



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Keep Hamas' heretics away
from the Palestinian cause

MADNESS is the logic of war, and reason is the foundation of peace. With this in mind, we can take into consideration the plan proposed by former U.S. President Donald Trump to resolve the Gaza crisis, which is now nearing its second year, sparked by Hamas' reckless actions.

Some naive individuals believed they could defeat Israel with a few rockets, ignoring the fact that the West, especially the United States, would never allow this at any cost.

If Hamas were guided by reason and truly concerned with the well-being of the people in Gaza, it would have been the first to accept a peace plan. Instead, it chose to escalate the conflict, leading to further death, destruction, hunger, and suffering.

By all rational assessments, Hamas and the other factions fueling this crisis face inevitable defeat, and their continued presence only deepens and prolongs the tragedy.

Some Arab leaders, especially those who met with Trump during the UN General Assembly, realized that their window of opportunity is closing, and that maneuvering is futile without possessing a force capable of

resisting the Israeli-American-Western alliance.

The region is now entering a new phase, different from the era of the Sykes-Picot Agreement that culminated in the 1967 war, when Israel expanded into Arab territories. Despite the presence of armies, there was no direct military confrontation. The outcome of that defeat marked the worst Arab catastrophe, the repercussions of which continue to this day.

Despite this, the Palestinians still have a chance to preserve some gains, especially in the Gaza Strip, where the Mediterranean Sea off its coast holds oil and gas resources that could help the people of Gaza overcome poverty and build an economy to support a future Palestinian state.

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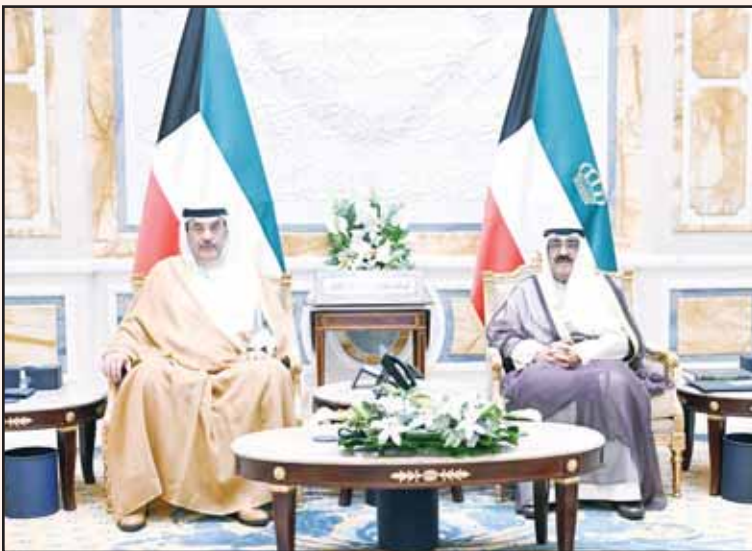
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Amiri Diwan photo
HH the Amir receives HH the Crown Prince at Bayan Palace.

Amir receives Crown Prince
after latter's visits to UK, US

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Tuesday received, at Bayan Palace, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah following his official visits to the United Kingdom and the United States.

His Highness the Crown Prince had chaired the State of Kuwait's delegation that participated in the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

On Monday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of gratitude and thanks to United Kingdom's Crown Prince, the Prince of Wales William.

In his cable, His Highness Sheikh Sabah said "as we leave the friendly United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland after concluding our official visit, I am pleased to express to your Highness, on my behalf and on behalf of the members of the accompanying delegation, my sincere thanks and deep gratitude for the cordial reception and warm hospitality you have accorded us throughout our visit."

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Kuwait welcomes US
push to end Gaza war

Hamas reviewing Trump's 20-point proposal

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (Agencies): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Tuesday applauded and praised the US efforts masterminded by President Donald Trump to end the war in the Gaza Strip.

In a statement, the ministry acclaimed Washington's efforts to reach an agreement to end hardships of the Palestinian people, safeguard their inalienable rights and lead to the full withdrawal of the Israeli occupation from the strip, begin reconstruction, prevent eviction of the Pales-

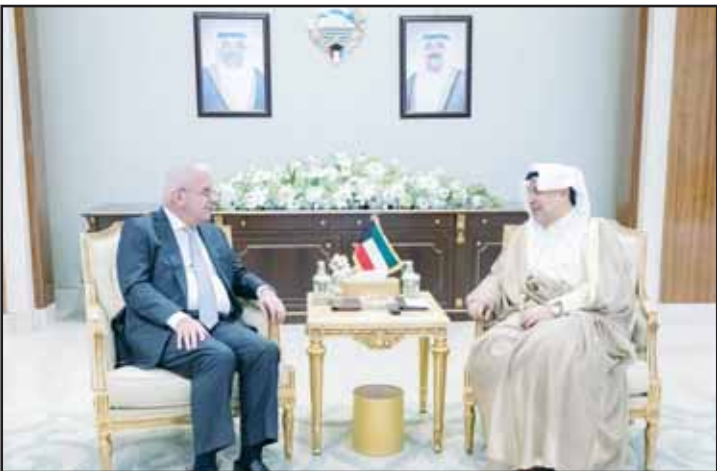
tinian people and support just and comprehensive peace.

The State of Kuwait, according to the statement, renewed its full confidence in President Trump's ability to find a peaceful and lasting solution in Gaza, expressed support for these sincere efforts aspired to lead to immediate delivery of urgent humanitarian aid to the Palestinians, establish peace based on the two-state solution, enable the Palestinian people to establish their independent states within the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

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Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs receives the US Embassy Charge d'Affaires.



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs receives Ambassador of the State of Palestine.



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, Head of Crown Prince Diwan receive the Ambassador of Greece.

Amiri Diwan Minister, Head of Crown Prince Diwan
host US, Greece, Albania and Palestine ambassadors

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Head of the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Tuesday at Bayan Palace the Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of the United States to Kuwait Steven Butler, who conveyed congratulations on their recent appointments.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed the close historical relations between Kuwait and the US, affirming the strength of their strategic partnership and the commitment to further develop it in various fields.

Sheikh Hamad praised the United States' historic role in the liberation of Kuwait, expressing gratitude to its government and people, and welcomed President Donald Trump's peace plan aimed at ending the Gaza conflict, securing Palestinian rights, and enabling reconstruction.

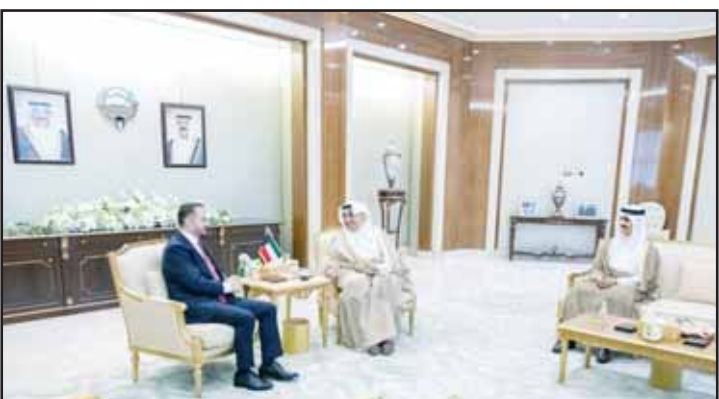
They also received the Ambassador of Greece to Kuwait, Ioannis Plotas, where talks focused on aspects of bilateral cooperation and means to bolster them across different domains.

They further received the Ambassador of Albania to Kuwait, Ilir Husa, during which the two

sides reviewed the solid relations between the two countries and explored opportunities for further development at all levels.

They also received the Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Kuwait, Rami Tahboub, and discussed the deep fraternal ties and ways to strengthen them in a manner that serves the interests of both sides and supports joint Arab action.

Sheikh Hamad reaffirmed Kuwait's principled and unwavering support for the Palestinian people in their pursuit of legitimate rights, particularly the establishment of an independent state.



Amiri Diwan photos
Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, Head of Crown Prince Diwan receive the Ambassador of Albania.

Day by Day

GOVERNMENT pressure on the people is overwhelming. What citizens truly need is for their affairs to be handled with ease. They are now being asked to pay service fees and overdue electricity bills, even though these debts accumulated largely due to the failure of previous governments to ensure timely collection. This is the government's fault, not the fault of the people.

Today, all that the people want is a flexible and compassionate approach to the collection of service fees and overdue electricity and water bills. They are asking for mercy, even as they are willing to pay what they owe. They hope that future policies will reflect what Kuwait has always stood for, which is compassion and kindness toward its citizens. ... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Boursa Kuwait launches the second edition of the 'Bell' initiative for financial literacy in commemoration of World Investor Week



KFH named 'Best Bank for Financial Institutions in the Middle East' by Global Finance



Valuable prizes, events, and activities presented by NBK Run 2025 partners

Tenants challenge legality of Muthanna Complex eviction

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Ministry of Finance evacuated the Al-Muthanna "commercial and residential" Complex on Sunday morning, sparking discontent among residents and investors, who argued that the

procedure overlooked legal considerations and the rights of families and businesses that have operated in the building for many years, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an interview with the daily, tenants explained that the Ministry of Finance notified investors and occupants of the complex in July that they must vacate within just 23 days. Shop owners and tenants viewed this as a sudden notice that did not comply with

the legal timelines typically applied in such cases.

In August, the ministry cut off some basic services to the complex, which exacerbated the residents' suffering,

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Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Tuesday a phone call from the Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tareq, discussing with him matters pertaining to bilateral relations.

His Highness the Amir and the Sultan of Oman also discussed issues of regional and international importance, exchanging their views on them. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, representing His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Prime Minister, departed Tuesday for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to attend the Munich Leaders Meeting on Security in Al-Ula.

The meeting, scheduled to commence on Wednesday and continue until Thursday, will address a number of key topics on its agenda, including global trade, regional crises, and energy transition. (KUNA)

Investment office aims to expand partnerships

Kuwaiti investments in Türkiye surpass \$2 billion

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Ambassador of Türkiye to Kuwait, Tuba Nur Sonmez, has said that there are 427 Kuwaiti companies currently operating in

Türkiye, with Kuwaiti investments exceeding two billion dollars, and that the volume of trade exchange between the two countries reached approximately 700 million dollars in 2024.

In her speech at a reception organized by the embassy to mark the visit of the

President of the Investment and Finance Office at the Turkish Presidency Ahmet Burak Daglioglu, Ambassador Sonmez stressed that the leadership of both countries places great importance on enhancing bilateral relations, which gained new

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Left: Ambassador of Türkiye to Kuwait, Tuba Nur Sonmez, speaks at a reception organized by the embassy. Right: A section of the attendees.



Photos by Rezk Tawfiq

Cooler days lift
mosque 'limits'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Ministry of Islamic Affairs has issued Circular No. 20/2025, announcing the suspension of the strict electricity and water conservation measures that were implemented during the summer, particularly during

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Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:21	Asr	15:03
Sunrise ..	05:40	Maghrib ..	17:36
Zohr	11:38	Isha	18:53

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times north-westerly wind, with speeds of 15-45 km/h with a chance for rising dust.
By Night: Rather hot to mild

Weather			
with light to moderate freshening at times over coastal areas north-westerly wind, with speeds of 12-42 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	42	30	
Kuwait Airport	41	30	

Abdaly	41	23
Bubyan	41	19
Jahra	42	28
Failaka Island	40	27
Salmiyah	37	30
Ahmadi	39	26
Nuwaisib	42	26
Wafra	41	27

Crown Prince, PM extend sympathies

Kuwait HH Amir offers condolences to Saudi King on Princess Abta’s passing



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Monday a cable of condolences to the King of Saudi Arabia, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, over the passing of Princess Abta bint Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir offered his sympathies and sincere condolences to King Salman bin Abdulaziz and the Saudi royal family.

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His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah

Strong ties marked by royal meetings

Foreign Minister Al-Yahya hails historic Kuwait-UK partnership

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya on Tuesday affirmed that the 126-year-old deep-rooted relationship between the State of Kuwait and the United Kingdom is constantly a focus of interest for the two states’ stakeholders in various spheres.

These close ties constitute an example for solid friendship and constructive cooperation in diverse fields, said the minister in a statement to KUNA following the visit by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to the UK.

The visit embodied the bonds of partnership and friendship bonding the two countries, he said, noting that His Highness the Crown Prince met with His Royal Highness Prince William, the Prince of Wales, at Windsor Castle, where he conveyed greetings from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to King Charles III and Prince William, wishing the UK and its friendly people continued progress and prosperity.

He added that His Highness the

Crown Prince also met, during the visit, Kuwaiti students studying at British universities, commending their achievements, excellent academic performance and affirming the aspiration for their future contribution to developing their dear homeland.

Moreover, His Highness the Crown Prince visited Kuwait Investment Office in London where he was briefed on its tasks, strategic plans and the vital role in managing and developing the Kuwaiti investments since its founding in 1953.

The minister, furthermore, lauded the office’s role in boosting Kuwait’s economic status and diversifying national income sources to ensure a promising future for the coming generations.



Al-Yahya

Ministry expects KD 4 mln savings

MoE OK’s staffing overhaul

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Ministry of Education announced that Minister Jalal Al-Tabtabaei has approved a ministerial decision concerning the regulatory procedures for supervisory and educational institutions, as well as the criteria for selecting personnel assigned to work in adult education and literacy centers in the Educational Affairs Sector, including educational zones, religious education, and special education, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the ministry explained that the new decision is expected to achieve financial savings of approximately KD 4 million from the bonus budget. These savings result from restructuring assignments and controlling staff numbers while ensuring that assignments align with actual needs and workload. The decision is part of its

educational reform strategy and efforts to enhance the efficiency of supervisory and educational bodies in line with the New Kuwait 2035 vision. It also aims to strengthen the role of continuing education and literacy in serving society and enabling individuals to complete their educational journeys.

The ministry clarified that applications from those wishing to work in adult education and literacy centers will be accepted online via the ministry’s official website from September 30 to October 6.

It affirmed its commitment to providing opportunities based on fair and transparent regulations.

The Ministry of Education emphasized its commitment to implementing strict measures to rationalize spending and control bonuses for supervisory and educational teams. Assignments will be limited to school staff and educational levels, based on the nature of the work and workload.

It confirmed that priority in assignments will be given to teachers in general, religious, and specialized education, followed by those in private education.



Al-Tabtabaei

Other Voices

Diamonds are forever

By Ahmad alsarraaf

Nothing brings a brighter smile to a woman’s face or fills her eyes with more joy than the gift of a precious diamond ring.

Diamonds, whether in the form of a ring, earring, necklace, or bracelet, have long been symbols of love, passion, and devotion. They embody eternal love, making them one of the most cherished gifts and a powerful testament to deep emotional connection.

While diamonds have always been highly prized, their value is not rooted in rarity like a masterpiece painting or a one-of-a-kind sculpture. Instead, their allure stems from a combination of historical mining limitations, controlled supply by powerful market forces, and brilliant marketing strategies.

In fact, just 80 years ago in 1947, a diamond ring lacked the brilliance, global prestige, and romantic symbolism it holds today.

Good-quality diamonds, whose name comes from the Greek word “adamas”, meaning “unbreakable” or “hard”, are among the most abundant gemstones, especially in regions like Africa, Russia, Australia, and Canada. While high-grade diamonds make up only a small fraction of total production, the overall supply is sufficient to meet global demand, particularly with the growing availability of lab-grown diamonds.

The South African company De Beers has controlled diamond extraction, manufacturing, and pricing since 1888. It was established by British businessman Cecil Rhodes after he acquired several mines, including one owned by the Dutch De Beers family, whose name he adopted for the company.

Within a few years, De Beers controlled 90 percent of the global diamond market, though its share has declined in recent decades.

De Beers has withstood crises, wars, natural disasters, and major financial collapses due to

its conservative policies, market dominance, and highly successful marketing campaigns, most notably the creation of the iconic slogan “A diamond is forever.” This campaign sparked global demand and gave diamonds a modern, attractive appeal.

However, some critics consider De Beers’ strategy to be one of the greatest marketing hoaxes of the 20th century. Diamonds, they argue, are not truly rare, and therefore not inherently as valuable as the market suggests.

To ensure the success of their marketing strategy, De Beers deliberately linked diamond gifting and ownership to love and marriage, creating a deep desire in women to possess them.

The company employed various tactics such as featuring diamonds in popular novels, blockbuster films, and romantic songs, launching lavish and persuasive advertising campaigns, and enlisting famous women to wear them.

High-quality natural diamonds are much rarer than synthetic ones, even though both share similar geological origins.

Lab-grown diamonds, while chemically identical, often lack the clarity, color, and brilliance needed for fine jewelry and are typically unsuitable for cutting, grinding, or drilling tools. Only about 20 percent of mined diamonds each year are classified as high-quality, with an even smaller percentage considered exceptionally valuable due to their superior color, clarity, and size.

Diamond clarity is graded using the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) scale, which ranges from FL (Flawless), indicating no visible imperfections under magnification, to I (Included), where inclusions are clearly visible. Clarity is assessed based on the number, size, and position of internal flaws or inclusions under specialized magnification.

The belief in exchanging something valuable for a few otherwise worthless banknotes is not so different from our belief in the market value of diamonds. Just as currencies rely on central banks to maintain their value, diamonds have their own equivalent in the De Beers Corporation.

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Bahraini envoy praises diwaniya as ‘deep-rooted social value’ in Kuwait

‘Tradition a unique Gulf bond enhancing Kuwaiti generosity’

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain Salah Al-Maliki says the concept of diwaniya in the Kuwaiti society represents a deep-rooted social value, as it is a place for friendly conversation and an opportunity to strengthen bonds of brotherhood and exchange visits. This unique tradition is

almost exclusive to the people of the Gulf and is rarely found in the same depth or richness elsewhere in the world.

In a press statement during a reception held by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain at its diwaniya recently, Ambassador Al-Maliki expressed his joy at receiving the guests who honored the diwaniya with their presence.

He expressed his pride in the diwaniya serving as a meeting space for all, adding, “From time to time, we host our brothers and sisters from the State

of Kuwait, including sheikhs, dignitaries, friends, media professionals, and members of the diplomatic corps.”

Ambassador Al-Maliki affirmed that such gatherings reflect the depth of the fraternal ties between Bahrain and Kuwait and highlight the spirit of love and friendship that binds the two peoples.

He emphasized that the diwaniya is a symbol of social and human connection, embodying the nature of Kuwaiti society, which is rooted in openness, generosity, and hospitality.

Ambassador Al-Maliki noted that Bahraini-Kuwaiti relations are not limited to official ties, but extends to deep-rooted popular, social, and cul-

tural connections.

He stressed that these friendly gatherings in the diwanis are a natural extension of the mutual understanding, harmony, and shared vision between the leaderships of both countries in pursuit of a brighter future for the region, adding, “The Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain is always keen to keep the diwaniya open to everyone. It reflects our commitment to ongoing communication and to strengthening the bonds between our two nations.”

Ambassador Al-Maliki affirmed that such occasions help deepen mutual understanding and open broader avenues for cooperation in various sectors.



Photos by Rezk Tawfik

Bahrain Embassy diwaniya brings together dignitaries, diplomats, and guests in a celebration of Gulf traditions and the strong bonds between Bahrain and Kuwait.

Kuwaiti Soof Wool Mill displays at prestigious fair in Italy

LONDON, Sept 30, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Soof Wool Mill participated with a dedicated booth at the Exhibition on Sustainable Innovations, held in Rome, Italy, from September 29 to October 3.

The fair was held on the occasion of the Global Conference on Sustainable Livestock Transforma-

tions, organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The opening ceremony was headed by FAO Director General Dr. Qu Dongyu in the presence of Nasser Al-Qahtani, Ambassador of Kuwait to Italy, Yousef Juhail, Kuwait’s Permanent Repre-

sentative to FAO, and Sheikha Bibi Duaij Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Head of AlSadu Society, as well as Dr Abdulaziz Mohammad Altateeqi, representative of Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, member of the External Advisory Panel of the conference.

Bureaucracy burden: Stalling Kuwait's development drive

“GOVERNANCE is neither an intellectual luxury nor an irreplaceable accessory. If it were, it would not have received such global attention. The United Nations would not have prioritized it, and economists would not have recognized it as a condition for sustainable development,” former director of the Arab Planning Institute **Dr. Bader Othman Malallah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Good governance promotes the values of transparency, integrity, and a commitment to quality performance. True and lasting development, along with prosperous economic growth, can only be achieved through a well-governed public sector and a private sector built on strong foundations of good governance.

“The National Framework for Governance of the Governmental Administrative Apparatus in Kuwait and the National Program for Corporate Governance have yet to produce tangible results in achieving their intended goals.

“This may be due to two reasons - first, they are advisory frameworks without legal binding force, and second, there has been insufficient promotion and integration of these frameworks within public administration and the national culture.

“The Chandler Good Governance Index ranks Kuwait 53rd globally for 2025. While this reflects Kuwait's significant efforts in governance and digitization, it also highlights the shortcomings in public administration governance procedures and programs.

“Therefore, a new perspective and modern methods are urgently needed to advance this field, given its critical impact on development performance and the national economy.

“Government administration has become large and complex, both in terms of institutional components and the number of employees. It remains the primary employer of national labor, largely due to the trend in previous decades of creating new agencies for every new government role.

“Studies indicate that this expansion far exceeds the scope of services and goods provided by the government administration and explains the significant decline in productivity.

“As a result, the government administration has become a burden on development rather than a driver of it. Beyond problems of size and low productivity, administrative costs continue to rise steadily, with salaries and wages accounting for the largest share of the general budget, estimated at approximately KD 14.8 billion for the fiscal year of 2024/2025, out of a total expenditure of around KD 24 billion (about 62 percent of total spending).

“Approximately 483,000 employees work in the government administration, with Kuwaitis making up about 77 percent. In addition to the high cost, this workforce size far exceeds the administration's actual needs and capacity.

“The goal of “effective government administration” was one of the pillars of both the 2015–2020 Development Plan and the subsequent (current) plan. Both plans identified government administration reform as central to Kuwait's national development strategy and included policies aimed at reforming administrative and bureaucratic practices to enhance transparency, accountability, and performance efficiency. They also focused on building an effective civil service system, utilizing digital technologies in government operations, and reducing bureaucratic red tape and paperwork.

“However, traditional problems remain unaddressed because the vision and policies included in these plans did not fully engage with the root of the issues.

“Reducing the size of the public administration to align with the actual volume of public services and goods it provides requires creating job opportunities to ease the employment burden currently borne by the public sector, shifting this responsibility to the private sector.

“Addressing a major aspect of public finance imbalances, namely salaries and wages, is essential as a primary goal of financial reform. Governance of public administration must be aligned with that of the private sector, which has made significant strides in this area, particularly the banking sector, a key pillar of the national economy.

“The private sector must increase its contribution to productive industries and transform itself into a productive, rather than an importing, sector.”

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“Judicial litigation is one of the fundamental pillars that govern the administration of justice and uphold

the rule of law. Understanding the difference between initiation and commencement of litigation is crucial to ensuring the proper and efficient conduct of judicial proceedings. The difference between these two concepts depends on the timing and procedures followed, as each plays a pivotal role in achieving justice,” Kuwaiti writer **Imad Khamis Al-Aqab** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Al-Aqab

ting all necessary documents and evidence supporting the plaintiff's case, along with a clear specification of the claims they seek to pursue through the judiciary.

“Litigation officially begins once the defendant is notified of the lawsuit filed against them. This notification is carried out by serving the defendant with a copy of the statement of claim and related documents. The notice must be served properly and legally to ensure the defendant is fully aware of the lawsuit and has the opportunity to present their defenses and evidence.

“Thus, initiating a lawsuit is the first step taken by the plaintiff, while the commencement of the lawsuit represents the realization of justice by ensuring the defendant's right to defend themselves. Understanding this distinction is crucial for the proper administration of justice. Filing the lawsuit alone, without notifying the defendant, is not enough to achieve justice. Proper service of notice is essential to ensure the defendant is aware of the case and able to present their defense.

“Thus, this distinction ensures a balance of rights between the disputing parties and upholds the principle of fairness. These concepts demonstrate that the Kuwaiti judicial system places great importance on protecting the rights of all parties involved and relies on precise procedures to achieve this goal. Understanding the difference between filing a lawsuit and the commencement of the lawsuit is a key element in ensuring fair and effective justice.”

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“If citizens, especially those with limited income, wish to expand or build new homes to replace their small, old-fashioned houses that no longer reflect modern urban development, the government does not provide them with land plots. This leaves the citizen with no choice but to take a risky path - either sell the old home or mortgage it to banks that charge excessive interest. In reality, both options are like stepping into the fire, as these banks deduct steep installments directly from the citizen's salary, or pension, if retired,” Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Therefore, do not be surprised when you hear that half of Kuwait's citizens are working just to pay the



Al-Aqab

banks. This means a large portion of their income goes toward paying off accumulated housing debts, car loans, wedding expenses for their children, or tuition fees for foreign schools.

“Many people, especially expatriate friends, imagine that the Kuwaiti citizen walks around with a checkbook and multiple bank cards in his pocket, unaware that, in reality, he is financially struggling.

“A citizen needs between KD 200,000 and KD 300,000 just to buy a plot of land suitable for building a modest family home, on top of a similar amount needed for construction. For the average citizen, owning a home means constant worry, sleepless nights, financial pressure, and a long, exhausting journey of paying off installments.

“O government, this is the reality for the low-income citizen. And here, I can't help but ask - Is now really the right time for the government to consider allowing foreigners to own real estate, despite the already limited availability of land? Selling land plots to foreigners is a disastrous plan that would subject poor citizens to the greed of merchants and real estate brokers.

“O Council of Ministers, fear God. Previous governments rejected this idea out of awareness of the citizens' hardship and their belief that the Kuwaiti citizens must remain at the heart of national priorities. I say this clearly - Kuwait is not for sale.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

Candidates advance to medical exams

Mol selects 250 First Sergeant students

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Under the patronage of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, the admission draw for the 29th batch of non-commissioned officer students, with the rank of First Sergeant, was held at the Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Admission draw for non-commissioned officer students held under the patronage of First Deputy PM and Minister of Interior Sheikh Faad Al-Yousef.

The draw took place in the presence of Head of the Education and Training Affairs Sector Brigadier General Ali Al-Wahib, Assistant Director-General of the Academy Brigadier General Faisal Hajji, and Acting Director of the Non-Commissioned Officers Institute Colonel Walid Al-Najjar. The Ministry of Interior stated on its X account

that a total of 910 applicants competed for the batch. Among them, 250 primary candidates and 50 reserve candidates were selected. All selected candidates will undergo advanced medical examinations according to approved requirements and standards. The ministry wished the candidates success in their future endeavors to serve the nation's security.



Ministry of Interior photos

Traffic sweep nets reckless motorists

Bangladeshi man dies in Wafra

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Ministry of Interior announced that the General Traffic Department, represented by the Traffic Investigations Unit of Security Control Department, conducted field campaigns that resulted in the issuance of 214 various traffic citations, and impoundment of 21 vehicles and 11 motorcycles.

In an official statement, the ministry revealed that ten individuals were placed in precautionary detention, 12 juveniles were referred to the Juvenile Prosecution, and one vehicle wanted for judicial detention was seized.

The ministry explained that these campaigns are part of ongoing efforts to enhance road safety, deter reckless behavior that endangers lives and property, and track down violators and reckless drivers. It will not tolerate any leniency in taking legal action against violators.

It emphasized the importance of public cooperation in reporting traffic violations or reckless behavior through the hotline No.

112 of the ministry's Operations Room, the WhatsApp No. 99324092 of the General Traffic Department or the “Tawasul” platform, adding that such cooperation will help enhance traffic safety and reduce negative incidents.

According to security sources, the recent arrests targeted reckless drivers, individuals riding quad bikes on public roads, and juveniles driving without licenses in several areas, all of whom have faced legal action.

They indicated that the Security Monitoring Department at the General Traffic Department is actively monitoring videos circulating on social media, including those showing red-light violations or other serious traffic offenses, adding that legal measures will be taken after verifying the authenticity and timing of the footage.

Meanwhile, a Bangladeshi expatriate in his fifties died in a traffic accident on Wafra Road, and his body has been referred to the Forensic Medicine Department.

According to a security source, when the Operations Room of the Ministry of Interior received information about the accident on Wafra Road, security personnel and paramedics rushed to the scene immediately, and discovered that the accident resulted in the death of a Bangladeshi man in his fifties. A case was registered.

KNG official, UK defense adviser explore deepening cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Undersecretary of Kuwait's National Guard (KNG) Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjes discussed Tuesday along with UK Senior Defense Adviser for the Middle East, Vice Admiral Edward Ahlgren ways of boosting cooperation between the Guard and British military establishments.

A statement issued by KNG

mentioned that Lt. Gen. Al-Barjes met with Ahlgren and the British defense attache to Kuwait Navy Colonel Neil Marriott and accompanying delegation on occasion of visit to the country.

Al-Barjes relayed the greetings of KNG Chief Sheikh Mubarak Humoud Al-Sabah and Deputy Chief Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Sabah.



KUNA photo
Part of the General Fire Force campaign in the Al-Ardiya Industrial Area.

33 establishments closed

KFF conducts safety inspection campaign in Al-Ardiya Industrial

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) conducted an inspection campaign on Tuesday in Al-Ardiya Industrial Area, resulting in the administrative closure of 33 shops and establishments for violating regulations.

The campaign also resulted in the issuance of 109 notices and 13 closure warnings to other establishments under the supervision of Acting Deputy Chief for Civil Protection at KFF, Brigadier General Omar Bouresli.

In a statement to KUNA, Brigadier General Bouresli said that the campaign came in response to KFF's national responsibility to protect lives and property and improve community safety and security.

News in Brief

Nazaha refers disclosure defaulters to prosecution

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) Sunday referred individuals subject to financial disclosure requirements to the Public Prosecution for submitting inaccurate financial disclosure statements, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In a statement posted on its official X account, Nazaha affirmed the importance of all individuals subject to financial disclosure provisions to complete their statements accurately and submit them within the legally specified deadlines. The authority stressed that this is essential to promoting transparency, integrity, and strengthening public trust in state institutions.

□ □ □

Mol warns of rising scams: “Ministry of Interior does not communicate through video calls and never requests personal or banking information from citizens or residents. In fact, no official entity will ask for bank account details or OTP codes via phone or text messages”, reports **Al-Anba** daily quoting security sources as saying.

They explained that the ministry has recently identified multiple types of fraud and scams, including video calls from individuals impersonating security officers using altered phones and communication apps, as well as others posing as telecom company employees offering fake promotions and making unrealistic claims.

□ □ □

Nazaha holds field training: As part of its field training program for university students, the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) welcomed a group of male and female students from Kuwait University's Faculty of Law, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

In an official statement, Nazaha explained that the training program, which will continue until December 11, includes both theoretical and practical components. Experts from Nazaha will deliver lectures on topics such as the law establishing the authority, its objectives and functions, financial disclosure regulations, job-related rights and duties, and disciplinary procedures. The practical segment will involve legal exercises and case studies.

□ □ □

Driver caught in drug scheme: Hawally security-men arrested a domestic driver of an Asian nationality for distributing heroin using his employer's car without their knowledge, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

According to a security source, the driver would place the drugs in pre-arranged locations according to instructions received electronically, and the buyers left the payment in designated spots. After his arrest, the driver confessed to the crime and was referred to the Drugs Control General Department for necessary legal action.

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Amir congratulates Botswana on Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Botswana, Duma Gideon Boko, on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished the President good health and wellbeing, and more progress and prosperity for Botswana and its people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to

the President of Botswana, Duma Gideon Boko, on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished the President good health and wellbeing, and more progress and prosperity for Botswana and its people.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Botswana, Duma Gideon Boko, on his country's National Day.

Kuwait strengthens global role in medical governance

KU signs MoU with Medical Liability Authority

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The Medical Liability Authority announced Kuwait's accession to the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA), reflecting the country's keenness to strengthen its global presence in medical regulation and align with Kuwait Vision 2035.

In a statement to KUNA, Authority President Dr. Salman Al-Sabah said this membership crowns Kuwait's ongoing efforts to reinforce its international standing in the field of medical governance and to actively contribute to shaping global health regulation policies.

He explained that the objective is to exchange expertise with leading global entities, adopt initiatives that improve regulatory practices, safeguard patient

rights, protect healthcare professionals, and ensure a positive impact on the quality of healthcare services.

Dr. Al-Sabah affirmed Kuwait's commitment to transforming international expertise into practical policies serving the local health system, marking the beginning of a new stage of long-term cooperation with the global community to develop legislation and strengthen Kuwait's influence.

IAMRA, established in 2000, is among the most prominent global bodies specializing in medical governance, currently comprising 46 member states following Kuwait's accession, making it a key platform for sharing expertise and shaping international healthcare policies.

Meanwhile, Kuwait University on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding with the Medical Liability Authority, a step that reflects the university's ongoing efforts to strengthen partnerships with national institutions and state entities.

In a press statement, the university said

its President Dr. Dina Al-Mailem received President of the Medical Liability Authority Dr. Salman Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation at Sabah Al-Salem University City.

It added that the meeting witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding aimed at consolidating partnerships between Kuwait University and various state institutions, in line with Kuwait Vision 2035 objectives in education, research, and community development.

The memorandum seeks to enhance co-operation by exchanging academic expertise, training programs in law and medicine, sharing educational materials and information, and organizing joint research projects, conferences, and other initiatives of mutual interest between the two parties.

The Medical Liability Authority is an independent government body established in 2020 under Law No. 70 of 2020 regulating medical practice, allied professions, patient rights, and the operation of healthcare facilities across the country.

Kuwait's Ambassador Sheikh Sabah Nasser presents credentials to Saudi Crown Prince

RIYADH, Sept 30, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah presented his credentials to the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, on behalf of King Salman bin Abdulaziz.

Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said the Crown Prince received several newly appointed ambassadors at Al-Yamamah Palace.

The Saudi Crown Prince welcomed the ambassadors and conveyed the greetings of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and his own greetings to the leaders of

their respective countries, wishing them success in their duties to strengthen ties with the Kingdom.

For their part, the ambassadors conveyed the greetings of their leaders to King Salman and the Crown Prince, expressing appreciation for the warm welcome and hospitality.

The event was attended by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, Chief of the Royal Court Fahd Al-Issa, Chief of Royal Protocol Khaled Al-Abbad, and Commander of the Royal Guard General Suhail Al-Mutairi.



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Sabah welcomes Cooperative Society leaders, praises role in food security.

Farwaniya Governor meets Cooperative Society leaders to discuss food security

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received at the Farwaniya Governorate's General Diwan on Monday morning the heads of the board of directors of cooperative societies.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the meeting began with the gover-

nor's speech in which he welcomed the board chairmen of the cooperative societies, and praised their vital role in enhancing food security, which is a main pillar of social stability.

He stressed the importance of strengthening collective and cooperative efforts through community initiatives to achieve prosperity, sus-

tainable development, and improved public services for Farwaniya residents.

At the end of the meeting, the board chairmen of the cooperative societies expressed their gratitude to the governor for his warm welcome and support for cooperative work and community initiatives serving the people of Farwaniya.

Ahmadi grants major urban dev't requests

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Ahmadi Committee of the Municipal Council, during its meeting on Sunday, chaired by Nassar Al-Azmi, approved the request of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to create an entrance from King Fahd bin Abdulaziz Road to serve South Sabahiya.

The committee also approved the Ministry of Public Works' request to allocate a site for a wastewater treatment plant in the South Sabah Al-Ahmad residential city.

In addition, the committee approved the Ministry of Education's request to reorganize its public schools in Ahmadi Block 4, as well as the Kuwait National Petroleum Company's request to relocate the fuel station located southeast of the Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential Area.



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4 firms selected for consulting works

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) has approved the technical bids of four consulting firms for the Sabriya City project's consulting services competition.

According to a memorandum on the consulting services competition for detailed studies, planning, design, and preparation of tender documents for the construction, completion, and maintenance of main roads and major infrastructure networks in Sabriya Residential City, four companies were selected after achieving a success rate of 70 percent or higher among the applicants.

Sources said PAHW will review the technical bids, adding that approval of these bids marks a major step toward the implementation of one of the largest

housing projects in the country. The city will offer 55,000 housing units along with service, commercial, recreational, and public facilities, covering an area of 80 square kilometers.

The consulting firms' scope of work includes preparing detailed studies and designs for main roads and major infrastructure networks, as well as drafting tender documents necessary for the construction, completion, and maintenance of these vital facilities.

The sources emphasized that this preliminary phase is a fundamental pillar for ensuring quality implementation in the future.

They highlighted the residential sector's commitment to adopting the highest technical and engineering standards and keeping pace with the latest global practices in urban planning and engineering.

MOHE limits scholarship major changes

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: In response to student requests to change their major within scholarship programs, the Ministry of Higher Education has announced the official conditions for doing so, either after completing the preparatory year or during academic studies, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The ministry affirmed that students must first obtain academic acceptance from a university or institution recommended by the ministry, for a major listed within the scholarship program, and within the same academic year and country of study.

In a press statement on its official X account, the ministry explained the important requirements including meeting academic eligibility criteria based on their academic system, and completing at least 12 credit hours in a semester-based system with a minimum GPA of 2.00, or successfully completing the preparatory

or first academic year in an annual system. Students are allowed to change their major only once after actual enrollment, and only after receiving formal approval from the ministry.

A scholarship student may request to change their major more than once during their academic studies, up to a maximum of two times, if they are accepted into a distinguished program or transfer to a distinguished educational institution.

Students may request to switch to a field not listed in the ministry's scholarship program under the same conditions, provided the total number of changes does not exceed two.

However, students are not permitted to change their major after completing half of their academic program or before arriving in the host country. Also, any change requires approval from both the admitting institution and the Ministry of Higher Education.

News in Brief

MoCI tightens company registration: Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced that it has updated company registration procedures to include the submission of beneficiary data as an important step in the application process, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The Kuwait Business Center explained that applications will not be accepted by the Registration and Licensing Department unless the beneficiary information is verified in advance. This requirement is intended to prevent delays in the approval process. Once verification is complete, applications will proceed to the department for the completion of registration procedures.

PAM seeks specialized software: Following the launch of its new automated service for digitizing most private businesses inspection procedures, the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has announced a tender for the procurement of specialized software to manage these inspection processes, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to PAM sources, the deadline for submitting bids is October 16, with a required bid security deposit of KD 525 and a non-refundable fee of KD 5 for the tender documents. A pre-bid meeting for interested companies will be held on October 5.

The sources affirmed PAM's commitment to expanding automated services and minimizing human intervention by embracing digital solutions, aimed at virtually eliminating opportunities for manipulation or abuse in the inspection process.



Left: A panel discussion with the participation of experts and officials. Right: Ministers, officials and decision-makers attend the opening session of the Global Rail 2025 exhibition and conference in Abu Dhabi.



Leading figures, experts gather to shape future of mobility and logistics

Kuwait supports transport growth at Global Rail 2025: Al-Mashaan

ABU DHABI, Sept 30, (KUNA): Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan affirmed Tuesday, Kuwait’s commitment to advancing sustainable transport and strengthening Gulf cooperation across sectors through its participation in Global Rail 2025.

Dr. Al-Mashaan told KUNA, following the opening of the conference in Abu Dhabi that such forums are key to exchanging expertise and learning from global transport and railway experiences.

She added that strengthening Gulf and Arab railway connectivity is a priority for achieving economic integration and increasing the flow of trade.

She emphasized that bilateral cooperation with the UAE is a key pillar for strengthening joint efforts and supporting regional integration toward a sustainable and prosperous future.

On the sidelines of the conference, Al-Mashaan toured the exhibition’s pavilions with Arab ministers and officials, receiving briefings on the latest innovations in transportation, railways, and smart technologies.



Left: Etihad Rail booth showcases latest train technology. Right: Pavilions of international companies participating in Global Rail 2025 in Abu Dhabi.

The second edition of the Global Rail 2025 Exhibition and Conference, themed “Driving the Future of Transport and Global Connectivity,” will run until October 3.

The conference brought together more than 24 ministers and ministerial

delegations, alongside more than 200 companies and brands from 14 sectors.

The exhibition includes over 55 discussion sessions covering sustainable finance, policies and governance, high-speed trains, AI, automation, and future urban planning.



KUNA photos

The Global Rail 2025 exhibition and conference was launched on Tuesday in Abu Dhabi with Kuwaiti Minister of Public Works, Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan participating.

The 2025 event, themed “Driving the Future of Transport and Global

Connectivity,” brings together leading figures and experts in the transport sector to foster cooperation and innovation in mobility, logistics and infrastructure across different countries.

Now in its second edition, the three-day event features strategic and techni-

cally conferences, with over 55 sessions addressing high-speed rail, sustainable financing, smart mobility, AI, interoperability, and future urban planning.

Experts from research institutions are also participating in discussions on engineering, digitization, asset management, and operational innovation.

The event is expected to welcome more than 20,000 international visitors over three days filled with strategic dialogue sessions, project showcases and exchanges of technical expertise.

Covering four halls, the 2025 exhibition brings together more than 200 companies and brands across 14 sectors, ranging from infrastructure and rolling stock to digital innovation, finance and smart mobility.

Over 70 companies are participating in the exhibition for the first time, alongside more than 11 national rail operators.

Kuwait’s delegation also includes Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) Khaled Al-Osaimi.

Continued from Page 1

Keep Hamas’

This is why the Trump plan has received a positive response in the Arab world, as some leaders recognize that the world has changed and are dealing with it in a language it understands. Therefore, stopping the war in Gaza is a prelude to halting a plan targeting the entire region.

Conversely, a thoughtful and wise reading of the Trump plan reveals a great opportunity for the Palestinians to establish their state and halt the Judaization of the West Bank.

Paragraph 20 of the plan states, “With the reconstruction of Gaza progressing, and with the faithful implementation of the Palestinian Authority’s reform program, conditions may finally be created for a credible path leading to Palestinian self-determination and statehood, which we recognize as the aspiration of the Palestinian people.”

The final statement in this paragraph marks the first Israeli recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and acknowledges the existence of a Palestinian state, which has become a reality increasingly recognized by countries around the world. However, achieving this goal depends on the ability to unify Palestinian decision-making under the legitimate, internationally recognized Palestinian Authority.

Wasting this opportunity will only prolong suffering. Unfortunately, reckless rhetoric continues to dominate the leaders of the Palestinian factions, who seem to take pride in the bloodshed of their own people.

Hamas’s rejection of the plan is not an act of patriotism but a clear evidence of betrayal, as the ongoing suffering benefits the greedy leaders who live luxurious lives nearly 2,000 kilometers away from Gaza, while hundreds of their own people are killed daily.

There is no doubt that the Palestinian people will hold accountable those responsible for the suffering in Gaza and the West Bank, and those who fail to understand the language of reason and the precise calculations that govern international balances.

They have ignored the history of the Arab region and Palestine, which spans nearly 3,500 years, and witnessed the rise and fall of great empires. Instead, they have fallen into the trap of Hamas’s seductive slogans that cloud reason. For this reason, Hamas’ heretics must be kept away from the Palestinian cause.

Amir receives

Sheikh Sabah added, “This visit embodies the strength of the close historical ties between our two countries, whose roots extend back more than 125 years, and are based on solid foundations of mutual respect and deep appreciation, and which have recorded a rich record of honorable positions, joint achievements, and constructive cooperation.”

“This visit is a continuation of a series of meetings and mutual visits that have provided us with a valuable opportunity to discuss and exchange views and visions on various international issues,” His Highness the Crown Prince said.

“I am confident that it will constitute an important step and a valuable addition that will contribute to strengthening the growing strategic ties between our two friendly countries, in light of the continued interest and generous patronage of His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah,” Sheikh

Sabah added.

“We also affirm our keenness in the State of Kuwait to continue working with you and moving forward towards a new phase of partnership that consolidates the strong relations between the two countries and elevates levels of integration and cooperation to broader and more comprehensive horizons that serve their mutual interests.

Lastly, His Highness the Crown Prince extended his personal best wishes, health, happiness, and success, hoping for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and its friendly people further progress, advancement, and prosperity.

Kuwaiti investments

momentum following the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Türkiye last year.

She explained that His Highness’s visit to Ankara witnessed the signing of several agreements in the fields of bilateral trade, defense industry, and investment. Cooperation between the two countries covers various sectors, including trade, defense, tourism, and investment.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan met with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on the sidelines of the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Also, the Turkish Embassy has hosted many high-level Turkish officials over the past two years, including Minister of Trade Ömer Bolat and Minister of Treasury and Finance Mehmet İmrek, who held meetings and events with the Kuwaiti business community.

Ambassador Sonmez affirmed that Türkiye and Kuwait are partners in all fields, based on their shared history, religious and cultural affinity, as well as common values, visions, and vibrant business communities, which are the most important pillars upon which bilateral relations are built.

She clarified that the current volume of trade and investment figures does not fully reflect the depth of the relationship, affirming the mutual need to connect the business sectors of both countries, build new bridges, and strengthen dialogue.

The ambassador said the visit of the Head of the Investment and Finance Office presents an opportunity to unlock joint potential, build new partnerships, undertake bold investments, and shape a future driven by mutual growth.

Meanwhile, Head of the Investment and Finance Office at the Turkish Presidency Ahmet Burak Daglioglu, on the sidelines of the reception, revealed that the visit was aimed to meet investors, explore available opportunities in various economic sectors, and encourage them to invest capital, especially given the existing collaboration between the Investment Office and many Kuwaiti investors in Türkiye.

He affirmed that the office supports most Kuwaiti companies with investments in Türkiye.

During his visit to Kuwait, Daglioglu toured the headquarters of those companies, met with their owners, and explored opportunities to expand cooperation, particularly as the office reports directly to the Presidency.

He stressed that the office aims to attract more capital in new sectors such as insurance, technology, and financial services, in addition to the traditional sectors that have long seen investment in Türkiye, such as the banking sector, particularly Islamic finance.

Daglioglu emphasized that supporting entrepreneurs in the technology sector is a top priority for the office, as is assisting Kuwaiti youth in establishing their tech ventures in Türkiye, given its

advanced digital infrastructure, adding that the office also helps them overcome most bureaucratic hurdles related to obtaining licenses.

Cooler days

peak hours from 11:00am to 5:00pm, in ministry buildings, mosques, and their associated facilities, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This decision is based on a statement issued by the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy confirming that such measures are no longer necessary due to the drop in temperatures and a corresponding decline in electrical loads.

The circular, signed by Undersecretary Dr. Bader Al-Mutairi, affirms the continued application of general rationalization policies during non-peak periods.

Tenants challenge

especially since the building houses both residential apartments and commercial shops relied upon by many citizens and residents for their daily work.

Residents reported being surprised on Sunday when teams from the ministry forcibly closed the entire complex, posted closure notices, prevented tenants from entering or leaving, and sealed off all entrances, including parking lots, elevators, and service areas.

Many of the residents had sought help through official channels to find a solution that would protect their rights, but their requests were rejected.

The residents revealed that the dispute was supposed to be between the ministry and the beneficiary investor only, and that the tenants, who have occupied their premises for more than 17 years, had no involvement in the matter.

Kuwait welcomes

A joint statement by the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia and several Arab and Muslim countries welcomed late Monday US President Donald Trumps efforts to end the war in Gaza, and find a path to peace in the region.

US President Donald Trump on Monday laid out a 20-point proposal supported by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that would end the war in Gaza and free remaining hostages, leaning heavily into conditions that Hamas has previously rejected.

The U.S. president, who has become increasingly frustrated by the bloody conflict, seems to be betting that the militants are now so decimated that they have no choice but to accept what he and Netanyahu are framing as a last, best offer.

“If Hamas rejects your plan, Mr. President, or if they supposedly accept it and then do everything to counter it, then Israel will finish the job by itself,” Netanyahu said after meeting with Trump at the White House. “This can be done the easy way or it can be done the hard way, but it will be done.”

Qatar’s prime minister and Egypt’s intelligence chief presented Trump’s proposal to Hamas negotiators, who are now reviewing it in “good faith,” according to a person familiar with the matter. The person was not authorized to comment and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Kuwait strengthens air transport partnerships

Women’s inclusion in aviation advanced

WASHINGTON, Sept 30, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Public Authority for Civil Aviation affirmed its commitment to strengthening international cooperation and expanding global air connectivity in order to develop the aviation sector and reinforce Kuwait International Airport’s position as a key regional hub.

This came during bilateral meetings held by the Public Authority for Civil Aviation delegation with several international counterparts on the sidelines of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Assembly, taking place in Montreal, Canada, from September 23 to October 3.

In a press statement, the Public Authority for Civil Aviation said the Kuwaiti delegation met with representatives from China to present Kuwait’s latest aviation projects and encourage Chinese airlines to operate passenger and cargo flights to Kuwait International Airport. The two sides also discussed opportunities to benefit from China’s expertise in airport management and cargo operations.

The delegation also met with Brazilian representatives, where talks focused on the possibility of opening new air routes between Kuwait and Brazil, either directly or through international hubs, to be operated by Kuwait Airways or Brazilian carriers.

The Public Authority for Civil Aviation delegation held discussions with Singaporean delegation, exploring prospects for direct flights between the two countries. The talks also covered knowledge exchange in airport management, air cargo city operations, and strengthening cooperation in training and capacity-building.

The statement added that the Kuwaiti delegation attended an official reception hosted by Qatar and South Korea in honor of the delegations participating in the ICAO meetings.

Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti Public Authority for Civil Aviation delegation took part in a session of the International Civil Aviation Organization’s (ICAO) 42nd General Assembly in Montreal, Canada, to promote gender equality and strengthen women’s participation in the aviation sector.

Deputy Director General for Aviation Safety and Air Transport Abdullah Al-Rajhi told KUNA late Monday that the delegation joined the meeting of the Gender Focal Points (GFPs) which discussed experiences, challenges, as well as international and regional initiatives to empower women in aviation.

He added that Kuwait was represented by Shoug Al-Kout and Ameera



Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) President Sheikh Eng. Humoud Mubarak Al-Sabah with the Brazilian delegation at the ICAO conference in Canada.



Kuwait Civil Aviation Chief with the Singaporean delegation.



KUNA photos
Kuwait Civil Aviation delegation meets South Korean delegation on the sidelines of ICAO meetings in Canada.

Al-Azmi, whose participation underscored the authority’s commitment to ICAO’s vision of empowering women and expanding their presence in international forums, in line with Kuwait’s approach to supporting women across key sectors, including civil aviation.

The meeting recommended pro-

grams and tools to advance gender equality and further integrate women’s roles within the aviation industry.

The 42nd ICAO General Assembly continues from September 23 to October 3, with broad participation from member states and international aviation organizations.

America

Texas parking lot shooting kills 2: Authorities on Monday were trying to determine why a man opened fire in the parking lot of a casino in a Texas border city over the weekend, killing two people and wounding at least five others.

Keryan Rashad Jones, 34, was arrested during a traffic stop several hours after the shooting late Saturday night at the Kickapoo Lucky Eagle Casino in Eagle Pass, authorities said.

Jones was arrested Sunday morning following a pursuit by authorities near Stockdale, which is about 180 miles (290 kilometers) east of Eagle Pass, according to the Wilson County Sheriff's Office.

Jones faces two counts of capital murder and five counts of assault with a deadly weapon, Maverick County Sheriff Tom Schmerber said.

It was unclear where Jones was being held and whether he had an attorney to speak on his behalf. (AP)



Jones

Marine veteran charged: A decorated Marine veteran charged with firing an assault rifle from a boat at a waterfront bar in North Carolina, killing three people and wounding five, appeared subdued in court Monday as prosecutors said they may seek the death penalty.

Nigel Edge, 40, a Purple Heart recipient whose last assignment was with a Wounded Warrior battalion, made his first court appearance via video link after Saturday's mass shooting. He's charged with murder, attempted murder and assault. (AP)

Suspected stowaway found dead: Airplane maintenance workers at a North Carolina airport found the body of a suspected stowaway in the landing gear compartment of an American Airlines flight that had recently arrived from Europe, police said.

The body was found Sunday morning while the plane was undergoing maintenance at Charlotte Douglas International Airport. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department said in a statement that it is investigating the death.

Neither the airline nor police have offered information about the person who died, including a possible cause of death, or said where the flight originated. (AP)

US President Trump and Hegseth declare end to ‘politically correct’ leadership in military

QUANTICO, Va., (AP): US President Donald Trump and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth declared an end to “woke” culture in the military and targeted other policies of past administrations Tuesday before hundreds of top US military officials who were abruptly summoned to Virginia from around the world.

Hegseth announced new directives for troops that include “gender-neutral” or “male-level” standards for physical fitness, while Trump bragged about US nuclear capabilities and criticized the military leaders’ previous commander in chief, President Joe Biden.

“We must be so strong that no nation will dare challenge us, so powerful that no enemy will dare threaten us,” Trump said. “And so capable that no adversary can even think about beating us.”

Hegseth had called military leaders to convene at the Marine Corps base in Quantico, near Washington, without publicly revealing the reason until this morning. Hegseth’s address largely focused on his own long-used talking points that painted a picture of a military that has been hamstrung by “woke” policies, and he said military leaders should “do the honorable thing and resign” if



US President Donald Trump speaks to a gathering of top US military commanders at Marine Corps Base Quantico on Sept 30, in Quantico, Va. (AP)

They don't like his new approach.

Meetings between top military brass and civilian leaders are nothing new, but the gathering had fueled intense speculation about the summit's purpose given the haste with which it was called and the mystery surrounding it.

Admirals and generals from conflict

across the globe.

During his nearly hour-long speech, Hegseth said the US military has promoted too many leaders for the wrong reasons based on race, gender quotas and “historic firsts.”

“The era of politically correct, overly sensitive don’t-hurt-anyone’s-feelings leadership ends right now at every level,” Hegseth said.

He said he is loosening disciplinary rules and weakening hazing protections, putting a heavy focus on removing many of the guardrails the military had put in place after numerous scandals and investigations

Hegseth said he was ordering a review of “the department’s definitions of so-called toxic leadership, bullying and hazing to empower leaders to enforce standards without fear of retribution or second guessing.”

He called for “changes to the retention of adverse information on personnel records that will allow leaders with forgivable, earnest, or minor infractions to not be encumbered by those infractions in perpetuity.”

“People make honest mistakes, and our mistakes should not define an entire career,” Hegseth said. “Otherwise, we only try not to make mistakes.”

It's now in the president's hands: Schumer

US govt on brink of first shutdown in almost 7 years amid partisan standoff in Congress

WASHINGTON, Sept 30, (AP): A partisan standoff over health care and spending is threatening to trigger the first US government shutdown in almost seven years, with Democrats and Republicans in Congress unable to find agreement even as thousands of federal workers stand to be furloughed or laid off.

The government will shut down at 12:01 am Wednesday if the Senate does not pass a House measure that would extend federal funding for seven weeks while lawmakers finish their work on annual spending bills. Senate Democrats say they won't vote for it unless Republicans include an extension of expiring health care benefits, among other demands, while President Donald Trump and his fellow Republicans are refusing to negotiate, arguing that it's a stripped-down, “clean” bill that should be noncontroversial.

It's unclear if either side will blink before the deadline.

“It’s now in the president’s hands,” Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said Monday after a meeting with Trump at the White House that yielded little apparent progress. “He can avoid the shutdown if he gets the Republican leaders to go along with what we want.”

Vice President JD Vance, who was also in the meeting, said afterward, “I think we’re headed into a shutdown, because the Democrats won’t do the right thing.”

While partisan stalemates over government spending are a frequent occurrence in Washington, the current impasse comes as Democrats see a rare opportunity to use their leverage to achieve policy goals and as their base voters are spoiling for a fight with Trump. Republicans who hold a 53-47 majority in the Senate will likely need at least eight votes from Democrats to end a filibuster and pass the bill with 60 votes, since Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky is expected to vote against it.

Trump had shown little interest in entertaining Democrats’ demands on health care, even as he agreed to hold a sit-down meeting Monday with Schumer, D-N.Y., Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., and House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y.

As he headed into the meeting, Trump made it clear he had no intention to negotiate on Democrats’ current terms.

“Their ideas are not very good ones,” Trump said.

It was Trump’s first meeting with all four leaders in Congress since retaking the White House for his second term, and he did more listening than talking, Jeffries told House Democrats at the Capitol afterward, according to a lawmaker who attended the private caucus meeting and insisted on anonymity to discuss it.

Schumer said after the closed-door meeting that they had “had candid, frank discussions” with Trump about health care. Vance also said Trump found several



US House Speaker Mike Johnson of La., talks to reporters outside the West Wing of the White House on Sept 29, in Washington, as Office of Management and Budget director Russell Vought, Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-SD, and Vice President JD Vance, listen. (AP)

points of agreement on policy ideas.

Schumer said Trump “was not aware” of the potential for health insurance costs to skyrocket once the subsidies end Dec. 31.

But Trump did not appear to be ready for serious negotiations. Hours later, Trump posted a fake video of Schumer and Jeffries taken from footage of their real press conference outside of the White House after the meeting. In the altered video, a voiceover that sounds like Schumer’s voice makes fun of Democrats and Jeffries stands beside him with a cartoon sombrero and mustache. Mexican music plays in the background.

Jeffries posted in response that “Bigotry will get you nowhere.”

He added, “We are NOT backing down.”

Democrats are pushing for an extension to Affordable Care Act tax credits that

have boosted health insurance subsidies 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.

“We are not going to support a partisan Republican spending bill that continues to gut the health care of everyday Americans,” Jeffries said.

Thune has pressed Democrats to vote for the funding bill and take up the debate on tax credits later. Some Republicans are open to extending the tax credits, but they want to place new limits on them.

“We’re willing to sit down and work with them on some of the issues they want to talk about,” Thune told reporters at the White House, adding, “But as of right now, this is a hijacking of the American people, and it’s the American people who are going to pay the price.”

Democrats are in an uncomfortable position for a party that has long denounced shutdowns as pointless and destructive, and it’s unclear how or when it would end. But party activists and voters have argued that Democrats need to do something to stand up to Trump.

Some groups called for Schumer’s resignation in March after he and nine other Democrats voted to break a filibuster and allow a Republican-led funding bill to advance to a final vote.

Schumer said he voted to keep the government open because a shutdown would have made things worse as Trump’s administration was slashing government jobs. He says things have changed since then, including the passage this summer of the massive GOP tax cut bill that reduced Medicaid.

Some of the Democrats who voted with Schumer in March to keep the government open were still holding out hope for a compromise. Michigan Sen. Gary Peters said Monday there’s still time before the early Wednesday deadline.

“A lot can happen in this place in a short period of time,” Peters said.

Federal agencies were sending out contingency plans if funding lapses, including details on what offices would stay open and which employees would be furloughed. In its instructions to agencies, the White House has suggested that a shutdown could lead to broad layoffs across the government.

Trump’s budget director, Russ Vought, told reporters at the White House that a shutdown would be managed “appropriately, but it is something that can all be avoided” if Senate Democrats accepted the House-passed bill.

Before joining the administration, Vought had advised hard-line conservatives in Congress to use the prospect of a shutdown to negotiate for policy concessions. But on Monday, he berated Democrats for engaging in a similar play.

Starmer urges Britain to choose decency over division as PM tries to counter Farage

LIVERPOOL, England, Sept 30, (AP): Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Tuesday that Britain faces a stark choice between decency and division as he attempts to reset his government and stem the rising popularity of the hard-right party Reform UK.

Starmer told his center-left Labour Party that Britain faces “a fight for the soul of our country” as he tries to overcome dire approval ratings, a sluggish economy and the challenge posed by Reform’s divisive leader, Nigel Farage.

“Britain stands at a fork in the road. We can choose decency or we can choose division. Renewal or decline,” Starmer told hundreds of lawmakers and Labour members at the party conference in Liverpool.

He urged people to reject “snake oil merchants on the right, on the left” who promise “a quick fix, a miracle cure.”

Since Labour won a landslide election victory in July 2024, its popularity has plummeted. The party promised economic growth, but has struggled to deliver. Inflation remains stubbornly high and the economic outlook subdued, frustrating efforts to repair tattered public services and ease the cost of living.

Treasury chief Rachel Reeves said Monday that wars in Ukraine and the Middle East and US President Donald



Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves, (right), is applauded by the Prime Minister Keir Starmer after giving her keynote speech during the annual Labour Party conference in Liverpool, England on Sept 29. (AP)

Trump’s tariffs have caused “harsh global headwinds,” and hard economic choices loom when she sets out her budget in November.

Against that gloomy backdrop, Labour’s annual conference - motto: “Renew Britain” - has been dominated by conversations about how to fight Reform. Farage’s party has topped opinion polls for months, ahead of both Labour and the main opposition Conservatives, despite holding just five of the 650 seats in the House of Commons.

Farage’s anti-establishment, anti-

immigration message, with its echoes of Trump’s MAGA movement, has homed in on the issue of thousands of migrants in small boats arriving in Britain across the English Channel. More than 30,000 people have made the dangerous crossing from France so far this year despite efforts by authorities in Britain, France and other countries to crack down on people-smuggling gangs.

Farage has vowed to deport everyone arriving by small boat and go even farther, stripping the right to remain in the U.K. from many legal residents.

Airspace violations force NATO to tread tightrope

BRUSSELS, Sept 30, (AP): NATO is stepping up aerial surveillance in the Baltic Sea, while France, Germany and Sweden are bolstering Denmark’s air defenses ahead of two summits in Copenhagen this week over a series of troubling drone incidents near the country’s airports and military bases.

The number of serious airspace violations in Europe has spiked this month, including by Russian warplanes. But not all NATO allies agree on how to respond. Poland is ready to use lethal force. Others say that must only be a last resort.

Regardless of who is to blame in Denmark, European leaders believe that Russia is testing NATO. Military planners in Moscow can observe how Western forces react, and countering intrusions by relatively cheap drones is a financial burden on the allies.

In the wake of the drone incident in Poland, NATO launched operation Eastern Sentry, with Britain among the allies to send more air defense equipment.

However, these deployments might also deprive Ukraine of the air defense systems it badly needs from its allies. NATO must tread a tightrope in its response.

Poland’s message is blunt. It intends to shoot down intruders over its territory.

“If another missile or aircraft enters our space without permission, deliberately or by mistake, and gets shot down and the wreckage falls on NATO territory, please don’t



A French army NH 90 Caiman helicopter takes off during a multinational military Exercise Pike (‘Lightning’) on Saaremaa Island, Estonia on Sept 26. (AP)

come here to whine about it,” Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski told Russia’s UN delegation last week. “You have been warned.”

Poland activated its air defenses over the weekend during a major Russian attack on Ukraine.

Europe

EU Commission unveils proposal: European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said on Tuesday that part of the proposed “reparations loan” to Ukraine, backed by frozen Russian assets, would be allocated for defence procurement within Europe, stressing the “urgent need for sustainable military support” to Kiev.

Speaking at a joint press conference with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, von der Leyen said the proposal “does not involve seizing the frozen assets,” explaining that Ukraine would repay the loan if Russia pays reparations.

She added that “EU sanctions against Russia are working, as Russia’s economic growth is expected to slow from 4.3 percent this year to 0.9 percent in 2025,” noting that the new sanctions package will cover energy, financial services and trade, in particular “a ban on imports of Russian liquefied natural gas.”

She stressed that “if we continue to believe that Ukraine is our first line of defence, we need to step up our military assistance,” adding that the EU and Kiev agreed on the allocation of EUR 2 billion to boost local drone production, which will also benefit the EU itself.

Von der Leyen noted that “in the last 1,000 days Russia has only captured 1 percent of the occupied territory of Ukraine, despite losing more than a quarter of a million soldiers on the battlefield this year,” affirming that “this moment represents an opportunity for decisive European steps that could lead to a turning point in the conflict.” (KUNA)



Von der Leyen

Poland arrests Ukrainian: A Ukrainian man suspected of being involved in causing undersea explosions that damaged the Nord Stream gas pipelines between Russia and Germany in 2022 was arrested in Poland, a spokesperson for the District Prosecutor’s Office in Warsaw said.

Volodymyr Z. was detained by police officers in Pruszkow, central Poland, according to Polish radio station RMF FM, which first reported on his capture. He has been transferred to the District Prosecutor’s Office in Warsaw. The man was detained on a European arrest warrant that was issued by German authorities.

The arrest announced Tuesday marks the second arrest of a Ukrainian man, following another in Italy last month, in connection with the explosion on the undersea pipelines that were built to carry Russian natural gas to Germany under the Baltic Sea. (AP)

PLSA opens in Lithuania: A logistics hub for the German brigade and NATO allies has opened in Rukla, Lithuania, the Baltic News Service reported on Tuesday.

Christoph Huber, commander of the German brigade in Lithuania, said at the opening ceremony on Monday that the unit is currently focused on its own training, with joint exercises with allies planned for next summer.

“The brigade will launch its Freedom Shield exercise series, to be held twice a year. We are finalizing the details of the first phase, scheduled for early summer 2026,” Huber said.

German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius called the opening of the Permanent Logistics and Support Area (PLSA) “an important and tangible achievement” that will ensure the sustainability of deterrence efforts.

“By mid-2026, around 2,000 troops will be serving in the brigade in Lithuania. (...) The brigade will gradually reach full operational capability in 2027, when about 4,300 soldiers and 200 civilians will be living and working in Rukla and Rudninkai,” he said. (Xinhua)

Canada’s FM walks fine line between pushing back at Trump, keeping peace

TORONTO, Sept 30, (AP): Canada’s foreign minister walked a fine line at the United Nations General Assembly on Monday, pushing back at US President Donald Trump’s assertions of unfettered US power while trying to avoid provoking her country’s biggest trade partner.

Trump famously said at his inauguration that “during every single day of the Trump administration, I will, very simply, put America first.” His ensuing actions have followed suit, including calls to make Canada the 51st state and vows to put sweeping 25% tariffs on Canadian products.

He has also derided the UN, asking before the General Assembly on Sept 23, “What is the purpose of the United Nations?” and saying that “not only is the UN not solving the problems it should, too often it’s actually creating new problems for us to solve.”

He has infuriated Canadians, and Foreign Minister Anita Anand delivered gentle pushbacks on Monday



Anita Anand, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada, addresses the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly at United Nations headquarters on Sept 29. (AP)

when she told the General Assembly that, “multilateralism remains our best hope to address global challenges rather than rejecting international norms.”

Switching to Canada’s second official language, French, she said, “Today, the multilateral system is threatened and some countries are turning toward protectionism and unilateralism.”

In rare UN appearance, senior N.Korean diplomat insists country won't give up nukes

Japan's outgoing PM Ishiba, South Korea's Lee commit to closer ties in final summit

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 30, (AP): Japan's outgoing prime minister and his South Korean counterpart underscored the need to strengthen cooperation between their nations, as US President Donald Trump's transactional approach to allies and trade wars are bringing the often-feuding Asian neighbors closer.

Tuesday's meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung in the South Korean southeastern port city of Busan is their third and likely final summit. Earlier this month, Ishiba offered to resign over his ruling coalition's recent election defeat, triggering a contest to find his successor.

"I hope that (South) Korea and Japan can grow closer emotionally, economically, socioculturally, and in terms of security, just as they are in physical distance," Lee said at the start of the meeting.

Ishiba said that it was "deeply meaningful" to conclude his final diplomatic activities as prime minister with a summit with Lee. "By sharing each other's wisdom and experience, we can strengthen relations between our two countries while addressing our common challenges," Ishiba said through a translator.

The two leaders issued a joint statement vowing further bilateral consultations on shared issues like low birth rates, rural revitalization and enhanced disaster prevention steps. Lee's office said the two also reaffirmed their commitment to the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, a reference to efforts to end North Korea's nuclear program.

South Korea and Japan are both key US allies and major trading partners. But their ties have experienced constant shifts because of history disputes stemming from Japan's past colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula. Relations began improving under Lee and Ishiba's predecessors. But the impending departure of Ishiba, who has acknowledged Japan's wartime aggression and shown empathy toward the Asian victims, could pose a foreign policy challenge to Lee.

Both governments said the summit was part of earlier agreements to maintain close communication and high-level exchanges between the countries.

When Lee traveled to Tokyo in August for his second summit with Ishiba, he became the first South Korean leader to pick Japan as their first destination for a bilateral summit since the two countries established diplomatic ties in 1965. In Tokyo, Lee said he intended to pursue pragmatic diplomacy and build future-



South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, (right), shakes hands with Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, (left), during a meeting in Busan, South Korea on Sept 30. (AP)

oriented relations with Japan.

South Korea and Japan have sought ways to tackle together challenges like North Korea's expanding nuclear arsenal and supply chain vulnerabilities. They are now being pushed closer together by Trump's push to reset global trade.

Lee's national security director, Wi Sung-lac, earlier told reporters that Tuesday's summit would provide a venue to expand discussions in the midst of "the rapidly changing geopolitical environment and trade order." He said that the meeting would also discuss Ishiba's possible active role in developing bilateral ties

even after his departure.

South Korea and Japan have pledged hundreds of billions of dollars in US industrial investments in hopes of avoiding the Trump administration's highest tariffs. But South Korean officials acknowledge they remain at odds with Washington over how Seoul's proposed \$350 billion package would be structured and operated.

South Korean officials have proposed delivering the investment through loans and loan guarantees and have balked at US demands for upfront payments, which they say would put the country at risk of a financial crisis given the size of its foreign-currency reserves.

Also:

UNITED NATIONS: A senior North Korean diplomat reiterated at the UN Monday that his country won't give up its nuclear weapons despite numerous international demands to do so, calling them crucial to keeping a "balance of power" with South Korea. "We will never walk away from this position," he said.

Under the spotlight of the General Assembly's annual meeting of world leaders, Vice Foreign Minister **Kim Son Gyong** amplified his country's longstanding complaints about US-led military exercises with South Korea and Japan. Complaining that the US and its allies are mounting a "growing threat of aggression," he portrayed his own country's arsenal as the reason "the balance of power on the Korean Peninsula is ensured."

Still, his address was more tempered, especially toward the United States, than many of his country's prior remarks on the world stage and elsewhere. While Kim lambasted - without naming names - "hegemonic forces" and an "indiscriminate tariff war," there were no direct references to US President **Donald Trump** or personal insults, and there was more sternness than over-the-top bellicosity.

Kim vowed that "we will never give up nuclear," noting that North Korea's nuclear program is enshrined in its constitution.

He asserted that security on the Korean Peninsula "is faced with serious challenges more than ever," saying that the US-Japanese-South Korean exercises "are breaking all the previous records in terms of scale, nature, frequency and scope." The North routinely characterizes such war games as preludes to an attack.

Rescuers run oxygen to survivors

Indonesia school building collapse kills 3

SIDOARJO, Indonesia, Sept 30, (AP): Rescuers ran oxygen and water to students trapped in the unstable concrete rubble of a collapsed school building in Indonesia, as they desperately worked to free survivors Tuesday a day after the structure fell. At least three students were killed, more than 100 were injured and dozens were presumed buried in the rubble.

Rescue workers, police and soldiers digging through the night pulled out eight weak and injured survivors more than eight hours after the collapse at Al Khoziny Islamic Boarding School in the East Java town of Sidoarjo. Rescuers saw additional bodies, indicating the death toll was likely to rise.

Rescue efforts were temporarily suspended at 10:15 a.m. as the collapsed concrete shook suddenly. People immediately ran for their lives, fearing another collapse, as rescuers urged everyone in the area to avoid the building, including more than a dozens of ambulances that parked near the scene. The work resumed around 1:45 p.m.

The students are mostly boys in grades seven to 11, between ages 12 and 18. Families anxiously awaited news at hospitals or near the collapsed building. A notice posted at the school complex Tuesday morning listed 65 students as missing. National Disaster Management Agency spokesperson Abdul Muhari revised the number of



Rescuers search for survivors after a building collapsed at an Islamic boarding school, in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia on Sept 29. (AP)

people presumed buried in the rubble to 38 by midday.

Heavy slabs of concrete and other rubble and unstable parts of the building hampered search and rescue efforts, said Nanang Sigit, a search and rescue officer who lead the effort. Heavy equipment was available but not being used due to concerns that it could cause further collapse.

"We have been running oxygen and water to those still trapped under the debris and keeping them alive while we work hard to get them out," Sigit said. He added that rescuers saw several bodies under the rubble but were focused on sav-

ing those who were still alive.

Several hundred rescuers were involved in the effort and had equipment for breathing, extrication, medical evacuation and other support tools.

Islamic boarding schools are commonly called as "pesantren" in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation, and its students who are called as "santri." Unlike students in public schools, the santri board in dormitories, because apart from studying formal education, they also study Islamic religious knowledge intensively, and they return home only during school holidays.

FBI gives NZ officials 3D-printed guns illegal to possess under local laws

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Sept 30, (AP): On a visit to New Zealand, FBI Director Kash Patel gave the country's police and spy bosses gifts of inoperable pistols that were illegal to possess under local gun laws and had to be destroyed, New Zealand law enforcement agencies told The Associated Press.

The plastic 3D-printed replica pistols formed part of display stands Patel presented to at least three senior New Zealand security officials in July. Patel, the most senior Trump administration official to visit the country so far, was in Wellington to open the FBI's first standalone office in New Zealand.

Pistols are tightly restricted weapons under New Zealand law and possessing one requires an additional permit beyond a regular gun license. Law enforcement agencies didn't specify whether the officials who met with Patel held such permits, but they couldn't have legally kept the gifts if they didn't.

It wasn't clear what permissions Patel had sought to bring the weapons into the country. A spokesperson for Patel told the AP Tuesday that the FBI would not comment.

Inoperable weapons are treated as though they're operable in New Zealand if modifications could make them workable again. The pistols were judged by gun regulators to be potentially operable and were destroyed, New Zealand's Police Commissioner



In this photo released by the US Embassy in Wellington, New Zealand, FBI Director Kash Patel cuts the ribbon at the official opening of the FBI office in Wellington, New Zealand on July 31. (AP)

Richard Chambers told AP in a statement Tuesday.

Chambers didn't specify how the weapons had been rendered inoperable before Patel gifted them. Usually this means the temporary disabling of the gun's firing mechanism.

Three of New Zealand's most powerful law enforcement figures said they received the gifts at meetings July 31. Chambers was one recipient, and the other two were Andrew Hampton, Director-General of the country's hu-

man intelligence agency NZSIS, and Andrew Clark, Director-General of the technical intelligence agency GCSB, according to a joint statement from their departments.

A spokesperson for the spy agencies described the gift as "a challenge coin display stand" that included the 3D-printed inoperable weapon "as part of the design." The officials sought advice on the gifts the next day from the regulator that enforces New Zealand's gun laws, Chambers said.

Internet blackout hits Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD, Sept 30, (AP): An internet blackout hit Afghanistan on Monday, with local media reporting a potential nationwide cut of fiber-optic services as part of a Taliban crackdown on immorality.

It's the first time Afghanistan has experienced a shutdown of this kind since the Taliban seized power in August 2021.

Earlier this month, several provinces lost their fiber-optic connections after Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada issued a decree banning the service to prevent immorality.

On Monday, internet-access advocacy group Netblocks said that live metrics showed connectivity in Afghanistan had "collapsed" to 14% of ordinary levels, with a near-total nationwide telecoms disruption in effect.

"The incident is likely to severely limit the public's ability to contact the outside world," the group added.

The Associated Press was unable to contact its Kabul bureau, as well as journalists in the eastern and southern provinces of Nangarhar and Helmand. There was no confirmation of the blackout from the Taliban government, which relies heavily on messaging apps and social media for its internal and external communications.

Colombia FM renounces US visa

BOGOTA, Colombia, Sept 30, (AP): Colombia's foreign minister has "renounced" her US visa to protest a decision by the US State Department to revoke the visa of Colombian President Gustavo Petro, the Colombian government said Monday.

The decision by Foreign Minister **Rosa Villavicencio** comes as tensions between both nations escalate over issues that include drug policy, the war in Gaza and a US naval build-up in neighboring Venezuela.

Colombia's Foreign Affairs Ministry did not respond to questions about what kind of visa Villavicencio held, but said in a statement that it was not interested in "diplomatic visas that limit opinions" or curtail the nation's "sovereignty."

Later on Monday, Colombian Finance Minister Germán Ávila wrote in an X message that he would stop using his visa in "solidarity" with Petro, and because of the "aggression" he was subjected to by the United States. "To work for our people, we do not need visas" Ávila wrote.

The US State Department revoked



Villavicencio

Petro's visa Friday after he participated in a protest in New York against the war in Gaza, in which Petro called for the creation of an international army to liberate the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Holding a megaphone and wearing a kaffiyeh, the traditional Palestinian scarf, Petro called on U.S. soldiers to "disobey" President Donald Trump's orders, adding that they should "not point their rifles against humanity."

Hours after the protest, the State Department said on social media that it would cancel Petro's visa "due to his reckless and incendiary actions."

Petro was back in Colombia when the visa announcement was made, after having spent several days in New York attending the U.N. General Assembly. He wrote on X that he "didn't care" about the punishment because he is also an Italian citizen, and could possibly travel to the US without a visa.

The revocation of Petro's visa marks a new low in the leftist leader's relations with the Trump administration, which earlier this month placed Colombia on a list of countries that it says are not fulfilling their international commitments to curb drug trafficking.

Geoff Ramsey, a Colombia analyst at the Atlantic Council, said the foreign minister's decision to ban herself from visiting the United States places more obstacles in the relationship.



Rescue workers and security officials examine damaged vehicles at the site of a powerful car bombing, in Quetta, Pakistan on Sept 30. (AP)

Car bomb outside Pakistan's security force HQ kills 10 and dozens injured

QUETTA, Pakistan, Sept 30, (AP): A powerful car bomb outside the headquarters of Pakistan's paramilitary security forces killed at least 10 people on Tuesday and wounded 30 others, authorities said.

Before detonating their vehicle, as many as six militants inside the car stepped outside and engaged troops in an intense shootout, according to the police. All six attackers were reported to have been killed.

Residents said the blast in the southwestern city of Quetta could be heard from miles away. Ambulances rushed to the site in front of the Frontier Constabulary and rescuers transported the wounded to nearby hospitals.

No group immediately claimed responsibility, though suspicion is likely to fall on separatists who often target civilians and security forces in insurgency-plagued Balochistan, where Quetta is the provincial capital.

Provincial health minister Bakhat Kakar said the death toll could rise further. He told reporters that the attackers had targeted the security forces' headquarters, but most of those killed and injured were civilians.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said six attackers were involved in the assault and all of them were killed by the security forces.

Mohammad Usman, who lives near the paramilitary headquarters, said the blast shook the entire neighborhood. "The windowpanes of my house shattered, and part of the building was damaged, but thanks to God we are all safe," he said, adding he heard gunfire following the explosion.

Local television channels and CCTV footage from the site of the explosion showed images of a car stopping in front of the gate of the paramilitary compound. An explosion follows and gunfire is heard after the blast. Windows of surrounding buildings were shattered and nearby cars were damaged, according to the footage.

In Islamabad, Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif denounced the bombing and praised security forces for quickly responding to the attack and eliminating the attackers.

Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti also condemned the attack, saying security forces returned fire and killed all the assailants involved in the deadly attack in the city.

"Terrorists cannot break the nation's resolve through cowardly acts, and the sacrifices of our people and security forces will not go in vain," Bugti said in a statement. He said that his government remains committed to making the province a peaceful and secure place.

Also:

ISLAMABAD: Gunfire erupted during a peace rally in Pakistan-administered Kashmir on Monday, killing at least one person and wounding over two dozen others, police and government officials said.

Local police officer **Mohammad Afzal** said the shooting happened as hundreds of people marched along a main road in **Muzaffarabad**, the regional capital. He said some of the wounded were listed in critical condition at hospitals.

Police, government officials and local media blamed armed members of the Awami Action Committee, a civil rights alliance that had called for a strike to demand subsidized food, electricity and other services, for initiating the violence. The government said most residents ignored the strike call, and demonstrations elsewhere remained largely peaceful.

However, the alliance's leader **Shaukat Nawaz**, in a speech to demonstrators in Kashmir, said most shops remained shut and the protest will continue until the acceptance of their demands. He accused members of the peace rally of initiating the gunfire.

'Your demands have been heard'

Madagascar's president fires govt

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar, Sept 30, (AP): Madagascar President Andry Rajoelina fired the prime minister and the rest of his government Monday in response to days of deadly Gen Z-led protests in the Indian Ocean island over the failure of the electricity and water supplies.

Rajoelina said in a speech on national television that Prime Minister Christian Ntsay and other government officials would stay on an interim basis until a new government is formed. He invited applications for government positions and gave a three-day time frame to review proposals for a new prime minister.

"Your demands have been heard, and I apologize if there are members of the government who have not done the work that the people expected," Rajoelina said.

The protesters had called for the resignation of both Ntsay and Rajoelina, but Rajoelina gave no indication that



Demonstrators hold up placards reading 'water and electricity are basic human rights', 'Malagasy people, wake up', 'Let's not remain in the dark with our yellow cans' in Antananarivo, Madagascar on Sept 25. (AP)

he would step down.

The protests against chronic electricity and water cuts began on Thursday and drew thousands onto the streets, prompting the government to order nighttime curfews in

the capital, Antananarivo, and other major cities.

The demonstrations gathered momentum on social media and have mirrored recent youth-led anti-government protests in Nepal and Kenya.

Boursa Kuwait closes mixed

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Tuesday's session with mixed performance, as the All Share Index slipped by 10.05 points, or 0.11 percent, to close at 8,795.74. Trading activity saw 776.4 million shares change hands through 34,532 transactions, with a total turnover of KD 138.6 million

(USD 422.7 million). The Main Market Index recorded gains, climbing 16.15 points, or 0.20 percent, to finish at 8,228.07. It witnessed the bulk of activity, with 631.11 million shares traded via 25,238 deals, worth KD 82.4 million (USD 251.3 million).

Business

In collaboration with CFA Society, InvestGB, GUST, and Ci-Net

Boursa Kuwait launches the second edition of the ‘Bell’ initiative for financial literacy in commemoration of World Investor Week



Naser Al-Sanousi



Dr. Abdullah Al-Falah



Alia Bader AlHumaidhi



Tareq AlSaleh



Talal AlKhamis

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Boursa Kuwait announced the launch of the second edition of “The Bell” initiative to promote financial literacy throughout October 2025, continuing its efforts to raise financial awareness across all segments of society and reaffirming its commitment to sustainable economic and social development.

The initiative coincides with the ninth edition of World Investor Week, the international campaign organized by the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) in collaboration with the World Federation of Exchanges (WFE), which takes place from Monday, October 6, until October 12, 2025.

“The Bell” initiative aims to enhance financial awareness across all segments of society and empower individuals to make informed and well-considered investment decisions. Organized in collaboration with CFA Society Kuwait, the CFA Institute, InvestGB, the Gulf University for Science and Technology, and the Kuwait Credit Information Network (Ci-Net), the initiative underscores Boursa Kuwait’s commitment to a more sustainable financial future for Kuwait.

Since its establishment, the company has placed great importance on financial literacy as a core pillar of its vision, as it is a fundamental element in achieving sustainable economic and social development and plays a key role in strengthening Boursa Kuwait’s regional and international standing.

Commenting on the initiative, Senior Director of Marketing and Corporate Communication at Boursa Kuwait, **Mr. Naser Meshari Al-Sanousi**, said, “The first edition of The Bell initiative played a significant role in raising financial literacy across all segments of society and was a reflection of a genuine enthusiasm within Kuwaiti society to acquire financial knowledge and strengthen its ability to manage savings and invest responsibly.”

This achievement is the result of Boursa Kuwait’s strategic partnerships with leading educational and professional institutions, and it underscores the company’s role as an active national institution dedicated to supporting economic and social development and placing financial literacy at the core of its strategy to reinforce its standing locally and regionally,” he added.

“Building on these positive results, Boursa Kuwait is proud to launch the second edition of the initiative, ensuring the continuity of its impact. The company firmly believes that financial literacy is a fundamental pillar of sustainable development, and that investing in this field is an investment in a brighter future for Kuwait and its coming generations. I would like to thank the CFA Society and Institute, InvestGB, the Gulf University for Science and Technology, and the Kuwait Credit Information Network Company (CINET) for their dedicated efforts, and I look forward to further collaboration in the future,” Al-Sanousi said.

The second edition of “The Bell” initiative will showcase a wide range of activities designed to enhance financial awareness, including a seminar on credit awareness in collaboration with the Kuwait Credit Information Network (Ci-Net), as well as a specialized workshop on sound financial planning concepts and effective budget management

entitled “Budgeting for Success” organized in partnership with the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST), and led by **Dr. Abdullah Al-Falah**, Head of the Executive Education Center.

The CFA Society Kuwait will also deliver a workshop on artificial intelligence and its applications in the financial and investment sectors presented by Dr. Dan Philips, PhD, CFA, Head of Rothko Investment Strategies and Co-Leader of AI Research and the FinTech Centre at the University of Warwick, underscoring the initiative’s focus on equipping participants with both essential knowledge and forward-looking insights that enable them to make well-informed and strategic investment decisions.

In addition, Boursa Kuwait will launch the third season of its “The Bell” podcast in collaboration with InvestGB, building on the success of previous seasons in promoting financial awareness in a modern and engaging way. The exchange will also enrich the content of its dedicated online education portal, Boursa Academy Online, which aims to enhance capital market knowledge for both new and professional investors, in collaboration with the CFA Institute, to broaden the initiative’s reach and impact. The content will also be shared across the company’s communication channels.

Commenting on Ci-Net’s participation, Chairman **Mrs. Alia Bader AlHumaidhi** said, “We are delighted to continue supporting the ‘The Bell’ initiative in its second edition, reaffirming our commitment to promoting credit literacy and enhancing financial awareness within the community. Credit information today is not just numbers; it is a set of tools that empower individuals and institutions to make informed and well-considered financial decisions. Through our participation in this initiative, we aim to shed light on the importance of a proper understanding of credit ratings and their role in enabling individuals to build a more stable and secure financial future.”

The Kuwait Credit Information Network (Ci-Net) is the sole provider of credit information and credit scores in the State of Kuwait, operating under the supervision of the Central Bank of Kuwait.

Commenting on InvestGB’s participation, **Mr. Tareq AlSaleh**, Acting Chief Investments Officer & Managing Director – Wealth Management, said, “We are pleased to continue our partnership with Boursa Kuwait for the third season of ‘The Bell’ podcast, an initiative that represents an important step in promoting financial literacy through an innovative and engaging approach, enhancing the awareness of both new and professional investors alike. Our commitment to collaborating with leading national institutions aligns with InvestGB’s vision of building a more knowledgeable and future-ready investment community.”

InvestGB is the investment arm of Gulf Bank, offering a range of services in wealth and asset management, investment and advisory for high-net-worth individuals and institutional investors.

Commenting on GUST’s participation in “The Bell” initiative, Head of Executive Education Dr. Abdullah Al-Falah said, “GUST’s Executive Education Center is committed to equipping participants with prac-

tical skills that make a real difference in their personal and professional lives. Our collaboration with Boursa Kuwait on their financial literacy program reflects a shared vision of promoting financial awareness and strengthening the foundations of responsible financial management. Through the ‘Budgeting for Success’ workshop, we aim to empower participants with the tools they need to make informed financial decisions and build a more stable future.”

The collaboration between Boursa Kuwait and GUST underscores the university’s commitment to its role in serving the community through initiatives designed to develop the knowledge and practical skills of students, graduates, and society at large. GUST continues to uphold its status as a distinguished educational institution and remains a top choice for students seeking professional excellence and experiential learning.

President of the CFA Society Kuwait, **Mr. Talal AlKhamis**, also commented, saying, “The partnership between the Society and Boursa Kuwait is a strategic one that dates to 2018, and this marks our second participation in ‘The Bell’ initiative, which reflects our shared commitment to promoting financial literacy within the community. The Society firmly believes that spreading financial literacy is a fundamental pillar in building a financially aware generation capable of making well-informed investment decisions that contribute to the growth and stability of the national economy.”

The CFA Society Kuwait is an association of local investment professionals, consisting of portfolio managers, security analysts, investment advisors and other financial practitioners, that has served CFA charterholders and CFA Program candidates locally since 2008.

Boursa Kuwait signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the CFA Society in September 2025, aiming to educate the public on the fundamentals of investing through the Boursa Academy Online platform for a nominal fee as well as collaborating to organize training programs and seminars.

“The Bell” initiative forms part of Boursa Kuwait’s efforts to develop and educate market participants, as well as create a lasting, meaningful impact on the communities where it operates. Part of the company’s Corporate Sustainability (CS) strategy, they are in line with Goal 4 – Quality Education – and Goal 17 – Partnership for the Goals - of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Boursa Kuwait’s support of World Investor Week comes from the company’s Corporate Sustainability (CS) strategy, which stipulates ensuring initiatives apply and fall in line with the company’s corporate social responsibility (CSR), industry best practice standards and investor expectations, creating strong and sustainable partnerships that ultimately achieve success and allow it to leverage the capabilities and strengths of other companies or organizations that have experience in different fields, and integrating sustainability efforts with the company culture, in order to achieve longevity and an ongoing impact that is carried on and instilled in the day-to-day operations of the stock exchange.

Propane set at \$495 per metric ton

Kuwait oil price down to \$71.39 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went down by USD 1.35 to USD 71.39 per barrel on Monday, compared to USD 72.74 pb last Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Tuesday.

In global markets, Brent crude went down by USD 2.16 to USD 67.97 pb, the same occurred with the West Texas Intermediate, which went down by USD 2.27 to USD 63.45 per barrel.

Also:
KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait Petroleum

Corporation (KPC) declared on Tuesday new prices of liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane, and butane, for October.

In a statement to KUNA, the corporation said a metric ton of propane would be sold for USD 495, in October, and a metric ton of butane for USD 475.

Both propane and butane are used in the petrochemical industry, cooking, heating, and other purposes.

LNG prices are mainly affected by global oil prices, market supply and demand, and other factors.

Exports hit 172,000 bpd

Kuwait’s oil exports to Japan up 38.9% in Aug

TOKYO, Sept 30, (KUNA): Kuwait’s crude oil exports to Japan jumped 38.9 percent in August from a year earlier to 5.33 million barrels, or 172,000 barrels per day (bpd), up for the first time in four months, government data showed Tuesday.

As Japan’s third-biggest oil provider, Kuwait supplied 7.8 percent of the Asian nation’s total crude imports, compared with 5.5 percent in the same month of last year, the Japanese Natural Resources and Energy Agency said in a preliminary report.

Japan’s overall imports of crude oil in August shrank 1.9 percent

year-on-year to 2.22 million bpd, down for the third month in a row. Shipments from the Middle East accounted for 95.8 percent of the total, up 1.0 percentage point from the year before.

Saudi Arabia returned to the top spot, with imports from the kingdom increasing 10.4 percent from a year earlier to 967,000 bpd, followed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with 908,000 bpd, down 11.3 percent. The US ranked fourth with 69,000 bpd and Qatar fifth with 48,000 bpd, respectively. Japan is the world’s-third biggest oil consumer after China and the US.

KPC announces multiple tenders for technical support, consultancy, & maintenance services

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has issued a tender for companies to provide technical support and maintenance for the Oracle system, including licenses and necessary infrastructure equipment, at the request of the Kuwait Oil Tankers Company (KOTC). The deadline for submitting bids is October 28.

According to the official gazette “Kuwait Al-Youm”, tender documents include a sealed bid form signed by the authorized signatory, along with the original initial guarantee in the specified amount at the KOTC building. The sealed and fully completed bid (KPC & Subsidiaries) must also be uploaded to the electronic system.

Bids are valid for 90 days from the closing date, and the initial guarantee of KD 50,000 must remain valid

throughout the tender period.

A preliminary meeting to address bidders’ inquiries will be held on Monday, October 6, with the deadline for submitting inquiries set for three days before the meeting.

KPC also announced, at the request of the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), the launch of a tender for consultancy services to conduct technical and financial studies for establishing a new fuel filling station in Mutlaa City, in accordance with the general and special terms outlined in the tender documents. The deadline for submitting bids is October 23.

According to the announcement published in the official gazette, bidders must submit the initial bond to KNPC in an envelope clearly marked with the tender name, address, and closing date. The envelope must be placed in the designated box on the first floor of the reception hall at KNPC building by 1:00 pm on Thurs-

day, October 23. A copy of the initial bond should be attached to the bid.

The announcement stated that the Higher Procurement Committee at KPC has launched this tender as a single-phase process with two separate technical and financial offers. The tender is limited and non-divisible, restricted to the companies listed in the attached document. A preliminary meeting for bidders will be held remotely on October 13.

In the same context, the Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) announced an extension of the closing date for the IT technical support services tender to October 14, instead of September 30.

In addition, the Central Agency for Public Tenders announced a tender for the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) for maintenance services of the company’s buildings. The tender opening took place on Sunday, September 28, and the closing date is December 28.

80+ stakeholders engage in strategy survey

CMA completes phase one of fourth strategy

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) announced the completion of the first phase of its fourth strategy, developed by its national experts. This strategy serves as a roadmap for the period 2027/2028 – 2030/2031.

According to a press release issued by CMA, the initial phase included a comprehensive current status assessment report based on an extensive internal and external environmental survey.

The survey witnessed active participation from over 80 local and international stakeholders classified into four main categories:

- International regulatory bodies
- Local regulatory and governmental institutions
- Strategic partners in market system development
- Entities under CMA oversight and international financial and investment institutions

CMA extends its gratitude and appreciation to

all who contributed valuable insights, and helped to identify best practices, customer aspirations, and opportunities for future cooperation.

The work also included a thorough internal analysis of the aspirations of CMA’s leadership and organizational units, along with the institutional enablers supporting their implementation.

Advanced strategic tools were employed, including:

- Benchmarking
- Risk-Based Analysis
- PESTEL
- SWOT analysis matrix

The status quo report and environmental scan serve as the primary tools for shaping the change agenda, forming the foundation for the strategic plan’s components, including vision, mission, values, strategic objectives, initiatives, indicators, and the implemen-

tation and operational plan.

CMA emphasizes that its fourth strategy builds upon the achievements of its current strategy, which introduced initiatives that significantly advanced the development of the local capital market.

The new strategy is in line with the state’s development plans, focusing on advancing financial markets, promoting sustainability and social responsibility, embracing digital transformation and financial inclusion, achieving institutional excellence, and strengthening local, regional, and international cooperation, as well as improving Kuwait’s ranks in global indices.

CMA views this planning process as a vital tool for efficient resource allocation, ensuring effective oversight and supervision of capital market activities, and enhancing its direct contribution to the national economy and the economic goals of New Kuwait 2035 vision.

Abdullah AIMarzouq: KFH is a trusted regional partner with significant global market influence

KFH named ‘Best Bank for Financial Institutions in the Middle East’ by Global Finance

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has been recognized as the “Best Bank for Financial Institutions in the Middle East for 2025” by Global Finance. This prestigious award is part of Global Finance’s 25th annual Best Treasury & Cash Management Banks awards for 2025.

Group General Manager of Financial Institutions at KFH, Abdullah AIMarzouq expressed his appreciation for the award while on the sidelines of the ceremony in Frankfurt, Germany. He noted that the recognition validates KFH’s leadership and excellence in providing advanced services to financial institutions throughout the region. He emphasized that KFH’s Financial Institutions (FI) Department has played a pivotal role in advancing cross-border banking capabilities and strengthening correspondent banking networks.

He added that this achievement is a testament to the unwavering commitment to excellence, innovation, and the highest standards of service in the financial sector, while reflecting the leadership in providing top-tier treasury and cash management solutions.

AIMarzouq explained that KFH is a trusted regional partner for financial institutions, maintaining significant influence in both regional and global markets. He further noted that the bank’s extensive network of strong international banking relationships enables it to provide advanced Islamic financing solutions and effectively link local markets to worldwide financial opportunities.

AIMarzouq explained that KFH introduced several digital enhancements and innovations that improved processing speed and compliance integrity, such as:

- Integrated SWIFT GPI capabilities to improve payment transparency and tracking.
- Automated nostro reconciliation tools, reducing manual errors and operational risk.
- Implementation of automatic compliance screening tools to enhance onboarding



Abdullah AIMarzouq receiving the award.

and transaction filtering efficiency.

AIMarzouq reiterated that KFH remains committed to delivering exceptional value to its clients and stakeholders, indicating the award serves as an impetus to continue pushing the boundaries and pursuing excellence in the financial industry.

Criteria and mechanism

Global Finance’s annual awards are highly regarded in the industry, recognizing banks and financial institutions that demonstrate excellence in treasury and cash man-

agement. The selection process involves a rigorous assessment of various criteria, including market share, customer service, product innovation, and the ability to meet the evolving needs of clients.

Global Finance used a multi-tiered assessment process – which included entries from banks and providers and input from industry analysts, corporate executives, technology experts and independent research – to select the best providers of treasury and cash management services. A variety of subjective and objective criteria were considered, including profitability, market share and reach, customer service, competitive pricing, product innovation and the extent to which treasury and cash management providers have successfully differentiated themselves from their competitors around core service provision.

Treasury & Cash Management

“Driven by digital advancements and demand for visibility, the Treasury and Cash Management sector is rapidly evolving,” said Joseph Giarraputo, founder and editorial director of Global Finance. “Corporations seek integrated platforms with automation and AI, while financial institutions offer innovative solutions for efficiency and transparency. The Treasury and Cash Management Awards recognize those excelling in this changing landscape.”

Global Finance

Global Finance, founded in 1987, has a circulation of 50,000 and readers in 188 countries, territories and districts. Global Finance’s audience includes senior corporate and financial officers responsible for making investment and strategic decisions at multinational companies and financial institutions.

Its website – GFMag.com – offers analysis and articles that are the legacy of 38 years of experience in international financial markets. Global Finance is headquarters in New York, with offices around the world.

Liquidity unlocked, capital freed

Visa launches stable-coin prefunding pilot

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The way businesses fund cross-border payments is about to get faster, smarter and more flexible. Today, Visa announced it will launch a stablecoin prefunding pilot through Visa Direct, its global money movement platform that connects 11B eligible cards, bank accounts, and wallets. This capability gives businesses a new way to move money globally – unlocking liquidity and modernizing treasury operations for the digital-first economy.

For decades, moving money across borders has depended on slow, costly systems that tie up capital in advance. With this pilot, Visa Direct is testing stablecoins as a new funding source. The goal: reduce friction, unlock faster access to liquidity and give financial institutions more flexibility in how they manage global payments.

“Cross-border payments have been stuck in outdated systems for far too long” said Chris Newkirk, President, Commercial & Money Movement Solutions, Visa. “Visa Direct’s new stablecoins integration lays the groundwork for money to move instantly across the world, giving businesses more choice in how they pay.”

Why it matters

- Liquidity unlocked: Stablecoin prefunding frees businesses from parking large fiat balances in advance, keeping capital working while still ensuring payouts are covered.
- Modernized treasury: Institutions can move money in minutes instead of days, making liquidity management more dynamic and responsive.
- Predictability: Stablecoins pro-



vide a consistent settlement layer, reducing exposure to local currency volatility and stabilizing treasury operations.

- Lower cost: Increase pre-funding frequency without increasing costs
- How the pilot works**
- Stablecoin pre-funding: Businesses send Visa stablecoins instead of fiat to cover payouts. Visa treats those stablecoins as “money in the bank.”
- Who it’s for: Banks, remitters and financial institutions that need faster, more flexible ways to manage liquidity across borders.
- Availability: Visa is working with select partners that meet the pilot criteria, with plans to expand the pilot in 2026.

The Visa Direct stablecoin pilot builds on Visa’s broader commitment to building the future of money movement: one that is faster, more flexible and designed for the digital-first world. By combining the scale and trust of Visa’s global network with the program-mability of blockchain and by partnering with leading payment providers on prefunding use cases, Visa is helping modernize cross-border payments for businesses, financial institutions and consumers worldwide.

Program meets market demand to enhance business sustainability

UIC’s Investment Studies Center organizes Superior Customer Service training program

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: In a world undergoing rapid transformations in work patterns and customer expectations, customer service has become a fundamental pillar for strengthening institutional standing and reinforcing competitiveness in local, regional, and global markets.

Against this backdrop, the Union of Investment Companies (UIC) announced that, through its training arm – the Investment Studies Center (ISC) – it organized a specialized training program entitled Superior Customer Service, held on September 29-30, 2025 at the UIC headquarters. The program was launched in direct response to the pressing market need to enhance customer service skills and highlight the pivotal role this function plays in building trust, driving growth, and promoting business sustainability.

UIC and the Investment Studies Center

The organization of this program is part of UIC’s ongoing efforts to prepare a generation of professionals capable of delivering world-class customer service. This initiative reflects a broader commitment to developing human capital in line with the latest international standards, thereby enabling participants to confront evolving market challenges and adapt to the technological and regulatory changes shaping the business environment.

Customer Service as a Competitive Advantage

Customer service is no longer viewed as a secondary department or a supplementary activity within organizations. Today, it is one of the most important sources of competitive advantage, determining a company’s ability to endure and grow. The modern consumer is more aware and better informed, demanding an integrated experience that goes beyond the core product or service to encompass responsiveness, personalized attention, and precision in problem-solving. Investing in the development of employees’ capabilities to deliver superior customer service has become a strategic ne-

cessity, not a managerial option. Organizations that internalize this fact and build a culture of service excellence secure a stronger market position and achieve higher levels of customer loyalty and trust.

Program Content

The Superior Customer Service program spanned two intensive days, carefully designed to guide participants through a journey of knowledge and practice that started with the fundamentals of customer service and extended to the latest global strategies. On the first day, participants explored the theoretical foundations of superior service, including understanding customer needs and expectations, and mapping the customer journey. Special emphasis was placed on effective communication, building relationships based on mutual trust, and delivering customized experiences tailored to each client’s profile.

The second day delved into advanced strategies such as the application of technology in customer service, leveraging artificial intelligence and data analytics to deliver innovative and timely solutions. Participants also examined how to handle challenging scenarios, including managing customer complaints and converting them into opportunities for performance improvement. Practical training was provided on how to navigate difficult conversations in a professional manner that protects organizational reputation and strengthens customer confidence.

Added Value for Participants and Organizations

By attending this program, individuals gained enhanced ability to interpret and analyze customer satisfaction indicators and acquired practical tools to respond more quickly and effectively to market demands. Organizations benefited directly by elevating team performance, as employees with advanced customer service skills contribute to increased sales, reduced churn, and sustainable long-

term growth. Beyond financial gains, this added value extends to building a strong corporate reputation as an institution that places customers at the heart of its priorities.

Impact on the National Economy

The program’s impact goes beyond participating organizations, serving as a lever for the Kuwaiti national economy as a whole. When local companies improve their service standards, Kuwait’s image as a competitive regional financial and commercial hub is further strengthened. Enhanced customer satisfaction increases the market’s attractiveness to foreign investors, fosters a more transparent and stable business environment, and aligns seamlessly with the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035 – diversifying income sources, advancing human capital, and developing innovation- and knowledge-driven sectors.

Recommendations and Conclusion

In light of the program’s rich content and tangible added value, the Union of Investment Companies recommends that financial and investment institutions make customer service a central pillar of their strategic planning. Embracing a culture of service excellence not only secures the satisfaction of current clients but also paves the way for attracting new ones, thereby enhancing institutional standing in an intensely competitive business environment.

UIC further emphasizes the importance of sustained investment in training and development as the optimal path to long-term excellence and market adaptability. This program is not merely a short-term training initiative, but rather a strategic step toward embedding a customer-centric culture that ensures organizational growth and prosperity into the future.



Bader Al-Ghanim and Khalid Al Mutawa with representatives of talabat, AAW and Intersport.

Setting new convenience standards for sports community

talabat collaborates with AAW to offer Intersport products in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: In line with its commitment to advancing Kuwait’s digital economy and e-commerce sphere and establishing itself as a go-to platform for all delivery needs, talabat, the leading on-demand online ordering platform in the MENA region, announced its latest strategic partnership with Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. (AAW), through its brand Intersport, one of the world’s largest and leading sports retailers.

The announcement was made during a signing ceremony held on the 8th of September at the Grand Hyatt, with representatives from talabat, AAW, and Intersport in attendance. The event highlighted the value of this collaboration, which brings premium sportswear, gear, and accessories closer to athletes and fitness enthusiasts across Kuwait, with the ease and convenience talabat is known for. This partnership aligns with talabat’s robust and expansive growth strategy, further cementing its role as a reliable provider of everyday retail essentials beyond food and grocery. It also reaffirms its position as an enabler for global and local brands to thrive digitally, in support of the New Kuwait Vision 2035 goal to digitize the retail sector.

Commenting on the partnership, Bader Al-Ghanim, Vice President and Managing Director of talabat Kuwait, said: “The lifestyle in Kuwait today is considered fast-paced and diverse, which constantly drives us to enhance our services and expand our partnerships to meet the evolving needs of our customers. Our partnership with Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co., through its brand Intersport, adds a new dimension to the shopping experience on the talabat app, by giving users easy and fast access to a wide selection of high-quality sports essentials from top global brands. We remain committed to promoting healthy and balanced lifestyles, and this step is a continuation of that commitment.”

On his part, Khalid Faisal Al Mutawa, Deputy CEO of AAW, said: “We are delighted to kickoff this strategic partnership with talabat, who continue to raise the bar for on-demand online shopping in the region, allowing us to respond to customers across Kuwait faster than ever before with a 30-minute delivery promise.”

With over 5,500 stores worldwide, Intersport’s latest partnership with talabat is a testament to its trust in the platform’s premium service quality and sustainable growth, which is bound to reflect positively on Intersport’s presence and success



Bader Al-Ghanim and Khalid Al Mutawa during the signing ceremony.

- The new partnership between AAW and talabat allows for fast, 30-minute delivery to customers across Kuwait
- More than 1,000 products from across Intersport’s inventory will be available for on-demand purchase on talabat to fulfill the market’s diverse demand

in the Kuwaiti market. In its inaugural phase, the partnership will include more than 1,000 products from across Intersport’s vast inventory, covering the market’s varied needs.

In the upcoming period, the two parties look forward to implementing joint plans and initiatives aimed at expanding the range of Intersport products available on the talabat platform, in addition to exploring new collaboration opportunities in the fields of health, fitness, and lifestyle, in a way that meets consumer aspirations and supports their standing in the sector. Today, talabat continues to redefine convenience by expanding its partner portfolio to cover all corners of day-to-day essentials as well as luxury products. This includes food and FMCGs as well as a wide array of categories, such as home and lifestyle, health and beauty, tech, toys and games, flowers, and so much more.

Focus on AI, blockchain, smart cities, fintech

Pakistan Embassy launches Pakistan-Kuwait Technology Conference 2025

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Embassy of Pakistan in Kuwait, in collaboration with the Pakistan Software Export Council, inaugurated the “Pakistan-Kuwait Technology Conference 2025” at the Radisson Blu Hotel.

The two-day conference brought together a select group of decision-makers, innovators, and senior business leaders from the IT sectors of both countries, aiming to enhance cooperation in digital innovation and trade as well as create new opportunities for youth.

In his opening remarks, Pakistani Ambassador Dr. Zafar Iqbal praised the leadership of the State of Kuwait, represented by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, commending his ambitious vision for progress and innovation that has opened new horizons for cooperation between the two countries.

Dr. Iqbal affirmed that Pakistani-Kuwaiti relations, which are based on mutual faith and trust, are expanding to encompass technology and digital services.

He also welcomed Kuwait’s recent measures to facilitate visa issuance, describing them as “a new opportunity to enhance exchanges, partnerships, and joint investments.”

The ambassador added, “Kuwait is a country of peace and love, where every visitor truly feels the spirit of welcome and authenticity that reflects the saying ‘Ahlam wa Sahlan.’ Today, we are adding a new dimension to this distinguished relationship through cooperation in technology, innovation,



Pakistani Ambassador Dr. Zafar Iqbal

and digital services.”

He urged Pakistani and Kuwaiti companies to seize this opportunity and collaborate to innovate and develop solutions that benefit not only both countries but the entire region.

The second day of the conference included panel discussions, keynote speeches, and bilateral meetings between company representatives, covering advanced topics such as artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, smart cities, digital commerce, and financial technologies.

This conference is the first of its kind to focus on strengthening collaboration between Pakistan and Kuwait in information technology and modern technologies, aiming to advance digital innovation and economic cooperation between the two countries.

Gold delivers record 85% gain in 21 months

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Gold has reached an unprecedented milestone by crossing USD 3,800 per ounce, marking an all-time record in the global markets. This development is particularly significant because it validates the confidence that investors, institutions, and households alike have consistently placed in gold as a hedge against uncertainty. The 36% hike in the last 9 months demonstrates gold’s resilience and its ability to deliver consistent returns even in an environment where traditional assets are under pressure.

For Indian consumers, this is especially heartening news, as gold continues to occupy a dual role – an adornment that carries immense cultural significance, and a safe, long-term investment that secures financial stability across generations. While consumer demand remains steady, what is noteworthy in this cycle is that institutional investors, sovereign wealth funds, and central banks have emerged as the largest buyers of gold. Their significant participation underscores gold’s unique position as an asset that transcends borders, currencies, and economic cycles.

Looking ahead, I am confident that the momentum will continue, driven by a com-



Shamil Ahmed

bination of macroeconomic factors including the imposition of tariffs, weakening of the U.S. dollar, and the persistent need for safe-haven assets in volatile markets. Given these dynamics, I foresee gold advancing towards the USD 5,000 per ounce mark in the coming years. This outlook reinforces what our customers have always believed – that gold is not merely ornamental, but a strategic and enduring investment.

Key Points

1. Gold has delivered record returns to consumers, rising by an impressive 85% in the last 21 months. This makes it one of the strongest performing assets globally.

2. In 2024 alone, gold prices have increased by 37%. This demonstrates its ability to grow even when other investments face challenges.
3. Over the past 9 months, gold has risen by 36%. This steady climb shows its resilience and reliability as an asset.
4. For the first time in history, gold has crossed USD 3,800 per ounce today (22K per gram AED: 424.25, INR: 10,670). This milestone marks an all-time global record.
5. Institutions (Central banks), Investors and house holds continue to trust gold as a safe-haven asset. It remains a proven hedge against uncertainty and volatility.
6. For Indian consumers, gold is both cultural pride and financial security. It serves as adornment while protecting wealth for generations.
7. Large purchases by central banks, sovereign wealth funds, and institutions have driven demand. Their participation reinforces gold’s universal appeal.
8. Global factors point to continued momentum for gold in the future. Experts see the potential for it to reach USD 5,000 per ounce by next year.

New regulations require AI firms to disclose safety protocols

California Governor Gavin Newsom signs groundbreaking AI safety law

SACRAMENTO, Sept 30, (AP): California Gov. Gavin Newsom on Monday signed a law that aims to prevent people from using powerful artificial intelligence models for potentially catastrophic activities like building a bioweapon or shutting down a bank system.

The move comes as Newsom touted California as a leader in AI regulation and criticized the inaction at the federal level in a recent conversation with former President Bill Clinton. The new law will establish some of the first-in-the-nation regulations on large-scale AI models without hurting the state's homegrown industry, Newsom said. Many of the world's top AI companies are located in California and will have to follow the requirements.

"California has proven that we can establish regulations to protect our communities while also ensuring that the growing AI industry continues to thrive. This legislation strikes that balance," Newsom said in a statement.

The legislation requires AI companies to implement and disclose publicly safety protocols to prevent their most advanced models from being used to cause major harm. The rules are designed to cover AI systems if they meet a "frontier" threshold that signals they run on a huge amount of computing power.

Such thresholds are based on how many calculations the computers are performing. Those who crafted the regulations have acknowledged the numerical thresholds are an imperfect starting point to distinguish today's highest-performing generative AI systems from the next generation that could be even more powerful. The existing systems are largely made by California-based companies like Anthropic, Google, Meta Platforms and OpenAI.

The legislation defines a catastrophic risk as something that would cause at least \$1 billion in damage or more than 50 injuries or deaths. It's designed to guard against AI being used for activities that could cause mass disruption, such as hacking into a power grid.

Companies also have to report to the state any critical safety incidents within 15 days. The law creates whistleblower protections for AI workers and establishes a public cloud for researchers. It includes a fine of \$1 million per violation.

It drew opposition from some tech companies, which argued that AI legislation should be done at the federal level. But Anthropic said the regulations are "practical safeguards" that make official the safety practices many companies are already doing voluntarily.

"While federal standards remain essential to avoid a patchwork of state regulations, California has created a strong framework that balances public safety with continued innovation," Jack Clark, co-founder and head of policy at Anthropic, said in a statement.

The signing comes after Newsom last year vetoed a broader version of the legislation, siding with tech companies that said the requirements were too rigid and would have hampered innovation. Newsom instead asked a group of several industry experts, including AI pioneer Fei-Fei Li, to develop recommendations on



Governor of California Gavin Newsom, right, speaks next to former U.S. President Bill Clinton, left, during the Clinton Global Initiative on Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2025, in New York. (AP)

guardrails around powerful AI models.

The new law incorporates recommendations and feedback from Newsom's group of AI experts and the industry, supporters said. The legislation also doesn't put the same level of reporting requirements on startups to avoid hurting innovation, said state Sen. Scott Wiener of San Francisco, the bill's author.

"With this law, California is stepping up, once again, as a global leader on both technology innovation and safety," Wiener said in a statement.

Newsom's decision comes as President Donald Trump in July announced a plan to eliminate what his administration sees as "onerous" regulations to speed up AI innovation and cement the U.S.' position as the global AI leader. Republicans in Congress earlier this year unsuccessfully tried to ban states and localities from regulating AI for a decade.

Without stronger federal regulations, states across the country have spent the last few years trying to rein in the technology, tackling everything from deepfakes in elections to AI "therapy." In California, the Legislature this year passed a number of bills to address safety concerns around AI chatbots for children and the use of AI in the workplace.

Labor costs fuel price hikes

Home repair and remodeling costs rise 3.4% year-over-year

LOS ANGELES, Sept 30, (AP): If it seems like its getting more expensive to replace a broken door, kitchen fixtures or upgrade a major appliance, you're not wrong. The cost of home repair and remodeling projects is up compared to a year ago and running ahead of inflation overall, according to a report from data analytics company Verisk.

The firm's latest Repair and Remodeling Index jumped 3.4% in the April-June quarter compared to the same period last year. That's a bigger annual increase than the 2.7% rise in inflation in the same period, as measured by the Consumer Price index.

The index, which tracks costs for more than 10,000 home improvement products, including appliances, doors, plumbing and windows, showed a roughly 0.6% increase from the January-March quarter.

"While costs did continue to rise, they rose at a slower rate than in the first quarter," said Greg Pyne, vice president of Pricing at Verisk Property Estimating Solutions.

Much of the increase in home repair and remodeling costs appears to be driven primarily by higher labor costs for repair and remodeling work, Verisk noted.

The second-quarter jump in costs for home improvement products coincided with the Trump administration's broad rollout of tariffs on imported goods from many of the nation's major trading partners. But the tariffs didn't have the expected impact given they were postponed several times and didn't fully take effect until early August, midway through the third quarter.

However, homeowners looking to replace cabinetry could soon see prices increase sharply, following a new volley of tariffs announced by President Donald Trump last week that includes a 50% import tax on kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanities due to kick in on Wednesday.

The most labor-intensive types of home repair or remodeling work registered the biggest quarterly increases in labor costs. For example, the cost of replacing tile flooring rose 1.2%, while the cost of remodeling a primary bath or replacing vinyl siding each rose 1% in the April-June period from the previous quarter.

Nearly all of the 31 categories of repair and remodeling work tracked by Verisk saw costs increase at least slightly.

The latest index puts costs for repair and remodeling at almost 62% higher than they were 10 years ago and more than 73% higher than the first quarter of 2013, when the index debuted.

After declining the past two years, homeowner spending on maintenance and home improvement projects increased in the first half of this year, according to researchers at Harvard University.

The university's Joint Center for Housing Studies' most recent leading indicator of remodeling activity, or LIRA, estimates spending hit \$510 billion in the second quarter, a 1.8% increase from a year earlier. However, the researchers project that growth in spending on home improvement and maintenance will slow in 2026, citing weakness in the housing market and slower construction of new homes.

The housing market has been in a slump since 2022, when mortgage rates began climbing from historic lows. Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes sank last year to their lowest level in nearly 30 years. And, so far this year, sales are running below where they were at this time in 2024.

China's factory activity contracts for 6th month in Sept, PMI at 49.8

Experts note factories face margin pressure

HONG KONG, Sept 30, (AP): China's factory activity shrank for a sixth straight month in September, the longest slump since 2019, an official report said Tuesday.

The official manufacturing purchasing managers index, or PMI, improved to 49.8 from 49.4 in August. But it remained below the 50-cutoff level between contraction and expansion on a scale of 0 to 100.

A private sector PMI survey by the credit research and rating startup RatingDog was more upbeat, with September's overall PMI rising to 51.2 from 50.5 in August.

The mixed manufacturing measures reflect persisting sluggish domestic demand and uncertainties over trade tensions with the United States.

More detailed data measuring new orders and production saw month-on-month improvements.

"The September PMI reads from China offered a picture that looked less like a coherent growth engine and more like a car with one cylinder firing while another misfires," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

Companies are under pressure from price cutting amid rough competition, he said.

"Factories are moving more goods, but they're being forced to do it at thinner margins, like street vendors selling more bowls of noodles at half price just to keep the crowd coming," Innes said.

The latest data show China's economy is gaining momentum, with output accelerating slightly, said National Bureau of Statistics chief statistician Huo Lihui.

China's official manufacturing PMIs first slipped back into contraction in April as trade friction with U.S. President Donald Trump's administration heated up after he took office.

The two sides are still slowly working their way toward a broad trade agreement after exchanging threats of sky-high tariffs on each others' exports.

A pause in steep U.S. tariff hikes on China has been extended until November, while a Sept. 19 phone call between Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping offered glimmers of hope for improving relations.

A truce hinges largely on a widely anticipated U.S. proposal for transferring ownership of TikTok to a U.S. company from its Chinese owner ByteDance. That would also require Beijing's approval.

A face-to-face meeting between Trump and Xi is set for the end of October in South Korea on the sidelines of an annual summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

China's economy has remained in the doldrums, bogged down by a prolonged slump in the property sector, elevated unemployment and weak household spending.

Some economists are hoping that a rate cut by China's central bank by the end of the year could help encourage more spending and investment. This month, the People's Bank of China left its key lending rates unchanged following the U.S. Federal Reserve's rate cut for the first time this year.

ADB cuts developing Asia growth to 4.8% for 2025

TOKYO, Sept 30, (KUNA): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Tuesday cut its growth forecast for developing Asia to 4.8 percent for 2025 from its earlier projection amid a new global trade environment posed by US tariffs.

In an update of its Asian Development Outlook 2025, the Manila-based lender downgraded its April forecast of 4.9 percent growth for this year, and revised down next year's view to 4.5 percent from 4.7 percent.

Developing Asia covers 46 economies in Central Asia, East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific, but excludes the industrialized countries of Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

"US tariffs have settled at historically high rates and global trade uncertainty remains at elevated levels," said ADB Chief Economist Albert Park in a statement.

"Growth in developing Asia and the Pacific has remained resilient this year thanks to strong exports and robust domestic demand, but the worsened external environment is impacting the outlook.

Amid the new global trade environment, it's crucial for governments to continue promoting sound macroeconomic management, openness, and further regional integration," Park said.

The ADB said higher tariffs imposed by the US and elevated trade uncertainty are expected to weigh on the region's growth.

"The main risks to developing Asia and the Pacific's outlook include continuing uncertainty around US trade policy, particularly regarding possible sectoral tariffs on semiconductors and pharmaceuticals, as well as unresolved US-China trade negotiations."

China's growth prospects for both 2025 and 2026 are 4.7 percent and 4.3 percent, unchanged from April estimates, as policy support is expected to cushion the impact of higher tariffs and continued weakness in the property market, according to the ADB.

The bank trimmed its growth forecast for India by 6.5 percent this year and next year from its April forecasts of 6.7 percent and 6.8 percent, respectively.

The steep US tariffs levied on Indian exports starting in August are expected to weigh on growth, it explained.

Economies in Southeast Asia are seeing the largest downgrades to growth forecasts amid weaker global demand and elevated trade uncertainty.

Growth in the subregion is now projected at 4.3 percent for 2025 and 2026 -- down 0.4 percentage points for each year compared with April's forecasts.

The ADB is a multilateral development finance institution dedicated to reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific.

Established in 1966, it is now owned by 69 members, mostly from the region, as well as the US, Britain and Germany.

Algorithm stays in China, licensed to US

TikTok sale puts app's algorithm in spotlight – a social media expert explains how the For You Page works and what changes are in store

By Kelley Cotter, Penn State

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

President Donald Trump announced on Sept. 19, 2025, a preliminary agreement for the sale of a majority stake in TikTok from Chinese tech giant ByteDance to a group of U.S. investors following Trump's negotiation with Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

The deal would create a new U.S.-only version of the app, bringing it into compliance with a law signed by former President Joe Biden on April 23, 2024, and upheld by the Supreme Court on Jan. 17, 2025. Specifics of the deal remain to be hammered out, but some details are emerging. These include what will happen to the video-sharing app's core algorithm - and what that means for TikTok's millions of U.S. users.

The Chinese government has indicated it will not permit ByteDance to sell the algorithm, because it is classified as a controlled technology export, per Chinese law. Meanwhile, U.S. tech industry executives and some lawmakers say compliance with the law requires the algorithm to be under American control. The deal as proposed includes licensing the algorithm so that it remains Chinese intellectual property while the U.S. version of the app continues to use the technology.

TikTok's For You Page algorithm is widely considered the most important part of the app. As one analyst put it: "Buying TikTok without the algorithm would be like buying a Ferrari without the engine."

The algorithm's value lies in its uncanny capacity to anticipate users' content preferences. Many users claim it knows them better than they know themselves - a sentiment that has evolved into a curious mix of spiritual belief and conspiracy theorizing, as my colleagues and I have documented. Other scholars have similarly noted that users feel more intimately seen and known by TikTok's algorithm than those powering other popular platforms.

I have studied social media algorithms for nearly a decade, exploring how our relationships with them have evolved as they become increasingly entwined with daily life. As both a social media scholar and TikTok devotee, I want to shed some light on how the algorithm works and how the app is likely to change in the wake of its sale.

In some ways, the TikTok algorithm does not differ significantly from other social media algorithms. At their core, algorithms are merely a series of steps used to accomplish a specific goal. They perform

mathematical computations to optimize output in service of that goal.

There are two layers to the TikTok algorithm. First, there is the abstract layer that defines the outcome developers wish to accomplish. An internal document shared with The New York Times specified that TikTok's algorithm optimizes for four goals: "user value," "long-term user value," "creator value" and "platform value."

But how do you turn these goals into math? What does an abstract concept like "user value" even mean? It's not practical to ask users whether they value their experience every time they visit the site. Instead, TikTok relies on proxy signals that translate abstract outcomes into quantifiable measures - specifically, likes, comments, shares, follows, time spent on a given video and other user-behavior data. These signals then become part of an equation to predict two key concrete outcomes: "retention," or the likelihood that a user will return to the site, and "time spent" on the app.

The TikTok For You Page algorithm relies on machine learning for predicting retention and time spent. Machine learning is a computational process in which an algorithm learns patterns in a dataset, with little or no human guidance, to produce the best equation to predict an outcome. Through learning patterns, the algorithm determines how much individual data signals matter for coming up with a precise prediction.

A Wall Street Journal investigation found that the amount of time users spend watching each video plays a large role in how the algorithm chooses videos it suggests to users. Using the equation it has generated to predict retention and time spent, the algorithm assigns a score to each video and ranks possible videos that could be shown to the user by this score. The higher the score for an individual user, the more likely the video will appear in their feed.

Of course, content characteristics and other users additionally inform recommendations, and there are other subprocesses folded into the equation. This step is where algorithmic moderation usually comes in. If a video looks like engagement bait or has excessive gore, for example, the content's score will be penalized.

The sale has not been finalized, but the algorithm's fate is coming into focus. According to reports, the United States-only version of the algorithm will be retrained on only U.S. users' data. Users won't need to download a new version of the app for the changed algorithm to work.

Even though the algorithm itself is the same as before, it's fairly certain that TikTok will change. I see two key reasons for change.

First, the proposed app's U.S.-only user population will alter the

makeup of the underlying dataset informing algorithmic recommendations on an ongoing basis. As the kinds of content come to reflect American cultural preferences, values and behaviors, the algorithm may be slightly different as it "learns" new patterns.

Though users are more likely to stick with the app because they don't need to download a new version, not all users will choose to, especially if it is seen as under the control of Trump's allies. Under the current deal, Oracle Corp. and the U.S. government would oversee the algorithm's retraining. This arrangement suggests that the U.S. government may have significant influence over how the app works.

The deal would give an 80% share to U.S. investors, including 50% to new investors Oracle, Silver Lake and Andreessen Horowitz. These investors have connections to Trump, and an apparent provision of the deal allows the U.S. government to select one board member.

These influences raise the possibility of a boycott from left-leaning users and creators similar to earlier boycotts of Target for rolling back DEI measures and Disney after the since-reversed suspension of Jimmy Kimmel. This may result in a user population - and data - reflective of a narrower realm of interests and ideologies.

Second, it's possible that the majority shareowners of the new app will decide to adjust the algorithm, particularly when it comes to content moderation. The new owners may wish to modify TikTok's Community Guidelines according to their view of acceptable and unacceptable speech.

For example, TikTok's current Community Guidelines prohibit misinformation and work with independent fact-checkers to assess the accuracy of content. While Meta used to follow a similar approach for Instagram and Facebook, in January 2025 Meta announced that it would end its relationships with independent fact-checkers and loosen content restrictions. YouTube has similarly relaxed its content moderation this year.

With reports that the U.S. government would oversee retraining the algorithm, there's a possibility that not only the new investors but also the government itself could influence how content is prioritized and moderated.

The bottom line is algorithms are highly sensitive to context. They reflect the interests, values and worldviews of the people who build them, the preferences and behaviors of people whose data informs their models and the legal and economic contexts they operate within.

This means that while it's difficult to predict exactly what a U.S.-only TikTok will be like, it's safe to assume it will not be a perfect mirror image of the current app. (AP)

‘Movie production has been stolen from Hollywood’

Trump threatens 100% tariff on films made outside US

WASHINGTON, Sept 30, (AP): President Donald Trump says he will slap a 100% tax on movies made outside the United States - a vague directive aimed at protecting a business that America already dominates.

Claiming that movie production “has been stolen” from Hollywood and the US, Trump posted on his Truth Social platform that “I will be imposing a 100% tariff on any and all movies that are made outside of the United States.”

It was unclear how these tariffs would operate, since movies and TV shows can be transmitted digitally without going through ports. Also unclear is what it would mean for US movies filmed on foreign locations - think James Bond and Jason Bourne - or what legal basis the president would claim for imposing the tariffs.

The president had first issued the threat back in May. He has yet to specify when the tariff might go into effect.

Movies are an odd battleground for a US trade war. “Unlike any other country’s film industry, US movies are



The Hollywood sign is seen in Los Angeles, Jan. 9, 2025. (AP)

the most accessible, well-known, and best performing due to the numerous language options and worldwide reach provided by US-based studios,” trade

analyst Jacob Jensen of the center-right American Action Forum wrote in a July commentary.

In movie theaters, American-pro-

duced movies overwhelmingly dominate the domestic marketplace. Data from the Motion Picture Association also shows that American films made \$22.6 billion in exports and \$15.3 billion in trade surplus in 2023 - with a recent report noting that these films “generated a positive balance of trade in every major market in the world” for the US.

Barry Appleton, co-director of the Center for International Law at the New York Law Center, warned that other countries may retaliate with levies on American movies or other services. In movies, “Brand America is way, way ahead,” he said. “What this policy does is actually cook the golden goose that’s laying the golden eggs.”

Tariffs are Trump’s go-to solution for America’s economic problems, a tool he likes to use to extract concessions from other countries. Reversing decades of U.S. support for lower trade barriers, he’s slapped double-digit tariffs on imports from almost every country on earth. And he’s targeted specific products, including most recently pharma-

ceuticals, heavy trucks, kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanities.

Unlike other sectors that have recently been targeted by tariffs, movies go beyond physical goods, bringing larger intellectual property ramifications into question.

Here’s what we know.

Trump has cited national security concerns, a justification he’s similarly used to impose import taxes on certain countries and a range of sector-specific goods.

In May, Trump claimed that the American movie industry is “DYING to a very fast death” as other countries offer “all sorts of incentives” to draw filmmaking away from the US.

In recent years, US film and television production has been hampered between setbacks from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hollywood guild strikes of 2023 and the recent wildfires in the Los Angeles area. Incentive programs have also long-influenced where movies are shot both abroad and within the US, with more production leaving

California to states like Georgia and New Mexico - as well as countries like Canada.

At the same time, international markets make up a large chunk of Hollywood’s total box office revenue - accounting for over 70% last year, according to Heeyon Kim, an assistant professor of strategy at Cornell University. She warned that tariffs and potential retaliation from other countries impacting this industry could result in billions of dollars in lost earnings and thousands of jobs.

“To me, (this) makes just no sense,” Kim previously told The Associated Press, adding that such tariffs could “undermine otherwise a thriving part of the US economy.”

The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, which represents behind-the-scenes entertainment workers across the U.S. and Canada, said in May that Trump had “correctly recognized” the “urgent threat from international competition” that the American film and television industry faces today.

People

Combs sentence

Prosecutors push for over 11 years

NEW YORK, Sept 30, (AP): Prosecutors urged a New York federal judge Tuesday to send **Sean “Diddy” Combs** to prison for over 11 years following his conviction on prostitution-related charges, citing one of his accusers who said she lives in fear of the music mogul’s release from detention.



Combs

“His crimes of conviction are serious and have warranted sentences over ten years in multiple cases for defendants who, like Sean Combs, engaged in violence and put others in fear,” they wrote in a presentence submission requesting at least 11 years and three months in prison.

They filed their sentencing recommendation shortly after midnight, including letters from some of his accusers describing how his violence and demands had impacted their lives.

They called Combs “unrepentant” and said Combs had conceded his acts of violence and abuse throughout his trial but “incredibly, ... he now argues that his victims should shoulder the blame.”

Combs, 55, has remained in custody since his July conviction on charges related to arranging for men to travel to hotels or private residences, where they were directed to engage in intimate activities with his girlfriends.

These elaborate, days-long, drug-fueled gatherings were often recorded by Combs. Defense attorneys have requested a sentence of no more than 14 months in prison. Sentencing is scheduled for Friday.

In July, Combs was convicted of two charges for violating the Mann Act, which outlaws interstate commerce related to prostitution, for arranging the paid sexual encounters between his girlfriends and male workers. Each count carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison.

The same jury acquitted the Bad Boy Records founder of racketeering conspiracy and sex trafficking charges that could have resulted in a life sentence.

Last week, the defense submitted its presentence arguments, saying Combs has suffered enough during his nearly 13 months behind bars that he should be freed soon.

They wrote that he became a changed man in a Brooklyn federal lockup, where he has been under constant suicide watch and learned to react calmly to threats rather than violently, even when a fellow inmate confronted him with a shiv.

They said Combs has realized that his overuse of drugs, including some prescribed by doctors, had contributed to violent acts he participated in.

Prosecutors said Combs was now trying to cast himself as a victim.

“He is not the victim,” they wrote. “The Court should focus on the very real effects that the defendant’s conduct had on the lives of the actual victims, his victims.”

At trial, two of Combs’ former girlfriends testified that they felt forced to participate in the drug-fueled parties with male workers as Combs watched and sometimes filmed.

R&B singer Casandra “Cassie” Ventura described being physically abused by Combs when she upset him during their decade-long relationship. Another former girlfriend, testifying under the pseudonym “Jane,” said she felt pressured to take part in intimate acts involving other men. She testified that Combs, in a fit of rage, once put her in a chokehold and punched her in the face.

Film



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Leonardo DiCaprio in a scene from ‘One Battle After Another.’ (AP)

Rebellion reloaded in ‘One Battle After Another’

Anderson’s epic thriller lights a fire

LOS ANGELES, Sept 30, (AP): Paul Thomas Anderson spent about 20 years writing “One Battle After Another.” After two decades, it’s never felt more relevant.

The epic action thriller, inspired by Thomas Pynchon’s “Vineland,” hit theaters recently. With a running time of 2 hours and 50 minutes, “One Battle After Another” wastes no time immersing audiences in its politically charged world.

The revolution will not be televised, but it will be placed at the front and center of Anderson’s film. The director isn’t there to make his audience comfortable, star Teyana Taylor says, as he zeroes in on themes of immigration, racism and systemic corruption showcased at their most absurd.

“I feel like PTA calls out a lot of things that are trying to get swept under the rug,” Taylor told The Associated Press, referring to the director by his nickname. “And that’s what I respect. This is really waking, shaking and baking some s---. Like, you gotta shake the table.”

Taylor’s character, Perfidia Beverly Hills, is a member of the Weather Underground-inspired French 75 revolutionary group. From the film’s first scene, we see the French 75 take matters into their own hands, liberating undocumented detainees, destroying corrupt political offices and launching their own form of justice, one right after the other. The group is peppered with members portrayed by musicians-turned-actors like Dijon Duenas, Alana Haim, and Shayna McHayle and notable actors like Regina Hall and Wood Harris.

“I mean, this movie is based on some of the revolutionaries and anarchists of the late ‘60s, the Weathermen that were fighting for civil rights, environmentalism too at the time, capitalism, Viet-

nam,” star Leonardo DiCaprio told the AP. “But it’s about the implosion of that too, about the extremes that people go to for their own ideology.”

DiCaprio portrays Bob Ferguson, known in the French 75’s initial scenes as Ghetto Pat, a radical with deep knowledge of explosives and undying devotion to both Perfidia and the revolution. Together, Perfidia and Pat seem unstoppable, until the racist and xenophobic Col. Steven Lockjaw (Sean Penn) sets out to end the group to fuel his rise to power.

“And this is a movie, fast-forward, in today’s day and age, where you see this sort of systematic breakdown that comes from it, if it’s not done with grace and purity and consistently, the whole sort of- our revolution is dismantled and our past comes back to haunt us,” said DiCaprio. “So that’s what I love that Paul did. He shows extremity on both sides of the spectrum and how no one seems to be communicating or getting things done in the right way nowadays.”

Future

The film jumps 16 years into the future. Perfidia has disappeared and DiCaprio’s character lives under a new alias in a sanctuary city as a paranoid, stoner dad with his teenage daughter, Willa (newcomer Chase Infiniti). Everything is seemingly mundane until Lockjaw reappears, forcing the father-daughter duo on the run.

“There’s a lot of moments where I was like, I don’t know if I’m gonna be able to do this, but thankfully I had amazing scene partners and a great support system to kind of assure me that I was here to do my job and I knew exactly that I could do it,” Infiniti said.

“One Battle After Another” is Anderson’s most

expensive project to date and shot entirely in VistaVision - a decades-old format that’s been revived in recent years by movies like “The Brutalist.”

Benicio del Toro, who plays karate instructor Sensei Sergio St. Carlos, says blending improv scenes with DiCaprio and shooting in the antique format forced the actors and Anderson to have unwavering faith in each other’s decisions, knowing they only had a limited amount of takes. His character, also the head of an undocumented migrant hideaway, hopes his storyline will be an example of showcasing compassion beyond political affiliation.

“I wouldn’t be pompous enough to say movies change people. But it might just open a door that leads to another door that leads to a hallway to another door,” he said.

DiCaprio says portraying Bob Ferguson is his own version of freedom of speech, allowing him to “shine a light on certain issues about humanity and different subject matters.”

“I’m always searching for a movie that doesn’t necessarily have meaning but is thought-provoking, that holds a mirror up to who we are as a society, as people, of humanity,” said DiCaprio. “And that’s what I think the heart of this movie is, is how to find humanity in a world that is incredibly divided. ... It’s not a film where there’s a specific sort of ideology that Paul is putting into it. It’s saying this is who we are, this is the world we live in.”

For Taylor, the 20-year-old script’s relevance is evidence of American history continuing to repeat itself.

“It didn’t need a change; it didn’t need to be updated because it was all still so relevant,” said Taylor. “It’s time to wake up, and it’s time to shed light on the necessary conversations.”



Audrey Nuna, (from left), Ejay, and Rei Ami from ‘KPop Demon Hunters’ appear at the MTV Video Music Awards in Elmont, N.Y., on Sept. 7, 2025. (AP)

Variety

MADRID: Spanish club Valencia said on Monday it filed a lawsuit against Netflix claiming falsehoods in a documentary about Brazil player Vinicius Júnior.

Valencia said the documentary mistakenly accused a large group of Valencia fans of making racist chants against the Real Madrid forward in a La Liga match in 2023.

The club filed the lawsuit after its public demands for corrections by the documentary’s production company were not fulfilled.

The lawsuit is against Netflix and the production company for damaging “Valencia’s honor.” It seeks financial compensation, corrections of the subtitles in the documentary, and the publication of the sentencing, the club said.

Valencia first threatened the lawsuit this year. At the time, Vinicius’ representatives said the player would not get involved because the demand was against Netflix and the producers of the documentary.

A request for comment sent to Netflix was not immediately answered.

The documentary includes a social media video showing what appeared to be a large crowd at Mestalla Stadium chanting at Vinicius. The video has the word “mono,” Spanish for monkey, in the subtitles. But Valencia claims the fans were actually chanting “tonto,” which is Spanish for silly.

Then-Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti was quick to accuse the Valencia fans of racially insulting Vinicius, but later apologized after saying he realized it wasn’t the entire stadium chanting the word monkey.

There were fans who did racially abuse Vinicius during that match. Three of them became the first fans to be convicted in racism-related cases in professional soccer in Spain. They were handed eighth-month prison sentences. (AP)

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NEW YORK: Lally Weymouth, the daughter of the late Washington Post publisher Katharine Graham who forged her own journalistic career that included interviewing Iraq’s Saddam Hussein and Libya’s Muammar Gaddafi among other world leaders, has died. She was 82.

Weymouth died Monday at her home in Manhattan. The cause was pancreatic cancer, her daughter Katharine Weymouth told The Washington Post.

Born Elizabeth Morris Graham, Lally Weymouth was most recently a senior associate editor at the paper. Her latest piece was an interview with Qatari Emir Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani that ran shortly before President Donald Trump visited his country in May. It appeared in the opinion section in her preferred question-and-answer format.

Weymouth interviewed every Israeli prime minister since 1981, a biography posted on the paper’s website said. She also interviewed Britain’s then-Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Argentine President Javier Milei. (AP)

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PARIS: UNESCO on Monday inaugurated the world’s first virtual museum of stolen cultural objects during the MONDIACULT 2025 held in Barcelona, Spain, according to its website.

The initiative aims to protect the world’s common heritage and fight against the looting and illicit trafficking of cultural property.

Using innovative technologies such as 3D modeling and virtual reality, the virtual museum digitally reconstructs and showcases stolen cultural objects selected by member states. The platform also features narratives, educational content and testimonies from affected communities, highlighting the cultural and historical significance of these items. A special gallery devoted to successful restitution cases further underscores the importance of best practices and international cooperation in the return of cultural property.

The museum currently presents more than 200 stolen cultural objects, ranging from historical artefacts and architectural elements to ancient inscriptions and currencies, as well as musical instruments, rare books, manuscripts and archives. (Xinhua)

Judge stops Trump plan to cut hundreds of VOA jobs

YouTube to pay \$24.5M in Trump account suspension case

NEW YORK, Sept 30, (AP): Google’s YouTube has agreed to pay \$24.5 million to settle a lawsuit President Donald Trump brought after the video site suspended his account following the Jan. 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol following the election that resulted in him leaving the White House for four years.

The settlement of the more than four-year-old case earmarks \$22 million for Trump to contribute to the Trust for the National Mall and a construction of a White House ballroom, according to court documents filed Monday. The remaining \$2.5 million will be paid to other parties involved in the case, including the writer Naomi Wolf and the American Conservative Union.

Alphabet, the parent of Google, is the third major technology company to settle a volley of lawsuits that Trump brought for what he alleged had unfairly muzzled him after his first term as president ended in January 2021. He filed similar cases Facebook parent Meta Platforms and Twitter before it was bought by billionaire Elon Musk in 2022 and rebranded as X.

Meta agreed to pay \$25 million to settle Trumps’ lawsuit over his 2021 suspension from Facebook and X agreed to



A YouTube sign is shown near the company's headquarters in San Bruno, Calif., Wednesday, March 12, 2025. (AP)

settle the lawsuit that Trump brought against Twitter for \$10 million. When the lawsuits against Meta, Twitter and YouTube were filed, legal experts predicted Trump had little chance of prevailing.

After buying Twitter for \$44.5 billion, Musk later became major contributor to Trump’s successful 2024 campaign that resulted in his re-election and then spent several months leading a cost-cutting effort that purged thousands of workers from the federal government payroll before the two had a bitter falling out. Both Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai and Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg were among the tech leaders who lined up behind Trump during his second inauguration in January in a show of solidarity that was widely interpreted as a sign of the industry’s intention to work more closely with the president than during his first administration.

ABC News, meanwhile, agreed to pay \$15 million in December toward Trump’s presidential library to settle a defamation lawsuit over anchor George Stephanopoulos’ inaccurate on-air assertion that the president-elect had been found civilly liable for raping writer E. Jean Carroll. And in July, Paramount decided to pay Trump \$16 million to settle a lawsuit regarding editing at CBS’ storied “60 Minutes” news program.

The settlement does not constitute an admission of liability, the filing says. Google confirmed the settlement but de-

clined to comment beyond it.

Meanwhile, a federal judge agreed Monday to temporarily suspend the Trump administration’s plan to eliminate hundreds of jobs at the agency that oversees Voice of America, the government-funded broadcaster founded to counter Nazi propaganda during World War II.

US District Judge Royce Lamberth in Washington, D.C., ruled that the U.S. Agency for Global Media cannot implement a reduction in force eliminating 532 jobs for full-time government employees on Tuesday. Those employees represent the vast majority of its remaining staff.

Kari Lake, the agency’s acting CEO, announced in late August that the job cuts would take effect Tuesday. But the judge’s ruling preserves the status quo at the agency until he rules on a plaintiffs’ underlying motion to block the reduction in force.

Lamberth previously ruled that President Donald Trump’s Republican administration must restore VOA programming to levels commensurate with its statutory mandate to “serve as a consistently reliable and authoritative source of news.” He also blocked Lake from removing Michael Abramowitz as VOA’s director.

Fashion



A model wears a creation as part of the Louis Vuitton Spring/Summer 2026 collection presented in Paris, Tuesday, Sept. 30. (AP)



Zendaya poses before the Louis Vuitton Spring/Summer 2026 show in Paris, Sept 30. (AP)



Ana de Armas poses before the Louis Vuitton Spring/Summer 2026 collection presented in Paris. (AP)



Emma Stone poses before the Louis Vuitton Spring/Summer 2026 collection presented in Paris. (AP)

’80s power, Madonna steal the show

Saint Laurent blooms with oversized drama in Paris

PARIS, Sept 30, (AP): At Saint Laurent, Anthony Vaccarello dialed up the drama Monday night at Paris Fashion Week with a set of gigantic white flowers that loomed like a cinematic backdrop. If the blooms hinted at delicacy, the clothes told another story: big, bold, and unafraid of excess. Madonna was in attendance, and at times she stole the focus - a burst of razzmatazz on and off the runway that amped the show’s already operatic charge.

Floor-sweeping gowns rippled with frills, evoking 1970s archival pieces and petals unfurling at twilight. They weren’t garments so much as visual arguments

- “beauty as plural,” the house notes declared - gowns that embodied Vaccarello’s belief that esthetics are a language.

The designer’s penchant for oversize, a throughline of his tenure, reached new heights. Giant crisp bow collars, sharp enough to cut the air, swung the silhouettes firmly into the early ’80s, echoing the exaggerated power shoulders that have become a Saint Laurent signature under his watch. Sheeny trench coats, meanwhile, clung lean and skeletal, their crinkled fabric folding like the contours of a rose.

Vaccarello mined Saint Laurent’s heritage - echoes of John Singer Sargent’s “Madame X,” of Mapplethorpe’s leather-clad heroines, of Rive Gauche’s bourgeois chic - but stripped it of nostalgia. He prefers what he has often called “no ornamentation, no decoration, no ... nothing,” letting the silhouette itself speak.

It was pure theater. A Saint Laurent woman who is both heroine and classic, a figure of resistance and allure, swept across the runway. Vaccarello reminded the industry why his Saint Laurent is not just about clothes, but about style as discourse - garments as arguments, couture as conversation.

Technology

Promote ‘healthy AI use’

ChatGPT gets ‘parental’ controls for teen safety

LONDON, Sept 30, (AP): OpenAI said Monday it’s adding parental controls to ChatGPT that are designed to provide teen users of the popular platform with a safer and more “age-appropriate” experience.

The company is taking action after AI chatbot safety for young users has hit the headlines. The technology’s dangers have been recently highlighted by a number of cases in which teenagers took their lives after interacting with ChatGPT.

In the United States, the Federal Trade Commission has even opened an inquiry into several tech companies about the potential harms to children and teenagers who use their AI chatbots as companions.

In a blog post posted Monday, OpenAI outlined the new controls for parents. Here is a breakdown:

Getting started

The parental controls will be available to all users, but both parents and teens will need their own accounts to take advantage of them.

To get started, a parent or guardian needs to send an email or text message to invite a teen to connect their accounts. Or a teenager can send an invite to a parent. Users can send a request by going into the settings menu and then to the “Parental controls” section.

Teens can unlink their accounts at any time, but parents will be notified if they do.

Automatic safeguards

Once the accounts are linked, the teen account will get some built-in protections, OpenAI said.

Teen accounts will “automatically get additional content protections, including reduced graphic content, viral challenges, sexual, romantic or violent role-play, and extreme beauty ideals, to help keep their experience age-appropriate,” the company said.

Parents can choose to turn these filters off, but teen users don’t

have the option.

OpenAI warns that such guardrails are “not foolproof and can be bypassed if someone is intentionally trying to get around them.” It advised parents to talk with their children about “healthy AI use.”

Adjusting settings

Parents are getting a control panel where they can adjust a range of settings as well as switch off the restrictions on sensitive content mentioned above.

For example, does your teen stay up way past bedtime to use ChatGPT? Parents can set a quiet time when the chatbot can’t be used.

Other settings include turning off the AI’s memory so conversations can’t be saved and won’t be used in future responses; turning off the ability to generate or edit images; turning off voice mode; and opting out of having chats used to train ChatGPT’s AI models.

Get notified

OpenAI is also being more proactive when it comes to letting parents know that their child might be in distress.

It’s setting up a new notification system to inform them when something might be “seriously wrong” and a teen user might be thinking about harming themselves.

A small team of specialists will review the situation and, in the rare case that there are “signs of acute distress,” they’ll notify parents by email, text message and push alert on their phone - unless the parent has opted out.

OpenAI said it will protect the teen’s privacy by only sharing the information needed for parents or emergency responders to provide help.

“No system is perfect, and we know we might sometimes raise an alarm when there isn’t real danger, but we think it’s better to act and alert a parent so they can step in than to stay silent,” the company said.

Stevens postpones tour

Parton postpones Vegas shows over health issues

NEW YORK, Sept 30, (AP): **Dolly Parton** has postponed her first Las Vegas residency in 32 years, citing “health challenges,” the country legend shared on social media Sunday night.

She did not provide specific details, writing, “As many of you know, I have been dealing with some health challenges, and my doctors tell me that I must have a few procedures. As I joked with them, it must be time for my 100,000-mile check-up, although it’s not the usual trip to see my plastic surgeon!”

Parton added that she is postponing the shows because she is “not going to be able to rehearse and put together the show that I want you to see. You pay good money to see me perform, and I want to be at my best for you.”

She was scheduled to perform six shows at The Colosseum at Caesars Palace for “Dolly: Live in Las Vegas” between Dec. 4 and Dec. 13, overlapping with the National Finals Rodeo. Her dates have been moved to next year - Sept. 2026.

Tickets are valid for the new dates and refunds will be available, her statement adds.

“Don’t worry about me quittin’ the business because God hasn’t said anything about stopping yet,” she said. “But I believe he is telling me to slow down right now so I can be ready for more big adventures with all of you.”

Parton performs on occasion but hasn’t toured since her “Pure & Sim-



Parton

ple Tour” ended in 2016. But she’s remained as busy as ever: On Nov. 11, she will release a new book, “Star of the Show: My Life on Stage.” And a new stage musical inspired by her life story is set to land on Broadway in 2026.

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Cat Stevens, who also goes by Yusuf, has postponed the North American leg of his book tour due to unspecified visa issues, the singer announced on social media Monday.

The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame member was set to tour in support of his book, “Cat on the Road to Find-out,” which will release in the US on Oct. 7 and was made available in the UK earlier this month. The book release won’t be impacted, Stevens wrote, noting that “books don’t need visas!”

Stevens is the latest in a string of international musicians and athletes impacted by visa issues, as fees have increased in the past year and processing times have slowed.

Stevens wrote that his team waited months for visa approvals, but “at this point, the production logistics necessary for my show cannot be arranged in time.”

“I am really upset!” Stevens wrote on social media. “Not least for my fans who have bought tickets and made travel plans to see me perform.”

Representatives of Stevens did not immediately respond to The Associated Press’ request for comment.

The singer’s tour was set to start Oct. 2 in Philadelphia and had various stops scheduled across the country for the rest of the month. His Oct. 8 tour stop in Toronto, Canada was also postponed.

Latin representation meets NFL politics

Bad Bunny to bring Latin pride to Bowl show

LOS ANGELES, Sept 30, (AP): The selection of Bad Bunny to headline the Super Bowl halftime show is about more than music.

The move signals a cultural spotlight for Latin identity at America’s most-watched television event. It also raises fresh questions about how much space there will be for his trademark symbolism and social commentary - including his past criticism of President Donald Trump - given the NFL’s history of keeping performances tightly managed.

Here are some things to know about the selection.

The halftime show is a collaboration between the NFL, Roc Nation and Apple Music.

Roc Nation, Jay-Z’s entertainment company, has curated performers since 2019 and returns alongside veteran producer Jesse Collins. Apple Music distributes the performance, while the NFL ultimately controls the stage, broadcast and branding.

Artists don’t get a paycheck for performing. However, their payoff is global exposure. That imbalance gives the league leverage, though history shows that high-powered stars some-

times defy the league’s guardrails.

The NFL has a track record of pushing back when artists get political. However, some performers don’t always comply.

- In 2020, the league asked Jennifer Lopez to cut a segment featuring children in cages, a critique of US immigration policies. She refused.

- In 2022, it was reported that Dr. Dre and Eminem were both advised not to kneel or reference police, but they went forward.

- Rapper M.I.A. flashed a middle finger during Madonna’s set, earning a hefty fine in 2012. She and the NFL ultimately reached a settlement ending their multimillion dollar dispute a couple years later.

While Bad Bunny is a known hitmaker, he’s also an artist who ties his music to Puerto Rican identity, colonial politics and immigrant struggles. His Super Bowl announcement included a pointed dedication: “This is for my people, my culture, and our history.”

That alone sets the stage for a performance that could carry layered meanings far beyond spectacle.



Bad Bunny performs during the final concert of his summer residency in his homeland at the Coliseo de Puerto Rico Jose Miguel Agrelot, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025. (AP)

In his career, Bad Bunny has become one of the world’s most streamed artists with albums such as “Un Verano Sin Ti,” an all-Spanish-language record.

The 31-year-old artist born Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio has won three Grammys and 12 Latin Grammys. He has become a global ambas-

sador for Latin music, starred in films such as “Bullet Train,” “Caught Stealing” and “Happy Gilmore 2,” and collaborated with top fashion houses. He enters November’s Latin Grammys as the leading nominee with 12, dethroning producer and songwriter Édgar Barrera.

Bad Bunny has been vocal in his opposition to Trump and his policies. In the final weeks of the 2024 campaign, he backed former Vice President Kamala Harris after a comedian at Trump’s Madison Square Garden rally mocked Puerto Rico as a “floating island of garbage.”

Days later, Bad Bunny posted a video showcasing Puerto Rico’s beaches and artists, captioned simply: “garbage.”

Since Trump took office, Bad Bunny’s criticism hasn’t slowed. This year, he shared an Instagram video appearing to show immigration agents making arrests in Puerto Rico, with the voice behind the camera cursing the agents.

On July 4, he released the video for “NUEVAYo!,” featuring a Trump-like voice apologizing to immigrants: “This country is nothing without the immigrants.”

Experts to share research, treatment

Kuwait to host meeting on rare blood disorders

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Kuwait Society of Hematology announced it will hold an advanced scientific meeting on “Proliferative Blood Tumors and Myelodysplastic Diseases” on Saturday at the Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Conference Hall, with the participation of prominent international and regional experts.

Head of the conference organizing committee Dr. Ahmed Al-Abdulkareem told reporters that the event aims to review the latest developments in diagnosing and treating myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPNs) and myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS).

Speakers from the United Kingdom and the United States, along with local specialists, will participate in the event to strengthen international scientific cooperation and improve healthcare for patients with these complex conditions.

Dr. Al-Abdulkareem stressed that the scientific program includes interactive sessions and specialized discussions on modern techniques in molecular genetics, early diagnosis, and innovative treatments, along with real-life clinical case reviews and the latest clinical trial results.

He expressed hope that the meeting will achieve its objectives by serving as an interactive platform for exchanging experiences, applying acquired knowledge in medical practice, and exploring new treatment strategies for patients with rare blood diseases in Kuwait and the Arab world.

Dr. Al-Abdulkareem emphasized that the course goes beyond being just a scientific meeting, as it is an open invitation to physicians and researchers to embark on an advanced knowledge journey aimed at pushing the boundaries of innovation and achieving a qualitative shift in the field of hematology.



A health worker administers a polio vaccine to a child in a school in Karachi, Pakistan on Sept 1, 2025. (AP)

845 dengue cases in Bangladesh

Pakistan’s polio fight set back by two new cases

KARACHI, Pakistan, Sept 30, (Agencies): Pakistan reported two new polio cases in the southern province of Sindh, health officials said Monday, a blow to efforts aimed at eradicating the crippling disease among children. This brings the total to 29 cases across the country since January, despite several immunization drives.

The virus was detected in two young girls in the cities of Badin and Thatta, according to a statement from the Pakistan Polio Eradication Program.

Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan remain the only two countries where transmission of the wild poliovirus has never been stopped, according to the World Health Organization. Some parents in Pakistan still refuse to vaccinate their children, while others live in hard-to-access areas, experts say.

Meanwhile, health workers sometimes suffer life-threatening attacks when trying to reach households in former militant strongholds in the country’s restive northwest. In February, gunmen killed a police officer assigned to protect a vaccination team in Jamrud, a district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa bordering Afghanistan. Since the 1990s, more than 200 polio workers and the police assigned to protect them have been killed in attacks.

Authorities said nearly 21 million children under the age of five were vaccinated during a campaign earlier this month. Another nationwide, weeklong door-to-door drive is set to begin Oct. 13, targeting 45 million children.

Polio is a highly infectious, incur-

able disease that can cause lifelong paralysis. Pakistan has been reporting an average of about three new cases each month since January.

The WHO and its partners launched the global polio eradication initiative in 1988, following the notable precedent set by the elimination of smallpox in 1980. The effort came close several times, including in 2021, when just five cases were reported in Pakistan and Afghanistan. But cases have since rebounded, rising to 99 last year, and Pakistan has repeatedly missed eradication deadlines.

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Dengue: A total of 845 people were diagnosed with dengue fever in Bangladesh in the past 24 hours on Sunday, the highest number in a single day so far this year, said the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) under the Ministry of Health.

Also in the same period, four people died due to the mosquito-borne disease.

With the fresh infections reported as of 8 a.m. local time Sunday, the number of dengue cases has surged to 46,051 in Bangladesh so far this year, the DGHS said.

So far in September, 14,575 dengue cases were recorded after 10,496 people were infected with the disease in August, according to the DGHS, which confirmed 192 dengue deaths so far this year.

While 70 deaths were reported so far in September, there were 39 deaths in August and 41 in July, the DGHS said.

Nanosat nears end of mission

SpaceX eyes mid-Oct for Starship’s 11th flight test

LOS ANGELES, Sept 30, (Agencies): SpaceX is targeting mid-October for the 11th flight test of its Starship rocket, the company announced on Monday.

The launch is scheduled for as early as Monday, Oct. 13, with a launch window opening at 6:15 p.m. Central Time (2315 GMT).

During the test, the booster will launch with 24 flight-proven Raptor engines to test a unique landing burn configuration planned to be used on future Super Heavy rockets. It will target an offshore landing point in the Gulf of Mexico rather than returning to the launch site for catch, according to SpaceX.

Starship’s upper stage will pursue several in-space objectives, including deploying eight Starlink simulators that are similar in size to the company’s next-generation Starlink satellites. The simulators will follow the same suborbital trajectory as Starship and are expected to burn up upon reentry.

The mission will also include a series of experiments and operational changes aimed at paving the way for future Starship flights to return the upper stage to the launch site. For this test, some heat-shield tiles have been deliberately removed to stress-test vulnerable areas of the vehicle during reentry.

To replicate the trajectory of future return missions to SpaceX’s Starbase in the US state of Texas, the final phase of the test will feature a dynamic banking maneuver and evaluate subsonic guidance algorithms before a landing burn and splashdown in the Indian Ocean.

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The W-Cube nanosatellite, developed in Finland for the Europe-

an Space Agency (ESA), is nearing the end of its mission and will burn up in the Earth’s atmosphere within days, Finland’s VTT Technical Research Centre said recently.

The satellite is currently orbiting at about 200 km above the Earth’s surface and rapidly losing altitude. Scientists expect its signal to be lost at any time as atmospheric friction increases, causing it to ignite and disintegrate.

Launched on June 30, 2021, the cube-shaped satellite, about the size of a 1.5-litre milk carton, was the first ESA spacecraft ordered from Finland. It has operated for more than four years, close to the typical lifespan of nanosatellites.

The mission marked the first demonstration in orbit of the 75 gigahertz frequency band for satellite communications, VTT said in a statement. The satellite collected data on how the Earth’s atmosphere, especially rain and clouds, weakens high-frequency wireless signals.

“The W-Cube satellite validated that much higher frequency bands than those used today can be utilised in satellite communications and achieve very high performance,” said Jussi Saily, principal scientist at VTT. He said the technology could eventually deliver faster connections directly to smartphones in Europe.

The spacecraft carried a radio beacon system co-developed by VTT and Germany’s Fraunhofer IAF. Signals were successfully received at ground stations in Finland, Austria and the Netherlands, enabling measurements of atmospheric attenuation critical for future high-frequency satellite systems.

Call for prevention, lifestyle change

Kuwait doctors urge action amid rising rates of heart and metabolic diseases

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Head of the Lipid Diseases Unit at Sabah Al-Ahmad Cardiac Center and member of the Kuwait Cardiac Society Dr. Ahmed Al-Sarraf revealed the high rates of heart and metabolic diseases in Kuwait, and called for urgent action from both physicians and society, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Dr. Al-Sarraf affirmed that early prevention and adopting a healthy lifestyle represent the first line of defense against these conditions.

He said this in a statement he issued on the sidelines of the Second Kuwait Conference on Cardiometabolic Diseases held recently with the participation of doctors and experts from Kuwait and abroad, as well as international speakers.

Dr. Al-Sarraf emphasized that hosting the Second Kuwaiti Conference on Cardiometabolic Diseases highlights Kuwait’s commitment to promoting scientific research and exchanging expertise with international specialists, thereby contributing to the development of modern treatment and preventive strategies.

He highlighted that the statistics are alarming and that the conference covered several important scientific topics, including obesity and its cardiac and metabolic complications, diabetes and its impact on the heart, high cholesterol and triglycerides and methods of control, precision medicine and advances in modern treatments, as well as the use of Artificial Intelligence to predict heart disease risks.

A parent's guide to first-day school struggles

Tips for easing separation anxiety in young kids as they start school

NEW YORK, Sept 30, (AP): On her first full day of preschool, Alexander Lane’s 3-year-old daughter stayed in the car for an hour at drop-off because she didn’t want to go inside. On the second day, she entered class in tears.

But by the third day, she eagerly ran into the classroom.

Starting preschool or kindergarten is a milestone, but also a source of anxiety for some children, including many who are experiencing their first extended period of time away from a parent or guardian.

Lane already knew his daughter was nervous about being away from her parents. She had resisted going to a couple of classes several months ago, so Lane decided to give her a break before enrolling her in preschool.

“It’s not productive to tell someone, ‘You’ll just enjoy this if you push through and do it.’ Like, that’s not very persuasive,” said Lane, of Minneapolis.

Separation anxiety is not uncommon, especially for young children. In fact, experts say that it’s a natural part of growing up.

“As we’re starting a new school year, we’re going into a new classroom, our routine is changing ... there’s going to be some of this anxiety and time that you would expect that a child would need to transition,” said Erica Lee, a psychologist at Boston Children’s Hospital.

But if a child demonstrates symptoms of separation anxiety for prolonged periods of time, it can hinder their daily activities and may need a clinical diagnosis. Here’s some steps to acclimate young kids to school and make drop-off easier.



Olivia Starr clings to her father, Thaxter Hall, as Associate Educator Jessica Clark works to comfort her as she is dropped off for the last day of school at the Meadow Lakes CCS Early Learning, a Head Start center, May 8, 2024, in Wasilla, Alaska. (AP)

phia. Giving into a child’s fears, such as letting them avoid school, often worsens separation anxiety because the avoidance breeds more distress, Milaniak said.

That’s why she reinforces with parents the importance of raising brave kids. Having children confront scary situations - being alone in this case - shows them they are capable of doing tough tasks, even if it’s uncomfortable.

“It’s giving them opportunities to learn how to self-soothe, to learn how to be alone, which is part of what we all as humans need to learn,” Milaniak said.

Milaniak suggests a two-pronged approach for a child already dealing with separation anxiety: Validate their feelings, but stay firm. Treating a child’s anxieties with respect is important, but “compassionate limit-setting” is essential to building their confidence.

When Patrick Edmondson’s child, Miles, started preschool in 2023, the 3-year-old would resist getting ready in the morning and become emotional when it came time to separate from his parents. While Edmondson and his wife had empathy for their son’s fears, he said they didn’t want to indulge his anxiety by allowing him to skip school.

“If he was really having a problem, that option exists, but we don’t really disclose that to him,” said Edmondson, of Washington, D.C., said. “If that was the case, he would just say ‘I don’t

want to do it. It’s too scary, I don’t want to go today.’”

Miles’ parents implemented a few tactics to help their son, including offering reassurance that they would come back for him. Another tool was letting Miles choose a “bravery toy,” that made him feel safer at school, such as a Hot Wheels car or a stuffed animal, Edmondson said.

Now in kindergarten, Miles rides the bus to school, and he loves it, Edmondson said.

Gradually exposing a child to separation can help them become more comfortable with it, Lee said. Parents can start by doing short bursts of separation - such as going into another room for 5 minutes - to build their child’s tolerance. As a child gets used to it, parents can increase the length of time within reasonable limits.

Creating a brief goodbye ritual can also benefit a child dealing with separation anxiety, Lee said, because it creates a sense of routine without dragging out a parent’s departure.

Lane, the father from Minneapolis, eased his daughter’s transition into formal preschool by having her attend half-day classes over the summer.

They spend Sunday night talking about what activities she might do in class, as well as packing her lunch and picking out her outfit together, which makes her more comfortable, he said.

Drug abuse

Mongolia sees rise in suicide

ULAN BATOR, Sept. 30, (Xinhua): Suicide rates have increased during the last four years in Mongolia and remain high, according to a report released by the country’s National Center for Mental Health on Tuesday.

Mongolia had an average suicide rate of 28.1 per 100,000 people in 2021-2025, most of whom were male, the report said.

Suicide is a leading cause of death for people aged 15 to 34, according to center.

The main causes of suicide are unemployment, socioeconomic instability, severe depression, drug addiction, alcoholism, and illness.

Mongolian psychologists said the government must take urgent measures to prevent suicide among young men in the country.

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Drug-addiction: Sri Lanka’s National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) said on Monday that Sri Lanka’s Western Province records the highest number of drug-addicted schoolchildren, with Colombo district accounting for most cases.

The NDDCB said in a statement that children from low-income communities in Colombo and its suburbs are particularly vulnerable. Certain parts of the Kandy district, along with Gampaha, Kurunegala, Anuradhapura, Galle, Ratnapura, and Kalutara, were also identified as high-risk areas.

Peer influence has been cited as a major driver of drug use among schoolchildren, while weak implementation of school drug prevention policies and limited involvement of principals and education offices have worsened the problem, said the NDDCB. Stressful family environments, neglect, poverty, malnutrition, and the easy availability of drugs in communities are also contributing factors.

To curb the trend, the NDDCB said it is rolling out programs through six streams, including school, youth, family, workplace, and community-based initiatives, along with environmental and media campaigns.

The climate toll of air travel

Can travelers really offset flight pollution?

NEW YORK, Sept 30, (AP): So you’re booking your flight, and just when you’re about to check out, the airline asks if you’d like to pay a little something to offset your share of the flight’s pollution. Or, maybe you’re an environmentally minded person, and you’ve heard you can buy these things called carbon offsets.

Are they worth it? Let’s explore.

A roundtrip flight from New York to Los Angeles emits more than 1,300 pounds (about 614 kilograms) of planet-warming carbon dioxide per passenger, according to an emissions calculator from the International Civil Aviation Organization. That’s about the amount of pollution you’d save if you swore off meat for 17 months.

Jet engines burn fossil fuels, releasing planet-warming gases into the atmosphere. They also release water vapor, which turns into long, thin clouds called contrails that trap heat instead of letting it escape to space - additional warming that isn’t typically included in a flight’s emissions, said Diane Vitry, aviation director at a clean energy advocacy organization called the European Federation for Transport and Environment.

Reducing emissions from air travel is difficult. Batteries weigh too much and provide too little power for long flights. Sustainable aviation fuel - biofuels made from things like corn, oil seeds and algae that can be mixed with jet fuel - is currently more expensive than traditional fuel and lacking sufficient supply to be in wide use.

“Aviation is the problem child,” Vitry said. “Aviation and shipping are not decarbonizing, and definitely not fast enough.”

That’s where carbon offsets come in.

A carbon offset is a certificate or



A waxing gibbous moon is seen as a plane flies by March 12, 2025, in Grand Prairie, Texas. (AP)

a permit to emit planet-warming gases. It’s connected to something that stores or reduces carbon emissions - for example, planting trees, or funding renewable energy.

The idea is that the program or action offsets your pollutive action. You drive a car that pollutes a certain amount, you buy a carbon offset that leads to the planting of a tree that sequesters the same amount, and bam: the pollutive action (driving) is offset (tree planting).

They’ve gotten popular enough that there’s an entire marketplace that connects people and companies wanting to reduce their impacts with other companies that promise to do so.

Vitry doesn’t think so. She calls them a fake climate solution.

“Unfortunately, it is not what is going to solve aviation’s climate problem,” she said. “You can’t clear your climate conscience with an offset.”

Sure, you can plant a tree, but

Vitry said that doesn’t stop your flight’s emissions from entering the atmosphere. The tree may eventually absorb an equivalent amount of emissions. Or it may die. Or it may be sold as an offset multiple times by an unscrupulous company, meaning the tree can’t possibly absorb all the emissions it’s supposed to.

Barbara Haya, director of the Berkeley Carbon Trading Project, has studied carbon offsets for more than 20 years. She said some offset schemes are overcounted by 10 to 13 times their actual value.

“There’s so much over-crediting on the offset market, so many credits that either don’t represent any emissions reductions at all or represent just a small fraction of what they claim,” Haya said.

She said that’s partly because the voluntary offset market is largely unregulated, and it’s really difficult to measure offsets. The other problem is everyone involved ben-

efits from over-exaggerating the benefits of offsets. “The buyer of the credit wants the cheap credits, the seller of the credits wants to get more credits for the same activity and the third party verifier is hired by the project developer, so has a conflict of interest to be lenient,” Haya said.

Jodi Manning, chief executive of the carbon offset nonprofit Cool Effect, said consumers should beware of offset programs that don’t say clearly which project will benefit from your purchase or how much of your money is going to a project. But she said “high-quality” carbon credits can play an important role where emissions are unavoidable.

Manning said offsets have to be permanent, transparent, and unable to exist without the offset funding.

“When carbon is done correctly, it can provide a credible, immediate way to account for the emissions that travelers cannot otherwise reduce. We all create emissions at some point and it is certainly better to take action to compensate for it than to do nothing,” she said.

Several airlines that offer offsets did not respond to requests from AP to talk about their use. One that did, Southwest Airlines, said in a statement that it does not plan to rely on carbon offsets to help it reach a goal of net zero emissions by 2050.

Fly less, take the train if you can, and pack light, Manning said.

If you have to fly, think about cutting your emissions in other ways, Haya said.

Instead of buying carbon offsets, Haya said she donates \$1,000 to an organization she cares about on the rare occasion she flies for work or family visits.

“We have an ethical obligation not to fly unless we really have to,” she said.

‘Challenges include fighting the complacency’

Gilgeous-Alexander and the Thunder aim to defend NBA title with familiar faces

OKLAHOMA CITY, Sept 30, (AP): Shai Gilgeous-Alexander knows the outside view of him and the Oklahoma City Thunder squad he leads have changed significantly in the past year.

Gilgeous-Alexander is the reigning MVP and the Thunder is the defending NBA champion - firsts for both. Now, a team that rarely was seen beyond its local market last season has a schedule filled with national television appearances.

For all the new awards and attention, Gilgeous-Alexander is focused on what has remained the same. Most of the roster that won the title after a 68-14 regular season is intact. Gilgeous-Alexander, All-Star Jalen Williams and rising star Chet Holmgren all signed extensions in the offseason.

Gilgeous-Alexander hopes the familiar faces lead to familiar results. For that to happen, he believes that will require a familiar approach.

“How we get there is the same as it’s always ever been - daily improvement and focusing on trying to get better at the things that we can control every day,” he said. “And hopefully, we look up and we’ve accomplished the same

thing we just accomplished.”

Williams, a first-time All Star last season, believes the approach can lead to bigger accomplishments.

“You are chasing greatness,” he said. “You’re chasing to achieve stuff that hasn’t been done in our organization. And that’s everybody’s motivation. I think that’s why we’re a special group.”

Thunder guard Alex Caruso said the team would be naïve to ignore the risk of taking it easy after winning and said the challenges include “fighting the complacency, fighting the human nature of winning and not sitting back and resting but being on the front foot.”

Even with the championship, the Thunder remains one of the league’s youngest teams with its best days potentially ahead.

Gilgeous-Alexander averaged 32.7 points, 5.0 rebounds and 6.4 assists per game last season. It’s hard to imagine him getting better, but he’s only 27. He said he’s still seeking growth and little changed for him this offseason, other than the fact that it was shorter than usual.

“I was never a player that jumped out of the gym or had any insane tal-

ents,” he said. “I had to work for it. I had to craft and carve and mold myself into this player that I am today, and I’ll never forget that. And because of that, I hold that very dearly and make sure if I’m doing anything, I’m working at my game and try to be better.”

Williams, just 24, averaged 21.6 points, 5.3 rebounds and 4.1 assists last season and was a third-team All-NBA pick and a second-team all-defensive selection. He was a force in the NBA playoffs, despite playing through a wrist injury that required surgery after the season.

Williams said the surgery helped him focus in the offseason.

“It allowed me to be grounded and kind of focus on that and forget about the championship and everything else,” Williams said.

Holmgren, 23, averaged 15.0 points, 8.0 rebounds and 2.2 blocks last season. He missed 50 regular-season games with a pelvic injury and never fully got back to form last season. Despite that, the versatile 7-foot-1 forward was still a key piece that helped the Thunder win the title.

The role players are back, too.

Isaiah Hartenstein gave the Thunder much-needed bulk and averaged 11.2 points and 10.7 rebounds per game last season. Luguentz Dort was a first-team all-defensive selection who shot 41% from 3-point range. Caruso and Cason Wallace were among the league’s top perimeter defenders. Aaron Wiggins averaged 12 points per game. Isaiah Joe shot 41% from 3-point range and averaged 10.2 points. Jaylin Williams, Ajay Mitchell and Kenrich Williams provided key minutes when needed.

The depth helped the Thunder keep winning last season, despite being among the league leaders in games missed because of injury. Coach Mark Daigneault said the Thunder mentality of being prepared for anything should help them manage the season.

“The circumstances are always changing year to year and even within the season,” he said. “The challenges are always changing year to year and in the season. We try to have a very consistent and stable approach to that. And we try to have things that are pretty timeless and that can transcend circumstances. And we emphasize those in all circumstances.”



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander poses for a photo during the NBA basketball team's media day in Oklahoma City. (AP)

West Ham fights back to hold Everton in Nuno Espirito debut



West Ham United's Lucas Paqueta and Mateus Fernandes battle for the ball with Everton's Idrissa Gueye, centre right, during the English Premier League soccer match between Everton and West Ham United at the Hill Dickinson Stadium, Liverpool, England. (AP)

Lazio puts three past struggling Genoa



Torino's Cyril Ngonge, right, and Parma's Lamine Mandela Keita in action during the Serie A soccer match between Parma and Torino at Ennio Tardini Stadium in Parma, Italy. (AP)

LIVERPOOL, England, Sept 30, (AP): Nuno Espirito Santo's reign as the West Ham coach got off to an encouraging start after his lowly side fought back from a goal down to draw at Everton 1-1 in the Premier League.

The Portuguese coach replaced Graham Potter on Saturday and he saw his side's defensive frailties laid bare as it went behind in the 18th minute.

The Hammers defense looked sluggish when James Garner crossed from the left and Michael Keane headed home. The headed goal was Everton's 361st in the Premier League, a competition high beside Manchester United.

The Toffees are unbeaten at their new Hill Dickinson Stadium but they could not add to their total and they paid the price in a pulsating second half.

West Ham came more and more into the game and captain Jarrod Bowen equalized 20 minutes into the second period with a clinical left-foot strike. It was the first goal Everton has conceded at its new ground.

"I just tried to get into the box and I know what I am going to do before the defenders do," Bowen said.

"It is a big point for us. It is a fair result. It shows the character of the team going down 1-0. We spoke at halftime that it was only one goal and whether it took us up to 90 minutes we knew we would get our own chances."

West Ham remained second from bottom with four points from six games. Everton was ninth with eight.

"Disappointed we didn't take all three points," Everton coach David Moyes said. "It was a home game and an opportunity for us. We had moments we should have pushed the

button a bit more to get the second goal."

□ □ □

A double from Mateo Pellegrino gave Parma a 2-1 win over Torino and its first victory in Serie A.

A game between the league's most goal-shy clubs was never likely to produce a thriller, but Parma did just enough to give new coach Carlos Cuesta his first league win since being appointed in the summer.

Pellegrino put Parma ahead from the penalty spot and had a second

ruled out for offside two minutes into the second half.

Cyril Ngonge equalized for Torino three minutes later when he created space for himself on the edge of the box and then unleashed a lovely 20-meter drive into the far corner.

However, Pellegrino made sure of all three points with 18 minutes remaining. Torino had all 11 men in and around the six-yard box, but Pellegrino rose highest to head home a corner kick and lift Parma into 14th place.

Torino is 15th.

Later in the night, Valentín Castellanos scored one and made one as Lazio won at struggling Genoa 3-0.

The result left Patrick Vieira's men second from bottom and without a win in their last five games, while lifting Lazio into 12th place.

The capital club lost its last two league games to Sassuolo and Roma, but was dominant throughout against a ragged Genoa.

It took the lead in the fourth minute when Castellanos' exquisite pass put Matteo Cancellieri through on goal. The Genoa defense stood off him, giving him time and space to tuck a superb opener into the far corner.

Castellanos got a second himself on the half hour by stretching to connect with a low cross and steering the ball home.

Mattia Zaccagni added the third in the 63rd when he pounced on a rebound.

Rugby expectations high for 2029 Women's WC in Australia

LONDON, Sept 30, (AP): Basking in the afterglow of the best Women's Rugby World Cup yet, World Rugby warned success may be gauged differently when Australia hosts the next tournament in 2029.

The England-hosted tournament, capped by the home team beating Canada 33-13 in the final at sold-out Twickenham on Saturday, smashed already-ambitious forecasts for revenue from tickets, brand and commercial partnerships, media rights and

merchandise sales. Playing standards improved and social media engagement was phenomenal.

"A lot to live up to," said Jilly Collins, Rugby Australia general manager - women's rugby.

She and Australian government representatives shadowed World Cup organizers to learn what made the women's event tick ahead of hosting the men's tournament in 2027 and the women's two years later.

"Our focus now is diversifying

what the definition of success looks like, looking at the unique cultures" of future tournament hosts, Sally Horrox, World Rugby chief of women's rugby, said on Monday.

The 2029 Women's World Cup in Australia "will be an incredible but distinct sort of success story around their culture, their community, the First Nations (and) the Pacific legacy program that we're already building."

Collins was grateful for having

four more years to prepare.

"Australia is unique," she said. "We have our own challenges, geography being one, and next year we will be deciding what that looks like in terms of the tournament model."

"What we need to do is build that fan base, build the visibility. We need to make sure that our fans in Australia know the names of women stars from all around the world, not just the Wallaroos. And that's a big job."

Training camp set to begin

Warriors wait on Kuminga's unsettled contract situation

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept 30, (AP): Stephen Curry is prepared to begin his 17th NBA training camp Tuesday without a full squad.

The Golden State Warriors all hope it's not for long. They are still waiting on restricted free agent Jonathan Kuminga's decision and the planned signing of veteran big man Al Horford on a multiyear contract.

Kuminga has had a \$7.9 million qualifying offer in hand since June 29 but is also weighing other multiyear scenarios, with Wednesday's deadline looming to accept the qualifying offer.

"Contract negotiations are never pretty," Warriors teammate Draymond Green said Monday.



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) smiles while posing for photos with forward Jimmy Butler III (10) and forward Draymond Green (23) during the NBA basketball team's media day in San Francisco. (AP)

The unsettled situation for Kuminga has dominated the offseason, preventing the franchise from making other moves, and then extended into media day. Golden State can match any offer for Kuminga.

"Negotiations are hard, we all know that. The idea of everybody's situations are a little different," Curry said. "Everybody can come up with whatever narrative they want to. That's how business kind of goes. Some things are pretty straightforward. Some things aren't. This is definitely in the aren't category. But when he comes and he's here, he should be a professional and do exactly what he expects to do and take advantage of his opportunities to help us win."

Kuminga, who turns 23 on Oct. 6, missed much of last season with a right ankle injury. The high-flying forward averaged 15.3 points, 4.6 rebounds and 2.2 assists in 24.3 minutes over 47 games with 10 starts.

Jimmy Butler, who held a team retreat at his San Diego home last week, isn't concerned with Kuminga and said he can relate somewhat after dealing with his own contract dispute and facing constant scrutiny during what became a tumultuous ending in Miami before his February trade to Golden State.

"I'm not into all of that. I hope it gets resolved. I know what that is like being in this league going on 15 years now and it will get handled," Butler said. "I know that both sides are going to be happy in the end. We all love JK, we all want JK to be happy, we all want this organization to be happy. So we're

going to let JK and this organization figure it out."

Golden State began filling out its roster with several signings during media day, bringing back guard and defensive standout Gary Payton II on a one-year deal.

The Warriors also signed free agent center Marques Bolden, guards Chance McMillian, LJ Cryer and Taevion Kinsey, forwards Ja'Vier Francis and Jacksen Moni, rookie guard Will Richard and forward Alex Toohy and guard Pat Spencer to two-way contracts.

Green didn't sound concerned about Kuminga's absence becoming a distraction at this early stage of the season, saying, "I don't think anyone is winning a championship the first few days of practice."

Curry has heard from Kuminga that he will arrive ready to go and focused.

"This is a little different because you have a guy that's trying to figure out his situation, and we respect that process. It's going to play out, and when he's here, ready to work, we expect him to be locked in on doing what he needs to do to help us win," Curry said.

"I just know from man to man, he didn't want to have to be in the way of anything. Let that situation play out. He can speak for himself."

France's court of auditors reports modest economic impact from Oly

PARIS, Sept 30, (AP): Hosting the 2024 Paris Olympics generated only moderate revenues for France, with an almost negligible impact on growth, while total public expenditure exceeded six billion euros (\$7 billion), the country's court of auditors reported.

Public spending linked to the Olympics organization included €3.02 billion for the event organization, and €3.63 billion for infrastructure investment, some €690 million more than the auditors' initial estimate published in June.

The Paris Games also generated public revenues from taxes and commercial activities, estimated at €293.6 million. According to the Cour des Comptes report released ahead of the 2030 Winter Olympics - also awarded to France - the organizing committee of the Paris Games, funded mainly through private resources, posted a profit of €75.7 million.

"The Games' impact on annual economic growth in 2024 is estimated at +0.07 percentage point of GDP once indirect effects are factored in," auditors said. "The benefits have been modest, both in the run-up - when soaring prices limited the real effect of infrastructure spending - and during the

Games themselves, as regular tourism was partly crowded out. The medium to long-term economic benefits remain uncertain."

The Cour des Comptes said security for the Games was largely successful, except for sabotage of high-speed rail lines on the opening day. However, they criticized the under-budgeting of security costs, which ultimately reached €1.44 billion in state spending.

France's Interior Ministry argued that estimating security costs ahead of the Games was difficult due to the unprecedented urban security measures for the opening ceremony on the Seine and elevated threat levels.

The report came as opponents of the 2030 Winter Olympics and Paralympics in France have launched legal action to demand a public debate on the Games planned for the French Alps.

The project is centered on Alpine ski resorts and ice-sport venues in Nice on the Mediterranean coast. The organizing committee has set a provisional operational budget of €2 billion (\$2.1 billion) - construction costs, including for a planned ice arena in Nice, will be additional expense.

Best of the Rest

Goalkeeper dies from head injuries: A 19-year-old goalkeeper has died from head injuries after a collision with another player in a fifth-division match in Spain.

Soccer officials in Spain said on Monday that Colindres goalkeeper Raúl Ramírez was declared brain dead and his family decided to donate his organs.

The goalkeeper had been hospitalized since the collision in Saturday's match at Revilla, which was suspended after the incident.

Ramírez endured two cardiorespiratory arrests, one on the field and then in the ambulance while being transported to a hospital. (AP)

Kuwait’s biggest sporting event to be held December 13th

Valuable prizes, events, and activities presented by NBK Run 2025 partners

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Attended by representatives and officials from the bank, organizing company, and strategic partners, National Bank of Kuwait hosted a press conference at its headquarters in which the strategic partners announced the rewards and prizes to be given to the winners, participants, and audiences of NBK Run 2025 scheduled to be held on December 13th.

The list of NBK Run strategic partners this year includes AIBabtain Group, Ooredoo, Ali Abdulwahab AlMutawa (AAW), EQUATE Petrochemical Company, Chayah Group, Touristic Enterprises Company, United Beverage Company, and SPARK.

On this occasion, Manal Al-Mattar, EVP - Head of Group Corporate Communications at National Bank of Kuwait said: “NBK Run is one of the most significant social and sporting events the bank ensures to hold annually. It is the biggest athletic event of its kind in Kuwait, given the massive public participation and the growing public and media interest it attracts every year”.

Al-Mattar emphasized that NBK run is not only a sporting event, but also a symbol of social solidarity and a public message calling people to adopt an active and healthy lifestyle. This stems from NBK’s firm belief that sports not only strengthen the body but are also a means of spreading positive values such as cooperation, determination, and perseverance. Al-Mattar also added: “It is from this standpoint we fuel our dedication to organizing this race annually, as it serves as a platform through which we reinforce these values, and it also provides participants with the opportunity to enjoy an exciting and fun-filled experience”.

A New Distance

Sharing more details on this mega event, Al-Mattar added: “This year’s version of NBK Run will allow participants from all age groups of both males and females to partake in different challenges under 3 categories in accordance with their physical abilities, with the addition of a 21 KM distance alongside the 5 and 10 KM distances. This should establish an atmosphere of friendly competition among participants”, further highlighting that valuable prizes will be given to the winners and participants to ensure an exciting and fun experience for all.

In her statements, Al-Mattar made sure to express her deep gratitude to the strategic partners who, by choosing to be part of this year’s race, further confirm the significance of this sporting event and demonstrate their responsibility towards society. Moreover, Al-Mattar thanked all the organizers, sponsors, and teams who worked collaboratively in this event, especially the government institutions that support the bank’s endeavor to spread awareness about the importance of



Manal Al-Mattar alongside representatives of the race’s strategic partners.

sports in enhancing public health.

And finally, Al-Mattar called everyone, whether sports enthusiasts or professional athletes, to participate in this race that combines competitiveness and festivity: “I ask everyone to register and participate in NBK Run. Let’s all together fill this day with sweet competitiveness and positivity, and with your participation and constant support, we shall achieve remarkable success”.

A Clear Mark

On his part, Ahmed Al-Majed, CEO of Suffix for sports management, said that the company is proudof the continuing partnership with NBK in organizing this grand social and sporting event for the eight consecutive year, which proves every year its uniqueness and success in attracting large numbers of participants from all segments.

Al-Majed added: “NBK Run is the earliest sporting event in Kuwait that has truly left a clear mark and paved the way for many other institutions to conduct similar sporting events, and it stands as a great inspiration to us as well”.

Al-Majed also said that Suffix strives, since its establishment in 2007, to spread awareness about sports and health, guided by its strong belief that sports are part and parcel of any society that aims to achieve development, and they have become widely influential, whether economically or culturally”.

In conclusion, Al-Majed noted: “At Suffix, we look forward to providing all kinds of support so that the participants and audiences enjoy a fun and social sporting event. We always strive to organize distinguished events that contribute to advancing the level of sporting events in Kuwait and the region”.

Strategic Partners

On his part, Mohannad Yousef – Sr Marketing Manager at Nissan Al Babtain, commented: “At Nissan Al Babtain, we are pleased to be part of this event for the fifteenth year, as we

believe that this race is more than just a sporting event, for it aligns with our objectives to promote health and fitness, in addition to spreading positivity among the youth”.

Yousef also mentioned that Al Babtain Group has many surprises in store during this year’s NBK Run, including a Nissan car offer and interactive activities in the race village. Moreover, Yousef Emphasized that through this strategic partnership, Al Babtain Group aims to be closer to the participants and audience by giving them valuable rewards and providing all kinds of support for them to have a unique and fun experience, further noting that this continued partnership stems from its social responsibility commitment and spreading awareness about physical and mental health in Kuwait.

Meanwhile, Sundos Al Shatti - Director Digital Services and New Businesses at Ooredoo Kuwait said: “We are proud of our strategic partnership with NBK throughout the past years, especially that NBK Run is the best sporting event in Kuwait that sees a broad participation from all society segments and is very inclusive of all.

Al Shatti also mentioned that Ooredoo’s partnership with NBK has been going for four years and confirm its commitment to social responsibility, noting that the company is always keen to participate in the activities and events organized by NBK.

Moreover, Lulwah Al-Munifi – HR Organizational Effectiveness Leader at EQUATE Petrochemical Company, said: “We are proud to spearhead and sponsor the track for the special para-athlete category for participants with disabilities in NBK run 2025”, noting that the company’s participation last year encouraged for maintaining this partnership for this race, as it has been very positively influential for the disabled and their families.

Al-Munifi also indicated that EQUATE will present cash prizes for

the top 5 winners in the para-athletic categories, which are wheelchair users, the partially visually impaired, fully visually impaired, and amputees both males and females, in addition to preparing them through 4 training programs.

Al-Munifi also called all the para-athletes to participate, and called everyone to attend and support this significant society segment.

On her part, Sarah Al-Foudari - Senior manager – Corporate Marketing at Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa said: “At Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa, we are pleased to have a continued partnership with NBK Run, as it’s one of the largest events held in Kuwait, which aligns with our social responsibility values.”

Al-Foudari also highlighted that Ali Abdulwahab al Mutawa’s participation in this event through its Intersport and Joe and the Juice brands by presenting rewards and exclusive discounts on many products, noting that Joe and the Juice will launch an NBK-inspired drink during the race.

Abdulmohsen Al-Babtain, CEO of SPARK, stated:“Our strategic partnership in this year’s NBK Run reflects the event’s growing impact as a milestone in community service and a transformative force in public health across Kuwait. This initiative aligns perfectly with SPARK’s vision of promoting sports and wellness within society and leading the way in this field.”

Al-Babtain emphasized that the collaboration between SPARK and the National Bank of Kuwait is not new, noting that participation in this major sporting event further strengthens their ongoing partnership.

He added that SPARK will offer a wide range of prizes for both winners and participants in the NBK Run, including memberships and other services across all SPARK branches for men and women. The center will also provide pre-race warm-up sessions and set up a mini version of the SPARK Lab

- Al-Mattar:**
 - NBK run is not merely a sporting event, but a symbol of social solidarity.
- Al-Majed:**
 - This is the earliest sporting event in Kuwait that confirms its success year after year.
- Yousef:**
 - Many surprises will be presented by Al Babtain Group for the participants and audience to ensure they have a unique and fun experience.
- Al-Shatti:**
 - Ooredoo will give our iPhones, Apple Watches, and Shamel Internet plan subscriptions with exclusive discounts.
- Al-Munifi:**
 - EQUATE offers cash prizes to the top five winners in four categories for people with disabilities.
- Al-Foudari:**
 - Exclusive discounts and rewards from Intersport, Joe and the Juice and Al-Mutawa Pharmacies.
- Al-Babtain:**
 - A variety of subscriptions and services are offered by SPARK to winners and participants.
- Al-Qinaei:**
 - CHIPS store will present two Apple Family box prizes.
- Alrafeea:**
 - The prizes include 16,000 Winter Wonderland tickets and weekends at Al Khiran Resort.
- Al-Munae:**
 - Prizes for participants and various activities are offered by United Beverage Company during the race.

in the race village, allowing runners to access specialized running-related assessments.

Abdulwahab Al-Qinaei – Public Relations Manager at CHIPS store, emphasized his pleasure in sponsoring this big sporting event and the company’s continued strategic partnership with the bank for the second consecutive year.

He commented: “At CHIPS, we are always committed to integrating technology with sports, especially as the field of electronics is strongly tied to all sports”, further Noting that the company will give two Apple Family box prizes that includes Apple products, in addition to organizing activities in a booth at the village of the race.

Abdullah Alrafeea - Acting Head of Marketing at the Touristic Enterprises Company, said on his part: “We are happy to be strategic partners of NBK in this grand sporting event, which is known as the largest in Kuwait, by hosting the race on the beachfront – Kuwait’s most significant touristic place in Kuwait, and besides Kuwait’s monument the Kuwait Towers.

Alrafeea added that the NBK Run 2025 is aligned with the beachfront objectives of enabling sports, noting that the company will present 16,000 tickets to the project to all participants, in ad-

dition to weekend at Al Khiran prizes.

On his part, Rashed Al-Munae -Chief Executive Officer at the United Beverage Company said: “We made sure this year to be strategic partners with NBK due to the acclaim this event received during the past years from all segments, which promotes adopting healthy lifestyles”.

Al-Munae also added that what pushed the company to participate was the wish to provide athlete-friendly products for the participants, adding: “We will give participants prizes and organize activities that we hope match our audience expectations”.

The NBK Run 2025 will kick off at 8:30 AM on December 13th, with three distances, starting and finishing at the Kuwait Towers. In addition to the existing 10 KM and 5 KM distances, a 21 KM distance has been added. The top three male and female winners in each category will receive cash prizes as follows:

- 21 KM prizes: KD 1,200 for first place, KD 1,000 for second place, and KD 700 for third place.
- 10 km prizes: KD 1,000 for first place, KD 700 for second place, and KD 500 for third place.
- 5 km prizes: KD 500 for first place, KD 400 for second place, and KD 300 for third place.

Al-Hilal extends unbeaten run in ACL Elite with victory at Nasaf

Al-Ahli held to draw by Al-Duhail

QARSHI, Uzbekistan, Sept 30, (AP): Saudi Arabia’s Al-Hilal won at Uzbekistan’s Nasaf Qarshi 3-2 to move to the top of its group in the Asian Champions League Elite on Monday with maximum points from two games.

Sardorbek Bakhromov’s long-range effort canceled out Sergej Milinkovic-Savic’s opener in the first half.

After the break, Franc international Theo Hernandez restored Al-Hilal’s lead by dribbling past five defenders and scoring from inside the box. Javokhir Sidikov pulled one back for Nasaf, and Marcos Leonardo clinched the win for the four-time champion in



Al-Hilal players celebrate a goal during their three-goal victory.

the 79th minute.

“We played well with a fast tempo to get a positive result,” Al-Hilal coach Simone Inzaghi said. “We should have won the game earlier however as we wasted many chances but Nasaf is a strong opponent.”

Holder Al-Ahli was held at Qatar’s Al-Duhail to 2-2. The Saudi Arabian side went a goal down after Edmilson Junior finished into an empty net after Adil Boulbina’s shot bounced off the post.

Brazilian forward Mathues Goncalves equalized three minutes before halftime with a low strike. Moments later, Riyadh Mahrez - a Champions League winner with Manchester City in 2021 - intercepted a pass from the goalkeeper to put Al-Ahli in front.

Three minutes after the restart, however, a header from Polish forward Krzysztof Piatek earned a point for Al-Duhail.

Also, Tractor of Iran drew with Al-Wahda of the United Arab Emirates 0-0 while Qatar’s Al-Gharafa defeated Iraq’s Al-Shorta 2-0.

Al-Nasr breaks losing streak with narrow win over Al-Sulaibikhat

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Al-Nasr claimed its first victory of the current Premier Handball League season with a hard-fought 31-29 win over Al-Sulaibikhat in the sixth round. The match took place at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex, which also witnessed Qadsia narrowly defeating Al-Salmiya 31-30.

The win earned Al-Nasr its first two points of the season after five consecutive losses. However, despite the victory, the team remained at the bottom of the league standings.

Prior to yesterday’s matches, the league table stood as follows: Kuwait Club led with a perfect 10 points, followed by Burgan with 8 points. Qadsia and Al-Salmiya had 6 points each, Kazma 5, Al-Arabi 4, Al-Sulaibikhat 3,



Al-Nasr and Al-Sulaibikhat players battled fiercely for the ball during the Kuwait Premier Handball League.

and Al-Nasr 2 points.

The seventh round is set for Friday and Saturday, featuring Al-Arabi vs. Al-Salmiya, Qadsia vs. Al-Sulaibikhat, Kazma vs. Al-Nasr, and Kuwait Club vs. Burgan.

Unbeaten Al-Yarmouk & Al-Sulaibikhat share top spot in Kuwait First Division

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Al-Yarmouk and Al-Sulaibikhat maintained their perfect starts to the Kuwait First Division League, each securing a third straight victory in the third round of action.

Al-Yarmouk defeated Khaitan 2-0 at home, while Al-Sulaibikhat claimed a 3-1 win over Burgan at Al-Sahel Stadium. Both clubs now sit at the top of the table with nine points from three matches. Khaitan remain on a single point, with Burgan stuck at two.

Promoted side Al-Jazeera continued its impressive run, closing in on the leaders with a 3-0 victory over Al-Shamiya at Nasser Al-Assimi Stadium to reach seven points. Al-Shamiya remains bottom without a point, level with Sporty, who suffered their third



Al-Yarmouk and Al-Sulaibikhat players fight to gain control of the ball during the match.

straight defeat after falling 2-0 to Al-Sahel. That win lifted Al-Sahel to five points in fourth place.

Al-Yarmouk team manager Abdulaziz Al-Failakawi hailed his side’s strong 2-0 win over

Khaitan, their third consecutive success, which keeps them top of the standings with maximum points.

He praised the players for their dominant display, noting their ability to control the match while executing the game plan of Kuwaiti coach Dhafer Al-Adwani. Al-Failakawi highlighted that the team’s performance has shown steady improvement compared to their earlier matches, with clear progress visible in the win over Khaitan.

He also pointed to the growing chemistry between local players and foreign professionals, who are settling in well and making key contributions. Looking ahead, Al-Failakawi expressed confidence that the team will carry the same fighting spirit and intensity into their next clash against Burgan on Saturday.

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Arsenal's Gabriel (left) and Declan Rice during a training session at Sobha Realty Training Centre, London. (AP)

Sports

Saudi Arabia eyes new chapter

Turkey remains the nation to beat at Islamic Solidarity Games

RIYADH, Sept 30: Every edition of the Islamic Solidarity Games sees some countries simply participating, while others leave a lasting mark. Over the years, ten nations have established an unforgettable legacy, from the inaugural Games in 2005 to today.

These countries have not only dominated the medal tables but have become defining figures in the Games' history, their achievements forming an integral part of the event's identity.

With the sixth edition set to take place in Riyadh in 2025, featuring more than 3,500 athletes from 57 countries, fans are eagerly anticipating new displays of skill, determination, and ambition, as the leaderboard is set to be reshaped.

Turkey: The Benchmark

Turkey quickly rose to the top and has held its position steadily. With 239 golds out of 645 total medals, excelling in swimming and athletics, Turkey remains the nation to beat.

Iran: The Consistent Contender

Iran has firmly secured second place over the years. With 118 golds and 320 medals in total, leveraging its strength in athletics, wrestling, and karate, Iran remains a constant rival.

Azerbaijan: The Combat Powerhouse

Combat sports define Azerbaijan. With 114 golds and 300 medals, the nation has dominated judo, wrestling, and karate, making these disciplines synonymous with its success.

Uzbekistan: Masters of Diversity

From gymnastics to boxing and individual events, Uzbekistan has shown versatility and dominance. With 66 golds from 212 medals, it consistently ranks among the top performers.

Indonesia: Eastern Surprises

Indonesia has often caught its rivals off guard. With 56 golds and 222 medals, the nation has particularly excelled in athletics.

Egypt: Africa's Champion

Egypt has carried the African flag with pride. With 46 golds and 145 medals, strong performances in swimming and combat sports have cemented its status as a continental powerhouse.

Kazakhstan: The Rising Force

Kazakhstan has made a strong impact. With 42 golds and 135 medals, its achievements in weightlifting and boxing highlight its growing influence.

Morocco: Speed and Strength

Morocco has showcased excellence in both running and combat sports. With 40 golds and 146 medals, its athletes shine in athletics, karate, and taekwondo, keeping the nation consistently among the leaders.

Saudi Arabia: Ambitions on the Horizon

Saudi Arabia has steadily climbed the ranks with 37 golds and 111 medals, excelling in weightlifting and athletics. Hosting Riyadh 2025 offers the Kingdom a chance to write a new chapter in the Games' history.

Malaysia: Asia's Steady Performer



A file photo of Saudi athletes celebrating on the podium.

Malaysia completes the top ten. With 33 golds and 97 medals, the nation has excelled in swimming, karate, and athletics, earning a permanent spot among the elite.
Looking Ahead to Riyadh 2025

Over two decades, these ten nations have consistently set the standard at the Islamic Solidarity Games. As the sixth edition approaches, the world will watch to see who continues their dominance and which nations emerge with new surprises.

Blues continue preparations

Medical team closely monitoring injuries of Kuwaiti players



Sousa shares the pitch with Youssef Nasser and Fawaz Ayed

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Kuwait's senior soccer team continues preparations at the Friendship and Peace Stadium under Portuguese coach Helio Sousa, who has named a 26-man squad for an overseas training camp running until October 15. The team is scheduled to play two matches, with opponents yet to be confirmed.

The first training session featured 19 players. Four Qadsia players – Khalid Ibrahim, Khalid Sabah, Rashid Al-Dosari, and Athbi Shahab – missed the session as they traveled to Iraq to join Qadsia in its Gulf Champions League match against Zakho. Saud Al-Hoshan and Ahmed Al-Zanki were absent due to personal reasons, while Fahad Al-Hajri sat out due to minor health issues.

The full 26-man squad includes Saud Al-Janaï, Khalid Al-Rashidi, Saud Al-Hoshan, Abdulrahman Ajaj, Fahad Al-Hajri, Mishari Ghanem, Khalid Sabah, Mohammed Khalid, Rashid Al-Dosari, Khalid Ibrahim, Abdulwahab Al-Awadi, Nasser Khidr, Hasan Hamdan, Khalid

Al-Murshid, Mahdi Dashti, Redha Hani, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Athbi Shahab, Sultan Al-Anzi, Fawaz Ayed, Badr Tareq, Talal Al-Qaisi, Youssef Nasser, Moath Al-Osaimi, Salman Al-Awadi, and Ahmed Al-Zanki.

Dr. Abdulmajeed Albannai, head of the Kuwait Football Association's medical committee, confirmed that some absences are due to injuries. Mohammed Daham is sidelined with a leg injury requiring two weeks of recovery, while Eid Al-Rashidi is recovering from a second-degree muscle tear. Eid has been undergoing treatment in Dubai and will continue to be monitored by the national team medical staff; he is expected to need four weeks to fully recover.

Albannai also revealed that Mubarak Al-Fanini is dealing with a serious leg contusion and requires a dedicated rehabilitation program to regain full fitness.

Additionally, Jassim Al-Mutairi, Shabeeb Al-Khalidi, and Youssef Majid are recovering from injuries under the supervision of their clubs, with ongoing monitoring by the national team's medical staff.

Al-Ahly stages dramatic comeback to beat Zamalek, keeps title race alive



Players fighting for the ball.

CAIRO, Sept 30: Al-Ahly overturned a one-goal deficit to secure a 2-1 victory over arch-rival Zamalek in a thrilling Egyptian Premier League clash, keeping the title race alive.

The win moved Al-Ahly to 15 points from 8 matches, climbing to third place, while Zamalek remained at the top of the table with 17 points from 9 games.

The match began with high drama when Adi El-Debagh earned a penalty for Zamalek. Abdallah El-Saeed's initial attempt was saved by Al-Ahly goalkeeper Mohamed El-Shenawy after several Al-Ahly players had entered the box. Hossam Abdel-Meguid stepped up to convert the retaken penalty in the 32nd minute, giving Zamalek an early lead.

Al-Ahly's substitute Hussein El-Shahat equalized in the 71st minute before winning a penalty that Mahmoud Trezeguet converted in the 78th minute to complete the comeback.

In the next round, Al-Ahly will face Kahraba Ismailia, while Zamalek will play Ghazl El-Mahalla.

Barca, PSG hit by injuries ahead of Champions League showdown

MADRID, Sept 30, (Xinhua): FC Barcelona faces Champions League holder Paris Saint-Germain on Wednesday in arguably the most interesting game of the round.

The meeting sees former Barca coach and player Luis Enrique return to Barcelona, to play the side that moved to the top of La Liga for the first time this season following a 2-1 win at home over Real Sociedad.

The game will be affected by the absences in each side, because although Lamine Yamal looks set to start for Barca after his instant impact from the bench on Sunday, Barca is without Gavi, Raphinha and Fermin Lopez and first choice goalkeeper, Joan Garcia, although Alejandro Balde could be available at left back after almost a month out.

PSG is missing recent Ballon d'Or winner Ousmane Dembele, along with Marquinhos and Desire Doue, while Vitinha and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia are both doubts.

Ferran Torres looks likely to return for Barca after starting on the bench at the weekend, while Eric Garcia should also be back

in defense.

Villarreal is also at home, with a difficult tie against Juventus, with Villarreal coach Marcelino Garcia likely to bring Tajon Buchanan, Dani Parejo and Tani Oluwaseyi back into his starting 11 for the game.

Villarreal's 1-0 win at home to Athletic Club Bilbao on Saturday showed the depth of talent available to Marcelino despite injuries to Ayoze Perez and Gerard Moreno.

Athletic has to deal with an ever-lengthening injury list for its visit to play Borussia Dortmund.

Spain winger Nico Williams could make the squad after picking up a groin injury during the last international break, but Benat Prados is out for the season with a knee injury. Alex Berenguer is sidelined with an injury to his big toe and midfielder Mikel Vesga joined the list on Saturday with what looked like a groin strain, limiting the options of Ernesto Valverde to freshen up his starting 11 after Saturday's narrow defeat.

Alcaraz wins Japan Open to stay on track for season-ending No. 1

Sinner reaches China Open men's final against Tien

TOKYO, Sept 30, (AP): Top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz beat No. 5 Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-4 in the Japan Open final on Tuesday for his eighth singles title this year.

Alcaraz's 24th career singles title was clinched with a deft, sliced drop shot winner and reversed a loss in two sets last week to Fritz at the Laver Cup team event.

The Spaniard also improved his season record to a tour-best 67-7 as he stayed on course for the season-ending No. 1 ranking.

"It's been my best season so far without a doubt," Alcaraz said. "That shows how hard I've worked just to be able to experience these moments and accomplish my goals."

The final in Tokyo was a ninth straight for Alcaraz since March when he lost in the round of 64 at the Miami Masters. He is 7-2 in those finals, one of them at Wimbledon to Jannik Sinner.

"I didn't start the year that good, struggling emotionally," Alcaraz ac-



Winner Spain's Carlos Alcaraz, poses with the trophy after the men's final match against United States' Taylor Fritz at the Tokyo ATP 500 tennis tournament at Ariake Coliseum, in Tokyo, Japan. (AP)

knowledgeed, "so how I came back from that, I'm just really proud of

myself, and of all the people around me who have helped me to be in this

position."

Fritz took a medical timeout after the first set for treatment on his left thigh which was strapped during a changeover in the second set.

Top-seeded Jannik Sinner won his 11th straight career match against Alex de Minaur and advanced to the final of the China Open, where he will play United States teenager Learner Tien on Wednesday.

Sinner's 6-4, 3-6, 6-2 victory earned him a ninth straight final at hard-court tournaments. The No. 2-ranked Sinner dropped a set to No. 8 De Minaur for just the second time in his career before retaking control with a series of forceful forehands.

"I felt like the level was very high," Sinner said. "Many great rallies, many great chances for both."

Tien, the 19-year-old Californian ranked No. 52, will play in his first tour final after Daniil Medvedev retired injured when the score was 5-7, 7-5, 4-0.

Medvedev led 3-0 and 5-3 in the second set then had limited mobility when seemingly affected by muscle cramps. The Russian was warned by the umpire for not giving his best effort.