



Kuwait's PM chairs meeting of Supreme Defense Council Page 2



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Munich Security Leaders Meeting tackles Gaza, Gulf threats

Kuwait PM representative stresses collective security

ALULA, Saudi Arabia, Oct 1, (KUNA): Representing His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah stressed Wednesday that Kuwait's participation in Munich Security Conference (MSC) Leaders Meeting, reflects commitment to regional dialogue and cooperation.

In remarks to KUNA, on the sidelines of the meeting in AIUla city, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef condemned Israeli aggression against Qatar and Gaza as a violation of international law, emphasizing that the assault posed a direct threat to Gulf collective security and broader regional stability, urging urgent international attention.

He noted that the meeting provided a vital platform to discuss pressing global and regional security challenges, particularly the escalating conflicts and humanitarian trag-



Representative of His Highness the Prime Minister during his participation at the Munich Security Conference in AIUla.

edies in Gaza and the occupied Palestinian territories, where participants agreed sustainable security remains impossible amid ongoing Israeli aggression.

He warned of grave consequences from escalating conflicts caused by Israeli occupation's aggression, stressing risks to Gulf stability, while noting deliberations also addressed maritime and energy security, non-proliferation, food and water security, economic challenges, and shared transnational threats facing the international community.

Reaffirming Kuwait's commitment under its current presidency of the GCC, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef stressed the importance of bolstering collective security, unifying Gulf positions, and strengthening regional and international partnerships, while praising Saudi Arabia's warm hospitality and MSC's role in organizing this vital meeting.

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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

The doctor asked the dancer, 'If you were young again, would you dance or repent?'



In my youth, men used to throw money at my feet



For years, I danced all night at the Layali Al-Safaa nightclub



She never went to bed before visiting the homes of the poor neighbors to give them money



She supported underprivileged students until they graduated and took on prominent positions



The two young men competed to pay the doctor's fee on behalf of the elderly woman



The person behind one of the greatest catastrophes in modern history was a Serbian student



To prove his courage, he assassinated the Crown Prince of Austria



Russia's declaration of war on Austria angered Germany



One young man's reckless act led to 16 million deaths and 8 million missing.

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Kuwait climbs to Tier 2 in US trafficking report

Upgrade reflects reform efforts: Justice Minister

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1, (KUNA): Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait stated that the US State Department has upgraded Kuwait's ranking on its Trafficking in Persons 2025 report from Tier 2 Watch List to Tier 2.

"This upgrade reflects a remarkable improvement in Kuwait's performance and tangible efforts it exerted to comply with relevant international standards," Minister Al-Sumait, also chairman of the Permanent National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, said in a statement to KUNA.

He pointed out that Kuwait has recently implemented a series of legislative reforms to address challenges in this dossier, most notably the issuance of a decree-law on foreigners' residence late 2024 tightening penalties for trading in residence permits and criminalizing employers' withholding of workers' financial entitlements.

Kuwait had also introduced institutional reforms including the development of a victim protection system and implemented a national plan to combat human trafficking until 2028, he said.

Al-Sumait said that this annual assessment report places the responsibility on the state to continue reform and develop national measures to enhance the protection of victims and address

international observations in this area.

The 2025 US State Department's Tier 2 designation for Kuwait in measures to eliminate human trafficking reflects a solemn effort within the legislative and executive domains across several sectors, said Acting Director General of Public Authority for Manpower Eng. Rabab Al-Osaimi on Wednesday.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Osaimi lauded the collective efforts of state entities, especially the Manpower Authority, which is keen on protecting the rights of laborers, streamlining procedures, and boosting the training of its employees.

This is a significant achievement reflecting Kuwait's eagerness to implement national legislation and international agreements related to labor in cooperation with partners both local and abroad in line with efforts to counter cross-border crimes, she affirmed.

The US State Department's 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report said that the "Government of Kuwait is making significant efforts to eliminate human trafficking."

"The government demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared with the previous reporting period; therefore, Kuwait was upgraded to Tier 2."

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Stable 50 fils bread maintained through gov't backing: KFMBC

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: CEO of Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company (KFMBC) Mutlaq Al-Zaid says maintaining the price of Arabic bread at 50 fils is only possible with government support, revealing that the daily bread production volume ranged between 4.5 and 5 million pieces.

In a press statement, he explained that the company is committed to supporting and stabilizing the prices of commodities required by the government. The secret to maintaining this quality level lies in an integrated production process, including adherence to standards and certifications, the use of

high-quality raw materials, and consistent quality maintenance.

The company launched a unique initiative to introduce its products to public school cafeterias. This year, the products of KFMBC were provided in three schools through a buffet system, including baked goods and juices. The goal is to offer a different model that allows students to access healthy and balanced meals.

Al-Zaid affirmed that the company is ready to expand if requested, despite the existence of approximately 900 government schools in Kuwait, which would require the involvement of other entities.

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Arab interior ministers push unified cybercrime strategy

TUNIS, Oct 1, (KUNA): It is imperative for Arab countries to ratchet up cooperation as part of efforts to clamp down on cybercrime, a Kuwaiti official said on Wednesday, citing such acts as having exceeded traditional and geographic boundaries.

Greater cooperation among Arab states entails more information exchange and the ability to develop the skills needed to keep all forms of cybercrime at bay, Kuwaiti interior ministry's cybercrime department assistant chief Colonel Hamad Al Mahmoud told a gathering that joined him with his counterparts from across the wider Arab region.

Given the sharp rise in cybercrime activity, chiefly, financial scams, Arab Interior Ministers Council secretary general Mohammed bin Ali Koman suggested amid the talks forming a unified apparatus designed to fight cybercrime in the region, one that incorporates cutting-edge technology such as Artificial Intelligence tools, he said.

The council has introduced several initiatives aiming to beef up the fight against cybercrime in the region, added the official, mentioning a recently-approved "Arab strategy" to fight cybercrime as a case in point, saying that the plan had been assembled by experts who are well-versed on the matter.

Uzbekistan, Kuwait relations strengthened with key deals

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Kuwait, Ayub Yunusov, says his country deeply valued the wise policies pursued by Kuwait under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah, as these policies have contributed to advancing development and strengthening international cooperation.

In a speech delivered during the embassy's celebration of Uzbekistan's 34th National Day, in the presence of the Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Minister of Finance, and acting Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem, Ambassador Yunusov praised the remarkable momentum in Uzbek-Kuwaiti relations over the past two years.

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Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Kuwait Ayub Yunusov with acting Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem during the ceremonial cake-cutting.

Photo by Samer Shiqr

Kuwait Coast Guard Chief, UK Adviser discuss security efforts

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1, (KUNA): Director General of Kuwait Coast Guard Commodore Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Yusuf Al-Sabah met with United Kingdom's Senior Defense Adviser for Middle East Affairs, Vice Admiral Edward Algren to discuss areas of mutual interest, particularly regarding security and ways to strengthen cooperation.

The meeting took place at the Sabah Al-Ahmad Coast Guard Base, with several senior Coast Guard officials in attendance, during the British delegation's official visit to Kuwait, the Ministry of

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Kuwait Coast Guard Chief with UK's Senior Defense Adviser for Middle East Affairs.

KUNA photo

Customs staff, officer caught smuggling 'deported' vehicle

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: Nuwaiseeb Port Investigations Unit of the General Department of Criminal Investigation's Land Ports Investigations Department arrested three employees of the General Administration of Customs (GAC) and a military officer working at the border for attempting to smuggle into Kuwait inside a closed truck a vehicle that had been administratively deported, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Ministry of Interior stated on its X account that the arrests followed investigations into the incident, carried out in direct coordination with the GAC.

Intensive inquiries revealed prior co-

ordination between the truck driver and the three GAC employees, who exploited their positions by manipulating computer records and systems to facilitate the smuggling operation.

The investigation also revealed that a Ministry of Interior employee, serving as a military officer at the border port, acted as a mediator between the involved parties to enable the illegal entry of the vehicle.

The Ministry of Interior affirmed that no one is above the law and that it will not tolerate any employee exploiting their position or manipulating systems for personal gain or illegal activity.

Day by Day

WHY doesn't the government build residential towers on the undeveloped land within the capital city's borders? Many young citizens have the right to receive housing support, but they are not seeking villas or large houses that require long waits. They are content with comfortable apartments within the capital. This solution would save huge costs, enhance the beauty of Kuwait City, and bring life back to it, especially at night. It is important that these apartments meet the beneficiaries' needs and offer diverse designs.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Newswatch

Trump vows 'full' defense for Qatar

DUBAI, Oct 1, (AP): US President Donald Trump has signed an executive order vowing to use all measures including US military action to defend the energy-rich nation of Qatar - though it remains unclear just what weight the pledge will carry.

The text of the order, available Wednesday on the White House's website but dated Monday, appears to be another measure by Trump to assure the Qataris following Israel's surprise attack on the country targeting Hamas leaders as they weighed accepting a ceasefire with Israel over the war in the Gaza Strip.

The order cites the two countries' "close cooperation" and "shared interest," vowing to "guarantee the security and territorial integrity of the state of Qatar against external attack."

"The United States shall regard any armed attack on the territory, sovereignty or critical infrastructure of the state of Qatar as a threat to the peace and security of the United States," the order says.

"In the event of such an attack, the United States shall take all lawful and appropriate measures - including diplomatic, economic, and, if necessary, military - to defend the interests of the United States and of the state of Qatar and to restore peace and stability."

The order apparently came during a visit to Washington on Monday by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Trump organized a call by Netanyahu to Qatar during the visit in which Netanyahu "expressed his deep regret" over the strike that killed six people, including a member of the Qatari security forces, the White House said.

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Zain Group's MSCI rating for ESG upgraded to 'A'



8

ABK Capital DIFC launches Strategic Global Partnerships

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:22	Asr	15:02
Sunrise ..	05:41	Maghrib ..	17:34
Zohr	11:38	Isha	18:51

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-45 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas.
By Night: Rather hot to mild with

Weather			
light to moderate freshening at times over coastal areas northwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-40 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	41	30	
Kuwait Airport	40	30	
Abdaly	41	26	

Bubyan	40	20
Jahra	41	28
Fallaka Island	40	25
Salmiyah	37	30
Ahmadi	39	25
Nuwaisib	39	27
Wafra	40	29

Crown Prince and PM extend well-wishes

Amir congratulates China, Cyprus and Nigeria on Nat'l Days

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent congratulatory cables on Wednesday to the Presidents of the People's Republic of China, Cyprus, and the Federal Republic of Nigeria, marking their countries' national and independence celebrations.

In his message to President Xi Jinping of China, His Highness the Amir extended his best wishes for the President's lasting health and wellness, and for continued progress, prosperity, and stability for the Chinese people. The Amir highlighted the longstanding friendly relations between Kuwait and China, emphasizing the importance of further enhancing bilateral cooperation in various fields.

Similarly, His Highness the Amir sent a cable to President Nikos Christodoulides of Cyprus, con-

gratulating him on the occasion of his country's National Day. The Amir wished the President and the Cypriot people continued success, development, and strengthened bilateral ties between the two nations.

His Highness also conveyed his felicitations to President Bola Ahmad Tinubu of Nigeria on the occasion of Nigeria's Independence Day, wishing him good health and prosperity for the Nigerian people, while reaffirming Kuwait's commitment to fostering strong diplomatic and economic relations with Nigeria.

On the same day, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar messages of congratulations to the Presidents of China, Cyprus, and Nigeria. In his cables, the Crown Prince expressed wishes for good health, progress,

and prosperity for their countries and peoples, underscoring the importance of continued cooperation and friendship with Kuwait.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also joined in sending congratulatory cables to the three leaders, emphasizing Kuwait's respect for their national celebrations and its interest in strengthening diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations with China, Cyprus, and Nigeria.

These messages reflect Kuwait's commitment to maintaining and enhancing its international partnerships and reaffirm the country's dedication to global solidarity and cooperation on occasions of national significance.

Crown Prince, UK PM talk partnership and progress

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer discussed during a phone conversation on Wednesday the historic bilateral ties and ways to develop them in all pos-

sible fields.

His Highness the Crown Prince expressed his gratitude for the UK Prime Minister's gesture, which reflected the deep-rooted relations linking the two countries, wishing the UK further progress and development.



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister chairs a meeting of the Supreme Defence Council.

Kuwait's PM chairs meeting of Supreme Defense Council

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister and Head of the Supreme Defense Council Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired, on Wednesday, a

meeting of the Council at Bayan Palace.

The meeting discussed the agenda and the latest regional and international developments.

Cabinet applauds Crown Prince's UN address on regional security

Kuwait reaffirms two-state solution

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1, (KUNA): The Kuwait Cabinet on Tuesday commended the speech delivered by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's Representative, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah at the 80th session of the UN General Assembly in New York last Wednesday.

This was announced during the weekly Cabinet meeting led by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Tuesday at Bayan Palace, First Deputy Prime Minister, Interior Minister and Acting Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah said after the meeting.

In the speech, His Highness the Crown Prince recalled the success of the UN in general and the Security Council in particular in liberating Kuwait from the brutal Iraqi invasion occurred 35 years ago.

He referred to the humanitarian issue of Kuwait - the fate of Kuwaiti prisoners and missing persons who lost their lives for the sake of homeland, along recovering Kuwaiti property, including the national archives, according to Sheikh Fahad Al-Yusuf.

His Highness the Crown Prince also pointed to Kuwait's commitment to the agreement of maritime navigation at Khor Abdullah and the security mutual protocol signed with Iraq since 2009.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah renewed Kuwait's obligation to correcting negotiations on demarking maritime borders with Iraq beyond the 162 mark, in accordance with international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), adopted in 1982.

His Highness the Crown Prince further affirmed Kuwait's keenness, during its presidency of the 45th session of GCC Supreme Council, to continue joint Gulf action and enhance strategic partnership with regional and international organizations.

His highness deplored in the strongest terms the brutal Israeli occupation attack on the sisterly State of Qatar, stressing the GCC see this assault as a flagrant violation of all international



Prime Minister Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired the Cabinet meeting at Bayan Palace.

laws and a mediator's sovereignty working sincerely for peace, renewing Kuwait's full solidarity with brothers in Qatar against any aggression or threat.

Additionally, the Cabinet extolled the speech delivered by His Highness the Amir's Representative at the UN H.Q last Tuesday, on behalf of GCC members, during the emergency session on the condition in the Middle East including Palestine.

His Highness the Amir's Representative went to say that fair and permanent justice in "our" region could only be achieved through the two-state solution based on the international legitimacy resolutions topped with the Security Council resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

This is the only way to end the Israeli occupation, ensure legitimate Palestinian people's rights and establish an independent Palestinian state based on the June 4, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, His Highness the Crown Prince stressed in the speech.

"We warn against undermining this solution through the policies of settlement, displacement, and imposing the status quo," His Highness affirmed.

His Highness the Crown Prince urged the international community, mainly the Security Council, to bear its full responsibility to prevent the repetition of these violations, and ensure the perpetrators would not go unpunished and the access of Palestinian people's inalienable rights to self-determination.

The Amir's Representative welcomed the countries' recognition of Palestinian state on September 22 dur-

ing the high-level international conference on the peaceful settlement of Palestine's issue and the implementation of the two-state solution.

He termed the step as "blessed and courageous" that go in harmony with international law and justice.

In addition, His Highness the Crown Prince said that the GCC reiterated its unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people, and that these crimes are not only against Palestinians, as they pose a threat to regional and international security as a whole.

He asked the Security Council to translate its words into practical steps to immediately stop the Israeli aggression and ensure humanitarian aid access, protect civilians and end unfair and illegitimate occupation for the sake of safety and security.

Furthermore, the Cabinet was informed about the official visit by His Highness the Crown Prince to the UK and his meeting with Wales' Prince Williams at Windsor Palace, where they reviewed distinguished bilateral relations, and means of boosting them for the two countries and their nations' benefits.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet was briefed on the minute of meeting of the ministerial committee for legal affairs regarding facilitating measures for those whose Kuwaiti citizenship was withdrawn. The Cabinet allowed to this category to continue trading shares, sukuk and securities at Boursa Kuwait of individuals and companies. The Cabinet also decided to maintain some rights of this group at some agencies and bodies of the State.

Then, the Cabinet approved a bill on amending some provisions of the Law No. 20 of 2014 regarding e-sanctions to expand the implementation of the law to include all sanctions in civil, commercial and administrative domains, along personal affairs.

It also endorsed another bill on amending some provisions of Law No. 10 of 2020 on documentation allowing this step by e-system or visual communication, and keeping essential measures of the recorder. The Cabinet affirmed that these amendments are a main pillar in the State's digital transformation path.

In addition, the Cabinet endorsed some bills regarding MoUs Kuwait signed with some sisterly and friendly countries in varied fields, referring them to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The Cabinet was briefed on the minute of meeting of the public service's committee that includes some points topped with the periodical report by the Public Authority for Civil Aviation on the latest developments of the air-shipping project at Kuwait International Airport, asking the authority to facilitate carrying out the project.

The Cabinet further saw the minute of the meeting of economic affairs committee including a request from Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, and Acting Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs Sa-beeh Al-Mukhaizem to get a Cabinet decision to direct relevant government bodies and institutions to provide required support to carry out Kuwait's plan on energy transformation.

Ministry provides up to 900 MW daily to meet demand

MEW successfully navigates 2025 summer load

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: The official spokesperson for the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Eng. Fatima Hayat revealed that the ministry provided about 700 to 900 megawatts daily during the summer of 2025.

She explained that the maximum load recorded in 2024 reached 17,640 megawatts, an increase of 4.7 percent.

During a video presentation at the Government Com-

munication Center recently, Eng. Hayat explained that the expected maximum load in 2025, based on planning studies for the safe operation of the electrical system, is estimated at 18,345 megawatts, an increase of 4 percent. The maximum load recorded during the summer of 2025 reached 17,610 megawatts, a decrease of 0.017 percent from the estimated load.

Eng. Hayat reviewed the percentage increases in peak electrical loads recorded over the past seven years, which ranged from 14,420 megawatts in 2019 to 17,610 megawatts during the summer of this year.

She explained that the Ministry of Electricity and Wa-

ter has taken several measures to manage the demand for electricity and water, which has been a major factor in avoiding scheduled power outages. Among these measures, efforts were exerted to curb excessive electricity and water consumption through judicial seizure campaigns targeting cryptocurrency miners, as well as periodic preventative maintenance programs for components of the electrical system. These include maintenance of generation units, distillers, electrical distribution networks, transmission networks, and water networks. The maintenance work also included monitoring and control systems at control centers, as well as equipment at main transformer stations, power plants, and water distillation facilities.

Eng. Hayat affirmed the keenness of the ministry to increase available electrical capacity to meet rising demand by importing electricity through the Gulf Interconnection Network, ensuring the safe operation of the electrical grid.

She revealed that the ministry imported between 600 and 1,050 megawatts, depending on daily temperatures.

Eng. Hayat affirmed that the ministry played a major role in coordinating with various government sectors to manage the electrical loads of the highest electricity-consuming facilities, including those in the industrial and commercial sectors, as well as government buildings.

In conclusion, she highlighted the importance of the Hafiz Program for Conservation in promoting energy efficiency, along with the national "Waffer" campaign, which aimed to raise awareness about responsible consumption and support sustainability efforts.

Other Voices

Al-Mukhaizim's double win sets stage for food security mandate

By Ahmad alsarraf

WHOEVER insisted on appointing Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizim as Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, even though I believe he was aiming to become Minister of Finance, I want to thank that individual.

I have no personal ties with Dr. Al-Mukhaizim beyond a couple of phone calls. His recent appointment as the acting Minister of Finance, in addition to his role at the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, is a positive development. He has managed both ministries well, arguably better than most of his predecessors. I hope he will now focus fully on the Ministry of Finance, the most important and complex ministry.

On another note, Dr. Al-Mukhaizim highlighted that the government sees the agricultural sector as a fundamental pillar for strengthening Kuwait's food security.

He indicated that support to farmers comes in many forms such as land grants, symbolic prices, and subsidized electricity.

The minister revealed that the state provides around KD 40 million annually for fodder and plants.

Dr. Al-Mukhaizim stressed the need to regulate agricultural subsidies, clarifying that allocated land is intended for productive farmers, not for profit-making or subleasing.

The minister reiterated that the government considers agriculture vital to enhancing food security in Kuwait.

I, along with many others, have serious doubts about the quality of

irrigation water used for crops, especially vegetables and fruits, that we import from almost all countries in the region, except the Gulf states. There is no need to name these countries specifically. Some of this water is of very poor quality and heavily polluted, often containing sewage and human waste.

There is absolutely no guarantee that this situation will improve in the future. As a result, these products pose a serious health risk, costing the state millions in treating diseases caused by their consumption.

For example, the fight against smoking in developed countries is often driven not just by concern for public health but also by the billions their healthcare systems spend treating smoking-related illnesses.

Therefore, we urgently need to develop a successful agricultural project capable of meeting all or most of our agricultural needs in a healthy and sustainable way, especially since Kuwait is one of the few countries with abundant arable water.

I propose entrusting international agricultural companies to bring this easily achievable vision to life, for providing citizens and residents with high-quality produce at very reasonable prices. Local production will also lead to a significant reduction in healthcare costs.

Achieving this self-sufficiency is neither impossible nor difficult. For example, Emirates Airlines recently supplied all their passengers' vegetable needs from its own high-tech vertical farms. We are equally capable and determined to realize such a project.

To succeed, this initiative must be fully independent and use the best global technologies, unlike the current slow-moving private farms and sprawling government agencies.

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Diplomat denounces crimes

Kuwait voices strong support for Rohingya at UN Assembly

NEW YORK, Oct 1, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait reiterated Tuesday its firm commitment to working with the international community to end the Rohingya crisis and achieve a just, comprehensive and sustainable solution to help the "oppressed people" get their inalienable rights.

This came in a speech delivered by the Second Secretary of Kuwait's Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Wafa Al-Mulla, at the High-Level Meeting on the Situation of Rohingya Muslims and Other Minorities in Myanmar at the UN General Assembly.

Al-Mulla said that the ethnic cleansing, systematic mass displacement, and deprivation of basic human rights



KUNA photo
Second Mission Secretary of the Permanent Delegation of Kuwait to the United Nations, Wafa Al-Mulla, at the UN General Assembly.

experienced by the Rohingya Muslims constitute "a complete crime against humanity."



Group photo during the event.

Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Ministry of Communications initiative streamlines access to over 15 agencies

New gov’t center simplifies services for people with disabilities

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Communications Mishaal Al-Zaid announced the opening of the Integrated Center for Services for People with Disabilities at the Government Mall (Liberation Tower) recently.

In a press statement issued on the sidelines of the opening

ceremony, Al-Zaid said this initiative is in line with the state’s efforts to uphold the rights of people with disabilities by providing them with comprehensive administrative services in an accessible and supportive environment.

He explained that the center is equipped with advanced tools and modern technology, including tablets with indicators that monitor customer waiting times, enabling faster responses from staff to address inquiries and deliver requested services.

The center offers people with disabilities all necessary services to help them complete transactions and communicate effectively with specialized staff.

These services include Braille devices for the visually impaired and a sign language interpreter who facilitates direct communication between customers and employees.

Also, flexible communication options allow clients to interact with officials without physically visiting the departments.

The center’s services extend beyond Ministry of Transport transactions, as they connect with over 15 government agencies located in the Government Mall (Liberation Tower) that serve citizens and residents.

Al-Zaid added that such centers save time and effort for clients with disabilities by providing access to all information and services in one location, eliminating the need to visit multiple ministries.



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser hosted Amal Al-Dallal, the Acting Secretary-General of the General Secretariat of Awqaf, and Wael Al-Shatti, Director of the Secretary-General’s Office.

Farwaniya Governor vows support for Awqaf’s development projects

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received the Acting Secretary-General of the General Secretariat of Awqaf Amal Al-Dallal and the Director of the Secretary-General’s Office Wael Al-Shatti, at the Farwaniya Governorate headquarters on Tuesday morning to discuss joint cooperation.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, both parties emphasized the importance of collaboration to enhance and support endowment activities and projects in Farwaniya Governorate. They explored ways to cooperate with the activities of the General Secretariat

of Awqaf, focusing on highlighting its role in community and sustainable development.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser expressed his appreciation for the significant role played by the General Secretariat of Awqaf in supporting charitable and development projects throughout Kuwait.

The governor affirmed his readiness to provide all necessary support to strengthen these efforts in Farwaniya Governorate.

At the end of the meeting, Al-Dallal thanked the governor for his warm welcome and keen interest in engaging with all entities contributing to community service and promoting sustainable development.

Population boom spurs call for Jahra ministries complex

300,000 sqm site to ease public services

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: **Municipal Council member Abdullah Al-Enezi submitted a proposal to establish a ministries complex serving the northern region within Jahra Governorate, covering an area of 300,000 square meters.**

In his proposal, Al-Enezi highlighted the need for an integrated ministries complex in Jahra Governorate and surrounding areas to provide comprehensive government services.

He cited the governorate’s high population den-

sity and the presence of major housing projects, including Mutlaa City, which comprises 28,288 housing units, and the South Saad Al-Abdullah project, which includes 22,152 housing units along with additional residential plots in its eastern expansion.

Al-Enezi also noted future residential developments such as Nawaf Al-Ahmad City and Al-Sabriya City, each projected to include 54,000 housing units, as well as the Al-Naayem area, which will accommodate 9,800 housing units.

He called for the establishment of the complex in Jahra Governorate in line with Municipal Council Resolution No. 2, issued on October 2, 2006.

The resolution outlines the following provisions:

- First - Approval to allocate a 300,000-square-meter plot in Jahra Governorate for the establishment of a ministries complex to serve the northern region.
- Second - The project must be designed in line with the latest international standards for the design of government and administrative buildings.
- Third - The site should include supporting service facilities for both employees and visitors, such as cafés, restaurants, and various administrative service centers.
- Fourth - The Ministry of Public Works will be responsible for executing the project using its technical expertise and human resources.
- Fifth - Coordination must be carried out with relevant service ministries, and their approvals obtained prior to the start of implementation.

MEW adds key power projects for new hospitals

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has included three electrical projects in the current development plan that are related to the manufacturing and supply of 11 kV medium-voltage equipment for the new Al-Sabah Hospital and the new Cancer Hospital, as well as the supply of 300 kV ground cables.

According to informed sources, the medium-voltage equipment will provide the necessary power to both hospitals, while the 300 kV cables will connect the Sabah area to the ultra-high-voltage grid, for supporting eight ongoing construction projects in the area.

These projects are part of the ministry’s commitment to ensuring the continuous provision of electricity and water services for supporting the operation of Ministry of Health’s facilities and the delivery of medical services to citizens and residents around the

clock.

Coordination has been carried out with the Ministry of Health and the concerned hospital authorities to assess the specific requirements for supplying power to these facilities, including the necessary cables and both primary and secondary substations.

The sources noted that tenders for the projects will be issued through the Central Agency for Public Tenders, allowing qualified companies to compete for implementation of the project.



20 key education roles reassigned
MoE initiates major reshuffle

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: To enhance administrative efficiency and meet the demands of the upcoming phase, Minister of Education Dr. Jalal Al-Tabtabaei issued several decisions concerning transfers, appointments, and terminations for supervisory positions in various educational zones. These decisions are in line with current needs and recent organizational restructuring of the ministry, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Ministry of Education affirmed that this is part of a comprehensive effort to reorganize the new organizational structure and redistribute supervisory responsibilities, thereby boosting efficiency and improving educational and administrative services in line with the state’s vision for developing the administrative and educational system.



Al-Tabtabaei

- The decisions issued by the Minister are as follows:
1. Mohammed Turki Ibrahim Al-Wazzan, a school principal, has been appointed as Director of Educational Affairs for the Capital Educational Zone under the Educational Affairs Sector of the General Administration of Educational Zones.
 2. Mohammed Ali Dabees Al-Otaibi, a senior social studies supervisor in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational Zone, has been appointed as Director of Educational Affairs for the Hawalli Educational Zone under the Educational Affairs Sector of the General Administration of Educational Zones.
 3. Ahmed Abdulaziz Nasser Khalid has been transferred to the position of Secondary Education Supervisor in the Ahmadi Educational Zone and appointed as Director of Educational Affairs for the Ahmadi Educational Zone.
 4. Amin Mohammed Fahd Tamihir has been relieved of his duties as Acting Director General of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational Zone and returned to his previous position of Director of Administrative and Technical Affairs under the General Administration of Human Resources and Employee Affairs’ Administrative, Financial, and Technical Affairs Sector within the same educational zone.
 5. Salha Dibaan Awad Al-Mutairi, Human Resources Supervisor, has been appointed as Director of Administrative and Technical Affairs for the Capital Educational Zone under the Administrative, Financial, and Technical Affairs Sector of the General Administration of Human Resources and Employee Affairs.
 6. Mahmoud Abdulrazaq Ali Mohammed, Secondary Education Supervisor at Jahra Educational Zone, has been transferred to the same supervisory position within the Educational Affairs Department of Jahra Educational Zone in the Educational Affairs Sector of the General Administration of Educational Zones. He has also been assigned to serve as Director of Educational Affairs for the same district, in addition to his current duties.
 7. Mansour Abdullah Al-Dihani, Director General of Ahmadi Educational Zone, has been appointed as Director of Educational Affairs for Farwaniya Educational Zone.
 8. Ahmed Ghanman Khalifa Al-Majdi has been relieved of his duties as Acting Director General of the Capital Educational Zone and returned to his previous supervisory position of Director of Libraries under the Educational Affairs Sector of the General Administration of Supporting Educational Services.
 9. Adel Ghazi Nouman Al-Harbi has been

- relieved of his duties as Acting Director of Libraries and returned to his previous position.
10. Musaid Mohammed Naif Madhri, Secondary Education Supervisor in the Ahmadi Educational Zone, has been transferred to the same position in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational Zone. He is also assigned as Acting Director of Educational Affairs for Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational Zone, under the Educational Affairs Sector of the General Administration of Educational Zones.
 11. Mohammed Saad Al-Adwani, Director of Administrative and Technical Affairs, has been transferred to the same position in the Ahmadi Educational Zone, under the Administrative, Financial, and Technical Affairs Sector of the General Administration of Human Resources and Employee Affairs.
 12. Bader Hamad Amer Al-Ajmi’s assignment as Acting Director General of the Jahra Educational Zone has ended, and he has been returned to his previous position of Director of Administrative and Technical Affairs at the Farwaniya Educational Zone, under the Administrative, Financial, and Technical Affairs Sector of the General Administration of Human Resources and Employee Affairs.
 13. Nada Mutlaq Al-Mutairi has been transferred from her position as Director of Educational Affairs at the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational Zone to the position of Director of Religious Education at the Directorate General of Religious Education and Special Education in Educational Affairs Sector.
 14. Khalid Khalifa Al-Azmi’s assignment as Acting Director of Educational Affairs at the Hawalli Educational Zone has ended, and he has been returned to his previous position.
 15. Nasser Hamad Sharhan Al-Shamri has been transferred from the position of Director of Administrative and Technical Affairs at the Capital Educational Zone to the position of Director of Planning and Analysis at the Administrative, Financial, and Technical Affairs Sector of the Directorate General of Planning.
 16. Jassem Mohammed Buhamad’s assignment as Acting Director General of the Farwaniya Educational Zone has ended, and he has been returned to his previous position of Director of Administrative and Technical Affairs at the Hawalli Educational Zone under Administrative, Financial and Technical Affairs Sector of the Directorate General of Human Resources and Employee Affairs.
 17. Matrook Daieej Al-Mutairi has been transferred from his position as Director of Administrative and Technical Affairs at the Hawalli Educational Zone to the same position at the Jahra Educational Zone, under the Administrative, Financial and Technical Affairs Sector of the Directorate General of Human Resources and Employee Affairs.
 18. Ali Hussein Dashti has been assigned to serve as a supervisor in the office of the Assistant Undersecretary for Administrative, Financial and Technical Affairs, in addition to his current duties as Warehouse Supervisor at the Supplies and Warehousing Department.
 19. Hamad Ahmed Taqi has been transferred from his position as Head of the Secondary and High School Department at the Arabic Schools Supervision Office to the Private Education Authority, where he will serve as Head of the Secondary and High School Department at the Foreign Schools Supervision Office in the Educational Affairs Department, while retaining his current assignment.
 20. Amina Abdulhamid Abdullah Al-Jaber has been transferred from her position as office manager.

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Workshop builds rapid-response readiness for family services

KRCS, ICRC team up boosts humanitarian family programs

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1, (KUNA): Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) held a training workshop titled “Strengthening Partnerships with External Entities on Restoring Family Links (RFL),” in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and with officials from the Ministries of Social Affairs, Interior, and Foreign Affairs participating.

Speaking to KUNA on Wednesday, KRCS Director General Fawaz Al-Mazrouei said the workshop supports efforts to develop humanitarian programs and upgrade rapid-response mechanisms for family links services in line with international standards.

It aims to boost the readiness of KRCS staff and volunteers in RFL, a priority area where the Society mobilizes resources to reunite families, he said.

KRCS initiatives proved effective during the COVID-19 pandemic, when a hotline was launched for cases inside and out-



KRCS photos
ICRC Regional Protection Coordinator Ynske Vandormael addresses the workshop participants.

side Kuwait, along with specialized courses and workshops to train personnel and volunteers, Al-Mazrouei noted.

Broad institutional participation



Workshop participants including representatives from the Kuwaiti Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs pose for a group photo.

will strengthen joint efforts and help sustain RFL programs, he added.

Meanwhile, ICRC Regional Protection Coordinator Ynske Vandormael told KUNA that the ICRC remains committed to supporting National Societies worldwide in restoring family links, underscoring the importance of such humanitarian work in giving hope to families of the missing.

She commended KRCS-ICRC co-

operation in reconnecting separated families and KRCS’ role in preserving family bonds under difficult circumstances.



Head of Kuwait's Public Authority for Civil Aviation Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah during the session.



Part of the meeting with representatives of the Airports Council International (ACI).

Kuwait’s aviation chief hails Arab role in ICAO

Kuwait explores projects with Australia, ACI

WASHINGTON, Oct 1, (KUNA): Head of Kuwait’s Public Authority for Civil Aviation Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah stated, Tuesday, that the election of Gulf and Arab countries to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Council reflects their leading role in shaping the future of global aviation.

This came in a statement to KUNA by Sheikh Humoud, on the sidelines of the ICAO Assembly in Montreal, where he congratulated the UAE, Qatar, and Morocco on winning seats in Part III of the ICAO Council.

He stressed that this win highlights international recognition of these countries’ efforts in enhancing aviation safety, security, and sustainability, as well as their active contributions to global aviation policy.

On the sidelines, the Kuwaiti delegation held bilateral talks with Australia to discuss ways to enhance air operations and cooperation between airlines, in addition to reviewing joint civil aviation projects.



KUNA photos
Kuwait's Public Authority for Civil Aviation delegation with Australian delegation.

The delegation also met with Airports Council International (ACI) to explore future cooperation and benefit from its expertise in airport management and service development at Kuwait International Airport.

The 42nd ICAO Assembly continues in Montreal with broad international participation from member states and specialized organizations.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait climbs

Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Kuwait, Mazen Aboulhosen, on Wednesday praised Kuwait’s efforts and notable progress in improving its global ranking in combating human trafficking.

Aboulhosen told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that Kuwait’s continuous efforts, led by the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons, alongside all concerned ministries, reflect strong political will and solid institutional commitment toward improving its global standing.

He added that such progress affirms Kuwait’s commitment to international standards through launching the national strategy to combat trafficking in persons 2025-2028, focused on legal framework development, a national referral system, capacity-building, and enhancing regional and international cooperation.

He noted that the IOM mission reaffirms its full support and commitment to working alongside Kuwait’s authorities, aiming to integrate globally and achieve top-tier status in the coming years.

Minister of Justice and Chair of the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Migrant Smuggling, Counselor Nasser Al-Sanea, said Tuesday that Kuwait’s ranking in the 2025 US State Department Report improved from Tier 2 Watch List, where it had remained for three consecutive years to Tier 2.

Stable 50

He revealed that demand for KFMBBC’s products is high, as their prices are lower than those of imported products while maintaining high quality.

Al-Zaid indicated that food prices in Kuwait are low compared to other countries, but without any negative impact on the production quality.

He emphasized that the company is moving forward with its expansion plans through what are called “boutiques,” having opened branches in areas such as Yamouk, Saad Al-Abdullah, and Fahad Al-Ahmad, as well as introducing new products, most notably coffee.

Al-Zaid explained that the company is keen to continuously introduce innovative products that keep pace with global trends. Its products are currently available in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and there are plans to expand further within the Gulf region and internationally.

He stressed that KFMBBC is capable of ensuring self-sufficiency for the local market in their basic products, emphasizing that the company has internal strategic plans focused on product development and meeting local market needs.

Kuwait PM

Munich Security Conference (MSC) Leaders Meeting, kicked off Wednesday in Saudi Arabia’s AIUla city, with First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah representing His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Held at AIUla’s Maraya Theater, the gathering provides a platform for senior decision-makers and prominent experts worldwide to engage in discussions, exchange perspectives, and explore solutions to pressing challenges affecting international security, stability, and economic cooperation across multiple sectors.

The two-day meeting, concluding Thursday, addresses issues including global trade, regional crises, energy transition, maritime security, nuclear safety, and ongoing efforts to strengthen regional and international cooperation in energy, security, and economic fields for sustainable peace and stability.

Kuwait Coast

Interior said in a press statement.

Sheikh Mubarak Al-Yusuf highlighted the longstanding historical ties between Kuwait and the UK and the ongoing development of military and security cooperation between the two countries.

During the visit, the UK advisor was briefed on the latest developments within Kuwait’s Coast Guard, including the new coastal surveillance system and the integration of marine drones into the

fleet.

The ministry noted that the visit reflects the shared commitment to enhancing maritime and security cooperation, advancing strategic interests, and promoting stability and security in the region.

Uzbekistan,

He highlighted the frequent meetings between the foreign ministers of both countries on the sidelines of international forums, culminating in the official visit of the President of Uzbekistan to Kuwait in February, which he described as “the beginning of a new era in bilateral relations.”

Ambassador Yunusov explained that the visit resulted in the signing of several agreements and memoranda of understanding covering various sectors, including trade, investment, energy, infrastructure, transportation, tourism, and healthcare. These agreements have elevated economic and trade cooperation between the two countries to a new level. Also, recent practical steps have further strengthened this momentum, notably the implementation of a 30-day visa exemption for Kuwaiti citizens visiting Uzbekistan, which took effect in June, and the launch of direct flights starting this September. These developments will help boost tourism, cultural exchange, and investment opportunities.

He noted that the first meeting of the Joint Governmental Committee, held in November 2024, played a great role in encouraging visits between representatives of the business community and achieving tangible progress in economic and investment cooperation.

The ambassador said Uzbekistan looks forward to an even brighter future in its relations with Kuwait, praising the strong ties between the two friendly nations, which is built on mutual respect and trust.

He revealed that around 300 Uzbek nationals are currently working in Kuwait in various positions such as doctors, surgeons, professors, and sports coaches.

Ambassador Yunusov expressed hope that this number will grow in the coming years.

Arab League hosts first gathering of cultural attaches

Kuwait aims to safeguard Arab cultural heritage

CAIRO, Oct 1, (KUNA): Kuwait is keen on safeguarding and enriching Arab cultural inheritance for the sake of future generations, said head of the Kuwaiti Cultural Office in Cairo Dr. Khaled Al-Mhareb, on Wednesday.

Speaking to KUNA on the sidelines of the Arab League’s first annual gathering for Arab Cultural Attaches, Al-Mhareb affirmed that Kuwait played an integral

cultural role in the Arab region via supporting cultural work in various fields.

Kuwait’s pioneering soft power role and publications output have left an imprint in the Arab cultural scene and created a unique identity for the country, he asserted.

He noted that Kuwait University also plays an important part in spreading Arab culture as one of the premier

universities in the Arab World, adding that its annual publications and hosting of outstanding educational staff made it a force to be reckoned with on the higher education level.

He also alluded to Kuwait being chosen as the capital of Arab Media and Culture for 2025, saying that the recognition reflected its status within the region.



KUNA photos
Head of the Cultural Office at the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in Cairo, Dr. Khaled Al-Mhareb, at the activities of the Arab League’s first annual gathering for Arab Cultural Attaches.



Kuwait champions equality and justice at UN

GENEVA, Oct 1, (KUNA): Kuwait reaffirmed, on Wednesday, its deep national commitment to the principle of equality before the law as a key element of its vision for justice and human rights.

This came in a statement by Diplomatic Attache, Heba Al-Sabah, during the interactive dialogue with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement, held during the 60th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Al-Sabah stressed that fair and transparent law enforcement is the true guarantee of national stability and reinforces public trust in state institutions.

Al-Sabah underlined Kuwait’s strong focus on advancing its legis-



KUNA photo
Diplomatic Attache, Heba Al-Sabah, during the interactive dialogue with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement.

lative and judicial system through a comprehensive review of hundreds of laws, amending those that do not align with international standards.

She explained that the legislative reforms included repealing certain penal provisions, raising the legal marriage age to 18, and enacting laws to protect families from domestic violence, in addition to strengthening anti-corruption laws and safeguarding public funds to uphold justice and equality.

Al-Sabah also affirmed that equality in law enforcement must be a universal principle guiding inter-state relations, free from selectivity or double standards, ensuring respect for sovereignty and the protection of peoples’ rights.

She renewed Kuwait’s commitment to cooperating with the international community to promote the rule of law and achieve security, peace, and sustainable development for all nations.

Roughly 750,000 federal workers expected to be furloughed

US government shutdown begins as country confronts fresh cycle of uncertainty

WASHINGTON, Oct 1, (AP): Plunged into a government shutdown, the US is confronting a fresh cycle of uncertainty after President Donald Trump and Congress failed to strike an agreement to keep government programs and services running by Wednesday’s deadline.

Roughly 750,000 federal workers are expected to be furloughed, some potentially fired by Trump’s Republican administration. Many offices will be shuttered, perhaps permanently, as Trump vows to “do things that are irreversible, that are bad” as retribution. His deportation agenda is expected to run full speed ahead, while education, environmental and other services sputter. The economic fallout is expected to ripple nationwide.

“We don’t want it to shut down,” Trump said at the White House before the midnight deadline.

But the president, who met privately with congressional leadership this week, appeared unable to negotiate any deal between Democrats and Republicans to prevent that outcome.

This is the third time Trump has presided over a federal funding lapse,

the first since his return to the White House this year, in a remarkable record that underscores the polarizing divide over budget priorities and a political climate that rewards hard-line positions rather than more traditional compromises.

The Democrats picked this fight, which was unusual for the party that prefers to keep government running, but their voters are eager to challenge the president’s second-term agenda. Democrats are demanding funding for health care subsidies that are expiring for millions of people under the Affordable Care Act, spiking the costs of insurance premiums nationwide.

Republicans have refused to negotiate for now and have encouraged Trump to steer clear of any talks. After the White House meeting, the president posted a cartoonish fake video mocking the Democratic leadership that was widely viewed as unserious and racist.

What neither side has devised is an easy offramp to prevent what could become a protracted closure. The ramifications are certain to spread beyond the political arena, upending the lives



The Capitol is seen at dusk as Democrats and Republicans in Congress are angrily blaming each other and refusing to budge from their positions on funding the government, in Washington on Sept 30. (AP)

of Americans who rely on the government for benefit payments, work contracts and the various services being thrown into turmoil.

“What the government spends

money on is a demonstration of our country’s priorities,” said Rachel Snyderman, a former White House budget official who is the managing director of economic policy at the Bipartisan Policy Center, a think tank in Washington.

Shutdowns, she said, “only inflict economic cost, fear and confusion across the country.”

An economic jolt could be felt in a matter of days. The government is expected Friday to produce its monthly jobs report, which may or may not be delivered.

While the financial markets have generally “shrugged” during past shutdowns, according to a Goldman Sachs analysis, this one could be different partly because there are no signs of broader negotiations.

“There are also few good analogies to this week’s potential shutdown,” the analysis said.

Across the government, preparations have been underway. Trump’s Office of Management and Budget, headed by Russ Vought, directed agencies to execute plans for not just furloughs, as are typical during a federal funding lapse, but mass firings of federal workers. It’s part of the Trump administration’s mission, including its Department of Government Efficiency, to shrink the federal government.

The Medicare and Medicaid health care programs are expected to continue, though staffing shortages could mean delays for some services. The Pentagon would still function. And most employees will stay on the job at the Department of Homeland Security.

But Trump has warned that the administration could focus on programs that are important to Democrats, “cutting vast numbers of people out, cutting things that they like, cutting programs that they like.”

As agencies sort out which workers are essential, or not, Smithsonian museums are expected to stay open at least until Monday. A group of former national park superintendents urged the Trump administration to close the parks to visitors, arguing that poorly staffed parks in a shutdown are a danger to the public and put park resources at risk.

Ahead of Wednesday’s start of the fiscal year, House Republicans had approved a temporary funding bill, over opposition from Democrats, to keep government running into mid-November while broader negotiations continue.

Troops could be deployed to Chicago as immigration agents patrol downtown – Illinois Governor Pritzker

CHICAGO, Oct 1, (AP): The sight of armed, camouflaged and masked Border Patrol agents making arrests near famous downtown Chicago landmarks has amplified concerns about the Trump administration’s growing federal intervention across US cities.

As Illinois leaders warned Monday of a National Guard deployment, residents in the nation’s third-largest city met a brazen weekend escalation of immigration enforcement tactics with anger, fear and fresh claims of discrimination.

“It looks un-American,” said Chicago Alderman Brendan Reilly, who represents downtown on the City Council. He deemed the Sunday display a “photo op” for President Donald Trump, echoing other leaders.

Memphis, Tennessee, and Portland, Oregon, also braced for a federal law enforcement surge. Meanwhile, Louisiana’s governor asked for a National Guard deployment to New Orleans and other cities.

Trump has called the expansion of federal immigration agents and National Guard troops into American cities necessary, blasting Democrats for crime and lax immigration policies. Following a crime crackdown in the District of Columbia and immigration enforcement in Los Angeles, he’s referred to Portland as “war-ravaged” and threatened apocalyp-



Federal agents from US Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Customs and Border Protection walk along West Wacker Drive in the Loop on Sept 28, in Chicago. (AP)

tic force in Chicago.

“Whether it takes place here in the city or the suburbs, it’s all the same to us,” Border Patrol agent Gregory Bo-vino said in Chicago.

Attorney General Pam Bondi has issued a memo that also directs component agencies within the Justice Department, including the FBI, to help protect U.S. Immigration and Customs

Enforcement facilities, including in Chicago and Portland.

Here’s a snapshot of where things stand with federal law enforcement activity in Chicago, Portland, Memphis and New Orleans. Many Chicagoans were already uneasy after an immigration crackdown began earlier this month. Agents have targeted immigrant-heavy and largely Latino areas.

Trump has waffled on sending the military, but Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker said Monday it appeared the federal government would deploy 100 troops. Pritzker said the Illinois National Guard received word that the Department of Homeland Security sent a memo to the Defense Department requesting troops to protect ICE personnel and facilities.

An immigration processing center outside Chicago has been the site of frequent protests and aggressive tactics by federal agents.

The enforcement recently escalated, with agents using boats on the Chicago River and marching Sunday on Michigan Avenue and in upscale neighborhoods. Activists and elected leaders are concerned about discriminatory stops, particularly after the US Supreme Court lifted restrictions on roving patrols in LA. The court cleared the way for immigration agents to stop people based on race, language, job or location.

“ICE is running around the Loop, harassing people for not being white,” Pritzker said, describing the city’s core business district.

Activists said a Latino family of four was led away by federal agents Sunday near the popular “Cloud Gate” sculpture, commonly called “The Bean.” Construction workers and bicyclists were also targeted.

Trump says administration close to reaching a deal with Harvard

WASHINGTON, Oct 1, (AP): US President **Donald Trump** said Tuesday that his administration is close to reaching a deal with Harvard University, which it has targeted with a series of investigations and billions of dollars in funding cuts as it presses for changes to its policies and governance.

A truce with the country’s oldest and wealthiest college would end a clash that has tested the independence of America’s colleges.

Trump came into office saying he would cut funding for schools that defied his agenda, vowing to eliminate “wokeness.” His pressure campaign zeroed in on the Ivy League institution after it rebuffed his demands.

Trump initially said a deal had been reached but then said officials were “close to finalizing” the agreement. “We haven’t done it yet,” he said at the White House.

Trump said the agreement in-



cludes a \$500 million payment from Harvard that would be used to create “a giant trade school, a series of trade schools that would be run by Harvard.” Trump described it as an investment to revive trade schools and produce workers for American plants.

“They’re going to be teaching people how to do AI and lots of other things,” Trump said.

Harvard and the White House did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

A deal would open the door to a resolution of sanctions that have included cuts to more than \$2.6 billion in Harvard’s research grants, losses of federal contracts, and efforts to cut off the school’s ability to enroll foreign students.

Trump’s administration has accused Harvard of tolerating antisemitism, particularly during last year’s protests over the Israel-Hamas war. In a letter to Harvard, federal officials said the campus was “overrun by an impermissible, multiweek encampment” that left Jewish and Israeli students fearful and disrupted their studies.

Harvard President Alan Garber has acknowledged problems with antisemitism and anti-Muslim bias on campus, but said Harvard has taken strides to fight prejudice.



Protesters take part in a nationwide 24-hour strike in Athens, Greece on Oct 1, as labor unions demand higher wages and the withdrawal of a bill changing work hours. (AP)

Greece general strike disrupts services across the country

A nationwide general strike in Greece left ferries tied up in port and disrupted public transportation across the capital on Wednesday, as public and private sector workers protest changes to the country’s labor laws.

No taxis in Athens or trains will run for the duration of the 24-hour strike, while buses and the city’s subway,

tram and trolley services were operating on a reduced schedule.

The strike was disrupting services across the country, including in schools, courts, public hospitals and municipalities. Two protest marches were planned in central Athens, with demonstrations also set for other cities.

Unions representing civil servants

and private sector workers called the strike to protest labor law changes that will introduce more flexibility, including allowing overtime that could stretch shifts to 13 hours in a day. Under the new regulations, working hours that include overtime would be capped at 48 hours per week, with a maximum 150 overtime hours allowed per year. (AP)

Explosion breaks out in Munich; one dead

BERLIN, Oct 1, (AP): German police closed the Oktoberfest fairgrounds Wednesday morning following a bomb threat from the suspected perpetrator of an explosion in northern Munich, city officials said.

At least one person’s death was believed to be connected to the explosion at a residential building early Wednesday, which Munich police said was deliberately set on fire and part of a domestic dispute.

It was not immediately clear whether the deceased was the suspected perpetrator or someone else. Another person, who was not considered to be a danger to the public, remained missing.

Specialized teams were called to the scene to defuse booby traps in the building, police said. Photos from the area also showed a burned-out van.

Officials discovered the bomb threat to Oktoberfest in a letter from the alleged perpetrator. Police searched the fairgrounds for other explosive devices and asked workers to leave the area.

Moldova’s Sandu cements power after party wins poll

CHISINAU, Moldova, Oct 1, (AP): Moldova’s pro-Western President **Maia Sandu** is riding high, following a decisive victory for the party she founded in a tense parliamentary election on Sunday which was plagued by claims of Russian interference.

Founded by Sandu in 2016, the Party of Action and Solidarity, known as PAS, won its second parliamentary majority on Sunday, defeating pro-Russian groups that risked upending Moldova’s push in recent years to join the European Union.

“The Kremlin sought to divide us, to undermine our trust – in the state, in our institutions, in one another, and in our ability to resist,” Sandu said in a speech on Monday. “We did not allow ourselves to be bought, intimidated, or frightened. We mobilized and defended our country



Sandu

through honest, democratic choice.”

She added that the outcome was “a strong mandate for Moldova’s EU accession.”

Landlocked between Ukraine and EU and NATO member Romania, Moldova was a Soviet republic until it proclaimed independence in 1991. In recent years, it has turned Westward: it became an EU candidate country in 2022 and as such, a geopolitical battleground between Russia and Europe.

Born in 1972 in the village of Risipeni, Sandu graduated from university in 1994 with a management degree and later took a master’s in international relations. From 1994 to 1998, she worked as a consultant at the Ministry of Economy, and then at the World Bank office in the Moldovan capital, Chisinau, until 2005.

In 2010, she obtained a master’s degree in public policy from Harvard, then worked as an adviser to the executive director of the World Bank in Washington. In 2012, she entered politics, serving as minister of education until 2015. In 2016, she founded PAS, a reformist party that railed against a kleptocratic political class.

Populist billionaire favorite in Czech Republic’s parliamentary election

PRAGUE, Oct 1, (AP): A parliamentary election in the Czech Republic on Friday and Saturday could deprive Ukraine of a staunch supporter and put the Czechs on a course away from the European mainstream, following the pro-Russian path taken by Hungary and Slovakia.

Billionaire Andrej Babiš is predicted to be the latest populist leader in Central Europe to stage an electoral comeback, as opinion polls put him on course for victory over a pro-Western coalition that defeated him four years ago. If he wins, he would join the ranks of Viktor Orbán of Hungary and Robert Fico of Slovakia, whose countries have refused to provide military aid to Ukraine, continue to import Russian oil and oppose sanctions on Russia.

Amid Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Prime Minister Petr Fiala and his coalition of three conservative parties called Together have made the threat from Moscow the key to their campaign. “Vote for freedom! Vote for security!” they urged the electorate.

The opposition led by Babiš blamed Fiala for all the troubles of recent years, from the energy crisis to soaring inflation, and pledged to revoke his



Chairman of opposition ‘ANO’ (YES) movement Andrej Babis talks to his supporters during a rally ahead of Parliamentary elections in Prague, Czech Republic on Sept. 30. (AP)

pension reform and help for Ukraine.

After the Oct. 3-4 election, “we will have, most probably, a very different setup of the government,” Czech President Petr Pavel said at Harvard University in September.

Babiš joined forces with his friend Orbán to create a new alliance in the

European Parliament, the “Patriots for Europe,” to represent hard-right groups. Previously, he was a member of the liberal Renew group.

The Patriots are united by anti-migrant rhetoric, a critical stance toward EU policies tackling climate change, and the protection of national sovereignty.

EU leaders gather for security talks

Russia waging hybrid war on Europe: Denmark

COPENHAGEN, Denmark, Oct 1, (AP): Europe is in the middle of a hybrid war waged by Russia and the continent must arm itself, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen warned on Wednesday as she hosted a summit of European Union leaders in Copenhagen.

“I hope that everybody recognizes now that there is a hybrid war and one day it’s Poland, the other day it’s Denmark, and next week it will probably be somewhere else that we see sabotage or we see drones flying,” Frederiksen told reporters.

Wednesday’s summit comes after a spate of troubling drone incidents at Danish airports and military bases over the last week. Ahead of the meeting, a special radar system was set up at Copenhagen airport to help keep watch. Unidentified drones forced the closure of the airfield a week ago, causing major disruptions.

France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the U.K. also sent aircraft, ships and air defense systems to Denmark ahead of the talks. Ukraine’s armed forces have dispatched a mission to the Nordic country for joint exercises, sharing its expertise on combating Russian drones.



French President Emmanuel Macron, (from left), Denmark’s Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Chairman, Investor AB Jacob Wallenberg in Danish Industry’s building host the EU’s political leadership in Copenhagen, on Oct 1. (AP)

While the Danish authorities have not identified those believed to be responsible, Frederiksen said, “There is only one country that are willing to threaten us and it is Russia and therefore we need a very strong answer back.”

“I want us to rearm. I want us to buy more capabilities. I want us to innovate more, for example on drones,” she said. “When I look at Europe today, I think we are in the most difficult and dangerous situation since the end of the Second World War.”

Activists from Sudan, Myanmar, Pacific Islands and Taiwan receive rights award

STOCKHOLM, Oct 1, (AP): The Right Livelihood Award was awarded Wednesday to activists from Sudan and Myanmar, where military and political violence devastates communities, to the Pacific Islands, where climate disaster threatens entire nations, and to Taiwan, which is the frequent target of threats and disinformation.

“As authoritarianism and division rise globally, the 2025 Right Livelihood Laureates are charting a different course: one rooted in collective action, resilience and democracy to create a livable future for all,” the Stockholm-based foundation said about the winners. It considered 159 nominees from 67 countries this year.

The youth-led organization Pacific Island Students Fighting Climate Change and Julian Aguon were awarded the prize “for carrying the call for climate justice to the world’s highest court, turning survival into a matter of rights and climate action into a legal responsibility.”

Justice for Myanmar was awarded “for their courage and their pioneering investigative methods in exposing and eroding the international



Attorney Julian Aguon, (left), meets with colleague Addie Rolnick after arguing before a panel of US Circuit Court of Appeals judges in Honolulu on Oct 10, 2018. (AP)

support to Myanmar’s corrupt military.” The covert group of activists is working to expose the financial architecture and global corporate complicity sustaining the military government, Right Livelihood said.

Audrey Tang from Taiwan won the prize “for advancing the social use of digital technology to empower citizens, renew democracy

and heal divides.” Tang is a “civic hacker and technologist who re-wires systems for the public good,” the organization said.

In Sudan, the Emergency Response Rooms network was awarded for “for building a resilient model of mutual aid amid war and state collapse that sustains millions of people with dignity.”

Questions arise about US commitment

S.Korea’s Lee calls for more self-reliant military

SEOUL, South Korea, Oct 1, (AP): South Korea’s president vowed Wednesday to sharply increase defense spending and build a more self-reliant military, as US President Donald Trump’s “America First” agenda raises questions about the US security commitment to its Asian ally.

A tariff war instigated by Trump’s administration and his transactional approach to security threaten to erode many South Koreans’ trust in the US. There are concerns that he may demand much higher South Korean payments for the US military presence in the country or possibly downsize America’s military footprint to focus more on China.

In an Armed Forces Day ceremony Wednesday, South Korean President Lee Jae Myung described the South Korea-US military alliance as “solid” and didn’t mention any concerns about Trump’s policies. But he repeatedly stressed an intention to build a strong military that can independently defend the country from external threats.

To boost a self-reliant defense posture, Lee said his government would increase next year’s defense spending by 8.2% to introduce advanced weapons systems like AI combat robots, au-



South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, (center left), arrives for a celebration to mark 77th Armed Forces Day in Gyeryong, South Korea on Oct 1. (AP)

tonomous drones and precision-guided missiles.

The government will also actively foster the defense industry and improve soldiers’ welfare by upgrading their service conditions and compensation systems, he said.

Lee, a liberal who espouses greater peace on the Korean Peninsula, made no direct mention of North Korean

military threats and may have been attempting to avoid provoking the country, though he said South Korea’s spending on defense is 1.4 times more than North Korea’s gross domestic product. Bolstering South Korea’s military readiness would clearly be aimed at increasing deterrence against potential aggressions from North Korea, which has nuclear weapons.

‘We’re still in the golden hour of our search and rescue’

Rescuers in desperate search after powerful quake hit Philippines, killing at least 69

CEBU, Philippines, Oct 1, (AP): Rescuers used backhoes and sniffer dogs to look for survivors in collapsed houses and other damaged buildings in the central Philippines Wednesday, a day after an earthquake killed at least 69 people.

The death toll was expected to rise from the magnitude-6.9 earthquake that hit at about 10 p.m. Tuesday and trapped an unspecified number of residents in the hard-hit city of Bogo and outlying rural towns in Cebu province.

Sporadic rain and damaged bridges and roads have hampered the race to save lives, officials said.

“We’re still in the golden hour of our search and rescue,” Office of Civil Defense deputy administrator Bernardo Rafaelito Alejandro IV said in a news briefing. “There are still many reports of people who were pinned or hit by debris.”

The epicenter of the earthquake, which was set off by movement in an undersea fault line at a dangerously shallow depth of 5 kilometers (3 miles), was about 19 kilometers (12 miles) northeast of Bogo, a coastal city of about 90,000 people in Cebu province where about half of the deaths were reported, officials said.

The Philippine government is considering whether to seek help from foreign governments based on an ongoing rapid damage assessment, Alejandro said.

The United States, Japan, Australia and the European Union expressed condolences.

“We stand ready to support the Philippine government’s response as friends, partners, allies,” MaryKay Carlson, U.S. ambassador to the Philippines, said in a post on social media platform X.

Workers were trying to transport a backhoe to hasten search and rescue efforts in a cluster of shanties in a mountain village hit by a landslide and boulders, Bogo city disaster-mitigation officer Rex Ygot told The Associated Press early Wednesday.

“It’s hard to move in the area because there are hazards,” said Glenn Ursal, another disaster-mitigation officer, who added that some survivors were brought



Rescuers search for survivors underneath rubble in Bogo, Philippines on Oct 1. (AP)

to a hospital from the mountain village.

Deaths also were reported from the outlying towns of Medellin and San Remigio, where three coast guard personnel, a firefighter and a child were killed separately by collapsing walls and falling debris while trying to flee to safety from a basketball game in a sports complex that was disrupted by the quake, town of-

ficials said.

The earthquake was one of the most powerful to batter the central region in more than a decade and it struck while many people slept or were at home.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology briefly issued a tsunami warning and advised people to stay away from the coastlines of Cebu and the nearby provinces of Leyte and Biliran due to possible waves of up to 1 meter (3 feet).

No such waves were reported and the tsunami warning was lifted more than three hours later, but thousands of traumatized residents refused to return home and chose to stay in open grassy fields and parks overnight despite intermittent rains.

Cebu and other provinces were still recovering from a tropical storm that battered the central region on Friday, leaving at least 27 people dead mostly due to drownings and falling trees, knocking out power in entire cities and towns and forcing the evacuation of tens of thousands of people.

Schools and government offices were closed in the quake-hit cities and towns while the safety of buildings were checked. More than 600 aftershocks have been detected after Tuesday night’s temblor, Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology director Teresito Bacolcol said.

Rain-soaked mountainsides were more susceptible to land- and mudslides in a major earthquake, he warned.

“This was really traumatic to people. They’ve been lashed by a storm then jolted by an earthquake,” Bacolcol said. “I don’t want to experience what they’ve gone through.”

The Philippines, one of the world’s most disaster-prone countries, is often hit by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions due to its location on the Pacific “Ring of Fire,” an arc of seismic faults around the ocean. The archipelago is also lashed by about 20 typhoons and storms each year.

Africa

Church under construction collapse; 25 dead: At least 25 people were killed when a church under construction collapsed on Wednesday in Ethiopia’s Amhara region, according to local authorities.

The incident happened early on Wednesday at Menjar Shenkora Areriti Mariam Church in Amhara, northern Ethiopia, as worshippers gathered for an annual event celebrating St. Mary.

Seyoum Altaye, a clinician with a local hospital, said the victims include some children and elderly people. “So far we have confirmed 25 dead and over a hundred injured,” he said. (AP)

Gabon prez party wins most seats: The party of Gabon’s president Tuesday won the most seats in the first round of the country’s first legislative elections since a 2023 military coup ended a 50-year-old political dynasty.

The Democratic Union of Builders, or UDB, a party founded in July by Gabon’s leader Gen. Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, won 55 of the 145 seats in the National Assembly, according to provisional results released by the Interior Ministry.

The Gabonese Democratic Party, or PDG, the party of former president Ali Bongo Ondimba, won three seats. (AP)

Malema found guilty on gun charges: South African opposition leader Julius Malema was found guilty Wednesday of breaking firearm laws in a 2018 incident where he was filmed firing a rifle at a political rally.

The fiery politician, who leads the opposition party Economic Freedom Fighters, was charged with contravening the Firearms Control Act. (AP)



Military officers stand in the dock during the trial of former Congolese president Joseph Kabila in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo on Sept 30. (AP)

Kabila gets death for treason

CONGO, Oct 1, (AP): A high military court in Congo convicted former President Joseph Kabila of treason and war crimes Tuesday on accusations of collaborating with anti-government rebels and sentenced him to death.

It was not immediately clear how the sentence could be carried out because the whereabouts of Kabila, who has been on trial in absentia since July, have been unknown since he last was seen in public in a rebel-held city earlier this year. Kabila’s political party called the verdict politically motivated.

The court in Kinshasa ordered his immediate arrest.

The government said Kabila collaborated with Rwanda and the Rwanda-backed rebel group M23, which seized key cities in a lightning assault in January in Congo’s mineral-rich east.

Kabila has denied the allegations, though he expressed support for the rebels’ campaign in an op-ed published in February in the South African newspaper Sunday Times.

UN authorizes much larger force to fight escalating gang violence in Haiti

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 1, (AP): The UN Security Council voted Tuesday to authorize a much larger, 5,550-member international force with expanded powers to help stop escalating gang violence in Haiti.

The resolution, co-sponsored by the United States and Panama, will transform the current Kenya-led multinational force into a “Gang Suppression Force” with the power to arrest suspected gang members, which the current force does not have.

The vote was 12-0 with Russia, China and Pakistan abstaining.

US Ambassador Mike Waltz said the resolution’s adoption “offers Haiti hope.”

“It is a hope that has been rapidly slipping away as terrorist gangs expanded their territory, raped, pillaged, murdered and terrorized the Haitian population ... (and) jeopardized the very existence of the Haitian state,” he said.

Gangs have grown in power since the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in 2021. They now control 90% of the capital, Port-au-Prince, and have expanded their activities, including looting, kidnapping, sexual assaults and rape, into the countryside. Haiti has not had a president since the assassination.

The US Embassy in Port-au-Prince said the message from the Security



Police officers patrol an intersection in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on Sept 30. (AP)

Council is clear: “The era of impunity for those who seek to destabilize Haiti is over.”

Panama’s UN Ambassador Eloy Alfaro de Alba said the co-sponsors are convinced that “through this force, it will be possible to re-establish the security that is needed for political reconstruction and the holding of elections,” as well as reviving the economy and creating opportunities for the Haitian people.

But China’s UN Ambassador Fu Cong was highly critical of the resolution, which he said “risks exacerbating Haiti’s already complex and dire situation.” He especially criticized the United States, which he said not only failed to provide promised funding to the Kenya-led force but also owes \$800 million to the UN peacekeeping budget while demanding that other countries share the financial burden for the new Gang Suppression Force.

Afghan internet disrupted due to fiber replacement: govt spokesman

ISLAMABAD, Oct 1, (Agencies): The Afghan government’s spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid on Wednesday said that the country’s internet disruption was due to technical reasons, and denied reports about an internet ban in Afghanistan. “The old internet fiber across Afghanistan has worn out and is being replaced,” the official Urdu X account of the Afghan government quoted Mujahid as saying.

Afghanistan has witnessed network disruptions in recent days, leading to speculation on social media about possible restrictions on internet use.

Several provinces last month confirmed an internet shutdown because of a decree from the Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada to combat immorality. The statement did not say when or if services would be restored.

The outage was first reported Monday by internet advocacy group NetBlocks, which said internet connectivity was collapsing across the country, including in the capital Kabul, and telephone services also were impacted.

Afghan carrier Kam Air told local TV channel TOLO News it would likely resume flights to Kabul later Wednesday, after fully halting operations since Monday due to the outage.

Also:

KABUL: Afghan counter-narcotics police have raided and destroyed two



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

drug processing labs in western Farah province, while arresting 11 individuals linked to the illicit drug trade in multiple provinces, according to announcements from the Ministry of Interior Affairs.

Acting on intelligence tip-offs, police targeted sites in the Bakwa and Parchaman districts of Farah, where they dismantled the labs and incinerated over 1,900 kg of various materials used in heroin production, the ministry stated on Monday.

In separate operations conducted across Baghlan, Laghman, Kapisa,

Kunar, Sari Pul, and Parwan provinces, authorities detained the 11 suspects on charges related to drug involvement.

Following initial investigations, the individuals were transferred to judicial authorities for further proceedings, as reported by the ministry on Sunday.

Additionally, in ongoing efforts to combat drug addiction, 44 recovering addicts in central Daykundi province have been successfully treated and reintegrated into their families, highlighting a multifaceted approach to addressing the narcotics crisis.

Rubio’s ‘personal’ agenda in Latin America risks Trump’s peace prospects: Cuban FM

NEW YORK, Oct 1, (AP): Recent US escalations in the Caribbean are a result of Secretary of State Marco Rubio’s “personal” agenda against the region, Cuba’s top diplomat said, adding that his American counterpart is increasingly pushing policies that do not align with President Donald Trump’s so-called mandate for peace.

Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla told The Associated Press that Cuba saw a possibility of changing the longstanding antagonistic dynamic between the United States and the communist-run island when Trump returned to office in January. But he added that Rubio, who was born to Cuban immigrants, has made it his mission for Washington to adopt an even stronger “maximum pressure” campaign against Havana.

“The current secretary of state was not born in Cuba, has never been to Cuba, and knows nothing about Cuba,” Rodríguez said in a sit-down interview with The Associated Press on Tuesday. “But there is a very personal and corrupt agenda that he is carrying out, which seems to be sacrificing the national interests of the U.S. in order to



Cuba’s Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla speaks during an interview with The Associated Press at the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations, in New York on Sept 30. (AP)

advance this very extremist approach.”

The State Department did not respond to a request for comment. Rubio and US officials have defended their aggressive stance against Cuba, accusing its leaders of running a dictatorship. “The US will

continue to stand for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of Cuba, and make clear no illegitimate, dictatorial regimes are welcome in our hemisphere,” Rubio said in a July statement.

Dollar drops to KD 0.304

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1, (KUNA): The US dollar exchange rate against the Kuwaiti dinar dropped 0.05 percent to reach KD 0.304 on Wednesday, while the Euro rose by 0.18 percent to reach KD 0.358, compared to Tuesday's

prices, said Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK). CBK added in its daily bulletin that the exchange rate of the pound sterling settled at KD 0.409, while the Swiss franc went up by 0.21 percent to reach KD 0.383, and the Japanese settled at KD 0.002.

Business

Commitment to governance and transparency drives rating improvement

Zain Group’s MSCI rating for ESG upgraded to ‘A’

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: Zain Group, a leading provider of innovative ICT and digital lifestyle communications operating in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, has attained a significant improvement in its Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) rating in ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance), which was upgraded from ‘BBB’ to ‘A’ as of September 2025.

This milestone underscores Zain’s unwavering commitment to strengthening corporate governance frameworks, upholding the highest standards of transparency, proactively complying with regulatory requirements, and adopting global best practices in disclosure and risk management. This commitment helps Zain mitigate risks and facilitates an effective Board oversight over the company’s executive management by promoting strong internal controls to improve integrity of financials and establishing a culture of compliance.

The Group recently intensified its efforts to build a flexible and sustainable operating model, reinforcing its leadership in guiding the region toward a future where technological advancement and corporate responsibility are closely aligned. Zain’s focus on accountability, transparency, and ethical practices further cements its standing as a leading force in the ICT sector, known for generating sustainable value.

Zain’s latest ESG rating highlights its ongoing advancement in data privacy and security initiatives. The Group has launched several oversight mechanisms and initiatives to safeguard data and manage risks, demonstrated by recent ISO certifications across multiple business units. The Group continues

Bader Al-Kharafi:

- “Zain’s transformative ‘4WARD-Progress with Purpose’ strategy is driving the company’s sustainability, corporate governance and ethical leadership agenda to new heights”
- Upgrade reaffirms the success of the company’s focus on innovation and responsibility, powered by a resilient, sustainable and data-powered ecosystem
- In the environmental pillar Zain scored 10/10 – a best-in-class recognition reflecting progress on its region-wide 2050 Net Zero Emissions targets

to enhance data security to mitigate risks while handling sensitive data – particularly in markets with tightening privacy laws, such as Kuwait.

Furthermore, the Group has enhanced its corporate governance structure by clarifying responsibilities and refining board oversight mechanisms. The MSCI upgrade also reflects Zain’s commitment to ethical conduct, responsible corporate behavior, and the adoption of best-in-class labor management practices, such as executive training programs and employee engagement initiatives.

Notably, Zain achieved a perfect 10/10 in the environmental category reflecting its progress on its region-wide 2050 Net Zero Emissions targets.

Zain Vice Chairman & Group CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi stated: “Zain’s transformative ‘4WARD-Progress with Purpose’ strategy is driving the company’s sustainability, corporate governance and ethical leadership agenda to new heights. Integrating ESG principles at the core of our business strategy is essential for achieving true industry leadership.”

He added: “This upgrade on the MSCI ESG Index reaffirms the success of the company’s focus on innovation and responsibility,



Zain-MSCI A ranking

ity, powered by a resilient, sustainable and data powered ecosystem built on transparency and adherence to the highest global standards. By reinforcing our oversight and control frameworks, we have fostered a supportive work environment that drives sustainable growth and long-term value for all stakeholders.”

“ESG is not just about risk management – it offers strategic vision that empowers us to meet future challenges with confidence and resilience. We are building a collaborative culture that champions innovation and expands strategic partnerships for greater synergy and shared success. Responsible governance is essential to address the challenges emerging from rapid technological advancement and artificial intelligence.”

Al-Kharafi emphasized Zain’s commitment to leading regional transformation through the development of advanced digital

infrastructure, the ethical and sustainable application of AI and technology, and the launch of breakthrough initiatives supporting responsible innovation, all while ensuring business continuity and community well-being.

Zain’s sustained progress on the MSCI ESG Index reinforces its status as a catalyst for sustainability and responsible governance. The recent upgrade reflects Zain’s alignment with evolving ESG regulations across its operational markets and its dedication to world-class transparency in reporting.

The Group’s leadership in climate action, governance reforms, effective environmental policies, and major strides in data privacy remain evident, even amid geopolitical challenges. Zain’s innovative responses and continuous improvement reinforce its position as a driver of long-term sustainable prosperity for the communities it serves.

As the business landscape evolves, Zain continues to set the benchmark for governance and sustainability. Its latest climb on the global MSCI ESG Index, particularly for data privacy and protection, underscores its commitment to a data-driven corporate

culture grounded in precision and informed decision-making.

Recognizing that robust data governance is now a regulatory necessity, Zain established the “ZAIN DATA OFFICE” as a foundational pillar for high-quality information, enabling compliance with data protection and cloud computing laws. This office enhances Zain’s resilience against data threats and regulatory constraints, strengthening its adaptability to global information management requirements.

Reinforcing its environmental objectives, Zain remains at the forefront of global efforts to combat climate change, consistently adopting nature-based, sustainable solutions that position it as a regional leader in environmental transformation.

On the labor rights front, Zain’s policies embed human rights principles across human resources and codes of conduct, with special emphasis on anti-discrimination and employee treatments.

Zain’s sustainability policies reflect a comprehensive vision for a more equitable and prosperous future, founded on strategic partnerships that drive economic growth and community well-being.

The renowned MSCI ESG Ratings methodology evaluates companies on their management of material ESG risks and opportunities including climate change, human capital, and corporate governance, with a focus on policies, performance metrics, and controversies. Ratings are industry-relative and range from ‘AAA’ to ‘CCC’, with scores determined by a company’s exposure to ESG risks and the effectiveness of its management strategies.

Kuwait raises \$11.25B in landmark triple-tranche debt deal

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: The State of Kuwait has made a highly successful return to the international debt capital markets with a landmark US\$11.25 billion triple-tranche issuance, its first since 2017. The deal attracted overwhelming demand, pricing at some of the tightest spreads ever achieved by a sovereign issuer in emerging markets.

The issuance comprised a US\$3.25 billion 3-year, a US\$3.0 billion 5-year, and a US\$5.0 billion 10-year tranche. Final pricing landed at T+40 bps, T+40 bps, and T+50 bps respectively, materially tighter than Kuwait’s debut transaction in 2017.

The transaction was 2.5 times oversubscribed, with the order book peaking at US\$28 billion. More than 66% of allocations went to investors outside the MENA region, including 26% into the U.S., 30% into Europe and the UK, and 10% into Asia, reflecting Kuwait’s deepening integration into global markets.

H.E. Dr. Sabeeh Abdulaziz Al-Mukhaizim, Minister of Finance, said:

“This landmark issuance is a testament to the global market’s confidence in Kuwait’s fiscal strength, prudent policies, and enduring financial buffers. The scale of demand and competitive pricing achieved position Kuwait as a premier sovereign issuer. Beyond financing needs, this transaction reinforces Kuwait’s credibility in global



H.E. Dr. Sabeeh Abdulaziz Al-Mukhaizim, Minister of Finance

markets and deepens our partnership with international investors as we advance our Vision 2035.”

The transaction ranks among the largest sovereign deals globally and amassed one of the largest orderbooks in 2025 year-to-date, underlining the trust of international investors in Kuwait’s solid credit fundamentals and long-term reform agenda.

The deal was led by Citi, Goldman Sachs International, HSBC, J.P. Morgan and Mizuho as Joint Global Coordinators, with Bank of China and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China acting as Passive Joint Lead Managers.

Kuwait crude oil drops to \$70.88 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil dropped 51 cents during Tuesday’s trading to reach USD 70.88 per barrel compared with USD 71.39 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum

Corporation (KPC) said Wednesday. Brent futures declined 95 cents to USD 67.02 pb and West Texas Intermediate dropped USD 1.08 to USD 62.37 pb.

Aligned with Kuwait Vision 2035

Kuwait Oil Min launches virtual broadcaster ‘Nouf’

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Ministry of Oil announced Wednesday the launch of the virtual broadcaster “Nouf,” who began presenting news bulletins using virtual reality (VR) technologies and 360-degree video, a first of its kind among ministries and the oil sector in Kuwait.

This was a new qualitative achievement that added to the list of accomplishments of the Public Relations and Media Department at the Ministry.

In a statement, the Ministry said that this unique experience gives viewers the opportunity to follow the news bulletin using innovative interactive mechanisms, where they can watch it without the need to wear VR glasses, simply by moving their smartphones.

The virtual broadcaster appears from different angles while delivering the bulletin, whether standing or sitting, with dynamic visual back-

grounds that reflect the news content.

The statement also quoted the Director of the Public Relations and Media Department at the Ministry, Sheikha Tamader Al-Sabah, affirming that this project embodies the Ministry’s commitment to digital transformation and the adoption of artificial intelligence tools in media, placing digital transformation at the forefront of its priorities and in implementation of the “New Kuwait 2035” vision.

She added that they are proud to launch this new step, which represents a qualitative shift in media communication tools and methods and reflects the ministry’s efforts to keep pace with global developments in the fields of digital media and artificial intelligence.

She explained that the Ministry of Oil has allowed the public to experience this through a test video available on YouTube.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) concluded its participation as a Platinum Sponsor of the second GCC Housing Conference alongside “Baiti” Exhibition. The event was held from September 3 to 4, 2025, at The Arena – 360 Mall, under the patronage and in the presence of His Excellency the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Mr. Abdul Latif Hamed Hamad Al-Mishari. It brought together a distinguished group of government leaders, as well as regional and international experts.



Al Saleh



Al Bahar

and participants. The Bank’s team introduced attendees to its latest banking products and services, and showcased KIB’s real estate financing solutions, designed to meet the aspirations of its valued customers.

Eng. Fahad Al Saleh, Senior Manager of Real Estate Advisory and Digital Solutions at KIB’s Real Estate Department, took part in one of the specialized panel discussions, titled ‘Opportunities and Challenges in Real Estate Investment’, which discussed



Dr. Abdulaziz Jawad, Chairman

tions us in a premier international financial center, enabling us to serve a broader client base across new jurisdictions and booking centers. Through this platform, we provide our clients with a suite of innovative investment solutions that are tailored to meet their evolving needs” said Dr. Abdulaziz Jawad, Chairman of ABK Capital- Kuwait.

Illustrating some of the benefits that ABK Capital DIFC customers would get, Dr. Jawad explained, “This partnership will serve our customers qualitatively and quantitatively as it further enhances the quality of our product and services suite, and



Sherif El-Rafie, CEO

widens the horizons of customer needs that ABK Capital DIFC will be able to satisfy. We remain focused on building ABK Capital into a leading regional investment house by continuously expanding our reach and developing client-centric solutions that reflect the highest standards of professionalism and performance. ABK Group’s partnership with entities like LGT Bank (Switzerland) Ltd, Blackstone, and BlackRock is a testament to this vision.”

Mr. Sherif El-Rafie, CEO of ABK Capital, commented, “The cooperation with our partners, including LGT Bank (Switzerland) Ltd through

our subsidiary aligns directly with our commitment to deliver top-tier investment services and global reach to our clients.”

He concluded, “Through these partnerships, our subsidiary, ABK Capital DIFC will provide an enhanced level of investment management and advisory capabilities, leveraging our partners’ strong global footprint. It is a key step in our strategy to expand our value proposition by offering clients access to leading international managers and differentiated investment solutions.”

The launch of the DIFC subsidiary reinforces ABK Capital’s broader growth objectives, which are centered on innovation, strategic partnerships, and expanding its investment management capabilities across the region. The firm continues to invest in talent, platforms, and partnerships that elevate its client experience and offer differentiated, high-quality investment solutions.

This partnership is also a testament on the group’s efforts to develop an integrated solutions platform catering to clients with varying risk profiles and investment goals, offering themwide access designed and delivered by the best-in-class partners around the globe. These partnerships proved worthwhile for ABK Capital and its clients, expecting the new partnership to deliver a similar value to investors.

The Bank’s team shared consultations and highlighted new products and solutions

KIB concluded its Platinum Sponsorship of the 2nd GCC Housing Conference alongside ‘Baiti’ Exhibition



KIB ‘Baiti’ Expo 2025

the role of the banking sector in strengthening public-private partnerships and accelerating the adoption of sustainable financing solutions that contribute to enhancing quality of life.

In this regard, Al Saleh said: “Our sponsorship and participation in this conference and exhibition embody our strategic commitment to supporting the real estate sector and promoting sustainable development within the community. The conference served as an important platform to engage with decision-makers and experts, enabling us to showcase our innovative financing solutions, powered by the latest digital technologies. These solutions are designed to facilitate access to real estate services, drive real estate investment and development, and promote sustainability by offering digital real estate products that meet the aspirations of individuals and the community.”

On his part, Abdulrahman Al Bahar, Head of Musawama Unit at KIB, said: “Our participation in this conference reflects the Bank’s continued commitment to supporting the real estate sector by providing innovative banking products and services that meet the needs of various customer segments. Being part of this important gathering also gave us the opportunity to highlight KIB’s role as a trusted partner in promoting urban and housing development, drawing on our extensive expertise in the real estate field and our contribution to building a more sustainable and higher-quality future.”

It is worth noting that, through this participation, KIB continues to strengthen its position in the local and regional banking sector by consistently supporting projects and events that align with national and GCC-wide directions in real estate development and sustainable housing, while also contributing to the realization of the New Kuwait 2035 vision.

Forging a global hub for AI device ecosystem

HONOR ALPHA flagship store launches in Shenzhen



ALPHA PLAN becomes reality with new flagship store.

SHENZHEN, Oct 1: Global AI device ecosystem brand HONOR has officially inaugurated its ALPHA Global Flagship Store at Shenzhen Bay MixC, positioning the space as an “AI Smart Living Innovation Hub” – a destination where cutting-edge technology converges with cultural inspiration.

HONOR ALPHA PLAN in Action: From Vision to Reality

Following the announcement of the ALPHA PLAN at MWC Barcelona 2025, which underscored HONOR’s evolution from a smartphone manufacturer into a global AI device ecosystem leader, the opening of the Shenzhen Bay flagship marks a pivotal step in bringing this vision to life. The store embodies HONOR’s commitment to an open, collaborative, and value-sharing AI ecosystem.

Drawing inspiration from Shenzhen Bay’s distinctive landscape, the HONOR ALPHA Global Flagship Store presents an open and calming environment that seamlessly blends advanced technology with human-centric design. Every detail reflects HONOR’s philosophy of harmonizing innovation with culture.

The layout is intuitively organized around core AI-powered living scenarios. In the AI-scenario Experience Zone, state-of-the-art devices – from smart travel to entertainment – are thoughtfully arranged to demonstrate how AI effortlessly enhances daily life.

“The world’s first Alpha flagship store, launched this time, is the result of Honor’s collaborative efforts with a range of industry partners.” Said Jian Li, CEO of HONOR Device Co., Ltd. “It not only brings together technical in-

spiration and cutting-edge innovation, but also seamlessly integrates AI into every device, every scenario, and every consumer experience – maximizing industrial value and unlocking human potential.”

Immersive AI Experience: Engaging with Intelligence

A dedicated YOYO Zone showcases HONOR’s AI assistant across four functional themes: AI lifestyle, AI assistance, AI content creation, and AI companionship.

Additionally, this next-generation AI agent embodies core competencies in visual perception, memory, and task execution. For instance, YOYO can recall a previously mentioned detail, such as “I prefer seats with a view,” and proactively apply it – from planning your next itinerary to recommending a restaurant that caters to your taste. This seamless service

demonstrates a truly humanized AI experience.

Another highlight is the AI Inspiration Café, a social space designed for technologists, creators, and visitors to connect over coffee and exchange ideas. To celebrate the launch, HONOR will host a series of creative performances and interactive activities, offering engaging experiences for all ages.

The HONOR ALPHA Global Flagship Store is poised to become a new landmark for technology and culture in Shenzhen. Now open to the public, it invites visitors from around the world to explore HONOR’s latest products and experience its cutting-edge innovations firsthand.

For more information, please visit the HONOR online store at www.honor.com.

DOE invests in Nevada lithium to cut China reliance

US government takes 5% equity stake in Lithium Americas & Thacker Pass project

NEVADA, Oct 1, (AP): The U.S. government is taking a minority stake in Lithium Americas, a company that is developing one of the world’s largest lithium mines in northern Nevada.

The Department of Energy will take a 5% equity stake in the miner, which is based in Vancouver. It will also take a 5% stake in the Thacker Pass lithium mining project, a joint venture with General Motors.

Thacker Pass is considered crucial in reducing U.S. reliance on China for lithium, a critical material used to produce the high tech batteries used in cell phones, electric vehicles and renewable energy. Both Republicans and Democrats support the project and narrowing the production gap. China is the world’s largest lithium processor.

U.S. Energy Secretary Chris Wright said in a statement that the deal with Lithium Americas “helps reduce our dependence on foreign adversaries for critical minerals by strengthening domestic supply chains and ensures better stewardship of American taxpayer dollars.”

Thacker Pass is expected to produce 40,000 metric tons of battery-quality lithium carbonate per year in its first phase, enough to help power 800,000 EVs.

The equity stake in Lithium Americas is the latest example of the direct intervention by the Trump administration with private companies.

The government is getting a 10% stake in Intel through the conversion of billions in previously granted government funds and pledges. The administration spent \$400 million of taxpayer money in July on MP Materials stock to make the U.S. government the biggest owner in the Las Vegas rare earths miner. Trump also made a deal with Nvidia and AMD to give the



Construction continues at the Lithium Nevada Corp. mine site Thacker Pass project, April 24, 2023, near Orovada, Nev. (AP)

U.S. government a 15% cut of revenue from selling certain chips to China.

Lithium Americas said Wednesday that it reached a non-binding agreement in principle with the DOE to advance the first draw of \$435 million on the federal loan. The DOE has agreed to defer \$182 million of debt service over the first five years of the loan.

The White House and Canada’s Lithium Americas seemed to be moving forward with the deal late last month, as both parties agreed on changes to an approximately \$2.3 billion federal loan that could allow the project to move forward to extract the silver-white metal used in electric vehicle batteries. GM has pledged more than \$900 million to help develop Thacker Pass, which holds

enough lithium to build 1 million electric vehicles annually.

Dan Ives, an analyst with Wedbush, called Thacker Pass is a “massive opportunity” for the U.S. to reduce its reliance on China and other foreign adversaries for lithium.

“Despite having some of the largest deposits, the U.S. produced less than 1% of the global lithium supply but this deal helps reduce dependence on foreign adversaries for critical minerals strengthening domestic supply chains and ensuring better stewardship of American taxpayer dollars with lithium production set to grow exponentially over the coming years,” he wrote.

Shares of Lithium Americas spiked more than 30% at the opening bell Wednesday.

Japan, US seal 15% tariff deal

Akazawa praises Trump as ‘tough negotiator’

TOKYO, Oct 1, (AP): Japan’s chief trade negotiator has defended a tariffs deal with the U.S., expressing respect for President Donald Trump and calling him a “tough negotiator.”

Trade envoy Ryosei Akazawa noted that the pact setting on most Japanese exports to the U.S. at 15% was comparable to a deal between Washington and the European Union. Unlike the EU, Japan did not have to lower its tariffs on U.S. goods, he noted.

Japan has also committed to investing \$550 billion in U.S. projects.

Trump initially set Japan’s tariff rate to increase by 25%.

Critics in Japan had ridiculed Akazawa’s repeated trips to the U.S. to work toward a deal as a waste of taxpayer money, saying he should pitch a tent on the White House lawn.

Akazawa said talks with his counterpart, U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, Trump and others in his administration were tense at first. By the time of his eighth trip, a rapport was established enabling the two sides to set an agreement by July.

“President Trump was a tough negotiator, but I kept insisting, and he would listen graciously. I have all the respect for him,” he told reporters at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan. “It was a good round of negotiations.”

“It goes without saying that, with any government negotiations, there will always be someone who says Japan lost out, no matter what,” Akazawa said.

The double-digit tariffs Trump has imposed on imports from various nations were



Japan’s top negotiator on President Donald Trump’s tariffs, Economic and Fiscal Policy Minister Ryosei Akazawa speaks to reporters at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan, in Tokyo Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025. (AP)

a bitter blow to Japan, a key U.S. ally in Asia. Tokyo especially objected to 25% tariffs Trump ordered for imports of steel and aluminum and automobiles.

Japan’s economy depends heavily on exports. Shipments to the United States sank nearly 14% in August compared to a year earlier, the fifth straight month of declines, as auto exports were dented by the tariffs.

U.S. tariffs on Japanese automobiles and auto parts are now set at 15%, way higher than the original 2.5%. Japanese automakers also produce many of the vehicles they sell in the U.S. in North America.

The friction with the U.S. over tariffs was an added burden for Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba’s administration. He is due to be replaced as leader of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party later this week.

The Liberal Democrats have ruled Japan almost continuously since the 1950s but they have lost their majority in the lower house, which chooses the prime minister, and will need coalition partners.

Kenya’s \$500 mln apparel exports at risk

US to end African trade pact AGOA

NAIROBI, Oct 1, (AP): Workers and industry are bracing for the end of a longstanding U.S. trade agreement that gave African exporters preferential treatment and now leaves businesses vulnerable to new competitive pressures and tariffs.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act will terminate as scheduled Tuesday amid uncertainty over renegotiations and the looming impact of new tariffs announced by the White House in April.

AGOA is a multilateral trade agreement that has given thousands of products from qualifying African nations duty-free access to U.S. markets since 2000.

A key example of the deal’s impact can be found in Kenya, where it has allowed the country’s textile and apparel sector - makers of jeans, for instance - to effectively compete with Asian exporters such as in Bangladesh and Vietnam.

“If AGOA goes away we have zero chance to compete with the Asian countries,” said Pankaj Bedi, owner of United Aryan, an apparel manufacturer in Nairobi that exports Levi’s and Wrangler jeans to the U.S.

Textile and apparel exports from Kenya to the U.S. have grown from around \$50 million when AGOA was first introduced to around \$500 million today.

“I will be asking (Trump) for the U.S. to consider seriously renewing and extending AGOA for at least a minimum of five years,” Kenyan President William Ruto said last week at the U.N. General Assembly. “It is a platform that connects Africa and the U.S. in a



A factory worker arranges garments at United Aryan EPZ Limited in Ruaraka on the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya, March 21, 2025. (AP)

very fundamental way.”

AGOA had also given African countries hope that major elements of their export economies would be exempt from blanket tariffs of 10% - and in some cases much higher - announced by the U.S. earlier this year.

Kenya is already paying 10% on non-AGOA exports, which are not many. Kenyan manufacturers will struggle to compete with rivals in Asia, even though some Asian countries may face a higher U.S. tariff, because of the limited domestic supply chain in Kenya where most of the raw materials are imported, as well as higher energy costs, lending rates, and operating expenses.

Ruto and other African leaders are pushing for a last-minute renegotiation of AGOA while also scrambling to sign new bilateral agreements with the U.S. They are doing so amid a period of seismic change in global trade

dynamics and with a White House that shows a mixed commitment to Africa.

“African countries including Kenya must be alive to the possibility that AGOA won’t be extended, AGOA won’t be remodified, and ... America won’t be interested in having a trade pact,” said Raphael Obonyo, a public policy expert at UN Habitat.

Ruto said last week that Kenya and the U.S. had made “good progress” toward a bilateral agreement that could be signed by the end of this year.

AGOA has mostly benefited African economies in both big and small industries. The agreement has helped both the continent’s largest exporters - Nigerian and Angolan oil, South African autos, and Kenyan clothing-as well as some of its smallest economies where exports are highly concentrated, such as Lesotho and

Eswatini.

Some African economies, like Nigeria and Lesotho, are likely to face “notable adverse effects” from the end of AGOA and new U.S. tariffs, researchers at the German Institute of Development and Sustainability wrote in a brief.

While there may be limited macroeconomic effects across Africa as a whole from changes to U.S. trade, these assumptions “likely understate the full impact of new Trump-era tariffs and do not capture the indirect effects like reduced foreign investment, weakened supply chains, rising poverty, or the loss of capacity-building,” the researchers added.

AGOA-dependent industries likely employ some 1.3 million people whose jobs are now at risk - in countries where many people have few if any other options in the case of sudden unemployment.

In Kenya, more than 66,000 people, many of them women, were employed through now-vulnerable textile and apparel exporters to the U.S. In the garment districts of Kenya’s bustling capital, job cuts and fears over livelihoods have already begun.

United Aryan said this week that it will shed some 1,000 jobs or 10% of its workforce amid trade uncertainty. “There is no way we can survive,” added Bedi, who is also the apparel export sub-chair at the Kenya Association of Manufacturers.

For Julia Shigadi, a machinist at United Aryan, the end of AGOA is an existential threat.

“This has been my bread and butter,” said Shigadi. “I only depend on this job-so if it is gone, it means my life is gone too.”

B-1 and ESTA visas approved

US govt allows South Korean workers on short-term visas

SEOUL, Oct 1, (AP): The United States has agreed to allow South Korean workers on short-term visas or a visa waiver program to help build industrial sites in America, Seoul’s Foreign Ministry said Wednesday.

The announcement came weeks after South Korea flew home more than 300 of its nationals who had been detained in a massive immigration raid at a battery factory being built on Hyundai’s sprawling auto plant campus near Savannah, Georgia.

The roundup, along with U.S. video footage showing Korean workers shackled at the hands, ankles and waist, fueled public outrage and a sense of betrayal in South Korea - a key U.S. ally that had pledged hundreds of billions of dollars in U.S. investments just weeks earlier in hopes of avoiding the Trump administration’s steepest tariffs.

The incident also triggered pent-up frustrations in Seoul over Washington’s failure to act on its long-standing request to improve the visa system for skilled Korean

workers, even as the United States presses its ally to expand industrial investments.

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

After bilateral visa talks Tuesday in Washington, South Korea’s Foreign Ministry said their American counterparts reaffirmed that South Korean companies can use B-1 short-term business visas or ESTAs to send workers to install, service and repair equipment needed for their projects in the United States. The statement was consistent with earlier remarks by South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun, who, after traveling to Washington to negotiate the workers’ release, said that U.S. officials had agreed to allow them to return later to complete their work.



South Korean workers released after days of detention in Georgia, arrive at the Incheon International Airport, in Incheon, South Korea, on Sept. 12, 2025. (AP)

What's On

SPOTLIGHT



Got a birthday or event?
Share your story and snapshots with Arab Times!
Email your write-up and photos to
arabtimes@arabtimesonline.com
We'll feature it on our What's On page!

Event establishes Al Sayer as key player in Kuwait's automotive sector

Al Sayer and Toyota exhibit mega display at the first edition of AUTO WORLD SHOW 2025



KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Est. Co. W.L.L and Toyota partnered for the first edition of AUTO WORLD SHOW, which was held under the esteemed patronage of His Excellency the Minister of Commerce and Industry, organized by Events & Venues Co. in collaboration with The Public Authority for Industry.

The groundbreaking event was held from September 22-27, 2025, at the Kuwait Fair Ground and created a massive platform for automotive dealers and enthusiasts in Kuwait to share the latest trends, innovations, and their passion for the automotive industry.

ALSAYER being one of the key partners of the event exhibited a significant pavilion



Photos during the event.

covering 700 sq meters to feature 12 most reliable cars with a strategic focus to promote Toyota's motorsport brand inspired Gazoo Racing (GR) cars, as well as their environment-friendly cars powered by hybrid electric technology.

The display also featured a race car from the GR Yaris Cup successful season 2 that concluded earlier this year.

Display of Toyota bZ4X

Toyota believes in the idea of "introducing sustainable vehicles practically" and is

developing a full line-up of electrified vehicles comprising HEVs, PHEVs, BEVs, and FCEVs in preparation to offer its customers a wide range of choices. The new BEV series, Toyota bZ which stands for Beyond

Zero is also based on this policy. The bZ4X was developed on this basis, as a medium-segment SUV-type BEV, the first model in the Toyota bZ series.

Toyota pavilion also featured the most practical

SUV's including Rav4, Corolla Cross and Ubran Cruiser in addition to the display of legendary Land Cruiser and Prado with exceptional 4x4 capabilities.

Positioned as a completely new and dynamic automotive showcase, AUTO WORLD SHOW is designed to be a "car enthusiast's paradise" and a fantastic exhibition of new age trends and technology in the automobile sector.

The show attracted large number of visitors and a wide range of exhibitors across diverse automotive businesses including dealerships, banks, Insurance companies, garages, service centers, car accessories and modifiers, establishing the mega event as a key venue for B2C and B2B partnerships.

Interactive session offers practical tools for career advancement & visibility

AmCham Kuwait hosts women in business focus group workshop on personal branding

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: The American Business Council – AmCham Kuwait (ABCK-AmCham Kuwait) successfully hosted a Women in Business (WIB) Focus Group Workshop titled "How to Develop Your Brand & Strategically Position Yourself".

The interactive workshop helped professionals strengthen their personal brand and learn practical strategies for positioning themselves in today's competitive market. The session combined short talks, hands-on exercises, and panel-style insights from leading experts.

The program was led by Dr. Arezou Harraf, Chair of AmCham Kuwait's Women in Business Focus Group, and featured guest speakers:

- Dr. Rawda Awwad, President of AUK, who spoke on "Market Yourself Without the Megaphone"
- Mohammed Al Muaili, CEO of KRH, who shared strategies on "Build and Keep Better Connections"
- Mai Alowais, CEO of Cinet, who highlighted how to "Spot the Real Deal in the Room"

Throughout the evening, participants engaged in practical exercises that allowed them to craft a one-line personal



Photo during the workshop.

brand statement, develop a concise 30-second introduction for professional settings, and identify two actionable steps to implement over the next 30 days, with the option of pairing up with an accountability partner to stay on track.

The workshop provided attendees with practical takeaways they could immediately apply to networking, career advancement, and professional

visibility.

"This session was not just about theory; it was about leaving with real tools participants could use the very next day," said Dr. Harraf. "Your personal brand is more than a CV or LinkedIn profile—it's the story people remember when you're not in the room."

About ABCK-AmCham Kuwait

A non-profit organization operat-

ing since 1985, composed of Fortune 500 corporations, small and medium-sized companies, and prominent business leaders and entrepreneurs, both American and Kuwaiti. ABCK-AmCham Kuwait has acted as an advocate for American interests in Kuwait. For more information, please visit www.amchamkuwait.org or follow @abck1985 on social media.

Landmark event draws 600+ swimmers from 235 schools

FAIPS swimmers make history at CBSE National Competition

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: The pool lights dimmed, the air electric with anticipation, as the CBSE National Girls Swimming Competition 2025-26 kicked off, hosted by the esteemed KIT International School from September 24th to 27th, 2025. This was no small meet; it was a landmark gathering, drawing over 600 elite swimmers from a staggering 235 schools worldwide, a true testament to the competitive spirit thriving across the 27,000 CBSE schools globally.

Amidst this fiercely spirited competition, two rising stars from the Kuwait Cluster of CBSE schools etched their names into history. Dakshaja Dey Upareti and Elysha Nathalia D'Cunha of FAIPS (DPS) delivered an unprecedented achievement for Kuwait.

Their performance marked the first time the cluster has achieved such distinction at the National level.

Dakshaja, a dedicated athlete from Class 9, dominated the water with breathtaking grace and power, clinching an astounding four Gold Medals. Her dedication and sporting excellence proved unbeatable. Not to be outdone, the versatile Elysha, a talented swimmer from Class 5, showcased her grit by securing a brilliant trio: one Gold, one Silver, and one Bronze Medal.

The victorious contingent, team and medalists alike, returned home to a hero's welcome. They were formally received at the airport by a proud delegation, including Mr. Ravi Ayanoli, the Principal of FAIPS(DPS) and Chairman of the Gulf Sahodaya of CBSE Schools,

and Mr. Prashant Vasudev, the Convenor of the Kuwait Chapter of CBSE Schools. Accompanying them were the FAIPS Physical Education HoD, Ms. R. Subbulatha, and the beaming parents.

On behalf of the management, the Principal lauded the young swimmers for their unwavering perseverance and discipline. He emphasized that their stellar performance had brought immense honour not only to FAIPS (DPS) but also to the entire Kuwait chapter of CBSE schools. This spectacular achievement stands as a vivid reflection of FAIPS's foundational commitment to holistic education, proving that outstanding success in extracurricular domains can shine just as brightly as academic excellence.



Photos during the competition.

IMA Kuwait announces Online Islamic Quiz with exciting prizes

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Kuwait proudly announced the launch of an Online Islamic Quiz Competition to be held on Friday, 31 October 2025, offering an Enriching Learning Experience along with Exciting Prizes for the Winners. The Initiative comes as part of IMA's Ongoing Efforts to encourage the noble habit of Reading and deepen Islamic Understanding.

The quiz will be based on two highly insightful books: Towards Understanding Islam (English) and Deeniyyat (Urdu).

Date of Quiz: Friday, 31 October 2025

This unique knowledge-based initiative is open to all, providing participants with an excellent opportunity to strengthen their understanding of Islam through structured reading and engaging competition.

How to Participate:

1. Join the official WhatsApp group via the link below to register.
2. Read and prepare from the designated books.
3. Take part in the online quiz on the

scheduled date.

WhatsApp Group Registration Link: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/BYE9I0BfRnmCNymiYe5VV3>

Study Materials: <https://www.imakuwait.org/quiz>

Through this unique initiative, IMA Kuwait invites brothers and sisters in Islam—students, professionals, and families alike—to participate actively and benefit from the knowledge gained. Beyond the competition, the quiz will serve as a means to strengthen our bond with the Book of Allah, broaden our understanding, and build a culture of learning and reflection in the community.

IMA Kuwait has always been at the forefront of organizing educational and spiritual activities that inspire, motivate, and connect people to the message of Islam. This Online Quiz Competition reflects the Association's commitment to making learning accessible, interactive, and rewarding.

For more details and updates, Please visit: www.imakuwait.org 6000 1424

Couple cites 'marital difficulties' in divorce filing

Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban end 19-year marriage

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Oct. 1, (AP): Nicole Kidman has filed for divorce from Keith Urban after 19 years of marriage, bringing a surprising end to a long and seemingly successful union that brought together two superstars from the worlds of movies and music.

The 58-year-old Oscar-winning actor petitioned on Tuesday to end her marriage to the 57-year-old Grammy winning country singer in a Nashville court. The documents state the couple has undergone "marital difficulties and irreconcilable differences."

Kidman and Urban, two of the biggest stars to come out of Australia in recent decades, have been red carpet fixtures throughout their two-decade relationship, with Urban joining his wife at the Oscars and Kidman attending music events like the Academy of Country Music Awards.

The filings include a marriage dissolution and childcare plan agreed on by the couple and submitted for a judge's approval.

"The mother and father will behave with each other and each child so as to provide a loving, stable, consistent and nurturing relationship with the child



Nicole Kidman, (left), and Keith Urban arrive at the American Music Awards on Nov. 19, 2017, in Los Angeles. (AP)

even though they are divorced," says the permanent parenting plan, using language common in the state's di-

vorces. "They will not speak badly of each other or the members of the family of the other parent. They will en-

courage each child to continue to love the other parent and be comfortable in both families."

The plan asks that Kidman be the primary residential parent to the couple's two daughters, ages 17 and 14, having them for 306 days per year with Urban taking them for the other 59.

The girls have lived in Nashville all their lives, and the documents give no indication that will change.

The filing states that each parent earns more than \$100,000 per month and neither will need childcare or spousal support.

The marriage dissolution plan lays out a roughly equal division of joint assets, with each keeping all the assets that are in their own name, including the copyrights and royalties for their artistic work.

The detailed agreements suggests that the divorce had been in the works for well over a month at the least. Urban signed the parenting plan on Aug. 29, Kidman on Sept. 6.

It will take at least 90 days for the divorce to become final under Tennessee law.

Representatives for Kidman and

Urban did not respond to emailed requests for comment on Tuesday.

Both raised in Australia, Kidman and Urban met in 2005 at a Los Angeles event honoring Australians and were married in Sydney the following year.

The marriage was the first for Urban and the second for Kidman, who was married to Tom Cruise from 1990 to 2001. Kidman also has two older children with Cruise.

The couple had publicly but lovingly described some marital difficulties, but there were still few if any signs they were headed for divorce. Media reports of their separation came just a day before the divorce filing.

Last year at the premiere of the Netflix series "The Perfect Couple," Kidman told The Associated Press the term didn't apply to her and Urban.

"You're heading for trouble if you consider yourselves the perfect couple," she said. "I'm not a believer in perfect."

A few months earlier, Urban paid tribute to Kidman, and brought her to tears, when she received the AFI Life

Achievement Award.

Urban said she showed him "what love in action really looks like" when his substance abuse problems emerged almost immediately after they wed in 2006.

"Four months into our marriage, I'm in rehab for three months," Urban said. "Nic pushed through every negative voice, I'm sure even some of her own, and she chose love. And here we are 18 years later."

Kidman's film roles have included "Days of Thunder," "Eyes Wide Shut," "Moulin Rouge" and "The Hours," for which she won an Academy Award for playing author Virginia Woolf. She has more recently worked in television, including the series "Nine Perfect Strangers" and "Big Little Lies," for which she won Emmys as both actor and producer.

Urban has been a major country star since the 1990s, with hits including "Somebody Like You" and "Blue Ain't Your Color." He has won four Grammy Awards and more than a dozen ACM Awards.

Their split was first reported by TMZ.

'Landmark moment'

Bad Bunny's Super Bowl, a victory for Puerto Rico

NEW YORK, Oct. 1, (AP): Crowds wore maga flowers and "pavas" - straw hats traditionally worn by jíbaros, Puerto Rican rural farmers. They sang and danced salsa.

Over the course of a 31-date residency at the Coliseo de Puerto Rico in San Juan, Bad Bunny worked a miracle, inspiring patriotism in the hearts of a proud Boricua people, and in those traveling to Puerto Rico for the first time. He performed on two stages, one showcasing the island's natural beauty with its flamboyant and plantain trees, and another, a casita ("little house"), for the parti de marquesina, a house party.

If all the world's a stage - might as well make it home.

In February, it can be expected that the artist born Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio will bring the same spirit to the 2026 Super Bowl. And he'll do so in Spanish - a landmark moment for Latino culture.

Bad Bunny's "No Me Quiero Ir De Aquí" residency (in English, "I Don't Want to Leave Here") bypassed a traditional US tour, bringing approximately half a million people to the island during the slow summer tourism season and generating an estimated \$733 million for Puerto Rico. Across three hours, attendees were guided through a musical history - reggaeton hits from Bad Bunny's singular discography as well as the folkloric styles of his latest album, "Debí Tirar Más Fotos." ("I Should Have Taken More Photos.")

There was a political history, too: like in the affecting song "Lo Que Pasó a Hawái," a rallying cry for Puerto Rico's autonomy. Or 2022's "El Apagón" ("The Blackout"), in reference to Hurricane Maria, its aftermath and the continued anger and frustration over persistent, chronic power outages.

Complicated

Of course, a Super Bowl half-time show traditionally runs 12 to 15 minutes. It's not a lot of time to bring Puerto Rico, or its complicated colonial history, to the NFL's mainstream - but it is enough for a taste.

It's worth mentioning Benito has done so before: making a surprise appearance at the Super Bowl in 2020, during Shakira and Jennifer Lopez's performance. He sang in Spanish alongside two artists whose bilingual hits helped usher in a crossover era for Latin music in the '00s. He's a direct inheritor of their successes, and he's been able to kick the door down further - helping to establish an industry where Latino superstars need not record their music in English to have a career.

Bad Bunny is simultaneously an interesting and an obvious choice

for the NFL: One of the most popular artists on the planet who understands that going global means embracing the local, performing during the most-watched television program of the year.

In a recent interview with i-D Magazine, Bad Bunny mentioned that one of the reasons his residency bypassed the continental US were concerns around the mass deportations of Latinos.

"There was the issue of - like, (expletive) ICE could be outside (my concert). And it's something that we were talking about and very concerned about," he told the publication, referencing US Immigration and Customs Enforcement. (Hundreds of people have been detained in Puerto Rico since large-scale arrests began in late January, surprising many in the US territory that has long welcomed migrants.) It resonated with Latinos and the Spanish speaking community, who have grown increasingly weary amid growing anti-immigrant sentiment and raids, as President Donald Trump's immigration policies and executive actions have vastly expanded who is eligible for deportation.

Critical

Bad Bunny has long been critical of Trump and backed Kamala Harris in the 2024 presidential election. "I will never forget what Donald Trump did and what he did not do when Puerto Rico needed a caring and a competent leader," he said in a video last year.

For some Trump supporters, Bad Bunny's booking at the 2026 Super Bowl is a divisive political pick. Conservative commentator Benny Johnson described Bad Bunny as an "anti-ICE activist" on Instagram.

Ryan Fournier, chair of Students for Trump, said that "whoever picks these people should be fired."

For others, Bad Bunny's booking is cause for celebration. "Go get em Bad Bunny!" wrote Bruno Mars on X.

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

At the very least, Bad Bunny, who performs in Spanish and will do so at the Super Bowl, is set to make history, further proving that connecting with a U.S. and international audience does not require singing in English.

The question is - what messages will Bad Bunny deliver in a culture where identity is politicized? And what does it mean that his performance arrives in the midst of one of the largest immigration crackdowns in US history, where Latinos are especially vulnerable?



Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio (aka Bad Bunny) attends the premiere of 'Caught Stealing' at Regal Union Square on Tuesday, Aug. 26, 2025, in New York. (AP)

Film



Zoey Deutch attends the premiere of 'Nouvelle Vague' at Alice Tully Hall during the 63rd New York Film Festival on Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025, in New York. (AP)

'Creativity is human-centered'

'AI actor' stirs outrage in Hollywood

NEW YORK, Oct. 1, (AP): Like thousands of actors, Tilly Norwood is looking for a Hollywood agent.

But unlike most young performers aspiring to make it in the film industry, Tilly Norwood is an entirely artificial intelligence-made character. Norwood, dubbed Hollywood's first "AI actor," is the product of a company named Xicoia, which bills itself as the world's first artificial intelligence talent studio.

Since the Dutch producer and comedian Eline Van der Velden launched the digital character's prospective career, Tilly Norwood has been all the talk in Hollywood.

But not in a good way. Guilds, actors and filmmakers have met the Xicoia product with an immediate wave of backlash, protesting that artificial intelligence should not have a starring role in the acting profession. In a statement Tuesday, the Screen Actors Guild said that "creativity is, and should remain, human-centered."

"To be clear, 'Tilly Norwood' is not an actor, it's a character generated by a computer program that was trained on the work of countless professional performers - without permission or compensation," the guild said. "It has no life experience to draw from, no emotion and, from what we've seen, audiences aren't interested in watching computer-generated content untethered from the human experience."

Van der Velden, founder of the AI production studio Particle6, last week-end promoted Tilly Norwood at the Zurich Summit, the industry sidebar of the Zurich Film Festival. She said then



Actor Frances Fisher holds a sign that says 'AI is not art' at a rally by striking writers and actors outside Paramount studios in Los Angeles on July 14, 2023. (AP)

that talent agencies were circling Norwood and that she expected to soon announce a signing.

Many in Hollywood, though, hope that never happens.

"Hope all actors repped by the agent that does this, drop their a\$\$," wrote actor Melissa Barrera ("In the Heights," "Scream") on social media. "How gross, read the room."

"Any talent agency that engages in this should be boycotted by all guilds," wrote Natasha Lyonne on Instagram. The "Russian Doll" star is directing a feature titled "Uncanny Valley" that

pledges to use "ethical" artificial intelligence in combination with traditional filmmaking techniques. "Deeply misguided & totally disturbed," she added. "Not the way. Not the vibe. Not the use."

Artificial intelligence is often used as a tool in film production, though its implementation is hotly debated. It was a major bargaining point in the lengthy strike by SAG-AFTRA that concluded in late 2023 with some safeguards put in place to protect the use of actors' likenesses and performances by AI. A yearlong strike by video game actors hinged on AI protections. In July, video game actors approved a new contract that mandates employers obtain written permission to create a digital replica.

But there have been numerous controversies over the use of AI in acting. The Oscar-winning 2024 film "The Brutalist" used artificial intelligence for Hungarian dialogue spoken by Adrien Brody and Felicity Jones' characters, the revelation of which prompted debate in the industry.

Van der Velden responded to the stir around Tilly Norwood on Instagram.

"To those who have expressed anger over the creation of my AI character, Tilly Norwood, she is not a replacement for a human being, but a creative work - a piece of art," Van der Velden said on Sunday. "Like many forms of art before her, she sparks conversation, and that in itself shows the power of creativity."

Van der Velden didn't respond to interview requests Tuesday. In her post, she argued that AI characters should be judged as their own genre.

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Tyrese Gibson failed to turn himself in to police after an arrest warrant was issued because his four Cane Corso dogs mauled and killed a neighbor's dog in Georgia in mid-September, police said Tuesday.



Gibson

The warrant for cruelty to animals issued for the "Fast & Furious" actor is part of an "ongoing issue" following multiple calls about the dogs in the past few months, Fulton County Police Captain Nicole Dwyer said.

"Our priority is the safety of the community and when there's so many incidents of dogs, especially large dogs like this, getting out and then killing an animal, you know, what's next? A child?" Dwyer said. "Our main priority is safety and that's why we want the dogs in custody."

Gibson had received multiple warnings before the warrant was issued, and police had attempted to cite him before the attack, but the actor wasn't at his Atlanta home. Dwyer said she spoke with Gibson's lawyer last week and informed them the actor had to turn himself in by Friday." (AP)

□ □ □

NEW YORK: The WNBA has another broadcast partner after signing an 11-year media rights deal with Versant to show regular-season games and portions of the playoffs beginning next year on USA Network.

As part of the multi-year agreement, which runs through 2036, USA Network will present at least 50 games annually, including coverage of the WNBA Playoffs and WNBA Finals games in select years beginning in 2026.

The agreement expands the game package that was to be distributed by USA Network under the WNBA's historic national media deals signed in 2024. That deal included partnerships with Disney, Amazon Prime and NBC and was worth about \$200 million a year. Neither side announced how much money this new deal would bring to the league.

"We're incredibly proud to expand our multi-year partnership with the WNBA," said Matt Hong, Versant's president of sports. "USA Network will be a destination for WNBA viewers all season long, as we showcase the star power across the league in our marquee Wednesday night doubleheaders and build toward the intensity of the WNBA Playoffs and WNBA Finals." (AP)

□ □ □

LOS ANGELES: Prime Video will bring many of its interactive features from "Thursday Night Football" and NASCAR to its NBA coverage.

Prime will have key moments and rapid recap, allowing viewers to catch up on the game if they tuned in at some point. There will also be a way to access the team and individual stats via a traditional box score or advanced stats.

Something new for NBA coverage will be an opt-in personalized bet tracking with FanDuel. Viewers will be able to link their Prime Video profile to their FanDuel account and track their bets. There will also be updated odds and lines during the game. However, the bet tracking feature does not offer the ability to place bets directly on Prime Video.

Some of the regional sports networks in recent seasons have done alternate broadcasts tied to betting.

Prime Video will also have a fully-customizable multiview feature where fans can pick which games they want to watch if they subscribe to Prime and NBA League Pass.

There will also be a shop the game feature, allowing fans to be able to purchase NBA merchandise. (AP)

OpenAI’s ChatGPT now lets users buy from Etsy, Shopify

OpenAI’s Sora joins Meta in pushing AI-generated videos

NEW YORK, Oct 1, (AP): If the future of the internet looks like a constant stream of amusing videos generated by artificial intelligence, then OpenAI just placed its stake in an emerging market.

The company behind ChatGPT released its new Sora social media app on Tuesday, an attempt to draw the attention of eyeballs currently staring at short-form videos on TikTok, YouTube or Meta-owned Instagram and Facebook.

The new iPhone app taps into the appeal of being able to make a video of yourself doing just about anything that can be imagined, in styles ranging from anime to highly realistic.

But a scrolling flood of such videos taking over social media has some worried about “AI slop” that crowds out more authentic human creativity and degrades the information ecosystem.

“These things are so compelling,” said Jose Marichal, a professor of political science at California Lutheran University who studies how AI is restructuring society. “I think what sucks you in is that they’re kind of implausible, but they’re realistic looking.”

The Sora app’s official launch video features an AI-generated version of OpenAI CEO Sam Altman speaking from a psychedelic forest, and later, the moon and a stadium crowded with cheering fans watching rubber duck races. He introduces the new tool before handing it off to



ChatGPT app icon is seen on a smartphone screen, Aug. 4, 2025, in Chicago. (AP)

colleagues placed in other outlandish scenarios. The app is available only on Apple devices for now, starting in the U.S. and Canada.

Meta launched its own feed of AI short-form videos within its Meta AI app last week. In an Instagram post announcing the new Vibes product, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg posted a carousel of AI videos, including a cartoon version of himself, an army of fuzzy, beady-eyed beings jumping around and a kitten kneading a ball of dough.

Both Sora and Vibes are designed to be highly personalized, recommending new videos based on what people have already engaged with.

Marichal’s own social media feeds on TikTok and other sites are already full of such videos, from a “housecat riding a wild animal from the perspective of a doorbell camera” to fake natural disaster reports that are engaging but easily debunked. He said you can’t blame people for being hard-wired to “want to know if something extraordinary is happening in the world.”

What’s dangerous, he said, is when they dominate what we see online. “We need an information environment that is mostly true or that we can trust because we need to use it to make rational decisions about how to collectively govern,” he said.

If not, “we either become super, super skeptical of everything or we become super certain,” Marichal said. “We’re either the manipulated or the manipulators. And that leads us toward things that are something other than liberal democracy, other than representative democracy.”

OpenAI made some efforts to address those concerns in its announcement on Tuesday.

“Concerns about doomscrolling, addiction, isolation, and (reinforcement learning)-sloptimized feeds are top of mind,” it said in a blog post. It said it would “periodically poll users on their wellbeing” and give them options to adjust their feed, with a built-in bias to recommend posts

from friends rather than strangers.

OpenAI is turning ChatGPT into a virtual merchant that can help sell goods for Etsy and Shopify as the artificial intelligence company looks for new revenue in online commerce.

ChatGPT users can now buy directly from Etsy sellers while interacting with the chatbot and will soon be able to do the same with Shopify sellers.

Competing with the likes of Amazon and Google for purchase fees from digital shopping could be a new source of money for OpenAI. The company hasn’t made a profit and has relied on investors to back the costs of building and running its powerful AI systems.

OpenAI said it is working with payments company Stripe on the technical standards that will enable purchases through the “Instant Checkout” system.

A number of payment companies have been working with AI developers on so-called AI agents that, given a credit card, could find and make purchases on a shopper’s behalf. OpenAI said ChatGPT won’t favor these items in its product results. “When ranking multiple merchants that sell the same product, ChatGPT considers factors like availability, price, quality, whether a merchant is the primary seller, and whether Instant Checkout is enabled, to optimize the user experience,” the company said in a statement.

Fashion

Courrèges goes futuristic at Paris Fashion Week

McCartney marries style with sustainability

PARIS, Oct 1, (AP): Inside the Centre Pompidou, Helen Mirren opened Stella McCartney’s Paris Fashion Week show with a spoken rendition of The Beatles’ “Come Together.” Less performance than manifesto, it set the tone for a Tuesday night collection framed around humanity, animals and the planet.

McCartney has long been ahead of the curve in fashion’s sustainability push. This season she claimed her most conscious offering yet: 98% sustainable, 100% cruelty-free.

“It’s about coming together - all humanity, all Mother Earth’s creatures - now more than ever,” the designer said backstage.

No leather, no fur, no feathers, no exotic skins. Instead came world-first innovations: FEVVERS, a plant-based alternative to feathers, and PURE.TECH, a programmable fabric that absorbs pollutants from the air.

If the message was serious, the mood was not. A pounding bass line and rave-like lights kept energy high as Robin Wright, Dylan Penn and Johnny Depp watched from the front row.

McCartney’s silhouettes explored opposites - masculine and feminine, grounded and ethereal. Savile Row tailoring was deconstructed: double-breasted jackets sliced open at the sides, draped with dropped lapels, worn over pleated wide trousers and ’80s Italian-inspired shirting. Cargo codes reappeared in crisp minis fringed with airy crinoline.

Colors shifted from candy pinks, lavenders and blues into khaki, corporate gray and pecan. Upcycling was visible. Denim waistbands collaged into dresses, bags and even platform shoes. Sequins glimmered across Falabella clutches and hand-embroidered denim. Evening pared back to sculptural satin gowns and corseted draping animated by the new feather substitute.

The collection captured McCartney’s recurring aesthetic - eco-lux innovation, ’80s-inflected power dressing, activist theater softened by British wit.



A model presents a creation by Stella McCartney in Paris, Sept 30. (AP)



A model presents a creation by Stella McCartney in Paris, Sept 30. (AP)



A model wears a creation as part of the Dries Van Noten SS26 collection in Paris. (AP)

Courrèges

Equestrian met beekeeper on Tuesday at Courrèges, where Nicolas Di Felice turned a helmet-veil silhouette into a recurring motif inside the Carreau du Temple in Paris’ Marais.

The Belgian designer has made a career of reviving the once space-age house with a club-ready edge, and this spring at Paris Fashion Week was no exception. Minimalism was the grounding note: black boots morphing seamlessly into socks in myriad variations, silver wrist clasps and sheeny black shades punctuating a sanitized, stripped-back mood.

But Courrèges is never just sterile. Sex appeal pulsed beneath the surface - a coatdress unzipped nearly to the crotch, bare skin flashing be-

neath. A shoulderless black mini trailed a floor-skimming train that licked behind the model with studied nonchalance.

A simple “solar” idea shaped the staging. The square venue became a circle, colors warmed from cool blues to sunset tones, and the soundtrack built to a white-hot finale. Accessories and fabrics hugged the body like a protective second skin; even the sunglasses sent as invitations hinted at glare and heat. The effect was clear and direct, not fussy: a steady rise in energy and light.

Founded in the 1960s by André Courrèges, the label was once synonymous with space-age futurism - geometric cuts, go-go boots, and glossy minimalism. Di Felice has kept that DNA intact while bending it toward

the club, the desert rave, and the after-hours Paris the brand now speaks to.

Louis Vuitton

Screaming fans jammed the gates before the Louvre pyramid, blocking entrances and snarling traffic. They weren’t there for the Mona Lisa. They came for Louis Vuitton - and for the front row.

Emma Stone sat with Zendaya, Jennifer Connelly, Jaden Smith, Ana de Armas and Sophie Turner, a casting flex that says as much about Paris Fashion Week today as any silhouette. The runway is no longer the only stage; the front row is the second show, shaping the brand’s message in real time.

And in a season of musical chairs - with roughly ten marquee houses unveiling new creative directors this

very week - one constant held. Nicolas Ghesquière, who has steered Vuitton’s women’s line since 2013, didn’t flinch or chase a trend. He doubled down on his language.

Inside gilded salons, with fall light pouring through 17th-century windows once used by Anne of Austria, Ghesquière staged another jump through time. His Spring-Summer 2026 collection fused past and present, with corseted waists, Juliette sleeves, tubular arms, giant silk turbans. Feathered collars mimicked fur, while baggy, sultan-style trousers added an Eastern beat. A striped, ruffled coat winked like Pierrot as a bejeweled gown flashed back at the murals.

“The collection is a celebration of intimacy and the boundless freedom of the private sphere,” Ghesquière

said - “an exploration of archetypes of genre” and the “ultimate luxury of dressing for oneself.” The set, styled as a contemporary apartment inside the Louvre, pushed the idea of private elegance into public spectacle, while Cate Blanchett’s reading of David Byrne lyrics kept the mood reflective.

Ghesquière’s signatures landed with clarity. Time-travel hybrids: Renaissance echoes clipped to modern attitude. Architecture made light: corsetry that moved, tailoring that floated like flou. Travel as code: an apartment inside a museum for a house built on motion. Surface obsession: feathers, crystals and rich, “changent” washes that blur costume and ready-to-wear. In a week of debuts, his hand was unmistakable.

Variety

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.: Florida officials decided Tuesday to set aside nearly three acres of prime downtown Miami real estate next to the historic Freedom Tower as a potential site of the future presidential library of President **Donald Trump**.

Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis and the Florida Cabinet voted to give the parcel appraised at more than \$66 million to a foundation that’s planning the president’s post-administration archives, arguing that the property owned by the state-run Miami Dade College would provide a “greater benefit to the public” and “increase economic development activities” as Trump’s library.

It’s the latest demonstration by top Florida Republicans of their loyalty to Trump, who has shifted the center of his political universe to his adopted home state.

The property is flanked by glitzy condos in an iconic stretch of palm tree-lined Biscayne Boulevard, overlooking the waterfront park and across the street from the basketball arena that’s home to the Miami Heat. Miami Dade College has used it as an employee parking lot. (AP)



Trump

LONDON: The British Museum has long maintained close ties with Chinese cultural institutions and seen vast potential for deeper cooperation, said Nicholas Cullinan, director of the British Museum.

“It is wonderful when we can discover what we share in common and explore ways to collaborate in fostering greater understanding,” Cullinan told Xinhua in an interview on Monday.

Speaking of China’s role in the global cultural landscape, he noted: “In terms of its population, innovation and deep historical traditions, China has all the elements to play an even greater role on the international stage. China is already a major force in global cultural exchange, and I hope to see more partnerships and collaborations in the future.”

Cullinan recalled his previous visit to Shanghai, describing China as “a country with a fascinating and profound history and cultural tradition.” He will travel to Beijing in October to attend the Palace Museum’s centenary celebrations and renew a memorandum of understanding with the museum.

Beyond joint exhibitions, cooperation between Chinese institutions and the British Museum extends to professional training and academic research. Cullinan noted that the museum’s training program has hosted several Chinese participants, creating “a cross-border network of friendship and expertise.” (Xinhua)

BANGKOK: Thailand is leveraging cultural festivals, milestone celebrations and targeted promotions to attract more Chinese visitors as the Southeast Asian country seeks to revive its largest inbound tourism market, a senior tourism official said. Chuwit Sirivajjakul, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) executive director for the East Asia region, highlighted that China remains the most crucial source market for Thailand’s vital tourism industry.

With 2025 marking the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Thailand and China, the TAT is actively capitalizing on this occasion for themed promotions, Chuwit told Xinhua in a recent exclusive interview.

At the heart of the year-end push is “Nihao Month,” a special celebration strategically timed to coincide with the upcoming Mid-Autumn Festival and China’s week-long National Day holiday, a peak travel period for Chinese tourists.

A major event is scheduled to kick off in Bangkok on Oct. 6, featuring celebrity guests who will participate in cultural exchange activities, such as mooncake making, lantern crafting, and calligraphy workshops, alongside Thai and Chinese dignitaries. (Xinhua)

Artists turn devastation into cultural revival

Miranda doubles down on Puerto Rican arts support

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, Oct 1, (AP): As Hurricane Maria roared over Puerto Rico in September 2017, Marena Pérez and Aureo Andino hunkered down inside their ballet studio. The couple never imagined that they, their daughter and Pérez’s parents would live there for three months, sleeping on pullout couches and relying on a gas generator.

The Category 4 hurricane flooded Pérez and Andino’s house with 4 feet of water. Unable to return home, the founders and directors of Mauro Ballet decided to open their doors to the community, teaching a free dance class each afternoon.

“It became an oasis for dancers in Puerto Rico,” said Andino. But Mauro Ballet still struggled - the dance company didn’t make money for 18 months.

It survived in part thanks to support

from the Flamboyant Arts Fund, a \$22 million initiative propelled by Lin-Manuel Miranda and his family, and funded mainly by money raised during a 2019 run of Miranda’s acclaimed Broadway musical “Hamilton” in San Juan.

“Artists always get left out of the conversation,” Miranda, an award-winning writer and performer whose parents were raised in Puerto Rico, told The Associated Press. “We wanted to make sure they were not forgotten in relief efforts.”

Instead of being forgotten, artists assumed essential roles, helping the archipelago grieve from Maria’s devastation and articulating the challenges Puerto Ricans faced.

“You can use the arts in so many ways to express your feelings, and to heal,” said Pérez.



Actor Lin-Manuel Miranda attends ‘Waiting for Godot’ Broadway opening night at the Hudson Theatre on Sept. 28, 2025, in New York. (AP)

The Flamboyant Arts Fund has supported 110 Puerto Rican arts organizations and 900 artists. Now the Miranda

family and the DC-based Flamboyant Foundation are committing an additional \$10 million to Puerto Rican arts and culture.

Despite federal funding cuts to arts and humanities, the new phase of giving is meant to go beyond emergency relief - helping arts and culture thrive and even become an economic driver for the archipelago.

“It just gives us too much back,” said Miranda, 45. “If you have ever enjoyed the work that comes from this island and its descendants, to invest in that future is important.”

Hurricane Maria led to an estimated nearly 3,000 deaths, most of them related to the lack of power, clean water, and other services. Damages surpassed \$115 billion, and power outages lasted 11 months in some places.

The destruction was so vast that

Marianne Ramírez Aponte, executive director and chief curator of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in San Juan, worried the cultural sector could not overcome it.

What happened instead was “quite the opposite,” she said.

Arts groups opened their spaces as relief hubs and activated mutual aid networks. “Cultural brigades” deployed their talents to comfort and entertain.

“It was a horrible situation, but we were able to prove the importance of art in the social process,” said Yari Helfeld, executive director of the community theater company Y No Había Luz.

Helfeld got requests to perform from isolated communities in Puerto Rico’s central mountains just weeks after the storm.

Why chromium considered key nutrient, despite no proven benefits

Chromium health claims under scrutiny after decades of study

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

By Neil Marsh
University of Michigan

You might best know chromium as a bright, shiny metal used in bathroom and kitchen fittings. But is it also essential for your health?

In a form known as trivalent chromium, this metal is included in multivitamin pills and sold as a dietary supplement that companies claim can improve athletic performance and help regulate blood sugar.

I'm a biochemistry professor with a long-standing interest in how metals function in biology. Although health agencies in the United States and other countries recommend chromium as a dietary requirement, eight decades of research have resulted in slim evidence that people derive any significant health benefits from this mineral.

Why, then, did chromium come to be considered essential for human health?

To stay healthy, people need what are called essential trace elements in their diet. These include metals such as iron, zinc, manganese, cobalt and copper. As the word "trace" implies, you need only tiny amounts of these metals for optimal function.

For most of these trace elements, decades of research have shown they are genuinely essential for health. Iron, for example, is essential for carrying oxygen in your blood, and many proteins - complex molecules that carry out all of the functions necessary for life - require iron to function properly. A deficiency of iron leads to anemia, a condition that results in fatigue, weakness, headaches and brittle nails, among other symptoms. Iron supplements can help reverse these symptoms.

Importantly, biochemists have pinpointed exactly how iron helps proteins

perform essential chemical reactions, not just for humans but all living organisms. Researchers know not only that iron is essential but also why it is essential. However, the same cannot be said for chromium.

Chromium deficiency - having little to no chromium in your body - is extremely rare, and researchers have not identified any clearly defined disease caused by low chromium levels.

Like all food, essential metals must be absorbed by your digestive system. However, the gut absorbs only about 1% of ingested chromium. Other essential metals are absorbed more efficiently - for example, the average person absorbs around 25% of certain forms of ingested iron.

Importantly, despite many studies, scientists have yet to find any protein that requires chromium to carry out its biological function. In fact, only one protein is known to bind chromium, and this protein most likely helps your kidneys remove chromium from your blood. While some studies in people suggest chromium might be involved to some degree in regulating blood glucose levels, research on whether adding extra chromium to your body through supplements can substantially improve your body's ability to break down and use sugar has been inconclusive.

Thus, based on biochemistry, there is currently no evidence that humans, or other animals, actually require chromium for any particular function.

So how did chromium come to be considered an essential trace metal?

The idea that chromium might be essential for health stems from studies in the 1950s, a time when nutritionists knew very little about what trace metals are required to maintain good health.

One influential study involved feeding lab rats a diet that induced symptoms of Type 2 diabetes. Supplementing their diet with chromium seemed to cure the rats of Type 2 diabetes, and medical researchers were enticed by the suggestion that chromium might provide a treatment for this disease. Today's widespread claims that chromium is important for regulating blood sugar can be traced to these experiments.

Unfortunately, these early experiments were very flawed by today's standards. They lacked the statistical analyses needed to show that their results were not due to random chance. Furthermore, they lacked important controls, including measuring how much chromium was in the rats' diet to start with.

Later studies that were more rigorously designed provided ambiguous results. While some found that rats fed chromium supplements controlled their blood sugar slightly better than rats raised on a chromium-free diet, others found no significant differences. But what was clear was that rats raised on diets that excluded chromium were perfectly healthy.

Experiments on people are much harder to control for than experiments on rats, and there are few well-designed clinical trials investigating the effects of chromium on patients with diabetes. Just as with the rat studies, the results are ambiguous. If there is an effect, it is very small.

Why, then, is there a recommended dietary intake for chromium despite its lack of documented health benefits?

The idea that chromium is needed for health persists due in large part to a 2001 report from the National Institute of Medicine's Panel on Micronutrients. This panel of distinguished nutritional researchers and clinicians was formed to evaluate available research on human nutrition and set "adequate intake" levels of vitamins and minerals. Their recommendations form the basis of the recommended daily intake labels found on food and vitamin packaging and the National Institutes of Health guidelines for clinicians.

Despite acknowledging the lack of research demonstrating clear-cut health benefits for chromium, the panel still recommended adults get about 30 micrograms per day of chromium in their diet. This recommendation was not based on science but rather on previous estimates of how much chromium adult Americans already ingest each day. Notably, much of this chromium is leached from stainless steel cookware and food processing equipment, rather than coming from our food. So, while there may not be confirmed health risks from taking chromium supplements, there's probably no benefit either. (AP)

Lab-grown eggs could revolutionize fertility

Researchers turn human skin cell into eggs – but not yet usable ones

WASHINGTON, Oct 1, (AP): Oregon scientists used human skin cells to create fertilizable eggs, a step in the quest to develop lab-grown eggs or sperm to one day help people conceive.

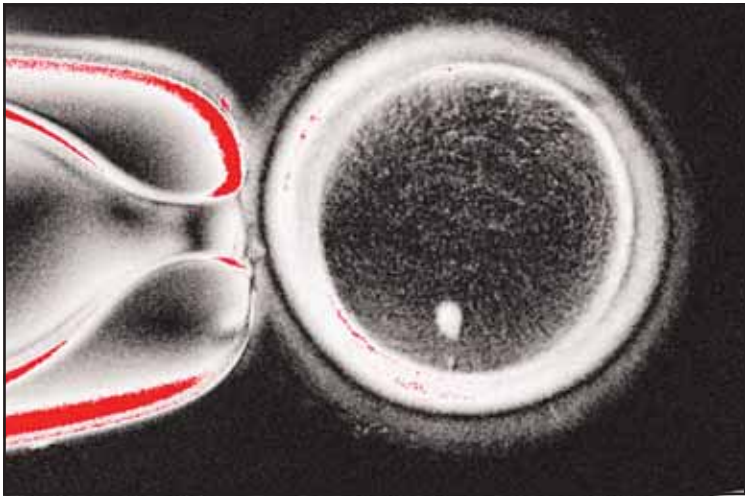
But the experiment resulted in abnormalities in the chromosomes, prompting the Oregon Health & Science University team to caution it could take a decade of additional research before such a technique might be ready for trials in people.

The work published Tuesday in Nature Communications may offer lessons as scientists try to learn to create eggs and sperm in a lab for the infertile couples have children genetically related to both partners.

The OHSU team removed the nucleus from a human egg cell and replaced it with the nucleus from a human skin cell. But a skin cell contains two sets of chromosomes, and eggs and sperm are supposed to each contain only one set that combine during fertilization. The researchers therefore induced the egg-like cells to discard extra chromosomes, injected donated sperm and jumpstarted post-fertilization development.

About 9% lasted for six days in lab dishes, reaching the blastocyst stage of early embryo development, before the experiment was stopped.

The main problem: The chromosomes were abnormal in several ways.



This undated image provided by the Mitalipov Laboratory at Oregon Health & Science University shows a microscope image of a human egg that contains a nucleus taken from a skin cell. (AP)

"We kind of developed this new cell division that can reduce chromosome number," said study senior author Shoukhrat Mitalipov, OHSU's embryonic cell and gene therapy director. "It's still not good enough to make embryos or eggs genetically normal." He called the initial findings proof-of-concept and said his team is working on improvements.

Scientists not involved in the work had mixed reactions. Columbia University stem cell researcher Dietrich Egli was troubled by the abnormalities. But Dr. Eve Feinberg, who agreed that the chromosome problems were critical, said it "seems like this team figured out how to reduce the number, just not well yet. But it's an important step and very exciting."



In this image provided by NASA, NASA's Cassini spacecraft captured this image of Enceladus on Nov. 30, 2010, with the shadow of the body of Enceladus on the lower portions of the jets is clearly visible. (AP)

Universe heating seen before star formation

New study reveals Saturn's icy moon may have favorable conditions for life

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., Oct 1, (Agencies): Scientists have uncovered new types of organics in icy geysers spouting from Saturn's moon Enceladus, bolstering the likelihood that the ocean world may harbor conditions suitable for life.

Their findings, reported Wednesday, are based on observations made by NASA's Cassini spacecraft in 2008 during a close and fast flyby of Enceladus. The small moon, one of 274 orbiting Saturn, has long been considered a prime candidate in the search for life beyond Earth because of its hidden ocean and plumes of water erupting from cracks near its south pole. While Enceladus may be habitable, no one is suggesting that life exists.

"Being habitable and being inhabited are two very different things. We believe that Enceladus is habitable, but we do not know if life is indeed present," said the University of Washington's Fabian Klenner, who took part in the study.

An international team decided to launch a fresh analysis of tiny grains of ice encountered as Cassini flew through the moon's geysers. The grains were young compared with the much older geyser particles that ended up in one of Saturn's outermost rings. These new grains collided with Cassini's cosmic dust analyzer at 40,000 mph (64,800 kph), faster than the old ones. The increased speed provided a clearer view of the chemical compounds present, the scientists noted.

Organic molecules already had been spotted in the old geyser grains, but their age raised questions as to whether they had been altered over the years by space radiation.

Scientists found some of the same molecules in the fresh grains, confirming they came from the moon's underground sea, as well as new chemical compounds. The findings were published in Nature Astronomy.

An ice-encapsulated water world barely 310 miles (500 kilometers) across with a rocky core, Enceladus is suspected

of having hydrothermal vents on its ocean floor, quite possibly like those in the Arctic. The moon's jets of water vapor and frozen particles can stretch thousands of miles (kilometers) into space. b"We are confident that these molecules originate from the subsurface ocean of Enceladus, enhancing its habitability potential," the Free University of Berlin's Nozair Khawaja, the lead author, said in an email.

The scientists favor new missions to further explore Enceladus. Launched in 1997, Cassini is long gone; the spacecraft was deliberately plunged into Saturn in 2017 following its joint mission by NASA, the European Space Agency and the Italian Space Agency.

Also:

SYDNEY: Astronomers in **Australia** have found early Universe was warm before stars formed, according to a study published recently.

Researchers at the International Center of Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR) were searching for the elusive "Epoch of Reionization," a period early in the Universe's history that is predicted by theory but is yet to be detected using radio telescopes, according to a statement released recently by Australia's Curtin University, which led the research.

The Epoch of Reionization signifies the end of the Cosmic Dark Ages, roughly a billion years after the Big Bang, when the gas between galaxies shifted from opaque to transparent, allowing light from the first stars and galaxies to travel throughout the Universe, it said.

The team used the Murchison Widefield Array telescope (MWA) located at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization's Murchison Radio-Astronomy Observatory on **Wajarri Yamaji** Country in the state of **Western Australia**.



Group photo during the official reception of the UNICEF delegation by Kuwait Ministry of Health officials.

Kuwait, UNICEF collaborate on child protection, mental health

MoH launches Gynecological Oncology Unit at Kuwait Cancer Control Center

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: The Ministry of Health announced the establishment of the "Gynecological Oncology Unit" at the Kuwait Cancer Control Center, to provide comprehensive treatment and diagnostic services under one roof.

The ministry explained that the new unit will contribute to accelerating referral mechanisms and ensuring patients' access to comprehensive treatment and diagnostic services, thus enhancing the efficiency of healthcare provided to women. This step strengthens Kuwait's regional standing in the field of gynecological oncology and reinforces its commitment to keeping pace with the latest international medical practices.

Meanwhile, the ministry appointed Dr. Noura Al-Ibrahim, a specialist in gynecological oncology surgeries, to head the unit, as part of its efforts to empower national competencies and enhance their role in leading specialized medical programs.

Dr. Al-Ibrahim stated that the establishment of the unit represents a major

step forward in the advancement of women's health in the State of Kuwait, noting that its integration within the Kuwait Cancer Control Center, with its comprehensive services and supporting specialties, will enable the delivery of comprehensive and continuous care to patients.

She affirmed that clear referral mechanisms will be implemented to ensure patients' timely access to necessary services.

Dr. Al-Ibrahim expressed her appreciation for the follow-up and ongoing support of the Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi, and Undersecretary Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, and their efforts to overcome challenges.

In another development, the Assistant Undersecretary for External Health Services at the Ministry of Health Dr. Hisham Kalandar met with a delegation from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to discuss areas of cooperation and ways to strengthen international partnerships in primary health care and child protection.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Health explained that Dr. Kalandar received UNICEF's Director of Part-

nerships and Resources for the Gulf Region, Fairouz Taqi Al-Din, and the organization's Deputy Regional Director for the Gulf Region, Jumana Haj Ahmed, in the presence of several leaders and officials from various sectors of the ministry.

The discussions were focused on the ongoing preparations for the joint strategic dialogue and identified priorities for cooperation in the upcoming phase, including aligning efforts with the New Kuwait 2035 development plan, with particular focus on child mental health issues.

They highlighted important health services offered within the primary care system, especially in maternal and child health, school health, nutrition, child protection, vaccination programs, and other areas aimed at promoting children's health and well-being. The ministry emphasized that this visit marks an important step in strengthening international cooperation in the field of child protection and reflects Kuwait's commitment to its humanitarian role in protecting children's rights and enhancing the health services provided to them in line with leading international standards and practices.



Board Member of CAN and campaign manager, Dr. Hessa Al Shaheen



Chairman of the Board of Directors of the CAN Campaign, Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh

Kuwait sees 44% rise in cancer recovery

CAN launches 'Pink Lifebuoy' campaign to promote breast cancer awareness

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 1: The Cancer Aware Nation (CAN) launched the "Pink Lifebuoy" breast cancer awareness campaign under the patronage of the Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, and the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and its subsidiaries.

The campaign will continue throughout the month of "Pink October" to raise health awareness and encourage early breast cancer screening.

During the launch ceremony, CAN Chair Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh emphasized that awareness and knowledge are the primary means of prevention and recovery.

He highlighted the importance of health education and training in

monthly self-examination as important tools for early detection of the disease.

Dr. Al-Saleh noted that breast cancer ranks first in incidence rates among women in Kuwait.

Highlighting a recent global study that showed a 44 percent increase in cancer recovery rates in the country this year, he emphasized the crucial role of awareness and early detection policies.

Meanwhile, CAN board member and campaign official Dr. Hessa Al-Shaheen stated that the campaign's awareness programs have had a significant impact on society, reflected in the growing interest of women in self-examination training and mammograms.

She explained that over the past 14 years, CAN has organized several field and social events during "Pink October", including self-examination

training workshops at companies, universities, and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), as well as awareness exhibitions in shopping malls, health centers, and hospitals. The activities also included awareness lectures in schools, targeting female students and faculty, providing them with the information and guidance needed to take effective preventive measures for women's and community health. A total of 172,000 female students were trained on self-examination.

Dr. Al-Shaheen emphasized the importance of continued cooperation between health, social, educational, and media organizations to raise awareness, support early screening, offer psychological support to patients, and encourage the community to adopt healthy lifestyles to prevent cancer.

Hall of Famers Allen and Garnett plan to appear at the games

Pelicans’ trip to Australia for preseason games is a first for the NBA

MELBOURNE, Oct 1, (AP): Australia has seen plenty of its players in the NBA over the years: Patty Mills, Joe Ingles, Andrew Bogut, Ben Simmons, Luc Longley, Matthew Dellavedova and Josh Giddey, to name a few. Kyrie Irving was born there as well.

And now, an NBA team is going to play Down Under.

The New Orleans Pelicans made the nearly 10,000-mile trip this week for a pair of games - first Friday against Melbourne United, then Sunday against the South East Melbourne Phoenix. Both of those clubs are from Australia’s top league, the NBL. The Pelicans arrived in Melbourne on Tuesday.

There’s a historical aspect, in being the first NBA team to go to Australia, and there’s also a slew of other perks that can bring a team together on such a trip, Pelicans coach Willie Green said. NBA players have competed in Australia before, including on United States teams during the

2000 Sydney Olympics and ahead of the 2019 Basketball World Cup, but this is the first time a franchise has traveled there together.

“This is a great bonding opportunity for all of our guys,” Green said. “We’re excited about interacting with the fans in Australia. For many of us, it’s our first time in Australia. They’re super excited. We’re going to really get a good look at our guys, get some dinners together, do some fan engagements and come out of this stronger.”

A pair of Hall of Famers, Ray Allen and Kevin Garnett, planned to appear at the games. An open practice, a fan night, a Junior NBA clinic for 50 Australian kids and more activities are planned, with the Pelicans expected back in New Orleans late Sunday night.

“I’ve never been to Australia before, so this is a personal bucket list travel experience,” forward Trey Murphy said. “I get to make this trip with some of my best friends and

play basketball. It’s something I love, and I’m really excited about that. This is a game you play as a child, and it’s taking me and my teammates all across the globe.”

These games will be Murphy’s first since his 2024-25 season ended prematurely because of injury.

“It’s great to be back on the court with my brothers and get this show started,” Murphy said.

These games are among eight in international locales during the NBA preseason. Philadelphia and New York play Thursday and Saturday in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Orlando and Miami open their preseasons on Saturday in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Denver and Toronto play Monday in Vancouver, and on Oct. 10 and 12, Phoenix and Brooklyn will play in Macao, China - the league’s first time playing in that country since 2019.

There are also a number of U.S. cities that don’t have NBA teams hosting preseason games, including San Diego; Palm

Desert, California; Oceanside, California; North Charleston, South Carolina; Fort Worth, Texas; Birmingham, Alabama; Greensboro, North Carolina; and Las Vegas.

Talks about the Pelicans’ trip to Melbourne began when Dyson Daniels - an Australian product - was playing for the club. He was traded to Atlanta in the deal that sent De-jounte Murray to New Orleans in 2024, but the Pelicans saw plenty of value in making the trip to Australia regardless.

“Any time we get an opportunity to use the platform that we’ve been blessed to have and impact other people, especially by going to different countries, it’s an honor, really,” Green said. “Credit to the NBA, credit to our organization, all the folks in Australia. Because to put this on, it takes a lot. It just goes to show you the reach of the NBA and how global the game has become. So, we’re grateful to have this opportunity.”

Aces outlast Fever in OT to secure third WNBA Finals trip in 4 years



Las Vegas Aces center A’ja Wilson (22) blocks a shot by Indiana Fever guard Shey Peddy (5) during the second half of Game 5 of a WNBA basketball playoff semifinals series in Las Vegas. (AP)

Showdown with Mercury looms

LAS VEGAS, Oct 1, (AP): The Fever, with about half their roster in street clothes, weren’t supposed to be this kind of challenge for the Aces.

And then, when Kelsey Mitchell left Game 5 because of severe leg cramping, victory seemed assured for Las Vegas - only to have Indiana keep fighting back.

But the Aces, pushed to the brink for the second postseason series in a row, survived 107-98 in overtime to advance to the WNBA Finals for the third time in four years. A’ja Wilson, with 35 points, and Jackie Young, with 32, became the first teammates to score more than 30 points in a playoff game.

The second-seeded Aces, who won the league title in 2022 and 2023, will host the fourth-seeded Phoenix Mercury on Friday in the opener of the best-of-seven championship series.

Las Vegas went on a 16-game winning streak to end the regular season, but was pushed to the edge by Seattle in the first round and then by Indiana.

“I think that streak we went on prepared us for moments like this, how to fight through the highs and lows of the game,” Wilson said. “It allows us

to never take our foot off the gas.”

Indiana made Las Vegas work for it even though the sixth-seeded Fever have been decimated by injuries, with Mitchell added to that list that includes Caitlin Clark and Sophie Cunningham. Coach Stephanie White somehow not only kept the team together, but the Fever reached the doorstep of their first Finals appearance since 2015.

“They have been an absolute joy to coach,” White said. “It’s an incredible group of women, an incredibly connected group. They’re a great example to everybody of what it means to just put one foot in front of the other to persevere, to welcome people into the fold, to not give in to circumstance.”

Mitchell had scored a team-high 15 points at the time of her injury. Six Fever players reached double digits, including Odyssey Sims with 27 points and Natasha Howard with 16. Aliyah Boston finished with 11 points and 16 rebounds, but fouled out with 27 seconds left in regulation.

The Aces were closer to a three-woman show, with Wilson coming within three points of her playoff career high. Young, whose putback basket in the opening round against Seattle allowed Las Vegas to advance to this round, had a playoff

career-high 10 assists.

Chelsea Gray - who briefly went into the locker room early in the third quarter with an apparent right leg injury - scored 17 points, including eight in overtime.

Las Vegas needed every one of those points because the Fever challenged the Aces throughout, including after Mitchell got hurt. Rather than fade away and concede the playoff series to the home team, the Fever battled to tie the game at 84 on two Sims free throws with 52 seconds left.

After Young made two free throws with 27.1 seconds remaining, Sims answered with a drive down the lane for a layup with 22.5 seconds to go to again tie the game. Young missed a layup in the closing seconds, and Jewell Loyd followed to send the game to overtime.

The Aces then took the lead early in OT and didn’t give it up.

“They would just not go away,” Aces coach Becky Hammon said of the Fever. “The resiliency of (White’s) group. They went through a lot of adversity this year, and for Steph to keep everybody onboard ... I thought they did an unbelievable job all the way around. They gas-pedaled the whole time, and it was tough for us.”

Slipper to retire after reaching 150 test matches for Australia

Nche returns for South Africa’s decider against Argentina

LONDON, Oct 1, (AP): Loosehead prop Ox Nche was back for title-chasing South Africa against Argentina in their Rugby Championship decider at Twickenham this weekend.

Nche was a late withdrawal last weekend for an unspecified niggle. However, he and scrumhalf Grant Williams would have played if they were needed, Springboks coach Rassie Erasmus said on Tuesday.

Nche was the only change to the starting XV from the 67-30 win over the Pumas in Durban last Saturday. Boan Venter dropped out of the matchday 23.

Williams, prop Bongsi Mbonambi and center Jesse Kriel - a combined 186 caps - were added to the bench.

The Springboks can win back-to-back Rugby Championships for the first time on Saturday. They lead New Zealand by one point and will know what exactly they need to clinch the title, as their game in London follows the Australia-New Zealand match in Perth.

The Pumas fell out of trophy contention last weekend but Erasmus expected an even bigger effort this weekend.

“They may be out of the title race but they have beaten the All Blacks, Wallabies, and British and Irish Lions this season, and it would be a big target for them to defeat us as well, so it’s going to be another hard grind,” Erasmus said.

South Africa: Damian Willemse, Cheslin Kolbe, Canan Moodie, Damian de Allende, Ethan Hooker, Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu, Cobus Reinach; Jasper Wiese, Pieter-Steph du Toit, Siya Kolisi (captain), Ruan Nortje, Eben Etzebeth, Thomas du Toit, Malcolm Marx, Ox Nche. Reserves: Bongsi Mbonambi, Jan-Hendrik



Australia's James Slipper, left, shakes hands with New Zealand's Will Jordan following the Bledisloe Rugby test between the All Blacks and the Wallabies at Eden Park in Auckland, New Zealand. (AP)

Wessels, Wilco Louw, RG Snyman, Kwagga Smith, Grant Williams, Manie Libbok, Jesse Kriel.

Just days after playing in his 150th test for Australia, Wallabies prop James Slipper said Wednesday he will retire after his 151st - Saturday’s Bledisloe Cup match against New Zealand.

The 36-year-old Slipper joins Welsh player Alun Wyn Jones (171) and New Zealand’s Sam Whitelock (153), in becoming just the third player to reach 150 tests when he ran out in Auckland last week in Australia’s 33-24 loss to the All Blacks at Eden Park.

Slipper’s international test career will finish where it started in Perth, Western Australia, site of Saturday’s match, where he debuted in 2010 as a 21-year-

old off the bench against England at Subiaco Oval.

Local media reported that Slipper may continue to play Super Rugby with the ACT Brumbies despite the fact his international career would end after Saturday’s match in Perth.

A Gold Coast junior in Queensland state, Slipper became the Wallabies’ 83rd test captain in 2015 and has led Australia 15 times.

When Slipper was selected for the Wallabies’ 2023 World Cup campaign in France - having previously been part of Australia’s 2011, 2015 and 2019 campaigns - he joined George Gregan and Adam Ashley-Cooper as the only Australians to play at four World Cup tournaments.

“Representing the Wallabies has been the single proudest achievement of my rugby career and a privilege I have never taken for granted,” Slipper said in a Rugby Australia statement.

“It feels like the right time for me to step away from test rugby. There’s a number of good young props coming through who will need time in the saddle leading into what’s going to be an unbelievable experience of a home Rugby World Cup in 2027.”

Rugby Australia chief executive Phil Waugh said Slipper “will go down in history as one of the most durable, dependable and respected players to ever pull on a test jersey anywhere in the world.”

“To reach the milestones he has across 16 professional seasons, particularly as a front rower, is testament to his professionalism and the way he goes about his work,” Waugh added.

Kerr content coaching in a contract yr

Kuminga reaches 2-year deal with GSW, ending contract stalemate

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct 1, (AP): Jonathan Kuminga agreed to a two-year contract with the Golden State Warriors that could be worth up to \$46.5 million if the team exercises its option for 2026-27, a person with knowledge of the contract said Tuesday.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the team hadn’t made a formal announcement. Kuminga has had a \$7.9 million qualifying offer in hand since June 29 but was also weighing other options. He had until Wednesday night to accept the qualifying offer.

Kuminga missed media day Monday and Day 1 of training camp Tuesday, but many of his teammates expressed support and confidence that the high-flying forward would show up ready to work and help the team win.

Kuminga, who turns 23 on Oct. 6, missed much of last season with a right ankle injury. He averaged 15.3 points, 4.6 rebounds and 2.2 assists in 24.3 minutes over 47 games with 10 starts.

The unsettled situation for Kuminga, a restricted free agent, has overshadowed the offseason and delayed general manager Mike Dunleavy’s ability to build the roster.

Center Al Horford had reached agreement on a deal and now guard Seth Curry - the younger brother of Warriors star Stephen Curry - is set to join the mix, too.

Stephen Curry said players had discussed how things would go once Kuminga is back in the fold.

“We talk about it for sure,” he said Monday. “As leaders on the team you have to acknowledge what’s going on and don’t make it more than what it is.

“Knowing JK’s situation, knowing the new faces that we’re adding to the roster, we talk about it every year going into a training camp - what it’s going to take for that particular team to win.”

Steve Kerr insists he is perfectly content coaching the Golden State Warriors in a contract year without worrying about negotiations or what’s next until the season is done.

He trusts owner Joe Lacob and general manager Mike Dunleavy to have those discussions when the time is right for everybody, whether that ends up being during the season or once it’s over many months from now. Kerr doesn’t anticipate having those discussions for a while.

“I’m very comfortable just going into this season with a year left. I’m so aligned with Mike and Joe that we talked about this. There’s no reason for discussion, concern, this is kind of a point in our relationship. Let’s just see how it is at the end of the year,” Kerr said Tuesday. “I love my job, I love what I’m doing every day, can’t wait to get to the building. Hopefully I’m here for another few years but I think it makes sense for the organization and for me just to see where this thing is at the end of the year, where they are, where I am. Hopefully that means we run it back, we keep going with this group, and that’d be awesome.”

Kerr, who turned 60 on Saturday, begins his 12th season leading the Warriors having won four NBA titles and now with son Nicholas as an assistant coach on his bench, too, after being promoted from the G League Santa Cruz Warriors.

Whether Kerr, Stephen Curry and Draymond Green will all depart together in some kind of fairytale farewell from the franchise is uncertain. Whatever happens, Kerr cherishes the special postseason runs and championships they’ve shared together.

Kerr owns a 567-308 regular-season record and guided the team to five straight NBA Finals that included the Warriors’ first championship in 40 years following the 2014-15 season.

The Warriors lost in the second round of the playoffs and want to chase another championship, and that is Kerr’s focus - not his own situation.

“I’m not the slightest bit concerned about it. I don’t think about it,” he said. “I just think it makes perfect sense for all of us. I’ve said this before, however this ends it’s going to be done in a really quality way. It’s going to happen the right way. If it’s meant to be for me to keep going then I’m going to keep going, and if it’s meant to be for the team to move on to somebody else there will be nothing but gratitude and appreciation. So this makes it easy for everybody.”

For now, he’s ready to get back to work. Day 1 of training camp was Tuesday and the Warriors host the Lakers in their preseason opener Sunday at Chase Center.

Golden State was still waiting for restricted free agent forward Jonathan Kuminga’s contract stalemate to resolve in the next couple of days and for center Al Horford’s signing to become official.

“I’m lucky to coach the group of guys that I’ve been able to coach,” Kerr said. “So I don’t spend a lot of time reflecting on the last 11 years, but I do embrace the fact that I get to do this every day. I’m very lucky.”



In this file photo, Golden State Warriors forward Jonathan Kuminga dribbles against the Minnesota Timberwolves during Game 3 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series in San Francisco. (AP)

New headquarters big step for ISU: Kim

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, Oct 1, (Xinhua): Kim Jae-youl, president of the International Skating Union (ISU), said the whole federation is excited to moving in to the new headquarters in Lausanne, and the relocation is a big step to the development of the sport.

The old headquarters of the world skating governing body is only a couple of minutes walk away from the new one at the center of Lausanne, but an open and much spacious working area is good help to their work, Kim said.

“We used to be in a very cozy, lovely apartment building with a lot of small rooms. It’s beautiful. But once you walk into the small room, you never see them again,” Kim said. “When we launched our Vision 2030, which would require the new culture openness and willingness to change, one of the first thing we wanted to do is find the new space that will facilitate more communication and collaboration. We found this beautiful space and moved in about three months ago.”

“Today is a special day for ISU - a big step to our federation,” the president said at the opening ceremony at the new headquarters, which was attended by many leaders of other International Federations (IFs).

ISU Director General Colin Smith said, “It brought a lot of new energy to the team. We’ve reinforced the team. With some new people, combined with our experience that we had in the team and the move, new logo, new website and new apps.

It’s just all at the same time come together to create new energy, which I think is very infectious.”

President Kim said this move is an investment. “We want to invest in sports to make our sports more attractive. Right now we are competing in so many forms of entertainment, not only in sports, but Netflix and Instagram.

We want to invest so we can generate more exciting content, bring more fans to watch our events on TV or live, which would give us better media contracts and more sponsorship. We want to generate more revenue so we can do many things for our athletes and investing in the future,” he said.

Sinner wins second China Open title

Goffin cruises into Shanghai Masters second round

BEIJING, Oct. 1, (Xinhua): Italy's Jannik Sinner clinched his second China Open title on Wednesday, defeating American teenager Learner Tien 6-2, 6-2 in the men's singles final.

It was Sinner's third consecutive Beijing final, having triumphed in 2023 by beating Daniil Medvedev after ousting Carlos Alcaraz in the semi-finals, before finishing runner-up to Alcaraz last year.

The top seed and world No. 2 made a flying start on Diamond Court, breaking twice and wrapping up the opening set in just 34 minutes.

Tien, 19, ranked 52nd and contesting his first ATP final, settled after a nervous start. He stayed level through the first four games of the second set before Sinner broke in the fifth to regain control.

"I had to stay aggressive in the second set," Sinner recalled of a key turning point. "He was playing great tennis, very physical, and I'm very happy with today's level."

The Italian surged ahead 5-2 with another break and sealed victory on his third match point after one hour and 12 minutes.

The victory gave Sinner his 21st career tour-level title, sixth at ATP 500 level, and third of 2025 following his triumphs at the Australian Open and Wimbledon. He has now captured 17 hard-court titles before turning 25.

Tien's breakthrough run, meanwhile, confirmed his reputation as one of the tour's rising stars. Earlier this year, he came through qualifying to reach the Australian Open last 16, stunning Medvedev in a five-set thriller in the second round.

In Beijing, the American advanced past both Lorenzo Musetti and Medvedev after they retired mid-match, but



Jannik Sinner of Italy holds up his trophy after defeating Learner Tien of the United States in the men's singles final match for the China Open tennis tournament in Beijing. (AP)

also showcased his resilience in earlier rounds. By reaching the final, he is projected to move close to the world's top 30.

"I'm grateful to my team and family for supporting me," Tien said. "The fans here made me feel so welcome. Even though it wasn't the result I

wanted today, this has been a very special experience."

Sinner is the first man since Novak Djokovic to reach three consecutive Beijing finals and joins Djokovic and Rafael Nadal to have won multiple titles at this event, which launched in 2004. He now turns his focus to the season's closing stretch, eyeing a year-end No. 1 battle with Alcaraz.

In the men's doubles, Finland's Harri Heliövaara and Britain's Henry Patten rallied past Russia's Karen Khachanov and Andrey Rublev 4-6, 6-3, 10-8 to lift the title.

Former No. 7-ranked David Goffin recovered from a close loss in a first-set tiebreaker to dominate Alexandre Müller the rest of the match for a 6-7 (6), 6-1, 6-1 win in the first round of the Shanghai Masters on Wednesday.

Goffin, 28, has reached four Grand Slam quarterfinals and has won six ATP titles as well as reaching a Masters 1000 final in Cincinnati.

The top-seeded players in Shanghai all received first-round byes and players such as Jannik Sinner, who won the China Open final in Beijing on Wednesday, and Novak Djokovic will not play their opening matches in the second round until Friday.

Seeded fourth, the 38-year-old Djokovic is a four-time Shanghai champion and is playing for the first time since losing to Carlos Alcaraz in the U.S. Open semifinals.

Alcaraz, who beat Taylor Fritz in the Japan Open final on Tuesday, announced after his win in Tokyo that he won't play at Shanghai.

"I've been struggling with some physical issues and, after discussing with my team, we believe the best decision is to rest and recover," the top-ranked Alcaraz wrote in an Instagram post.

Women in Blue to clash with archrival Pakistan in Colombo

India beats Sri Lanka by 59 runs in women's cricket World Cup opener

GUWAHATI, India, Oct 1, (AP): Deepti Sharma's all-round display helped India beat Sri Lanka by 59 runs (DLS) in the opening game of the Women's Cricket World Cup.

Sharma scored 53 off 53 balls and then took 3-54 in 10 overs to help her team overcome a batting collapse. Amanjot Kaur scored 57 off 56 balls and took 1-37 in six overs.

Sharma and Kaur put on 103 off 99 balls for the seventh wicket and rescued India from a precarious 124-6 in 27 overs. India finished with 269-8 from 47 overs after two rain stoppages had cut down the game by three overs in each innings.

In reply, Sri Lanka was bowled out for 211 runs in 45.4 overs. Skipper Chamari Athapaththu top-scored with 43 off 47 balls, but her side lost quick wickets in the middle overs.

Sneh Rana (2-32) and Shree Charani (2-37) also picked up braces, as the Indian spinners finished with seven of the 10 wickets.

India next plays archrival Pakistan in Colombo on Sunday - the latter will play all its games on neutral ground. Sri Lanka plays Australia next - also in Colombo - earlier on Saturday.

Opener Smriti Mandhana fell for eight runs before India's rebuild was interrupted twice by rain. The game was first reduced to 48 overs per side before another rain interruption further reduced it to 47 overs.



India's Harleen Deol plays a shot during the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup match between India and Sri Lanka at Barsapara Cricket Stadium in Guwahati, India. (AP)

Pratika Rawal (37) and Harleen Deol (48) put on 67 off 96 balls on either side of the first rain break. But their partnership came about slowly and put India's scoring under duress as Rawal was out in the 20th over.

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur tried to up the ante - she scored 21 off 19 balls - but it only resulted in a mini-collapse.

India went from 120-2 to 124-6 in the space of 12 deliveries as 39-year-old Lankan left-arm spinner Inoka Ranaweera stumped the batters.

Deol was first out caught and

Jemimah Rodrigues fell for a golden duck - out bowled. Kaur was the next to go three balls later and then Richa Ghosh fell to Athapaththu for two runs in a disastrous turn for India.

It brought Sharma and Kaur together, and the duo took time to get going, cutting out all the big shots. Their 100-stand came off 94 balls.

Kaur got to 50 first - off 45 balls - and then Sharma reached her half-century run-a-ball. They batted together for 16.3 overs and turned the game around for India.

Sneh Rana's cameo at the end - 28 not out off 15 balls with two sixes - helped push India past 250.

In reply, Sri Lanka lost opener Hasini Perera for 14. But it got a 52-run partnership between Athapaththu and Hashitha Madavi (29) for the second wicket.

The match hung in balance when Sharma bowled the Lankan skipper in the 15th over. It was the turning point and Indian turned over the screws thereafter.

Skipper Harmanpreet deployed her spin attack and together they picked seven wickets for 133 runs in 28 overs.

Sharma picked up another two wickets, while Sneh Rana bowled the dangerous Nilakshi de Silva for 35.

It was the second time Sharma scored a half-century and picked three wickets for India in ODIs and she was named player of the match.

"My partnership (with Kaur) was the turning point after we had lost back-to-back wickets. We wanted to take the game deep and I am used to such situations. So there was no pressure. First match (of the tournament) sets the tone and we want to keep winning," she said.

Guwahati's first women's ODI witnessed a 22,000-plus crowd turn up despite rain interruptions. It is the highest attendance ever for an opening day of the Women's Cricket World Cup.

Chuqin edges Redzimski to book last 16 spot at WTT China Smash

BEIJING, Oct 1, (Xinhua): World No. 1 Wang Chuqin emerged victorious in a five-game battle against Poland's Milosz Redzimski to advance to the men's singles last 16 at the World Table Tennis (WTT) China Smash on Wednesday.

Facing the 45th-ranked Redzimski in their first head-to-head, Wang took the first two games 11-7, 11-4. Seemingly headed for a comfortable win, the top seed fell into an 8-2 hole in the third game, rallied with seven straight points for a 9-8 edge, but lost 12-10.

With two Table Tennis Review calls going against him, Wang dropped the fourth game 11-8 and trailed 4-2 in the decider.

He then reeled off three points in a row to move ahead 8-5. Redzimski pulled back to 9-8, but amid loud home support Wang held firm to close out an 11-8 victory, avoiding another round-of-32 exit at the event after last year.

Wang was joined in the last 16 by Liang Jingkun, who rallied past Lin Gaoyuan 3-1 in an all-Chinese clash.

Liang led their head-to-head 9-3 before Wednesday's match. "We have played against each other for many years. It seems that every time the draw makes us together," Liang said after his win.

Lin took the early initiative, breaking a 7-7 tie with three points in a row to take the opening game 11-8.

Liang then turned the match around with powerful attacks, winning 13-11, 11-9, 11-5 to seal victory.

Instead of focusing on his own performance, Liang asked the crowd to applaud Lin. "He has worked so hard for Team China in many years," Liang commented.



Wang Chuqin of China serves during the men's singles round of 32 match against Milosz Redzimski of Poland at 2025 World Table Tennis (WTT) China Smash in Beijing, China. (Xinhua)

Messi quite, Suárez brace in vain as Chicago beats Miami

Fire clinches 1st playoff berth since 2017

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., Oct 1, (AP): The Chicago Fire jumped out to an early two-goal lead and withstood a furious second-half comeback try led by Luis Suárez in a 5-3 win over Inter Miami on Tuesday night.

With the victory, Chicago (15-6-11) secured its first playoff berth since 2017 and improved to eighth in the Eastern Conference MLS standings.

Lionel Messi was held scoreless for the second straight game as Inter Miami, which has already clinched a playoff spot, slipped to 16-8-7. The loss hurt Inter Miami's hopes of winning the Supporters' Shield. The Philadelphia Union can secure the regular-season title with a win over New York City FC.

"This defeat is exclusively my responsibility. It wasn't the names (the players), it was the strategy I chose," Inter Miami head coach Javier Mascherano said after the game.

The Fire seized the lead early as Dje D'Avilla opened the scoring with a header in the 11th minute and Jonathan Dean scored on a breakaway in the 31st.

Miami cut the deficit to 2-1



Chicago fire defender Joel Waterman (16) eyes a ball ahead of Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi (10) during the first half of an MLS soccer match, Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025, in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (AP)

when Tomás Avilés scored at the 39-minute mark, but Chicago's Romingue Kouamé restored the two-goal advantage just before halftime.

Suárez pulled Inter Miami within one with a goal in the 57th minute and the Uruguayan tied the game 3-3 when he scored off an assist from Jordi Alba in the 74th.

Justin Reynolds' tap in at the back post in the 80th minute put Chicago back in front 4-3, and Brian Gutierrez added an insurance goal on a hard shot from just outside the box in the 83rd.

The game was originally scheduled for August 30, but was postponed when Inter made the Leagues Cup Final, where they lost to Seattle 3-0.

Miami made five changes to the lineup used in a 1-1 tie with Toronto on Saturday, including replacing all defenders, except Jordi Alba. Inter Miami had its three-game MLS winning streak halted with the tie against Toronto.

India can still claim Asia Cup, says Naqvi

ISLAMABAD, Oct 1, (AP): A top official of the Asian Cricket Council insisted on Wednesday that India is "welcome" to collect the Asia Cup trophy from him.

"As ACC President, I was ready to hand over the trophy that very day and I am still ready now," Mohsin Naqvi wrote on X.

"If they truly want it, they are welcome to come to the ACC office and collect it from me."

Naqvi is one of the most influential figures in

the Pakistan government as the country's Interior Minister, as well as being chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board.

Simmering political tensions between India and Pakistan intensified on the cricket field last Sunday when Indian cricketers refused to accept the Asia Cup trophy from Naqvi, having already declined handshakes with their archrival for three consecutive matches. A day before the final, the ACC said that Naqvi would present the trophy to the winner.

On Wednesday, Indian media widely reported Naqvi apologized to ACC members the day before at the group's annual general meeting in Dubai for a delay in the presentation ceremony.

"The PCB chief apologized to member nations for the delayed start to the presentation ceremony during the Asian cricket body's meeting but remained defiant in his stance on denying India the trophy," India Today said in its report.

Naqvi denied this.

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India's Amanjot Kaur bowls a delivery during the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup match between India and Sri Lanka at Barsapara Cricket Stadium in Guwahati. India won by 59 runs. (AP) – See Page 15

Sports

Real, Bayern roll as Galatasaray upsets Liverpool

Chelsea edges Benfica on Mourinho's return; Atlético hits Frankfurt for five

ALMATY, Kazakhstan, Oct 1, (AP): Kylian Mbappé scored a hat trick and Harry Kane netted twice as European heavyweights Real Madrid and Bayern Munich enjoyed big wins over tournament newcomers in the Champions League.

Madrid shrugged off any travel weariness in a 5-0 win at Kairat Almaty in Kazakhstan, and Bayern cruised to a 5-1 win at Pafos in Cyprus.

Tottenham needed a late own goal to escape Norwegian champion Bodø/Glimt with a 2-2 draw.

Liverpool lost 1-0 at Galatasaray after having an 88th-minute penalty decision reversed following a VAR review. The home players were incensed when Wilfried Singo was penalized for an apparent foul on Ibrahima Konaté; as replays showed the Ivory Coast defender had touched the ball before Konaté's foot. Victor Osimhen's early penalty was enough for Galatasaray's victory.

Atlético Madrid romped to a 5-1 win over Eintracht Frankfurt with coach Diego Simeone watching from the stands following his suspension for an altercation with a Liverpool fan in the team's previous Champions League game.

José Mourinho blew a kiss to Chelsea supporters on his return to Stamford Bridge with his Benfica team. Only a Benfica player scored, but it was an own goal from Richard Ríos that decided the result, 1-0 to Chelsea, which had João Pedro sent off late.

Marseille beat visiting Ajax 4-0, and Lautaro Martínez scored twice to lead Inter Milan to a 3-0 win at



Galatasaray's Lucas Torreira, right, and Liverpool's Curtis Jones battle for the ball during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Galatasaray and Liverpool at the Ali Sami Yen stadium, in Istanbul, Turkey. (AP)

home over Slavia Prague.

Atalanta came from behind to beat Club Brugge 2-1.

Norway's champion from north of the Arctic Circle was agonizingly

close to claiming a victory over Tottenham in its first home game in the main stage of the competition.

Kasper Høgh skied a penalty over the bar in the 35th, but Jens Petter

Hauge curled a fine shot inside the far post to send the home fans wild in the 53rd.

Hauge scored another brilliant goal in the 66th, two minutes before

Micky van de Ven scored with Tottenham's first effort on target.

It spurred a late push from the visitors that was ultimately rewarded when Archie Gray's shot was saved

before it rebounded off the retreating Jostein Gundersen and in. The 15-time European champions traveled nearly 4,000 miles (6,500 kilometers) to play in the eastern Kazakh city of Almaty for Kairat's first home match in the competition.

Mbappé dispatched a penalty in the 25th after goalkeeper Sherkan Kalmurza had brought down Franco Mastantuono, and got his second after the break when goalkeeper Thibault Courtois caught the Kairat defense out with a long clearance. Mbappé lobbed the ball over Kalmurza.

Arda Güler sent Mbappé through for his third goal in the 73rd, when the France star completed his fourth hat trick in the competition. Only Robert Lewandowski (6) and Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi (8) have more.

Substitute Eduardo Camavinga scored his first-ever goal in the competition 10 minutes later, and fellow substitute Brahim Díaz completed the scoring in stoppage time.

Atlético put five goals past city rival Madrid over the weekend and followed up with another five against an overwhelmed Frankfurt team.

"It was really impressive what Atlético did," Frankfurt coach Dino Toppmöller acknowledged.

Giacomo Raspadori opened the scoring early, Robin Le Normand got the second, and Julián Alvarez skipped past Germany defender Robin Koch to set up Antoine Griezmann before the break.

Griezmann celebrated what was his 200th goal for the club by holding up a No. 200 jersey with the name "Grizi" to adulation from the fans.

Jonathan Burkardt pulled one back in the 58th, but Giuliano Simeone - the coach's son - headed Atlético's fourth from an Alvarez corner in the 70th. Alvarez scored the fifth with a cheekily taken penalty.

Al-Ittihad slump continues as Al-Ahli Dubai claims narrow win

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia, Oct 1, (AP): Saudi Arabia's Al-Ittihad fell to a second straight defeat in the Asian Champions League Elite, losing 1-0 to Al-Ahli Dubai.

Iranian midfielder Saeid Ezatolahi scored the only goal in Jeddah, heading in a corner after 40 minutes to silence the home fans of the Saudi Pro League champion and two-time continental winner.

Al-Ittihad, which fired Coach Laurent Blanc three days earlier, remains without a point after two games.

Elsewhere, Qatar's Al-Sadd drew 1-1 with Sharjah of the United Arab Emirates.

FC Seoul defeated Thailand's Buriram United 3-0. Fellow South Korean

team Gangwon FC lost 1-0 at Chengdu Rongcheng in China.

Both Japanese clubs settled for draws: Sanfrecce Hiroshima tied 1-1 with Shanghai Port, and Machida Zelvia played out a goalless stalemate at Johor Darul Ta'zim in Malaysia.

India's Mohun Bagan Super Giant exited Asia's second-tier tournament after refusing to travel to Iran to face Sepahan, citing safety reasons.

It was the second consecutive season the Kolkata club has declined to travel to Iran, with Tractor SC the opponent in 2024.

The AFC confirmed the team's earlier 1-0 loss to Ahal of Turkmenistan will be expunged from the competition record.

Kuwaiti side suffers 3-1 defeat against Iraq's Zakho

Qadsia's Gulf Champions League campaign off to rocky start

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

BAGHDAD, Oct 1: Qadsia's campaign in the Gulf Champions League began on a sour note after the Kuwaiti side slumped to a 3-1 defeat against Iraq's Zakho in their Group A opener at Duhok International Stadium.

Qadsia made a promising start when Libyan forward Mohamed Soula converted a penalty in the 9th minute, following a foul on teammate Abdullah Matawa. But Zakho quickly responded, leveling through Nigerian striker Echeita Dibouti just six minutes later.

From that point on, Zakho seized control of the game as Qadsia struggled with misplaced passes, a lack of cohesion, and sluggish movement. Goalkeeper Ali Jaragh was kept busy and twice rescued by the woodwork before conceding again in stoppage time of the first half, with Shirko Karim putting the hosts ahead.

The second half brought no relief for Qadsia, as Karim struck again in the 47th minute to extend Zakho's lead to 3-1. Despite substitutions from Tunisian coach Nabil Maaloul - including veteran Bader Al-Mutawa, Abdulrahman Al-Dhafiri, Neeskens Kebano, and Mohammed Al-Shuraifi - the team failed to turn the tide.



Players challenging for the ball.

Qadsia's struggles were compounded by the absence of several key players, among them Jassem Al-Mutair,

Eid Al-Rashidi, Mubarak Al-Fanini, Khaled Sabah, Victor Lekhal, and Moaz Al-Dhafiri. In the same group,

Al-Ain of the UAE made a strong start, easing past Bahrain's Sitra 4-1 at Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium.

Many uncertainties

FIFA World Cup 2026 tickets go on sale amid high demand

MIAMI, Oct 1, (AP) Not even half of the spots in the 48-team field have been claimed. The schedule of matches won't be finalized until December. And other than host nations U.S., Canada and Mexico, nobody has any idea where or when they'll be playing.

Millions of soccer fans worldwide evidently don't seem to mind any of those points.

Tickets to next year's FIFA World Cup officially go on sale Wednesday. The buyers will be those who were selected, out of 4.5 million applicants in a lottery that took place last month, to have the first formal chance to purchase tickets over the next few days. FIFA said lottery winners have been, or will soon be, informed by email.

There are unique questions for consumers heading into the tournament, particularly about how they'll get visas, if necessary, to visit the U.S. as the country cracks down on immigration. There are also more traditional concerns such as who, when and where - and none of those will be answered until the draw on Dec. 5. FIFA knows many fans won't fret about those answers; they'll just want tickets now and will figure out the rest later.

"These are not only outstanding figures, but also a strong statement," FIFA President Gianni Infantino said on social media, reacting to the 4.5 million applicants for a spot in the purchase window that opened Wednesday. "The whole world wants to be part of the FIFA World Cup 26, the biggest, most inclusive and

most exciting event ever. From Canada, Mexico and the United States, to countries big and small across every continent, fans are proving once again passion for football truly unites."

In divided times, the notion of soccer being something that "truly unites" will be put to the test.

Here are some things to know as tickets go on sale.

Fans can purchase seats in one of four categories; Category 1 is the best seats, Category 4 is somewhere around the tops of stadiums. Ticket prices will range initially from \$60 for group-stage matches to \$6,730 for the final but could - and almost certainly will - change as soccer's biggest event utilizes dynamic pricing for the first time.

There are other ways to get tickets other than shelling out big bucks. American Airlines announced last month that its AAdvantage loyalty program members can redeem miles for World Cup tickets, starting Oct. 13 for executive platinum and concierge key members, then Oct. 14 for platinum pro, platinum and gold members, followed on Oct. 15 by all members.

And starting Thursday, some Verizon customers will have access to free World Cup tickets and other perks.

The telecommunications giant is a World Cup sponsor and will simply start dropping free ticket chances to its customers through its app.

"For me, there are few things as exciting as experi-

encing football live, whether that's on or off the pitch, and so I am proud to partner with Verizon to celebrate their plans to give fans unprecedented access to the tournament," said soccer icon David Beckham, part of Verizon's promotion for the World Cup.

The U.S., Mexico and Canada all automatically qualified as host nations. Also in so far: defending champion Argentina, Japan, New Zealand, Iran, Uzbekistan, Jordan, South Korea, Brazil, Australia, Ecuador, Uruguay, Tunisia, Colombia, Paraguay and Morocco.

That leaves 30 spots still unclaimed.

FIFA said fans from 216 countries and territories applied to be part of the first ticket lottery. The top three nations of interest, to no surprise, were the hosts: the U.S., Mexico and Canada, in that order. The rest of the top 10, also in order of application totals: Germany, England, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Spain and Italy.

Nobody has said how many tickets FIFA plans to sell in this first window. Availability won't be depleted; based on the listed stadium attendance figures, there are roughly 7.1 million seats to fill for the 104 matches around 16 North American venues, though it's unknown how many of those seats will be available for sale to the public.

There is an immigration crackdown unfolding across the U.S., which could dampen overseas interest in traveling to the country.