



PM hosts IMF Managing Director  
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## GLOBAL OUTRAGE AS ISRAEL BLOCKS GAZA-BOUND FLOTILLA

# Kuwaitis kidnapped by Israeli forces appeal for swift release

European lawmakers among detained as streets in several major cities erupt in protest

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya has stated that the ministry is closely and attentively following developments surrounding the detention of Kuwaiti citizens who were participating in the Global Sumud Flotilla.**

In an official statement, Minister Al-Yahya affirmed that the ministry was exerting every possible effort to ensure the safety of the detained citizens and to secure their immediate release.

He emphasized that preserving the well-being of Kuwaiti citizens is a top priority, and the ministry will leave no stone unturned in fulfilling this responsibility.

Citizen Khaled Musaed Al-Abduljader appeared in a



Left: Students protest during a pro-Palestinian demonstration in Madrid, Spain, Thursday, Oct. 2, 2025, in solidarity with the Global Sumud Flotilla after ships were intercepted by the Israeli navy. Right: This frame grab from video released by the Global Sumud Flotilla shows Israeli navy soldiers aboard one of the flotilla's vessels after it was intercepted as it approached the coast of Gaza early Thursday, Oct. 2, 2025. (AP)

video clip in which he confirmed he was kidnapped by Israeli occupation forces.



He stated, "I am Khaled Musaed Al-Abduljader, a Kuwaiti citizen. If you are watching this video, it means I

have been kidnapped by the occupying Zionist entity, despite our trip being peaceful with the aim of breaking the siege on Gaza. I urge the state to take immediate action to secure my release."

Another citizen Abdullah Mubarak Al-Mutawa appeared in a clip in which he said, "I am your brother, Abdullah Mubarak Al-Mutawa from the State of Kuwait, by the grace of God Almighty. Every year, I donate zakat to different countries, once to Bangladesh, once to the East, once to the West, and once to Africa.

"This time, I was given the opportunity to go to the country we see as most in need, which is Gaza. I thought this is a chance for me to donate zakat with love, peace, security, and peace of mind, to carry with it a message of goodness and mercy, and to embark on a beautiful journey without any kind of violence. Unfortunately, I have been kidnapped by Israeli military forces. I hope and appeal to the government to do its utmost to follow up on the matter and secure my release from the clutches of the Israeli military forces."

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## Kuwait's Q1 development spending hits 5-year high

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA):** Government spending on development ventures by end of the first quarter of the annual development plan (2025-2026) reached the highest level since five years ago, compared to the corresponding periods of previous schemes.

The state expenditures on development reflected the government increasing approaches toward executing projects at this level.

The development expenditures, by the end of the first quarter of the current year, rose by 11 percent above the KD 117.9 million (USD 386.5 million) spending in the years 2020-2021.

Total spending by the end of the current year's Q1 amounted to KD 132.4 million (USD 433.4 million) against KD 54.5 million (USD 178.6 million) in the year 2024-2025, KD 22.7 million (USD 74.4 million) in the 2023-2024 period, KD 31.7 million (USD 101.4 million) in the 2022-2023 duration and KD 98.8 million (USD 323.9 million) in the 2022-2021 period.

A report following up on the annual Q1 plan (2025-2026), issued by the Secretariat General of the Supreme Council of Planning and Development, showed that spending proportion on its ventures was at 10 percent, 5.1 percent higher compared to the previous year.

The report also showed that spending proportion on ventures

for construction of a solid infrastructure was the highest among the plan programs, reaching 11 percent by Q1 end, followed by the programs for establishing environmentally coherent living regions, 5.5 percent.

The plan ventures reached 141, with nine programs, including 124 ongoing projects, 17 new ones, while the bulk of the projects centered in the sixth program, building a solid infrastructure, with 38 ventures.

The annual development scheme, execution of which involves 42 government departments as a package of initiatives, is reviewed annually, with possible amendments depending on the initiatives' performance or presenting news ones.

Compared with the previous annual plans, the current scheme is based on more specific criteria in selecting the development initiatives and specifying legislative requirements for moving development forward.

A governance system has been set up for each program to ensure attaining results and serving state's policies, where all this aims at improving the State of Kuwait's rating in all international indices and placing it among the top 35 states by onset of 2035.

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## IMF highlights GCC capacity to confront shocks

# Kuwait champions stronger Gulf economic integration

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, Minister of Finance, and acting Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Dr. Subaih Abdulaziz Al-Mukhaizeem, stressed the importance of strengthening joint Gulf cooperation in the financial and economic fields.**

He highlighted the pivotal role the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has played as a successful model of regional integration, stability, and growth for over four decades.

Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem highlighted GCC's most notable accomplishments, especially in enhancing economic and financial integration, coordinating efforts in customs and taxation, and launching initiatives that support economic diversification.

In his speech at the 124th meeting of the GCC's Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee held in Kuwait recently and attended by finance and economy ministers from member states along with GCC Secretary-General Jassim Mohammed Al-Budaiwi, Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem said the current challenges, including geopolitical tensions, rising interest rates, and economic uncertainty, necessitate intensified efforts and stronger joint Gulf cooperation to respond to these developments with efficiency and flexibility.

**Growth Rates**

In his speech, the minister high-



GCC Ministers of Finance and Economy and Governors of Central Banks with the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Kristalina Georgieva pose for a group photo.

lighted the strength and resilience of the GCC economies, citing World Bank forecasts that project economic growth rates in the region to reach approximately 3.2 percent in 2025, increasing to 4.5 percent in 2026, indicating that this increase comes within the framework of the GCC countries' efforts to diversify their economies, expand non-oil activities, invest in infrastructure, and develop tourism projects

During the meeting, the ministers

reviewed a number of important topics aimed at enhancing financial and economic cooperation among GCC states, including the outcomes of the work of the Committee of Central Bank Governors, the Customs Union Authority, the Committee of Heads and Directors of Tax Administrations, and the Gulf Common Market Committee.

The ministers expressed full agreement on all items on the agenda, affirming the GCC states' commitment to deepening economic cooperation

and strengthening joint ties.

Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem highlighted Kuwait's keenness to host such meetings, which represent a fundamental pillar in strengthening Gulf economic relations and promoting financial and economic integration.

**Second Session**

While chairing the second annual joint meeting of the GCC Ministers of Finance and Economy and Governors of Central Banks with the Managing

Continued on Page 5

## Stricter oversight boosts Kuwait's anti-trafficking success

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: The acting Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) Rabab Al-Osaimi says Kuwait's progress in the international classification for combating human trafficking is the result of organized collective action and continuous coordination among various government agencies, under the direct supervision of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.**

In a press statement, Al-Osaimi explained that Kuwait's recent progress in this sensitive area stem from a comprehensive package of legislative and executive measures, including the development of a system to protect workers' rights, the

unification of inspection and complaint-handling mechanisms, and the intensification of training and awareness programs for labor inspectors to ensure effective implementation of laws and regulations.

She said, "This achievement reflects the state's commitment to upholding relevant international agreements and strengthening partnerships with local, regional, and international entities."

Al-Osaimi emphasized that the next phase will witness the strengthening of field inspection capabilities, expansion of communication channels with workers, the facilitation of the process of filing complaints both electronically and in person, and increased awareness campaigns targeting workers and employers alike.

She highlighted that this latest progress reinforces

Kuwait's true image as a "country of humanity," stressing that national laws are not just rigid texts but are brought to life through practical plans and procedures for implementation.

Al-Osaimi revealed that PAM plans to increase its monitoring campaigns and introduce more precise mechanisms for documenting contracts and overseeing employers' obligations, with the aim of preventing any violations or exploitation.

She indicated that strict legal measures will be taken against anyone proven to be involved in illegal practices or residency trafficking.

Al-Osaimi concluded by emphasizing that combating human trafficking is a top priority for the state.

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## Kuwait launches nat'l cyber awareness drive

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA):** The National Cyber Security Center and the Ministry of Interior launched on Thursday a national campaign for "Cybersecurity awareness ... safeguard ... protection", coinciding with the Global Cybersecurity Day.

They said in a joint statement that the campaign aimed at boosting the society's awareness of modern cyber hazards, enabling individuals to protect their digital data and accounts, in collaboration with the joint government application for electronic services, Sahel, and the government communication center.

It focuses on deep fake, passwords safety, on-line phishing, Wi-Fi security and privacy.

It also aims at boosting safe digital activities, such as usage of strong passwords, activating bilateral endorsement and posting warning messages to cut phishing.

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## AlSadu Society showcases Kuwait's sustainable wool innovation at 2nd FAO Global Conference



Sheikha Bibi Duaij Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Director General of AlSadu Society and Founder of Soof Wool Mill, participates in a panel discussion.

**LONDON, Oct 2, (KUNA):** Kuwait showcased on Thursday its experience in transforming sheep wool into sustainable yarn, textiles to the Second Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Global Conference on Sustainable Livestock Transformation held in Rome, Italy.

Sheikha Bibi Duaij Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Director General of AlSadu Society and Founder of Soof Wool Mill, delivered a speech during the technical discussions of the Conference held at the headquarters of FAO in Rome.

Her participation came as part of the panel titled "Advancing Sustainable Transformation of

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## Kuwait faces 40°C temps, light winds this weekend

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA):** The Meteorological Department forecasts hot weather this weekend, with moderate to hot conditions at night.

Director of the Meteorological Department Dhirar Al-Ali told KUNA that Kuwait is currently affected by a high-pressure system extending from the northwest, accompanied by light to moderate northwesterly winds that may increase at times.

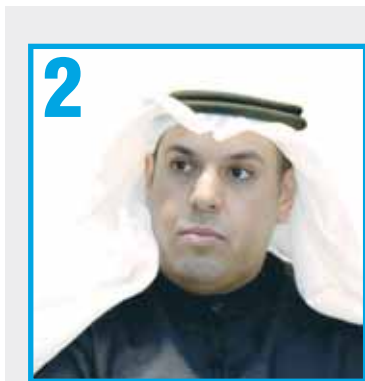
He explained that the weather during the day on Friday will be hot, with northwesterly to variable winds at light to moderate speeds, ranging between 10 and 32 kilometers per hour. Maximum temperatures are expected to be

between 36 and 38 degrees Celsius. Sea conditions will be light to moderate, with wave heights between one and four feet.

Friday night will be warm to moderate, with variable winds at speeds between 8 and 32 kilometers per hour. Minimum temperatures are expected to range between 23 and 25 degrees Celsius. The sea will remain light to moderate with waves between one and four feet.

Regarding the weather on Saturday, Al-Ali explained that it will be hot with northwesterly winds at light to moderate speeds, ranging between 12 and 38 kilometers per hour.

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Where is competence in Kuwait's government?



Kuwait sets Guinness World Records title with farthest intercontinental remote robotic surgery over 12,000 km



Prayer Timings

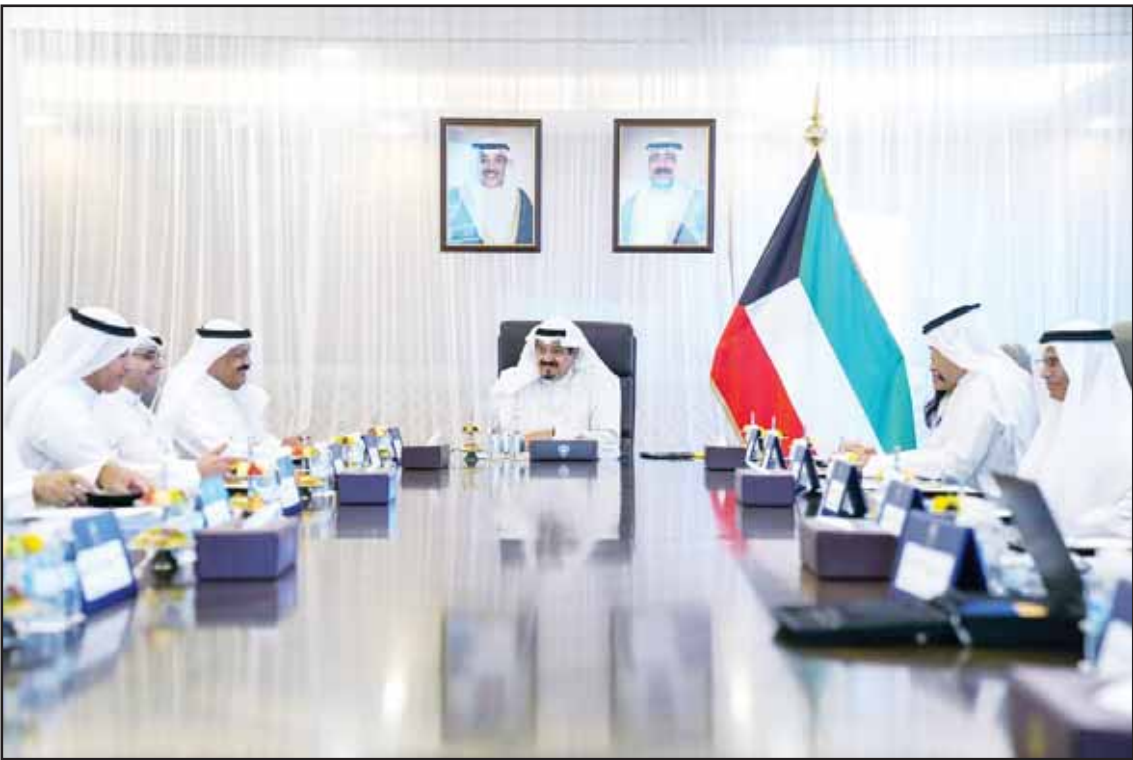
Fajr .....	04:22	Asr .....	15:01
Sunrise ..	05:41	Maghrib ..	17:33
Zohr .....	11:38	Isha .....	18:50

# Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 10-32 km/h.			
By Night: Rather hot to mild			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	39	29	
Kuwait Airport	39	29	
Abdaly	40	24	
Jahra	39	26	
Salmiyah	37	29	
Ahmadi	37	26	
Nuwaisib	38	26	
Wafra	39	25	
Salmiy	38	19	
Managish	40	24	

## Kuwait-China projects advance under PM's oversight

Prime Minister calls for full implementation of strategic agreements



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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA):** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired Thursday, at Bayan Palace, the 29th ministerial committee meeting to follow up on the implementation of agreements and memoranda of understanding signed between Kuwait and China.

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

The committee was briefed on a detailed presentation by leaders from the Ministry of Public Works, who outlined the latest developments regarding the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project. The presentation included the project's implementation phases, with relevant Chinese state-owned companies, as well as the follow-up on plans developed within the scheduled timeframe.

The committee was also briefed on a presentation by the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy on the development of electrical power and renewable energy through a joint alliance between the Government of the State of Kuwait and the Chinese state-owned company to develop electricity and renewable energy production in the Abdaliya and Shagaya projects in their third and fourth phases.

The Ministry of Defence gave a presentation on its role in contributing to combating desertification and the efforts made to implement the project with the Chinese side and coordinate with relevant state authorities in this regard.

Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdullatif Hamed Al-Mishari presented the latest developments on the workers' and housing cities, coordination with relevant Chinese government companies, and follow-up on the project's implementation with relevant government agencies.

The Minister also touched on the latest developments on the low-carbon green waste recycling system, coordination with relevant Chinese government companies that have expressed interest in the project, and the mechanism of cooperation between the two sides.

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

Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs, committee member and rapporteur Samih Jawhar Hayat, stated that the meeting



PM Diwan photo  
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace today the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Kristalina Georgieva and her accompanying delegation on the occasion of her visit to the country.

### PM hosts IMF Managing Director

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA)** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Thursday at Bayan Palace the Managing Director and Chairperson of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Kristalina Georgieva, and the accompanying delegation.

The meeting discussed cooperation between Kuwait and the IMF and ways to enhance commercial expansion, economic growth, and Kuwait's ambitious economic aspirations.

The Chief of His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel, attended the meeting.

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

The meeting was attended by Head of the Prime Minister's Diwan Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel, Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari, Director General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Head of the Fatwa and Legislation Department Counsellor Salah Al-Majed, Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs, member and rapporteur of the Ministerial Committee Ambassador Samih Jawhar Hayat, and several state leaders from the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of State for Municipal Affairs, and the Ministry of State for Housing Affairs.

## Kuwait's Deputy FM welcomes New Zealand's chief lawmaker

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA):** Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Wednesday received visiting Chairperson of New Zealand Parliamentary Foreign Affairs, De-

fense and Trade Committee Tim van de Molen. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations between Kuwait and New Zealand and issues of mutual interest.



KUNA photo  
The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs receives the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee of the New Zealand Parliament.

### Other Voices

## Where is competence in Kuwait's government?

By Abdulaziz Mohammed Al-Anjeri

For years one phrase has echoed across meetings and debates as if it were the solution to all of Kuwait's challenges. We must appoint competent people. Yet the phrase has become a cliché, repeated without clarity. What exactly is competence and how do we recognize it?

If you ask anyone who invokes this phrase to name ninety Kuwaitis who could credibly run ministries or major state institutions, you will rarely hear more than four or five names. This does not mean Kuwait lacks talent. It reflects instead how blurred the definition of competence has become and how absent the mechanisms are to measure it. Competence is not simply years of service dressed up as experience, nor long hours at a desk mistaken for discipline.

The greater danger lies in mislabeling. Too often competence is reduced to loyalty to a powerful figure or to an institution. Proximity is rewarded while achievement is ignored. In this way the concept becomes a tool for entrenching favoritism rather than a standard of merit.

From this confusion arises the dreamer official. They speak of visions and plans but lack the substance of leadership. They announce



Al-Anjeri

projects that promise results in ten or twenty years, knowing they will not be in office when the deadline arrives. Each unfulfilled promise chips away at public trust while the official enjoys the illusion of achievement simply for making declarations.

If competence is difficult to define, then results must be the measure. In the private sector there are individuals who turned modest firms into large enterprises, multiplying staff and revenues within a few years. These people have proven themselves not with slogans but with tangible outcomes.

Bringing such achievers into government requires more than appeals. Why would someone earning generously in the private sector accept a heavier workload and a smaller salary in public service. The only way is to create an environment that both values them and allows them to lead with their own vision. Hiring proven performers only to silence them with "yes sir" culture would render their presence meaningless.

Kuwait cannot live on dreams forever. Public promises without execution turn into burdens and walls separating citizens from their government. Real progress will come only when proven achievers are invited to take charge, equipped with the tools and freedom to act. They will deliver, and credit will go not only to them but also to the leaders wise enough to appoint them.

### Sheikh Abdullah Salem hosts Spanish Ambassador

## Capital Governor reviews housing projects

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2:** The Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali held a meeting on Wednesday with officials from the Investment and Private Sector Projects Sector at the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the meeting, several ongoing projects were discussed, and important plans and programs under development were reviewed, aiming to meet citizens' needs and provide essential services according to the highest standards.

The governor affirmed that the government places great importance on supporting and developing projects in an integrated manner, including facilities and services, to ensure quality and enhance sustainability.

He emphasized the importance of applying the latest methods and advanced technologies in implementing housing projects, while expanding the develop-



Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali received the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain to Kuwait, Manuel Hernandez Guamayo.

ment of smart, environmentally friendly housing cities. Sheikh Abdullah highlighted that enhancing cooperation and coordination with all relevant entities contributes to the timely completion of projects for serving citizens and fulfilling their aspirations.

The governor praised the efforts of the Investment and Private Sector

Projects Sector in supporting the development process and achieving the New Kuwait 2035 vision, which aims to provide an integrated and sustainable environment for all citizens.

Meanwhile, Governor Sheikh Abdullah received the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain to Kuwait, Manuel Hernandez Guamayo, at his office in the governorate headquarters Wednesday morning. He welcomed the Ambassador, and they discussed several topics of mutual interest aimed at strengthening bilateral relations and exploring ways to enhance cooperation and joint action in various fields.

The governor emphasized the deep historical ties between Kuwait and Spain, and praised both countries' commitment to supporting and expanding bilateral cooperation to serve common interests and fulfill the aspirations of their peoples.



Capital Governorate photos  
Part of the governor's meeting with officials of the Housing Care Institution.



Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah attending a lecture on the 'Future Operations Environment.'

### Sheikh Abdullah lauds insights on modern warfare

## Kuwait's Defense Minister attends seminar on future military strategy

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA):** In presence of the Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, a seminar themed "the environment of future operations" was held on Thursday at Mubarak Al-Abdullah Joint Staff and Command College.

The Ministry of Defense said in a statement the seminar, ran by Staff Colonel Sabah Mohammad Al-Sabah, was addressed by the senior researcher at the British Royal Academy, Dr. John Watling.

It tackled various strategic issues related to challenges on the theater of military operations, early readiness to cope with modern-time and forecast threats that warrant integration among the various military ranks.

Dr. Watling shed light on lessons learned from the current operating threatens from around the world, how to employ these lessons in overhauling the modern military doctrines, in addition to examining international guidelines in the realms of defense technologies, artificial intelligence, non-conventional wars and their impact on the theater of operations.

The minister of defense Sheikh Abdullah lauded the topics and ideas that were addressed during the gathering.



KUNA photos  
Dr. John Watling , senior researcher at the British Royal Academy



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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## The law most favorable to the accused ... Justice guided by mercy

“WHEN justice is cloaked in mercy, and laws are made not to burden people with the shackles of the past but to refine souls and open windows to the present; when a person stands between the hammer of the law and the anvil of accusation, a firm principle shines like a star in a dark night - the principle of applying the law best suited to the accused,” legal advisor **Hamada Al-Amir** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“This principle affirms that justice has a beating heart, born from wisdom and nourished by mercy, and that the authority of the law carries a shining spirit. It is more than just a legal text; it is a hymn of justice sung by the courts, a humanitarian message spread through legislation, and a strong affirmation that justice, even when strict, remains merciful, and that punishment is not revenge but reform and deterrence.

“If the legislator believes leniency is best for both the accused and society, it is unjust to harm a person under the shadow of a harsh, outdated law.

“The principle states that criminal law should be applied to criminal acts according to the law in force at the time. However, the law does not apply to acts committed before its enactment. This is the core of the principle of the legality of crimes and punishments, affirmed by Article 32 of the Kuwaiti Constitution, which states, “There shall be no crime or punishment except by virtue of a law, and no punishment shall be inflicted except for acts committed after the law providing for them has come into force.” This constitutional principle is further supported by Article 14 of the Penal Code.

“However, a fundamental exception to this rule is the retroactive application of the law most favorable to the accused. This principle is recognized in the criminal laws and legal systems of many countries, whose constitutions specify that criminal punishment cannot be applied retroactively unless it benefits the accused.

“Kuwaiti legislators established this principle in Article 15 of the Penal Code, which states: “If a law more favorable to the accused is enacted after the act has been committed and before a final judgment is rendered, that law shall be applied exclusively. However, if a law is enacted that decriminalizes a particular act after a final judicial judgment has been issued, the law shall be applied, and the judgment shall be considered null and void.”



Al-Amir

“According to this provision, for the accused to benefit from the new law, two conditions must be met. First, the law must be more favorable to the accused, that is, it offers a lighter penalty, more lenient liability, reduced criminalization, or a fairer assessment. Second, the law must be enacted after the act was committed but before the judgment has taken final effect.

“A law is considered more favorable to the accused if it adds a condition for imposing the penalty that was not present in the previous law, reduces the suspension period of the sentence, eases its conditions, provides an exemption from punishment, lessens the sentence compared to the previous version, or removes an aggravating circumstance.

“Once this is established, the new law must be applied as a requirement, not as an option, in order to uphold justice.

“However, it should be noted that the rule of retroactively applying the law most favorable to the accused does not apply to temporary laws, in accordance with Article 16 of the Penal Code.

“The principle of applying the law most favorable to the accused reflects the legislator’s conscience and embodies the judiciary’s commitment to merciful justice.

“This legal principle is more than just a phrase in law books; it is a cornerstone of justice that balances the enforcement of punishment with the presence of mercy.

“It marks the dawn of a more just, less blazing sun, confirming that mercy does not contradict justice but rather complements it.

“If the law ignores the pulse of humanity, it becomes a body without a soul, a shadow without light. Justice is not a whip that lashes or a chain that binds, but a scale that honors human dignity and balances the protection of society with the preservation of freedoms.”

□ □ □

“The Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem, stated that the ministry successfully navigated the summer period without recording record electricity consumption loads, despite temperatures reaching 51 degrees Celsius. He described this as an unprecedented qualitative achievement, noting that the peak electricity load decreased by 30 megawatts compared to 2024,” columnist **Hamad Salem Al-Marri** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem explained that the decrease in electricity loads is an important indicator of the success of national efforts to achieve tangible energy savings, attributing it to strict campaigns against excessive consump-

tion through cryptocurrency mining, as well as improvements in operational efficiency and ongoing periodic and emergency maintenance work.

“There are other primary reasons for the decrease in electricity loads, in addition to the secondary factors mentioned by Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem in his statement.

“While the ministry has indeed played a role in reducing loads through the efficient operation and maintenance of primary and secondary power plants, the main reasons for the decline lie elsewhere.

“A major factor is the travel of hundreds of thousands of citizens, residents, and their families, particularly teachers, during the peak summer period from July to the end of August, when electricity consumption typically rises due to extreme heat.

“By the time schools resumed and travelers returned, temperatures had already begun to drop. With the end of summer and the onset of autumn, it was only natural for electricity loads to remain within normal levels.

“For decades, Kuwait has suffered from power outages during the peak of the scorching summer months. This year was no different, with an early outage occurring in June, an indication of the depth and persistence of this crisis.

“The core issue lies in the fact that the government has not built any new power plants in decades, despite the construction of public projects and new residential areas, which increases electricity consumption.

“Moreover, Kuwait has not taken advantage of its intense summer heat to invest in solar energy, nor has it explored wind energy as a viable alternative. This is despite the country’s abundance of oil as its primary source of energy production.

“To the Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, we say - Next summer will be the real test. Will the ministry resort to scheduled power outages, as has become customary, or will some areas experience unplanned blackouts due to overload?

“The answer will reveal whether the ministry’s load management strategy has truly succeeded, especially considering that no new power plants have yet been constructed.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Al-Marri



Minister of State for Municipal and Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari delivers his speech at the Shuwaikh Beach opening ceremony.



Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Governor of the Capital, addresses attendees at the Shuwaikh Beach opening ceremony.



A view of the new Shuwaikh Beach walkway and facilities.



Photos by Samer Shaqir

## Shuwaikh Beach reopens, marks new era for Kuwait’s tourist sites

A model for future regional developments: Al-Mishari

**By Inaas Awadh**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari affirmed that the reopening of Shu-**

**waikh Beach in its new form marks a true beginning for efforts to “humanize” vital tourist sites in Kuwait.**

In a speech at the official opening ceremony, Al-Mishari praised the work done to complete the project, and expressed his grati-

tude to all who contributed to the project’s success. He also commended the National Bank of Kuwait for its generous donation to develop the beach.

The minister affirmed that this step will serve as a starting point for developing more beaches and vital facilities in various regions of Kuwait.

— See Also Page 9 —

### News in Brief

**Bedoun detained:** An illegal resident was detained at the Shaab Police Station after being found in a state of public intoxication in Shaab Al-Bahri, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, when the Ministry of Interior’s Operations Room received information about a man who had collapsed and lost consciousness in a building in Shaab Al-Bahri, officers from Hawally Police Station were dispatched to the scene and they found the man lying on the ground, unconscious.

□ □ □

**Asian arrested for DUI:** Rescue officers in Farwaniya Governorate arrested an Asian national in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh for drug possession, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, during a routine patrol one evening recently, officers spotted a vehicle being driven erratically. After stopping the vehicle, they found the driver, an Asian national, under the influence of drugs. A precautionary search revealed narcotics and drug paraphernalia in his possession. He was immediately arrested and referred to the relevant authorities for further action.

□ □ □

**Chemical drug seized:** An Asian expatriate was referred to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) after being arrested in Farwaniya for drug trafficking, and in possession of 15 bags containing “Chemical” drug, reports Al-Anba daily.

### Key digital reforms enacted

Government expands electronic ‘legal records’ across all sectors

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: As part of the government’s push for comprehensive digital transformation and the development of supportive legislation, two draft decree-laws were issued for amending the Electronic Transactions Law No. 20/2014 and the Notarization Law No. 10/2020.

The Electronic Transactions Law was amended to expand its scope to cover all electronic records, documents, transactions, and signatures related to civil, commercial, and administrative matters, including personal status, real estate, and commercial instruments. Under the new provisions, these electronic transactions carry the same legal weight as their paper-based equivalents.

The Notarization Law was amended to remove the absolute requirement for in-person presence, allowing notarization to be conducted via electronic systems or videoconferencing, while preserving the notary’s core responsibilities to verify identity, eligibility, and consent.

The changes also set a maximum duration of five years for powers of attorney, unless a shorter period is agreed upon, with exceptions made for commercial powers of attorney or as determined by the Minister of Justice.

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KUNA photo  
Representatives of the official bodies participating in preparing the 15th plane of the second airlift to aid Gaza.

Kuwait sends 15th relief flight to Gaza

The 15th transport plane by the Kuwaiti Air Force arrived on Thursday in Al-Arish Airport, northern Sinai, carrying 40 tons of food supplies for the Gaza Strip as part of the Kuwaiti humanitarian air bridge for Palestinians.

Head of the Disaster Department at the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Munira Al-Saeed said to KUNA that the ongoing humanitarian aid reflects Kuwait's stance on providing support and charity for those in need.

She pointed out that the shipment contains flour and food baskets provided by charity associations.

The 15th relief aircraft in Kuwait's second air bridge departed Thursday morning from Abdullah Al-Mubarak Air Base to Egypt's Al-Arish International Airport, carrying 40 tons of food aid bound for Gaza under the "Kuwait is by Your Side" campaign.

Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) is operating the flights as part of the nationwide "Fazaa for Gaza" effort, in partnership with Kuwaiti charities and in coordination with the Ministries of Social Affairs, Foreign Affairs, and Defense, including the Kuwait Air Force.

Speaking to KUNA before takeoff, KRCS Chairman Khaled Al-Maghamis said the air bridge - directed by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah - mobilizes state institutions to deliver aid swiftly and in an orderly manner.

The official charity partnership underscores Kuwait's consistent support for just humanitarian causes and highlights the country's strong culture of solidarity, he said. (KUNA)

Kuwait Accountants Association holds first 'Audit Firms Employment Forum'

Initiative responding to market demand

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: The Cultural and Social Committee of the Kuwait Association of Accountants and Auditors (KAAA) organized the "Audit Firms Employment Forum" in which audit firms, specialists, and individuals interested in the auditing sector participated.

Honorary President of the Kuwait Association of Accountants and Auditors Yousef Saleh Al-Othman highlighted that the forum is the association's first initiative on graduate employment in accounting. It was launched at the request of audit firms, which provide job opportunities to participants, allowing graduates to explore available positions directly.

Secretary of the Kuwait Association of Accountants and Auditors Faisal Abdul Mohsen Al-Tabikh explained that the forum aims to increase university graduates' awareness of employment opportunities within audit firms.



KAAA photo  
A number of association members participating in the forum.

He indicated that the forum aims to supply audit firms with qualified accounting professionals as well as raise awareness among university graduates and visitors, adding that this initiative helps reduce the burden on the state and encourages national talent to join the private sector.

Meanwhile, Chairman of the Cultural and Social Committee organizing the forum Dr. Mohammed Ghassan Al-Asfour emphasized that auditing is a vital profession for the business environment and financial markets.

Farwaniya Governor hosts Ambassador of El Salvador

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received the Ambassador of the Republic of El Salvador to Kuwait, Juan Carlos Boillat, Wednesday morning in his office at the governorate headquarters.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the governor welcomed the ambassador and highlighted the strong ties between the two friendly countries, as well as the ongoing development and cooperation in various fields.

During the meeting, both sides discussed ways to enhance joint cooperation and further develop bilateral relations in areas of mutual interest. They also exchanged views on strengthening cultural and diplomatic communication between Kuwait and El Salvador.

Also, the ambassador expressed his gratitude to the governor for the warm welcome and generous hospitality.



Farwaniya Governorate photo  
Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received the Ambassador of the Republic of El Salvador to Kuwait, Juan Carlos Boillat.

Strengthening public outreach

KUNA, UN-Habitat boost media co-op

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA): Acting Director-General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Mohammad Al-Menai met with Head of the UN-Habitat Programme in Kuwait Dr. Amira Al-Hassan to discuss strengthening joint media cooperation and highlighting UN efforts in the region.

During the meeting held Thursday at KUNA headquarters, Al-Menai affirmed the agency's keenness to support UN initiatives and utilize its media platforms to serve developmental and humanitarian causes, praising UN-Habitat's local and regional role.

He stressed that enhancing cooperation in media and awareness fields and working towards renewed media partnerships would contribute to supporting national efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to urban development.

For her part, Dr. Al-Hassan expressed appreciation for KUNA's role and continuous cooperation with UN institutions and missions, emphasizing the importance of media as a key partner in spreading public awareness and supporting development programs.

Dr. Al-Hassan praised KUNA's efforts in covering events and conferences related to sustainable urban development, in addition to its support for joint initiatives aimed at promoting awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals locally and regionally.

She expressed anticipation for strengthening future partnerships with KUNA to highlight successful national experiences and link them with UN efforts.

The meeting was attended by KUNA Deputy Director-General for Editorial Sector Esam Al-Ghanim and Acting Editor-in-Chief Mohammad Al-Bahar.



KUNA photo  
KUNA's acting director-general discusses enhancing joint media cooperation with a UN official.

Other Voices

The polls will speak: On talent, criticism and lasting reputation

By Ahmad alsarraf

My colleague, columnist Samir Atallah, is regarded as one of the senior figures in Arab journalism. He is widely respected, prolific, and well-known. Born in Beirut in 1941, Atallah has worked for Al-Nahar newspaper, the Lebanese magazines 'Al-Usbu' Al-Arabi and Al-Sayyad, as well as the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Anba.



alsarraf

Atallah mastered the art of blending multiple genres in his writing, including politics, art, travel, love, literature, and culture. Since 1987, he has been writing a daily column for Asharq Al-Awsat, in addition to contributing weekly articles to other newspapers. He has also authored many books on history, fiction, and travel. Atallah served as a correspondent for Al-Nahar daily in both Europe and at the United Nations.

Although I have met him only a few times, I read all of his columns in Asharq Al-Awsat, and he says he reads all of mine, even those related to local affairs. The years Samir Atallah spent in Kuwait as editor-in-chief of one of its newspapers left Kuwait with a lasting place in his heart and memory.

\* \* \*

A Kuwaiti columnist wrote a harsh article about me, built on a strange premise and filled with personal attacks, without any reason, justification, or prior animosity between us.

It appears that this offensive piece did not sit well with my friend and colleague Samir Atallah, who responded with an article titled "In the Country," published in Asharq Al-Awsat.

\* \* \*

"In the Country"

This article is about a poll conducted by a well-known newspaper, which was won by a prominent writer, long before the poll even took place. One of the writers objected to the results, challenging their validity.

Of course, every writer has the right to express an opinion. However, in this case, it crossed the line into a misuse of that freedom, as it involved an unjustified attack on the credibility of a respected newspaper.

Moreover, the recognition a writer earns over the years is not theirs alone; it belongs to the thousands of readers who value their work.

I have no connection to the matter other than being one of those readers who sees the writer who won the poll as a highly talented and distinguished voice.

Nothing changes this fact; it is neither fair to diminish the winner nor to exaggerate the value of his critics.

A writer's standing is shaped by many factors, including the length of their career. Achieving and maintaining a distinguished position is not something that happens quickly or easily.

It is equally difficult to strip a respected writer of their reputation. The real judging committee consists of thousands of readers, countless days, and hundreds of articles.

Unfortunately, the objecting writer also lost the moral battle. He should have congratulated his colleague instead of questioning his victory. Both writers are in a daily race, and the public is the best judge of whom they value, love, and respect.

A military officer can be promoted to the rank of major general by decree, but no decree, nor the backing of a dozen armies, can make him a poet.

I believe the objecting columnist was unsuccessful in his attempt because the colleague he targeted enjoys wide popularity and respect. It would have been wiser to accept the poll results as they are, in order to preserve the dignity and credibility of the newspaper that conducted it.

Some journalistic battles can be insightful, even entertaining, but they lose their appeal when they are driven by jealousy and clear personal motives.

In my view, the real winner in such debates is often the one who chooses silence. Let the polls run their course, and let people celebrate the results. Neither anxiety nor resentment can elevate or diminish a writer's true worth.

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs photo  
Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikhha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah with Attiya Warris, the UN Independent Expert on Foreign Debt.

Fusion innovation showcased

Kuwaiti student shines at ICFRM-22 held in Japan

TOKYO, Oct 2, (KUNA): Abdulmohssen Abaalkhail, a Kuwaiti PhD student at the University of Miami, presented his research on Thursday at a major international conference on fusion reactor materials science in Japan.

Abdulmohssen is participating in the six-day International Conference on Fusion Reactor Materials (ICFRM-22) in Shizuoka City, eastern Japan, which opened on September 28.

He was selected as the only Kuwaiti and one of very few participants from the Middle East region for a poster presentation to showcase his doctoral research at the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering.

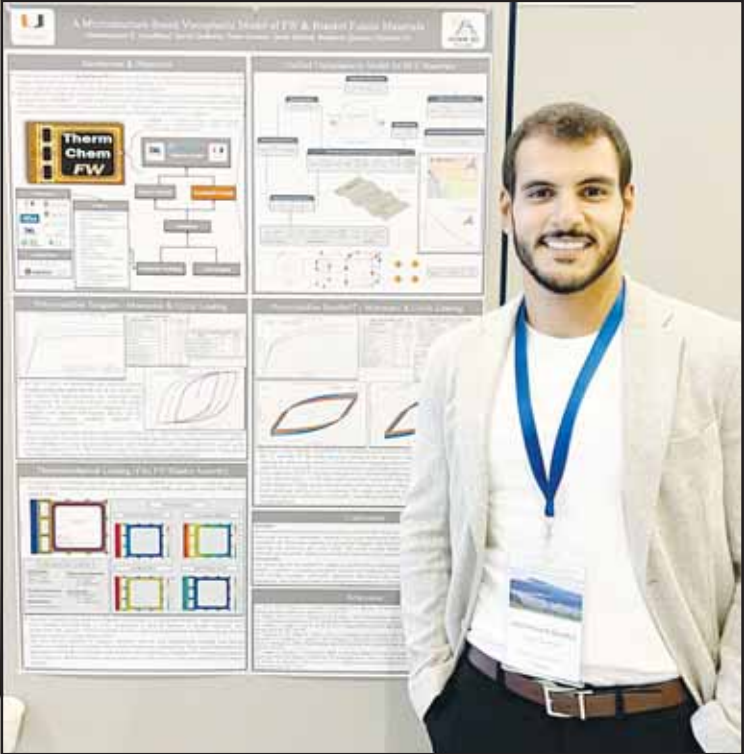
His presentation, titled “A Microstructure-based Viscoplastic Model of First Wall & Blanket Fusion Materials,” introduced a practical model to predict how nuclear fusion reactor materials perform under heat and repeated use, supporting safer and more efficient fusion energy.

“Being the only Kuwaiti and the only participant from the Gulf region, presenting at ICFRM-22,” Abdulmohssen told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA).

“This places Kuwait on an international stage in a highly impactful scientific field that leading programs prioritize through the ITER partnership, including the European Union, US, Japan, China, India, South Korea, and Russia,” he said.

ICFRM is the leading biennial international conference bringing together experts from universities, national laboratories and companies, including teams supported by the US Department of Energy and EUROfusion.

It focuses on structural, functional, plasma-facing and high heat flux materials, including irradiation effects, materials engineering and technologies, and cutting-edge research.



KUNA photo  
Abdulmohssen Abaalkhail, a Kuwaiti PhD student at the University of Miami, with his presentation titled 'A Microstructure-based Viscoplastic Model of First Wall & Blanket Fusion Materials.'

Sheikha Jawaher pushes reform, transparency in UN engagement

Kuwait advances education, health in rights dialogue

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA): Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikhha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah held talks with Attiya Warris, the UN Independent Expert on Foreign Debt, about the State of Kuwait’s relentless efforts in the realms of human rights and the economy.

The talks tackled in particular Kuwait’s endeavors for boosting diversification of income, transparency and sound governance.

In remarks to KUNA, Sheikhha Jawaher said she informed Warris, during the meeting at the foreign ministry headquarters, about the national accomplishments at the levels of human rights and the

economy.

State reforms that have been undertaken serve objectives of sustainable development, economic and social rights for the citizens particularly in the sectors of education, health and labor, Sheikhha Jawaher said.

The accomplishments that have made were in line with guidelines of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the assistant foreign minister noted, while affirming the State of Kuwait’s commitment to social justice and sustainable development.

The State of Kuwait, according to its development vision, neo Kuwait 2035, as a member in the UN Council for Human Rights (2024-2026), is proceeding with establishing bridges of cooperation with the UN, its various agencies including the Human Rights Council to back up these rights, she

added.

She also alluded to Kuwait’s leading role in backing international and regional initiatives in the sphere of human rights, indicating at exchanging expertise with the UN Independent Expert to address issues such as external debts, international financial obligations, along with continuing the constructive dialogue with the UN agencies to shed light on the national efforts and the present challenges.

The State of Kuwait prepared a program for the expert’s mission including visits to the ministries of finance, commerce and industry and Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, Sheikhha Jawaher elaborated.

She affirmed the State of Kuwait’s readiness to cooperate with the expert, re-affirming that her visit was an opportunity to shed light on the national achievements and the future plans at these levels.



Zakat House photos  
Award recipients from across the GCC gather for a group photo at the 2025 Humanitarian Awards ceremony.

Award highlights Kuwait’s regional role in global relief

IICO chief, Zakat House win 2025 GCC award

MANAMA, Oct 2, (KUNA): Chairman of the Kuwait-based International Islamic Charitable Organization Abdullah Al-Maatouq and Kuwait’s Zakat House have been declared winners of the GCC Award for humanitarian action for 2025.

Speaking at the honoring ceremony, Al-Maatouq, who also serves as a Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General, commended the award as an important platform for boosting GCC contribution to global humanitarian action.

He called for buttressing strategic partnership among GCC humanitarian organizations for dealing with challenges.

The seventh edition of the GCC Award for Humanitarian Action was organized in Manama Tuesday by the Manama-based Regional Network for Corporate Social Responsibility, in collaboration with the Executive Office of the Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs of the GCC member states and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

For his part, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Royal Humanitarian Foundation and Chairman of the GCC Humanitarian Award for 2025 Adnan Al-Qattan expressed his pride in the launch of the seventh edition of the award.

This award has established itself as a platform for honoring outstanding initiatives and exchanging humanitarian experiences, he said, stressing



that humanitarian work in the GCC countries is a cultural and moral duty rooted in Islamic and Arab values.

Director General of the Executive Office of the Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs of the GCC member states Mohammed Al-Obaidly emphasized that the award embodies the GCC countries’ commitment to the values of solidarity

and mutual support.

He praised the role of the Kingdom of Bahrain and its partners in organizing this Gulf humanitarian event.

The ceremony honored a number of Gulf personalities and institutions in the categories of individuals, government agencies, and the private and non-profit sectors, including Dr. Al-Maatouq, who received the Award of Excellence in the field of Gulf international humanitarian work.

Al-Obaidly was named “International Ambassador for Social Responsibility” in recognition of his efforts to promote Gulf humanitarian work.

The Kuwaiti Zakat House, the Ministry of Social Development in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Charitable Organizations Regulatory Authority in the State of Qatar, the UAE Red Crescent Society and Qatari Red Crescent Society, the Princess Al-Anoud Charitable Foundation, the Al-Awazim Orphanage, and the Bahrain Association for the Care of Parents were also awarded the prize of the humanitarian action in the public and private sector category.

Al-Roya Press and Publishing Foundation in the Sultanate of Oman and the Executive Office of the Council of Ministers of Labor and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) were also honored for their partnership in organizing the event.

Stricter oversight

She praised the extensive efforts of the anti-trafficking team led by the Director of the Labor Inspection Department at PAM and a member of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Dr. Fahad Al-Murad.

The US State Department’s 2025 report upgraded Kuwait from the Tier 2 Watch List, where it had been for three consecutive years, to Tier 2 in combating human trafficking.

AlSadu Society

the Livestock Sector,” chaired by Dr. Thanawat Tiensin, FAO Assistant Director-General.

In her address, Sheikhha Bibi highlighted Kuwait’s pioneering initiative in transforming Naemi sheep wool and other locally available fibers into high-quality yarns and textiles through a sustainable circular production model.

This model relies on solar energy, water recycling, and converting waste into organic fertilizers to support the agricultural sector.

She emphasized that this innovation not only revives and sustains the traditional craft of AlSadu weaving, but also empowers farmers, women weavers, and schools -- demonstrating how heritage and innovation can come together to strengthen sustainability and community development.

In her closing remarks, Sheikhha Bibi expressed her appreciation for FAOs support and attention to the Kuwaiti delegation. Notably, Kuwait was the only Arab country from the Middle East region to participate in the spe-

cialized exhibition held alongside the conference, which brought together delegations from over 100 countries, along with global experts in livestock technologies and sustainable transformation.

Kuwait faces

Some scattered clouds are expected, and maximum temperatures will range between 38 and 40 degrees Celsius. Sea conditions will be light to moderate, with wave heights between two and five feet.

Saturday night will be warm to moderate, with northwesterly winds at speeds between 12 and 35 kilometers per hour, and scattered clouds continuing to appear. Minimum temperatures are expected to range between 22 and 24 degrees Celsius, and the sea will remain light to moderate with waves between two and five feet.

Kuwait launches

Elsewhere, the Arab Interior Ministers Council called on Thursday for enhancing awareness on cybercrimes to protect citizens from falling victim to them, during the second conference for combating cybercrimes, held at its headquarters.

The Council stated that in cooperation with the United Nations Regional Centre for combating cybercrime, it will organize an annual week to raise awareness about cybercrimes and ways to prevent them.

It also discussed ways to prevent crimes committed using AI, as well as prepared a strategy to address the misuse of AI and its risks.

Kuwait chaired the conference represented by Assistant Director of Cybercrimes Colonel Hamad Al-Hamoud, in the presence of representatives from Arab Interior Ministries, as well as several other organizations.

Kuwait champions

Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Kristalina Georgieva, held on the sidelines of the 124th meeting of the Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee, Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem affirmed the importance of strengthening the strategic partnership between the GCC countries and the IMF.

He stressed the need to address current economic challenges, anticipate future prospects through a thorough understanding of global developments, and seize opportunities in areas such as the green economy, renewable energy, private sector empowerment, and the creation of an attractive investment environment.

He added that continued consultation and enhanced joint coordination represent a fundamental pillar for advancing economic cooperation and capitalizing on available opportunities to realize a more prosperous future.

**Increased Cooperation and Integration**

Secretary-General of GCC Jassim Al-Budaiwi emphasized in his speech that the Gulf countries have achieved numerous significant accomplishments under the directives of the GCC leaders, who have consistently called for advancing cooperation and integration to meet the aspirations of member states.

He praised the role of the GCC Financial and Economic Cooperation

Committee in supporting steps toward financial and economic integration among Gulf countries, stressing that economic indicators show the GCC’s gross domestic product (GDP) reached USD 2.3 trillion by the end of 2024, while foreign trade volume amounted to USD 1.5 trillion.

Al-Budaiwi also highlighted that the value of economic and trade policies approved by GCC since its establishment reached USD 145 billion in 2024, reflecting a growth rate of approximately 9.8 percent compared to the previous year.

**Enhancing Economic Capabilities**

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, in her speech, addressed the impact of uncertainty and shifts in global trade policies on the world economy and GCC economies.

She stressed the importance of collective preparedness to confront these challenges and strengthen economic capabilities.

The meeting covered several important topics, including the IMF’s annual report “GCC Countries’ Capacity to Confront Global Shocks”, the development of appropriate fiscal policies in light of oil price volatility, the provision of the necessary funding to support economic diversification programs, structural reforms aimed at increasing productivity and enhancing global economic integration, and the need for developing local financial markets, enhancing trade and financial integration and supporting joint Gulf initiatives in the areas of fiscal and monetary policies.

At the end of the meeting, the ministers reaffirmed their shared vision on the importance of strengthening the GCC-IMF partnership, emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts to de-

velop economic frameworks and policies that keep pace with global changes and promote sustainable growth and comprehensive development.

They also called for the continuation of these periodic meetings, recognizing them as an important platform for exchanging views and deepening cooperation with the IMF, which is an important partner in supporting economic reforms, helping GCC countries confront challenges, and strengthen their global economic standing.

Kuwait’s Q1

Moreover, the capital expenditures in the budget of the 2025-2026 fiscal year ensures listing 69 new projects for the ministries, in addition to 373 continuing and under-execution ventures, namely expansion of Umm Al-Haiman station and complementary tasks during 2025, in addition to completing construction of the new passenger terminal T-2 at Kuwait International Airport by 2027 as well as finishing the first phase of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Mina (port) in 2028.

The continuing projects in the 2025-2026 budget covers ventures for overhauling the infrastructure for developing transportation and the ports, where such tasks would boost competitive ability of the national economy, enhance commerce and create new jobs.

Kuwaitis kidnapped

In addition to citizens Al-Mutawa and Al-Abduljader, Dr. Muhammad Jamal is also participating in the Global Sumud Flotilla. Israeli naval forces

boarded most of the vessels in a flotilla attempting to break Israel’s blockade of Gaza on Thursday and detained dozens aboard, including European lawmakers, drawing widespread condemnation.

The Global Sumud Flotilla was the largest yet to try to break the blockade, and it comes at a time of growing criticism of Israel’s conduct in Gaza, where its offensive has laid waste to wide swaths of territory and killed tens of thousands of people.

Activists had said they hoped that the sheer number of boats would make it more difficult for Israeli authorities to intercept them all - but Israel’s Foreign Ministry declared the operation over on Thursday afternoon.

Supporters of the flotilla took to the streets in several major cities after news of the interception broke - including in Rome; Istanbul; Athens, Greece; and Buenos Aires, Argentina - to decry the Israeli operation and the ongoing offensive in the Gaza Strip.

In the northern Italian city of Bologna, dozens of protesters and university students scuffled with police outside the city’s central train station. Police in riot gear used batons to push back the protesters who were trying to occupy the train station and chanting “Free Palestine” and “Shame on you”. Italy’s largest union called for a one-day general strike on Friday.

The flotilla, which started out with more than 40 boats and nearly 450 activists, was carrying a symbolic amount of humanitarian aid to Gaza. Its main goal, they said, remained “to break Israel’s illegal siege and end the ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people.”

Continued from Page 1



INTERNATIONAL

Bondi and Hegseth rally federal agents and troops in Memphis as part of crime task force

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Oct 2, (AP): US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, Attorney General Pam Bondi and White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller on Wednesday rallied members of a federal law enforcement task force that has begun operating in Memphis as part of President Donald Trump’s crime-fighting plan for the city.

The officials met with Tennessee Gov Bill Lee, a Republican who has supported the project, before touring a staging area for the Memphis Safe Task Force and then speaking to a group of federal, state and local law enforcement officers and Tennessee National Guard members.

Miller called the task force an “all of government, unlimited support operation” that would make the city “safer than any of you could ever possibly imagine.” He predicted that “businesses and investment are going to pour in, and Memphis will be richer than ever before.”

“We’re not here to second guess you,” Hegseth told them. “We’re here to have your back - to unleash you to do your jobs so you come home safely.”

Democratic US Rep Steve Cohen, who represents Memphis in Congress, said he was disappointed to learn about the visit in the media. In a letter to Hegseth and Bondi, he urged them to



National Guard soldiers leave the Shelby County Office of Preparedness in Memphis, Tenn., on Oct 1. (AP)

be more collaborative and expressed concern about the “wartime rhetoric” coming from the Trump administration.

“Memphians are not enemies; they are Americans,” Cohen said. “They are entitled to constitutional rights, not their government working to ‘intimidate, demoralize, hunt and kill’ them. We are not a training ground or target practice.”

The task force is part of a larger ef-

fort by Trump to use National Guard troops and surge federal law enforcement in cities, particularly ones controlled by Democrats. Following troop deployments in the District of Columbia and Los Angeles, he referred to Portland, Oregon, as “war-ravaged” and threatened apocalyptic force in Chicago. Speaking Tuesday to US military leaders in Virginia, Trump proposed using cities as training grounds for the armed forces.

Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer casts doubt on 2028 presidential bid

LANSING, Mich., Oct 2, (AP): Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer cast doubt on the prospect of running for president in 2028 while speaking in Toronto on Wednesday.

Whitmer was asked by a Canadian journalist in a moderated discussion whether she is considering seeking the Democratic nomination for president in 2028.

“I anticipate helping, but I don’t know if I’m going to be the person,” she said.

Whitmer is in the last two years of her second term as governor and she cannot run again because of term limits. While she is seen by many as a potential candidate, she said she is focused on her current work as governor.

“I don’t know if I need to be the main character in the next chapter, but I want to have a hand in writing it,” she said. “And I think I’ve got an important vantage point as the governor of an important swing state.”

Whitmer has several challenges in front of her. Michigan lawmakers just passed a one-week continuing budget to keep the state government operational after months of bitter disagreement and just this week, a gunman opened fire in a Michigan church he set ablaze in an attack that



Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer addresses the media, regarding the shooting at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, during a news conference at the Grand Blanc Township police on Sept 29 in Grand Blanc Township, Mich. (AP)

killed four people.

Additionally, U.S. tariffs on Canada are hurting auto manufacturing. She gave a speech about Michigan’s relationship with Canada and the impact of the tariffs before the question-and-answer segment.

Canadian Journalist Steve Paikin

grilled the governor on her relationship with President Donald Trump, which has been more cordial in his second term and less combative compared to other prominent Democratic governors such as Gavin Newsom of California and JB Pritzker of Illinois.

The longer this goes on, the more pain will be inflicted: Johnson

Trump uses government shutdown to dole out firings and political punishment

WASHINGTON, Oct 2, (AP): US President Donald Trump has seized on the government shutdown as an opportunity to reshape the federal workforce and punish detractors, by threatening mass firings of workers and suggesting “irreversible” cuts to programs important to Democrats.

Rather than simply furlough employees, as is usually done during any lapse of funds, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said layoffs were “imminent.” The Office of Management and Budget announced it was putting on hold roughly \$18 billion of infrastructure funds for New York’s subway and Hudson Tunnel projects - in the hometown of the Democratic leaders of the US House and Senate.

Trump has marveled over the handiwork of his budget director.

“He can trim the budget to a level that you couldn’t do any other way,” the president said at the start of the week of OMB Director Russ Vought, who was also a chief architect of the Project 2025 conservative policy book.

“So they’re taking a risk by having a shutdown,” Trump said during an event at the White House.

Thursday is day two of the shutdown, and already the dial is turned high. The aggressive approach coming from the Trump administration is what certain lawmakers and budget observers feared if Congress, which has the responsibility to pass legislation to fund government, failed to do its work and relinquished control to the White House.

Vought, in a private conference call with House GOP lawmakers Wednesday afternoon, told them of layoffs starting in the next day or two. It’s an extension of the Department of Government Efficiency work under Elon Musk that slashed through the federal government at the start of the year.

“These are all things that the Trump administration has been doing since January 20th,” said House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries, referring to the president’s first day in office. “The cruelty is the point.”



US President Donald Trump speaks in the Oval Office of the White House on Sept 30, in Washington. (AP)

With no easy endgame at hand, the standoff risks dragging deeper into October, when federal workers who remain on the job will begin missing

paychecks. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has estimated roughly 750,000 federal workers would be furloughed on any given day

during the shutdown, a loss of \$400 million daily in wages.

The economic effects could spill over into the broader economy. Past shutdowns saw “reduced aggregate demand in the private sector for goods and services, pushing down GDP,” the CBO said.

“Stalled federal spending on goods and services led to a loss of private-sector income that further reduced demand for other goods and services in the economy,” it said. Overall CBO said there was a “dampening of economic output,” but that reversed once people returned to work.

“The longer this goes on, the more pain will be inflicted,” said House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., “because it is inevitable when the government shuts down.”

Trump and the congressional leaders are not expected to meet again soon. Congress has no action scheduled Thursday in observance of the Jewish holy day, with senators due back Friday. The House is set to re-

sume session next week.

The Democrats are holding fast to their demands to preserve health care funding, and refusing to back a bill that fails to do so, warning of price spikes for millions of Americans nationwide. The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates insurance premiums will more than double for people who buy policies on the Affordable Care Act exchanges.

The Republicans have opened a door to negotiating the health care issue, but GOP leaders say it can wait, since the subsidies that help people purchase private insurance don’t expire until year’s end.

“We’re willing to have a conversation about ensuring that Americans continue to have access to health care,” Vice President JD Vance said Wednesday at the White House.

With Congress as a standstill, the Trump administration has taken advantage of new levers to determine how to shape the federal government.

‘Russian drones endanger safety at Chernobyl, Europe’s biggest N-plant’

KYIV, Ukraine, Oct 2, (AP): Russia’s sustained bombardment of Ukraine’s power grid is deepening concerns about the safety of the country’s nuclear facilities after a drone knocked out power for more than three hours to the site of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster and as Europe’s biggest atomic power plant remains disconnected from the grid, officials said.

Both Chernobyl and the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant are not working but they require a constant power supply to run crucial cooling systems for spent fuel rods in order to avoid a potential nuclear incident.

A blackout could also blind the radiation monitoring systems, installed to boost security at Chernobyl and operated by the U.N. nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency.

“Russia is deliberately creating the threat of radiation incidents,” Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said late Wednesday, criticizing the U.N. watchdog and its chief Rafael Mariano Grossi for what he described as weak responses to the danger.

“Every day of Russia’s war, every strike on our energy facilities, including those connected to nuclear safety, is a global threat,” he said. “Weak and half-measures will not work. Strong action is needed.”

The war that followed Russia’s all-out invasion of its neighbor more than three years ago appears no closer to



Denmark’s Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, (front left), and Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, front right, talk prior to an meeting of the European Political Community in Copenhagen, Denmark on Oct 2. (AP)

ending, despite months of U.S.-led peace efforts.

Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address that Russian launched over 20 Shahed drones against energy infrastructure in Slavutych, the city whose power supply services Chernobyl, the site of the world’s worst nuclear accident.

A wave of drones overwhelmed de-

fenses and caused a blackout, he said, affecting the sarcophagus that prevents radioactive dust from escaping the destroyed fourth reactor and storage housing more than 3,000 tons of spent fuel. He did not provide details of how it was affected.

“The Russians could not have been unaware that a strike on Slavutych would have such consequences for Chernobyl,” Zelenskyy said.

Last February, a drone armed with a warhead hit Chernobyl’s protective outer shell, briefly starting a fire. Radiation levels there did not increase, officials said.

Meanwhile, the Zaporizhzhia plant, which is one of the 10 biggest nuclear facilities in the world, has been disconnected from the grid for over a week.

Zaporizhzhia has repeatedly been caught in the crossfire during the war. Zelenskyy blamed Russian artillery for cutting the power line to the plant, but Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said it was Ukrainian shelling.

The facility is using emergency diesel generators to run cooling systems for its six shutdown reactors and spent fuel.

The IAEA says the plant is not in immediate danger but wants it swiftly reconnected to the grid.

The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington think tank, said Russia’s occupation of Zaporizhzhia has “significantly degraded” the security of the plant.



People march during a protest in Belgrade, Serbia on Oct 1, eleven months after the deadly train station tragedy that sparked mass demonstrations against corruption. (AP)

Thousands march in Serbia in persistent resistance to Vucic

Thousands joined protest marches in several Serbian towns on Wednesday reflecting persistent resistance to autocratic President Aleksandar Vucic’s rule despite a government crackdown.

Crowds gathered to mark 11 months since a concrete canopy collapsed in a northern Serbian city that killed 16 people and triggered a major anti-government movement.

Protesters believe that the crash at the renovated train station in Novi Sad resulted from graft-fueled negligence in construction projects. The building’s renovation was part of a wider railway overhaul with Chinese companies.

Holding up lights on their phones, the protesters in Belgrade walked in silence to honor the victims who included children. Huge crowds also gathered in Novi Sad, braving

heavy rain falling in the city.

No incidents were reported, unlike at previous several demonstrations when riot police used tear gas against the protesters.

University students - a main force behind the rallies - are demanding justice in the Novi Sad tragedy but also early parliamentary elections that they hope would oust Vucic’s populist government. (AP)

Luxembourg grand duke to abdicate and passing throne to eldest son

LUXEMBOURG, Oct 2, (AP): A monarchy at the heart of Europe is preparing for a generational change. Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg will abdicate the throne on Friday after 25 years as head of state in favor of his eldest son, Guillaume. Henri has filled the largely ceremonial role of grand duke alongside his Cuban-born wife, Grand Duchess Maria Teresa, as the government steered the country through troubles like the 2008 financial crisis, the greatest shock to Luxembourg’s economy since the 1970s.

The tall and reserved 70-year-old Henri was educated in France, Switzerland and at the United Kingdom’s military academy Sandhurst. His 43-year-old son followed a similar path - going to school in London, Switzerland, France and Sandhurst before working in Belgian, German and Spanish firms. He is married to Belgian-born Countess Stéphanie de Lannoy; they have two sons, aged 5 and 2.

After his father abdicates in a ceremony at the Grand Ducal Palace, built of yellow stone and decorated with spires and ironwork, Guillaume will be crowned and then swear an oath to Luxembourg’s constitution before the 60 elected members of the Chamber of Deputies, the duchy’s parliament. After taking over from his father, Guillaume will tour the small nation, about the size of Rhode Island, and end with a Sunday mass with Archbishop Jean-Claude Hollerich at the Catholic Notre-Dame de Luxembourg cathedral.

One of the European Union’s smallest nations and its richest per capita, Luxembourg is a financial powerhouse that



This photo combination shows Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg, (left), on Dec 1, 2023, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg’s Crown Prince Guillaume in Tokyo, June 10, 2024. (AP)

hosts important EU institutions like the European Court of Justice and the European Investment Bank. The grand duchy is home to many of the banks in the eurozone, reinsurance companies, and managers of hedge funds and money markets.

Europe

**Car, knife attack kills 2 in Manchester:** An assailant drove a car into people outside a synagogue in northern England on Thursday and then began stabbing them, killing two and wounding three seriously, police said.

Officers shot and killed the suspect, Greater Manchester Police said, though it took authorities some time to confirm he was dead because of concerns he had an explosive on him.

The attack took place as people gathered in suburban neighborhood of Manchester on Yom Kippur.

A bystander could be heard on the video saying the man had a bomb and was trying to detonate it. When the man tried to stand up, a gunshot rang out and he fell to the ground. (AP)



An armed police officer at the scene of a stabbing incident in Crumpsall, Manchester, England on Oct 2. (AP)

of an oil tanker immobilized off the country’s Atlantic coast which President Emmanuel Macron linked to Russia.

Macron has alleged that the tanker belongs to Russia’s so-called shadow fleet of aging tankers of uncertain ownership and safety practices that are avoiding Western sanctions over Moscow’s war in Ukraine.

Stéphane Kellenberger, prosecutor of the western port city of Brest, said Thursday that the crew members presenting themselves as the ship’s captain and chief mate have been in custody since at least Wednesday.

A preliminary investigation was opened into the crew’s “refusal to cooperate” and “failure to justify the nationality of the vessel” after the Atlantic Maritime Prefect alerted justice authorities Monday, Kellenberger said. (AP)

□ □ □

**Belarus opposition leader vanishes:** Scores of political prisoners pardoned by the authoritarian leader of Belarus sat on a bus waiting to cross the border with Lithuania last month, minutes from freedom. Suddenly, one of them stood up, forced the door open and got off, defiantly refusing to leave his homeland in what he called as a forced deportation.

Since that incident on Sept 11, Mikalai Statkevich hasn’t been seen. Human rights activists are demanding that Belarusian authorities reveal what has happened to the 69-year-old opposition politician and former presidential candidate. Statkevich was one of 52 political prisoners pardoned by President Alexander Lukashenko as part of a deal brokered by the United States. (AP)

□ □ □

**France detains 2 crew members:** A French prosecutor said police have detained two crew members



## Tropical storm edges toward Philippines and may grow to typhoon on path toward China

HONG KONG, Oct 2, (Agencies): Tropical Storm Matmo edged closer to the Philippines on Thursday and was expected to intensify into a typhoon that could threaten southern China this weekend, just about a week after the region was battered by Ragasa, one of the strongest storms to hit Asia in years.

Matmo, which had maximum sustained winds of 65 kph (40 mph), is forecast to move west-northwest to the vicinity of Luzon, the Philippines' most populous region, at about 22 kph (13 mph), according to Hong Kong's observatory on Thursday morning.

The country's central region was already grappling with the aftermath of an earthquake that killed dozens of people.

The Philippine weather agency said it may make landfall over southern Isabela province or northern Aurora province on Friday, and is expected to cross northern Luzon. It warned of a moderate risk of life-threatening storm surge in the next 36 hours in some low-lying areas, saying sea travel is risky for all types of vessels around areas where the storm is



This aerial image shows flooding caused by rain following typhoon Bualoi in Lao Cai, Vietnam on Sept 30. (AP)

expected to come ashore.

**Also:**

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The death toll from a 6.9-magnitude earthquake that struck **Cebu** province in the central **Philippines** has risen to 72, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said Thursday, as aftershocks continued.

In a press release, the council noted that the earthquake injured 294 people and affected approximately

170,959 people, including more than 20,000 displaced persons. Two landslides and two building collapses were also recorded, in addition to one structural fire.

The council also affirmed that 53 cities and municipalities have declared a state of disaster, in addition to declaring the entire province a disaster area. It indicated that approximately 600 homes and 87 other facilities sustained severe damage.

## Papua New Guinea Cabinet approves bilateral defense treaty with Australia

MELBOURNE, Australia, Oct 2, (AP): Papua New Guinea's Cabinet has approved a bilateral defense treaty with near neighbor Australia, paving the way for the nations' leaders to sign a landmark agreement that US allies hope will curb Chinese influence in the region.

Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape confirmed Thursday that the treaty had been formally approved by his Cabinet. "Australia has only one other mutual defense treaty of this type and at our request Papua New Guinea will now sign this treaty," Marape said in a statement. Australia's other alliance-status pact is the ANZUS Treaty signed in 1951 with the United States and New Zealand.

"This reflects the depth of trust, history, and shared future between our two nations," Marape added.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said he and Marape would sign the treaty soon.

"Our two nations are the closest of neighbors and the closest of friends, and this treaty will elevate our relationship to a formal alliance," Albanese said in a statement.

Australia was Papua New Guinea's colonial master until the developing



Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, (left), and Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister James Marape attend a flag lowering ceremony in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, on Sept 16. (AP)

island nation became independent in 1975. Australia, with its population of 28 million, and Papua New Guinea, with an estimated population of roughly 10 million, are the most populous nations in the South Pacific.

The United States and Australia have both increased military ties in

recent years with Papua New Guinea, which is seen as a strategically important partner in countering China's growing influence in the Pacific.

The new Australia-Papua New Guinea pact would vastly increase integration of military equipment and personnel.

## Anti-foreigner sentiments, politicians on rise as Japan faces population crisis

TOKYO, Oct 2, (AP): Outside a train station near Tokyo, hundreds of people cheer as Sohei Kamiya, head of the surging nationalist party Sanseito, criticizes Japan's rapidly growing foreign population.

As opponents, separated by uniformed police and bodyguards, accuse him of racism, Kamiya shouts back, saying he is only talking common sense.

Sanseito, while still a minor party, made big gains in July's parliamentary election, and Kamiya's "Japanese First" platform of anti-globalism, anti-immigration and anti-liberalism is gaining broader traction ahead of a ruling party vote Saturday that will choose the likely next prime minister.

Anti-immigrant policies, which allow populists to vent their dissatisfaction on easy targets, are appealing to more Japanese as they struggle with dwindling salaries, rising prices and bleak future outlooks.

"Many Japanese are frustrated by these problems, though we are too reserved to speak out. Mr. Kamiya is spelling them all out for us," said Kenzo Hagiya, a retiree in the audience who said the "foreigner problem" is one of his biggest concerns.

The populist surge comes as Japan,



Sohei Kamiya, leader of a surging nationalist party Sanseito, speaks at a campaign rally in Yokohama, near Tokyo, on Sept 15. (AP)

a traditionally insular nation that values conformity and uniformity, sees a record surge of foreigners needed to bolster its shrinking workforce.

In September, angry protests fueled by social media misinformation about a looming flood of African immigrants quashed a government-led exchange program between four Japanese mu-

nicipalities and African nations.

Even the governing party, which has promoted foreign labor and tourism, now calls for tighter restrictions on foreigners, but without showing how Japan, which has one of the world's fastest-aging and fastest-dwindling populations, can economically stay afloat without them.

### Asia

**Lee apologizes over adoption programs:** South Korea's president apologized Thursday for poorly managed foreign adoption programs that were rife with abuses and fraud, months after the country's truth commission admitted state responsibilities for such practices for the first time.

President **Lee Jae Myung** said in a Facebook post that he was offering "heartfelt apology and words of comfort" on behalf of the country to South Koreans adopted abroad and their adoptive and birth families.

Findings by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and recent court rulings have confirmed some cases of human rights abuses in the course of international adoptions, Lee said, adding that the government failed to play its role in such cases. He did not elaborate.

Lee said he "feels heavy-hearted" when he thinks about "anxiety, pain and confusion" that South Korean adoptees would have suffered when they were sent abroad as children. He asked officials to formulate systems to safeguard the human rights of adoptees and support their efforts to find their birth parents.

South Korea has faced growing pressure to address widespread fraud and abuse that plagued its adoption programs, particularly during a heyday in the 1970s and 1980s when the country allowed thousands of children to be adopted each year. Many adoptees discovered their records were falsified to portray them as abandoned orphans, while others were carelessly removed, or even stolen, from their birth families.(AP)



Lee

**Rohingya Muslims plead for help:** Rohingya Muslims

pleaded with the international community at the first United Nations high-level meeting on the plight of the ethnic minority to prevent the mass killings taking place in Myanmar and to help those in the persecuted group lead normal lives.

"This is a historic occasion for Myanmar, but this is long overdue," Wai Wai Nu, the Rohingya founder and executive director of the Women's Peace Network-Myanmar, told ministers and ambassadors from many of the UN's 193-member nations in the General Assembly Hall.

The Rohingya and other minorities in Myanmar have suffered decades of displacement, oppression and violence, while seeing no action in response to determinations that they are victims of genocide, she said. "That cycle must end today," Wai Wai Nu said.

Buddhist-majority Myanmar has long considered the Rohingya Muslim minority to be "Bengalis" from Bangladesh even though their families have lived in the country for generations. Nearly all have been denied citizenship since 1982. (AP)

**2 Vietnamese officials evade extradition:** Two Vietnamese officials accused of attacking two young female servers at a restaurant in New Zealand won't return to face criminal charges after attempts to extradite them failed, New Zealand authorities said Thursday.

New Zealand police would not disclose why efforts to return the men had stalled, but the two countries don't have an extradition treaty so Hanoi would have had to turn over the alleged attackers voluntarily.

"It's disappointing that police requests for extradition have been unsuccessful," a spokesperson for New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon said in a statement. "Clearly it is not the outcome we wanted."

One of the women said she and her coworker were attacked at the Vietnamese restaurant where they worked in Wellington in March 2024, days before Vietnamese Prime Minister Phạm Minh Chính was due to visit New Zealand. (AP)

### Africa

**Nigeria boat accident kills 26:** At least 26 bodies have been recovered during a rescue operation after a fully loaded boat capsized in Nigeria's central state of Kogi, local authorities said Wednesday.

The boat, conveying mostly traders traveling from the Ibaji local government area of Kogi to the Ilushi market in the southern state of Edo, capsized midway on the Niger River on Tuesday evening. **Kingsley Fanwo**, commissioner for information and communication in Kogi State, said in a statement posted on the social media platform X.

"This is a heartbreaking loss, and our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the deceased, as well as the entire Ibaji local government area, during this moment of grief," Fanwo said, confirming that at least 26 bodies have been recovered so far by rescuers.



Fanwo

Citing witnesses, local media on Wednesday reported that more victims were involved in the incident, raising concerns that the casualty toll might increase. (Xinhua)

**91 killed in Darfur city last month – UN:** At least 91 civilians were killed in Sudan's besieged city of el-Fasher in attacks by the Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, within 10 days last month, the United Nations said Thursday.

The series of attacks were the latest in the intensified fighting between the army and rival paramilitaries seeking to control the city. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk said Thursday that the city's Daraja Oula neighborhood has been repeatedly attacked during RSF artillery shelling, drone strikes and ground incursions

between Sept. 19 and 29.

Türk called for urgent action to prevent "large-scale, ethnically-driven attacks and atrocities in El Fasher."

In its latest attack in the city, the RSF fired a missile that killed 16 people, including three women, and injured 21 people, including five children on Wednesday, the Sudan Doctors Network said.

The network said residential neighborhoods were targeted in what it described as a "massacre." El-Fasher is the military's last stronghold in the sprawling Darfur region, which has been the epicenter of the

The civil war between the RSF and the military erupted in 2023 and soon engulfed the country, killing at least 40,000 people, according to the World Health Organization, and displacing as many as 12 million others. Over 24 million people are facing acute food insecurity, according to the World Food Program. Wednesday's attack came about a week after the RSF struck a bustling market in the city, killing 15 people. A separate strike on a mosque before that killed at least 70 people. (AP)

**'AES confederation to form unified force':** Defense and security constitute the first pillar of the Confederation of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES) as the bloc moves toward creating a unified force, Nigerian President Abdourahmane Tchiani said Tuesday in Bamako at the end of a 24-hour visit to the Malian capital.

Speaking to the press at the Koulouba Palace, Tchiani said AES leaders are determined to "create and implement a unified force whose general staff is operational with constituted battalions," assuring that "all defense and security issues will be handled by the general staff of this unified force," which is based in Niamey, the capital city of Niger.

Diplomacy and development are the two other pillars of the confederation, he added, stressing that "to consolidate these three pillars, we meet through intermediate structures to evaluate the progress made and the objectives achieved." (Xinhua)

## Youth-led anti-government protests in Morocco turn deadly; two people killed

RABAT, Morocco, Oct 2, (AP): Anti-government demonstrators in Morocco filled the streets for a fifth straight night on Wednesday, as protests over the state of public services descended into deadly violence. Police opened fire at the protesters in a southern town, reportedly in self-defense, killing two people.

The deaths in Leqiaa, about 500 kilometers (312 miles) south of the capital of Rabat, were the first fatalities as anger mounts across this North African country over conditions and government spending.

Morocco's state news agency, MAP, cited local authorities as saying the two "troublemakers" were killed by police acting in self-defense. It said those shot were attempting to seize police weapons, though no eyewitnesses could corroborate the report. There were no further details.

The demonstrations, organized by a leaderless movement dominated by internet-savvy youth, have taken the country by surprise and emerged as some of Morocco's biggest in years. By midweek, they appeared to be spreading to new locations despite a lack of permits from authorities.

Those taking part in the so-called



A boy is detained as youth led protests calling for healthcare and education reforms turned violent, in Sale, Morocco on Oct 1. (AP)

"Gen Z protests" decry what they see as widespread corruption. Through chants and posters, they have contrasted the flow of billions in investment toward preparation for the 2030 World Cup, while many schools and hospitals lack funds and remain in a dire state.

But chants were fewer as violence broke out in several cities on Wednesday evening, following days of mass

arrests in more than a dozen cities, particularly in places where jobs are scarce and social services lacking.

In Sale, the poorer city just across the river from Morocco's capital, an Associated Press reporter saw hundreds of masked youth - mostly teenagers - torching cars, banks and shops, smashing windows and looting, with no police in sight.

## Journalism association to leave El Salvador over government pressure

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, Oct 2, (AP): El Salvador's Journalists Association is moving its legal status out of the country in response to a foreign agents law passed earlier this year that was seen as a way to pressure critical voices in the Central American nation.

Founded in 1936, the association said Wednesday that to continue defending journalists' rights and freedom of the press it would have to move to another country, which it did not name. The association announced plans in September to close its offices.

"This was a difficult decision, taken after evaluating the urgent need to work without limitations, pressures," the group said in a statement.

President Nayib Bukele has consolidated his grip on power since winning re-election in a landslide. He points to his success in fighting the country's powerful gangs and high popularity.

The foreign agents law passed in May imposes a 30% tax on funds nongovernmental organizations receive from outside El Salvador and requires them to register as foreign agents. He



El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele, (left), waves next to first lady Gabriela Bukele after delivering his annual address to Congress at the National Theater in San Salvador, El Salvador on June 1. (AP)

has criticized nongovernmental organizations critical of his policies as sympathetic to the gangs.

Critics have said it is an attempt to silence critical voices by going after

their international funding.

Several other prominent organizations, including the human rights group Cristosal, have moved outside El Salvador.



# Dollar settles at KD 0.304

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA): The US dollar exchange rate against the Kuwaiti dinar settled at KD 0.304 on Thursday, while the Euro dropped by 0.11 percent to reach KD 0.357, compared to Wednesday's prices, said Central Bank of Kuwait

(CBK). CBK added in its daily bulletin that the exchange rate of the pound sterling rose by 0.21 percent to KD 0.410, while the Swiss franc dropped by 0.14 percent to reach KD 0.382, and the Japanese settled at KD 0.002.

# Business

An initiative supporting financial inclusion with easy financing and flexible repayment plans

## Warba Bank launches first digital ‘Easy Finance’ in Kuwait for domestic workers

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: As part of its vision to provide innovative solutions that serve all segments of society, and in a first-of-its-kind initiative in Kuwait, Warba Bank launched “SiDi Easy Finance”, a digital easy financing solution designed exclusively for residents under Article 20 (domestic workers). The service offers financing in three tiers of KD 100, KD 200 or KD 300, with flexible repayment periods ranging between 3 and 9 months.

This initiative comes as part of the Bank's strategy to enhance financial inclusion for low-income segments that often lack access to appropriate financial and banking services. Previously, Warba Bank launched the SiDi account to provide integrated banking solutions that include account opening and low-fee remittances, designed to suit the needs and capabilities of low-income clients.

On this occasion, Mr. Hamad Mohammad Ashkanani, Senior Director Business Excellence at Warba Bank, said: “We are proud to be the only bank in Kuwait providing specialized financing solutions for domestic workers. SiDi Easy Finance is not just a financial product; it is a true embodiment of our vision ‘Let's Own Tomorrow,’ as we

work to build a fair and inclusive financial system that serves all members of society without exception.”

Ashkanani further stressed that this financing solution is governed by a regulatory framework compliant with Islamic Sharia principles and requires no financial commitments from the sponsor. He noted that this reflects the very purpose of the SiDi account, which aims to provide full independence for its clients, while also supporting sponsors by offering additional options to track salary transfers alongside a set of free banking services and products through the SiDi app.

**A seamless and secure digital journey**  
SiDi Easy Finance service provides a fully digital, secure, and user-friendly experience. SiDi clients can submit financing applications, receive approval and obtain financing without the need to visit any bank branch. The process begins with submitting an application via the SiDi app, which first requires the client to open a bank account through the app, a process that is entirely free, simple and secure.

To ensure the highest standards of authentication and security, clients must activate their digital signature through self-service kiosks provided by the Public Authority for



Hamad Ashkanani

Civil Information (PACI), available at multiple locations including PACI headquarters, major shopping malls and main markets, in addition to a kiosk available at the dedicated SiDi branch.

SiDi Easy Finance service also saves sponsors time and effort, as they are not re-

quired to intervene in any of the financing procedures related to the worker. All steps are completed digitally via the SiDi app, eliminating the need for sponsors to follow up on applications or provide direct financial support.

Ashkanani added: “At Warba Bank, we do not only provide financial services; we redefine the very concept of banking experiences by investing in smart, digital solutions that reflect our clients' needs and modern lifestyle. Our goal is to offer real value and full control over their financial transactions with ease and security. We believe that continuous innovation is the way forward to deliver banking services that adapt to market changes and the evolving aspirations of individuals in today's fast-moving world.”

**Commitment to Sharia and regulatory standards**

The SiDi Easy Finance service is governed by a strict regulatory framework that ensures full compliance with Islamic Sharia rulings and the guidelines of Kuwaiti regulatory authorities, offering clients additional assurance regarding the safety and legitimacy of all transactions and procedures.

The service has also been designed in accordance with the highest standards of cyber-

security and data protection, while meeting all local and international regulatory requirements in the field of digital banking services.

**Leadership in the Kuwaiti market**  
With the launch of SiDi Easy Finance, Warba Bank reinforces its leadership as the first and only bank in Kuwait to provide specialized financing solutions for domestic workers. This milestone reflects the Bank's strong commitment to innovation, financial inclusion and social responsibility.

The initiative joins a series of pioneering programs that Warba Bank continues to introduce, cementing its role as a progressive Islamic financial institution that integrates technological advancement with noble social values, while contributing to building a sustainable and inclusive financial future for all.

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

## Boursa Kuwait closes mixed

All Share Index down 0.10%

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA): **Boursa Kuwait ended Thursday's trading session on a mixed note, with the All Share Index slipping 8.54 points, or 0.10 percent, to close at 8,773.35 points. Trading activity was robust, with 846.16 million shares changing hands across 35,366 transactions, generating a total value of KD 137.6 million (USD 418.3 million).**

The Main Market Index recorded strong gains, climbing 104.06 points, or 1.26 percent, to settle at 8,336.43 points. This surge came on the back of heavy

trade, as 714.18 million shares were exchanged in 26,891 transactions, valued at KD 91.4 million (USD 277.8 million).

In contrast, the Premier Market Index retreated, losing 37.05 points, or 0.40 percent, to close at 9,315.82 points. A total of 131.9 million shares were traded through 8,475 deals, amounting to KD 46.2 million (USD 140.4 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index maintained upward momentum, rising 61.69 points, or 0.72 percent, to finish at 8,604.80 points. Trading reached 476.6 million shares through 17,489 cash transactions, with a total value of KD 70.18 million (USD 213.3 million).

Total market value climbs 25.4%

## Kuwait weekly real estate deals surge 18.7% to 127 transactions

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: Weekly real estate transactions reached 127, totaling KD 81.8 million, up from 107 transactions worth KD 65.2 million the previous week. This marks an 18.7 percent increase in the number of transactions and a 25.4 percent rise in total value, driven by a surge in investment and significant growth in commercial real estate.

The weekly report from the Real Estate Registration and Documentation Departments at the Ministry of Justice revealed stability in residential real estate, while investors continued to focus on investment and commercial properties despite a decline in transaction numbers, reflecting large-scale commercial deals.

The residential sector maintained its first place in terms of transaction volume, with 83 transactions worth KD 33 million, compared to 73 transactions valued at KD 30 million the previous week.

Despite a 13.7 percent increase in transaction numbers and a 10 percent rise in value, the average transaction value slightly declined, reflecting buyers' preference for smaller units or less expensive land ahead of

the new laws' implementation.

The investment sector recorded a significant jump, with transactions increasing from 23 to 40, a growth rate of approximately 73.9 percent. The value rose from KD 21.2 million to KD 29.8 million, marking a 40.6 percent increase. This confirms investors' strong interest in income-generating properties, especially with rising rental returns and increasing talk of new regulations that could affect residential land prices.

As for the commercial sector, despite a decline in the number of transactions to just two, compared to five the previous week (a 60 percent decrease), its value surged to KD 16.4 million, up from KD 4.3 million (an increase of 281 percent), reflecting the completion of major, high-value deals that strongly impacted overall trading.

The report also noted the conclusion of one crafts deal worth KD 1.6 million and another in the exhibitions sector valued at KD 1 million.

Meanwhile, no warehouse deals were recorded this week, compared to five deals worth KD 8.8 million the previous week.

No transactions were recorded on the coastal strip, which had limited activity last week as well.

## Egypt organizes 9th Mediterranean Central Banks Conference in Cairo

CAIRO, Oct 2, (KUNA): Governor of the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) Abdalla Hassan called Thursday for cementing cooperation among central banks of the Mediterranean region to turn financial challenges into opportunities.

Speaking at the opening session of the 9th Conference of Mediterranean Central Banks held in Cairo today, Abdalla said that hosting this conference reflects Egypt's “unwavering commitment to fostering collaboration and exchanging expertise to promote stability and prosperity across the region”.

He affirmed that the conference was an opportunity to deepen cooperation, particularly in light of current circumstances that demand collective action to overcome challenges.

“The Mediterranean, which has long served as a bridge between people, cultures, and continents, must now also evolve into a hub for innovation and resilience,” he said.

For his part, Banco de Espana Governor Jose Luis Escrivá called for reinforcing multilateralism and building resilient financial systems that serve all segments of society.

Meanwhile, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)'s Luiz de Mello highlighted the role of central banks in financing green transitions and supporting inclusive growth.

Held under the theme “Harnessing Innovation and Integration for Sustainable and Inclusive Development in the Mediterranean Region”, the conference was organised in cooperation with Banco de Espana, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

The conference's agenda features a number of key issues including the implications of artificial intelligence for central banks and the financial sector; financing for sustainable development and the green transition; financial inclusion for women entrepreneurs and SMEs; and advancing financial integration in the Mediterranean region.

This long-standing joint initiative fosters dialogue on the region's economic and financial outlook and the role of central banks in building resilience, inclusion and sustainability.

## Kuwait crude oil plunge to \$67.67 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil plunged USD 3.21 during Wednesday's trading to reach USD 67.67 per barrel compared with USD 70.88 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corpora-

tion (KPC) said Thursday. Brent futures dropped 68 cents to USD 65.35 pb and West Texas Intermediate lost 59 cents to USD 61.78 pb.

Global economy showing signs of recovery

## Kuwait's Oil Min stresses OPEC+ coordination for market stability

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Oil Tareq Al-Roumi has emphasized the importance of continued coordination among OPEC Plus countries to maintain stability on the global oil market through reaching a balance between supply and demand.

In a statement following his participation in the 62th session of the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) held today via video conference, Minister Al-Roumi affirmed that market indicators showed a revive in market basics and growth of the global economy.

He pointed out that the Committee had reviewed the

state members' crude oil production and the level of compliance with their quotas in the months of July and August.

The Committee commended the high conformity rate among state members and urged them to continue abidance with the production compensation plans to ensure a balance in supply and demand, he added.

In addition to Minister Al-Roumi, Kuwait's Governor at OPEC Mohammad Al-Shatti and Kuwait's National Representative at the organization Sheikh Abdullah Sabah Salem Al-Sabah participated in the meeting.

Return on equity at 13.2%

## GCC banking sector remains resilient with strong performance in H1 2025

DUBAI, Oct 2: According to the EY GCC Banking Sector Outlook H1 2025, banks across the region maintained a strong performance in the first half of the year, with sustained profitability, asset quality, and capitalization all improving. The sector continues to demonstrate resilience even as monetary policy easing and tighter liquidity begin to impact margins.

**Macroeconomic stability underpins sector performance**

The GCC economy is forecast to grow by 3% in 2025, rising further to 4.1% in 2026, supported by infrastructure investments, diversification initiatives and private sector dynamism. Oil GDP is expected to recover modestly by 1.7% in 2025 before accelerating to 5.4% in 2026, while non-oil sectors drive growth through ongoing reforms and foreign investment. These conditions provide a supportive backdrop for banking activity across the region.

**Mayur Pau, EY MENA Financial Services Leader, said:**

“The first half of 2025 demonstrates the resilience of the GCC banking sector. With solid capital buffers, healthier balance sheets and improved efficiency, banks are well-positioned to navigate near-term pressures and pursue long-term opportunities. As digital adoption, sustainability and regulatory readiness advance, the sector will continue to play a central role in supporting the region's economic transformation.”

**Stronger fundamentals in H1 2025**

The GCC banking industry's average return on equity stood at 13.2%, reflecting higher noninterest income and stronger cost efficiency. The cost-to-income ratio improved to 32.0%, indicating sustained benefits from operational optimization and digital transformation.

Asset quality strengthened, with



Mayur Pau, EY MENA Financial Services Leader

- Average return on equity reached 13.2%, reflecting higher noninterest income and stronger cost efficiency
- The cost-to-income ratio improved to 32.0%, benefiting from operational optimization and digital transformation
- Asset quality strengthened, with non-performing loans declining to 2.4%

non-performing loans declining to 2.4% from 2.8% a year earlier, while coverage ratios remained above 140%. Capitalization remained a core strength with an average Tier 1 ratio of 17.5% and a capital adequacy ratio of 18.9%, reinforcing the sector's capacity to absorb external shocks.

**Liquidity and margins under pressure**

Despite strong fundamentals, GCC banks are adjusting to a changing environment. Net interest margins eased to 2.6%, compared to 2.8% in H1 2024, reflecting the impact of rate cuts across the region, with further compression expected following September 2025 reductions. Liquidity conditions also tightened, with the loan-to-deposit ratio rising to 94.1%, up from 90.7% in the previous year. These factors highlight the importance of efficiency gains, funding diversification, and revenue expansion beyond interest income.

Mayur adds:

“Bank profitability remains intact, underpinned by rising non-interest income and stable asset quality. Credit

growth remains solid, particularly in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, where transformation agendas continue to drive lending activity. However, net interest margins are under pressure following rate reductions implemented in late 2024, which triggered loan repricing at lower yields. This trend is expected to persist with further rate cuts announced in September 2025. However, banks are actively diversifying revenue streams and enhancing operational efficiency to sustain profitability.”

**Transformational shifts shape the outlook**

The report notes that banks continue to adapt by embedding sustainability, accelerating digital transformation, and preparing for evolving regulatory requirements. Adoption of AI-driven banking, enhanced customer-facing digital solutions, and alignment with frameworks such as Basel III and Anti-Money-Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) remain priorities. These initiatives are reshaping business models and positioning the sector for long-term competitiveness.

## Saudi Arabia, UN launch global initiative to boost cyberspace capacity

RIYADH, Oct 2, (Xinhua): Saudi Arabia and the United Nations (UN) on Wednesday jointly launched the Global Initiative for Capacity Building in Cyberspace during the 2025 Global Cybersecurity Forum (GCF) Annual Meeting in Riyadh.

The initiative comes in response to a global shortage of 2.8 million cybersecurity professionals and skills gaps reported by 43 percent of information security executives, according to the GCF 2024 Cybersecurity Workforce Report.

The program will offer expert-led workshops, training and education

programs, international simulations and cyber drills, policy development support, and collaborative research to strengthen skills ranging from policymaking, law enforcement, and cyber diplomacy.

Implementation will be led by Saudi Arabia's National Cybersecurity Authority (NCA), the Saudi Information Technology Company, and the GCF, in partnership with several UN agencies.

“Saudi Arabia's partnership with the United Nations to advance global cybersecurity capacity building is a testament to a shared commitment to driving progress for the benefit of people, societies, and nations,” said Majed bin

Mohammed Al-Mazyed, governor of the NCA, during the meeting.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said via video that cyberspace is essential for innovation and opportunity, but vulnerabilities can disrupt societies and threaten peace. “We must act together to ensure cyberspace serves the common good by investing in people, building skills and fostering inclusion,” he said.

The GCF Annual Meeting, now in its fifth edition, serves as a global platform to promote international cooperation and strengthen the safety and resilience of cyberspace through dialogue and action-oriented initiatives.





Minister Abdullatif Al-Meshari, the Governor of the Capital, Isam Al-Sager, Shaikha Al-Bahar, Salah Al-Fulaij, and Maysa Boushehri during the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the project.



A group photo with the engineering team that supervised the project's implementation.



Governor of the Capital, Isam Al-Sager, Shaikha Al-Bahar, Salah Al-Fulaij, and Sulaiman Al-Marzouq.



Part of the audience.



Part of the inauguration ceremony.

Attended by Minister Al-Meshari, Governor of the Capital Governorate, and NBK's executive management

## Inauguration of Shuwaikh Beach Development Project marks a significant milestone in strengthening Kuwait's touristic infrastructure and advancing Vision 2035



The Governor of the Capital delivers his speech.



Eng. Maysa Boushehri delivers her speech.



Minister Abdullatif Al-Meshari delivering his speech.



Isam Al-Sager delivers his speech.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: Following the completion of construction, Shuwaikh Beach Development and Beautification Project was inaugurated yesterday (Wednesday), now ready to welcome visitors in its renewed and modernized look.

Generously funded by National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), this project represents a unique and valuable addition to Kuwait's touristic infrastructure. It underscores NBK's leadership in social responsibility and community service, while supporting national initiatives that advance sustainable development and elevate Kuwait's position as a recreational destination in the region.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Eng. Abdullatif Al-Meshari, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Mr. Isam Al-Sager, Vice Chairman and Group CEO of National Bank of Kuwait, Shaikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Governor of the Capital Governorate, Eng. Maysa Boushehri, Kuwait Municipality's Deputy Director General for Projects, along with NBK's executive management, senior officials, and representatives from the relevant government entities.

In celebration of the inauguration, the ceremony featured live folkloric performances, creating a vibrant cultural atmosphere, alongside athletic activities. Moreover, the event also honored the engineering team responsible for overseeing the project's implementation, ensuring that the facilities were developed to meet the highest aesthetic and environmental standards.

NBK's support for this project underscores its leadership in social responsibility and embodies the Bank's commitment to advancing developmental initiatives that align with Kuwait Vision 2035. The project aims to strengthen the tourism and entertainment sector, enhance quality of life and create an attractive environment for both citizens and residents of Kuwait.

Blending modern design with state-of-the-art facilities, this 1.7 Kilometer project represents a leading example of waterfront development in Kuwait, built to the highest standards of environmental sustainability and reflecting NBK's vision of promoting societal welfare.

**Generous Donation**

In his remarks on the occasion, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Eng. Abdullatif Al-Meshari, expressed his appreciation to NBK for its generous contribution towards the implementation of the Shuwaikh Beach Development and Beautification Project. He also thanked the Governor of the Capital for his diligent follow-up, emphasizing that this initiative marks the beginning of further developments to enhance the country's beaches and vital public spaces, making them more vibrant and better serving the residents of Kuwait.

Al-Meshari further commended the significant role played by both current and former leaders of Kuwait Municipality in bringing the project to fruition, while praising the dedication and professionalism of the municipality's national engineering teams in delivering vital development projects.

**An Ambitious Vision**

Speaking on the occasion, Shaikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah,

Governor of the Capital, stated: "I am pleased to welcome everyone as we gather today to celebrate the inauguration of the Shuwaikh Beach Development Project. This initiative reflects an ambitious vision for achieving sustainable development and represents a significant step in enhancing the capital's cultural and urban identity. It also embodies our continuous efforts to develop public waterfronts and transform them into integrated urban and cultural destinations that serve both the people of Kuwait and its visitors."

The Governor explained that the project aims to position Shuwaikh Beach as a distinguished model of an integrated recreational destination, featuring modern facilities, landscaped green areas, and dedicated spaces for sports, social, and leisure activities. He noted that it provides an appealing and safe environment that aligns with the community's aspirations for healthier lifestyles and more sustainable green spaces.

"The Shuwaikh Beach Development Project marks the beginning of further initiatives that reflect the aspirations of our visionary leadership for a brighter future. We invite all individuals and institutions to experience the beach's

**Al-Meshari:** We extend our gratitude to NBK for its generous contribution that made the implementation of this project possible.

**Al-Ali:** This marks the beginning of further initiatives that embody the aspirations of our visionary leadership for a brighter future.

**Al-Sager:** This project stands as a milestone reaffirming NBK's role as a pioneering national institution committed to supporting society and achieving sustainable development.

■ The Shuwaikh Beach Development and Beautification Project exemplifies the strength of public-private partnerships.

■ We believe that leading institutions carry a responsibility to drive development through initiatives that create a tangible impact on society.

■ NBK remain committed to investing in social welfare initiatives.

beauty, take full advantage of its modern and unique facilities, and actively participate in maintaining its cleanliness. By doing so, we ensure that it remains a symbol of beauty, sustainability, and civic pride, a recreational and cultural landmark worthy of the capital, preserved for the enjoyment of future generations," he added.

Al-Ali expressed his sincere gratitude to Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Eng. Abdullatif Al-Meshari, for his continuous support and dedicated efforts in overseeing the successful imple-

mentation of this vital project. He also commended the fruitful collaboration of all government agencies and their coordinated efforts with Kuwait Municipality and the Ministry of Public Works, which ensured the completion of the project in accordance with the highest standards of quality and sustainability.

Moreover, the Governor expressed his gratitude to the private sector, represented by NBK, for its significant contribution and support in realizing this vital project.

**Anchoring Partnerships**

Commenting on this event, Mr.

Isam Al-Sager, Vice Chairman and Group CEO of National Bank of Kuwait said: "The Shuwaikh Beach Development and Beautification Project is a milestone that reaffirms NBK's role as a pioneering national institution in social responsibility and sustainable development. It is a true embodiment of public-private partnerships and an exemplary model of effectively leveraging expertise and resources to support infrastructure and society, providing recreational spaces in Kuwait that align well with the national standards and visitors' expectations".

"NBK's support for this touristic project reflects our firm belief that leading national institutions have a responsibility to champion development, not only through economic activity but also via initiatives that create meaningful impact and enhance the quality of life in society", Al-Sager added.

Al-Sager also highlighted that through this project, NBK reaffirms its leadership in supporting Kuwait Vision 2035, which prioritizes the development of tourism and entertainment in Kuwait. He emphasized that NBK will continue to support Kuwait's efforts to achieve environmental sustainability and reduce

carbon emission, in line with the country's pledge to achieve carbon neutrality by the year 2060.

Finally, Al-Sager expressed his sincere gratitude to all the government institutions and entities that contributed to the completion of this landmark project, including Kuwait Municipality and the Capital Governorate, emphasizing that the Bank will continue to invest in initiatives that promote social welfare.

**All-Inclusive Facilities and Modern Amenities**

The Shuwaikh Beach Development and Beautification Project comprises four thoughtfully designed zones to cater to the diverse needs of beach visitors:

■ **The first area:** sports fields, entertainment areas, landscaped green spaces, renovated mosque, restrooms, commercial kiosks, and designated areas for future kiosks, ATMs (Automated Teller Machines) and ITMs (Interactive Teller Machines).

■ **The second area:** A sandy beach area featuring centrally placed wooden loungers to provide a comfortable and relaxing experience.

■ **The third area:** A closed park with green fields, trees, and dedicated spaces for relaxation and meditation.

■ **The fourth area:** The project's entry point, featuring interactive Dama game with large pieces, green fields, and versatile multi-usage spaces.

The project also encompassed comprehensive infrastructure upgrade, including stormwater, sewage, and electricity networks, along with the installation of 360 LEED-certified lighting poles and modern surveillance cameras. Approximately 14 tons of recycled tire materials were incorporated into the construction of the running track, demonstrating NBK's commitment to environmental sustainability and reducing its carbon footprint.

**A Distinguished National Engineering Team**

Overseeing the project was a specialized team from Kuwait's Municipality spearheaded by Eng. Ameena Hamada. The team included Eng. Khaled Al-Kandari, Eng. Sara Al-Qahs, Eng. Eman Al-Kandari, Eng. Mona Al-Mutairi, Eng. Hessa Al-Sane', Eng. Rawan Al-Dhafiri, Eng. Athbi Al-Asfour, Eng. Maraheb Al-Hilal, Eng. Rawa'a Al-Radwan, Eng. Ahmed Al-Enezi, and Eng. Razan Al-Hajiri. They worked diligently to execute the project in accordance with the highest environmental and aesthetic standards, fulfilling the collaborative vision of all parties involved.

**Social Responsibility Leadership**

In May 2023, NBK signed a KD 3 million agreement with Kuwait Municipality to develop and renovate Shuwaikh Beach, providing for all visitor needs. The project emphasizes contemporary facilities designed to the highest standards, promoting health, athletics, and sustainable recreational experiences in Kuwait.

This project is part of a series of initiatives that NBK is committed to launching across various sectors, including healthcare, environmental stewardship, and social awareness. It reinforces the bank's leadership as a leading contributor to social responsibility in Kuwait and strengthens its sustainable development efforts in line with the national development plan.





Powell: Policy decisions now ‘meeting by meeting’

# Shutdown delays key US economic data, clouding outlook

WASHINGTON, Oct 2, (AP): The government shutdown that began Wednesday will deprive policymakers and investors of economic data vital to their decision-making at a time of unusual uncertainty about the direction of the U.S. economy.

The absence will be felt almost immediately, as the government’s monthly jobs report scheduled for release Friday will likely be delayed. A weekly report on the number of Americans seeking unemployment benefits - a proxy for layoffs that is typically published on Thursdays - will also be postponed.

If the shutdown is short-lived, it won’t be very disruptive. But if the release of economic data is delayed for several weeks or longer, it could pose challenges, particularly for the Federal Reserve. The Fed is grappling with where to set a key interest rate at a time of conflicting signals, with inflation running above its 2% target and hiring nearly ground to a halt, driving the unemployment rate higher in August.

The Fed typically cuts this rate when unemployment rises, but raises it - or at least leaves it unchanged - when inflation is rising too quickly. It’s possible the Fed will have little new federal economic data to analyze by its next meeting on Oct. 28-29, when it is widely expected to reduce its rate again.

“The job market had been a source of real strength in the economy but has been slowing down considerably the past few months,” said Michael Linden, senior policy fellow at the left-leaning Washington Center for Equitable Growth. “It would be very good to know if that slowdown was continuing, accelerating, or reversing.”

The Fed cut its rate by a quarter-point earlier this month and signaled it was likely to do so twice more this year. Fed officials said they would keep a close eye on how inflation and unemployment evolve, but that depends on the data being available.

A key inflation report is scheduled for Oct. 15 and the government’s monthly retail sales report is slated for release the next day.



Staff members place a sign on a podium before a news conference, Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025, on Capitol Hill in Washington. (AP)

“We’re in a meeting-by-meeting situation, and we’re going to be looking at the data,” Fed Chair Jerome Powell said during a news conference earlier this month.

The economic picture has recently gotten cloudier. Despite slower hiring, there are signs that overall economic growth may be picking up. Consumers have stepped up their shopping and the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta estimates the economy likely expanded at a healthy clip in the July-September quarter, after a large gain in the April-June period.

A key question for the Fed is whether that growth can revive the job market, which this Friday’s report might have helped illustrate. Economists had forecast another month of weak hiring, with just 50,000 new positions

added, according to a survey by FactSet. The unemployment rate was projected to stay at a still-low 4.3%.

On Wall Street, investors obsess over the monthly jobs reports, typically issued the first Friday of every month. It’s a crucial indicator of the economy’s health and provides insights into how the Fed might adjust interest rates, which affects the cost of borrowing and influences how investors allocate their money.

So far, investors don’t seem fazed by the shutdown. The broad S&P 500 stock index rose slightly Wednesday to an all-time high.

Many businesses also rely on government data to gauge how the economy is faring. The Commerce Department’s monthly report on retail sales, for example, is a comprehensive look at the health of U.S. consumers and can influence whether companies make plans to expand or shrink their operations and workforces.

For the time being, the Fed, economists, and investors will likely focus more on private data.

On Wednesday, the payroll provider ADP issued its monthly employment data, which showed that businesses cut 32,000 jobs in September - a signal the economy is slowing. Still, ADP chief economist Nela Richardson said her firm’s report “was not intended to be a replacement” for government statistics.

The ADP data does not capture what’s happening at government agencies, for example - an area of the economy that could be significantly affected by a lengthy shutdown.

“Using a portfolio of private sector and government data gives you a better chance of capturing a very complicated economy in a complex world,” she said.

The Fed will remain open no matter how long the shutdown lasts, because it funds itself from earnings on the government bonds and other securities it owns. It will continue to provide its monthly snapshots of industrial production, which includes mining, manufacturing, and utility output. The next industrial production report will be released Oct. 17.

# Supreme court lets Lisa Cook remain on Fed board for now

High court to hear Trump’s case against Cook in Jan

WASHINGTON, Oct 2, (AP): The Supreme Court on Wednesday allowed Lisa Cook to remain as a Federal Reserve governor for now, declining to act on the Trump administration’s effort to immediately remove her from the central bank.

In a brief unsigned order, the high court said it would hear arguments in January over Republican President Donald Trump’s effort to force Cook off the Fed board.

The court will consider whether to block a lower-court ruling in Cook’s favor while her challenge to her firing by Trump continues.

The high-court order was a rare instance of Trump not quickly getting everything he wants from the justices in an emergency appeal.

Cook will be able to take part in the remaining two Fed meetings in 2025, including the next meeting of its interest rate-setting committee in late October.

Separately, the justices are hearing arguments in December in a separate but related legal fight over Trump’s actions to fire members of the boards that oversee other independent federal agencies. The case concerns whether Trump can fire those officials at will.

But a second issue in the case could bear directly on Cook’s fate: whether federal judges have the authority to prevent the firings or instead may only order back pay for officials who were wrongly dismissed.

Trump had sought to oust Cook before the September meeting of the Fed’s interest rate-setting committee. But a judge ruled that the firing was illegal, and a divided appeals court rejected the Trumps administration’s emergency appeal.

A day after the meeting concluded with a one-quarter of a percentage point reduction in a key interest rate, the administration turned to the Supreme Court in a new emergency appeal.

The White House campaign to unseat Cook marks an unprecedented bid to reshape the Fed board, which was designed to be largely independent from day-to-day politics. No president has fired a sitting Fed governor in the Fed’s 112-year history.



Federal Reserve Board of Governors member Lisa Cook listens during an open meeting of the Board of Governors, June 25, 2025, in Washington. (AP)

“President Trump lawfully removed Lisa Cook for cause from the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. We look forward to ultimate victory after presenting our oral arguments before the Supreme Court in January,” White House spokesman Kush Desai said.

The court already has suggested that it will view the Fed differently from other independent agencies and Wednesday’s order is another demonstration of that distinction, said Lev Menand, a professor at Columbia Law School and author of a book on the Fed.

The justices have allowed other firings to take effect while legal challenges proceed, including in the case that will be argued in December involving Rebecca Slaughter, whom Trump fired from the Federal Trade Commission.

“The court seems to be steering a different course here,” Menand said. “It has the effect of freezing the status quo that is in favor of Fed independence.”

Cook, who was appointed to the Fed board by Democratic President Joe Biden, has said she will not leave her job and won’t be “bullied” by Trump. Her lawyers said in a statement Wednesday

day that the court’s decision “rightly allows Governor Cook to continue in her role on the Federal Reserve Board, and we look forward to further proceedings consistent with the Court’s order.”

Separately, Senate Republicans recently confirmed Stephen Miran, Trump’s nominee to an open spot on the Fed’s board. Both Cook and Miran took part in last month’s meeting. Miran was the sole dissenting vote, preferring a larger cut.

Trump has accused Cook of mortgage fraud because she appeared to claim two properties, in Michigan and Georgia, as “primary residences” in June and July 2021, before she joined the Fed board. Such claims can lead to a lower mortgage rate and smaller down payment than if one of them was declared as a rental property or second home.

“Put simply, the President may reasonably determine that interest rates paid by the American people should not be set by a Governor who appears to have lied about facts material to the interest rates she secured for herself - and refuses to explain the apparent misrepresentations,” Solicitor General D. John Sauer wrote in his Supreme Court filing.

Cook has denied any wrongdoing and has not been charged with a crime. According to documents obtained by The Associated Press, Cook specified that her Atlanta condo would be a “vacation home,” according to a loan estimate she obtained in May 2021. In a form seeking a security clearance, she described it as a “2nd home.” Both documents appear to undercut the administration’s claims of fraud.

U.S. District Judge Jia Cobb ruled that the administration had not satisfied a legal requirement that Fed governors can only be fired “for cause,” which she said was limited to misconduct while in office. Cook joined the Fed’s board in 2022.

Cobb also held that Trump’s firing would have deprived Cook of her due process, or legal right, to contest the firing.

By a 2-1 vote, a panel of the federal appeals court in Washington rejected the administration’s request to let Cook’s firing proceed.

Trump’s lawyers have argued that even if the conduct occurred before her time as governor, her alleged action “indisputably calls into question Cook’s trustworthiness and whether she can be a responsible steward of the interest rates and economy.”

## Silver surges 59% ytd

# Gold hits record \$3,858 amid US shutdown fears

NEW YORK, Oct 2, (AP): As uncertainty deepens amid the U.S. government’s first shutdown in almost seven years, the gold frenzy continues to climb to new heights.

The going price for New York spot gold hit a record \$3,858.45 per troy ounce - the standard for measuring precious metals - as of market close Tuesday, ahead of the shutdown beginning overnight. And futures continued to climb on Wednesday, dancing with the \$3,900 mark throughout the day.

Gold sales can rise sharply when anxious investors seek “safe havens” for parking their money. Before Wednesday, the asset - and other metals, like silver - have seen wider gains over the last year, particularly with President Donald Trump’s barrage of tariffs plunging much of the world into economic uncertainty.

If trends persist, analysts have predicted that prices could continue to soar. Still, gold can be volatile and the future is never promised. Here’s what we know.

Gold futures are up more than 45% since the start of 2025, trading at just under \$3,895 by around 4 p.m. ET Wednesday.

Other precious metals have also raked in gains - with silver seeing an even bigger percentage jump year to date. Silver futures are up nearly 59%, trading at over \$47 per troy ounce as of Wednesday afternoon.

A lot of it boils down to uncertainty. Interest in buying metals like gold typically spikes when investors become anxious.

Much of the recent economic turmoil has spanned from Trump’s trade wars. Since the start of 2025, steep new tariffs the president has imposed on goods coming into the U.S. from around the world have strained businesses and consumers alike - pushing costs higher and weakening the job market. As a result, hiring has plunged while inflation continues to inch back up. And more and more consumers are expressing pessimism about the road ahead.

The current U.S. government shutdown could add to those anxieties. A key jobs report from the Labor Department, scheduled for Friday, is likely to be delayed, for example. And the shutdown itself threatens to bring its own economic fallout nationwide. Roughly 750,000 federal workers

were expected to be furloughed, with some potentially fired by Trump’s Republican administration. Many offices will also be shuttered, perhaps permanently, as Trump vows to “do things that are irreversible” to punish Democrats for voting down GOP legislation.

The scope of impact could come down to how long the impasse lasts. Wall Street, meanwhile, has largely been unmoved by the shutdown so far - but Treasury yields dropped after discouraging hiring data from ADP Research Wednesday.

Investments in gold have also been driven by other factors over time. Analysts have previously pointed to strong gold demand from central banks around the world - including amid rising geopolitical tensions, such as the ongoing wars in Gaza and Ukraine.

Advocates of investing in gold call it a “safe haven” - arguing the commodity can serve to diversify and balance your investment portfolio, as well as mitigate possible risks down the road. Some also take comfort in buying something tangible that has the potential to increase in value over time.

Still, experts caution against putting all your eggs in one basket. And not everyone agrees gold is a good investment. Critics say gold isn’t always the inflation hedge many say it is - and that there are more efficient ways to protect against potential loss of capital, such as derivative-based investments.

The Commodity Futures Trade Commission has also previously warned people to be wary of investing in gold. Precious metals can be highly volatile, the commission said, and prices rise as demand goes up - meaning “when economic anxiety or instability is high, the people who typically profit from precious metals are the sellers.”

And even gold’s current rally has seen some volatility. While still up significantly overall since the start of the year, there’s been a handful of short stretches with losses. Gold prices fell for several days following Trump’s sweeping “Liberation Day” announcement on April 2, for example.

If you do choose to invest in gold, the commission adds, it’s important to educate yourself on safe trading practices and be cautious of potential scams and counterfeits on the market.

## Deal seen as possibly Buffett’s last major acquisition

# Berkshire Hathaway to acquire Occidental’s chemical unit for \$9.7 bln

OMAHA, Oct 2, (AP): Berkshire Hathaway is buying Occidental Petroleum’s chemical division for \$9.7 billion in what may be the last big acquisition involving the consummate dealmaker, Warren Buffett.

Buffett wasn’t mentioned anywhere in materials released by Berkshire Hathaway discussing the deal Thursday, potentially signaling a passing of the torch to Vice Chair Greg Abel, to whom Buffet will hand the CEO title in January.

Buffett will remain chairman at Berkshire and will still be involved in deciding how to spend the conglomerate’s colossal pile of more than \$344 billion cash.

Berkshire’s cash reserves have been growing for years because Buffett has been unable to find any major acquisitions at attractive prices since completing the \$11.6 billion acquisition of Allegheny Insurance in 2022. Prices for big acquisitions have been driven higher in recent years by the entry of more hedge funds in the market.

OxyChem makes things like chlorine for water treatment, vinyl chloride for plastics and calcium chloride that’s used to treat icy roads along with an assortment of other chemicals. It will fit nicely within Berkshire alongside Lubrizol, which Buffett bought in 2011 for \$9 billion.

“Berkshire is acquiring a robust portfolio of operating assets, supported by an accomplished team,” Abel said in a prepared statement. “We look forward to welcoming OxyChem as an operating subsidiary within Berkshire.”

OxyChem generated \$213 million in pretax earnings for Occidental in the second quarter, though that is down from last year when it generated



Berkshire Hathaway Chairman and CEO Warren Buffett speaks during an interview with Liz Claman on Fox Business Network’s ‘Countdown to the Closing Bell,’ May 7, 2018, in Omaha, Neb. (AP)

nearly \$300 million for the company. This year, Occidental has been selling off some of its assets in the Permian Basin to generate \$950 mil-

lion to pay down debt. Since it completed the CrownRock acquisition in December 2023, Occidental has sold off roughly \$4 billion worth of assets to help it pay down \$7.5 billion in debt. This OxyChem deal will accelerate that.

Occidental expects to use \$6.5 billion of proceeds from the Berkshire deal to lower debt and achieve the target of principal debt below \$15 billion set following the announcement of its CrownRock acquisition.

Berkshire held more than 28% of Occidental’s stock and had warrants to buy another 83,911,942.38 shares in the major oil and gas producer for \$59.586 per share before this deal. And Berkshire held about \$8.5 billion worth of preferred Occidental shares that it picked up in 2019 when it helped finance the oil producer’s purchase of Anadarko that Occidental has been paying 8% dividends on every year.

Buffett had previously told Berkshire investors that he wouldn’t sell off the Occidental stake and he has been periodically buying more shares, but he also told shareholders in 2023 that he had no plans to buy all of Occidental.

Berkshire owns an eclectic assortment of dozens of companies, including Geico and several other insurers, BNSF railroad, a portfolio of major utilities and some well-known brands like Dairy Queen and See’s Candy. Buffett has built up the conglomerate over the past 60 years. In addition to owning companies outright, Berkshire holds stocks worth more than \$250 billion, including large stakes in Apple, Coca-Cola, Bank of America and American Express.

The OxyChem deal is expected to close in the fourth quarter of this year.



## Behind bars but not silenced

# Turkish columnist perseveres through ‘prison journalism’

ANKARA, Turkey, Oct 2, (AP): Turkish journalist Fatih Altayli has been imprisoned, but his reporting remains defiantly alive.

From behind bars, the veteran journalist delivers news and sharp political commentary on his YouTube channel through letters relayed by his lawyers. The letters are read aloud by an assistant in an initiative Altayli’s peers have dubbed “prison journalism.”

“Fatih Altayli has launched a new form of journalism: prison journalism,” fellow journalist Murat Yetkin, wrote on his news website, Yetkin Report. “Drawing on visits from legislators, letters, and his lawyers - he continues his journalism uninterrupted, conveying not only information from inside but also insights about the outside world.”

Altayli, whose YouTube program attracts hundreds of thousands of views daily, was arrested in June on charges of threatening President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, an accusation he strongly denies. Critics say his arrest, which comes amid a deepening crackdown on the opposition, was aimed at silencing a government critic.

Prosecutors accuse Altayli of issuing and publicly disseminating a threat, a criminal charge under Turkish penal law, and are seeking a minimum five-year prison sentence. The first hearing of the trial is set for Friday.

The charges stem from a comment he made on his YouTube program, “Fatih Altayli Comments,” following a recent poll that reportedly showed more than 70% of the pub-



An empty chair takes center stage at a TV studio set where imprisoned Turkish journalist Fatih Altayli continues to deliver news on his YouTube show through letters read by his assistant, in Istanbul, Wednesday, Oct. 1. (AP)

lic opposed a lifetime presidency for Erdogan, who has been in power for more than two decades.

On the show, Altayli said he wasn’t surprised by the results of the poll and that the Turkish people preferred checks on authority.

“Look at the history of this nation,” he said. “This is a nation which strangled its sultan when they didn’t like him or want him. There are quite a few Ottoman sultans who were assassinated, strangled, or whose deaths were made to look like suicide.”

The 63-year-old journalist, columnist and television presenter whose career spans decades, was detained from his home on June 21, a day after the comment was aired - and charged with threatening the president.

The Istanbul Bar Association described the detention order against Altayli as unlawful, insisting that his comment did not constitute a “threat” and should be considered as freedom of expression.

The government-run Department for Combating Disinformation has responded to criticism over Altayli’s arrest, insisting that issuing a threat is a criminal offense and denouncing what it described as a coordinated campaign to manipulate public opinion and present the alleged threat as freedom of expression.

Altayli has since turned his cell in the notorious high-security Silivri prison near Istanbul - now renamed Marmara Prison Campus - into a newsroom of sorts. He often writes commentary critical of the political climate that led to his imprisonment and shares news he gathers from a steady stream of visitors, including politicians and legal advisers.

The YouTube program, now rebranded as “Fatih Altayli Cannot Comment,” opens with the journalist’s empty chair.

His assistant, Emre Acar, reads Altayli’s letter out loud before a guest commentator, which has included journalists, politicians, academicians, actors and musicians, temporarily occupies the seat and delivers his or her views in a show of support.

Altayli’s written commentaries, meanwhile, continue to be published on his personal website.

Yetkin said many had assumed that because of his privileged lifestyle, Altayli would bow to pressure.

“But Fatih didn’t bow. I won’t say he’s maintained his line; he’s elevated it. In my view, he’s standing firmer than before,” Yetkin wrote.

Altayli’s “prison journalism” has included an interview with fellow inmate Ekrem Imamoglu, the mayor of Istanbul, who was arrested in March on corruption charges. That interview was conducted through written questions and answers exchanged through their lawyers. Altayli also gives news of other prominent prisoners at Silivri.

With a majority of mainstream media in Turkey owned by pro-government businesses or directly controlled by the government, many independent journalists have lost their jobs and have turned to YouTube for uncensored reporting.

A total of 17 journalists and other media sector workers, including Altayli, are currently behind bars, according to the Turkish Journalists’ Syndicate. The government insists the journalists face prosecution for criminal acts, not for their journalistic work.

## Music

### Pre-save album

## Swift’s ‘Showgirl’ era almost here

NEW YORK, Oct 2, (AP): Lights, camera, action. **Taylor Swift’s** 12th studio album, “The Life of a Showgirl,” arrives Friday. Are you ready for it?

Swift announced her latest era back in August, when she began teasing the release.

Here’s everything you need to know ahead of its drop date: how to stream, which variants exist, and of course, how the album came together. Enjoy the show!

“The Life of a Showgirl” will be available to stream on all major plat-

forms, including Spotify, Apple Music and Amazon Music.

Fans can pre-save the album ahead of its release on Oct. 3. Pre-saving ensures the new music automatically appears in a fan’s library the moment it is available. It is also a way for an artist to promote streams ahead of the drop date.

On Monday, Spotify announced that Swift’s album surpassed five million pre-saves on their platform to become the most pre-saved album in its history. The previous title holder? Her 2024 album “The Tortured Poets Department.”

In addition to the many streaming options, there will also be a digital-download variant of “The Life of a Showgirl” available via iTunes, featuring a new cover image and a nearly three-minute “exclusive video from Taylor herself detailing inspirations behind the album” labeled “A Look Behind the Curtain.”

Target is once again a major partner with Swift. Their stores will carry three CD variants, titled as “It’s Frightening,” “It’s Rapturous” and “It’s Beautiful” editions. There is also an exclusive vinyl release, “The Crowd Is Your King” edition in “summertime spritz pink shimmer vinyl.” Many Target locations will remain open past midnight on the day of release for superfans to pick up in real time.

There are a number of other vinyl variants as well: “The Tiny Bubble in Champagne Collection,” which features two vinyl variants described as “under bright lights pearlescent vinyl” and “red lipstick & lace transparent vinyl.”

There is also “The Baby That’s Show Business Collection,” in two colorways: “lovely bouquet golden vinyl” and “lakeside beach blue sparkle vinyl.”

Then there’s “The Shiny Bug Collection” in “violet shimmer marbled vinyl” and “winter-green and onyx marbled vinyl.”

And of course, there is the standard LP and cassette, in “sweat and vanilla perfume Portofino orange vinyl.”

Artwork varies throughout.

Swift partially announced her 12-track new album “The Life of a Showgirl” on the “New Heights” podcast hosted by Travis Kelce - Swift’s fiancé and Kansas City Chiefs tight end - and his brother, Jason Kelce, the former Philadelphia Eagles center.

In the full episode, Swift revealed she worked on the album in Sweden while she was on the “Eras Tour” - flying between dates to record, truly embodying the album’s title, “The Life of a Showgirl.” The entire album was completed with producers Max Martin and Shellback, who Swift previously collaborated with on 2012’s “Red,” 2014’s “1989” and 2017’s “Reputation.”

## Fashion



Cara Delevingne poses during the Karl Lagerfeld Party in Paris, Wednesday, Oct. 1. (AP)



Anya Taylor-Joy poses before the Dior Spring/Summer 2026 collection presented in Paris, Wednesday, Oct. 1. (AP)



Taylor Hill poses during the Karl Lagerfeld Party in Paris, Wednesday, Oct. 1. (AP)

## Front row sparkles with star power

# Anderson’s Dior womenswear debut is montage of ideas, but not ‘New Look’

PARIS, Oct 2, (AP): No other show so far at Paris Fashion Week has drawn such a feverish crush of celebrities, designers and press.

All eyes were on Jonathan Anderson - the Northern Irish designer who has already transformed Loewe into a global powerhouse of wit and craft - as he unveiled his first Dior womenswear collection on Wednesday.

Around him, the front row glittered with Johnny Depp, Rosalia, Jisoo, Jennifer Lawrence, Rosamund Pike, Charlize Theron, Anya Taylor-Joy, Willow Smith, Mikey Madison and Jenna Ortega, celebrity wattage setting the stakes before a single look appeared.

The weight of history was everywhere. Dior was the fashion house that recrowned Paris as the world’s capital of fashion in 1947, when Christian Dior unveiled the “New Look.” That Bar jacket and wasp-waisted silhouette made headlines across a world still emerging from war. Every Dior designer since - from Yves Saint Laurent to John Galliano, Raf Simons and Maria

Grazia Chiuri - has been judged by how they wrestle with that legacy.

Anderson, 41, is the first in Dior’s history to oversee both men’s and women’s lines, a responsibility with enormous cultural and commercial stakes.

The staging dramatized the moment. A giant inverted pyramid, echoing the Louvre, loomed over the runway as a montage of Dior’s imagery flickered across it at breakneck speed - a horror filmlike splice of icons and ghosts. The message: the weight of heritage, fractured and unsettled.

What followed was not a revolution but a series of probing gestures. Anderson has never been one to detonate house codes; at Loewe, and again in his Dior men’s debut in June, his method has been to bend and reframe. That instinct carried through here. Silhouettes slouched, almost defiantly loose. Admiral visors capped the brow. Black lace flared like bows - or bats - from the back. Most striking was the recurring “double balloon” form hidden under skirts, producing a strange, bouncing, Versailles-like silhouette - a



A model wears a creation as part of the Dior Spring/Summer 2026 collection presented in Paris, Oct. 1. (AP)

sly riff on 18th-century panniers made uncanny for the present.

The Bar jacket - the staple of Dior’s

revolutionary New Look - was reimagined off-kilter, its peplum hoisted toward the bust, the hourglass skewed into something surreal. On the body, it sometimes looked ill-fitting, as if the poetry of the idea fought against proportion. This is what Dior called “boxing and unboxing history,” a phrase that captured Anderson’s push-pull with the archive.

The result echoed his menswear: not a “New Look” with a capital N - as one critic put it - but a constellation of eclectic ideas. Critics who wanted a single, defining jolt - a Slimane-style bolt of clarity or a Simons-like manifesto - will have left underwhelmed. Instead, Anderson’s Dior unfolded like his opening montage: fragmentary and deliberately unresolved - in step with the house’s framing of the collection as “a feeling of harmony and tension.”

There were undeniable wins. The quality of the clothes’ fabrics, finish and precise craft reinforced Dior’s atelier power. Historical references felt alive, not embalmed. And there was commercial oxygen in separates, ballooned skirts, accessories with bite.



Models wear creations as part of the Dior Spring/Summer 2026 collection presented in Paris, Wednesday, Oct. 1. (AP)

## Variety

**NEW YORK:** Drawing upon her personal and political past, **Jane Fonda** has revived an activist group from the Cold War era that was backed by her father and fellow Oscar winner, Henry Fonda.

Jane Fonda announced she had launched a 21st century incarnation of the Committee for the First Amendment, originally formed in 1947 in response to Congressional hearings aimed against screenwriters and directors - notably the so-called “Hollywood Ten” - and their alleged Communist ties. Signers of the new organization’s mission statement include Florence Pugh, Sean Penn, Billie Eilish, Pedro Pascal and hundreds of others.

Wednesday’s news comes in the wake of Jim-



Fonda

prominent support for Democratic Party candidates, including John F. Kennedy, for whom the elder Fonda appeared in a campaign ad in 1960. (AP)

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**LONDON:** Literary biographies vie with explorations of extremism, slavery and European wolves on the shortlist for Britain’s leading nonfiction book prize.

The six finalists announced Thursday for the 50,000 pound (\$67,000) Baillie Gifford Prize include “The Boundless Deep,” a biography of poet Alfred, Lord Tennyson by Richard Holmes, Frances Wilson’s “Electric Spark,” about Scottish writer Muriel Spark, and acclaimed Australian writer Helen Garner’s diaries, “How to End a Story.”

Also in the running are Jason Burke’s book about 1970s anti-capitalist militants, “The Revolutionists”; Justin Marozzi’s history of slavery in the Muslim world, “Captives and Companions”; and Adam Weymouth’s “Lone Wolf,” which traces a wolf’s 1,000-mile (1,600-kilometer) journey

across the Alps in search of a mate. (AP)

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**NEW YORK:** A New York City rapper who joined President Donald Trump during a campaign rally last year has been sentenced to five years behind bars after he admitted he used earnings from his music career to fuel gang violence in Brooklyn.

Sheff G, whose legal name is Michael Williams, also must serve five years of supervised release once he’s freed under the terms of the sentence imposed Wednesday. He and the judge agreed on the sentence when the rapper pleaded guilty earlier this year to attempted murder and conspiracy. Prosecutors wanted a 20-year prison term.

“This defendant had talent and opportunity, but chose to use them to fuel violence instead of building a better future,” Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez said after the sentencing. (AP)



An advocate for nature who inspired generations

# Jane Goodall, celebrated conservationist, has died

NEW YORK, Oct. 2, (AP): Jane Goodall, the intellectual, soft-spoken conservationist renowned for her groundbreaking, immersive chimpanzee field research in which she documented the primates’ distinct personalities and use of tools, has died. She was 91.

The environmental advocate became a beloved household name who transcended generations through her appearances in documentaries and on television, as well as her travels to address packed auditoriums around the world.

The Jane Goodall Institute announced the primatologist’s death Wednesday in an Instagram post. According to the Washington, DC-based institute, Goodall died of natural causes while in California on a US speaking tour.

Her discoveries “revolutionized science, and she was a tireless advocate for the protection and restoration of our natural world,” it said.

While living among chimpanzees in Africa decades ago, Goodall documented them doing activities

previously believed to be exclusive to humans. Her observations and subsequent magazine and documentary appearances in the 1960s transformed how the world perceived not only humans’ closest living biological relatives but also the emotional and social complexity of all animals, while propelling her into the public consciousness.

She had been scheduled to meet with students and teachers on Wednesday to launch the planting of 5,000 trees around wildfire burn zones in the Los Angeles area. Organizers learned of her death as the event was to begin at EF Academy in Pasadena, said spokesperson Shawna Marino. The first tree was planted in Goodall’s name after a moment of silence.

“I don’t think there’s any better way to honor her legacy than having a thousand children gathered for her,” Marino said.

Goodall in her later years devoted decades to education and advocacy on humanitarian causes and protecting the natural world. In her British



Primatologist and environmental activist Dr. Jane Goodall poses during an interview, Sept. 15, 2011, in New York. (AP)

accent, she was known for balancing the grim realities of the climate crisis with a sincere message of hope for

the future.

From her base in the British coastal town of Bournemouth, she traveled nearly 300 days a year, even after she turned 90, for public speeches. Between more serious messages, her speeches often featured her whooping like a chimpanzee or lamenting that Tarzan chose the wrong Jane.

Tributes from animal rights organizations, political leaders and admirers poured in following news of her death.

“I’m deeply saddened to learn about the passing of Jane Goodall, our dear Messenger of Peace. She is leaving an extraordinary legacy for humanity & our planet,” said United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres.

Nature broadcaster Chris Packham reflected on her relentless advocacy until the very end.

“In many ways Jane just died on the job,” he said. “The job that her life became. And that was protecting life on earth.”

While first studying chimps in Tanzania in the early 1960s, Goodall

was known for her unconventional approach. She didn’t simply observe them from afar but immersed herself in every aspect of their lives. She fed them and gave them names instead of numbers, which some scientists criticized.

Her findings were circulated to millions when she first appeared on the cover of National Geographic in 1963 and then in a popular documentary. A collection of photos of Goodall in the field helped her and even some of the chimps become famous. One iconic image showed her crouching across from the infant chimpanzee named Flint. Each has arms outstretched, reaching for the other.

In 1972, the Sunday Times published an obituary for Flo, Flint’s mother and the dominant matriarch. Flint died soon after showing signs of grief and losing weight.

□What the chimps have taught me over the years is they’re so like us. They’ve blurred the line between humans and animals.□ she said in 1997.

University of St. Andrews pri-

matologist Catherine Hobaiter, who studies communication in chimpanzees, said that when she first heard Goodall speak, it transformed her view of science.

“It was the first time as a young scientist working with wild apes and wild chimpanzees that I got to hear that it was OK to feel something,” she said.

Goodall earned top civilian honors from a number of countries. She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2025 by then-U.S. President Joe Biden and in 2021 won the prestigious Templeton Prize, which honors individuals whose life’s work embodies a fusion of science and spirituality.

The Humane World for Animals said Wednesday that Goodall’s influence on the animal protection community was immeasurable.

“Her work on behalf of primates and all animals will never be forgotten,” said Kitty Block, president and CEO of the group formerly the Humane Society of the United States and Humane Society International.

## Heritage



The city covers 7–8 hectares, sloping to the sea and ringed by greenery and a double wall.



The city site spans between 7 and 8 hectares, sloping toward the sea from an elevation of 3 meters.



Artifacts and sculptures show local creativity and Mediterranean ties.



KUNA photos  
The statue of Tanit, protector goddess of ancient Carthage, stands at the city entrance.

## Timeless Kerkuane reflects Carthaginian past

Founded in the sixth century as a Carthage-affiliated town, the historic Tunisian city of Kerkuane is still able to keep its original features intact as the most ancient witness to the Punic Age.

Located in Nabeul Province

in northeastern Tunisia on the Mediterranean Sea, Kerkuane, contrary to what took place in several Tunisian towns, marks the only example of a Phoenicio-Punic city to have survived.

Excavations show that this

Phoenician city was so vibrant that was inhabited by fishermen, merchants and craftsmen thanks to its attractive sea location and fertile agricultural land. It was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985. (KUNA)

## Over 6,800 books banned in 2024-25

# Stephen King is the most banned author in US schools: PEN report

NEW YORK, Oct. 2, (AP): A new report on book bans in US schools finds Stephen King as the author most likely to be censored and the country divided between states actively restricting works and those attempting to limit or eliminate bans.

PEN America’s “Banned in the USA,” released Wednesday, tracks more than 6,800 instances of books being temporarily or permanently pulled for the 2024-2025 school year. The new number is down from more than 10,000 in 2023-24, but still far above the levels of a few years ago, when PEN didn’t even see the need to compile a report.

Some 80% of those bans originated in just three states that have enacted or attempted to enact laws calling for removal of books deemed objectionable - Florida, Texas and Tennessee. Meanwhile, PEN found little or no instances of removals in several other states, with Illinois, Maryland and New Jersey among those with laws that limit the authority of school and public libraries to pull books.

“It is increasingly a story of two countries,” says Kasey Meehan, director of PEN’s Freedom to Read program and an author of Wednesday’s report. “And it’s not just a story of red states



PEN America literary service award recipient Stephen King attends the 2018 PEN Literary Gala on May 22, 2018, in New York. (AP)

and blue states. In Florida, not all of the school districts responded to the calls for banning books. You can find differences from county to county.”

King’s books were censored 206 times, according to PEN, with “Carrie” and “The Stand” among the 87 of his works affected. The most banned work of any author was Anthony Burgess’ Dystopian classic from the 1960s, “A Clockwork Orange,” for which PEN

found 23 removals. Other books and authors facing extensive restrictions included Patricia McCormick’s “Sold,” Judy Blume’s “Forever” and Jennifer Niven’s “Breathless,” and numerous works by Sarah J. Maas and Jodi Picoult.

Reasons often cited for pulling a book include LGBTQ+ themes, depictions of race and passages with violence and sexual violence. An ongoing trend that PEN finds has only intensified: Thousands of books were taken off shelves in anticipation of community, political or legal pressure rather than in response to a direct threat.

“This functions as a form of ‘obeying in advance,’” the report reads, “rooted in fear or simply a desire to avoid topics that might be deemed controversial.”

The PEN report comes amid ongoing censorship efforts not just from states and conservative activists, but from the federal government. The Department of Education ended an initiative by the Biden administration to investigate the legality of bans and has called the whole issue a “hoax.” PEN’s numbers include the Department of Defense’s removal of hundreds of books from K-12 school libraries for military families as part of an overall campaign against DEI initiatives and “un-American” thinking.

## A postman, his family, and a chair

# Van Gogh’s Roulin family portraits unite

AMSTERDAM, Oct. 2, (AP): The Van Gogh museum is bringing a scattered family back together this fall to honor a postal worker, his wife and their children who sat as models for the Dutch master at a time when he was struggling to make friends in a French town.

Portraits from the late 1880s of the expansively bearded postman Joseph Roulin, his wife, two sons and baby daughter have been brought together for an exhibition titled “Van Gogh and the Roulins. Together Again at Last.”

The show collects paintings of the family from museums around the world and even features an armchair from the artist’s studio in Arles in the southern region of Provence.

The show is in Amsterdam after a run at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, which provided one of the centerpiece of the exhibition, a portrait of the postman (he was actually a postal clerk) resplendent in his blue uniform with gold buttons and trim sitting in an armchair made of local willow from Provence.

While preparing the show, the Van Gogh Museum found the very chair featured in the portrait in its storerooms and is exhibiting it for the first time. It was deemed too fragile to be sent to Boston for the show there.

“As it turns out, we have this chair in our collection, but we have never shown it before,” said Van Gogh Museum Director Emilie Gordenker. “And it just shows you when you start to work on a topic - in this case, the Roulin family portraits - all kinds of things you might never have thought about before come up and it’s really exciting to rediscover, as it were, your own collection.”

Vincent van Gogh created a total of 26 portraits of the family in a burst of creative activity from July 1888 to April 1889. There are 14 on show at the museum alongside works by his friend



The chair in which bearded postman Joseph Roulin sat when he was portrayed by Vincent Van Gogh is displayed next to a self portrait of Vincent van Gogh at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, Netherlands, Wednesday, Oct. 1. (AP)

and fellow painter Paul Gauguin and by Dutch Golden Age masters Rembrandt van Rijn and Frans Hals, whose works were major sources of inspiration.

“Many people consider his Arles period really his peak,” Gordenker said. “I’m not sure we totally agree with that, but it is definitely a moment when he turns a corner ... his power as an artist really comes out.”

In an upstairs room, the museum has created a life-size facade of the yellow house that Van Gogh used as his studio in Arles, where Roulin became more than just a model to Van Gogh.

“While Roulin isn’t exactly old enough to be like a father to me, all the same he has silent solemnities and tenderness for me like an old soldier would have for a young one,” the artist wrote in a letter to his brother, Theo, in April 1889.

Nienke Bakker, who curated the

show along with Katie Hanson from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, said the Arles period was crucial to Van Gogh’s artistry.

“He literally says painting people brings out the best in me, but also makes me feel part of humanity. So it’s a very important thing,” Bakker said.

She said that the chair went into storage after Van Gogh left Arles and was then passed to the artist’s relatives and ultimately to the museum.

The museum is now displaying the chair alongside the painting from the Boston museum that features Roulin and the chair.

“It’s quite moving to have of course this fantastic portrait here, but also to be able to show the actual chair he was sitting in and to realize that it was quite a simple small chair,” Bakker said.

The exhibition opens Friday and runs through Jan. 11.

## Variety

**RIYADH:** A series of new cultural investment projects were announced at the two-day Cultural Investment Conference, which concluded in Riyadh on Tuesday, including partnerships between Saudi and Chinese companies.

The event, organized by the Saudi Ministry of Culture, saw the signing of 89 agreements worth an estimated 5 billion Saudi riyals (1.33 billion US dollars), a move expected to boost the kingdom’s cultural and creative economy, according to Saudi officials.

Among the agreements, the Saudi Cultural Development Fund announced the launch of the kingdom’s second private investment fund in the film sector, with a capital of 375 million riyals, in partnership with BSF Capital.

Cultural Assets Group announced the launch of the Osoul Private Investment Fund, valued at 850 million riyals. Its CEO Abdulaziz MUSAED Al-Sulaim said the fund will focus on visual arts, fashion, cultural retail, digital content, interactive media, and modern technologies.

During the conference, Saudi company Jizaa signed a partnership agreement with China’s Silkroad Visual, valued at 50 million riyals. Their cooperation will focus on digital museum exhibitions, interactive technologies, enhancing museum experiences, and the transfer of knowledge and expertise.

Chinese company Ori Group announced the establishment of a regional headquarters in Saudi Arabia, along with an investment of over 2 billion riyals. The company will focus on film, education, fashion, tourism, and cultural events.

The Saudi Ministry of Culture revealed that since the launch of Saudi Vision 2030 in 2016, it has allocated over 81 billion riyals to cultural infrastructure, with contributions from the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

According to Saudi Minister of Economy and Planning Faisal Alibrahim, the kingdom is training 5,000 individuals and supporting thousands of students in cultural fields under Saudi Vision 2030, noting that such investment enhances the quality of Saudi products and the visitor experience. (Xinhua)

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**ALBUQUERQUE, N.M:** It’s the largest ballooning event in the world and one of the most photographed spectacles, drawing hundreds of thousands of spectators over nine days

to watch as pilots from around the globe take to the skies in colorful hot air balloons.

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta kicks off Saturday with a mass ascension at Balloon Fiesta Park.

Fiesta attendees can walk among the inflating balloons and talk to pilots while scarfing down breakfast burritos and sipping piñon coffee. The roaring propane burners are not enough to drown out the cheers and whistles as the balloons drift upward.

The show is made even better by a combination of clear and cool mornings and a phenomenon known as the Albuquerque box: Different wind directions at different elevations allow pilots to adjust their flight patterns to stay close to the launch field, saturating the view for those on the ground.

The annual show has become quite a production over the last five decades. Here’s a by-the-numbers look:

Years the balloon fiesta has been held, having grown from a modest launch of 13 balloons in 1972 at a shopping mall parking lot. (AP)

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**ASPEN, Colo.:** Investigators in Colorado are reviewing the 2005 shooting death of journalist Hunter S. Thompson, which was ruled a suicide, authorities said.

There’s no new evidence suggesting foul play in Thompson’s death, but the Pitkin County Sheriff’s Office requested the review at the behest of Thompson’s widow, Anita Thompson, the sheriff’s office and Colorado Bureau of Investigation said in a news release Tuesday.

Investigators are committed to answering any “lingering questions” surrounding his death, Sheriff Michael Buglione said.

“We understand the profound impact Hunter S. Thompson had on this community and beyond,” he said. “By bringing in an outside agency for a fresh look, we hope to provide a definitive and transparent review that may offer peace of mind to his family and the public.”

Thompson, who popularized a first-person form of “gonzo” journalism in articles and books such as “Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas,” died at his Aspen-area home in February 2005. He was 67.

At the time, his family said in a statement that he “took his life with a gunshot to the head.”

Anita Thompson told The Associated Press days after her husband’s death that he had been talking about suicide in months leading up to it. (AP)



A visitor (left) looks at a 1872 painting by Camille Pissarro titled ‘Bords de l’Oise, près de Pontoise, temps gris’ (The Banks of the Oise near Pontoise, grey weather); a visitor (right) looks at a 1901-03 painting by Edvard Munch titled ‘Sankthansnatt’ (Midsummer Night) during a pre-auction exhibition in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Wednesday, Oct. 1. These paintings by Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Frida Kahlo, Edvard Munch, Rene Magritte and Camille Pissarro are expected to sell for US \$1.5 million at an auction in New York in November 2025. (AP)





Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi speaking during the press conference.



Chief Executive Officer of Zain Kuwait, Nawaf Al-Gharabally, speaks during the event.



KFAS Director General Dr. Ameenah Rajab Farhan delivers her remarks.

A historic medical and tech feat for MoH, Jaber Hospital powered by Zain and KFAS

Kuwait sets Guinness World Records title with farthest intercontinental remote robotic surgery over 12,000 km

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: In a joint press statement, the Ministry of Health (MoH), Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital, Zain Kuwait – the country’s leading telecom operator, and the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) announced that Kuwait has been awarded a new Guinness World Records title for the longest distance between a patient and a surgeon. The recognition by Guinness was achieved through a recent remote robotic surgery performed by the surgical team at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital on a patient in Brazil, across a record distance that exceeded 12,000 kilometers.

The announcement was made at a press conference held at Zain’s headquarters in Shuwaikh, attended by H.E. the Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi, the Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) Dr. Ameenah Rajab Farhan, Zain Kuwait CEO Nawaf Al-Gharabally, and the Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital surgical team led by Dr. Sulaiman Almazzeedi, Dr. Mohammad Alhaddad, and Dr. Hmoud Alrashidi.

During the conference, the official representative of Guinness World Records presented record certificates to H.E. the Minister of Health, the surgical team, Zain, and KFAS, stating that surgical teams operating from Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital in Kuwait and from SCOLLA in Hospital Cruz Vermelha in Brazil officially attained the feat.

This accomplishment underscores Kuwait’s pioneering role in the field of remote digital surgery, relying on the latest medical technologies and Zain’s state-of-the-art telecom infrastructure to deliver a global first.

H.E. the Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi said: “Kuwait’s inclusion in the Guinness World Records with a medical and technological achievement of this magnitude is not merely a global record. It is a clear message that our national healthcare system is capable of standing at the forefront globally.”

Dr. Al-Awadhi added: “Our medical professionals have proven that when will is paired with science and technology, it breaks geographic barriers and makes Kuwait a global platform for medical innovation. This success is the fruit of the wise guidance and continued support of the nation’s leadership, and it reflects a collective effort that brought together medical, technical, and administrative teams in

partnership with Zain and the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, so that the human being remains the goal and purpose of everything we do.”

Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences Dr. Ameenah Rajab Farhan said: “It gives me great joy to write these words, words of innovation that span continents and transcend distances, as we celebrate a national achievement that places Kuwait on the map of global medical leadership with a world record in robotic surgery. The distance between the surgeon and the patient exceeded 12,000 kilometers, which feels almost like fiction. It is an accomplishment that embodies the value of innovation when coupled with national medical excellence and advanced connectivity infrastructure, all in service of human health.”

She added: “The Ministry of Health team, in partnership with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences and Zain, has proven that creativity, knowledge, and technology can come together to create historic impact. This success is not merely a technical feat or a record, but a clear message that investment in science and innovation directly improves people’s lives and health.”

She continued: “It is also a practical model that reflects the Foundation’s commitment to the vision of His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and his trusted Crown Prince, Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as the guidance of His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah.”

She affirmed: “What we are witnessing today is a translation of the Foundation’s strategy based on practical, applicable innovation. It is a living example of turning that strategy into reality by empowering national talent and advancing health as one of its core pillars.”

She concluded: “On this occasion, I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Ministry of Health for its continued support, to the brilliant medical team whose spirit and determination embodied the meaning of national leadership, and to Zain for its initiative and support. At KFAS, we reaffirm our commitment to being an active partner in every initiative that positions Kuwait at the forefront of scientific progress and innovation.”

Nawaf Al-Gharabally, Chief Executive Officer at Zain Kuwait, said:



Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, Dr. Ameenah Farhan, and Nawaf Al-Gharabally with the surgical team and the Guinness World Records representative.

**Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi:**

- The Guinness record affirms Kuwait’s leadership in medicine and reflects the wise leadership’s support and the competence of our national talent

**Dr. Ameenah Rajab Farhan:**

- This achievement embodies the value of innovation when paired with national medical excellence and advanced connectivity infrastructure, all in service of human health.

**Nawaf Al-Gharabally:**

- With its advanced infrastructure, Zain is contributing to the nation’s vision to propel the growth of digital medicine across the region

“This achievement is not only a world record. It is a serious step toward a thriving digital future in which we harness technology to serve people, from Kuwait to the world. It also reflects the purpose we have embraced at Zain to deliver ‘Lasting Connections and Better Lives,’ showcasing technology’s impact on people’s lives, under our new 4WARD strategy led by Zain Group Vice Chairman and CEO Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi, whose unlimited support was pivotal to this success.”

He added: “We are delighted to be an active part of this global medical achievement. Zain’s contribution alongside national institutions reaffirms our leadership in driving digital transformation in the healthcare sector. It is compelling evidence that Kuwait has the talent and capabilities to lead a new era in which geographic borders give way to

the power of technological innovation.”

Al-Gharabally continued: “Zain’s role as a leading provider of digital infrastructure drove us to deploy our advanced technologies in cross-continental connectivity, delivering ultra-fast response times that ensured the success of this transcontinental surgical procedure.”

He explained: “With this major step, Kuwait demonstrates that the future of digital medicine is supported by all state institutions and by strategic partnerships that bring together science and technology in the service of humanity.”

He stated: “Our fruitful collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the medical team at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital is a model partnership between the technology sector and national healthcare institutions. Our

digital infrastructure and advanced network played a decisive role in providing a stable, instant connection that enabled a highly precise and reliable robotic surgery.”

Al-Gharabally affirmed: “We are confident this historic achievement opens wide the door for the growth of digital medicine in Kuwait and across the region, and it strengthens the state’s vision to push the frontiers of technology for the greatest human benefit. Technology is not merely a set of tools; it is a bridge that builds connections and brings distances closer.”

Saud Al-Fawzan, Vice Chairman of SADITA Holding and AUMET, said: “We are honored today to receive the Guinness World Records title for the world’s longest remote surgery. This achievement affirms that the future begins when we break boundaries and

harness creativity. Our vision at AUMET is to embrace every technological revolution, from robotic surgical systems to artificial intelligence, to create healthcare without limits.”

**Guinness World Records statement**

On 23 September 2025, surgical teams operating from Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital in Kuwait and SCOLLA in Hospital Cruz Vermelha in Brazil performed a series of robotic tele-surgery operations across a record-breaking distance of 12,034.92 km (7,480 miles) each way. The procedures were inguinal TAPP (transabdominal preperitoneal) repair, carried out using advanced robotic surgical systems connected over a secured high-bandwidth international network provided by Zain Telecommunications and supported by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS).

The operations were made possible through the collaboration of surgeons, and scientists from Edge Medical and AUMET who successfully completed the surgery with an average latency of 199 milliseconds, an average bandwidth of 80 Mbps, and a packet loss of just 0.19%.

Both operations were completed successfully and safely, underscoring the feasibility of global collaboration in surgical care and setting a new benchmark in the field of remote robotic surgery. The surgeons were Dr. Sulaiman Almazzeedi, Dr. Marcelo Loureiro, Dr. Mohammad Alhaddad, Dr. Ahmed Karim, Dr. Hmoud Alrashidi, and Dr. Leandro Totti Cavazzola.

**Technical infrastructure and Zain’s role**

The project faced major technical challenges that required ensuring a fast and stable network connection between the two continents to avoid any delay that could affect the surgical workflow. Zain provided the communications infrastructure through advanced international MPLS technology, enabling a secure, high-speed link between Kuwait and Brazil.

As a result, the latency between surgeon and patient was under 0.2 seconds only, approximately 199 milliseconds, throughout the procedure. This record-low latency allowed the surgeons to control the robot almost in real time despite the vast distance. The highly reliable connection was a decisive factor in ensuring smooth, uninterrupted remote surgery, proving that Kuwait’s infrastructure is ready to support global digital medical innovations.



Cura Health and Novo Nordisk officials at the launch of Wegovy in Kuwait.

Updated vaccines available across Kuwait

MoH launches winter vaccination drive

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: As part of its national strategy to enhance the prevention of seasonal diseases and protect public health, the official spokesperson for the Ministry of Health Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad announced the launch of the annual winter vaccination campaign for the tenth consecutive year, reports Al-Anba daily.

In an official statement, he emphasized that protecting against diseases and infections during the winter season is a top priority for the Kuwaiti healthcare system.

Dr. Al-Sanad explained that winter-related illnesses, including seasonal viruses and bacteria such as influenza and Streptococcus pneumoniae, typically become active in Kuwait during the period from mid-September

to May, with peak activity between October and March. These illnesses can cause serious complications in certain vulnerable groups, particularly children, the elderly, those with chronic diseases, pregnant women, and individuals with weakened immune systems.

He stressed that the ministry has made available the updated influenza vaccine, along with an enhanced pneumococcal vaccine covering 20 strains of the bacteria, which can protect against serious diseases such as pneumonia and meningitis.

In previous seasons, the Ministry of Health administered more than 2.5 million doses of these vaccines.

Over 80% people in Kuwait overweight or obese

Cura Health and Novo Nordisk launch Wegovy in Kuwait to combat obesity

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: Cura Health, a leading pharmaceutical supplier, in collaboration with Novo Nordisk, a global healthcare leader specializing in the treatment of chronic diseases such as diabetes and obesity, announced the availability of Wegovy in Kuwait.

The announcement was made during a press conference held in the presence of Danish Ambassador to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, and Yemen Liselotte Plessner, Chairman and CEO of Cura Health Faisal Al-Mutawa, General Manager of Emerging Gulf Markets at Novo Nordisk Venkat Kalyan, President of the Kuwait Diabetes Society Dr. Waleed Al-Dahi, and President of the Kuwait Obesity Association Dr. Asrar Al-Sayed Hashem.

In this regard, President of the Kuwait Obesity Association Dr. Asrar Al-Sayed Hashem explained that obesity has become a global epidemic, affecting approximately one billion people worldwide, with the Gulf region witnessing some of the highest obesity rates globally. About 44 percent of adults in Kuwait are obese, and 80 percent of the population is overweight.

This is where Wegovy comes in as a crucial step toward tackling this national health challenge by helping to reduce obesity and its related complications. With six out of ten adults suffering from weight-related health issues, scientifically proven treatments such as Wegovy are expected to play a pivotal role in easing the burden on healthcare systems and improving the quality of life for Kuwaiti citizens. Wegovy is used as a complementary treatment along with a low-calorie diet and physical activity to manage weight effectively.

Dr. Hashem stated that the launch of



From left: Burak Cem, Faisal Al-Mutawa, and Venkat Kalyan at the launch event of Wegovy in Kuwait.

Wegovy in Kuwait marks an important step in expanding the range of treatments available to combat obesity, adding, “As our scientific understanding of obesity evolves as a chronic, multifactorial disease, it becomes increasingly essential to provide a variety of treatment options tailored to each patient’s individual condition and needs.”

Meanwhile, the Danish Ambassador to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, and Yemen Liselotte Plessner highlighted the significance of the strategic collaboration between Novo Nordisk and Kuwait’s Ministry of Health.

She said, “Denmark is proud to see one of its leading companies working closely with Kuwait’s Ministry of Health to tackle the growing burden of obesity and chronic diseases. Together, we are not only driving medical innovation but also reaffirming our shared commitment to improving lives through sustainable healthcare solutions.”

Furthermore, Faisal Al-Mutawa, Chairman and CEO of Cura Health, stated, “Our collaboration with Novo Nordisk to launch Wegovy in Kuwait underscores our shared commitment to driving healthcare innovation and improving patient outcomes. At Cura Health, we believe that access to advanced global treatments is essential for building a healthier future for our society, and partnerships like this help make that vision a reality.”

Also, Venkat Kalyan, General Manager of Emerging Gulf Markets at Novo Nordisk, emphasized that the launch of Wegovy marks a pivotal step in combating obesity and its related complications in Kuwait, with a focus on combating non-communicable diseases through advanced treatments.

He highlighted that Novo Nordisk brings decades of global expertise in obesity and diabetes care to support the health and well-being of Kuwaiti citizens.



# Nashville edges Austin to win historic US Open Cup



Austin FC midfielder Ilie Sanchez, left, heads the ball past Nashville SC midfielder Hany Mukhtar (10) during the first half of an U.S. Open Cup final soccer match in Austin, Texas. (AP)



Nashville SC players celebrate their win over Austin FC in an U.S. Open Cup final soccer match in Austin, Texas. (AP)

**AUSTIN, Texas, Oct 2, (AP): Sam Surridge converted a penalty in the 60th minute, and Nashville SC won the Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup with a 2-1 victory over Austin FC.**

Hany Mukhtar also scored for Nashville, which secured a spot in the 2026 CONCACF Champions Cup with the victory. It was the first major trophy for the club, which joined Major League Soccer in 2020.

The U.S Open Cup, which dates to 1914, is the oldest soccer competition in the United States.

“I think it is important for us that we know that we can do it, that we can win a trophy,” said Mukhtar, who has been with the club since it joined MLS. “It gives us extra confidence for the rest of the (MLS) season.”

Mukhtar gave Nashville the early lead with a shot that sailed into the upper corner just out of the reach of Austin goalkeeper Brad Stuver in the 17th minute

Austin had a good chance to equalize less than 10 minutes later after goal-keeper Brian Schwake’s foul on Myrto Uzuni. But Schwake denied Uzuni’s penalty attempt.

Uzuni got redemption with a left-footed goal to the far corner in first-half stoppage time, and the teams went into the break at Q2 Stadium tied at 1-1.

Austin’s Dani Pereira fouled Jeisson Palacios in the box for a penalty. Surridge stepped up and converted for his tournament-best sixth goal. Surridge was sent off with a red card in stoppage time.

“I think this year we showed we can control games with the ball. That is a big improvement. And I still believe we have at least one step to go to be a top team, to be one of the best teams in this league,” Mukhtar said. “But I think we’ve shown over long periods this season that we can compete, we can keep the ball, we can be aggressive against the ball. I’m very proud of this team.”

Nashville’s last final was in the Leagues Cup two years ago, but the team

missed out on a trophy, falling on a penalty shootout to Lionel Messi and Inter Miami.

Actor Matthew McConaughey, an Austin FC owner and the team’s “Minister of Culture,” was among those at the match.

The final featured an all-woman on-field officiating crew for the first time, which included referee Tori Penso and assistants Brooke Mayo and Kathryn Nesbitt.

The U.S. Open Cup is open to both professional and amateur clubs, but Major League Soccer teams have dominated the competition for more than two decades.

The last time a non-Major League Soccer team made it to the final was in 2022 when the USL Championship-level Sacramento Republic played Orlando City.

The last time a non-MLS team won the event was in 1999 when the Rochester Rhinos defeated the Colorado Rapids.

### Daugunu earns first start of year

New Zealand makes 6 changes, Australia 5 for Bledisloe Cup test



Australia's Billy Pollard makes a run during the Bledisloe Rugby test between the All Blacks and the Wallabies at Eden Park in Auckland, New Zealand. (AP)

PERTH, Australia, Oct 2, (AP): Damian McKenzie will start at flyhalf in place of injured Beauden Barrett in an All Blacks team changed in six places for the second Bledisloe Cup test against Australia on Saturday.

New Zealand secured the Bledisloe Cup for the 23rd year when it beat Australia 33-24 in the first match between the teams in Auckland last weekend.

The All Blacks remain in contention for the Rugby Championship, though that will depend on the outcome of the second test between South Africa and Argentina at Twickenham in London later on Saturday.

For Australia, Jake Gordon and Will Skelton were named to start. They are two of five changes to the starting XV from last weekend’s test, with Filippo Daugunu earning his first start of the year on the left wing, Allan Ala’alatoa starting at tighthead prop, and Tane Edmed selected to partner Gordon in the halves.

Ala’alatoa will start in an all-ACT Brumbies front row, with Billy Pollard named at hooker and Australian record holder James Slipper at loosehead prop in what will be his 151st and final appearance for Australia.

Most of the New Zealand changes to the starting lineup announced Thursday by head coach Scott Robertson were forced by injuries. Barrett has a shoulder injury, Ethan de Groot has a concussion, fellow prop Tyrel Lomax has a thumb injury and winger Caleb Clarke has an ankle injury.

**Australia:** Max Jorgensen, Harry Potter, Joseph-Aukuso Sua’ali’i, Len Ikitau, Filippo Daugunu, Tane Edmed, Jake Gordon, Harry Wilson, Fraser McReight, Tom Hooper, Will Skelton, Nick Frost, Allan Ala’alatoa, Billy Pollard, James Slipper. Reserves: Josh Nasser, Tom Robertson, Taniela Tupou, Jeremy Williams, Rob Valetini, Ryan Lonergan, James O’Connor, Josh Flook.

**New Zealand:** Will Jordan, Leroy Clarke, Quinn Tupaea, Jordie Barrett, Leicester Fainga’anuku, Damian McKenzie, Cam Roigard; Peter Lakai, Ardie Savea, Simon Parker, Tupou Vaa’i, Scott Barrett (captain), Fletcher Newell, Codie Taylor, Tamaiti Williams. Reserves: Samisoni Taukei’aho, George Bower, Pasilio Tosi, Patrick Tuipulotu, Wallace Sititi, Cortez Ratima, Rieko Ioane, Ruben Love.

### Finney-Smith likely to miss season opener

Heat, forward Jovic agree on four-year \$62.4 mln extension



Miami Heat forward Nikola Jovic dribbles during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Oklahoma City Thunder in Oklahoma City. (AP)

MIAMI, Oct 2, (AP): The Miami Heat and forward Nikola Jovic have agreed on the framework of a four-year, \$62.4 million extension, a person with knowledge of the talks said Wednesday night.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity to The Associated Press because the contract has not been signed.

It’s a significant commitment by the Heat to Jovic, who averaged 5.5 points as a rookie, 7.7 points in his second season and then 10.7 points last season. Jovic is coming off a strong summer working with the Serbian national team, and the Heat expect that his role is going to continue to grow this season.

“He’s becoming more mature, more professional,” Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said earlier this week at media day, when asked about Jovic and how his time with the Serbian team has helped in recent summers. “And if you’re hanging out with players much older than you, it just naturally happens. I’ve seen growth from him over three years because of that standard that they’ve had in that program.”

The Heat and Jovic had until Oct. 20 to work out an extension. Otherwise, the 6-foot-10 Jovic - the No. 27 pick by Miami in the 2022 draft - would have been a restricted free agent next summer.

□ □ □

Houston Rockets forward Dorian Finney-Smith is expected to miss the start of the NBA season while recovering from off-season ankle surgery.

Coach Ime Udoka was asked Wednesday after training camp if Finney-Smith would be ready for Houston’s opener against Oklahoma City on Oct. 21.

“No, probably not,” Udoka said.

He added that he didn’t know how long his debut with the Rockets would be delayed.

Finney-Smith joined the Rockets this offseason on a four-year contract worth almost \$53 million. He spent last season with the Lakers before undergoing a procedure on his left ankle in June to address a lingering injury.

### Dortmund faces Leipzig

Fireworks expected, on-form Kane, Bayern meet Frankfurt



DUESSELDORF, Germany, Oct 2, (AP): Expect goals when the most on-form striker in European soccer meets an opponent whose every game is a goal-fest.

Bayern Munich and Harry Kane - who has 17 goals in nine club games this season - take on Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday in the Bundesliga.

Second-placed Borussia Dortmund faces third-placed Leipzig as they compete to be Bayern’s closest rival.

Bayern has won every game it’s played this season, but hasn’t won in Frankfurt since 2022. Win or lose, Frankfurt is always entertaining. Its eight games in all competitions have yielded a total of 47 goals - almost six per game - after a 6-4 win last week over Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Dortmund is two points off the top and the only undefeated team except for Bayern as it prepares to host Leipzig on Saturday. Leipzig has recovered from losing 6-0 to Bayern on the opening day and won four in a row since.

Kasper Hjulmand hasn’t lost any of his first five games as coach of Bayer Leverkusen but the team still hasn’t found its rhythm. Tightening up a defense that has conceded in each of those games could be key against Union Berlin on Saturday.

Kane’s goals grab the attention, but Michael Olise’s contribution to Bayern has been almost as important. A goal and two assists in Bayern’s 5-1 win over Pafos on Tuesday kept up Olise’s run of either scoring or setting up a goal in each of his Bundesliga and Champions League games this season.

Nicolas Jackson finally scored in his fifth game for Bayern on Tuesday, his first goal since arriving from Chelsea on loan. With Kane in such strong form, the Senegal striker’s chances to make an impact have been limited.

Can Uzun is Frankfurt’s key player, with five goals and three assists in five Bundesliga games, as the 19-year-old attacking midfielder starts to fulfill his potential.

Leverkusen will be without striker Patrik Schick for the first time in the Bundesliga this season. He has a hamstring injury and missed Wednesday’s 1-1 draw with PSV Eindhoven.

## Free-flowing Marseille looks for fourth straight victory in Ligue 1

PARIS, Oct 2, (AP): Resurgent Marseille aims for a fourth straight Ligue 1 win when it travels to rock-bottom Metz on Saturday while high-flying Lyon also looks to maintain an impressive start.

Marseille’s win against defending champion Paris Saint-Germain last week seems to have galvanized coach **Roberto De Zerbi**’s side, which is playing the free-flowing soccer the club’s demanding fans want. He described Marseille’s scintillating first-half performance in Tuesday’s 4-0 win against Ajax in the Champions League as “close to perfection.”

After winning at Barcelona 2-1 on Wednesday, PSG faces a tough trip to Lille on Sunday.

Injury-hit PSG travels to play a Lille side which has a point to prove.

Lille’s bright start to the season has nosedived after two straight defeats. Furthermore, Lille failed to score in both games and wasted a flurry of chances in last Sunday’s 1-0 home defeat to Lyon.

Lyon’s future looked bleak when it was demoted to Ligue 2 for financial irregularities, only to have the decision overturned on appeal. Still, Lyon had to sell forward Georges Mikautadze to balance the books, and few observers made Lyon a

contender.

However, Lyon is level with PSG at the top heading into Sunday’s home game against Toulouse and looks for a sixth win in seven games. Lyon has allowed only three goals, one less than PSG.

Monaco faces Nice in the Riviera derby on Sunday with both sides proving inconsistent. Fourth-placed Monaco has scored 14 times but leaked 10 while 12th-placed Nice has netted just seven times and lost three games.

Marseille winger Igor Paixão scored two well-taken goals against Ajax, his first goals since joining from Feyenoord in a deal that could rise to 35 million euros (\$40.6 million). Paixão scored 18 goals in 47 games last season and was voted the Dutch player of the season.

Tanner Tessmann is becoming a key player in Lyon’s midfield. The United States international has netted twice and provides valuable cover for a defense which has kept five clean sheets.



De Zerbi

Veteran Olivier Giroud has made a bright start at Lille with three goals. But the 39-year-old striker looked weary against Lyon and Lille needs him at his best against PSG.

PSG remains without injured club captain Marquinhos and star forwards Ousmane Dembélé and Désiré Doué.

PSG coach Luis Enrique is awaiting further news over midfielder João Neves. Although he was selected against Barcelona after missing two games with a thigh injury, Neves was replaced moments before the start.

Meanwhile, Lille coach Bruno Genesio is suspended for one game following his red card against Lyon. He kicked at a bunch of water bottles and yelled that the match officials were “all rubbish.”

Strasbourg striker Emanuel Emegha’s residence was reportedly burgled last Friday while he was playing against Marseille, and 200,000 euros (\$235,000) worth of goods were stolen.

The theft took place in the same apartment complex where former Strasbourg striker Kevin Gameiro was also burgled last year. According to Le Parisien newspaper, two people have been arrested in connection with the two thefts.



# Qadsia pips Kuwait Club for U-20 league lead



Qadsia and Kuwait Club players contest possession during the match.

**By Hassan Mosa**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: Qadsia has surged to the top of the U-20 Ora League after a narrow 1-0 victory over Kuwait Club, courtesy of a goal from Abdullah Al-Ghaniman, in their Round 3 clash at Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium. The win moves the “Yellow” team to nine points, putting it firmly in first place, while Kuwait remains on

three points. Despite moments of dominance from Kuwait, Qadsia’s solid defensive organization and effective counterattacks allowed them to secure the match-winning goal. The league standings were also influenced by other results. Kazma drew 0-0 with Arabi, reaching seven points, while Al-Sahel earned its first point. Al-Jahra fell 1-2 to Sulaibikhat, bringing the latter to four points.

Fahaheel climbed to fifth place with a 3-0 win over Al-Shabab, while Al-Ahmadi remained at the bottom with zero points. Salmiya celebrated its first victory of the season with a 9-1 rout of Sporty, also reaching four points. Al-Yarmouk secured second place after a 4-1 win over Khaitan, who stayed on three points. Qadisiya now leads the league ahead of its rivals, setting up an exciting remainder of the U-20 season.

# Kuwait Club reaches quarterfinals of Arab Basketball Championship

**By Hassan Mosa**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DUBAI, Oct 2: Kuwait Club secured a spot in the quarterfinals of the 37th Arab Basketball Championship in Dubai, running until October 6, after a hard-fought 88-83 win over UAE’s Al-Nasr in the Round of 16. The Round of 16 also saw Qadsia exit the tournament following a 75-70 loss to Bahrain’s Al-Manama, while Libya’s Ahli Tripoli defeated Yemen’s Shabab Hadramout 94-66, and Lebanon’s Antonine edged Syria’s Al-Fidaa Homs 98-97. The remaining Round of 16 matches concluded late yesterday, with Kazma facing Syria’s Al-Wahda. Kuwait will take on the



Kuwait Club player shoots over an opponent.

KUNA photo

winner of the clash between Qatar’s Al-Rayyan and Yemen’s Al-Mina in the quarterfinals. The game against Al-Nasr was closely contested from the start, with both teams trading points in a first quarter that ended tied 15-15. Kuwait gradually gained control in the second quarter thanks to strong performances from Americans Jamal Jones and Charlie Moore, supported by Hamad and Mohammed Adnan, taking a 38-32 lead at halftime. Al-Nasr fought back in the third quarter, exploiting moments of disorganization to briefly take a 57-55 lead. However, Kuwait regained composure in the final quarter, imposing their rhythm at critical moments to secure a deserved 88-83 victory.

# Siraj, Bumrah shine as India bowls out West Indies for 162 in Ahmedabad Test

Host trails by just 41 runs

AHMEDABAD, India, Oct 2, (AP): Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah shared seven wickets as West Indies were bowled out for 162 runs and India was 121-2 in reply on day one, Thursday of the first test in Ahmedabad. Siraj took 4-40 in 14 overs, and fellow pacer Bumrah picked 3-42 as the visitor was shot out in 44.1 overs. No. 7 batter Justin Greaves top-scored with 32 runs; no other batter crossed 30. Left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav picked 2-25 in 6.2 overs. By stumps, India trailed by just 41 runs. Lokesh Rahul was unbeaten on 53 not out and skipper Shubman Gill was 18 not out. West Indies lost three



West Indies' captain Roston Chase plays a shot on the first day of the first Test cricket match between India and West Indies at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, India. (AP)

wickets in the first 10 overs and five wickets by lunch after choosing to bat. The top order looked to play shots, and they didn’t pay off. Siraj grabbed

3-19 in the morning while Bumrah took a couple of overs to find his rhythm. Opener Tagenarine Chanderpaul was caught behind for an 11-ball duck. Bumrah struck in the

seventh over to remove the other opener, John Campbell, caught behind for 8. Captain Roston Chase and Shai Hope added 48 runs for the fifth wicket, their best passage of the morning session, until Yadav bowled Hope. After lunch, Chase was caught behind off Siraj. Greaves and debutant Khary Pierre helped their side pass 150. Pierre scored 11 off 34 balls in his maiden outing and was out lbw to Washington Sundar. India’s innings began post-tea, and Rahul put on 68 off 110 balls with Yashasvi Jaiswal, who scored 36 off 54 balls. Jaiswal hit seven fours and was out caught behind trying to attack Jayden Seales in the 19th over. Sai Sudarshan, playing at his Indian Premier League home ground, was out lbw for 7. Chase dismissed him, and India was 90-2. Play was extended for 22 minutes owing to a short rain interruption, and Rahul reached his half-century off 101 balls despite leg cramps. He and Gill added 31 off 79 balls before stumps. West Indies has not beaten India in their last 25 tests - home or away - dating to 2002.

## Brooksby cruises past Trotter in Shanghai Masters

# Gauff advances to China Open semifinals

BEIJING, Oct 2, (AP): Defending champion Coco Gauff reached the semifinals of the China Open for the third straight year after beating hard-hitting Eva Lys 6-3, 6-4 on Thursday. The second-seeded American was troubled on her serve and conceded seven break-point chances in Beijing. But Lys, a German player seeking her first career WTA title, could convert only three of them and dropped her own serve five times against the French Open champion. “She’s a tough opponent, she hit some incredible shots on the run,” said Gauff, who is seeking her 11th career title. “I was trying my best to stay aggressive. Just staying confident in my game and not being too passive.”

Gauff’s semifinal opponent will either be third-seeded Amanda Anisimova - the Wimbledon and U.S. Open runner-up - or No. 6 Jasmine Paolini, who recently helped Italy successfully defend the Billie Jean King Cup. Jensen Brooksby followed up his semifinal run at the Japan Open earlier this week with a dominating 7-6 (2), 6-1 win Thursday over James Trotter in the first round of the Shanghai Masters. Brooksby returned to play this year at the Australian Open after two years away from the game due to injuries and a suspension because of missed drug tests. Brooksby’s loss at the Japan Open in

Tokyo was to fellow American and second-seeded Taylor Fritz. 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 at least Friday. Carlos Alcaraz, who beat Fritz in the Japan Open final, 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.

# Ministries Volleyball Super Cup in Kuwait set for October 19

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: The Ministries Volleyball Super Cup will take place on October 19, featuring a single match between the National Guard and the Ministry of Electricity at the Volleyball Federation Hall in Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex, confirmed Abdullah Al-Najdi, Secretary of the Technical Committee for Volleyball in the Ministries League. Al-Najdi explained that the Technical Committee recently held a meeting with representatives from the participating ministries and government authorities to finalize the competition’s rules and regulations. Nine entities are taking part in the Ministries Volleyball competitions: two teams from the National Guard, two from the Ministry of Education, and one each from the Ministry of Electricity and Water, the Fire Department, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Culture and Information. The Ministries Volleyball League is set to kick off on October 11 and will be played across three phases. All matches will be held at the Kuwait Volleyball Federation Hall, with an additional venue to be announced later. Dates for the Ministries Cup and Beach Volleyball competitions will also be released soon. Al-Najdi extended his gratitude to all participating ministries and wished all teams success in the tournament. Meanwhile, two matches of the Volleyball Federation Championship are scheduled today at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex, with Al-Nasr facing Al-Yarmouk and Kuwait Club taking on Al-Shabab.



Abdullah Al-Najdi

## Kuwait Club ahead as first phase ends

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: The curtain comes down on the first phase of the Handball Premier League today with the final matches of Round 7 at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. Arabi faces Salmiya at 5:00 p.m., followed by Qadsia against Sulaibikhat at 6:30 p.m. The round will conclude tomorrow when Kazma meets Nasr at 5:00 p.m., before league leader Kuwait Club takes on Burgan at 6:30 p.m. Kuwait Club tops the standings with 12 points, followed by Burgan on eight, Kazma on seven, while Qadsia and Salmiya are level on six. Arabi sits on four points, Sulaibikhat on three, and Nasr remains without a point. The second phase of the league is scheduled to begin next Tuesday and Wednesday. Eight teams compete in the Premier League, which is played across three phases. Each team meets its opponents three times over the season (home, away, home). The last-placed team will be relegated to the First Division, while the seventh-placed side will play a play-off against the First Division runner-up to determine promotion and relegation. Meanwhile, the technical committee of the Ministries, Authorities, and Government Institutions Handball League held a coordination meeting with six participating entities, confirming October 28 as the start date of the “Super” competition.



Members of the technical committee.

## Statistics are getting worse for Amorim

MANCHESTER, England, Oct 2, (AP): The stats are increasingly damning for under-pressure Manchester United coach Ruben Amorim. A return of 34 points from his first 33 Premier League games in charge is by far the worst of any United manager since Alex Ferguson retired in 2013. Of the other five permanent appointments from David Moyes through to Erik ten Hag, none amassed fewer than 56 over the same period. The rate of just over a point a game would mean relegation in the Premier League’s past. While the points total required for safety has dropped, Amorim’s record is still worrying. “The results are catastrophic, really, in Manchester United terms,” former United captain Gary Neville told Sky Sports. “The money that’s been spent has been big and there are some things that I’m seeing that are a massive worry, and some things that can’t happen.” United great Wayne Rooney echoed those concerns on his podcast after United’s latest defeat at Brentford last week. “I honestly hope he can turn it round,” Rooney said. “But if you’re saying to me, ‘Do you believe he will?’ then, after everything I’ve seen, honestly, I’ve got no faith in it.” Amorim was hired last November and oversaw United’s worst Premier League campaign last season. On Saturday, United hosts newly promoted Sunderland in the last game before the international break. More dropped points would only increase the pressure on Amorim at a point in the season when clubs traditionally look to make managerial changes. Despite United’s troubles, it was only four points off fourth-placed Tottenham. It was also only three points above the relegation zone. After back-to-back defeats in the Premier League and Champions League, Liverpool travels to Chelsea on Saturday. Chelsea was expected to be a title challenger after winning the Club World Cup in the summer but has picked up just one point from its last three games. Erling Haaland is on fire with two more goals in the Champions League on Wednesday taking his total to 17 in 10 games for Manchester City and Norway this season. City plays Brentford on Sunday. German striker Nick Woltemade has made an impressive start to life at Newcastle with three goals in four starts. Newcastle hosts Nottingham Forest on Sunday. The injuries are mounting for Liverpool. Giovanni Leoni was out with ACL damage and Alisson and Hugo Ekitike were injured in the Champions League defeat at Galatasaray on Tuesday. Alisson has been ruled out of the Chelsea game, while Ekitike is being assessed. Chelsea will also be missing Cole Palmer, who has a groin injury. On the field it could hardly be going better for high-flying Crystal Palace - up to third and the only unbeaten team in the league. Off the field, however, there is growing uncertainty about the future of manager Oliver Glasner, who is being tipped as a potential replacement for Amorim at United and is out of contract at the end of the season. The Austrian won the Europa League with Eintracht Frankfurt before leading Palace to an FA Cup triumph last season.

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India's KL Rahul celebrates after scoring fifty runs on the first day of the first Test cricket match between India and West Indies at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, India. (AP) - See Page 15

# Sports

## Kuwait Shooting Federation honors Gulf, Arab and Asian championships medalists



Group photo of the female winners with the President and members of the federation.



Honorees gather for group photo with Asian Shooting Confederation President Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and Kuwait Shooting Federation officials.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: The Kuwait Shooting Federation held a ceremony to honor its male and female shooters who recently excelled at the Gulf, Arab, and Asian championships.

The event took place at the Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex, with Asian Shooting Confederation President Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah in attendance, alongside Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federation President Duaij Al-Otaibi and members of the local federation.

Kuwaiti shooters achieved notable success across three recent tournaments. At the 16th Asian Shooting Championship in Kazakhstan last August, they secured eight medals (two gold, two silver, and four bronze medals). The following month in Oman, at the Dhofar Gulf Autumn Shotgun Championship (Skeet and Trap), they added four more medals (two gold and two bronze). In Morocco last month, they collected 10 medals (two gold, four silver, and four bronze medals) at the Arab Shotgun Championship.

Speaking at the ceremony, Al-Otaibi expressed his delight at the accomplish-

ments of Kuwait's shooters, stressing that the recognition should serve as motivation for further success in the upcoming season. He noted that next year is filled with important championships and urged the athletes to push harder to secure as many Olympic qualification spots as possible.

Al-Otaibi dedicated these achievements to Kuwait's political leadership, Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Sport Bashar Abdullah, and to the Kuwaiti people.

## PSG sinks Barca with late winner as Man City and Juventus stumble



PSG's Nuno Mendes fouls Barcelona's Lamine Yamal during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain at the Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

### Dortmund routs Bilbao; Arsenal keeps perfect Champions League record

MADRID, Oct 2, (AP): **Goncalo Ramos struck a 90th-minute winner as Paris Saint-Germain sealed a statement win over Barcelona in the Champions League.**

Trailing 1-0 at the Estadi Olímpic Lluís Companys and without injured star forwards Ousmane Dembele, Desire Doue, and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, defending champion PSG fought back for a 2-1 victory against one of the favorites to lift the trophy in May.

Manchester City had to settle for a 2-2 draw with Monaco after Eric Dier scored a 90th-minute penalty for the hosts.

Villarreal and Juventus also ended 2-2 after Renato Veiga's late equalizer. Arsenal beat Olympiakos 2-0.

PSG's trip to Barcelona was always seen as the standout clash of matchday two. Both teams are expected to go far, with PSG aiming to join Real Madrid as the only other club to successfully defend the trophy in the Champions League era. Barcelona, a semifinalist last campaign, is intent on turning last season's domestic dominance into European triumph.

But despite the anticipation, neither team was at the height of its powers, with so many players missing.

While PSG was without the attack-



PSG's Nuno Mendes fouls Barcelona's Lamine Yamal during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain at the Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

ing trio that fired it to victory last term, Barcelona was also missing the injured Raphinha, while Robert Lewandowski was on the bench.

Lamine Yamal was available, but it was Ferran Torres who gave the home team the lead in the 19th minute.

Senny Mayulu leveled the game in the 38th, and substitute Lee Kang-in came close to a winner by hitting the post late on.

But there was still more drama to come when Achraf Hakimi squared

the ball beyond Barca's defense and Ramos slid in the winner.

It's now two wins from two for PSG at the start of its defense of the title and an early statement against one of its main rivals.

Erling Haaland did what Erling Haaland does with two more goals in the Champions League, but it wasn't enough to seal victory in Monaco.

Having become the quickest player to reach 50 goals in the competition last month, the Norwegian looks certain to

become the quickest to reach 60. Lionel Messi managed it in 80 appearances. Haaland is on 52 after 50 games.

But that will be of little comfort to Pep Guardiola, who watched his team squander two points by conceding a late penalty that Dier converted to seal the draw.

Discarded by Manchester United, Rasmus Hojlund is showing the type of form that earned him an \$82 million move to Old Trafford in the first place.

He struck twice to earn Napoli a 2-1 win over Sporting Lisbon. That's three goals in five appearances - after having scored two in his last 13 games for United.

It certainly helps when he can feed off the kind of service Kevin De Bruyne can deliver, and the former Man City playmaker was the provider of both of Hojlund's goals.

Borussia Dortmund routed Athletic Bilbao 4-1 and Bayer Leverkusen was held 1-1 at home by PSV Eindhoven.

Another win for Arsenal and another clean sheet. The 2-0 victory over Olympiakos was its sixth shutout in nine games this season.

Goals from Gabriel Martinelli in the first half and Bukayo Saka in stoppage time maintained Arsenal's 100% start in the competition.

Another team with a perfect record so far is Qarabag after its 2-0 win over Copenhagen. Abdellah Zoubir and Emmanuel Addai were on target for the Azerbaijani team.

## Al-Huleili replaces injured Dashti for Oct friendlies

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: Kuwait national team coach, Portuguese Helio Souza, has summoned Kazma midfielder Jarah Al-Huleili to replace Salmiya's Mahdi Dashti, who was sidelined due to injury during training earlier this week.

Al-Huleili, who has previously represented Kuwait at the Olympic (U-23) level, joins the squad as preparations continue for an upcoming friendly against Uzbekistan on October 9 in Tashkent during the international break.

The coaching staff decided to cancel the team's planned early departure to Dubai for a training camp, opting instead for daily sessions in Kuwait. This approach allows players more time to focus and build cohesion, especially after the squad was completed with Qadsia players who had finished their Gulf Champions League commitments against Iraq's Zakho.

The friendly against Uzbekistan marks Kuwait's first practical test under Souza since a 2-2 draw with Syria in a closed-door match last September.



Kuwait's Al-Huleili takes guidance from official.

Following the Uzbekistan match, the team will travel directly to Dubai for a short camp, which will include a second friendly against Morocco's local team on October 14. These preparations are crucial as the squad gears up for its official Arab Cup qualifier against Mauritania on November 14 in Doha, Qatar.

## Real Madrid aims to rebound from derby demolition against Villarreal

BARCELONA, Spain, Oct 2, (AP): Real Madrid needs to bounce back from its thrashing in last weekend's Spanish capital derby when it hosts a red-hot Villarreal on Saturday in La Liga.

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Alonso's side was embarrassed when it lost 5-2 at Atletico Madrid, marking the first time its crosstown rival scored five times in the derby in 75 years.

That loss let Barcelona take the lead. Madrid is one point back in second, and Villarreal only two points back in third.

Against Atletico, practically the entire starting XI of Madrid disappointed. Jude Bellingham was making his first start of the season after being sidelined by a shoulder surgery in the summer, and the rust was evident. Newcomers Dean Huijsen and Alvaro Carreras, both defenders, and regular midfielder Federico Valverde were also criticized for their performances.

Madrid is back home after a long journey to Kazakhstan midweek to beat Kairat Almaty 5-0, with Kylian Mbappé scoring a hat trick and taking his season goal tally to 13.

Villarreal heads to the Santiago Bernabeu after fighting back for 2-2 at Juventus in the Champions League on Wednesday. Marcelino Garcia Toral's team also has three consecutive wins in La Liga.

Tajon Buchanan leads Villarreal with three goals, and Pape Gueye, Nicolás Pépé and Georges Mikautadze have two each.

Barcelona visits Sevilla on Sunday after losing its first match of the season 2-1 to Paris Saint-Ger-

main in the Champions League on Wednesday.

Elche will aim to continue its surprisingly strong return to the top flight at Alaves on Sunday. Elche is unbeaten after seven rounds and has risen to fourth place.

Julian Alvarez is on a scoring run of six goals in his last three games as fifth-placed Atletico visits winless Celta Vigo on Sunday.

The Argentina forward struck his first hat trick in Europe in a 3-2 win at Rayo Vallecano last week. He scored two against Madrid and one in a 5-1 win over Eintracht Frankfurt midweek.

Madrid's defense remains depleted with right backs Dani Carvajal and Trent Alexander-Arnold and central defender Antonio Rudiger out with injuries. Eder Militao and Ferland Mendy are also doubtful.

Villarreal strikers Ayoze Pérez and Gerard Moreno are doubtful, and defender Juan Foyth is injured.

Barcelona is still missing Raphinha, Joan García and Fermin López with injuries.

Valverde, a key Madrid player in recent years under former coach Carlo Ancelotti, has caused a stir over his role under Alonso.

Spanish media reports say Valverde, an attacking midfielder, refused to play as a makeshift right back at Kairat with Madrid missing Carvajal and Alexander-Arnold. Central defender Raúl Asencio played on the right instead.

Valverde responded to those reports on social media with a statement saying that while he was aware he played some "bad games" he had never refused to play.

"No one can say that I refuse to play," Valverde said. "I have a good relationship with my coach, and I feel comfortable enough to tell him that I prefer to play in the midfield while also saying that I am willing to play in any position."