13.9%. In the four years after the tax cut, the average investment rate fell to 12.4% - in other words, no evidence of a bump.

Where did those liberated cash flows go? Instead of plowing this newfound cash after the tax cuts into new projects, many companies funneled it into stock buybacks and dividends.

In retrospect, this makes sense. If a company has excess capacity, the incentive to invest should be more muted, even if new machines are suddenly cheaper thanks to tax breaks. If the demand isn’t there, why buy them?

Even with the most generous tax incentives, the core challenge remains: You can’t force-feed investment into an economy already swimming in excess capacity. If companies don’t see real, scalable demand, tax breaks alone aren’t likely to unlock a new era of business spending.

That doesn’t mean tax policy doesn’t matter - it does, especially for smaller firms with real growth prospects. But for the large, well-established firms that make up the lion’s share of the economy, the bigger challenge is demand. Rather than trying to stimulate even more investment, policymakers should prioritize understanding why demand is sagging relative to supply and reducing economic rigidities where they can. That way, the capacity generated by new investment has somewhere useful to go. (AP)

Climate alliances falter amid political backlash and profit pressures

Net-Zero Banking Alliance suspends operations after major banks exit

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.

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By David L Levy
UMass Boston

Another business-led effort to fight climate change is unraveling.

On Aug. 27, 2025, the Net-Zero Banking Alliance suspended its activities after several major U.S. and European banks backed out.

While most observers are blaming the strong political backlash in the U.S. against climate change action and sustainable investing, we believe the banks didn’t need much of a push: These net-zero alliances never made much business sense and were not particularly effective at fighting climate change. Indeed, for us the puzzle was why they had flourished in the first place.

To examine their rise and fall, we recently conducted a research project that encompassed interviews with more than 80 executives from various financial institutions, activist organizations and oil and gas companies.

The Net-Zero Banking Alliance was founded in 2021. Members agreed to limit lending to carbon-intensive sectors so that total greenhouse gas emissions from companies in the banks’ loan portfolios are close to zero by 2050.

This target aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement but was not binding and lacked clear shorter-term targets and plans. Similar net-zero networks were established for insurance, asset management and other financial areas, all under the umbrella of the United Nations Environment Program’s Finance Initiative. Over the

past 16 months, the insurance and asset managers’ alliances have also suspended their activities.

These net-zero alliances were built on the premise that climate risk equals financial risk and that the challenge requires a collective response. Their goal was to leverage the power of finance to push companies to decarbonize their products and processes.

Key financial regulators, central banks and a few of the largest asset managers propelled these alliances because they perceived that climate change poses serious long-term systemic risks to markets and economies around the world. Influential figures such as Larry Fink, the CEO of BlackRock, the world’s largest asset manager, and former Bank of England head Mark Carney, now the prime minister of Canada, lent legitimacy to these initiatives.

Some environmental groups also supported these alliances as a smart strategy to pressure companies on climate. Many other financial institutions then joined the net-zero bandwagon, but our research revealed that they didn’t do so because of concern about climate-related financial risks. Rather, they felt an array of pressure from peers, investors, activists, regulators and even their families.

Many people we interviewed mentioned reputational risk as a key driver and saw a low-carbon transition as inevitable, driven by regulation, technological innovation and consumer demand. This was the Biden era, with billions of dollars flowing to clean energy through the Inflation Reduction Act.

The burgeoning field also spawned a specialized but lucrative industry of data providers and consultants who actively marketed carbon management, disclosure and broader sustainability

services. The global market for sustainability data and software was estimated at more than US\$1 billion in 2024 and growing rapidly.

Climate strategy and sustainability reporting was the fastest-growing business sector for accounting and consulting firms. And asset managers were happy to collect higher fees for funds screened for sustainability - even though these funds have not outperformed the broader market.

These vested interests spurred continued expansion of net-zero networks. Indeed, at its peak in 2024, the Net-Zero Banking Alliance included over 140 members globally with \$74 trillion in estimated total assets, representing over 40% of global banking assets.

Given the size and scope of these net-zero networks, what triggered their rapid collapse?

One major factor, of course, was the political backlash against anything connected with climate action and sustainable investing following the 2024 election of President Donald Trump.

Finance officials in more than 20 U.S. states have demanded that major asset managers restrict the use of environment, social and governance benchmarks, accusing them of eroding “traditional fiduciary duty” and claiming they hurt investors.

In August, 23 Republican attorneys general accused organizations created to set standards for corporate climate disclosures of operating an anticompetitive “climate cartel” and violating antitrust laws.

While the political pressure in the U.S. has indeed been intense, the collapse of net-zero networks and the broader corporate retreat from climate commitments is largely due to the con-

tinued profitability of fossil fuels and the high costs and risks of deep decarbonization. Investors and banks, of course, want to keep on financing profitable companies and avoid pressuring their clients to take risky measures.

Oil companies such as BP and Shell that had relatively strong climate targets suffered financially as a result, prompting them to retreat from these targets and shift capital from renewable projects back toward fossil fuels. High energy prices in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war made the sector even more lucrative. Low-carbon fuels and processes for industries such as aviation, steel and cement are still very expensive.

Moreover, the Trump administration is abolishing most subsidies for clean energy and freezing permits for offshore wind, while easing regulations and opening more land for oil and gas exploration.

These economic incentives made it hard for the banking alliance to reduce financing for fossil fuels - and the money has kept on flowing into oil and gas projects.

European banks that sharply cut funding to fossil fuel companies saw their business diverted to other banks and to private, nonbank sources of finance, which has soared in the past two years. Facing this loss of business, major banks’ lending to oil and gas companies surged in 2024, driving loans to a three-year high of \$869 billion.

The costs of membership in the net-zero alliances also increased over time, with the adoption of stricter standards that called for specific plans and timelines for ending fossil fuel financing entirely. The new standards also required loan recipients to disclose Scope 3 emissions, which include

emissions from a company’s suppliers and customers.

Managers in financial institutions told us that the increasingly complex and demanding requirements were generating strong pushback from their clients. We also heard that membership was turning from a reputational asset to a liability, as activist organizations called out the hypocrisy of continued fossil fuel lending despite their commitments to phasing it out.

Although banks are rushing back to finance fossil fuel projects, these loans typically have long terms of 10 to 25 years. This means they carry the risk that an eventual transition to clean energy will make these projects worthless, “stranded assets.” One study estimates that investors are currently exposed to more than \$1 trillion in potential losses.

Why do banks often ignore these risks?

Our interviewees mentioned the organizational silos that separate analysts who assess climate risks from the loan originators. In other words, the employees deciding where to lend money may not be talking to the team that best understands the long-term risks. Moreover, current risk assessment tools are quite crude and don’t generate the quantitative metrics that loan underwriters want.

Finally, loans are increasingly repackaged and sold, or securitized, into the larger corporate debt market, obscuring the risks.

The Net-Zero Banking Alliance isn’t disappearing entirely. The group is currently deciding on whether to restructure into a much weaker “framework initiative” that provides voluntary guidance instead of binding commitments. (AP)

editor’s choice



Critics hail American epic as movie of the year

Anderson's 'One Battle After Another' opens with \$22.4M

NEW YORK, Sept. 29, (AP): "One Battle After Another," Paul Thomas Anderson's widely acclaimed American epic of rebellion and resistance, opened with \$22.4 million in ticket sales from North American theaters over the weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Anderson's ultracontemporary opus signifies a major gamble by Warner Bros. With "One Battle After Another," the studio is making a \$130 million-plus bet that audiences would come out for 170-minute-long powerhouse drama from one of cinema's most celebrated auteurs the way they usually only turn up for a franchise or superhero movie.

Anderson, many critics said, delivered the movie of the year. "One Battle After Another," starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Teyana Taylor and Sean Penn, has been hailed as a film brimming with many of the political conflicts of today. Oscar prognosticators have pegged it this year's best-picture front-runner. Aided by DiCaprio's drawing power, the film added \$26.1 million

overseas.

But good reviews, star power and a marquee filmmaker are nowadays often insufficient to make a hit. For a movie that cost at least \$130 million to make, plus many millions more to market, "One Battle After Another" will have a long road to reach profitability. For most releases with such a high budget, a \$22.4 million start would be a disappointment.

Executives for Warner Bros. declined to be interviewed about the opening.

Yet "One Battle After Another," like movies from earlier movie eras, will hope its time in theaters is more about the long run than opening weekend. Warners is hoping word-of-mouth, awards conversation and a rolling awareness that "One Battle After Another" is a major movie event, will keep ticket sales strong in the weeks, or even months, to come.

Some signs suggest that's possible. Audiences gave "One Battle After Another" an "A" CinemaScore. That's far better than CinemaScores for previ-



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Chase Infinity in a scene from 'One Battle After Another.' (AP)

ous Anderson wide releases, including 1997's "Boogie Nights" ("C"), 1999's "Magnolia" ("C-") and 2002's "Punch-Drunk Love" ("D+).

"The long-term playability is going to be key for this," said Paul Derarabedian, senior media analyst for Comscore. "And given the outpouring

of support by critics and audiences, alike, that's where it's going to make back its budget."

Yet as highly regarded as Anderson is, his films have rarely made a big impact at the box office. His biggest hit was 2007's "There Will Be Blood," which collected \$76.4 million worldwide.

For Warner Bros., "One Battle After Another" marked its ninth movie this year to open No. 1, more than any other studio. That success - with \$4 billion in global sales - has included some refreshingly original films that haven't always made their most obvious way into theaters.

Warners released Ryan Coogler's "Sinners" in April, and it went on to gross \$366.7 million worldwide. "One Battle After Another" chose to opt out of the usual fall festival platforms for prestige films, and first screened while most critics were in Venice or Toronto. Yet "Sinners" and "One Battle After Another" will likely be favorites for many of the same prizes in the coming awards

season.

Anderson's film, loosely inspired by Thomas Pynchon's "Vineland," stars DiCaprio as a former revolutionary living off the grid with his teenage daughter (Chase Infinity). Shot in VistaVision, "One Battle After Another" played in several large-screen formats, including 70mm, IMAX, 70mm and, on four screens, in VistaVision.

Second place went "Gabby's Dollhouse: The Movie." The Universal Pictures release, produced by DreamWorks Animation, grossed \$13.5 million in 3,500 theaters. It's a good start for the G-rated film, based on the long-running series. "Gabby's Dollhouse: The Movie," which cost \$32 million to make, also earned an "A+" CinemaScore from audiences.

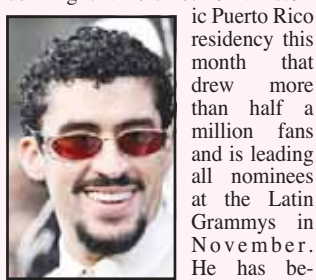
After two weeks atop the charts Sony Pictures and Crunchyroll's sleeper hit "Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba Infinity Castle" slid to third place. It added \$7.1 million to its \$118.1 million haul, a North American record for anime releases.

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Bad Bunny will bring his Latin trap and reggaeton swagger to the NFL's biggest stage next year: The Grammy winner will headline the Apple Music Super Bowl halftime show in Northern California.

The NFL, Apple Music and Roc Nation announced Sunday that Bad Bunny will lead the halftime festivities from Levi's Stadium on Feb. 8 in Santa Clara, California.

The Puerto Rican superstar's selection comes amid another career-defining run: He's fresh off a historic Puerto Rico residency this month that drew more than half a million fans and is leading all nominees at the Latin Grammys in November. He has become one of the world's most streamed artists with albums such as "Un Verano Sin Ti," an all-Spanish-language LP.



Bad Bunny

Bad Bunny will host "Saturday Night Live" on Oct. 4.

Roc Nation founder Jay-Z said in a statement that what Bad Bunny has "done and continues to do for Puerto Rico is truly inspiring. We are honored to have him on the world's biggest stage."

The 31-year-old artist born Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio has won three Grammys and 12 Latin Grammys. He has become a global ambassador for Latin music, starred in films such as "Bullet Train," "Caught Stealing" and "Happy Gilmore 2," and collaborated with top fashion houses. He'll enter the Latin Grammys as the leading nominee with 12, dethroning producer and songwriter Edgar Barrera. (AP)



NEW YORK: Snoop Dogg is headed back to the Olympics.

NBCUniversal announced Sunday night that the global megastar - who was a roving correspondent for its coverage of the Paris Games in 2024 - will be part of the coverage for the Milan-Cortina Games coming in February.

"Guess who's back?" Snoop - dressed in full Team USA red, white and blue regalia, as snow swirled around him and the Olympic anthem played - asked in a 15-second video that was released Sunday night by NBC.

Much in the same way that he did in Paris, Snoop will speak with NBC host Mike Tirico at times to give his perspective on what's happening in Italy. He's expected to be at numerous events during the Winter Olympics, "and cheer alongside the athletes, their friends, and families," NBC said.

"I am excited to be back with my main man Mike Tirico for the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan Cortina," Snoop said in a release provided by NBC. "The D-O-double-G will be on the scene, and I am looking forward to celebrating with the athletes and their families. The Olympics is the biggest stage in the world and, as everyone knows, I'm all about sports, bringing people together, and unifying while bringing the fun." (AP)



America Ferrera poses for photographers upon arrival at the screening of the film 'The Lost Bus' on Sunday, Sept. 28, in London. (AP)

Film



This image released by Apple TV+ shows Brett Goldstein, (right), and Imogen Poots in a scene from 'All of You.' (AP)

A love story that's messy, romantic and deeply sad

Goldstein, Poots will trigger tears in 'All of You'

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 29, (AP): There's something about Laura Sharp and Simon Tavistock. Close friends since college, they share jokes that no one else understands and instinctively know how to make the other feel better.

"What's the deal with you two?" a woman asks Simon after watching them interact. "We're like BFFs," he responds, which is true and also not completely true. What if these BFFs were really meant to be lovers?

"All of You" from Apple TV+ walks carefully into this age-old premise, sweetly and with more honesty than typical Hollywood fare. It's messy and romantic and both deeply sad and deeply soulful.

Brett Goldstein and Imogen Poots star in this very British drama-rom-com that asks questions about destiny, regret and happily-ever-after love. Goldstein, the gruff "Ted Lasso" star, is slightly less gruff here, but pulls off the yearning. Poots is revelatory - girlish one moment, anguished the next.

Written by Goldstein and William Bridges, "All of You" starts with Poots' Laura signing up to take a compatibility test that will find her soulmate. Goldstein's Simon accompanies her, worried that she'll find true love and then immediately start ignoring her friends. "It'll be the end of everything," he moans.

She does find her soulmate and he's really perfect - but he's not Simon. He's another guy (Steven Cree), a sweetheart who becomes her husband and with whom they have a daughter. He's almost cartoonishly good. "His very existence makes me feel guilty," she admits.

In turns out there is indeed something about Laura Sharp and



Brett Goldstein, (left), and Imogen Poots attend the Apple Original Film premiere of 'All of You' at The Whitby on Wednesday, Sept. 17, in New York. (AP)

Simon Tavistock. And one day they can't deny it to each other.

An affair - in fits and starts, admittedly, with some panic attacks thrown in - begins. Cue montage of walks through fields holding hands and steamy sex. It goes on for years until it isn't enough for Simon. "All I want is to be with you through all of it," he tells her. "I don't know how to love anyone else."

Bridges, who also directs, has a loose hand, letting scenes breathe in silence and allowing the actors to sneak meaningful glances at each other. Transitions between scenes are excellent - a car door closes in the darkness and another opens in daylight. But it's not always clear how much time has passed between the moments. Is it the next day? Or four years?

"All of You" is a sort of second stab at this story, which Goldstein and Bridges ("Black Mirror") first explored in the canceled-too-soon AMC anthology series "Soulmates." Fittingly for a story about second chances, this time it sticks.

We're rooting for this star-crossed couple even though the ache they will leave behind is palpable. There is this overwhelming lustful urge but also responsibilities, the heart versus the head. "We hurt people and they don't even know that we're doing it to them," Laura says. To make it all hurt the more, Laura is held up as a reason the soulmate test works.

Goldstein makes a good stab and showing he can be a leading man - and also write a gentle, human romance - and Poots is a revelation in showing raw emotion. The two have a natural chemistry tied by his humor and her laughter is genuine and touching.

There are funny bits, to be sure, but our advice is to have a box of tissues on hand. Someone onscreen is going to get really badly hurt by the end and be in tears - and likely so will you.

"All of You," an Apple TV+ release that hit the streamer Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for sexual content/some nudity, language and brief drug use. Running time: 99 minutes. Three stars out of four.

'The Sound of Harmony' celebrates cultural ties

Ancient Chinese musical instruments exhibition opens in Riyadh

RIYADH, Sept. 29, (Xinhua): A Chinese musical instruments exhibition titled "The Sound of Harmony: Musical Instruments in Ancient China" opened Sunday evening at the Saudi National Museum here.

The show features more than 100 pieces and sets of musical instruments from the National Museum of China, including bone flutes, bronze bell sets (Bianzhong), Guqin zithers and pipes that trace the evolution of Chinese music and aesthetics across millennia.

Mona Khazindar, an advisor to Saudi Arabia's Museums Commission, said that it is "an educational exhibition" that "will at-

tract lots of visitors of all ages." She underscored the importance of building "exchanges and bridges" between the two countries' museums, citing "shared traditions and shared heritage."

Khazindar also thanked Chinese partners for their contribution to archaeological missions in Saudi Arabia and expressed readiness to enhance collaboration with China in heritage preservation, conservation, restoration and training.

Chinese Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Chang Hua said the exhibition is a key project of the 2025 Saudi Chinese Cultural Year

held in commemoration of the 35th anniversary of diplomatic ties.

It "highlights the unique charm of Chinese civilization and stands as a vivid example of exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations," Chang noted, expressing the hope that the show will help "more Saudi people learn about China and open a new chapter in China-Saudi cultural exchange."

The opening featured a live pipa performance.

According to organizers, the exhibition runs from Sept. 28 to Dec. 1 and is open to the public free of charge.

Seven years on, she’s still the pop queen and that diva

Carey enters ‘the era of me’ with her new album

LOS ANGELES, Sept 29, (AP): Seven years after her last album and 35 years into a powerhouse career, **Mariah Carey** continues her reign as the queen of pop and R&B with “Here for It All.”

If good things come to those who wait, fans are about to audibly feast on Carey’s evolution with this musically layered project.

Carey’s 16th studio album, out Friday, brings fans into what she’s calling “the era of me” - leaning into her now-familiar, unapologetically confident energy. “I’m D-I-V-A, that’s MC ... I ain’t checked a price since Emancipation Mi ... I’m the movie and the muse/and you couldn’t walk a mile in my shoes,” she sings on the first track, “Mi.”

The 11-track album includes singles “Type Dangerous,” sampling Eric B. and Rakim, and “Sugar Sweet,” featuring vocals from Kehlani and Shenseea. Anderson .Paak and the Clark Sisters join in the fun.

Carey recently sat down with The Associated Press to discuss her collaborations, the spirituality woven into her music and her most liberating era. This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

AP: What comes first in the songwriting process for you? And has it become almost like a spiritual discipline in a way where whenever you need to enter a space of healing or process emotions, you immediately turn to songwriting?

Carey: It’s really interesting. I have all different ways of going about it. Sometimes I’ll just have to say this happened in the past and sometimes it happens again, you never know what it’s going to be. But I’ll suddenly be like - I hear a melody and a lyric at the same time, and I’ll go, you know, put it in my notes and sing it into the notes and also just write down what I’m hearing, what I am feeling. I think songwriting has definitely been my outlet for what I need when I’m ever going through something, you know, whenever I’m feeling like the need to express myself. It’s definitely song-writing.

AP: You get to work with The Clark Sisters on this project. I know in the past you’ve listed them as an influence. What was it like to have this full circle moment where you’re both collaborating on “Jesus I Do”?

Carey: It was amazing. I was so thrilled to be able to work with the Clark Sisters. ... I never could have imagined that it would have happened that I would be able to work with The Clark Sisters, but we did. So, it was major ... definitely butterflies coming into it. And also just like, you know, shaking a little bit like, “This is really happening.”

AP: You’ve mixed in your faith through different gospel tracks on different albums. We see it in this one as well with “Jesus I Do.” Why is it important for you to say, “I’m not necessarily making a gospel album with this one, but I want to make sure that I bring my faith into this a little bit”?

Carey: Well, it was interesting. Also, the title track, “Here for It All,” kind of has a spiritual tonality to it, and interestingly enough, I put “Jesus I Do” right before that. ... Since the past few albums that I’ve done, I’ve kind of had to put something spiritual in there because it’s for me, it’s not like a “Let me impress this one or that one with this.” That was, you know, always just for me to really feel like that spiritual side of who I am ... it’s definitely almost like a dedication to faith.

AP: I feel like you’re one of the few icons who is so connected to their fans and invites them in any chance that you get. What is it about that love that is so important to you and how much do they play into the decision-making of what goes into the album?

Carey: I love my fans, like we have this whole thing with the Lambily, it’s a long story, but we love the Lambs. And I think the fact that they really study the albums, you know, like it’s not just like, “Oh, I’ll just throw this out.” I know they’re going to really be focused on what I’ve written about, what type of musical selections I’ve made, so, yeah, I don’t know, we just have an incredible connection.

AP: “Here for It All” so beautifully ties everything together. What led you to say this is the one that’s gonna be representing the album, but it’s also gonna be the one that really ties it all together at the end?

Carey: Well, I knew it was going to be the one that ties it all together at the end. But then I also, when listening to the album that I had sequenced, I said I have to put “Here for It All” at the end because I want people to take the time to listen to it. I want my fans to take time to listen to it and just to know that it’s, in a way, it’s kind of for them. It’s interesting. It’s got a vibe to it that just happened.

AP: You’re embarking on a new creative chapter for this. I’m curious, did the album unfold as you were organically making new music?

Carey: Yeah, I was working on this album for so long, and I didn’t even know, like, was I going to put it out? What was it going to be? And it just became something that I then sort of focused on and said, I’m going to make this my 16th album, which I can’t even believe it is. But yeah, I am so thankful for where we are at with this album, and I can wait for people to hear it. We’re calling it the era of me.

AP: I know you’ve mentioned that “Butterfly” era was the first time that you felt free in your music. What does that mean to you to feel free, and how have you continued to feel free throughout all of these different eras that you’ve gone through?

Carey: Well, the “Butterfly” era was amazing and also a scary moment because I was going through like a breakup of a relationship that I really couldn’t get out- it was a whole thing. I don’t want to go into it because I hear people are saying that I won’t let it go so I’m like, “It’s just one person, we don’t care about them.” But yeah, “Butterfly” was definitely my first time feeling fully free and just, yeah, loving the moment. Even though I was a little bit stuck in a moment, I got through it.



Mariah Carey poses for a portrait on Friday, Aug. 29, 2025, in Los Angeles. (AP)

Fashion

50 years of fashion empire honored in Milan

Armani’s last collection shown in solemn runway

MILAN, Sept 29, (AP): The last Giorgio Armani collection signed by the late designer himself and marking the 50th anniversary of his signature line was shown Sunday night in a solemn runway show that gathered Hollywood stars and Italian friends in tribute.

Richard Gere, Lauren Hutton, Glenn Close and Spike Lee attended the black-tie gala in the courtyard of the Brera Art Gallery where an exhibition features 129 Armani creations in dialogue with Italian masterpieces.

They include one of the soft-shouldered suits that Gere wore in “American Gigolo,” looks that helped catapult Armani to global fashion stardom. Gere said he had no idea the Armani suits he wore in the 1980 movie would make fashion history, but he said they helped him decide how to approach the role.

“I was trying the suits on, and I hadn’t decided how I was going to play this character at all,” Gere told The Associated Press from the front row. “And I had to do it very quickly. I had a couple of weeks to figure it out. I started trying the clothes on, and the clothes actually started telling me who this guy was.”

Hutton, Gere’s “American Gigolo” co-star, reminisced about a light blue suit that Gere wasn’t sure about. She called Armani a “treasure” who contributed greatly to Italy’s economy, and remembered attending a Giorgio Armani fashion show shortly after Gigolo came out.

Armani “gave me a pair of diamond earrings. And they are still the only pair of diamond earrings I have ever had,” Hutton said.

Hollywood stars and friends alike honored Armani for his key role in helping putting Milan at the center of global fashion.

“A giant for the industry. A great humanitarian,” Lee said as he arrived for the show.

Close said she wrote Armani letters on a regular basis, even if she never sat down with him one-on-one.

“I’m here because he meant a tremendous amount in my life. He was generous about lending me clothes for events. He once came to London to see a play that I was in. I felt like he was a very special element in my life,” Close told AP.

“I was just in his aura.”

During the show, models walked slowly in pairs, women half a step in front of the men, around the colonnaded courtyard filled with the same glowing paper lanterns that had lit Armani’s showroom for the public viewing attended by 15,000 mourners.

Italian composer Ludovico Einaudi played live.

The coed collection paid tribute to Armani’s two Italian homes, his adopted city of Milan and the Sicilian island



A model wears a creation as part of the Giorgio Armani Spring/Summer 2026 collection show in Milan, Italy, Sunday, Sept. 28. (AP)

of Pantelleria, with the sandy colors of the island neighboring Africa transitioning to the urban blues and grays, in a river of relaxed tailoring that defined the Armani silhouette.

Pockets in the draping of evening dresses were a testament to Armani’s practicality, and appreciation for his client’s needs.

One model walking alone in a glittering blue evening dress closed the show, a wave of applause following her around the courtyard like a stadium cheer.

At the end of the show, Armani’s creative heirs, his niece Silvana Armani for womenswear and Leo Dell’Orco for menswear, received a standing ovation.

Armani died Sept. 4, just weeks before Milan Fashion Week and a series of events marking the 50th anniversary of the Giorgio Armani fashion house

that he built to a global powerhouse.

The Armani empire was worth about 10 billion euros (nearly \$12 billion) at



Models clap their hands as they wear creations part of the Emporio Armani women’s Spring-Summer 2026 collection, presented in Milan, Italy, Thursday, Sept. 25. (AP)

the time of his death. He stipulated that his heirs should sell an initial 15% stake of the business, which includes



Models wear creations as part of the Francesca Liberatore Spring/Summer 2026 collection presented in Milan, Italy, Sunday, Sept. 28. (AP)



Models wear creations as part of the Francesca Liberatore Spring/Summer 2026 collection presented in Milan, Italy, Sunday, Sept. 28. (AP)

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Universal Studios Hollywood in the US city of Los Angeles is captivating visitors with its annual Halloween Horror Nights, one of Southern California’s premier Halloween-themed events.

The event features eight all-new and returning terrifying haunted houses, an array of frightening scare zones, the return of its popular Terror Tram experience and live stunt show, a Universal Studios Hollywood spokesperson told Xinhua on Saturday.

Renowned for its elaborate make-up, costuming, and immersive set designs, Universal Studios Hollywood has become a top destination for thrill-seekers during the Halloween season.

This year’s Halloween Horror Nights will run through Nov. 2. (Xinhua)

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SHIJIAZHUANG: The 20th China Wujiao International Circus Festival opened Sunday in Wujiao County, north China’s Hebei Province, marking the first time the event’s main activities have been held in the country’s renowned “hometown of acrobatics.”

The festival features 28 acts from 19 countries and regions, competing for three Golden Lion, five Silver Lion and seven Bronze Lion awards. The closing ceremony is scheduled for Oct. 3, while related theme events will continue through Oct. 8, the last day of the upcoming eight-day National Day and Mid-Autumn Festival holiday.

A special showcase of 12 top Chinese acrobatic programs funded in recent years by the China National Arts Fund was held on Sunday, highlighting achievements in domestic acrobatic art. Other activities include acrobatic exhibitions and a Grand Canal intangible cultural heritage display. (Xinhua)

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UNITED NATIONS: Stephane Dujarric, chief spokesman for UN Secretary-General, said on Friday that Fox News host Jesse Watters apologized for his comments suggesting that the United Nations should be “bombed.”

Watters made the comments during Jesse Watters Primetime on Tuesday while discussing U.S. President Donald Trump’s address to world leaders at the General Debate of the 80th UN General Assembly (UNGA). His remarks came after Trump experienced technical difficulties with an escalator and a teleprompter at the UN headquarters. (Xinhua)

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TOKYO: The cumulative number of visitors to the 2025 World Exposition in Osaka City, western Japan, has exceeded 22 million, which is regarded as the break-even point, its organizer said Sunday.

Preliminary data shows that about 22,000,500 people visited the Osaka Expo as of Saturday since its April 13 opening, reaching the figure seen as the number needed to avoid a loss, the Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition said.(Xinhua)



Shakira performs during the Global Citizen Festival on Saturday, Sept. 27, in New York. (AP)

Shakira, Cardi B and fans help raise millions for global causes

Star-studded Global Citizen Festival delivers on big promises

NEW YORK, Sept 29, (AP): Global Citizen surpassed its fundraising goals for Amazon rainforest protection, African energy access and community education at the antipoverty nonprofit’s annual music festival in New York’s Central Park, headlined by Shakira and late addition Cardi B.

Internationally recognized actors and foreign diplomats appealed to the crowd of more than 60,000 in between high-energy sets by artists from around the globe. Scheduled at the end of the United Nations General Assembly’s high-level meetings, the festival hammered home the message that everyday attendees, too, could influence the world leaders who gathered this week.

“This may seem quite ambitious on the surface. But I know for a fact that when we unite, we make noise that leads to real change. When you take action, governments and corporations listen, policies change, financial investments are made and progress happens,” host Hugh Jackman said at the top of the show.

Efforts to tap into the African continent’s high potential for renewable power got a boost. Global Citizen shared that they’d secured enough commitments to provide clean energy for 4.6 million homes on the continent. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced that the EU would provide more than \$638 million to develop climate-friendly energy production. Energea, a renewable energy investment platform, pledged \$250 million towards projects over next five years.

Nigerian singer Ayra Starr, who donned her reading glasses for a serious moment in an otherwise bouncing performance, shared that she grew up waiting until 6 p.m. for power to come on.

“But even I was lucky, OK? Some children in Africa have no access to light at all,” she said. “No child should be left in the dark. They need light to work, study, practice. They need light to reach their dreams and watch their favorite TV shows. That’s why energy matters.”

The program frequently paired celebrities and performers with issues close to them. American soccer star Carli Lloyd helped announce the MetLife Foundation’s \$9 million to the FIFA Global Citizen Education Fund. Actresses Kristin Bell and Danai Gurira emphasized the need to end sexual violence in war.

Global Citizen also announced more than \$280 million toward its goal of protecting the Amazon. That included a \$100 million pledge from the Inter-American Development Bank toward its Amazonia Forever sustainable development program.

To underscore its importance, actress Liza Koshy and celebrity scientist Bill Nye asked the audience to hold their breath for a comedic bit about the Amazon being the “lungs of the Earth.” In the middle of Camilo’s set, the Colombian singer emphasized that it’s everyone’s responsibility - not just his country’s concern - to take care of the rainforest.

Senegal reports 7 deaths in Rift Valley fever outbreak

95 dead from hunger, disease in 40 days in W. Sudan camp

KHARTOUM, Sept 29, (Xinhua): At least 95 people have died from hunger and disease over the past 40 days in Abu Shouk displacement camp in El Fasher, western Sudan, volunteer groups said on Sunday.

In a statement, the Abu Shouk Camp Emergency Room said 73 children under five and 22 elderly individuals had died from hunger and illness among camp residents.

“The security and humanitarian situation in El Fasher remains dire, with residents facing severe shortages of food, water, and healthcare, especially displaced people cut off from aid and basic services,” the statement said. The group warned of a looming health crisis, citing unburied bodies across the city amid ongoing insecurity, and urged international organizations to establish safe corridors for civilians fleeing the conflict.

The Coordination of Resistance Committees in El Fasher, another volunteer group, confirmed the deaths and reported a sharp deterioration in humanitarian conditions, citing ongoing shelling, the collapse of basic services, and the shutdown of most charity kitchens amid funding shortfalls and rising prices.

On Thursday, the Sudan Doctors Network, a non-governmental organization, reported 23 deaths from



Sudanese displaced families take shelter in a school after being evacuated by the Sudanese army from areas once controlled by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Omdurman, Sudan, located across the Nile River from Khartoum, on March 23, 2025. (AP)

malnutrition among children and women in El Fasher during the month. In July, the group said 239 children had died in the city since January due to shortages of food and medicine.

Meanwhile, Senegal’s Health Minister Ibrahima

Sy said Sunday that a recent outbreak of Rift Valley fever (RVF) in the northern Saint-Louis region has caused seven deaths.

Speaking at an epidemic control meeting in Saint-Louis, Sy said that the health authorities, in coordination with the livestock department, are intensifying preventive and control measures to curb the further spread of the disease. The Saint-Louis region officially reported its first RVF cases on Thursday.

Boli Diop, head of epidemiological surveillance at the Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene, explained that RVF is a zoonotic disease caused by the RVF virus. While primarily transmitted among animals, it can also infect humans.

Patients typically experience fever, headache, muscle pain, and fatigue. Most cases are mild, but delayed treatment can lead to hemorrhagic complications that may be life-threatening, he added.

Diop noted that human infections are usually associated with contact with blood or organs of infected animals. High-risk activities include slaughtering, butchering, assisting in animal births, and handling deceased livestock. Groups such as herders, farmers, slaughterhouse workers, and veterinarians are more likely to be exposed to the virus.

‘Vaccine safe and effective’

HPV vaccine prevents 90% of related cancers – MoH

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: The Ministry of Health has confirmed that the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine is a safe and effective way to prevent certain types of cancer and other diseases linked to the virus.

In response to a circulating video regarding the target age group for vaccination, the ministry explained that HPV is one of the most common viruses globally and is associated with several diseases, most notably, certain types of cancer that can be prevented through vaccination.

The vaccine is typically administered to girls and boys aged 11 to 12, though it can be given as early as age 9, when the immune response is strongest.

The vaccine reduces the incidence of HPV-related cancers by up to 90 percent.

There is no scientific recommendation for administering the vaccine after the age of 45, as the benefits become limited and do not achieve the intended level of protection.

The ministry stressed that following approved scientific guidelines ensures maximum benefit from the vaccine and plays a vital role in promoting public health and protecting future generations.



A Long March-2D carrier rocket carrying test satellites, Shiyao-30 01 and 02, blasts off from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China's Sichuan Province, Sept. 29. (Xinhua)

China successfully launches two new test satellites

China on Monday sent two new test satellites into space from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in the southwestern province of Sichuan. The test satellites, Shiyao-30 01 and 02, were launched at 11:00 a.m. (Beijing Time) aboard a Long March-2D carrier rocket

and entered their preset orbits successfully.

The satellites will be mainly used for experimental verification of Earth observation technologies.

The launch marked the 598th flight mission of the Long March series carrier rockets. (Xinhua)

Experts urge caution as misinformation spreads

Trump’s comments on autism evoke anger, hope among affected families

NEW YORK, Sept 29, (AP): An Indiana woman with an autistic son says President Donald Trump was blaming moms when he made unfounded claims that taking Tylenol while pregnant causes autism.

A Kentucky woman diagnosed with the condition as an adult thought Trump was villainizing autism by describing it as a “horrible, horrible crisis.”

A Massachusetts man whose twin boys have profound autism found the Republican president’s words hopeful because it was the first time the father had seen autism discussed at the highest levels of government.

Recent comments about autism by the Republican president and others in his administration are rippling through the United States, stirring up a wide range of views and feelings among autistic people and their families. Some welcome the renewed focus and pledges of research money for the complex developmental condition. Others are outraged by what they consider the blaming, shaming and spreading claims not grounded in science.

On Monday, Trump repeatedly warned pregnant women not to take Tylenol, known by the generic name acetaminophen, and he fueled discredited claims about autism and vaccines. Some studies have raised the possibility that taking acetaminophen in pregnancy might be associated with a risk of autism. Many others, however, have not found a connection and no causal link has been proved.

Meantime, scientists stress that concerns that vaccines could be linked to autism have been long debunked. A fraudulent study claiming a link between the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine



In this photo provided by Madison Kennedy, Dani Derner, 30, of Dripping Springs, Texas, holds her son, Liam, in July 2022. Liam was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder at age 2. (AP)

was later retracted by the journal that published it. Science has shown autism is mostly rooted in genetics.

Dr. Noa Sterling, an OB-GYN, said Trump’s comments, particularly about Tylenol, touched a nerve for many parents of young autistic children.

“There’s this kind of narrative that you have to be careful of absolutely everything you do in pregnancy, and if you eat the wrong thing or do the wrong thing, you’re going to irreparably harm your baby,” she said. “So the Tylenol just plays directly into this fear that, ‘I’ve taken something that has caused this condition in my child.’”

Dani Derner, who has a 4-year-old autistic son, said it is “really disappointing” that women are being

blamed.

“I personally did not take Tylenol during my pregnancy,” said Derner, of Dripping Springs, Texas. But, she said, “some women might not have a choice.”

Some women said the blaming was reminiscent of the disproven mid-20th century theory that emotionally cold “refrigerator mothers” caused autism.

“When I heard that he said acetaminophen was the cause, I was a little scared and a little sad because as a mom of a child with autism, I felt like maybe I was being blamed for that,” said Rachel Deaton of Fishers, Indiana, who has a 22-year-old autistic son. “We really don’t know what causes autism.”

Consumers urged to discard food items

US recalls deli products over listeria concerns

NEW YORK, Sept 29, (AP): Albertsons Companies has recalled several of its store-made deli products because they may contain listeria bacteria, in a move that arrives shortly after federal health officials warned consumers to not eat certain pasta meals sold at Walmart and Trader Joe’s over similar contamination concerns.

The Boise, Idaho-based supermarket giant on Saturday said it was pulling five deli items because they contain a recalled bowtie pasta ingredient made by Nate’s Fine Foods. Albertsons is urging consumers to not eat these products - which were supplied by refrigerated goods distributor Fresh Creative Foods - and is instructing those impacted to throw them away or initiate a return at their local store for a full refund.

The products under recall include certain ready-to-eat basil pesto pasta salad offerings, as well as pasta dishes with chicken, spinach and other ingredients. Consumers can determine if an item they bought is impacted by looking at the list of product names, sell thru dates and other identifying infor-



This image provided by US Agriculture Department shows Marketside Linguine with Beef Meatballs & Marinara Sauce. (AP)

mation on Albertsons’ website.

The recalled items were sold in various Albertsons-owned stores - including Albertsons Market, Safeway and Von’s - across more than a dozen states.

“Listeria monocytogenes can survive in refrigerated temperatures and can easily spread to other foods and surfaces,” Albertsons warned in its release. The company also noted that the FDA instructs consumers to be extra vigilant when cleaning any surfaces or containers that may have come into

contact with products recalled for possible listeria contamination.

The Associated Press reached out to Nate’s Fine Foods in California and Fresh Creative Foods, a division of Oregon-based Reser’s Fine Foods, for further statements on Sunday.

Albertsons on Saturday said that there had been no reports of injuries or illnesses related to its recalled products. But the company’s recall comes amid wider warnings from U.S. health officials about potential listeria contamination in ready-made meals sold by other retailers, some of which have previously been linked to a deadly outbreak.

Last week, the US Agriculture Department issued a public health alert warning consumers to not eat Trader Joe’s “Cajun Style Blackened Chicken Breast Fettuccine Alfredo” with best-by dates of Sept. 20, Sept. 24 and Sept. 27 - as well as “Marketside Linguine with Beef Meatballs & Marinara Sauce” sold at Walmart with best-by dates of Sept. 22 through Oct. 1, due to potential listeria contamination.

Chatbots aren’t therapists, experts warn of risks

Regulators struggle to keep up with fast-paced, complex AI therapy apps

NEW YORK, Sept 29, (AP): In the absence of stronger federal regulation, some states have begun regulating apps that offer AI “therapy” as more people turn to artificial intelligence for mental health advice.

But the laws, all passed this year, don’t fully address the fast-changing landscape of AI software development. And app developers, policymakers and mental health advocates say the resulting patchwork of state laws isn’t enough to protect users or hold the creators of harmful technology accountable.

“The reality is millions of people are using these tools and they’re not going back,” said Karin Andrea Stephan, CEO and co-founder of the mental health chatbot app Earkick.

The state laws take different approaches. Illinois and Nevada have banned the use of AI to treat mental health. Utah placed certain limits on therapy chatbots, including requiring them to protect users’ health information and to clearly disclose that the chatbot isn’t human. Pennsylvania, New Jersey and California are also considering ways to regulate AI therapy.

The impact on users varies. Some apps have blocked access in states with bans. Others say they’re making no changes as they wait for more legal clarity.

And many of the laws don’t cover generic chatbots like ChatGPT, which are not explicitly marketed for therapy but are used by an untold number of people for it. Those bots have attracted lawsuits in horrific instances where users lost their grip on reality or took their own lives after interacting with them.

Vaile Wright, who oversees health care innovation at the American Psychological Association, agreed that the apps could fill a need, noting a nationwide shortage of mental health providers, high costs for care and uneven access for insured patients.

Monitored

Mental health chatbots that are rooted in science, created with expert input and monitored by humans could change the landscape, Wright said.

“This could be something that helps people before they get to crisis,” she said. “That’s not what’s on the commercial market currently.”

That’s why federal regulation and oversight is needed, she said.

Earlier this month, the Federal Trade Commission announced it was opening inquiries into seven AI chatbot companies - including the parent companies of Instagram and Facebook, Google, ChatGPT, Grok (the chatbot on X), Character.AI and Snapchat - on how they “measure, test and monitor potentially negative impacts of this technology on children and teens.” And the Food and Drug Administration is convening an advisory committee Nov. 6 to review generative AI-enabled mental health devices.

Federal agencies could consider restrictions on how chatbots are marketed, limit addictive practices, require disclosures to users that they are not medical providers, require companies to track and report suicidal thoughts, and offer legal protections for people who report bad practices by companies, Wright said.

From “companion apps” to “AI therapists” to “mental wellness” apps, AI’s use in mental health care is varied and hard to define, let alone write laws around.

That has led to different regulatory



This image provided by Dartmouth in September 2025, depicts a text message exchange with the Therobot generative AI chatbot for mental health treatment. (AP)

approaches. Some states, for example, take aim at companion apps that are designed just for friendship, but don’t wade into mental health care. The laws in Illinois and Nevada ban products that claim to provide mental health treatment outright, threatening fines up to \$10,000 in Illinois and \$15,000 in Nevada.

But even a single app can be tough to categorize.

Earkick’s Stephan said there is still a lot that is “very muddy” about Illinois’ law, for example, and the company has not limited access there.

Stephan and her team initially held off calling their chatbot, which looks like a cartoon panda, a therapist. But when users began using the word in reviews, they embraced the terminology so the app would show up in searches.

Last week, they backed off using therapy and medical terms again. Earkick’s website described its chatbot as “Your empathetic AI counselor, equipped to support your mental health journey,” but now it’s a “chatbot for self care.”

Still, “we’re not diagnosing,” Stephan maintained.

Users can set up a “panic button” to call a trusted loved one if they are in crisis and the chatbot will “nudge” users to seek out a therapist if their mental health worsens. But it was never designed to be a suicide prevention app, Stephan said, and police would not be called if someone told the bot about thoughts of self-harm.

Critical

Stephan said she’s happy that people are looking at AI with a critical eye, but worried about states’ ability to keep up with innovation.

“The speed at which everything is evolving is massive,” she said.

Other apps blocked access immediately. When Illinois users downloaded the AI therapy app Ash, a message urged them to email their legislators, arguing “misguided legislation” has banned apps like Ash “while leaving unregulated chatbots it intended to regulate free to cause harm.”

A spokesperson for Ash did not respond to multiple requests for an interview.

Mario Treto Jr., secretary of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, said the goal was ultimately to make sure licensed therapists were the only ones doing therapy.

“Therapy is more than just word exchanges,” Treto said. “It requires empathy, it requires clinical judgment, it requires ethical responsibility, none of which AI can truly replicate right now.”

In March, a Dartmouth University-based team published the first known randomized clinical trial of a generative AI chatbot for mental health treatment.

The goal was to have the chatbot, called Therobot, treat people diagnosed with anxiety, depression or eating disorders. It was trained on vignettes and transcripts written by the team to illustrate an evidence-based response.

The study found users rated Therobot similar to a therapist and had meaningfully lower symptoms after eight weeks compared with people who didn’t use it. Every interaction was monitored by a human who intervened if the chatbot’s response was harmful or not evidence-based.

Nicholas Jacobson, a clinical psychologist whose lab is leading the research, said the results showed early promise but that larger studies are needed to demonstrate whether Therobot works for large numbers of people.

“The space is so dramatically new that I think the field needs to proceed with much greater caution than is happening right now,” he said.

Many AI apps are optimized for engagement and are built to support everything users say, rather than challenging peoples’ thoughts the way therapists do. Many walk the line of companionship and therapy, blurring intimacy boundaries therapists ethically would not.

Therobot’s team sought to avoid those issues.

The app is still in testing and not widely available. But Jacobson worries about what strict bans will mean for developers taking a careful approach. He noted Illinois had no clear pathway to provide evidence that an app is safe and effective.

Experts warn of global health threat

Antibiotic resistance in newborns rising: study

SYDNEY, Sept. 29, (Xinhua): The rise of antibiotic-resistant infections in newborn babies is emerging as a growing global health threat, a study warns.

Researchers are calling for an urgent overhaul of diagnostic and treatment guidelines for infections in newborn babies, after a University of Sydney (USYD)-led study revealed frontline treatments for sepsis are no longer effective to treat the majority of bacterial infections, a USYD statement said on Monday.

The study, published in The Lancet Regional Health -- Western Pacific,

analysed almost 15,000 blood samples collected from sick babies in 2019 and 2020 at 10 hospitals across five countries in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Malaysia.

Findings showed that most infections were caused by bacteria unlikely to respond to the currently applied World Health Organization-recommended treatments, which were developed using data from high-income countries rather than localized regional data.

“Guidelines must be updated to reflect local bacterial profiles and known

resistance patterns. Otherwise, mortality rates are only going to keep climbing,” warned study senior author Associate Professor Phoebe Williams from the USYD School of Public Health.

Researchers highlighted the slow pace of developing new antibiotic medications for infants and babies, urging substantial investment in this area.

While the study excluded Australian cases, researchers stressed Australia’s vigilance is critical given its close ties with Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific, where antimicrobial resistance is rising rapidly.

Golden Lady Eagles and CDH Bowldogz triumph

Filipino community in Kuwait rallies through ‘Bowling for a Cause’



Participants pose for a group photo.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: The Kuwait Golden Eagles Club (KGECC) and Kuwait Golden Lady Eagles Club (KGLEC), under Central Luzon Region 36, hosted a benefit bowling tournament titled “Bowling for a Cause” – A Friendly Tournament with the theme: “Love at First Strike”, on September 26 at the Kuwait Bowling Sports Club in Salmiya.

The friendly competition drew participation from more than a dozen Filipino community groups and organizations. Teams taking part included Kuwait Golden Eagles Club, Kuwait Golden Lady Eagles Club, The Amazon, Grand Canal, The Bicolanos in Kuwait – New Generation, Kuwait Elite Eagles Club, Light Benders Photography Group, Pinoy Ambulance Nurses in Kuwait, Vinta Café & Restaurant, CDH Bowldogz, Gutter Boyz, Team Simple Anglers, Triskelion International State of Kuwait, Pilipino Professional Organizations, Association of Filipino Organizations in Kuwait, Strike Syndicate and FFC Team.

Traditional Filipino dishes such as pandecoco and tapsilog were also served, provided by Pinoy Cuisine Restaurant Co., adding a cultural flavor to the community fundraiser.

Winners

Male/Mixed Category

• Champion – CDH Bowldogz

• 1st Runner up – Kuwait Kalasag Eagles Club

• 2nd Runner up – Kuwait Elite Eagles Club - 2

• MVP – Paul (Kuwait Kalasag Eagles Club)

• Best Strike – Nelson (Kuwait Golden Eagles Club)

• Most Spare – Jowie (Gutter Boyz)

Female Category

• Champion – Kuwait Golden Lady Eagles Club (KGLEC)

• 1st Runner up – Strike Syndicate

• 2nd Runner up – Association of Filipino Organizations in Kuwait (ASFOK)

• MVP – Pilar (CDH Bowldogz)

• Best Strike – Frances (Kuwait Elite Eagles Club - 1)

• Most Spare – Pilar (CDH Bowldogz)

Organizers said the funds raised from the event will go directly to support a cancer patient.

Service through Strong Brotherhood. Deo Et Patria, MABUHAY ANG AGILA



Top and above: some of the players in action.



Kuwait Golden Lady Eagles Club



Winners pose for a group photo

Photos by Jhun Ay Si Bunsuoy

Mercury eliminates Lynx, books WNBA Finals return after 4 years

Fever set up decisive Game 5 against Aces

PHOENIX, Sept 29, (AP): Alyssa Thomas scored 23 points, DeWanna Bonner made two late 3-pointers, and the Phoenix Mercury overcame a 13-point, fourth-quarter deficit to beat the short-handed Minnesota Lynx 86-81 in Game 4 on Sunday to advance to the WNBA Finals for the first time since 2021. Phoenix will face the Indiana-Las Vegas winner. Indiana forced a Game 5 earlier Sunday with a 90-83 home victory.

“We knew they were going to challenge us today, and I’m just proud of how we responded,” Thomas said. “We could have easily given up and headed to Minnesota right now. But we stuck together and dug deep on defense.”

The Mercury won the final three games of the best-of-five semifinal series. The top-seeded Lynx were playing without Cheryl Reeve, who was suspended for Game 4 because of her behavior and comments toward officials in Game 3. Minnesota also was without All-Star guard Napheesa Collier, who suffered an ankle injury near the end of the Game 3 loss. Down 68-55 after three quarters, Phoenix pulled to 70-69 on Sami Whitcomb’s 3-pointer with 4:46 left. Bonner’s 3-pointer pushed them ahead 72-70, and she hit another 3 with 2:03 left for a 77-73 lead.

Minnesota’s Kayla McBride hit a 3-pointer – her sixth of the second half – to cut it to 77-76 with 1:04 left. The 38-year-old Bonner then made a pair of free throws to push the Mercury ahead 79-76. Bonner scored 11 points in the fourth part of the Mercury’s



Minnesota Lynx forward Jessica Shepard (15) dribbles past Phoenix Mercury forward Natasha Mack, left, during the first half of Game 4 of a WNBA basketball playoff semifinals series in Phoenix. (AP)



Indiana Fever forward Makayla Timpson (21) reaches for a rebound during the second half of Game 4 of a WNBA basketball playoff semifinals series against the Las Vegas Aces in Indianapolis. (AP)

31-point outburst in the final quarter. “We didn’t have much of a choice,” Mercury coach Nate Tibbets said.

“We were down 13, needed to get stops. And when we get stops, we’re

pretty good offensively because we’re playing free, and we don’t have time to overthink it. “We made some great plays, some really good passes. That’s what it took.” Phoenix’s Satou Sabally

scored 21 points. Phoenix will play for the title for the first time in four years in a bid for its first championship since 2014. McBride led Minnesota with 31 points on 6-of-11 shooting from 3-point range. Courtney Williams added 20 points. The Lynx’s fourth-quarter collapse was a common theme in the series.

“Got to give Phoenix credit for the way they defended in the fourth quarters,” Lynx associate head coach Eric Thibault said. “They switched and made it hard on us. We didn’t get enough quality shots down the stretch.” Phoenix’s Kahleah Copper hit a 3-pointer early in the third quarter to give the Mercury their first lead of the game at 41-38. But the Lynx responded with a 23-9 run, highlighted by three 3-pointers from McBride. The Lynx jumped out to an early 12-1 lead, but the Mercury slowly chipped away at the deficit. Thomas hit Bonner for a layup just before the halftime buzzer to tie it 38. “It was ugly at times,” Tibbets said. “But we kept fighting.” The Mercury had just two players on this year’s roster – Copper and Natasha Mack – who were with the team in 2024. They are the first team in WNBA history to make two Finals in five years without having any players from either team appear on both teams.

All-Star center Aliyah Boston finished with 24 points and 14 rebounds, and Kelsey Mitchell scored 25 points to help the Indiana Fever avoid elimination in the WNBA semifinals with a 90-83 victory over the second-seeded Las Vegas Aces.

The best-of-five series is now tied 2-2 with a winner-take-all Game 5 set for Tuesday in Las Vegas. The winner faces either top-seeded Minnesota or fourth-seeded Phoenix.

Indiana closed it out after Las Vegas mistakenly called a timeout it did not have with 30.1 seconds left in the game. The technical foul gave Indiana one free throw and possession of the ball, and the Fever made all three free throws to take an 87-77 lead.

Chase secures spot in 3rd round of playoffs

Elliott steals Kansas Speedway race in wild overtime finish

KANSAS CITY, Kan., Sept 29, (AP): Chase Elliott somehow stole Sunday’s race at Kansas Speedway, where he drove from eighth to the checkered flag during a two-lap overtime sprint to earn a spot in the third round of NASCAR’s playoffs.

It was a wild ending to a race that probably should have been won by Denny Hamlin, who dominated and led 159 laps until a bevy of late issues denied him his chance at career win No. 60 for Joe Gibbs Racing.

The race had a slew of late cautions – Hamlin dropped from the lead to seventh on a slow pit stop – that put Bubba Wallace in position to win the race. A red-flag stoppage for Zane Smith flipping his car set up the final overtime restart, and Wallace was holding tight in a door-to-door battle with Christopher Bell for the victory.

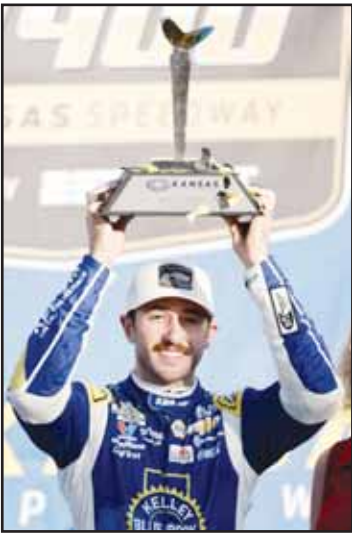
Then Hamlin came from nowhere to catch Wallace, who drives for the team Hamlin co-owns with Michael Jordan, and Wallace scraped the wall as he tried to hold off his boss. That’s when Elliott suddenly entered the frame and smashed Hamlin in the door to get past him for his second win of the season.

“What a crazy finish. Hope you all enjoyed that. I certainly did,” NASCAR’s most popular driver told the crowd after collecting the checkered flag.

Elliott joins Ryan Blaney as the two drivers locked into the third round of the playoffs. The field will be cut from 12 drivers to eight after next week’s race in Concord, North Carolina, and Elliott said once he got in position for the victory, he wasn’t giving up.

“I wasn’t going to lift, so I didn’t know what was going to happen. I figured at the end of the day, it was what it was at that point,” Elliott said. “Wherever I ended up, I ended up. At that point, we were all committed. Really cool just to be eighth on the restart and somehow win on a green-and-white checkered. Pretty neat.”

Hamlin finished second and was clearly dejected by the defeat. The three-time Daytona 500 winner is considered the



Chase Elliott celebrates after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Kansas Speedway in Kansas City, Kan. (AP)

greatest driver to never win a Cup title and needed the victory to lock up his spot in the next round of the playoffs. He also has a 60th Cup win set as a major career goal and is stuck on 59 victories.

He drove the final 50-plus laps with his power steering on the friz.

“Just super disappointing. I wanted it bad. It would have been 60 for me,” Hamlin said. “Obviously got really, really tight with (Wallace), and it just got real tight and we let (Elliott) win.

“Man, I wanted it for my dad. I wanted it for everybody. Just wanted it a little too hard.”

Hamlin was followed by his JGR teammates Bell and Chase Briscoe, who were third and fourth.

Wallace wound up fifth, and even though the victory would have moved him deeper into the playoffs than he’s ever been in his career, he was satisfied considering how poorly his car was running earlier in the race. He wasn’t even upset with Hamlin and shook hands with his boss on pit road.

Second seed Wang sails into WTT China Smash 2nd round

BEIJING, Sept 29, (Xinhua): Women’s singles second seed Wang Manyu advanced to the last 32 at the World Table Tennis (WTT) China Smash after defeating compatriot He Zhuojia in straight games. Wang claimed an 11-8, 11-8, 11-6 victory in her opener, which lasted half an hour.

“It’s a tough draw to play against Jiajia [He Zhuojia] in the first round. As we are teammates and familiar with each other, I made full preparations for this match,” Wang said.

Speaking of her next rounds, she added, “At the China Smash, every opponent is strong, so I need to prepare well for what lies ahead.” She was joined in the last 32 by teammate Wang Xiaotong, who upset 14th-seeded Miyu Nagasaki of Japan 11-3, 11-7, 11-7.

“It was our first encounter, so I made full preparations for it,” Wang Xiaotong said. “Whoever I face next, I will just focus on doing my best.” Japan’s Hina Hayata marked her 100th career win in the WTT Series after easing past French veteran Yuan Jjianan in straight games.

In another all-Chinese men’s singles clash, Liang Jingkun won a tense opening game 15-13 before Wen Ruibo leveled with an 11-5 second game. Liang then pulled away to seal an 11-4, 11-2 finish and secure his spot in the second round.

“Wen is young and aggressive. We both played well today, while I did better on some key points,” Liang said. “After losing the second game, I tried to keep calm and fought for every point.” Elsewhere, Lin Gaoyuan beat Wong Chun Ting of Hong Kong, China 11-6, 11-8, 11-7.

Flamengo beats Corinthians to extend lead

Riestra downs River Plate to boost title hopes

BUENOS AIRES, Sept 29, (Xinhua): Pedro Ramirez scored a second-half winner as Deportivo Riestra clinched a 2-1 away victory over River Plate in Argentina’s Primera Division.

Antony Alonso gave Riestra the lead by heading home from Pablo Monje’s cross but Giuliano Galoppo equalized shortly after, smashing a volley that beat goalkeeper Ignacio Arce at his near post.

Monje was again the provider as Pedro Ramirez restored the visitors’ lead with a low finish on the turn in the 51st minute.

The hosts played the last 15 minutes with only 10 men after Maximiliano Salas was shown a straight red card for offensive language toward a linesman.

Deportivo Riestra now leads the 15-team Group B with 22 points, four ahead of second-placed River.

In other Primera Division fixtures on Sunday, Independiente drew 0-0 at Racing, Instituto was held to a goalless home draw by Lanus while Independiente Rivadavia’s home clash with Huracan also ended in a 0-0 stalemate. Giorgan de Arrascaeta and Luiz Araujo scored second-half goals as Flamengo extended its lead at the top of Brazil’s Serie A with a 2-1 away win over Corinthians.

Yuri Alberto opened the scoring for the hosts by completing a 30-yard solo run with a left-footed shot into the far corner from a tight angle.

De Arrascaeta equalized shortly after, showing composure in heavy traffic before slotting the ball past goalkeeper Hugo Souza. Araujo completed the turnaround three minutes from time with a low first-time drive after Jorge Carrascal’s pass.

The result leaves Flamengo with 54 points, four ahead of second-placed Cruzeiro, while Corinthians is 12th in the 20-team standings with 29 points.

“It was a fantastic victory,” Flamengo manager Filipe Luis told reporters after the match. “We didn’t start well but we saw signs of improvement late in the first half and then made some adjustments at halftime that made the difference.” “We need to keep our feet on the ground and not think that we are the best just because we beat Corinthians away from home. There is still a long way to go in the season. We need to work hard and stay humble.” In other Brazilian Serie A fixtures on Sunday, Gremio secured a 3-1 home win over Vitoria, Bahia beat Palmeiras 1-0 in Salvador, Fluminense won 2-0 at home against Botafogo and Bragantino was held to a 2-2 home draw by Santos.

Team wraps up preparations in high spirits

Qadsia kicks off Gulf Champions League against Zakho

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: Qadsia will look to make a strong start in the Gulf Champions League when it faces Iraq's Zakho tonight at 8:00 PM at Zakho International Stadium in the opening round of Group One. The group also features UAE's Al Ain against Bahrain's Sitra at 7:30 PM at Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium.

The team completed preparations for the opener in high spirits, though first matches are often tricky—especially in a competition where only the top two teams advance to the semifinals.

Qadsia will be without several key players through injury, including Eid Al-Rashidi, Mubarak Al-Fanini, Moaz Al-Dhafiri, and Talal Al-Fadhel. The participation of Algerian midfielder Victor Lekhal is also uncertain. However, Coach Nabil Maaloul is expected to rely on seasoned stars such as Bader Al-Mutawa, Egypt's Mahmoud Kahraba, Libya's Mohamed Soula,

and Congo's Neeskens Kebano, alongside a core of talented youngsters.

The team is eager to bounce back after its recent domestic league loss to Kuwait SC, while Zakho will look to take advantage of home support to turn around its poor form in the Iraqi league, where it sits 13th after losing to Diyala in its last outing.

In the domestic Zain Premier League, Salmiya claimed its third straight victory with a 2-0 win over Jahra in the final match of the fourth round at Thamer Stadium.

Moaz Al-Oseimah opened the scoring in the 11th minute, before Mohannad Al-Mohameed doubled the lead just before halftime (45+2). The result lifted Salmiya to second place on nine points, while Jahra remained ninth with just a single point.

Elsewhere, Tadamon edged Naser 1-0 at Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium thanks to a 55th-minute header from Fahad Al-Rashidi. Tadamon moved up to seventh with four points, while Naser stayed bottom of the standings without a point.



Qadsia players sharpen their touch with ball-juggling drills in training.

Kuwait Handball Federation announces season sponsors

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: In a step highlighting the Kuwait Handball Federation's commitment to developing the sport, the federation announced the sponsors for the season during a press conference held at Marina Hotel. Sponsors include Bin Alameed, Spark, Jazeera Airways, Coffee Boutique, and the Sports Medicine Center (SESC).

The partnership, under the theme "Partners in Success," also provides medical consultations, physical development guidance, and nutritional support to help elevate handball standards in Kuwait.

Secretary-General Qaid Al-Adwani described the sponsorship as a strategic alliance aimed at boosting handball development and engag-



Al-Hajri and Al-Adwani speak during the Kuwait Handball Federation conference.

ing youth participation. He emphasized that the support will benefit the national team, clubs, and youth categories, covering medical, physical, and

nutritional aspects.

National team captain Abdullah Al-Khamees praised the large turnout at the conference, reflecting strong public interest in Kuwaiti handball. He encouraged fans to attend matches and support players during the league and national team competitions, while also thanking players for their dedication and the federation for facilitating their preparation.

Dr. Mohsen Dashti, CEO of Business Partner Marketing, highlighted the financial impact of the partnership, noting that the contracts exceed KD 130,000, directly benefiting teams from youth squads up to the senior men's national team.

Meanwhile, as part of the sixth round of the Premier Handball League, Kuwait Club will face Al-Arabi today in an eagerly anticipated matchup.

Kazma and Al-Shabab secure wins in Volleyball Federation Championship



Players in action.

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: Kazma volleyball team temporarily leads the Federation Championship standings with three points after a convincing 3-0 victory over Nasr at the Volleyball Hall of Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex in the second round. In the same round, Al-Shabab also claimed a 3-0 win against Al-Arabi.

Following these results, Al-Shabab sits second and Al-Arabi third in the standings, both on equal points, with Kazma holding

the advantage on set difference. Qadsia has two points, Burgan one, while Yarmouk, Naser, Kuwait Club, and Sulaibikhat remain scoreless.

Kazma reinforced its squad for the new season with national player Abdullah Al-Mulla, under the guidance of Brazilian coach Kakaru, and signed Brazilian professionals Costa and Adimar, along with local player Fahad Al-Saad. The team is aiming for success in domestic competitions and is also preparing to represent Al-Adailiya in the Arab Clubs Volleyball Championship alongside Kuwait Club, scheduled for January.

Barcelona back on top after fifth straight win

Elche unbeaten

MADRID, Sept 29, (AP): Lamine Yamal needed only a minute to make an impact in his return to action after an injury.

Yamal came off the bench in the second half and set up Robert Lewandowski's 59th-minute go-ahead goal in Barcelona's 2-1 win against Real Sociedad in the Spanish league on Sunday.

The fifth win in a row for the Catalan club across all competitions moved Barcelona to the top of the Spanish league, one point ahead of Real Madrid, which was crushed 5-2 by Atletico Madrid on Saturday.

Barcelona has scored at least a goal in 44 games in a row in all competitions, equaling a run that the club last achieved in the 1940s. The current streak began in late 2024 after a 1-0 league defeat at Leganes.

"I am very proud," Barcelona coach Hansi Flick said. "I think this victory will really help us keep improving."

Yamal came into the match in the 58th to replace Roony Bardghji and make his first appearance after missing four matches because of a pubic-area injury sustained while playing for Spain's national team during the international break.

"It's very good to have him



Real Sociedad's Igor Zubeldia, right, challenges Barcelona's Ferran Torres during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between FC Barcelona and Real Sociedad at the Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium in Barcelona, Spain, Sunday. (AP)

back," Flick said.

Yamal also had a goal disallowed for offside in the 74th, and nearly set up another Lewandowski goal in the 84th, when the Poland striker was denied by the crossbar.

Before the match, Yamal presented to fans his Ballon d'Or award for

best young player of the year.

"Very happy that he is back playing again," Barcelona defender Jules Koundé said of Yamal. "We are going to need him."

Barcelona still doesn't have the right permits to return to the renovated Camp Nou Stadium. It was

back at Montjuic stadium after playing its first two home matches in the Spanish league in a 6,000-capacity venue at its training facility.

The club will also host Paris Saint-Germain at the Montjuic on Wednesday in its home opener in the league phase of the Champions League.

Fast bowler Woakes calls time on England career

LONDON, Sept 29, (AP): England fast bowler Chris Woakes announced his immediate retirement from international cricket on Monday after 62 test matches and World Cup titles in the ODI and Twenty20 formats.

His last appearance for England was a test match against India at The Oval in August, when he came to the middle with his left arm in a sling - after suffering a dislocated shoulder - in a last-ditch and ultimately unsuccessful bid to force a victory.

The 36-year-old Woakes was left out of England squad for the upcoming Ashes series Down Under after failing to fully recover from the shoulder injury and has decided that "the time is right for me to retire from international cricket."

"Playing for England was something I aspired to do since I was a kid dreaming in the back garden," Woakes posted on social media, "and I feel incredibly fortunate to have lived out those dreams."

"Representing England, wearing the Three Lions and sharing the field with teammates over the last 15 years, many of whom have become lifelong friends, are things I'll look back on with the greatest pride."



In this file photo, England's Chris Woakes holds the trophy as he celebrates after winning the Cricket World Cup final match between England and New Zealand at Lord's cricket ground in London, Sunday. (AP)

Roma maintains strong start under Gasperini

Milan topples defending champion Napoli

MILAN, Sept 29, (AP): A fully fit Christian Pulisic will be feared by every Serie A team after the United States international led AC Milan to a 2-1 win over defending champion Napoli on Sunday.

It was Napoli's first loss of the season.

Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri had said shortly before kickoff that Pulisic was not in the best shape but the American lit up San Siro and had a goal and an assist before he had to be sacrificed when his team was reduced to 10 men early in the second half.

It was Pulisic's sixth goal in seven matches this season for Milan.

Milan and Napoli top the Serie A standings with 12 points along with Roma after the capital side beat Hellas Verona 2-0.

The match was billed as an early season title battle and it was also the first meeting in more than 11 years between two of the most successful Italian coaches in Allegri and Napoli counterpart Antonio Conte.

Milan got off to the perfect start as it took the lead after less than 150 seconds thanks to some magic from Pulisic. The American evaded Luca Marianucci to race from his own half down the left and keep the ball from going out. He cut in and went past the Napoli defender again to roll the ball across for Saelemaekers to tap in.

Milan should have doubled its lead through



Napoli's Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa, right, and AC Milan's Christian Pulisic challenge for the ball during the Serie A soccer match between AC Milan and Napoli at the San Siro stadium in Milan, Italy, Sunday. (AP)

Pulisic's superb throughball but Youssef Fofana fired over.

Pulisic got on the scoresheet himself in the 31st minute. This time it was Strahinja Pavlovic who was allowed to surge forward and he rode a couple of weak challenges before pulling back for Fofana, who touched it on for Pulisic to sweep home.

Milan appeared to be heading for a surprisingly comfortable win but made matters harder for itself when defender Pervis Estupiñán needlessly gave away a penalty and was sent off for dragging back Napoli captain Giovanni Di Lorenzo in the area.

Kevin De Bruyne converted the penalty for his third goal in five matches since joining Napoli on a free transfer from Manchester City.

With Milan down to 10 men and needing to protect a slender lead, Pulisic was taken off for defender Davide Baresaghi, going off to a standing ovation at San Siro.

Artem Dovbyk scored his first goal of the season on his first start for Roma but Verona was left to rue one of the misses of the season.

Gian Piero Gasperini continued his almost perfect start to life in the Italian capital - after nine years in charge of Atalanta - by winning all but one of his six matches in charge of Roma.

Dovbyk headed Zeki Celik's cross into the bottom right corner in the seventh minute and Matias Soule sealed the match late on.

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NEWS



Europe's Matthew Fitzpatrick hits from the bunker on the eighth hole during their singles match on the Bethpage Black golf course at the Ryder Cup tournament in Farmingdale, N.Y. (AP)

Sports

This is one thing which I have never seen since I started playing cricket: Yadav

India's Asia Cup win over Pakistan marred by trophy presentation snub



Team India celebrates after winning the Asia Cup cricket final against Pakistan at Dubai International Cricket Stadium, United Arab Emirates. (AP)

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Sept 29, (AP): Simmering political tensions between India and Pakistan have intensified on the cricket field with the India team refusing to accept the Asia Cup trophy from a senior Pakistani official, having already declined handshakes with their archrival for three consecutive matches.

Tilak Varma's nerveless half-century helped India beat arch-rival Pakistan at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Sunday and claim its ninth Asia Cup, second in the T20 format.

But it at the post-match presentation ceremony where tensions reached boiling point.

The ceremony was first delayed for unclear reasons for over one and a half hours. The Pakistan team, led by captain Salman Agha, then arrived late for the ceremony. However, there was a further delay as the Indian team refused to accept the trophy from Asian Cricket Council (ACC) chief Mohsin Naqvi, who is also the chief of Pakistan Cricket Board

(PCB) and the Interior Minister of Pakistan.

India's Twenty20 skipper Suryakumar Yadav claimed that his team was denied the chance to lift the 2025 Asia Cup trophy.

"This is one thing which I have never seen since I started playing cricket, started following cricket - a champion team is denied a trophy, that too a hard-earned one," said Yadav in the post-match media conference. "I feel we deserved it. And I can't say anything more."

"If you tell me about trophies, mine are sitting in the dressing room, all 14 guys with me, the support staff - those are the real trophies throughout this journey in the Asia Cup."

A statement on the ACC website had stated on Saturday that Naqvi would hand over the trophy to the Asia Cup winners. However, it is understood that the Indian team did not want to receive the trophy from him, in line with their refusal to shake hands with the Pakistan team in any of the three matches the two sides played during the tournament, both at



Fans celebrate after India won the Asia Cup cricket final against Pakistan at Dubai International Cricket Stadium, United Arab Emirates. (AP)

the coin toss and at the end of the match.

While the Indian team had refused to accept the trophy from Naqvi, he reportedly refused to step down from the presentation ceremony altogether. Before the ceremony began, an official also removed the Asia Cup trophy from the presentation podium. No explanation was provided by the ACC for this action.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have been informed by the ACC that the Indian cricket team will not be collecting their awards tonight. So that does conclude the post-match presentation," Simon Doull, former New Zealand cricketer and broadcaster, announced.

This was after Tilak Varma and Abhishek Sharma had collected their individual awards - player of the match and tournament, respectively. India wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav also collected an award for his bowling performances through the tournament.

All three received their awards from sponsor representa-

tives and did not acknowledge or shake hands with Naqvi on the presentation stage.

The Pakistan team received its runners-up medals from Aminul Islam, the Bangladesh Cricket Board president, and the check from Naqvi.

Eventually, the Indian team celebrated without the trophy or its individual winners' medals.

"We have decided not to take the Asia Cup trophy from the ACC chairman, who happens to be one of the main leaders of Pakistan," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia told Indian news media outlet ANI. "But that does not mean that the gentleman will take away the trophy with him, along with the medals. So it is very unfortunate, and we hope that the trophy and the medals will be returned to India as soon as possible."

"There is an ICC conference in November in Dubai. In the next conference, we are going to launch a very serious and very strong protest against the act of the ACC chairperson."

Europe fends off US rally in nail-biting Ryder Cup finish



Europe poses with the trophy after winning the Ryder Cup golf tournament against the United States on the Bethpage Black golf course in Farmingdale, N.Y. (AP)

Europeans reassert dominance

FARMINGDALE, N.Y., Sept 29, (AP): Staked to the largest lead in history, Europe fully expected to win the Ryder Cup on Sunday. The surprise was how much emotion poured out of the team on a final day that produced a furious American charge and, ultimately, another Irish hero.

What looked to be only a matter of time before the European celebration was on turned into nervous glances at the scorecard as the unruly crowd at Bethpage Black finally had a U.S. team to cheer for instead of against.

It went from looking impossible to improbable to just maybe.

And then Shane Lowry, who endured so much abuse from a hostile and vulgar New York crowd, had the last word. He holed a 6-foot birdie putt against Russell Henley to earn the half-point Europe needed to make sure it kept that 17-inch gold chalice.

He couldn't contain himself, pumping his fists and spinning around the green and squeezing every teammate he could find. He recalled telling his caddie as they walked up the 18th fairway, "I have a chance to do the coolest thing in my life here."

"The Ryder Cup means everything to me," Lowry said.

Ditto for all of Europe. Even a closer call than imagined did not take away from a reminder of who dominates these matches. Europe has won

11 times in the last 14 Ryder Cups, and this was its fifth time winning on U.S. soil in the last 10 tries.

"They'll be talking about this team for a long time," Luke Donald said after joining Tony Jacklin (1985 and 1987) as the only European captains to win back-to-back.

Tyrrell Hatton, unbeaten in four matches, earned a half against Collin Morikawa that made Europe an outright winner.

The final score - Europe 15, United States 13 - was the only real surprise.

"Shoutout to the Americans," Donald said, his players draped in flags of their home countries. "We knew they'd be tough. I didn't think they would be this tough on Sunday. They fought so hard, and all the respect to them."

"This means a lot, obviously, to me and the team. We came here knowing that the task was going to be very difficult. Couldn't be more proud of these guys - what they've gone through, how they come together, how they're playing for history, how they're playing for the people that came before them and now they'll be talked (about) for generations to come."

The Americans at least showed a pulse and made their opponents sweat more than anyone imagined, storming back from a seven-point deficit. No team ever won from more than four points behind going into the 12 singles matches.

There was a moment where a comeback actually looked possible.

Cameron Young and Justin Thomas won matches on the 18th hole. Bryson DeChambeau charged from 5 down to earn a halve. Scottie Scheffler avoided getting blanked by winning his heavyweight match against Rory McIlroy.

Champions League sends Real, Bayern to new places, returns Mourinho to old home Chelsea

GENEVA, Sept 29, (AP): The Champions League sends its top-ranked teams to new places this week and revisits the Barcelona-Paris Saint-Germain rivalry that is among the more storied in its modern era.

José Mourinho also returns to Stamford Bridge, his home in two spells coaching Chelsea, for his first Champions League game coaching Benfica.

In 71 seasons of the European Cup and Champions League, record 15-time title winner Real Madrid never went to Kazakhstan where it plays Kairat Almaty on Tuesday.

That's a meeting of No. 151 vs. No. 1 in the UEFA club rankings on the same day No. 2 Bayern Munich has a rare trip to Cyprus to face No. 91 Pafos, another competition newcomer.

Tottenham already went inside the Arctic Circle to face Bodo/Glimt - winning in the Europa League semifinals in May - and returns for the Norwegian champion's first home game in the main stage of the Champions League.

The standout game Wednesday is Barcelona hosting PSG in a matchup immortalized by "La

Remontada" in 2017.

Barcelona superstar Lamine Yamal seems fit after a groin injury to start his first game since placing second in the Ballon d'Or voting to Ousmane Dembélé, who is still out for PSG after being injured on France duty this month.

While Dembélé skips this reunion in the city where he spent six years before coming to Paris, PSG coach Luis Enrique goes back to the club he led to his first Champions League title, in 2015.

A heavyweight clash that will always conjure memories of Barcelona's epic 6-1 win in March 2017, to overturn a 4-0 first-leg loss in Paris and advance to the quarterfinals.

That was the last season of the stellar Barcelona forward line of Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar, who after that season would join PSG for a world record transfer fee - money Barcelona invested in buying Dembélé from Borussia Dortmund.

Less well remembered is that PSG has since been back twice for knockout rounds games - and won 4-1 each time after trailing to eliminate Barcelona.

In 2021, Kylian Mbappe scored a hat trick in a Round of 16 game played in an empty Camp Nou because of health restrictions in the COVID-19 pandemic. In the quarterfinals in '24, Mbappe scored just twice in a game that swung on an early red card for Barcelona defender Ronald Araújo.

A game to watch should be Atletico Madrid hosting Eintracht Frankfurt judging by their free-wheeling wins in domestic league games Saturday.

Atletico humbled Real Madrid 5-2 in the city derby after trailing 2-1 in the first half.

Eintracht led 5-0 at half time at Borussia Mönchengladbach, and quickly added a sixth for what looked a cruise to the finish. Gladbach started its fight-back in the 72nd and kept adding goals into stoppage time of what ended as a wild 6-4 win for the visitors.

The fourth newcomer in this season's edition, Belgian champion Union Saint-Gilloise, impressed in a 3-1 opening win at PSV Eindhoven.

That's how it has been for Belgium this season. Club Brugge won four straight games in the qualifying rounds than started the league phase easing past Monaco 4-1.

Top seeds shine at China Open

BEIJING, Sept 29, (Xinhua): Jannik Sinner of Italy and Iga Swiatek both progressed at the China Open on Monday, as the tournament's leading names continued their charge in the Chinese capital. Sinner, the 24-year-old world No. 2, reached the semifinals with a 6-1, 7-5 win over Hungary's Fabian Marozsan. The Italian, last year's finalist in Beijing, looked in full control in the opening set, breaking three times to close it out within half an hour.

But the second set proved trickier. Sinner created four break chances in the first eight games but could not convert, as Marozsan, ranked No. 57, lifted his first-serve percentage and found more depth on his groundstrokes. At 4-4, the Hungarian broke serve to move ahead 5-4, capitalizing on a rare lapse despite Sinner saving one chance with an ace.

The top seed hit back immediately, breaking to love for 5-5 before holding serve to move ahead. He then sealed victory with another love game break in the 12th, wrapping up the win to book a place in the semifinals.

"He was serving much better in the second set and playing more aggressively," Sinner said. "I had some chances at 4-3 but couldn't take them. It was a very tough match, but I'm happy with the way I closed it." Sinner will now face third seed Alex de Minaur, who progressed after 20-year-old Czech Jakub Mensik retired while trailing 4-1. De Minaur, who ranks world No. 8, had already broken twice in the opening set when Mensik stopped with an apparent injury. The 26-year-old Australian, a Washington champion and US Open quarterfinalist this season, is aiming to secure his debut berth at the ATP Finals in Turin.