



Kuwait Crown Prince receives UN official  
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# Third Kuwaiti from Sumud flotilla freed

Kuwait preparations in full swing for return of all 3 nationals

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA):** Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya announced on Tuesday the arrival of the third Kuwaiti citizen released from the Al-Sumud flotilla to Jordan, as preparations continue for the return of all three nationals to Kuwait.

Al-Yahya said, a statement to KUNA, that the ministry is closely following the citizens' return after completing the necessary logistical procedures, reaffirming Kuwait's commitment to ensuring the safety of its

nationals and monitoring their situation from the moment of detention until their return home.

He expressed his sincere appreciation to Bahrain, Jordan, and Türkiye for the efforts in facilitating the release and safe return of the Kuwaiti citizens, praising the cooperation and support provided by the authorities in those countries.

A Kuwaiti citizen and 130 nationals from various countries who took part in the foiled maritime mission to relieve Gaza, the Sumud flotilla, have arrived in Jordan via King Hussein bridge, the Jordanian Foreign Ministry declared earlier Tuesday. The ministry spokesperson Fuad Al-Majali said in a press statement that the

released activists included a Jordanian female and citizens from Kuwait, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, Oman, Libya, Pakistan, Türkiye, Argentina, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Uruguay.

He added that the ministry, in collaboration with other authorities, facilitated their transport to Jordan and gave them some assistance.

Al-Majali also indicated that his department coordinated with the embassies of the freed activists' countries to facilitate their return home.

Kuwait had declared on October four that two citizens who were engaged in the humanitarian sea mission were freed.



Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Office Head receive Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait.



Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Office Head receive Ambassador of Vietnam to Kuwait.



Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Office Head receive Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait.



## Opinion

**Ahmed Al-Jarallah**

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

## Exhausted are the bodies with mighty souls

GIVEN that souls are mighty, the bodies are exhausted in pursuit of their aspirations.

Leadership requires continuous effort and tireless work, while strengthening the presence of national cadres to perform their roles to the fullest.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is determined to establish partnerships with global companies and institutions, so that Kuwait becomes a leading platform in the competitive economy, not only in the Gulf, but also regionally.

Based on this, a series of meetings between the political leadership and a group of business owners and CEOs of several major international institutions were held last week.

The discussions focused on expanding the horizons of foreign investment in the local environment, which is thirsty for it in all aspects -- whether industrial, service, economic or agricultural.

Some of the fruits of this have started to appear in the strategic relationship with major Chinese companies in the fields of afforestation and agriculture.

This is a step on a long road, on which the leadership is working with all its capabilities to transform Kuwait into a regional economic base with a strong presence.

It is obvious that people always aspire for economic stability and to exploit opportunities to develop their societies, providing them with intrinsic strength to deal with the repercussions of unexpected events that may occur suddenly.

Since leaders, who are keen on serving their nations,

bear the concerns of their people, they strive to become stronger in facing any event and transform threats into opportunities.

Therefore, the efforts of His Highness the Amir, HH the Crown Prince and the rest of the political leadership are directed toward revitalizing Kuwait, which greatly suffered from the effects of political unrest and the resulting corruption that diminished the strength of economic activity.

Today, the opportunity is available for the country to shake off the dust and reveal its bright side.

Undoubtedly, this requires high-level institutional performance and sound practices, not based on personal biases or thinking within the confines of squabbling.

On this basis, government agencies are required to rise to the occasion, not close their doors to local and foreign investors, and abandon malicious behavior. Their sole concern should not be to pursue a minor violation and turn it into a major case. The primary objective should be to encourage innovation and allow citizens to exert maximum effort to exploit every moment to promote fair competition in accordance with sound principles.

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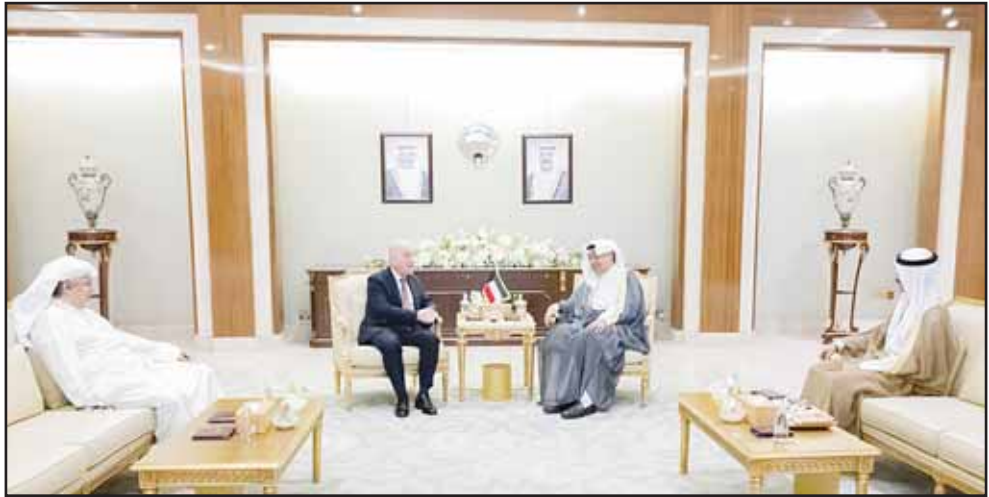
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Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Office Head receive Croatian Ambassador to Kuwait.

## Amiri Diwan Minister, Crown Prince Office Head receive Spain, Vietnam, Pakistan, Croatia envoys

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): The Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Office Head Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Tuesday Spanish Ambassador to the country, Manuel Hernandez Gamallo.

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

Sheikh Hamad and Sheikh Thamer also received the Vietnamese Ambassador to the country Dr.

Nguyen Duc Thang, where both sides discussed the bilateral relations between the two countries. Further, Sheikh Hamad and Sheikh Thamer received Pakistan Ambassador to Kuwait, Dr. Zafar Iqbal.

Boosting cooperation and coordination between the two countries were discussed.

Sheikh Hamad and Sheikh Thamer also received Croatian Ambassador to the country, Amir Muharemi, where bilateral ties and enhancing cooperation between the two countries were touched on.

## UAE gifts space mission artifacts to Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): The UAE Ambassador to the State of Kuwait Dr. Matar Al-Neyadi on Tuesday presented to Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center the UAE space-suit, "Tomoooh Zayed" logo and belongings from the Mohammad bin Rashid Space Center, related to the UAE's first space mission (2019).

Al-Neyadi, in a statement to journalists during the handover ceremony attended by Director General of Kuwait Foundation

for Advancement of Science (KFAS), Dr. Amina Farhan, said that he was proud of the level of cooperation and coordination between the State of Kuwait and the UAE in the space realm.

He also expressed pride that the cultural center displays items of the UAE space mission and screens documentaries of the adventure, hoping that the UAE space endeavor would pave the way for creating an inclusive Gulf space program.

There are joint space programs

between the UAE and Kuwait, Al-Neyadi added. The UAE items given to the center included video clips showing the space trip by the UAE Minister of State for Youth Dr. Sultan Al-Neyadi to the International Space Station (ISS) and UAE astronauts' training exercises.

Ambassador Al-Neyadi and Dr. Farhan examined the space museum at the center including the chamber named the "Galaxies Traveler" that depicts space history in the GCC countries.

PACI adopts AI to streamline geographic data

## Kuwait to launch unified electronic lease system

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has approved five strategic development projects under the current 2025-2026 development plan, including four new projects and one ongoing project. Among them is the "Unified Electronic Lease Contract" project, which will be approved in October 2026.

According to the development plan report, this project involves creating an electronic platform designed to regulate and monitor rental contracts. It aims to unify the process of registering and documenting leases, facilitate rental transactions, and organize the relationship between the tenant, property owner, and real estate broker, through an online system connected to the information network.

The project benefits all parties in the real estate market and aims to establish a new automated system to standardize lease contracts and enter them electronically into the PACI system. This will allow

for easy tracking, prevent tampering, and enable address updates for property owners when needed. According to the phased schedule, the project is scheduled for completion on October 30, 2026.

The second project involves expanding the infrastructure of the "Sahel" application to transform it into a managed services environment. A specialized team will be deployed to enhance its capacity to handle increased workloads, improve operational efficiency, and restructure the system to enable its use on local or external cloud platforms, in line with modern technological requirements. The project is expected to be completed by March 31, 2028.

The third project focuses on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies to automatically update data for supporting the geographic information system, and reducing reliance on human resources. This project is scheduled for completion by October 30, 2027.

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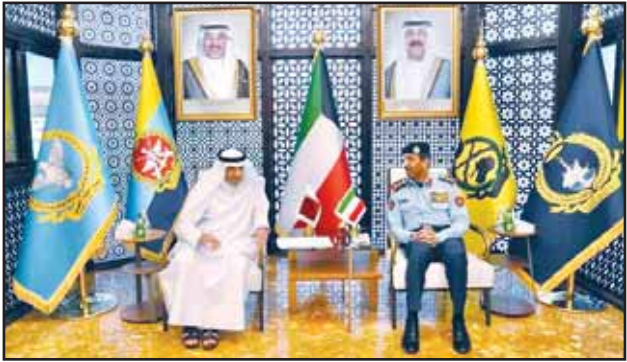
## Kuwait Army Chief meets Qatar, Türkiye envoys

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): The Chief of the General Staff of the Army, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuriaan, discussed a number of topics of mutual interest on Tuesday with the ambassadors of Qatar and Türkiye to the country, separately.

In a press release, the Army stated that Lieutenant General Al-

Shuriaan met with the Ambassador of Qatar to the country, Ali Al-Mahmoud, and the Ambassador of Türkiye to the country, Tuba Sonmez.

The statement added that the two meetings discussed key topics of mutual interest.



Army Chief of the General Staff with Ambassadors of Qatar and Türkiye.



General Staff of the Army photos

## Global investors flock to Kuwait's \$11.25b bonds

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): Economists attributed strong global investor demand for Kuwait's first sovereign bond issuance in eight years, worth USD 11.25 billion, to five main factors, led by exceptional financial strength and structural reforms.

Speaking to KUNA, they said the issuance was more than just deficit financing; it signaled to markets that Kuwait is activating

its new public debt law, prompting strong investor confidence and heavy oversubscription.

Economic Society Secretary Mohammad Al-Jouan told KUNA the high demand stemmed from five key factors, led by Kuwait's financial strength and its long absence from markets since its last issuance in 2017.

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## Kuwait marks Arab Capital of Culture '25 with major events

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): Over the past nine months, Kuwait has witnessed several cultural events in line with its selection as the Arab Capital of Culture for 2025.

This recognition recognizes Kuwait's active contributions to this field, its significant legacy, and the achievements it has accomplished over the past decades.

These events included cultural festivals, art exhibitions, honor-

ary awards, book fairs, artistic and theatrical performances, in addition to several workshops, discussion panels, and training courses.

The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) selected Kuwait as the Arab Capital of Culture in recognition of its pioneering position in the cultural field and in affirmation of its commitment to

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High-level Kuwait-US talks strengthen cooperation framework



Zain renews compliance with Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS)



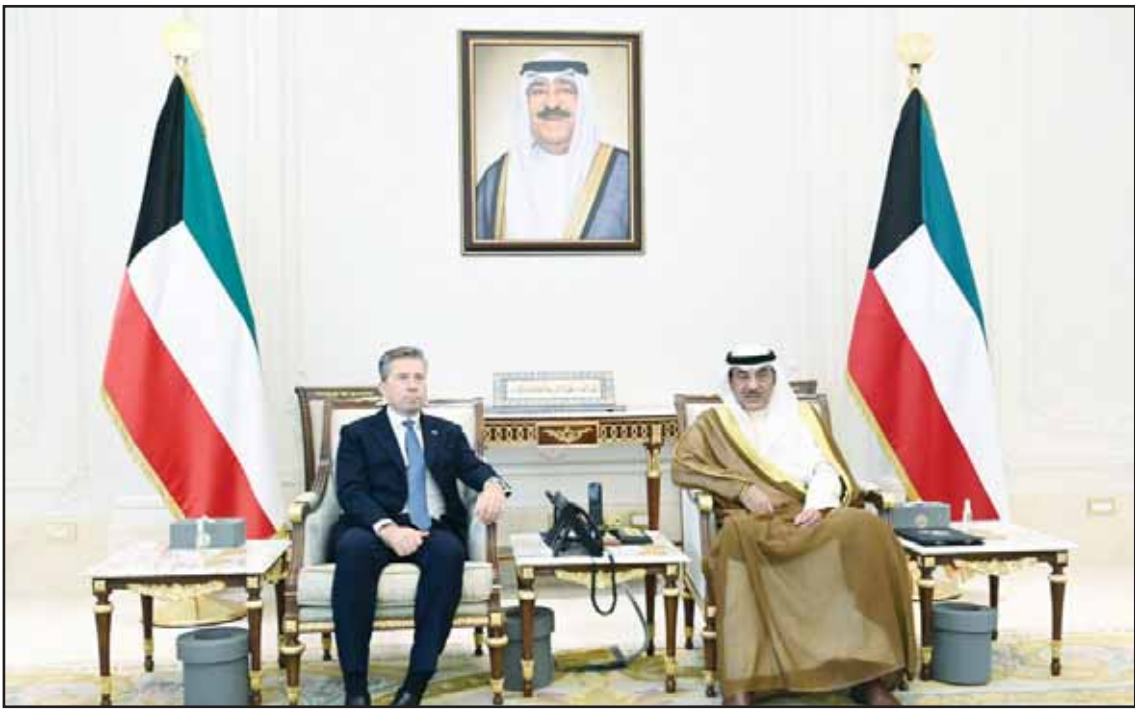
NBK celebrates the graduation of the second cohort of 'NBK RISE'



Prayer Timings			
Fajr .....	04:25	Asr .....	14:57
Sunrise ..	05:44	Maghrib ..	17:27
Zohr .....	11:36	Isha .....	18:44

# Local

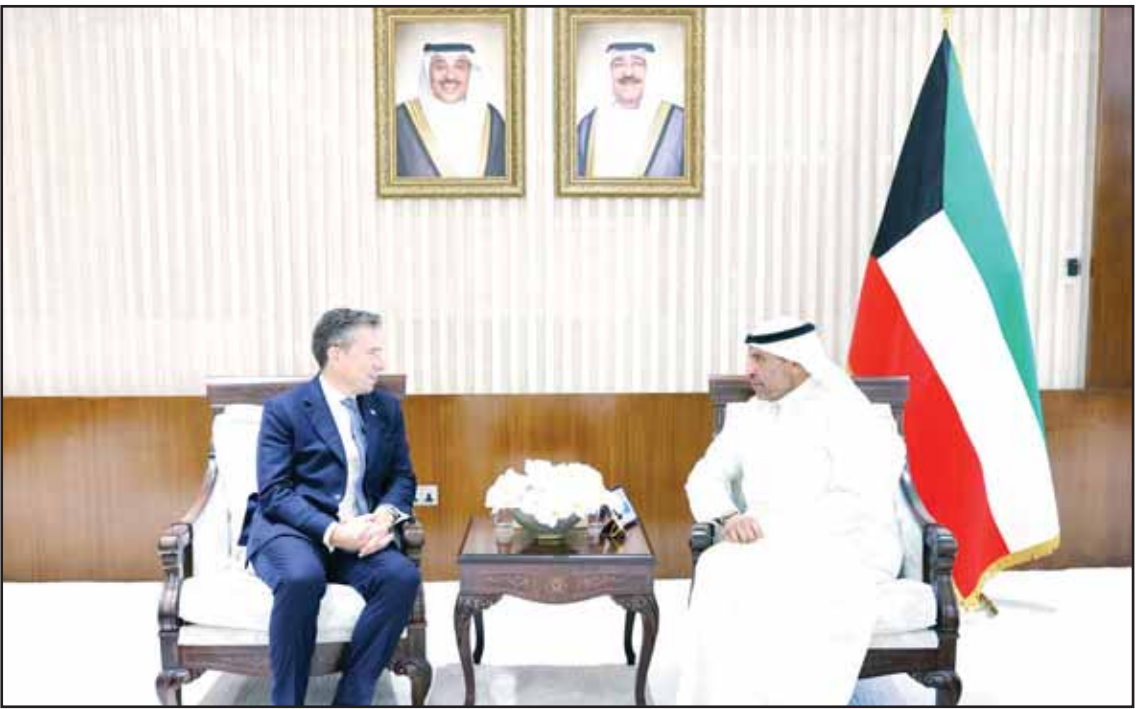
Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 06-26 km/h. to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.			
By Night: Rather hot to mild and relatively humid over coastal			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	41	26	
Kuwait Airport	39	20	
Abdaly	40	22	
Bubyan	36	17	
Jahra	41	24	
Failaka Island	38	21	
Salmiyah	38	27	
Ahmadi	37	23	
Nuwaisib	36	21	
Wafra	39	21	



Crown Prince Diwan photo  
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Tom Fletcher.

## Kuwait Crown Prince receives UN official

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Tuesday the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Tom Fletcher, and the accompanying delegation. Present at the reception were Chief of His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and senior officials.



KUNA photo  
The Minister of Foreign Affairs meets with the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

## Kuwait Foreign Minister hosts UN official

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met on Tuesday United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher, on the occasion of his visit to Kuwait. The meeting addressed the close ties between Kuwait and the UN, its agencies and specialized bodies, as well as discussing current humanitarian developments in the region.

# Greek Deputy FM lauds Kuwait's mediation role



Photos by Rezk Tawfiq  
Diplomats and officials gather in Kuwait to celebrate strong political, trade, and cultural ties with Greece.

### Greece eyes stronger political, economic ties

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: “Kuwait plays a vital role in building bridges and promoting international dialogue,” says Greek Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Harry Theoharis who praised the country’s balanced relations with various nations around the world and its policy based on friendship and mediation in resolving regional and international crises.**

In a statement during his visit to Kuwait to attend the joint ministerial meeting between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union (EU), Theoharis stressed that “Kuwait is a respected country with an exceptional ability to build bridges of understanding between peoples and countries -- a role that the region and the world

need more than ever.” He affirmed that Kuwaiti-Greek relations are “at their best,” and that the two countries share the same values, foremost among them are respect for international law and rejection of the logic of force. He said Greece and Kuwait are relatively small countries, yet both of them believe that the rule of law must always prevail, not the rule of arms. On his current visit, he explained that it was intended to reactivate dialogue with relevant authorities in Kuwait, including Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA), to discuss opportunities for cooperation in the fields of trade and investment. He confirmed that the coming period will witness more meetings between officials from the two countries. He pointed out that the ministerial meeting between the EU and GCC is a very important platform for consultation between two politically and economically pivotal regions. He stated that the discussions touched on complex regional and international issues such as Ukraine, Gaza, the Red Sea, Iraq and Lebanon. He said “the positions presented were very similar, thereby, making us more optimistic about the future

of dialogue and cooperation.” He stressed that there are opportunities to enhance trade exchange between the two countries, indicating that Kuwaiti products could find a promising market in Greece, while his country offers a safe and stable investment environment, characterized by economic growth exceeding twice the EU average. He added Greece also boasts of political stability that provides an attractive climate for investors. He underscored the importance of cooperation in the fields of education and health, citing the presence of Greek professors and researchers in Kuwaiti educational and research institutions. He aspires to expand these partnerships, particularly in medical research. He affirmed the commitment of Greece to strengthen cooperation with Kuwait at the political and economic levels. He asserted “we believe that our bilateral relations are capable of developing significantly, and that cooperation between our countries will always be mutual and fruitful.” He described the two countries’ relations as “excellent”, emphasizing that they are witnessing continuous development.

## Vietnam ends ASEAN Chairmanship in Kuwait

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to Kuwait Nguyen Duc Thang expressed his happiness at the conclusion of his country’s chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Committee in Kuwait (ACK), stressing his deep appreciation for the close cooperation and mutual support among ASEAN ambassadors over the past six months.

In a speech he delivered during the ACK chairmanship handover ceremony at the Indonesian Embassy on Monday with a number of Asian ambassadors and representatives of international organizations in attendance, the Ambassador thanked the participants in the ASEAN Committee event in Kuwait.

He explained that the ASEAN Committee chairmanship in Kuwait lasts for only six months, unlike the annual ASEAN chairmanship system, which gives all ambassadors the opportunity to assume this leadership role during their tenure in the country.

He stated “Vietnam and I were honored to chair the committee from March to September 2025, as we made it our top priority to strengthen the ASEAN community’s identity and consolidate joint cooperation in Kuwait.”

He pointed out that Vietnam, during its chairmanship, sought to highlight ASEAN’s image in Kuwaiti society

by deepening communication with official bodies and the local community, as well as organizing joint events and activities with the diplomatic corps.

He disclosed “Vietnam launched five qualitative initiatives during its chairmanship, focusing on sports, tourism, business networks and community health.” He indicated that his country completed 90 percent of these initiatives during its chairmanship.

He explained that the only initiative postponed was the blood donation campaign in cooperation with Jahra Hospital, due to the requirement that donors reside in Kuwait for six consecutive months. He confirmed that this event will take place in December “as a modest contribution to serving the community and supporting those in need.”

He stressed the importance of developing relations between ASEAN and GCC countries. He said “the relationship between Asia and the Gulf countries is growing, especially after the summit held in Kuala Lumpur in May.”

He announced the handover of the chairmanship of the ASEAN Committee in Kuwait to Indonesian Ambassador Lena Mariana.

Ambassador Mariana delivered a speech in which she thanked the entire previous working group for their outstanding performance and continued commitment to achieving shared regional aspirations. She also praised the cooperation of all heads of mission and working group members, who contributed to the success of the committee’s missions and programs in Kuwait.

Kuwait and Netherlands sign MoU

## Al-Yahya, EU top diplomat review bilateral ties, regional dynamics

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met with High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, Kaja Kallas, who is in Kuwait to attend GCC-EU meetings. During the meeting, both sides discussed bilateral relations between Kuwait and the EU, ways of promoting and developing them and the latest regional and international developments. Minister Al-Yahya met Monday his Hungarian counterpart Peter Szijarto, who is in Kuwait to attend GCC-EU meetings.

During the meeting, both sides discussed bilateral relations between Kuwait and Hungary, ways of promoting and developing them and the latest regional and international developments. Minister Al-Yahya met Monday his Dutch counterpart David van Weel, who is in Kuwait to attend the second session of the High-Level Ministerial Security Forum on Security and Regional Cooperation between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union (EU), as well as the 29th session of the Joint Ministerial Council between the GCC and the EU. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated in a press release that during the meeting, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and discussed ways to strengthen and develop them. They also addressed current regional developments and international issues. Following the meeting, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed regarding the establishment of a joint cooperation committee between the Government of Kuwait and the Gov-



Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya meets with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission Kaja Kallas.



KUNA photos  
Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya meets with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, David Van Wiel.

ernment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. This reflects the two countries’ commitment to advancing their cooperative relations in various vital and important fields, aiming to broaden horizons and enhance mutual interests.

### Other Voices

## Church of England and the Dhuhr Prayer

By Ahmad alsarraf

Last Friday, the Church of England appointed Sarah Mullally as its new Archbishop. She will become the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury, the spiritual leader of 85 million Anglicans worldwide, and the first woman to lead a church with a history stretching back more than 1,400 years. Mullally replaces her predecessor, who resigned after failing to properly investigate widespread allegations of sexual abuse involving children and young men by clergy members.

A 63-year-old former nurse, Mullally is known for her strong advocacy of women’s rights within the Church of England. She steps into her new role at a time when the church is facing major challenges. Its credibility has been damaged by past scandals, internal divisions over same-sex marriage, and a steady decline in attendance in an increasingly secular society. Mullally will need to restore the church’s credibility on youth protection and other critical issues, particularly in light of the rejection of her leadership by bishops in Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

Currently, there are approximately 40,000 church buildings in Britain open and in use for worship, including Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Pentecostal, and hundreds of other denominations. This number, combined with an additional 4,000 churches, outnumbers major public buildings such as supermarkets, post offices, and even pubs in the United Kingdom. More than three decades ago, the Church of England gradually approved the inclusion of women in senior church positions, following extensive theo-

logical and social debates. This shift reflected the changing role of women in British society, the rise of gender equality movements, and the church’s desire to stay relevant and vibrant in contemporary times.

What has happened in the British church community has also occurred in many other religious communities, including Islam, with no exception.

Stagnation means decline. While Islam has seen significant developments over the centuries, these changes have generally been slow and limited. Time is not on our side; it demands more and better reforms, some of which I have previously addressed in several articles. These include ending slave ownership, abolishing the amputation of thieves’ hands, enforcing mandatory wills, assigning courts to handle divorce and alimony cases, ending leniency toward murderers in adultery cases, stopping the stoning of married adulterers and flogging of unmarried adulterers, replacing some punishments with imprisonment or psychiatric treatment, reducing penalties for alcohol consumption, and transitioning to modern legal systems in line with international human rights conventions and global judicial standards.

Suspending some punishments must be part of a set of urgent reforms we desperately need. For example, combining the noon and afternoon prayers has become a practical necessity, as the noon prayer often falls in the middle of the workday.

The stagnation and resistance to change for the benefit of humanity are truly astonishing. We cannot claim to be right when the rest of the world, with its billions of people, is moving forward. Many of these changes were initially opposed by religious authorities, yet it has been proven that faith among Muslims was not diminished. On the contrary, these reforms brought them closer to the rest of humanity and more in harmony with their humanity.



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## Development plans ... The crisis between setbacks and success

“EFFECTIVE planning is the backbone of any truly successful development effort. When planning falters or deviates from a sound methodology, development loses momentum, diminishing its impact and its role in driving progress,” former Director General of the Arab Planning Institute **Dr. Badar Othman Malallah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“A comprehensive renaissance project cannot be implemented, or expected to achieve its goals without a clear vision, carefully crafted plans, realistic development initiatives, and qualified human resources. These elements must be present in an integrated and interconnected way.



Dr. Malallah

“Kuwait has made notable progress in its renaissance journey, which began with independence, sometimes facing setbacks, and at other times succeeding. These successes have contributed to progress in economic and social development, placing Kuwait in a respected international position. However, the areas where progress has stumbled have now turned into challenges. We must confront and overcome these challenges to complete our renaissance project and keep pace, especially in a world marked by fierce competition, intense struggles for influence, and growing areas of tension.

“Despite our substantial human and financial resources, successive development plans often take us one step forward only to pull us one step back, as if we are running in place. This reflects a deeper crisis in both planning and implementation. The result is a negative impact on development, a slowdown in economic diversification, continued dependence on oil as the primary source of government revenue, and an inability to adequately improve and expand essential services such as healthcare, education, and housing.

“All of this is reflected in our ranking on international indicators. Managing the economy and development can either follow a framework of well-structured, strategic planning or rely on scattered projects and programs that often resemble reactions to emerging events. Of course, well-structured, strategic planning is far more effective and efficient. Strategic planning is a vital tool for building a comprehensive renaissance project in any country.

“It is important to ask - What do we mean by a development plan? The answer is that a development plan refers to any goal we seek to achieve within a specific time frame, in line with what has been achieved previously. By “any goal,” we mean everything related to the development of the state, the economy, society, and the government’s program of action. It is not appropriate to create isolated plans and pursue them separately from plans in other sectors. Doing so undermines the importance, momentum, and feasibility of the development process.

“Successful development plans have aimed at important objectives, including reducing dependence on oil, diversifying sources of income and GDP, achieving sustainable economic growth driven by the non-oil sector, establishing an efficient and highly productive public administration, and promoting a leading role for the private sector in driving growth and employment. However, the practical implementation of these plans has fallen short of achieving the intended goals.

“Since 1969, nine five-year plans have been prepared, including the so-called National Document for Reform and Development for the period 1992–1995. An evaluation of these plans, based on available data, reveals a low level of performance and achievement such that some of the plans were not even implemented at all. There are certainly many known reasons for this, familiar to planners, but there are also fundamental reasons that have often gone unnoticed.

“I will highlight a number of these reasons here. First, most, if not all, of the development plans, despite emphasizing the private sector’s leadership role, were primarily government-driven infrastructure investment programs. They did not focus on actively stimulating the private sector in productive areas or supporting economic diversification.

“Second, while the development plans often claim to be based on clear policies and indicators, in practice they tend to be traditional in nature. They are not designed or implemented within the framework of a comprehensive macroeconomic model based on overall economic balances. In addition, the sluggishness of government administration, weak coordination among agencies, and institutional fragmentation have all contributed to poor implementation and low achievement rates. A long-term development vision, implemented through medium-term plans within a structured development planning system, is a vital tool for strengthening national partnership.

“From this perspective, development

is a society’s journey toward a better future. It is a societal partnership that involves the state, citizens, civil society, and the private sector. Everyone should contribute to this process, and everyone should share in its benefits. Development planning is a key instrument for promoting national unity and social partnership.”

“During the Iran-Iraq War, Kuwait faced a blockade on its tanker traffic. Due to US reluctance to allow Kuwaiti tankers to fly the American flag for protection, Kuwait turned to Moscow to raise the Soviet flag on its tankers, and the request was approved,” columnist **Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarrah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Kuwait’s aim was to protect its oil tankers from attacks and threats amid the tense military and political situation caused by the war with neighboring Iran, especially after failing to reach an agreement with Washington over flying the American flag on tankers. An official Kuwaiti delegation visited the Soviet capital at the time, which resulted in the signing of several agreements, including those related to oil. Although investment opportunities in the Soviet Union were limited and unattractive, political necessity led Kuwait to overlook the economic drawbacks in exchange for the protection offered by flying the Soviet flag on its tankers.

“Following the Kuwaiti-Soviet agreement in the mid-1980s, Washington agreed to allow tankers to fly the American flag, securing Kuwait’s protection from both superpowers. The American effort to maintain Kuwait as an ally, preventing it from falling under Soviet influence, became evident. Amid a significant shift in the American-Israeli alliance, the events and shocking developments following the attack on Qatar revealed a selective American policy, accompanied by promises of “non-repetition” of attacks on Doha. Meanwhile, Tel Aviv continued to escalate threats but later issued apologies to Doha.

“For multiple reasons and with strong justification, Kuwait needs to carefully assess the necessity of deepening its partnership with the Chinese giant, transforming economic and investment cooperation into advanced military and defense collaboration.

This would enable Kuwait to successfully maintain a balance between Washington and Beijing. China is a superpower with unwavering interests, friendships, and alliances. It has shown no shifts in international or regional balances of power, while emphasizing dialogue and the preservation of humanity, without hesitation or compromise when it comes to military strength.

“Washington is influenced by presidential moods and the strong impact of the Israeli lobby on American policymaking. In contrast, China has maintained a firm international stance against Israeli arrogance, which recently limited the “political and media blockade” imposed by Qatar and China, as well as efforts to isolate it from its allies. Any political ideology, whether fragile or unstable, that aligns with Israel’s ambitions cannot be relied upon. It is more prudent to develop multiple military and political scenarios by establishing legitimate agreements with the Chinese giant to preserve the security and sovereignty of Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council states.

“Let’s be realistic in addressing the recent, fleeting developments that have struck Doha both militarily and politically, and focus on analyzing the future challenges that can be anticipated rather than waiting for them to take shape. This comes in light of a terrorist violation that breaches all international conventions, humanitarian and moral laws, and international law in particular.

“Israel has violated the sovereignty of Doha, a mediating state and international negotiator. What prevents the same “state terrorism” scenario from being repeated against Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council states? Kuwait is the only country that, since 1967, has been officially in a state of war with Israel. Therefore, concerns and the likelihood of multiple American-Israeli scenarios involving normalization and military threats to Kuwait are increasing, serving as a joint American-Israeli signal to a country whose political system differs from other Gulf states.

“Many indicators confirm Israel’s focus on a scenario of endless conflict and open war as a means to become a major regional power, which it aims to achieve through military and political arrogance. The attack on Doha is more than just an act of aggression. It marks a turning point in Israel’s struggle for influence in the Middle East and poses a direct threat to the security and sovereignty of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. This threat reflects Israel’s growing ambitions, fueled by extremist rhetoric and expansionist actions.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

# GCC backs Kuwait and Saudi plans, affirms Gaza solidarity

Ministers adopt AI, set annual endowments study

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

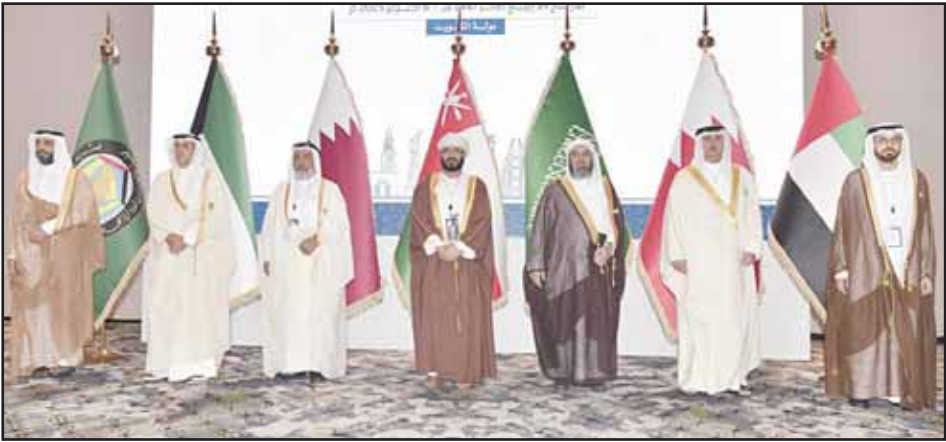
**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: Kuwait, represented by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, hosted the 11th meeting of the ministers responsible for Islamic affairs and endowments in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries on Monday.**

In a speech as chairman of the meeting, Kuwait’s Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi said the papers presented include ambitious visions and unique projects that embody collective awareness and understanding of opportunities for joint cooperation.

He explained that the most important proposals and projects submitted by the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs include “Employing Artificial Intelligence in the Field of Islamic Affairs” and “Technical Guides for the Construction and Development of Mosques.”

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Islamic Affairs submitted proposals entitled “Standards and Controls for the Success of the Imam in His Social Role,” “The Charter for Intellectual Security for the Imam of the Mosque,” and “Electric Conservation in Mosques.”

He added “with sadness, the Islamic nation and the GCC countries monitored the brutal attacks on the State of Qatar by the usurping Zionist entity, which is a flagrant violation of international conventions and norms.” He affirmed their full support for the State of Qatar.



KUNA photo

The 11th meeting of the ministers responsible for Islamic Affairs and Endowments of the Gulf Cooperation Council States.

He stated that “amid the challenges that nations are facing, our countries enjoy the blessings of security, safety, stability and faith, thanks to Almighty Allah, and then to the wisdom of our wise leaders, who instilled this lofty edifice for us and established this cohesive Arab Gulf entity, through which we preserve our identity, realize our hopes and aspirations, and work together to achieve cooperation and integration in all fields. We strive toward our common destiny with sincerity and faith.”

He revealed an agreement was reached for all countries to conduct specialized studies on endowments, and dates were set for these studies throughout the year. He said the first week of October each

year was designated for studies on endowments and their development, indicating updated studies will be presented by all countries to participate in the meeting.

He concluded “the feelings of pain and sorrow that overwhelm our hearts over the atrocities and humanitarian tragedies witnessed in the Gaza Strip constitute a crime that blatantly violates all international and humanitarian law conventions. We hereby affirm our firm and unwavering position alongside the Palestinian people. The GCC countries have played a leading role since the beginning of this crisis, through their honorable positions and continuous support at all levels.”

### Patient treated accordingly

## Jahra Hospital upholds privacy amid viral case

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7:** Jahra Hospital confirmed that its medical staff is treating a patient, whose case was circulated on social media, according to the highest professional and ethical standards.

In a press statement, the hospital expressed its appreciation for the sympathy expressed by members of the community and their shared concern for the health and safety of the patient.

It also emphasized the importance of preserving patients’ privacy and the confidentiality of their data, considering it a fundamental right that must not be violated or circulated outside the specialized medical framework.

It indicated that the case is being monitored by an integrated medical team comprising of a select group of specialized national experts, under the direct supervision of the medical administration and the head of the medical staff. It asserted that the team closely monitors the case and the treatment plan, and maintains continuous communication with the patient’s family to clarify all treatment procedures and steps.

It stated that all necessary diagnostic tests have been completed, the patient’s medical condition accurately determined, and the treatment plan is being implemented in accordance with established scientific principles.



General Staff of the Army photo

The Kuwaiti Deputy Chief of Staff and his Emirati counterpart visit the Sabah Al-Ahmad Coast Guard Base.

## Kuwait, UAE’s Army Deputy Chief visit KOC exhibition and Coast Guard Base

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA):** Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Major Gen. Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and his United Arab Emirates counterpart, Major Gen. Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nahyan visited Sabah Al-Ahmad Coast Guard Base, and the Ahmad Al-Jaber Oil and Gas Exhibition of the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) in Ahmadi City, Monday.

The visit took place on the sidelines of the meeting between both Deputy Chiefs of Staff and Al-Ahmad Governor Sheikh Humoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, discussing

topics of mutual interest, according to a statement by the Kuwaiti Army.

On the other hand, the Army stated that the visit to the Coast Guard Base aims to enhance military and security cooperation and exchange expertise between the armed forces of both countries, contributing to the security and stability of the region.

Accompanying the visit was UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Matar Hamed Al-Neyadi, and senior commanding officers from both sides.

## Court ‘acquits’ defendant in alleged KD40,000 fraud case

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7:** The Criminal Court acquitted a defendant of defrauding a female citizen.

Case files indicate that the Public Prosecution charged the defendant with deceiving the female citizen and using fraudulent means to lure her into entering into a vegetable stand, restaurant and café venture with him. The victim was led to believe that there was a joint commercial project with the defendant, who asked her to finance it with KD40,000. However, she later discovered that the business was not at the location he specified, so she demanded that he return the amount, but her efforts were in vain. He later acknowledged in a signed letter that he owed her the aforementioned sum.

The court explained in its ruling that it was not reassured by the statements of the complainant, as the documents contained no evidence proving the defendant’s use of fraudulent methods to induce her to hand over the money.



Ahmadi Municipality photo

Part of a large-scale inspection campaign in Mangaf.

## Large-scale Ahmadi blitz targets Mangaf clean-up

By Inaas Awad  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7:** The inspection teams of Ahmadi Municipality carried out a large-scale inspection campaign in Mangaf to ensure compliance with municipal regulations and guidelines.

The Public Relations and Media Department of the Kuwait Municipality stated that the campaign, the largest of its kind in the area, led to the lifting of 13 abandoned vehicles and four food trucks operating in violation of the law. Also, three street vendors were apprehended, six citations were issued for the unlicensed use of public space, and 11 illegal sunshades were removed after prior warnings were issued by inspectors from the Violations Removal Department.

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First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah meets with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio at the US State Department.

KUNA photos

## High-level Kuwait-US talks strengthen cooperation framework

WASHINGTON, Oct 7, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah reaffirmed on Monday the deep historical and strategic relations that bonds Kuwait with the United States.

This came during his meeting with US Secretary

of State Marco Rubio, and US Homeland Secretary Kristi Noem, also attended by Kuwait’s Ambassador to the United States, Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah, Kuwait’s Ministry of Interior said in a statement.

The two sides discussed bilateral cooperation across various sectors and ways to enhance joint

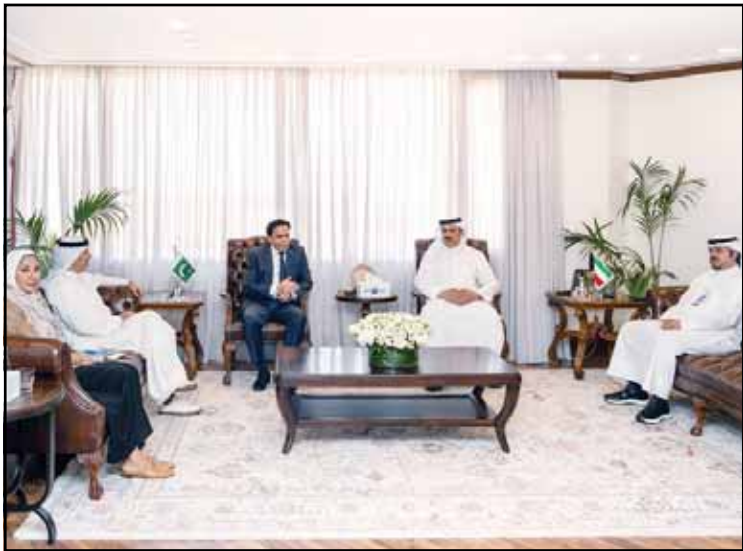
coordination for mutual benefit, the statement added.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef affirmed Kuwait’s keenness to continue coordination and exchange visits, and to benefit from US expertise, particularly in the security and diplomatic fields, in order to strengthen

the capabilities of national institutions.

At the end of the meeting, both sides expressed their commitment to continuing fruitful cooperation and emphasized the strength of bilateral relations.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef arrived in Washington Sunday on an official visit the statement added.



Acting Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Mohammad Al-Menai with Pakistan’s Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Zafar Iqbal.

## KUNA Acting Director, Pakistan Ambassador eye media co-op

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): Acting Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Mohammad Al-Menai discussed on Tuesday with Pakistan’s Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Zafar Iqbal ways to boost bilateral media cooperation and develop initiatives serving both sides.

During the meeting held at KUNA headquarters, Al-Menai highlighted the significance of media for cooperation and cultural exchange among nations while conveying Kuwait’s message to regional and international audiences.

He reaffirmed KUNA’s interest in expanding partnership with Pakistani media institutions through news exchange and the adoption of advanced tools based on Artificial Intelligence (AI) as well as digital

technology.

For his part, Ambassador Dr. Iqbal praised KUNA’s professional efforts in promoting Kuwait’s international image, emphasizing the importance of developing new avenues of cooperation between the two national news agencies.

He also expressed Pakistan’s keenness to renew the cooperation agreement between the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) and KUNA, reflecting the depth of bilateral ties, and extended his congratulations on KUNA’s 49th anniversary.

The meeting was attended by Acting Editor-in-Chief Mohammad Al-Bahar, Director of Marketing and Public Relations Essam Al-Ruwayeh, and Director of the Office of the Director General Lamia Al-Farsi.

# Over 4,100 seniors benefit from nationwide programs

Kuwait boosts elderly care with expanded services

**By Fares Ghaleb**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: Director of the Elderly Care Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Enezi disclosed that around 4,100 elderly people are officially registered at mobile service centers in the six governorates.**

In a press statement on Monday, Al-Enezi said the department issued 40,000 priority cards to facilitate the transactions of these elderly people with government agencies, in addition to 10,000 parking signs for the elderly.

He added the department provides comprehensive housing services at Farah Specialized Center, which is manned by a select group of doctors, nurses, and psychological and social specialists. “It also organizes daily cultural and recreational activities and programs for the elderly to spend their free time in worthwhile activities and to develop their skills. It provides home care services through medical teams consisting of social and psychological specialists, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health. This is in addition to daycare services that allow the elderly to benefit from the

## Social Affairs minister highlights mental health as nat’l investment

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Social Affairs and Family and Childhood Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila affirmed Monday that attention to the mental health of families and children is not a luxury but an investment in the nation’s future and a cornerstone for creativity and productivity.

Al-Huwaila said in a speech during the opening of the first Mental Health Forum and Exhibition, organized by the Ministry’s Awareness and Guidance Center, which coincides with World Mental Health Day.

She said the forum represents an opportunity to increase awareness of mental health as a fundamental human right and to support individuals suffering from psychological challenges while addressing any

social stigma preventing access to proper care.

The minister added the event aims to raise family awareness and equip parents with tools and methods that help them understand their children’s behavior and interact positively through effective communication.

She explained the ministry seeks to strengthen mental health within families through awareness and counseling programs in cooperation with schools and specialized centers to promote a sound family environment.

Al-Huwaila expressed appreciation to the Awareness and Guidance Center team and participating entities, including the Arab Planning Institute, Tanmia Charity Society

and Elite Research and Development Company, for their contribution to organizing and supporting the forum.

The forum, held at the Arab Planning Institute and accompanied by an exhibition featuring specialized institutions, highlights effective parenting methods to reduce psychological and behavioral challenges and reinforces community partnerships among relevant entities.

The event included three main scientific sessions: “Bridging the gap between parents and children: How to build effective communication,” “Between freedom and discipline: Achieving balance,” and “The school as a psychological community: How to identify and support children”.

center’s facilities and enjoy the diwaniya, traditional games, and cultural and awareness gatherings for the families who care for them,” he elaborated.

He pointed out that the department spares no effort in developing the services provided to the elderly,

affirming its ongoing efforts to strengthen partnerships with its Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) partners, civil society organizations, and the private sector to develop these services.

He revealed there are several clubs and diwanis for the elderly,

such as Al-Bar Club in Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Baraka Club in Rehab, West Abdullah Al-Mubarak Diwaneya and Hawally Center Diwaniya. He added these entities organize daily activities and arts and crafts workshops aimed at integrating the elderly into society.

Continued from Page 1

## Exhausted are

This means that government institutions must take advantage of the opportunities provided by the political leadership’s ongoing efforts to restore the country to the leadership position it once held.

This leadership served as an important building block in the construction of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and at one point, even transformed into an Arab cultural and development center with a lasting impact.

Today, there are numerous opportunities that cannot be overlooked. If they pass without capitalizing on them, it will lead to backwardness and a return to square one.

This is not the aspiration of the political leadership. It promised, and has delivered, to restore Kuwait to the high-level of leadership.

Consequently, it is working on major strategic partnerships. The leadership is keen on attracting major investments to diversify domestic resources, free the economy from the dominance of oil, and open the doors to Kuwaiti youths and local investors to play their part in this field.

Kuwait is an important gateway to the development process, so we all want it to regain its economic and development glory and openness. Everyone here understands that stability is the key to growth and prosperity.

## Kuwait to

The fourth project is the creation of a “Digital Twin for the State of Kuwait,” aiming to benefit from the data collected by PACI through its various initiatives and integrate it to build a realistic digital representation of the country. This includes producing a high-resolution digital copy of the data. The project is expected to be completed by February 2027.

The fifth and final project involves

the development of a “Unified Platform” for data exchange between government agencies, with completion expected by March 25, 2028.

## Kuwait marks

developing cultural content at the regional, Arab, and international levels, reflecting its national identity and cultural heritage.

On February 13, the representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, inaugurated the “Kuwait Capital of Arab Culture and Media 2025” events.

The event was attended by a number of ministers and media and cultural figures from the Arab world.

In his speech on this occasion, Minister Al-Mutairi stated that since its independence, Kuwait has adopted a comprehensive cultural vision that has placed it at the forefront of countries supporting thought and creativity.

It has launched numerous initiatives that have contributed to shaping the awareness of Arab generations and strengthening cultural identity.

The event was preceded by the opening of the 30th Qurain Cultural Festival, held from February 3 to 12.

The festival embodied three decades of cultural creativity, featuring a packed schedule of events that combined art, music, literature, and intellectual seminars.

The opening ceremony included a musical performance titled “From Kuwait,” combining authentic Kuwaiti and contemporary Arab art, in addition to a mini-opera featuring a patriotic song and a traditional “tanbura” performance.

On February 15, the Public Authority for Youth, in cooperation with Kuwait University, launched the “Pulse of Culture” project across several colleges.

The project aims to enhance students’ cultural awareness and devel-

op their skills to serve their academic careers.

The cultural project, which continued until April, featured 38 cultural activities, including practical workshops, discussion panels, and training courses, in addition to a number of diverse competitions.

On April 27 witnessed an intellectual symposium titled “Culture in Kuwait Before Oil,” attended by a number of academics and thinkers.

The symposium aimed to shed light on Kuwait’s historical roots in the pre-oil era.

On July 19, Minister Al-Mutairi issued a ministerial decision reorganizing the mechanism for theatrical and artistic performances in the State of Kuwait.

On July 23, the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters selected media personality Amal Abdullah and literary critic Saleh Al-Gharib to be honored with the “Honoring Gulf Creators” award in recognition of their qualitative contributions to the fields of culture, arts, and media.

On July 30, the Arab Observatory for Architectural and Urban Heritage in Arab Countries announced the inclusion of the Kuwait Towers in the Arab Heritage List under the category of modern architecture.

On August 1, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization announced the inclusion of a number of Arab cultural and historical sites and facilities, including the Kuwait Towers, in the Arab Register of Modern Architectural and Urban Heritage.

On August 24 witnessed the launch of the eighth Summer Book Fair, held at the Alumni Association headquarters, with the participation of several cultural institutions and publishing houses.

## Global investors

Other reasons, he said, include strong credit ratings, attractive pricing, and a political message from Kuwait’s return to debt mar-

kets, aimed at diversifying its investor base and reinforcing fiscal reform.

Al-Jouan said Kuwait’s USD 11.25 billion sovereign bonds drew USD 28 billion in demand, with 2.5 times oversubscription, highlighting the country’s low public debt and large sovereign reserves managed by its investment bodies.

He added investors viewed Kuwait as a rare safe haven among emerging markets due to its low debt-to-GDP ratio, vast reserves, and absence from debt markets since 2017, creating strong demand.

He noted that major agencies, Fitch, Standard & Poor’s, and Moody’s maintained Kuwait’s strong ratings with stable outlooks, reinforcing investor confidence and signaling low credit risk compared to regional peers.

Kuwait’s bonds were priced just 40, 50 basis points over US Treasuries, Al-Jouan added, offering high-rated, low-risk exposure with yields more attractive than many American and European government bonds.

The fifth factor, he said, was the issuance’s political message, not just funding the deficit but showcasing new debt law implementation and reinforcement of financial tools.

Dr. Yousef Al-Mutairi, finance professor at Kuwait University, told KUNA the sovereign issuance aimed to ease pressure on the General Reserve Fund and finance delayed development projects vital to GDP growth.

He said the move helps Kuwait preserve sovereign wealth by investing reserve funds abroad with better returns than bond costs, avoiding excessive withdrawals that previously strained the fund.

Al-Mutairi said bond-based deficit financing is widely used globally and easier to manage than reserve withdrawals, especially amid

lower interest rates worldwide, reducing Kuwait’s debt servicing burden.

The three-tranche bonds (three, five, and 10 years) aligned with lower global rates, allowing Kuwait to borrow at reduced costs and better support public finance and long-term investments.

He added the issuance helps withdraw excess liquidity from markets, reducing inflation and supporting the dinar’s purchasing power, ultimately stimulating market activity and economic growth.

Former Islamic Development Bank Vice President Dr. Fouad Al-Omar told KUNA debt instruments like bonds help fund major development projects, engaging global banks and investors in Kuwait’s economic growth.

He said past deficits were funded from the General Reserve, which is meant for emergencies like COVID-19, while bonds and sukuk are more suitable for regular deficit and project financing.

Al-Omar stressed the need to direct funds toward high-return projects that boost national economic growth, adding the bond issuance helps develop a local debt market and financial sector.

In early October, the Finance Ministry issued USD 11.25 billion in sovereign bond, marking Kuwait’s first return to global debt markets since 2017; across three tranches of 3, 5, and 10 years.

Acting Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Dr. Sabeeh Al-Mukhaizeem said strong demand and pricing reflect Kuwait’s credibility as a sovereign issuer and will deepen global investor partnerships in line with Vision 2035.

The bonds were issued under Law 60 for the year 2025 on liquidity and financing, part of a broader reform package including new tax laws and private-sector-led housing and real estate legislation.

## Kuwait participates in elderly workshop

BEIRUT, Oct 7, (KUNA): A Lebanon-hosted workshop on Tuesday looked into the rights of elderly and disabled people around the wider Arab region, allowing participants the chance to immerse themselves into the pressing matter.

“Dare to Care,” described as a “groundbreaking regional program,” aims to alter social norms and advance gender equality and women’s economic empowerment in the Arab region, the program’s manager and head of the UN Women’s office for Arab states Rodrigo Montero Cano told the gathering in the Lebanese capital.

He spoke of how societies are not “measured” on poverty rates, rather, on how elderly and disabled people are treated, underlining that in spite of their shortcomings, this segment of the population is capable of “successfully” contributing towards economic development and prosperity, added the official.

Representing Kuwait amid the gathering, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities committee member Dr. Rehab Bourisly underscored the main objective of the workshop, which aims to draw out a “regional roadmap” towards assessing the needs of disabled and elderly people, she said.

Bourisly, who also serves as the second vice president of the Arab Organization for Persons with Disabilities, said that the workshop shines light on the latest “demographic trends” and possible “gaps” when it comes to statistical data on elderly care, while it will also look into success stories dealing assimilation efforts targeting the disabled and elderly.

On progress seen at home over disabled and elderly support programs, the Kuwaiti official underlined national awareness about how these segments of the population are seen as “integral partners” in national development plans and strategies, explaining in her lecture that they are the beneficiaries of a wide array of state services.

The workshop looks into the success of governments worldwide in their effort to offer support for the elderly and disabled, while also taking into account how the use of cutting-edge technology and emerging tools can contribute towards keeping such initiatives afloat.



## UN refugee agency chief suggests that US deportation practices violate law

GENEVA, Oct 7, (AP): The head of the UN refugee agency has suggested that President Donald Trump’s America has carried out deportation practices that violate international law, and criticized a wider “backlash” in some countries against migrants and refugees.

Filippo Grandi, the UN high commissioner for refugees, used a speech to lament that drastic funding cuts and shortages have forced his agency, UNHCR, to slash nearly 5,000 jobs this year, or nearly a quarter of its workforce. The cuts may not be finished, he said.

“This was certainly not an easy year for any of us,” Grandi told the opening of UNHCR’s executive committee. “But remember, please: There has never been an easy year to be a refugee - and there never will be.”

He did cite some bright spots and praised the Trump administration-led peace efforts in Congo, where conflict has displaced millions of people.

At the UN General Assembly last month, the Trump administration - which has slashed support this year for international humanitarian aid - pitched other countries on its view that the global system of seeking asylum has been abused and needs to be revamped, in part by cracking



Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), attends UNHCR's 76th annual Executive Committee meeting at the European headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland on Oct 6. (AP)

down on migration.

Other traditional donors have cut back their aid outlays for UNHCR this year.

In recent years, the agency has received roughly \$5 billion a year - or half its budgetary requirements - even as conflict and repression in places like Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sudan, Venezuela and Ukraine have led the number of people fleeing

their homes to roughly double over the last decade - to 122 million.

In the politically charged environment of today, Grandi said, “putting the (UN) Refugee Convention and the principle of asylum on the table would be a catastrophic error.” He insisted that “national sovereignty and the right to seek asylum” are not incompatible. They are complementary.”

## Chicago, Illinois sue to stop Trump’s National Guard deployment plan after Portland ruling

CHICAGO, Oct 7, (AP): Illinois leaders went to court Monday to stop President Donald Trump from sending National Guard troops to Chicago, escalating a clash between Democratic-led states and the Republican administration during an aggressive immigration enforcement operation in the nation’s third-largest city.

The legal challenge came hours after a judge blocked the Guard’s deployment in Portland, Oregon.

The lawsuit in Chicago also raised the stakes after a violent weekend: Authorities said a woman was shot by a federal agent when Border Patrol vehicles were boxed in and struck by other vehicles. The city’s police superintendent rejected suggestions that his officers were on the government’s side in volatile situations like that one.

The Trump administration has portrayed the cities as war-ravaged and lawless amid its crackdown on illegal immigration. Officials in Illinois and Oregon say military intervention isn’t needed and that federal involvement is inflaming the situation.

The lawsuit alleges that “these advances in President Trump’s long-declared ‘War’ on Chicago and Illinois are unlawful and dangerous.” Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker said a court hearing was scheduled for Thursday.

“Donald Trump is using our service members as political props and as



Federal officers hold down a protester in the Brighton Park neighborhood of Chicago, on Oct 4, after protesters learned that US Border Patrol shot a woman Saturday morning on Chicago’s Southwest Side. (AP)

pawns in his illegal effort to militarize our nation’s cities,” Pritzker, a Democrat, said.

Pritzker said some 300 of the state’s guard troops were to be federalized and deployed to Chicago, along with 400 others from Texas.

Pritzker said the potential deployment amounted to “Trump’s invasion,” and he called on Republican Texas Gov Greg Abbott to block it. Abbott pushed

back and said the crackdown was needed to protect federal workers who are in the city as part of the president’s increased immigration enforcement.

White House spokesperson Abigail Jackson confirmed in a weekend statement that Trump authorized using Illinois National Guard members, citing what she called “ongoing violent riots and lawlessness” that local leaders have not quelled.

Trump open to deal but government must reopen first

## At center of shutdown fight, health care one of most intractable issues in Congress

WASHINGTON, Oct 7, (AP): Democrats believe health care is an issue that resonates with a majority of Americans as they demand an extension of subsidies in exchange for their votes to reopen the shuttered US government. But it is also one of the most intractable issues in Congress - and a real compromise amid the government shutdown will not likely be easy, or quick.

There are some Republicans in Congress who want to extend the higher subsidies, which were first put in place in 2021 amid the COVID-19 pandemic, as millions of people who receive their insurance through the Affordable Care Act marketplaces are set to receive notices that their premiums will increase at the beginning of the year. But many GOP lawmakers are strongly opposed to any extension - and see the debate as a new opportunity to cut back on the program altogether.

“If Republicans govern by poll and fail to grab this moment, they will own it,” wrote Texas Rep. Chip Roy, a Republican, in a letter published in the The Wall Street Journal over the weekend. He encouraged senators not

to go “wobbly” on the issue.

“The jig is up, the pandemic is over and my colleagues shouldn’t blink in any other direction,” Roy wrote.

Republicans have been railing against the Affordable Care Act, former President Barack Obama’s signature health care law, since it was enacted 15 years ago. But while they have been able to chip away at it, they have not been able to substantially alter it as a record 24 million people are now signed up for insurance coverage through the ACA, in large part because billions of dollars in subsidies have made the plans more affordable for many people.

Now, some of them see the Democrats’ fight as their chance to revisit the issue - putting Republican congressional leaders and President Donald Trump in a complicated position as the government shutdown enters its seventh day and hundreds of thousands of federal workers are going unpaid.

“I am happy to work with Democrats on their Failed Healthcare Policies, or anything else, but first they must allow our Government to reopen,” Trump wrote on social media Monday night,



US Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., leaves after holding a news conference on the 6th day of the government shutdown, at the Capitol in Washington on Oct 6. (AP)

walking back earlier comments saying there were ongoing negotiations with Democrats.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune,

R-S.D., has repeatedly indicated that Republicans are open to extending the subsidies, with reforms, if Democrats would reopen the government. But he

has refused to negotiate until that happens - and has suggested Trump will be key to the eventual outcome.

Thune told reporters Monday “there may be a path forward” on ACA subsidies, but stressed, “I think a lot of it would come down to where the White House lands on that.”

Many GOP senators argue the only path forward is to overhaul the law. “The whole problem with all of this is Obamacare,” said Florida Sen. Rick Scott.

Most House Republicans agree, and House Speaker Mike Johnson has been noncommittal on discussions.

“Obamacare is not working,” Johnson said Sunday on NBC’s “Meet the Press.” “We’re trying to fix it.”

Democrats believe that public sentiment is on their side and argue that Trump and Republicans will have to come to the negotiating table as people who are enrolled in the program, many of whom live in Republican districts and states, are notified that their rates will increase.

Trump cracked the door slightly to negotiations with Democrats on the health care subsidies they’ve made

central to the shutdown fight, then abruptly closed it Monday, leaving the two sides once again at a seemingly intractable impasse.

Democrats are conditioning their support for a short-term funding patch on extending the health subsidies that lessen the cost of plans offered under the Affordable Care Act, commonly referred to as Obamacare.

“We have a negotiation going on right now with the Democrats that could lead to very good things,” Trump told reporters. “And I’m talking about good things with regard to health care.”

The comments were one of the few hopeful signs Monday as the government shutdown hit its sixth day. Negotiations between the two parties have been virtually nonexistent since the start of the shutdown despite the impact on federal services.

But Trump later followed up those comments on his social media site to reinforce what GOP leaders in Congress have been saying: The shutdown must end. And work on extending the enhanced tax credits for health insurance would take place separately.

## French prez political isolation deepens as allies abandon Macron, with some call for resignation

PARIS, Oct 7, (AP): Embattled French President Emmanuel Macron suffered a fresh blow Tuesday with two of his former prime ministers sharply distancing themselves from him as he faced growing pressure to resign after the collapse of his latest government.

Edouard Philippe was Macron’s first prime minister after he swept to power in 2017, and Gabriel Attal had previously been one of the French president’s most loyal lieutenants, appointed prime minister in January 2024, during Macron’s second term. Attal then made his displeasure known with Macron’s stunning decision in June 2024 to dissolve parliament’s powerful lower house - the root of the current crisis.

Their separate decisions to now draw a line between themselves and Macron illustrated how the president’s authority is being sapped by his inability to deliver stable governance.

Political turmoil has gripped France for more than a year, flowing from the National Assembly dissolution that triggered fresh elections. The result was a Parliament stacked with opponents of Macron who have brought down his minority governments one



Then French Defense Minister Sebastien Lecornu, (right), and France's President Emmanuel Macron talk at the end of an address by the president to army leaders in Paris on July 13. (AP)

after another.

Attal, speaking Monday night to broadcaster TF1, struck the first blow, saying: “Like many French people, I no longer understand the president’s decisions.”

Philippe then piled on more pressure

Tuesday, saying that Macron should call early presidential elections and step down after the National Assembly adopts a 2026 budget. Macron has previously said that he’ll see out his second and last presidential term to its end in 2027.

## Norwegian Crown Prince Haakon marks 200 years of organized emigration to US

MINNEAPOLIS, Oct 7, (AP): Norwegian Crown Prince Haakon is marking the 200th anniversary of organized emigration from his homeland to the United States, highlighting the deep connections between the two countries with a visit to the heart of Norwegian America.

The Upper Midwest has some of the largest concentrations of Scandinavian Americans in the US, and his tour takes him Tuesday to Minnesota, where well over 800,000 residents claim Norwegian ancestry, according to state demographers. That’s more than any other state, though less-populous North Dakota actually has a higher percentage of residents with Norwegian roots. Members of the royal family have made several visits to the region over the years.

Haakon’s visit is part of the Crossings 200 commemorations across North America this year.

Nearly 5 million North Americans now claim Norwegian ancestry. The US was a relatively welcoming place for Scandinavians during the main waves of emigration that began in the 1800s. They were drawn to the Upper Midwest by cheap land and jobs.

But much has changed since then, and today immigration is a contentious issue for both the US and Scandi-



Norwegian Crown Prince Haakon is photographed outside of a NVIDIA office in Santa Clara, Calif on April 16, 2024. (AP)

navian and other European countries.

Haakon went Monday to Vesterheim, a museum in Decorah, Iowa, that tells the story of Norwegian immigrants in America. He met there with three descendants of people who arrived on the Restauration, a ship carrying 52 Norwegians that left July 4, 1825, from Stavanger. One of the

travelers gave birth on the long voyage, so 53 arrived in New York. More than 800,000 other Norwegians eventually followed.

The crown prince also visited Luther College in Decorah, a school founded by Norwegian immigrants in 1861, which presented him with an honorary degree.

### America

**Sacramento copter crash injures 3:** A medical helicopter crashed on a highway in Sacramento, critically injuring three people aboard, including a woman who was pinned underneath and was rescued with the help of motorists who lifted part of the aircraft, according to officials.

The helicopter had taken a patient to a hospital and was on the way back to the place it had been dispatched from when it experienced an “in-air emergency” just after 7 p.m. Monday, said Captain Justin Sylvia, a spokesperson for the Sacramento Fire Department. He said it looks like the helicopter crashed upside-down and left a large debris field.

A pilot, nurse and paramedic were taken to hospitals and were in critical condition, he said. No one on the highway was injured, he said, calling that “mind blowing” given that the helicopter crashed in the center of the highway.

“People reported that they basically saw the helicopter kind of going down quickly. So all the traffic slowed down,” Sylvia said. (AP)

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**Ivey vows action after shooting:** Following a mass shooting that killed two people and wounded a dozen others in downtown Montgomery, Alabama, Gov Kay Ivey said Monday that the state will take a greater role in public safety efforts in the capital city.

The deadly shooting unfolded Saturday at about 11:31 pm in a crowded section of the city’s downtown filled with bars, hotels and restaurants. The location is less than a mile (1.6 kilometers) from the Alabama Capitol and near sites that pay tribute to Rosa Parks and other key figures in the city’s history.

Montgomery Police Chief James Graboys said they believe one of the 14 victims was targeted and gunfire erupted in the crowded area. He said others then took out their own guns and started firing.

“As you can imagine, that could be a very chaotic situation,” Graboys said Sunday. Seven of the 14 victims are



A medical helicopter is shown after it crashed on Highway 50 on Oct 6, in Sacramento, Calif. (AP)

under the age of 20, the police chief said.

Ivey, a Republican, said she is exploring options in response to the shooting. As a start, she said Capitol troopers will extend their patrol zones to include other key downtown areas. The governor said she will also ask Alabama lawmakers to approve additional resources for state law enforcement downtown. (AP)

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**Authorities shoot, kill black bear:** Arkansas officials shot and killed a male black bear that they believe fatally mauled a 60-year-old Missouri man last week at his campsite in the Ozark National Forest, authorities said Monday.

The body of Max Thomas of Springfield, Missouri, was discovered Thursday several yards outside the Sam’s Throne campground in northwest Arkansas, Newton County Sheriff Glenn Wheeler said.

A deputy had gone to the campground after the man’s son reported he had not heard from his father, who had sent his family pictures of a black bear in his camp Tuesday morning, Wheeler said. The deputy found evidence of a struggle and injury, including drag marks from the campground into the woods, the sheriff said. (AP)

## Pope Leo XIV to travel to Turkey, Lebanon in Nov

VATICAN CITY, Oct 7, (AP): Pope Leo XIV will travel to Turkey and Lebanon next month on the first foreign trip of his papacy, making a symbolically important gesture to Christians and Muslims on a pilgrimage to two countries that Pope Francis had planned to visit.

The Vatican on Tuesday announced that Leo will visit Turkey from Nov 27-30, and Lebanon from Nov 30-Dec 2. The visit to Turkey will include a pilgrimage to Iznik to mark the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicea, the first ecumenical council.

The anniversary is an important moment in Catholic-Orthodox relations, and Francis had planned to mark it with his own trip to Turkey in May at the invitation of Patriarch Bartholomew I, the spiritual leader of the world’s Orthodox Christians.

Francis died in April, and Leo said from the start of his papacy that he intended to fulfill Francis’ plans.

The trip will give history’s first American pope a chance to speak in broad terms about peace in the Middle East and the plight of Christians there.

Leo, like his predecessor Francis, has consistently called for peace and dialogue in the Middle East, especially as Israel’s offensive rages on in Gaza.

The last pope to visit Lebanon was Pope Benedict XVI in September 2012



Pope Leo XIV waves from his popemobile at the end of a Mass for the Jubilee of Migrants and Missionaries in St Peter’s Square at the Vatican on Oct 5. (AP)

on what was the last foreign trip of his papacy.

Francis had long hoped to visit Lebanon, but the country’s political and economic instability prevented a visit during his lifetime.

The Mediterranean nation of around 6 million, including more than 1 million Syrian and Palestinian refugees, has the largest percentage of Christians in the Middle East and is the only Arab

country with a Christian head of state.

Lebanon is currently struggling to recover after years of economic crisis and a bruising war between Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah that ended with a US and France-brokered ceasefire in November. Formation of a new, reformist government in November ended a two-year political vacuum and brought hopes of recovery but the situation remains tense.



China’s Premier Li to visit North Korea in highest-level visit since 2019

Chinese, South Korean foreign ministers express willingness to deepen bilateral ties

BEIJING, Oct 7, (Agencies): China is willing to work with South Korea to strengthen mutual trust, avoid disruptions, deepen cooperation and contribute to each other’s success so as to safeguard regional peace, stability and prosperity, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Tuesday.

In a telephone conversation with South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun, Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, said that as the two countries are important neighbors as well as close partners, China always attaches great importance to its relations with South Korea.

As South Korea and China will host the APEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting this year and next year, respectively, Wang voiced hope that the two sides will support each other to build consensus, strengthen solidarity and cooperation, safeguard the international trade regime, uphold multilateralism and advance the process of building a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) in pursuit of an Asia-Pacific community.

Cho, for his part, said that South Korea holds in high regard its relationship with China and will spare no effort to boost its growth.

He voiced hope that South Korea will take the APEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting as an opportunity to facilitate high-level exchanges between the two countries and deepen exchanges and cooperation.

**Also:**

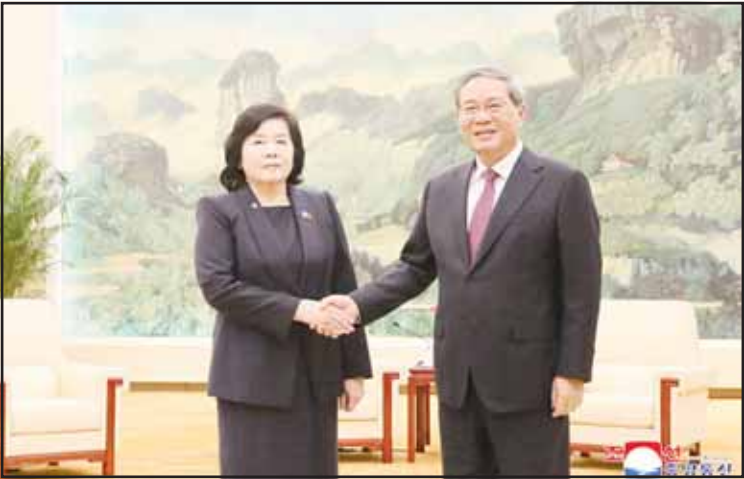
**BEIJING:** China’s Premier **Li Qiang** will go to **North Korea** this week in the highest-level visit by a Chinese leader since 2019.

Li will lead a government delegation from Thursday to Saturday to attend events marking the 80th anniversary of the founding of North Korea’s ruling party, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said Tuesday.

China has long been the North Korean government’s most important ally and source of support, though North Korean leader **Kim Jong Un** has sought to balance that in recent years by building ties with **Russia**. He has sent troops to help **Moscow** in its war against **Ukraine**.

Russia is sending former President **Dmitri Medvedev** to this week’s anniversary celebrations, North Korea’s official KCNA news agency said Monday.

A statement from the Chinese Foreign Ministry called **China** and North Korea



This photo provided on Sept. 30, 2025, by the North Korean government, shows Chinese Premier Li Qiang, right, meeting with North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Sept 29. (AP)

“traditional friends and neighbors” and said it is “an unswerving strategic policy” of the Chinese government and the ruling Communist Party “to maintain, consolidate and develop” relations with North Korea.

Li is one of seven members of the Standing Committee of the Communist Party’s Politburo, the apex of power in China. As premier, he is generally considered the No. 2 leader after President **Xi Jinping**. Li has been representing China on more foreign trips as the 72-year-old Xi curtails his travel schedule.

Xi’s last visit to North Korea was in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Vietnam’s** top leader, **To Lam**, will also visit North Korea this week for the anniversary celebrations, the country’s government announced Monday. He is general secretary of the Communist Party, the same leadership position held by Xi in China and Kim in North Korea’s Workers’ Party.

It will be the first visit by a Vietnamese leader to North Korea since 2007, Vietnam’s state media said.

The president of **Laos**, **Thongloun Sisoulith**, will also attend, KCNA said last week. He is general secretary of the Lao People’s Revolutionary Party.

High-level contacts between China and North Korea have picked up since last year. **Zhao Leji**, another member of the Politburo Standing Committee, traveled to North Korea in April and met Kim in the capital, **Pyongyang**. Kim visited China last month, joining Russian President **Vladimir Putin** and others at a Chinese military parade in **Beijing**.

**NANNING:** Typhoon Matmo, the 21st named storm of the 2025 Pacific typhoon season, has weakened after making a second landfall in south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region early Monday morning.

Matmo was downgraded to a severe tropical storm as it made landfall in Guangxi’s coastal areas around 1:10 a.m. Monday, packing strong winds and heavy rain to particularly affect the cities of Beihai, Qinzhou and Fangchenggang. As of 11 am Monday, the typhoon had affected 10,561 people in **Beihai**, with 10,003 people relocated for safety and about 3,400 hectares of crops damaged, according to the municipal emergency management bureau.

Strong winds also toppled more than 4,000 trees in Beihai, blocking roads. Municipal authorities have mobilized workers to clear the debris and restore traffic.

Qinzhou and Fangchenggang also reported fallen trees and billboards. Emergency response personnel have been dispatched to clean up debris, clear main roads and alleyways and address waterlogging issues.

According to the regional meteorological authorities, Typhoon matmo moved into northeastern **Vietnam** around noon on Monday, although strong winds and rain are forecast to persist in the western and southern parts of Guangxi.

Qinzhou and **Chongzuo**, another city in Guangxi, have lifted temporary traffic controls, with railway services gradually resuming.

Asia

25 years after landmark UN resolution, Guterres says women too often absent from peace talks

**Authorities probe Philippine collapsed bridge:** The Philippines’ Department of Public Works and Highways has sent a team to conduct a thorough assessment of a bridge in Cagayan province in the northern Philippines that collapsed on Monday.

Preliminary findings reveal that three loaded trucks, each with an estimated weight of 50 tons, far exceeding the bridge’s 18-ton capacity, were on the bridge in Alcalá town when the structure collapsed. “The Department shall provide a recommendation based on the results of the assessment,” said Public Works Secretary **Vince Dizon** in a statement released on Monday evening.

In the meantime, authorities urged the public to avoid the bridge and use alternate routes.

Local media earlier reported that seven individuals were injured and brought to hospitals due to the incident. Meanwhile, the magnitude 6.9 earthquake that struck Cebu province in the central Philippines on Sept 30 resulted in 72 deaths and affected 547,394 individuals, the country’s National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said on Monday.

The NDRRMC reported that 559 people have been injured in the 5-kilometer-deep, offshore quake that hit the region at 9:59 p.m. local time while villagers were asleep or preparing to go to bed. (Xinhua)



Dizon

**‘Bualoi caused over \$37m in road damage’:** Damage to road infrastructure caused by Typhoon Bualoi and subsequent flooding in Vietnam is estimated at about 982.83 billion Vietnamese dong (about 37.2 million US dollars), local daily Nhan Dan reported Tuesday.

Most of the damage was reported on roads managed by local authorities, the report said, citing the Department for Roads of Vietnam.

The national road network recorded over 370 locations suffering from traffic disruptions due to flooding and roadbed or slope landslides, local daily Sue Khoe & Doi Song reported.

The heaviest infrastructure damage occurred in central and northern provinces, with losses estimated at about 600 billion Vietnamese dong (about 22.7 million dollars) in Thanh Hoa province, 132.6 billion Vietnamese dong (about 5 million dollars) in Nghe An province and 130 billion Vietnamese dong (about 4.9 million dollars) in Cao Bang province. Many roads in these areas remain affected by landslides and localized flooding, the report said. (Xinhua)

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 7, (AP): Twenty-five years after a landmark UN resolution demanded equal participation for women in all efforts to promote peace, the United Nations chief said Tuesday that far too often women remain absent.

At the same time, violence against women and girls is on the rise and 676 million women live within 50 kilometers (30 miles) of deadly conflicts, which the head of the UN women’s agency says is the highest number since the 1990s.

“Around the globe, we see troubling trends in military spending, more armed conflicts, and more shocking brutality against women and girls,” Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told a UN Security Council meeting marking the anniversary.

Since the resolution’s adoption on Oct 31, 2000, there has been some progress, he said.

The number of women in uniform as UN peacekeepers has doubled, women have led local mediation, advanced justice for survivors of gender-based violence, and women’s organizations have been instrumental in promoting recovery from conflicts and reconciliation.



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres speaks during a Security Council meeting at the United Nations Headquarters on Sept 23 at UN headquarters. (AP)

“But gains are fragile and - very worryingly - going in reverse,” Guterres said.

In no-nonsense language, Guterres said too often nations gather in rooms like the Security Council chamber “full of conviction and commitment,”

Bahous also pointed to some progress. She said women have reduced community violence in the disputed Abyei region between Sudan and South Sudan and in the Central African Republic.

In Haiti, women have achieved near parity in the new provisional electoral council, and women’s representation in Chad’s National Assembly has doubled, she said. Syria’s interim constitution guarantees rights and protections for women, and in war-torn Ukraine women have succeeded in getting national relief efforts helping women codified into law.

But Bahous also said it’s lamentable that the world today is witnessing “renewed pushback against gender equality and multilateralism.” She said the situation is being exacerbated by what she called short-sighted funding cuts.

These cuts are undermining education opportunities for Afghan girls, curtailing life-saving medical care for tens of thousands of sexual violence survivors in Sudan, Haiti and beyond, and limiting access to food for malnourished women and children in Gaza, Mali, Somalia and elsewhere, Bahous said.



People gather outside the United Nations’ office in Caracas, Venezuela, for a government-organized rally against foreign interference on Oct 6. (AP)

President Maduro asks Pope Leo XIV to help maintain peace in Venezuela

CARACAS, Venezuela, Oct 7, (Agencies): Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro on Monday said he has asked Pope Leo XIV to help maintain peace in the South American country.

Maduro’s comments come as the United States military continues to strike alleged drug-carrying boats in the waters off Venezuela in what US President Donald Trump has declared an “armed conflict” with cartels. Maduro said he sought Leo’s help in a letter.

“I have great faith that Pope Leo, as I stated in the letter I sent him, will help Venezuela preserve and achieve peace and stability,” Maduro said during his weekly show on state television.

Maduro did not provide details of the letter. His government’s press office did not immediately respond to a request for a copy of the document.

The US military has carried four deadly strikes in the Caribbean since last month. The latest killed four people on Friday.

The Trump administration has told lawmakers he was treating drug traffickers as unlawful combatants and military force was required to combat them. That assertion of presidential war powers sets the stage for expanded action and raises questions about how far the administration will go without sign-off from Congress. Maduro has repeatedly said the US military’s actions are designed to oust him.

Meanwhile, Venezuela warned Monday of an alleged plan by extremists to attack the shuttered US Embassy complex in Caracas with explosives,



The entrance to the US embassy in Caracas, Venezuela on Oct 6. (AP)

coming as bilateral tensions simmer over Washington’s military deployment in the Caribbean.

Jorge Rodríguez, head of the National Assembly and of Venezuela’s delegation for dialogue with the US, said in a statement that through “three different channels,” the United States had been warned “of a serious threat” from right-wing groups posing as followers of Maduro.

“Through a false-flag operation prepared by extremist sectors of the local right, there are attempts to plant lethal explosives at the US Embassy in Caracas,” Rodríguez said.

The US State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The embassy, which is currently closed, maintains a staff responsible for security and maintenance of the premises, despite the rupture of diplomatic relations with Maduro’s government in 2019.

In another development, Trump has called off efforts to reach a diplomatic agreement with Venezuela, reported The New York Times on Monday, citing US officials.

During a meeting with senior military leaders on Thursday, Trump instructed Richard Grenell -- the special presidential envoy leading negotiations with Maduro and other top Venezuelan officials -- to stop all diplomatic outreach, including talks with Maduro, the officials said on Monday.

Air India’s midair emergency sparks new alarm over safety of Boeing Dreamliner

NEW DELHI, Oct 7, (Agencies): India’s leading body of pilots has asked the civil aviation regulator to inspect all Boeing 787 Dreamliners operating in the country for electrical issues after one of the planes abruptly deployed an emergency power system midair over the weekend.

The device, a small propeller that acts as a backup generator and which is known as the ram air turbine, or RAT, normally would be activated when an aircraft’s engines lose power, its hydraulic systems register critically low pressure or its electrical systems fail.

However, the RAT engaged unexpectedly on Saturday aboard Air India flight 117 from the northern Indian city of Amritsar moments before it landed safely in Birmingham, England.

The Federation of Indian Pilots, which represents about 6,000 pilots, asked for the investigation Sunday evening.

Air India, owned by business conglomerate Tata Group, said in a statement that an initial inspection following the weekend incident found that “all electrical and hydraulic parameters were normal” and that the aircraft landed safely.



Officials inspect the site of Air India plane crash on the roof of a building in Ahmedabad, India on June 13. (AP)

**NEW DELHI:** At least three people were killed and two others rescued alive after a portion of a dilapidated building collapsed Monday in the western Indian state of **Gujarat**, police said.

The building collapsed in **Veraval** city of **Gir Somnath** district, about 456 km southwest of **Gandhinagar**, the capital city of **Gujarat**.

Immediately, police, fire and emergency personnel and disaster response force teams were rushed to the spot to

carry out rescue efforts and pull out survivors.

Police said two people were rescued alive from the debris and removed to the nearest hospital.

Local media reports quoted residents as saying the building was nearly 80 years old.

The cause of the building collapse was not immediately known. Police have registered a case and ordered an investigation to ascertain the reasons that led to the collapse of the structure.

Mutharika announces partial lineup of Cabinet

Madagascar’s president appoints new PM

ANTANANARIVO, Oct 7, (Xinhua): President of Madagascar Andry Rajoelina appointed Ruphin Fortunat Dimbisoa Zafisambo as the country’s new prime minister, a week after the government was dissolved amid mass protests.

The new prime minister must be “capable of restoring order and regaining the people’s trust,” Rajoelina said, adding that his main task will be to improve people’s living conditions and advance the nation’s key priorities.

Before his appointment, Zafisambo had served as director of the military office at the Prime Minister’s Office since 2021.

The dissolution of the government was announced on Sept. 29, following days of protests in major cities across the country, including the capital Antananarivo, over frequent power outages and water shortages.

**Also:**

**LILONGWE:** Malawi’s new president,



Malawi’s President Peter Mutharika, (centre), gestures as his wife Gertrude Mutharika, (right), and Chief Justice Rizine Mzikamanda look on, after taking the oath of office during his inauguration ceremony at Kamuzu stadium in Blantyre, Malawi on Oct 4. (AP)

**Peter Mutharika**, has released a partial lineup of his Cabinet.

Mutharika, who won the Sept. 16 presidential election and took office on Saturday, appointed **Enock Chihana** of the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) party as second vice president on Sunday. His running mate during the election, **Jane Ansah**, is the first vice president.



## Kuwait oil price rises to \$66.70 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 90 cents to USD 66.70 per barrel on Monday, compared to USD 65.80 per barrel last Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on

Tuesday.

In global markets, the price of the Brent crude rose by 94 cents to USD 65.47 per barrel, while the West Texas Intermediate climbed up by 81 to USD 61.69 pb.

# Business

Reinforcing customer trust in secure payments across digital and in-store channels

## Zain renews compliance with Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS)



Zain Kuwait CEO Nawaf Al-Gharabally receives the certificate from ControlCase President Suresh Dadlani.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: Zain Kuwait announced the renewal of its compliance with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS Level 1, version 4.0.1) following a comprehensive independent audit by an approved Qualified Security Assessor. This affirms that Zain continues to apply industry-leading information security controls for payments and protection of customer data across its digital and in-store channels.

This step affirms Zain's ongoing implementation of integrated technical and operational controls to safeguard customer data during payment operations across all channels. Measures include end-to-end encryption for data in transit and at rest, segmentation of sensitive networks, round-the-clock proactive monitoring, vulnerability management and timely updates, granular access controls with activity tracking, regular employee awareness programs, and clear governance policies for risk and compliance management.

The certificate was renewed after a full audit conducted by ControlCase, an independent firm accredited by the PCI Security Standards Council to perform the required analyses and tests. The assessment verifies that company systems meet security specifications to prevent breaches, identify vulnerabilities, and review payment-related policies and procedures.

This achievement reflects Zain's commitment to providing a trusted payment experience for individual and enterprise customers while upholding the highest standards of confidentiality, integrity, and service availability. It also strengthens the confidence of partners and payment service providers in the company's digital payments ecosystem.

In 2010, Zain became the first telecom provider in the region to receive this recognition from the PCI Security Standards Council, which is adopted by financial institutions, banks, and regulators worldwide. Today's renewal contin-

ues the company's efforts to deliver the most secure experience to its corporate, institutional, and consumer customer base, the largest in the country.

In April, Zain Kuwait obtained the ISO 37301:2021 Compliance Management Systems certification after an independent evaluation, becoming one of the first telecom providers in the region to earn this accreditation. The certification reflects a strong culture of integrity and a comprehensive governance and compliance risk management framework across policies, processes, and controls.

In July, Zain maintained the Uptime Institute M&O (Operations and Management) certification for its data center at the Shuwaikh headquarters, continuing its presence among a select group of regional companies that have held this rating since 2019, following a thorough audit covering maintenance, training, safety procedures, and operational readiness.



Al-Gharabally and the Enterprise Risk Management team with ControlCase executives.

## Selective buying drives Boursa growth in Sept

Banks and blue chips lead gains

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7, (KUNA): Trades at Boursa Kuwait in September were marked with selective buying by Kuwaiti individuals and financial portfolios and swaps of positions on the listed stocks particularly those of the banks and leading operating companies.**

These factors stimulated unprecedented rise of the benchmarks, mirroring substantial confidence in the market. Moreover, the selective purchases contributed to the main chips' bullish trend.

Daily liquidity, last month, grew due to the targeting of less than 100-fils chips in the realty sector and financial services, another factor that signaled the significant confidence in the local stock exchange.

Moreover, there was noticeable appetite on part of the Gulf investment portfolios that invested foreign funds in banks' stocks and others of prices less than 100 fils, the lowest compared to other shares listed in the Gulf bourse -- generally targeted by small traders.

Two financial analysts, interviewed by KUNA, forecast continuation of the bourse positive performance, considering comeback of some traders from the summer vacation to rotate their positions on some chips and benefit from the decision to activate extending the trades -- thus providing boost to the local, Gulf and foreign investors, in addition to giving a new stimulant to lure more liquidity.

Suleiman Al-Wugayyan, board member of Sorouh Holding Company, said the bourse operations in September witnessed selective purchases on operating shares, amid profit generating activities and correction of some stocks' prices.

Despite the divergence, position swaps and rapid speculations that targeted some chips, the market performance remained positive due to well calculated moves by some individuals and portfolio managers, Al-Waugayyan said.

Recent geopolitical events in the region affected the Gulf stock markets, but Bourse Kuwait coped well with their repercussions, absorbing the decline of some indices that

quickly rebounded upwards, he said.

He added that the decision to extend trades for half an hour as of October 12 impacted positively on the traders' psyche, and that in turn would contribute tangibly to improving the market trades.

He lauded international establishments and corporations' trend to shift to the Kuwaiti bourse, alluding for example to the American BlackRock company, lured to the second most active stock market in the region due to the Kuwaiti companies and banks' high solvency.

He predicted persistence of the bullish atmosphere amid forecast revelation of good results by the leading companies, namely the banks' chips due to publicize their statements in the third quarter of the year, to be followed by the operating companies.

Fozi Al-Dhafiri, the deputy chairperson of the research and investment division at Kuwait Investment Company, said all of the market index posted monthly gains where the All Share Price Return Index rose by 3.5 percent, while the Premier Market Index climbed by 3.1 percent and Main Market Index, 5.2 percent.

These gains were motivated by most of the sectors, particularly the heavy ones such as the banks, financial services and realty, Al-Dhafiri said, adding that the September gains coincided with rise of the volume and value of the trades compared to the previous month, where the deals rose by more than 13 percent on monthly basis.

He added that the transactions value in September grew by more than 15 percent in contrast to August.

Elaborating, Al-Dhafiri said the decree-in-law regarding financing and liquidity and interest rate cut contributed to motivating the stock market, adding that the companies results would improve if the interest trimming approach persists.

Performance at the bourse in October would "be more calm," compared to September and would tend toward horizontal movement. Moreover, trades' forecast of the companies' results in the third quarter would overshadow their decisions in building their investment positions.

According to global standards of excellence and sustainability

## KFH receives two ISO certificates in quality & facilities management

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has successfully received two certifications from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The certifications are the ISO9001 (QMC) for quality management system and ISO41001 (FM) for facility management system.

This accomplishment underscores KFH's commitment to the highest international business standards, operational discipline, service excellence and alignment with Kuwait's sustainability directions.

ISO for quality management system is a globally recognized framework that sets out the requirements for establishing a quality management system in any institution, ensuring the consistent quality of products and services that meet customer expectations and regulatory standards, while fostering continuous process

improvement.

Additionally, ISO for Facilities Management is a global standard that provides support for institutions to enhance their facilities efficiency and operational effectiveness. It covers all aspects of maintenance, cleaning, energy management, infrastructure, and support services, ensuring harmony with corporate strategies and delivering tangible value to the business.

It serves to note that both certifications aim to capitalize on the best global practices, by streamlining operations, reducing costs, improving service quality, ensuring sustainability and well-being of employees and customers. The certifications are also considered among the most prominent recognitions provided by ISO worldwide.

On this occasion, Executive Manager General Services at KFH, Ayman Altabtabaei,

said that the two certifications were awarded to KFH after a comprehensive external audit, confirming the efficiency of KFH's operational and technical procedures, as well as the Bank's capabilities for continuous development and improvement. These efforts ensure that KFH provides high-quality services to employees and customers across its branches. This achievement also reflects KFH's sustained operational efficiency and commitment to the best international standards in quality and integrated facilities management.

He added: "This accomplishment is part of KFH's record of international recognitions. The General Services Department is an organizational function that connects employees with their working environment, ensuring enhanced quality of life, increased business productivity, and excellent customer service."



Ayman Altabtabaei and the team receive the certificate from ISO officials.

Provisions cover all GCC industrial projects

## '10,000 barrels daily quota boost'

## Oil expert questions OPEC's limited production increases

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: Oil analyst and expert Kamel Al-Harami expressed surprise at OPEC's recent production increases for the eight countries, and questioned the logic behind Kuwait's modest quota increases of 3,000 barrels per day at one point, 4,000 at another, and the most recent increase being just 10,000 barrels per day.

Al-Harami noted that the total increase for all eight countries that had committed to voluntary cuts amounted to only 137,000 barrels per day, which he described as very limited.

He indicated that it would have been better to adopt the Saudi proposal, which suggested an increase of between 400,000 and 500,000 barrels per day.

Al-Harami explained that a convincing and fair increase for OPEC should range between 500,000 and 600,000 barrels per day. OPEC's recent increase of Kuwait's quota by 10,000 barrels per day appears to reflect the country's current production levels, which is still between 2.6 million and 2.7 million barrels per day.

He insisted that the recent OPEC production increases are insufficient.

Meanwhile, oil sources confirmed that the collective and voluntary OPEC+ production cuts, to which Kuwait is committed, have contributed to a decline in the annual profits of oil companies affiliated with the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), compared to the massive profits achieved in 2022.

They stressed that Kuwait's daily production quota, which increased from 2.559 million barrels in October to 2.569 million barrels, is scheduled to increase again in November. Combined with recent monthly increases, this is expected to have a mildly positive impact.

The sources indicated that plans to raise Kuwait's crude oil production capacity to 3 million barrels per day by the end of 2025 and maintain that level through 2035 will be crucial to the country's efforts to push for a higher OPEC+ quota.

They pointed to a series of growing onshore and offshore oil discoveries, which are paving the way for a significant increase in daily production capacity.

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: Decree-Law No. 144/2025 on the unified industrial regulations of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries was issued Sunday, with the Public Authority for Industry (PAI) in the State of Kuwait tasked to implement its provisions in the country.

This is within the context of strengthening the role of the Gulf industrial sector as one of

the most important sources of national income and a major driver of economic growth.

The explanatory memorandum published in the Official Gazette, 'Kuwait Al-Youm', on Sunday includes 28 articles on supporting development and encouraging industrial investment, increasing the contribution of industry to the gross domestic product (GDP), and expanding the scope of integration and interconnection between the economic activities of the GCC countries.

The memorandum emphasized that the pro-

visions of the system apply to all industrial projects in the GCC countries, except the projects regulated by international treaties or agreements, those subject to country-specific provisions, or exceptions specified by the executive regulations.

It affirmed the importance of coordination among GCC countries on industrial affairs, improving the innovation environment, and adopting and localizing modern technologies to develop the global competitiveness of Gulf industries.

## KIPIC launches tender for gasoline analyzer at Al-Zour

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: The Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) announced the launch of a public tender for the supply of a gasoline analyzer to Al-Zour refinery, stating that the deadline for submitting bids

is Nov 4.

The Higher Purchasing Committee at Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries also announced the extension of the deadline for the tender to provide security services for the main building of Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC) in Shuwaikh Administrative

Area, until Oct 21, 2025, instead of Sept 30, 2025.

Meanwhile, KPC announced the awarding of the tender for the supply of Kuwaiti sweets (Tender No. 5) to Lafrancese Catering Company -- the third lowest bidder that met the technical specifications and conditions, for an amount of KD21,800.



In the presence of the bank's executive management, representatives from leading companies and banks

# NBK celebrates the graduation of the second cohort of ‘NBK RISE’



Shaikha Al-Bahar speaking to the graduates.



The executive management of the National Bank of Kuwait and representatives of participating companies and banks with the graduates of the second batch of the program.



A section of the second batch of graduates from the program.



Shaikha Al-Bahar, Shamael Al-Sharikh, and Dhari Al-Gharaballi



Part of the graduation ceremony.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) celebrated the graduation of the second cohort of NBK RISE, the first-of-its-kind initiative dedicated to advancing women leaders by equipping them with the skills, opportunities, and support needed to realize their full potential and ascend to the highest leadership positions.

The graduation ceremony held at the bank's headquarters was attended by the bank's executive management, along with CEOs and representatives from leading companies and banks, including Kuwait Banking Association, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, Abyat, Gulf Bank, and Kuwait Financial Centre Company (Markaz).

The ceremony was also attended by representatives from the participating universities, including IE Business School, and featured inspiring speeches, success stories, and tributes to the commitment and achievements of the participants throughout the program.

The event welcomed 25 trainees from diverse professional backgrounds, including NBK Kuwait, NBK's international branches, and NBK Wealth, alongside participants from partner organizations including Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, Ooredoo, Kuwait Banking Association, Abyat, Gulf Bank, Kuwait Financial Centre Company (Markaz), J's Bakery, and Intervest Capital Partners, New York.

The second edition of the program spanned nine months and featured a comprehensive range of activities and integrated training courses aimed at developing core competencies, building confidence, fostering networking, and enhancing the skills required to navigate a dynamic work environment. The curriculum also focused on implementing strategic initiatives, leading transformation and change, practicing inclusive leadership, and making effective decisions. The program further offered mentorship and coaching from

- The program serves as an exceptional platform for ambitious women to realize their career aspirations and unlock their full potential
- NBK remains steadfast in fostering equal opportunities while championing DE&I across all functions

accomplished industry leaders, complemented by collaborative projects that translated ideas and proposals into tangible outcomes.

Launched in 2022 by Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group CEO at NBK, the program represents a strategic effort to empower women to realize their full potential, reflecting the Bank's commitment to diversity and inclusion as essential drivers of sustainable success for organizations.

In a short period, the program has significantly advanced women's leadership by engaging, inspiring, and empowering women across diverse sectors and disciplines. It has also aimed to foster a community of women leaders, ensuring the sustained growth and long-term impact of the initiative.

NBK is dedicated to fostering a culture of women's empowerment across the Group and enhancing their representation in leadership positions by offering tailored guidance and career development opportunities. The Bank collaborates with leading universities and training centers worldwide to deliver specialized programs and workshops that equip women leaders with the skills, tools, and techniques necessary for effective leadership.

NBK RISE serves as an exceptional platform for aspiring women to unlock

their potential and achieve their career aspirations. Building on the remarkable success of its first edition, the program reflects NBK's ongoing commitment to empowering women in the workplace and advancing their careers, grounded in the Bank's belief that diversity and inclusion are essential drivers of sustainable organizational success.

NBK remains committed to promoting equal opportunities and advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) in the workplace through its strategic initiatives and specialized programs aimed at supporting and developing women leaders. These efforts have contributed to a notable increase in the number of women holding leadership and supervisory positions across the Bank.

Enhancing the representation of women leaders and providing them with opportunities to contribute to critical organizational decision-making is a key strategic priority for global organizations. As women increasingly engage in social and community issues, their participation helps foster environments that drive sustainable development and generate lasting positive impact on society.

NBK RISE offers an inspiring experience that extends beyond the Bank's individual efforts, engaging a number of leading institutions in Kuwait that have signed a pledge to increase the representation of women in leadership positions, reaffirming their collective commitment to advancing the objectives of this initiative.

The program has garnered several prestigious international accolades, including MERIT's Special Recognition for 'Developing Women Leaders', the Silver Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award from the prestigious Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) at its MENA Annual Awards, and a distinguished award from Euromoney.

## Reaffirming its commitment to developing young Kuwaiti leaders in tech and innovation

# talabat participates in the Academy X closing ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: Following a year of hands-on sponsorship and engaged support, talabat, the leading on-demand online ordering platform in the MENA region, joined the graduation ceremony celebrating over 400 graduates who completed the 2025 edition of Academy X, Kuwait's largest women's empowerment initiative in the tech and entrepreneurship industry, led by CODED Academy. The event, hosted at Kuwait University, welcomed the students, their families and friends, and representatives from talabat and other program sponsors.

As one of the key sponsors of Academy X, talabat continued to reinforce its commitment to supporting women in STEM and investing in Kuwait's aspiring talents across all fields, especially technology and innovation. This aligns with talabat's social responsibility strategy and its active contribution to achieving Kuwait Vision 2035 goals.

"On behalf of talabat's management and the dedicated instructors who took part in Academy X, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to all the graduates on their outstanding commitment, not only to completing the program, but more importantly to having the courage to push past their boundaries and build a better future for themselves," said Bader Al-Ghanim, Vice President and Managing Director of talabat Kuwait. He added: "It is very important to remember that the real value of technology lies within the human talents operating and utilizing it. This is why it is crucial to continue supporting our young, creative, and ambitious talents, and prepare them for leading our technology and innovation industry toward sustainable success that serves Kuwait and its people."

On his part, Hashim Behbehani, Co-founder and Chief Operations Officer of CODED, said: "As we come to the closing of the second edition of Academy X, I would like to express my gratitude to all our strategic partners and sponsors who have played a central role in the development and success of Academy X in its two editions, and who have



talabat distributes bouquets of flowers to Academy X participants at its booth during the ceremony.

shared their knowledge, market insights, and expertise with the program participants, guaranteeing a solid foundation for them to launch their careers in technology and innovation from."

Following the speeches delivered by Academy X sponsors, the ceremony showcased the program's winning projects, from among 100 innovative projects developed across the three cohorts in 2025 and honored the teams behind them. On its part, talabat presented the "talabat Award for Best Food Technological Innovation", which was granted to the EcoWajba project, developed by team members Dalya Mohammed, Noor Al-Razeehan, Jana Mohammed, Nabila Al-Mannaai, and Hind Al-Mukhaizeem. Reflecting on the recognition, team member Dalya Mohammed said: "I am very proud to be among the teams whose projects are recognized as outstanding. I am also very grateful to all our mentors from CODED and talabat, who inspired us every step of the way to seek knowledge with passion and to find creative solutions to everyday problems using advanced technology and smart tools."



Salma Hassan receiving an honorary award from Coded on behalf of talabat.

Throughout the program, which spanned three cohorts, talabat took various engaging approaches to supporting the Academy X students. The company hosted program participants at its HQ for a visit that introduced them to real-world tech-



Abdullah Almansour, Director of Communications, Public Affairs, and Corporate Responsibility at talabat Kuwait, with the EcoWajba team, winners of the 'talabat Award for Best Food Technological Innovation'.



Salma Hassan delivering a speech during the closing ceremony.

insightful session to the members of the third cohort on the evolving tech landscape and the skills shaping tomorrow's workforce.

Building on the success of Academy X's first two editions, talabat confirmed its ongoing commitment



Salma Hassan delivering a speech during the closing ceremony.

to supporting the growth and development of the program's future editions, with strategic goals that include sponsoring a bigger number of participants and offering them a more advanced experience that is up to date with emerging technologies.

Building on the success of Academy X's first two editions, talabat confirmed its ongoing commitment

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# What's On

## SPOTLIGHT

**Got a birthday or event?**

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



The bank continues its annual tradition with an expansive program promoting health and well-being across society

## Burgan Bank lights up in pink & launches 'Driven by You' Breast Cancer Awareness campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: In a show of solidarity with breast cancer survivors and fighters, and in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Burgan Bank illuminated its Head Office building in pink – marking the kick-off of its annual awareness campaign.

This year's campaign, held under the theme 'Driven by You', brings together a series of initiatives to inform, empower, and support women – both within the Bank and across the wider community. Highlights of the Bank's initiatives include a special Burgan Bank podcast series featuring doctors from Kuwait Hospital, Dr. Zahra Ismail, General Surgery Consultant, Dr. Shatha Al-Najdi, Radiologist specializing in breast tumor detection; breast cancer survivor and Manager- Branch Sales at Burgan Bank, Mrs. Bibi Al-Bannai; and Clinical Dietitian and Exercise Specialist, Ms. Dalal Al-Nukhailan.

The campaign also features a dedicated awareness and screening day in collaboration with Royale Hayat Hospital. Furthermore, badges and other giveaways with strong awareness messages will be distributed at different events during the month promoting awareness, education and collaborative action.

The campaign will also include ongoing educational content, wellness tips, and motivational activities designed to encourage



Danah AlJasem

early detection and healthier lifestyles – all rolled out across the Bank's digital channels and the Bank's internal and external social media platforms.

Commenting on the campaign, **Ms. Danah Faisal AlJasem**, General Manager of Corporate Communications at Burgan Bank, said: "Breast cancer awareness month is celebrated worldwide in October to raise awareness in our community about the benefits of early detection, this is what saves lives. That's



Burgan Bank headquarters.

why our campaign goes beyond symbolic gestures. By bringing together medical expertise, survivor voices, and direct access

to screening by providing our female staff the tools they need to take charge of their health".

She added that "Our theme this year, 'Driven by You,' is deeply intentional. It acknowledges that the courage of survivors and the determination of those still fighting are what inspire us to keep moving forward. These women lead the way in showing us what resilience looks like. Our responsibility is to listen, support, and act."

Within this context and as part of its commitment to the well being of its employees and their families, Burgan Bank will also offer free annual mammogram screening in collaboration with IMAGS for all female employees as well as the employee's wives through its insurance coverage, and 50% discount on screening for first and second-degree female relatives of staff members.

Burgan Bank has long marked Breast Cancer Awareness Month with extensive initiatives as part of its broader ESG-driven social responsibility agenda. By fostering an environment – within and beyond the Bank – that prioritizes health, well-being, and early detection, the bank continues to build on its commitment to creating a positive and supportive workplace culture and contributing to the long-term resilience of the community.

## Goan writer Crasto launches new humor book in London

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: Kuwait-based Goan writer Gasper Crasto has once again tickled the funny bone of readers with the launch of his third book, "Tackling Wife Questions – Goan Style."

The 250-page laugh-riot was launched last July in London, at the hands of legendary Goan footballers during the staging of Fidelis Fernandes' Konkani drama 'Kwaichai Mati.'

The book packs 40 rib-tickling stories, delightfully laced with Goan wit, satire, and gentle wisdom.

Unveiling the book on his birthday (8th October), Gasper remarked:

"Most of these stories spring from my own life experiences – exploring the secret art of dodging, deflecting, and gracefully surviving the legendary 'wife' questions."

Dedicated lovingly to his daughter Angel Rafa Crasto, the book promises readers a roller-coaster of humor – Goan style.

Gasper's literary journey began in 2018 with his debut novelette "A Rose is Not Just a Rose," followed by his thought-provoking 2020 release "Migrate Goa."

With his latest work, Gasper hopes to rekindle the reading habit among today's gadget-absorbed generation.

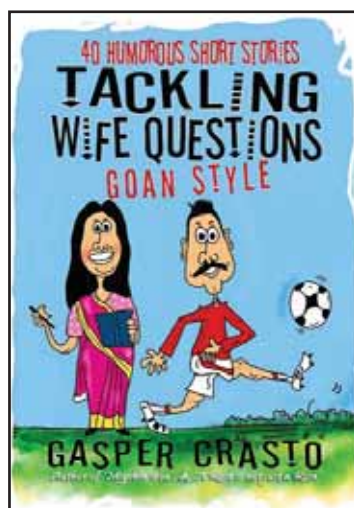
"In London, I was amazed to see people reading in parks and trains," he shared. "My book is my humble effort to make people fall in love with reading again."

### About the author

Gasper Crasto hails from Goa, one of the most enchanting corners of India.

A man of many talents, he shone on the football field representing Salgaocar FC – one of India's premier clubs – for eight glorious seasons.

With a background of Mechanical Engineering, Gasper moved to Kuwait in 1999, where he continues to balance his technical



career with his creative passions.

Beyond writing, he's a singer, compere, and humorist, entertaining audiences in Konkani and English with his trademark charm and wit.

He also runs a popular blog, gaspersWorld, where his articles, stories, and musings capture slices of Goan life and global experiences with warmth and humor.

Married to Esparansa, Gasper resides in Kuwait with his family.

Tackling Wife Questions – Goan Style is now available on Flipkart and Amazon India for 500, and worldwide on Amazon in Hardcover, Paperback, and eBook formats.

## Historical links to Alexander the Great highlighted

## International Women's Group & Greek Embassy celebrate Greek Cultural Day

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: The International Women's Group (IWG), in collaboration with the Embassy of the Hellenic Republic in Kuwait, proudly hosted Greek Cultural Day on Sunday, October 5, 2025, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The event centered on the theme: "Greece – Healthy Nutrition, Mindful Living, and the Power of Human Connection."

In her opening remarks, the President of IWG, Mrs. Marika Kochlamazashvili, spouse of the Ambassador of the Republic of Georgia, expressed gratitude to all attendees and acknowledged the support of the Vice-President of IWG, Theano Tsoumi Plotas, and His Excellency, Ambassador Ioannis Plotas, for organizing the event.

In her address, she highlighted the significance of cultural exploration and joyful gatherings. The President also emphasized that future IWG events would continue to offer a truly enriching experience for all participants.

Following the President's remarks, His Excellency Ioannis Plotas, Ambassador of Greece, welcomed the distinguished guests and acknowledged the contributions of the IWG President, Board members, the press, and all attendees. Ambassador Plotas emphasized the strong cultural ties between Greece and Kuwait, rooted in shared history, Greek traditions, music, food, and dance, which have long captivated Kuwaiti audiences. He also referenced the historical passage of Greek ancestors, including during the era of Alexander the Great, to Failaka Island, as a foundation for lasting cultural appreciation and respect between the two nations.

The Ambassador highlighted Greece's rich heritage, noting the enduring influence of the Greek language on global vocabulary, with words such as symphony, biography, rhapsody, anatomy, and philosophy originating from Greek. He congratulated all participants and especially the Greek team for presenting traditional Grecian outfits, dances, and authentic Greek cuisine.

A special segment featured Ms. Eleni Dimitriadou, a Greek psychotherapist and retreat specialist from Greece, who combines mental health expertise with holistic wellness practices. She shared practical insights on balanced living,



Photos during the event.



and presented a short video showcasing a retreat experience in Greece, inspiring all to embrace mindfulness, self-care and a healthier lifestyle. The event concluded with lively Greek music and traditional dances, including the Island,

Zebekiko and Zorba dances, leaving attendees immersed in Greek culture.

During the event members enjoyed the taste of Greek yogurt from Go Yogurt Company and Myka Frozen Yogurt.

Greek Cultural Day exemplified the power of cultural exchange and human connection, strengthening bonds between Greece and Kuwait while celebrating shared values, heritage, and traditions.

## Over 200 dental professionals attend the event

## IDAK hosts 4th Members Congress on 'Dental Horizons' in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: The Indian Dentists Alliance in Kuwait (IDAK) successfully organized the 4th IDAK Members Congress at the KDA hall in Jabriya. Themed "Dental Horizons: New Frontiers in Dentistry", the event served as a platform for sharing the latest insights and innovations in the field of dentistry and oral healthcare. More than 200 dental professionals from across Kuwait attended the program, reflecting the growing enthusiasm for continuing dental education in the country.

Dr. Jagan Baskaradoss, Chair of IDAK Scientific Committee, delivered the welcome address and highlighted the rising interest in IDAK's scientific activities among dental practitioners in Kuwait.

The scientific session featured four distinguished speakers.

[ ] Dr. Sufiyan M.K., Prosthodontist and Implantologist at Kidzsmile Dental Center, discussed "Tame the tissues around Dental implants".

[ ] Dr. Tasmiya Farooqi, Pedodontist at Kidzsmile Dental Center, presented "Tech-smiles - New Horizons in Pediatric Dentistry", emphasizing modern approaches to managing young patients.

[ ] Dr. Vivekanand Kattimani, Oral and Maxillofacial surgeon at Jaber Al-



Photos during the event.



Ahmed hospital, shared his experience on "Socket preservation: A clinician's dilemma in the era of new-generation biomaterials" supported by case studies and research evidence.

[ ] The final session was led by Dr. Sreekrishnan Nair, Orthodontist at Maidan clinic, who spoke about "Artificial intelligence and its place in our lives" exploring its emerging applications and impact on clinical practice.

All sessions were well received by participants, who engaged actively in discussions following each presentation.

Commenting on the success of the program, Dr. George P Alex, President of IDAK, said "We are at a turning point in dentistry where technology, research and clinical practice are converging. Events like these demonstrate the potential to transform not only our profession but also the overall health and well-being of our patients."

The 4th Members Congress, supported by UPlus properties, Ultramed and Al Mulla Exchange, reaffirmed IDAK's commitment to advancing professional excellence and fostering scientific collaboration among dentists in Kuwait.



2.7 million copies sold on first day

## Swift's 'Life of a Showgirl' breaks US sales record

NEW YORK, Oct 7, (AP): It's the life of a saleswoman. Taylor Swift's 12th studio album, "The Life of a Showgirl," sold 2.7 million copies in traditional album sales - which include physical and digital formats - in its first day in the US. That's according to Luminate, an industry data and analytics company.

The album was released Friday. The sales are impressive for a number of reasons. Swift has broken her record for most first week sales... in one day. Her last album, 2024's "The Tortured Poets Department," amassed 2.61 million equivalent album units in the US in its first week. "The Life of a Showgirl" has also become the second-largest sales week for any album in the modern era, since Luminate began tracking sales in 1991. That was also accomplished in just one day. Currently, Adele's "25," which sold 3.378 million copies

in its first week in 2015 in the US, holds the top spot.



Swift

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."

There are a number of other vinyl variants as well: "The Tiny Bubble in Champagne Collection," "The Baby That's Show Business Collection," "The Shiny Bug Collection," and the standard LP and cassette, in "sweat and vanilla perfume Portofino orange vinyl."

Artwork varies throughout, likely inspiring diehard fans to pick up multiple copies.

And most recently, on Saturday, Swift announced four new CD variants featuring acoustic renditions of the album's tracks. Each edition features two different stripped-down recordings.

She also dominated the box office over the weekend with her three-day event, "The Official Release Party of a Show Girl," which debuted at No. 1 with \$33 million in North America, according to Sunday estimates from Comscore.

### Fashion

Miu Miu stays steady at Paris Fashion Week

## Blazy brings back showmanship at Chanel

PARIS, Oct 7, (AP): Showmanship returned to Chanel on Monday.

At Paris Fashion Week, its new designer Matthieu Blazy opened the season's most anticipated debut beneath colossal celestial bodies - Saturn with its rings, a full solar system suspended above a jet-black and a mirror-bright runway - staking a claim for theater from the first second.

Reflections mirrored the cosmos beneath the runway, while a front row constellation - Nicole Kidman, Marion Cotillard, Tilda Swinton, joined by Lauren Sanchez and Jeff Bezos - gazed upward.

By night's end, the room rose in a standing ovation. As Vogue's doyenne Anna Wintour has said, "fashion needs its showmen."

Chanel had one again. Founded in 1910, Chanel reshaped women's wardrobes by replacing corseted silhouettes with ease - jersey, trousers - and later codified a global idea of Parisian chic through the little black dress, pearls and the tweed suit. Under Karl Lagerfeld in the 1980s, it became the model for how a heritage house can be both historic and relentlessly modern, its runway spectacles influencing the industry far beyond Paris. That legacy made Blazy's debut more than a change of designer, but a test of how a century-old, multi-billion dollar institution continues to speak to the world.

The show capped a season dense with debuts: Pierpaolo Piccioli at Balenciaga, Louise Trotter at Bottega Veneta, Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez at Loewe and Dario Vitale at Versace.

Yet Chanel's moment felt singular for stakes and scale. By dialing down glitter, dialing up line, restoring theater and keeping the codes legible, Blazy positioned Chanel not as a museum of symbols but as a platform for them.

The opener functioned as a manifesto: an androgynous, slouchy pantsuit featuring low-slung trousers and an asymmetric jacket with structured shoulders. The looks split from the playbook of subdued designer Virginie Viard who parted ways with Chanel last year. They also shifted from late-period Karl Lagerfeld - one step closer to Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel.

The styles were not a reinvention of tweed, but rather menswear rethought through the founder's origin story, when Coco wore the clothes of her lover the "Boy" Capel.

A hand anchored in a pocket made the point explicit: the freedom Chanel once placed in women's hands - giving them trousers and pockets on them - restated. The spring 2026 collection, months in the making, read as an imagined conversation between Blazy and Chanel herself: thoughtfulness braided with showmanship.

Ribbons - rumored to be a sticking point between designer and atelier - were largely gone. Sparkle was sparse, a calculated risk in markets that prize high shine.

In their place came silhouette-first solutions and masses of feathers, with the camellia held as steady leitmotif. However far the line moved, the codes stayed legible - each



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



A model wears a creation as part of the Chanel Spring/Summer 2026 collection presented in Paris, Monday, Oct. 6. (AP)

look unmistakably Chanel. Tweed arrived interconnected rather than narrowly Parisienne - multicultural in palette and weave, intercontinental if not interplanetary.

Then came the fun wigs - what one critic termed the "funny little hats" - feathered, sly and intentionally light. They channeled Lagerfeld's provocation about how he revitalized the once-dusty heritage house when he joined the helm in 1983.

"Chanel is an institution, and you have to treat an institution like a (prostitute) - and then you get something out of her," he said.

While Viard's Chanel was often faulted for sobriety and restraint; Blazy, like Lagerfeld, deals in irony. At Bottega Veneta he staged frogs on heels, bunny-lapel coats and trompe-l'œil leather jeans. Here, plumage, proportion and wigs delivered the wink without tipping into theatrical costume.

Accessories set a new tempo: big hats, metallic bags, tiers of pearls, chunky gold chains and statement earrings - bold on paper, disciplined on the body. Handbags - the other reason Blazy was chosen - spanned crisp chain-strap updates and playful clutches, including a notable ovoid shaped like an egg.

The finale carried the argument in motion: a silky short-sleeve shirt paired with a multicolored feathered skirt with a long train. Color moved across the plumage and the black floor threw back its reflection.

"It was such a surprise. ... It's exciting to be here for a new era," filmmaker Sofia Coppola told The Associated Press. "There are things you recognize from the house codes, and a fresh new look at it."

### Miu Miu

As France's government unraveled in another episode of political instability Monday, the cogs of the luxury industry kept turning. At the Iéna Palace in Paris' 16th arrondissement, Miuccia Prada's Miu Miu offered its own brand of reassurance: business as usual, chic as ever at Paris Fashion Week.

The opener was sober - a deep blue warehouse apron dress, all covered up and precise. It set the tone for a collection that was gamine yet grounded, playful but edged with pragmatism. Prada, a pioneering CEO as well as designer, made it clear: Miu Miu wasn't just flirtatious this season, it meant business.

Founded in 1993 as Prada's irreverent little sister, Miu Miu is the Italian designer's freer, instinctive outlet. Where Prada is cerebral, Miu Miu is gamine and skewed-lingerie-as-daywear, bourgeois classics nudged off-kilter, humor threaded through rigor.

Prada, who studied political science before taking over the family firm, has long used the label to probe femininity's codes - how clothes can be both play and armor.

The apron motif returned again and again, recast in pared silhouettes that exposed flashes of skin or gleamed under shiny buttons. Actor Richard E. Grant, in a long tradition of Miu Miu's celebrity cameos, strode out in a black sheeny leather apron that read like a kinky chef's uniform. Milla



A model wears a creation as part of the Miu Miu SS 26 collection presented in Paris. (AP)

Jovovich followed in a riff on the same theme, softened with black frills.

Prada framed the choice bluntly. "I want to talk about women's work, using my work... the apron as a symbol of work that can express multiple messages," she said of her show. "The apron is my favorite piece of clothing... it is about protection and care... a symbol of the effort and hard-ship of women."

From there, the show swerved gamine. Floral minidresses with faintly sporty underpinnings carried the collection toward its finale. Banded frills bisected the bust; geometric torso prints nodded to Balkan or folk references - an echo of the eclectic "mishmash" styling that has long defined the label.

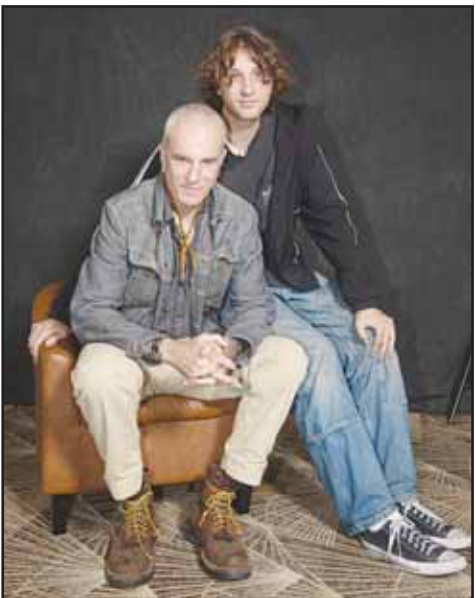
Across seasons, Miu Miu's strength is its push-pull: underthings recast as outerwear, schoolroom polish meeting club logic, intellect wrapped around wearability. Beyond the show's palatial halls, those cogs keep turning - not just out of habit but horsepower.

Paris Fashion Week is a luxury engine fueling a vast supply chain - hotels, drivers, ateliers and retail - that accounts for more than 3% of France's gross domestic product. That robust machinery is why, apron or opera coat, the show goes on.

Associated Press that he's still a fan of the game and that the panel works because he and his colleagues get along away from the show and do it as though there are no cameras.

"I look forward to hanging out with the crew," Lundqvist said. "It's fun to go to Atlanta, when it's TNT, to hang out with the boys and just have fun. We talk about the game, we break down things and what we see and hear, but we'll talk about other things going on."

Gretzky, nicknamed the "Great One," is the league's all-time leading scorer. He has more assists than anyone else has points and held the goals record for more than three decades until Alex Ovechkin broke it in April. (AP)



Daniel Day-Lewis, (left), and Ronan Day-Lewis pose for a portrait on Saturday, Sept. 27, 2025, in New York. (AP)

### Acting comeback

## Day-Lewis finds his acting fire still burns

NEW YORK, Oct 7, (AP): It's been eight years since Daniel Day-Lewis announced his retirement from acting and said he wanted to "explore the world in a different way."

But the big-screen absence of the actor many would peg as the greatest one alive ends with "Anemone," a new film directed by his son, Ronan Day-Lewis. The two of them wrote it together. What began as something small, with no real ambition, grew until a full feature film and Day-Lewis' long-awaited return to movies.

"It saddened me that I had perhaps ruled myself out of that when I decided to work on something else for a while," Day-Lewis said in an interview alongside his son. "As we progressed through it, and it seemed less and less possible to contain it, like two fellas in a shed, it began to alarm me slightly. I understood that this was going to involve the full paraphernalia of a film production, and that wasn't something I was eager to get back into."

"But we just kept moving forward to see what would happen," he added. "And this is what happened."

"Anemone," which recently premiered at the New York Film Festival and which Focus Features releases Friday in theaters, finds Day-Lewis, now 68, not even slightly less intense or magnetic a performer. It's a father-son story, though not an autobiographical one. Day-Lewis stars as Ray Stoker, a solitary hermit living in a remote cabin. His brother, Jem (Sean Bean), arrives and tries to convince him to return to his teenage son.

### Retirement

Since 2017's "Phantom Thread," Day-Lewis has, among other things, studied violin making in Boston. But he has also come to think of his declaration of retirement as a mistake, or not quite what he intended. At least, it wasn't enough to stand in the way of him making a movie with his son.

"I know it's been imagined on my behalf by numerous commentators, people that don't know me, that somehow the way I work has left me so debilitated I can barely open my eyes in the morning. This then requires a period of five or six years recovery!" Day-Lewis says. "That was never the case. The work itself was always nourishing to me."

Yet after making "Phantom Thread," Paul Thomas Anderson's London-set portrait of a perfectionist couturier, Day-Lewis was uncertain that he would ever regenerate the appetite to tackle another role.

"I definitely was brought low after I finished shooting "Phantom Thread" more than for any other reason because I anticipated being back in the public arena again," he says. "And this is where I find myself now. And it's something I never found a solution to from the day I started doing this work until now. The public aspect of my life I've always been baffled by."

The most meaningful gesture Day-Lewis is offering his son might not be making a movie with him, but returning to the spotlight for it. At the New York Film Festival, Day-Lewis has been a happy, humble presence, calling himself a fool for his professed retirement and dutifully accepting a glare of attention that he's largely avoided for the last decade.

"It's been a stark reminder for me of: Oh, yeah, that's what it's like," he said, chuckling.

But Day-Lewis greeted a reporter warmly, urging him to pull a chair - a Churchill, noted Day-Lewis, a craftsman and furniture maker - and spoke candidly and thoughtfully about the mystique that has often surrounded his work, an aura he disdains.

"I knew to survive in this world that that would probably be the way I'd do it, by creating other worlds and escaping into them and living through them for a period of time," he said. "And that remains the same. It never changed. I love that work, otherwise I wouldn't do it. I don't do it as an act of self-flagellation."

### Legend

Day-Lewis' Method-acting immersion in a character has long been the stuff of legend. Jim Sheridan, who directed him in three films, including "My Left Foot," once remarked, "Daniel hates acting." But the idea that Day-Lewis somehow makes himself into a martyr for his art has long chafed with him.

"That's something that's weighed heavily over the years, this sort of misconception which has now become so ludicrous about Method acting, which is a very bad name in the business now," says Day-Lewis. "We all find a different way of approaching the same problems. And when we're on the set, it makes no goddamn difference what system you train under, Meisner or Method or Stanislavski or whatever it might be. You're just there trying to live in those moments, to burn yourself up trying to find that truth as well as you can."

Day-Lewis has sensed some of the same all-consuming imagination in Ronan, a 27-year-old painter making his directorial debut. He's one of two sons Day-Lewis has with his wife, filmmaker Rebecca Miller. (He also has an older son, Gabriel-Kane Day-Lewis, from his past relationship with Isabelle Adjani.) From a young age, Day-Lewis saw how invested his son was in creating imagery. Ronan, meanwhile, grew up marveling from a distance at his father's work.

"It always held a huge amount of mystery to me what he was doing," says Ronan, who has vivid memories of being on set for films like "There Will Be Blood" and "The Ballad of Jack and Rose." "To be inside this realm that I had always been watching curiously from the outside was so intriguing. But there were aspects of his process that still remained a mystery to me, which I think helped, actually."

### Variety

#### NEW YORK: Sean "Diddy" Combs'

lawyers want the hip-hop mogul sent to a low-security federal prison in New Jersey to serve his four-year, two-month prison sentence, telling a judge Monday that the facility's drug treatment program will help him stay clean.

In a letter, Combs' lawyers urged the judge presiding over his case, Arun Subramanian, to "strongly recommend" that the federal Bureau of Prisons place Combs at FCI Fort Dix, a massive prison located on the grounds of the joint military base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

FCI Fort Dix, one of several dozen federal prisons with a residential drug treatment program, will best allow Combs "to address drug abuse issues and to maximize family visitation and rehabilitative efforts," Combs lawyer Teny Geras wrote.



Combs

don. Trump, referring to Combs by the

nickname "Puff Daddy," did not say if he would grant the request. Messages seeking comment on Trump's remarks was left for Combs' lawyers and his publicity team. (AP)

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NEW YORK: Hockey Hall of Fame players Wayne Gretzky and Henrik Lundqvist have signed multiyear deals to continue their roles as TNT Sports NHL analysts.

Gretzky has been with the network since it got US national media rights in 2021. Lundqvist is going into his fourth year in studio with TNT.

Gretzky's deal was announced Tuesday on the eve of the start of the season. Lundqvist said on a video call with The



Dubai chocolate finds its sweet spot in global markets

Dubai chocolate craze is now about much more than bars

NEW YORK, Oct 7, (AP): Some flavor crazes flirt with us and fade. Others stay and make themselves at home.

It's too soon to tell for sure, but the Dubai chocolate movement seems to have put down roots and is spreading at a brisk clip. The sweet flavors and thick texture that have made Dubai chocolate bars a hit are morphing into other kinds of confections too.

Let's back up for a minute. The original and now-classic Dubai chocolate bar was created by Fix Chocolatier in the United Arab Emirates in 2021, and by 2023 had exploded on social media. Rich and indulgent, it features a thick, milk chocolate shell usually encasing a creamy pistachio (and often tahini) filling mixed with crispy, shredded, phyllo-like pastry called kadayif.

Global brands and small bakers alike are riffing on the concept, translating it to croissants, milkshakes and more. Fillings range from peanut butter and jelly to s'mores to matcha.

"I don't call this a 'trend' anymore - it's a whole new thing," said

Din Allall, whose family business, The Nuts Factory, has about 150 US stores featuring nuts, dried fruits and candies.

The craze has even contributed to a pistachio shortage this year, the Iranian nut producer Keinia has reported. It said the primary reason for the shortage is "the explosive surge in demand fueled by the viral 'Dubai chocolate' TikTok trend, compounded by underlying supply constraint."

Globally, Google searches for "Dubai chocolate" shot up quickly at the start of the year before peaking in March. They've remained elevated since then, according to Google Trends.

Allall carries 12 flavors of Dubai chocolate bar, as well as chocolate- and pistachio-covered Dubai dates, Dubai-coated roasted nuts, a layered Dubai chocolate strawberry parfait, and a Dubai Golden Chocolate bar infused with edible 24-karat gold for \$79.99 (their regular 6.5-ounce bars sell for \$18.99).

It's not just the flavors that make Dubai chocolate different, Allall says,



Pieces of Dubai chocolate bars are displayed in New York on Friday, Sept. 26, 2025. (AP)

but the bar's structure too - "huge, thick, with lots of filling."

Trader Joe's carries a Dubai chocolate bar made by Patislove. IHOP introduced a limited-time Dubai

pancake stack in some locations in August. Baskin-Robbins has some Dubai-inspired ice cream products on its menu, while Costco sells a range of Dubai chocolate confections, includ-

ing a Dubai chocolate cake. Walmart and QVC also sell Dubai chocolate.

Swiss chocolate giant Lindt has a bar, and drew crowds when it debuted a limited number of them in Europe last fall.

"For me, it's the crunch," said Erica Lefkowitz, who was buying some Dubai chocolate recently in Dublin. "The chocolate is soft and melty, and the filling is creamy, and then the crunch of the kadayif. It's all about the texture. Plus, it's sugar."

She was a little annoyed at the price, higher than your average chocolate bar. Part of Dubai chocolate's appeal, though, is the way it feels simultaneously indulgent and worldly. Pistachios, rose, saffron and cardamom bring luxury, travel and exoticism to the chocolate party.

In the US, Dubai chocolate is still a relatively niche product. In the 52 weeks ending June 28, US retail sales of pistachio-filled chocolate totaled \$822,900, according to the market research company NielsenIQ. By comparison, sales of all chocolates totaled \$16.27 billion.

Still, demand for Dubai chocolate is growing much faster than demand for other varieties. Unit sales of pistachio-filled chocolates were up 1,234% compared to the previous year, NielsenIQ said, while unit sales of all chocolates fell less than 1%.

Despite the price, "I've never seen a single item sell like this in my 50 years of retailing," said Stew Leonard, Jr., CEO of Stew Leonard's grocery stores in the New York metropolitan area. The chain introduced the BeeMax Dubai chocolate bar in March, watched it fly out the doors, he said, and then launched their own house-branded version (made by the company Chocopologie).

They've introduced a Dubai chocolate gift box for the holidays, which includes teeny Dubai ice cream cones, Dubai pralines and two bars.

Some other widely distributed brands in the US are Moda, Magno and Leoneessa. Other iterations of Dubai chocolate include Chocolove's little candies and Matteo's Coffee Syrups' sugar-free chocolate coffee syrup.

Media

Paramount acquires The Free Press

Bari Weiss appointed to lead CBS News

NEW YORK, Oct 7, (AP): Paramount said Monday that it has bought the news and commentary website The Free Press and installed its founder, Bari Weiss, as the editor-in-chief of CBS News, saying it believes the country longs for news that is balanced and fact-based.



In this undated photo released by Paramount, The Free Press's co-founders, Suzy Weiss, Bari Weiss, and Nellie Bowles pose for a portrait. (AP)

It's a bold step for the television network of Walter Cronkite, Dan Rather and "60 Minutes," long viewed by many conservatives as the personification of a liberal media establishment. The network is placing someone in a leadership role who has developed a reputation for resisting orthodoxy and fighting "woke" culture.

"I am confident her entrepreneurial drive and editorial vision will invigorate CBS News," said David Ellison, who took over this summer as the corporate leader overseeing the network when his company, Skydance, purchased Paramount. "This move is part of Paramount's bigger vision to modernize content and the way it connects - directly and passionately - to audiences around the world."

No purchase price was announced for The Free Press, which has grown to reach 1.5 million subscribers since Weiss started it in 2021 after leaving The New York Times as an opinion editor. When she left the Times, she wrote a letter of resignation that spoke of a culture of intolerance at the newspaper and said she was bullied by colleagues who disagreed with her.

Weiss will report directly to Ellison and partner with the current CBS News President Tom Cibrowski, who reports to Paramount executive George Cheeks.

Editor-in-chief is a new role at CBS News. Ellison said that Weiss will "shape editorial priorities, champion core values across platforms and lead innovation in how the organization reports and delivers the news."

In a letter to CBS News employees on Monday, Weiss said that watching CBS was part of a family tradition growing up in Pittsburgh. Her goal in the next few weeks is to get to know the staff, she said.

"I want to hear from you about what's working, what isn't, and your thoughts on how we can make CBS News the most trusted news organization in America and the world," Weiss wrote. "I'll approach it the way any reporters would - with an open mind, a fresh notebook and an urgent deadline."

Some at CBS News have been concerned about what they see as signs that the news division is moving in a

direction more friendly to President Donald Trump. Paramount's merger with Skydance was approved by the administration shortly after Paramount settled the president's lawsuit against "60 Minutes." Ellison has hired Kenneth Weinstein, former head of a conservative think tank and a Trump contributor, as an ombudsman to examine complaints about CBS News.

"60 Minutes," which is two weeks into its new season, has been seeking an interview with Trump.

CBS isn't the only news organization to face pressure from the president. He also settled a lawsuit against ABC News, has sued The New York Times and Wall Street Journal, and is fighting a battle with The Associated Press over access.

Broadcast news organizations are generally fading in influence with the growth of online alternatives, and have aging audiences. CBS is generally third in popularity behind ABC and NBC, but "60 Minutes" and "CBS News Sunday Morning" have devoted

fan bases.

Rather, who stepped down as anchor and managing editor of the "CBS Evening News" in 2005, told The Associated Press that he did not know Weiss and hopes she gets to know the people at CBS News before making any big changes.

"No one has to send a memo to everyone down the line at CBS News about what is going on with journalism and this presidency," Rather said. "It is obvious that there is tremendous pressure to bend the knee to the Trump administration. The fear is that this appointment is part of that overall play."

Weiss has worked in opinion journalism and has little background in broadcast journalism. She has described herself politically as a centrist and wrote a column for the New York Post in 2021 headlined, "10 ways to fight back against woke culture."

Writing for the liberal website the Unpopulist, Matt Johnson said that "one reason for The Free Press' popularity is that it offers intellectual rea-

surances to legions of anti-anti-Trump readers - sophisticated conservatives who may be uneasy about Trumpism, yet want to believe that wokeness and other left-wing excesses are the primary threats to western civilization."

Weiss told fellow CBS News employees that she stood for the same core journalistic values that have defined the profession from the beginning, including reporting on the world as it actually is and being fair, fearless and factual.

In separate staff memos, Ellison and Weiss outlined similar philosophies about a mainstream America being ill-served by a destructive form of partisanship.

"When we reduce every issue to 'us vs. them' or 'my way vs. the wrong way,' we close ourselves off from listening, learning and ultimately growing, both as individuals and as a society," Ellison wrote. "I don't pretend to have a solution to this challenge. But I do believe we each have a responsibility to do our part."

A quirky time capsule of one man's art and fame

Button King's legacy lives on in S. Carolina museum

BISHOPVILLE, S.C., Oct 7, (AP): When J.D. Stevens flips on the lights in the shed by his South Carolina home, he feels the presence of his dad, who died nearly a decade ago. He also sees hundreds of thousands of buttons.

They are sewn onto the original button suit on the mannequin that started it all. Nearby is the Chevrolet Chevette covered in buttons of all colors, big and small. There's a walk-in outhouse with a toilet covered in buttons and a piano with buttons everywhere but the keys. There's a button-covered hearse not too far from the coffin where white buttons stand out from all the rest, spelling out "Button King."

Dalton Stevens started on the road to become the Button King one night in 1983 while battling insomnia and, after retiring, a feeling of worthlessness and withdrawal from the world. He got an epiphany to start sewing buttons onto a denim suit because, as he said, "television went off at two in the morning back then."

Back in the 1980s, one didn't trend to the top overnight. Once Stevens finished the original button suit, a tiny newspaper in Bishopville wrote a story. Then the local TV station did its own package. Stevens kept sewing and gluing buttons and once he finished covering the entire Chevette there was a second local TV story picked up by that fledgling all-news network CNN.



J.D. Stevens talks about his father Dalton Stevens' button museum and all of its folk art in Bishopville, S.C., on Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2025. (AP)

National attention grew after he was featured in magazines. One day the phone rang in his Bishopville home. It was "The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson."

Carson made it a point not to see Stevens in 1987 before he walked onto the stage, wearing a suit covered in 16,333 buttons - everywhere but the butt and the back of the thighs. Car-

son laughed at the sight. Stevens then sang a little ditty while playing his 3,005-button guitar.

"If you like the color of my clothes, would you give me buttons instead of a rose," Stevens sang with his South Carolina twang. "Buttons can be square or round. They keep my pants from falling down."

Carson gave Stevens the honor of

staying over a commercial break. Then Stevens made the king of late night roar with laughter at a joke about his three ex-wives.

"Once you make it to the Johnny Carson show one time, that's about as big as you can get without being in the movies. That was high for an old country boy like me," Stevens told South Carolina Educational Television in an early 2000s interview.

Life was never the same. He was on talk shows hosted by David Letterman, Regis Philbin and Kathie Lee Gifford and Geraldo Rivera.

Stevens and his button suit made trips to Japan and Canada. The appearances kept rolling in for two decades. Stevens' fame lasted long enough for an eponymous website to pop up. It has since disappeared.

Eventually the Button King finished all his folk art pieces and needed a place to store them. With his family's help he built a shed on his land and called it the "S.C. Button Museum."

From the start, it's been open to the public 24/7. After Stevens died in 2016 his son kept his promise to keep the museum open.

"It makes me feel good because it's daddy's stuff, you know," J.D. Stevens said, remembering a couple who visited from Pennsylvania and smiled while looking around the small shed.



Egypt's Khaled El Enany speaks to the press after being elected Secretary-General by UNESCO executive board members, at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, Monday, Oct. 6. (AP)

First Arab to lead UNESCO

Egyptian Khaled El-Enany elected to UNESCO chief

CAIRO, Oct 7, (Agencies): Egyptian President Abdelfattah Al-Sisi congratulated Egyptian candidate Dr. Khaled El-Enany on Monday, on his landslide victory in the elections for the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and his election as Director-General of the organization.

In a post on his official social media account, Al-Sisi said, "I extend my sincere congratulations to Dr. Khaled El-Enany on his landslide victory in the elections for the UNESCO Executive Board, receiving 55 out of 57 votes and being elected Director-General of the organization, a historic achievement that adds to Egypt's diplomatic and cultural record and to the achievements of the Arab and African peoples."

The Egyptian leader added, "this well-deserved victory embodies Egypt's cultural standing, confirms the ability of its people to lead in international forums, and reflects the world's confidence in Egyptian talent, which combines knowledge, experience, and dedication."

Egypt on Monday announced the election of its candidate, Dr. Khaled El-Anany, as Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) by an overwhelming majority.

In a statement, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry said El-Anany

is the first Egyptian and Arab, and the second African, to assume the post, calling it a historic achievement that reflects Egypt's international standing and the strength of its foreign policy under the leadership of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.

El-Anany secured 55 out of 75 votes from the UNESCO Executive Board, the highest number ever received by a candidate in a competitive election for the post since the organization's founding in 1945, the statement added.

The ministry said the vote capped a 30-month diplomatic campaign led by the Foreign Ministry, in coordination with Egypt's permanent delegation to UNESCO, and supported by Arab and African blocs.

The campaign included outreach to member states, high-level visits to 65 countries between June 2023 and September 2025, and wide engagement with officials and civil society.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr. Badr Abdelatty, speaking at the Executive Board session, congratulated President El-Sisi, the Egyptian people, and Dr. El-Anany on this historic win, expressing confidence in his leadership and vision for the organization.

Abdelatty noted that El-Anany's election celebrates the rich cultural and intellectual contributions of Egypt, the Arab world, and Africa, and reflects global confidence in Egypt's diplomatic efforts.



Gizele Oliveira arrives at the premiere of 'Frankenstein' on Monday, Oct. 6, at Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in Los Angeles. (AP)



WHO praises CAN’s youth-focused breast cancer education initiative

Kuwait trains PE teachers to lead breast cancer awareness in schools

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: The Cancer Aware Nation (CAN) Campaign on Monday launched a new training program for female trainers in the field of breast cancer awareness, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

Around 200 female Physical Education teachers from various educational districts participated in the program, which is part of the campaign’s plan for the 2025/2026 academic year.

The program aims to qualify these teachers to become certified trainers in the field of breast cancer aware-



KUNA photo  
Chairman of the CAN Campaign Board of Directors, Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh, during the opening of the training course.

ness, in preparation for training Grade 12 students on self-examination and spreading the culture of early detection.

Chairman of the CAN Campaign Board of Directors Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh confirmed that the program is the continuation of a successful first phase, during which 182,000 students were trained between 2010 and 2024.

He said the second phase is being implemented according to a schedule covering all educational districts.

Al-Saleh revealed that the first session began with the participation of teachers from the Jahra and Hawally educational districts, followed by the Capital and Mubarak

Al-Kabeer educational districts on Oct 6, then Ahmadi on Oct 7 and Farwaniya on Oct 8.

He said the activities will conclude on Oct 9 with the special education teachers.

He added that the World Health Organization and the Regional Alliance for Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) praised the awareness program implemented by CAN Campaign at an early age, due to its effective role in raising health awareness and encouraging young women to practice self-examination.

The program, which runs from Oct 5-9, includes lectures and workshops that combine theoretical and practical aspects, such as lectures on breast cancer, health development and positive communication skills, in addition to the survivor’s ‘recovery journey’.

An exam is scheduled for Oct 12 to certify participants as CAN Campaign trainers. They will then train Grade 12 students in their respective schools.

Moreover, President of the Regional Alliance for Noncommunicable Diseases Dr. Ibtihal Fadel described the program as “leading across the region,” commending Kuwait’s pioneering role in launching early awareness initiatives that contribute to building an aware and healthy generation.

Malawi reports more mpox cases

India’s Kerala bans medicines for children without prescription after cough syrup issue

NEW DELHI, Oct. 7, (Xinhua): Amid concerns over alleged cough syrup-related deaths in two Indian states of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, the health department in the southern state of Kerala has ordered that no medicines should be given to children under the age of 12 without a doctor’s prescription, officials said Tuesday.

The local government of Kerala has also formed a three-member committee to study the use of cough medicines by children in the state and submit a report immediately.

Officials said that so far, no problem has been reported in children in Kerala related to cough syrup.

However, the authorities have stopped the distribution and sale of

the cough syrup in question. The drug control department teams are conducting intensive inspections in the market.

Reports said 17 children -- 14 in Madhya Pradesh and three in Rajasthan -- have died allegedly after developing complications following the consumption of cough syrups.

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**Mpox:** Malawi continues to register more cases of mpox disease, with the capital, Lilongwe, recording the highest number of cases, according to the latest update on the outbreak from the Public Health Institute of Malawi (PHIM).

Since the first case was recorded on April 17, the total number of cas-

es in the country has now amounted to 128, with Lilongwe having recorded 104 cases cumulatively. Only one mpox-related death has been reported so far.

On Monday, the PHIM announced that two new cases had been diagnosed and confirmed at two separate clinics in Lilongwe: one involving a nine-year-old female and one involving an 11-year-old female.

All the confirmed cases have no history of travelling outside Malawi, according to the update.

Ten of the country’s districts have recorded mpox cases, and health authorities have continued to fight the outbreak through various interventions.



From left: Chair of the Nobel Committee for Physics Olle Eriksson, Secretary General of the Swedish Academy of Sciences Hans Ellegren and Member of the Nobel Committee for Physics Goran Johansson announce John Clarke, Michel H Devoret and John M. Martinis, on screen behind, as the recipients of the Nobel Prize in Physics, at the Nobel Assembly of the Karolinska Institute, in Stockholm, Sweden, Tuesday, Oct. 7. (AP)

3 scientists share Nobel for Physics

Nobel Prize in Physics awarded for quantum mechanics breakthrough

STOCKHOLM, Oct 7, (AP): John Clarke, Michel H. Devoret and John M. Martinis won the Nobel Prize in Physics on Tuesday for research on the weird world of sub-atomic quantum tunneling that advances the power of everyday digital communications and computing.

One of the winners said that quantum mechanics research already has wound up in our everyday communications. Speaking from his cellphone, Clarke said: “One of the underlying reasons that cellphones work is because of all this work.”

Clarke, 83, conducted his research at the University of California, Berkeley; Martinis at the University of California, Santa Barbara; and Devoret is at Yale and also at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Clarke, who spearheaded the research team, told The Associated Press he was “pleased to receive this prize” alongside his two colleagues.

Martinis’ wife, Jean, told Associated Press reporters who called at his home some two-and-a-half hours after the announcement that he was still asleep and did not yet know. She said in the past they had stayed up on the night of the physics award, but at some point they decided that sleep was more important. “He doesn’t like surprises,” she said.

Devoret could not immediately be contacted.

The prize winning research in the mid-1980s took the sub-atomic “weirdness of quantum mechanics” and found how those tiny interactions can have real world applications on the human scale level, said Jonathan Bagger, CEO of the American Physical Society. They have the potential to supercharge computing and communications.

The 100-year-old field of quantum mechanics deals with the seemingly impossible subatomic world where switches can be on-and-off at the same time and parts of atoms tunnel through what seems like impenetrable barriers.

What the three physicists did “is taking the scale of something that we can’t see, we can’t touch, we can’t feel and bringing it up to the scale of something recognizable and make it something you can build upon,” said Physics Today editor-in-chief Richard Fitzgerald, who in the 1990s worked in the field on a competitors’ group.

The work is a crucial building block in the fast-developing world of quantum mechanics.

“Quantum computers is one very sort of obvious use, but they’re also can be used for quantum sensors, so to be able to make very sensitive measurements of, for example, magnetic fields, and perhaps also for cryptography, so to encode information so it cannot be easily listened to by a third party,” Mark Pearce, a professor of astrophysics and Nobel Physics Committee member, told The Associated Press.

Quantum computing when fully achieved would be a large leap from what we now know, scientists said.

Clarke said the research “in some ways is the basis of quantum computing. Exactly at this moment where this fits in is not entirely clear to me.”

Both Bagger and Fitzgerald said it’s a bit of a stretch to say our everyday cellphones now use the breakthrough made by Clarke and colleagues. But ultra-sensitive measuring devices rely on that team’s work and while we could have magnetic resonance imaging (MRIs) without their work, it makes it far more sensitive and useful, Bagger said.

“Quantum mechanics is everywhere in everything we do, from the cellphone to the satellite communications that are connected to the cellphones to the screens on which we watch our videos on our cellphones,” Bagger said.

Normally quantum mechanics “is associated with tiny objects, things smaller and atoms where your intuition doesn’t apply,” Bagger said. “They found a way to demonstrate the weirdness of quantum mechanics” at the level where humans live.

“It is wonderful to be able to celebrate the way that century-old quantum mechanics continually offers new surprises. It is also enormously useful, as quantum mechanics is the foundation of all digital technology,” said Olle Eriksson, Chair of the Nobel Committee for Physics.

Clarke told the AP he was stunned and overwhelmed to hear the news. His daughter called early in the morning to congratulate him on the win, and he said he had hundreds of emails in his inbox.

“It had never occurred to me, ever, that I would win the Nobel Prize,” Clarke told The Associated Press.

“To put it mildly, it was the surprise of my life,” Clarke told reporters at the announcement by phone after being told of his win.

Chilly therapy improves mood and well-being

Cold-water dips bring health benefits and risks

NEW YORK, Oct 7, (AP): Dr. Mark Harper recalls his first cold-water swim in the south of England 20 years ago. It was August, but the initial jolt from the plunge took his breath away.

The shock to his system lasted a minute or two until he was “recombobulated and able to think about something other than the cold,” Harper says. A surprise sensation soon replaced his discomfort.

“I remember getting out of the water the first time and feeling so good,” Harper, an anesthesiologist who has since researched the potential risks and rewards of taking a nippy dunk. “I wasn’t expecting that.”

Claims about the benefits of cold-water immersion date back centuries. Thomas Jefferson, the principal author of the Declaration of Independence and the third American president, wrote toward the end of his life about using a cold foot bath daily for 60 years. He also owned a book published in 1706 on the history of cold-water bathing.

While evidence is building around the positive health effects of swimming in chilly water, bathing in ice or taking cold showers, scientific confirmation is still lacking.

But Harper, who became a regular cold-water swimmer after his initiation, said there are strong signs that people can derive mental health benefits from the activity. He mentioned a positive effect on depression and general well-being.

“For now, we have a very strong base, but not hard evidence, that cold-water immersion is effective for mental health,” Harper told The Associated Press.

Harper said his own early experiences with cold-water swimming piqued his professional curiosity. As a physician, he wondered if the brief bodily shock had clinical uses for treating depression. He cited the biological phenomenon of hormesis, in which a stressor introduced at a low dose creates a positive response.

Muscles and bones put under stress -for example, with weight-bearing exercise - also respond and grow.

Harper acknowledged that the positive effects he’s observed may be the result of the placebo effect, a phenomenon



Canda-Leigh Habonimana dips in the waters of Gatieneau Park’s Meech Lake in Chelsea, Que., during a polar bear dip on New Year’s Day, Jan. 1, 2025. (AP)

in which people who are given a medicine they think will help them report responding to the treatment even if it had no active ingredients.

In the case of cold-water immersion, the benefits may come from meeting people, the exercise itself, or simply accepting a challenge and accomplishing it, which improves self-confidence, he said.

“Personally, I think it’s all of those things, and the cold has an additive effect,” Harper said. “I think we have a good physiological basis for that. The basic science tells us the cold has a very strong effect on the body.”

“What we’re talking about is an intervention, when it’s used clinically, that produces beneficial effects on mental health. So in a way it doesn’t matter which aspect is generating the positive effects.”

Harper cited what he said was a common reaction among

first-timers who have taken the plunge.

They often say “the fact that I’ve done this means I can do anything,” he said. “It’s quite a confidence builder and it’s something people stick to because they enjoy it so much.”

Dr. Mike Tipton, a physiologist at the University of Portsmouth in England who has studied extreme environments, authored a paper along with Harper and two more researchers several years ago. The title highlighted the potential advantages and dangers of stimulating the body with a sudden drop in temperature: “Cold Water Immersion: Kill or Cure.”

“Like other environmental constituents such as pressure, heat and oxygen, cold water can be either good or bad, threat or treatment depending on circumstance,” they wrote after reviewing the research then available on the topic.

One of their findings: The activity presents dangers. Deaths from cold-water immersion are not uncommon. The shock of frigid water can cause people to hyperventilate and drown. But Tipton told The AP the risks can be managed with common sense and precautions.

You do not need to go to extremes to get a potential payoff. Entering water at a temperature of 20-15 degrees Celsius (68-59F) and staying for only a few minutes is sufficient.

Tipton explained if the water is colder than that, you may get more benefit - but limit your exposure.

“If you ask me what protocol you would follow if you thought this was going to be doing you good, I wouldn’t go in water much below 12C (54F), and I wouldn’t stay in for much more than two minutes,” Tipton said.

Tipton and Harper both said that any benefits from cold-water immersion come from the body’s cold-shock response: the sudden fall of skin temperature, the release of the stress hormones, the release of endorphins, and the anti-inflammatory effect.

Tipton cautioned against long spells in an ice bath.

“Sitting in water for as long as I can fills me with horror,” Tipton said. “This could destroy small nerves, blood vessels in extremities and could result in amputation the same way frostbite can.”

E-cigarettes fuel new addiction wave: WHO

GENEVA, Oct. 7, (Xinhua): While the world is smoking less, tobacco still hooks one in five adults worldwide, causing millions of preventable deaths every year, and e-cigarettes are fueling a new wave of nicotine addiction, said a report released by the World Health Organization (WHO) on Monday.

The number of tobacco users has dropped from 1.38 billion in 2000 to 1.2 billion in 2024. Since 2010, the number of people using tobacco has fallen by 120 million, a 27 percent drop in relative terms, according to the report.

“Millions of people are quitting, or not starting, tobacco use thanks to tobacco control efforts by countries around the world,” said WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. “In response to this strong progress, the tobacco industry is fighting back with new nicotine products, aggressively targeting young people. Governments must act faster and more strongly to implement proven tobacco control policies.”

For the first time, the WHO has estimated global e-cigarette use and the numbers are alarming: more than 100 million people worldwide now vape, including at least 86 million adults, mostly in high-income countries, and at least 15 million children aged 13-15. In countries with data, children are on average nine times more likely than adults to vape.

The tobacco industry has been introducing new products and technologies to market tobacco addiction -- not just with cigarettes, but also with e-cigarettes, nicotine pouches, heated tobacco products and others, it said, adding that all of these harm people’s health, and more worryingly, the health of new generations, youth, and adolescents, said the report.

“E-cigarettes are fueling a new wave of nicotine addiction,” said Etienne Krug, WHO Director of Health Determinants, Promotion and Prevention Department.

“They are marketed as harm reduction, but in reality, they are hooking kids on nicotine earlier and risk undermining decades of progress.”



The FVS system aims to democratize soccer: FIFA

‘Simplified version’ of VAR emerging as vital at Under-20 World Cup

SANTIAGO, Chile, Oct 7, (AP): FIFA is employing an alternative review system that allows coaches to appeal two referee’s decisions per match at the Under-20 soccer World Cup in Chile

The football video support (FVS) is a “simplified version” of VAR and has transformed the youth tournament into a testing ground for new technologies.

Cards that vary between blue and purple are held by coaches, who are in charge of requesting reviews.

During the group stage, its use has proven crucial, defining the course of several matches played in the cities of Santiago, Valparaíso, Rancagua and Talca. The system was deployed in more than a dozen matches in the early part of the tournament.

FVS was first used when South Korea coach Lee Chang-Won used a card for the first time during the opening match against Ukraine. He challenged a penalty, but the request was ultimately ruled out by the referee.

Since then, the review system has had a role in several matches. Of the 12 games in the first round of the group stage, the “light VAR” was used in seven.

It proved decisive in Norway’s 1-0 victory over Nigeria after a review of a handball by Nigeria defender Ahmed Akinyele, which American referee Joe Dickerson had ignored.

FVS also disallowed a goal in Argentina’s 4-1 win against Australia - the review denying a tying goal for the Socceros.

Mexico’s use of the system helped it overturn a penalty decision in a match they ended up tying 2-2 against Spain. It also led to Paraguay winger Enso González being red-carded after kicking South Korea



Norway’s Magnus Holte (20) and Saudi Arabia’s Saud Harun go for a header during a FIFA U-20 World Cup Group E soccer match at El Teniente Stadium in Rancagua, Chile. (AP)

striker Hyeon-oh Kim. Unlike VAR, which uses special cameras and a supporting team of officials, FVS referees review their decisions based on images captured by the television broadcast, without further assistance. According to world soccer’s ruling body FIFA, the FVS system aims to “democratize football by introducing video review technology as a complementary option,” not only for top-level competitions but also for those that “could not afford VAR infrastructure,” thanks to its low cost and simplified operation.

Coaches can only appeal in four specific situations: whether or not there was a goal; whether or not there was a penalty, over a direct red card, or in case of suspicion that a card was not shown to the correct offender.

The system has already been tested by FIFA in other competitions, such as the 2024 Youth Championship/Blue Stars in Switzerland and the 2025 Under-20 Women’s World Cup in Colombia, and it is expected to be expanded to other youth categories.

Some have praised the system, but others have expressed reluctance.

“It’s a good tool to avoid constantly stopping the game,” said Chile coach Nicolás Córdova after a 2-0 loss against Japan.

Some fans, however, have criticized the long waiting periods until a decision is made.

“In a game like this, we had 10 extra minutes because they stopped the whole time to review things that clearly hadn’t happened,” Brazilian fan Tiago Dias said after his country lost 2-1 against Morocco.

Some coaches, such as Morocco’s Mohamed Ouahbi, said they would make extensive use of the tool, regardless of whether there was a violation or not.

“I’m going to use the card because the option is there. We have two cards and we have to use them,” Ouahbi said.

Malaysia to appeal sanctions

FAM disputes cheating claims and will appeal FIFA sanctions



In this file photo, Malaysia’s players pose before the start of the AFC Asian Cup qualifier Group F soccer match between Malaysia and Vietnam at the National Stadium Bukit Jalil in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. (AP)

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 7, (AP):The Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) said Tuesday that it would appeal FIFA sanctions after being accused by soccer’s governing body of cheating.

In September, FIFA suspended seven overseas-born players who all featured for Malaysia in June’s 4-0 win over Vietnam in a 2027 Asian Cup qualifier, for 12 months and fined FAM \$438,000, citing falsified or doctored documentation.

In its full report released Monday, the FIFA Disciplinary Committee said “the original birth certificates indicated a sharp contrast to the documentation provided,” referring to papers from the FAM claiming the players all had a grandparent born in Malaysia, making them eligible to represent the country under FIFA rules.

The committee reported that the original certificates showed that the said family members had actually been born in the same countries as the players: Argentina, Brazil, the Netherlands and Spain.

“Presenting fraudulent documentation with the purpose of gaining eligibility to play for a national team constitutes, pure and simple, a form of cheating, which cannot in any way be condoned,” FIFA said in the report. “Such conduct erodes trust in the fairness of competitions and jeopardizes the very essence of football as an activity founded on honesty and transparency.”

In a statement posted on Facebook, FAM disputed FIFA’s findings.

“Claims that players ‘acquired or were aware of fake documents’ are baseless as no solid evidence has been presented so far,” it said. “FAM would like to assert that the heritage players involved are legitimate Malaysian citizens.”

The body said that there had been an administrative error when submitting documents and that it is preparing to appeal the ruling using original documents that have been certified by the Malaysian government.

“FAM will be presenting an official appeal regarding this conclusion, and remain committed to defending the integrity of national football based on facts and authentic documents,” it said.

The FIFA report said that FAM admitted it “was contacted by external agencies regarding the Players’ heritage and yet failed to independently verify the authenticity of the documentation.” FIFA added that it was “able to obtain the relevant original documents without hindrance,” which highlighted a “a lack of proper diligence” by FAM.

The Asian Football Confederation, which runs the Asian Cup, will refer the eventual results of the case to its own Disciplinary Committee, which could mean further punishments for Malaysia, which will play against Laos on Thursday.

The revelations have provoked anger in Malaysia. “Although FAM has issued a statement saying it was a technical error, a mistake by their staff, all of that needs improvement because the 19-page statement contains very serious remarks by FIFA, which tarnish the country’s image,” Hannah Yeoh, Malaysia’s Youth and Sports Minister said. “Fans are angry, hurt and disappointed.”

Diacre hired as Marseille women’s coach

MARSEILLE, France, Oct 7, (AP): Corinne Diacre was hired as coach of the Marseille women’s team on Monday, marking her return after a bitter end to her time in charge of the French national team.

Known as Les Marseillaises, the team was promoted from the second tier last season.

“Joining Marseille is a source of great pride. It’s a club whose identity, passion and ambition fully resonate with my career path and my approach to football,” the 51-year-old Diacre said. “I can’t wait to get back on the field with my new players.”

Diacre was fired by France in March 2023, only four months before the Women’s World Cup.

The French soccer federation’s executive committee made the decision after several players expressed their discontent with Diacre, saying the situation had “reached a point of no return.”

At the time, Diacre said she was the victim of a smear campaign.

Former defender Diacre captained France during her playing career and made 121 appearances.

South Africa beats New Zealand for first Women’s World Cup win

Brits hits century

INDORE, India, Oct 7, (AP): Tazmin Brits scored a century as South Africa beat New Zealand by six wickets with a turnaround batting performance at the Women’s Cricket World Cup.

Brits hit 15 fours and a six in her 101 as the Proteas posted 234-4 in 40.5 overs after bowling out New Zealand for 231.

It was a vast improvement for South Africa after being dismissed for 69 against England in its first game. Sune Luus scored 83 not out off 114 balls as South Africa registered its first points of the tournament.

New Zealand skipper Sophie Devine led her team with 85 after winning the toss and electing to bat. Left-arm spinner Nonkululeko Mlaba picked up 4-40 in 10 overs to lead the South Africa bowling - her second-best career figures.

“I’m glad we could pull off this win, and we definitely needed it after the first game,” said Brits, who was voted player of the match. “I am trying to

expand my batting a bit and be more positive. It’s the first time I used this bat - it’s going to be my lucky bat from now on!”

South Africa, which rose to fifth spot in the standings with an improved run-rate, next meets host India in Visakhapatnam on Thursday.

New Zealand, which lost its opening game to Australia by 89 runs, next plays Bangladesh in Guwahati on Friday.

New Zealand made a poor start, losing Suzie Bates on the first ball of the match when she was trapped lbw by Marizanne Kapp.

Georgia Plimmer (31) shared a 44-run second-wicket partnership with Melie Kerr (23) and then combined with the in-form Devine in a 57-run stand.

Devine followed up her century in the first game by reaching 50 off 68 balls, putting on the best partnership of the innings - 86 - with Brooke Halliday (45).

But Mlaba returned for her second spell and wrecked the innings, with New Zealand losing its last seven wickets for 44 runs, including two run

outs. There was no chance to stem the collapse as Mlaba bowled Devine in the 45th over, picking up the best figures for South Africa against New Zealand in tournament history.

Chasing 232, Brits raced to 50 off 44 balls despite losing skipper Laura Wolvaardt for 14.

Brits and Luus then put on a record 159 for the second wicket - South Africa’s best partnership for any wicket in tournament history.

Having scored three hundreds in her previous four ODIs, Brits reached her fifth century in 2025. She also overtook Australia’s great Meg Lanning by scoring seven ODI hundreds in 41 innings. Lanning took 44 innings to reach that milestone.

Luus took her time at the other end, reaching 50 off 76 balls. South Africa seemed to be heading for a massive win until a slight stumble, with Brits bowled in the 32nd over.

Kerr picked up two wickets as the Proteas slipped to 213-4. Luus, though, made sure there were no further issues as she hit the winning runs with 55 balls to spare.

‘You don’t want to have a satisfied locker room because we’re not there yet’

Aces’ champ’ship experience could be crucial as they take 2-0 WNBA Finals lead to Phoenix

LAS VEGAS, Oct 7, (AP): The Aces won their two championships on the opponents’ home floor - Connecticut in 2022 and New York in 2023 - so this is a team that shouldn’t be intimidated as the WNBA Finals shifts to Phoenix for Game 3 on Wednesday.

Las Vegas, which won both home games to open this series against the Mercury, lost Game 3 in both title years before wrapping it up in Game 4.

Both were best-of-five series, so the Aces have a little more work this year with the Finals a best-of-seven for the first time if they are to win their third championship in four years.

The core of those title teams remain mostly in place in four-time MVP A’ja Wilson and fellow All-Stars Jackie Young and Chelsea Gray. Jewell Loyd was a key player on two Seattle championship teams.

Those players know the work is not done and any number of things can change the momentum of a series. The Aces experienced that two years ago when Gray and Kiah Stokes didn’t play in the clincher because of foot injuries, though Las Vegas still eked out the win.

“You don’t want to have a satisfied locker room because we’re not there yet,” Aces coach Becky Hammon said. “All we did was do what we’re supposed to do. We were supposed to take care of our home court.”

The Aces have been a resilient team, overcoming a 14-14 start that was capped by a record 53-point home loss to Minnesota. They then reeled off 16 consecutive victories to go from the playoff bubble to the



Las Vegas Aces guard Jewell Loyd (24), right, fouls Phoenix Mercury forward Alyssa Thomas (25) during the first half in Game 2 of the WNBA basketball finals in Las Vegas. (AP)

No. 2 seed.

Then the postseason tested Las Vegas’ resolve again, with Seattle and a depleted Indiana making the Aces go the distance.

“That stuff helps you be battle tested,” Hammon said. “We know Chelsea, Jackie and A’ja have been in a lot of wars together, but now Jewell’s been in the wars because of how the series have played out.”

“Even the whole year, the process is always equipping you for what’s coming next, and I think they really embrace that journey together, being resilient together, going through adversity together. It takes a special

group to embrace hard, and they really have all year.”

Even in the two victories over the Mercury, the Aces quickly fell behind in both games.

Should the Aces win Game 3, they would put the Mercury in an almost impossible situation. But a Phoenix win on Wednesday would set up a Game 4 that could pull the Mercury even.

“We just have to play the game in front of us,” Wilson said. “We don’t look at the series as just the numbers. We look at it as this is just another opportunity to play basketball the right way. Going into Phoenix, that’s

the same mindset that we’ll have.”

The Aces have beaten the Mercury five of six games between the regular season and the Finals, so they clearly have the edge.

But series can turn and turn quickly, and the Mercury will do everything they can on their home floor to at least make it a competitive one. They can borrow on their experience from this postseason when they trailed top-seeded Minnesota by 20 points and faced the likelihood of falling into a 2-0 series hole in the semifinals. Phoenix rallied to win that game and eventually close out the series.



Defining moment for sports

World Aquatics president lays Budapest HQ stone

BUDAPEST, Oct 7: World Aquatics President Husain Al-Musallam described the laying of the foundation stone for the federation’s new headquarters in Budapest as a historic milestone and a launchpad toward a brighter and more innovative future for the organization.

Al-Musallam extended his greetings to Mr. Gergely Gulyás, Minister of the Prime Minister’s Office, Dr. Adam Schmidt, Minister of Youth and Sports, and to all athletes affiliated with World Aquatics.

“This day marks a defining moment in the

history of World Aquatics,” he said. “The new headquarters symbolizes a fresh beginning and a commitment to innovation, excellence, and global collaboration.”

He emphasized that the new facility will not only serve as an administrative center but also as a world-class training hub designed to nurture aquatic athletes from all continents and provide an ideal environment for growth and performance.

The modern complex will house up to 125 World Aquatics staff members and offer resi-

dential facilities for around 200 athletes, featuring state-of-the-art training and support infrastructure.

Al-Musallam highlighted that the project reflects a deepening partnership with Hungary, aimed at leveraging the country’s expertise in sports medicine, performance science, and athlete development. He added, “We will also expand our collaboration with Hungary’s leading universities to promote scientific research and innovation, further strengthening the pursuit of sporting excellence worldwide.”



World Aquatics President Husain Al-Musallam delivers a speech at the foundation ceremony.

Oman eyes first-ever qualification

Saudis, Qatar aim for World Cup berths in crucial Asian qualifiers

RIYADH, Oct 7: Arab teams are already guaranteed at least one spot in the 2026 World Cup finals ahead of the decisive fourth round of Asian qualifiers.

The playoff stage begins today, with Group A featuring host Qatar, Oman, and the UAE, and Group B including host Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Indonesia. The matches will run from October 8 to 15.

In today’s fixtures, Qatar takes on Oman at Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium, Al-Sadd Club, at 6:00 PM, while Saudi Arabia faces Indonesia at King Abdullah Sports City Stadium in Jeddah at 8:30 PM.

Qatar aims to bounce back



Players fight for possession during the game.

from its third-round setbacks, seeking victories over Oman and the UAE to secure another World Cup berth.

Oman, meanwhile, is pursuing a historic first-ever qualification to the World Cup.

In the other match, Saudi Arabia faces Indonesia, the only team that started its campaign from the first round and advanced steadily. Indonesia’s sole previous World Cup appearance was in 1938, under the name Dutch East Indies.

Three days later, Iraq (ranked 58th) will play its opening match against Indonesia, aiming for its second World Cup qualification since 1986.

Kuwait’s Al-Mansouri claims gold at prestigious ADCC Jiu-Jitsu event



Al-Mansouri stands on the podium after claiming gold at the Middle East martial arts tournament, hosted at Al-Arabi Club.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 7: Kuwait’s Mohammed Al-Mansouri delivered an outstanding performance to claim first place at the ADCC Jiu-Jitsu Championship, one of the most prestigious martial arts tournaments in the Middle East, hosted at Al-Arabi Club.

Competing against a field of elite international professionals, Al-Mansouri demonstrated exceptional technique, composure, and strength, securing victory and proudly raising Kuwait’s flag high in the competition. The championship drew wide participation from athletes across several countries, with Al-Mansouri’s dominance in the final rounds earning him widespread praise.

Recognized as a leading event in the global Jiu-Jitsu calendar, the ADCC Championship continues to attract top fighters and enthusiasts from around the region. Al-Mansouri expressed his determination to build on this success and continue representing Kuwait in future international tournaments.

Djokovic into quarters

Swiatek, Osaka move to next round at Wuhan Open

SHANGHAI, Oct 7, (Agences): Novak Djokovic overcame pain in his left ankle, the Shanghai humidity and the challenge of Jaume Munar to reach the quarter-finals at the Shanghai Masters for the 11th time on Tuesday.

The Serbian received multiple medical timeouts for a leg issue during the two hours and 40 minutes clash and frequently placed an ice towel over his head during changeovers, with humidity levels exceeding 82 percent. Djokovic threw up courtside on several occasions and collapsed to the floor after losing the second set before he received medical support.

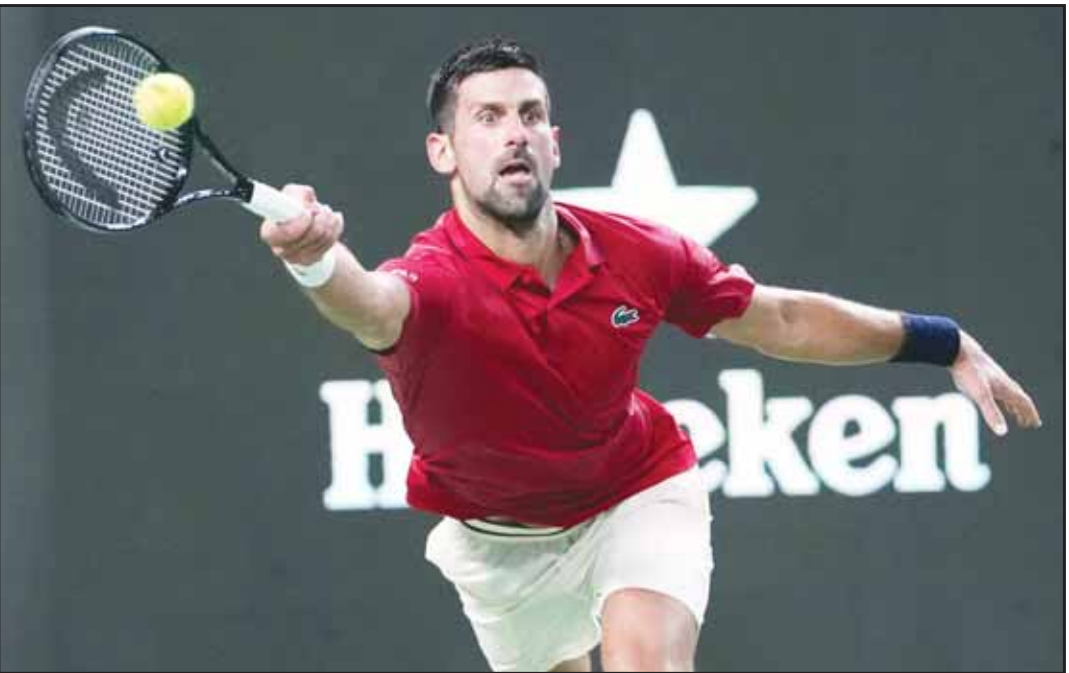
However, despite the challenging conditions, the 38-year-old dug deep to grind down Munar 6-3, 5-7, 6-2 in one of the most physical matches of the season.

Djokovic has reached the quarter-finals in all 11 of his Shanghai appearances, lifting the trophy a record four times. The world No. 5 is the highest-ranked left player in the draw and he will next meet Belgian Zizou Bergs. Also on Tuesday, Holger Rune moved a step closer to his first ATP Masters 1000 title in almost three years, after he overcame Frenchman Giovanni Mpetshi Perreard 6-4, 6-7(7), 6-3.

Iga Swiatek powered her way to the third round of the WTA’s 1,000-level Wuhan Open with a straight sets win against Marie Bouzkova.

Wimbledon champion Swiatek bounced back impressively after her fourth round exit at the China Open last week, winning 6-1, 6-1 against the Czech opponent.

The victory was the six-time



Novak Djokovic of Serbia plays a forehand return to Jaume Munar of Spain during the men’s singles match of the Shanghai Masters tennis tournament at Qizhong Forest Sports City Tennis Center, in Shanghai, China, Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2025. (AP)

grand slam winner’s 60th this year and the fourth year in a row she has reached that figure.

“Every tournament I go to, I want to play my best game,” said Swiatek. “Sometimes I deliver, sometimes not, but, yeah, my expectation is to just do my best.”

“Honestly, I don’t set goals like semifinal or whatever - just really making it step by step.”

No. 2 seed Swiatek will play Belinda Bencic or Elise Mertens in the next round.

Earlier Emma Raducanu retired ill from her first round match. The British No.1 and former U.S. Open champion had her blood pressure checked and temperature taken in her match against American Ann Li. Li was winning 6-1 4-1 when

Raducanu retired and will play No.9 seed Ekaterina Alexandrova in the second round.

Naomi Osaka dropped the first set before rallying to beat Leylah Fernandez 4-6, 7-5, 6-3 to advance to the second round.

Osaka was back in the central Chinese city for the first time since 2017 and, in the day’s first match on center court, facing the player who produced a major upset to beat her at the 2021 U.S. Open.

Fernandez, who was defeated by Raducanu in the U.S. Open final four years ago, converted one of her two first-set breakpoint chances and served consistently. But Osaka stepped up pressure on the service returns in the second set, which featured five service breaks,

and finished over the top of the 2021 U.S. Open finalist. In other early matches, Sofia Kenin edged Anastasia Zakharova 3-6, 7-6 (5), 6-3 to set up a second-round meeting against No. 16 Liudmila Samsonova, who beat Emiliana Arango 6-1, 7-5.

No. 2 Iga Swiatek was scheduled to make her Wuhan tournament debut in a second-round match against Marie Bouzkova in the night session.

Top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka and No. 3 Coco Gauff were due to open Wednesday. No. 4 Amanda Anisimova, the runner-up at both the U.S. Open and Wimbledon this year, withdrew from the Wuhan Open citing a left calf muscle injury after winning the China Open title.

African soccer leader says Morocco street protests do not affect Cup of Nations plans

KINSHASA, Congo, Oct 7, (AP): Street protests against Morocco’s government, provoked in part by spending on stadiums, will not change plans for the Africa Cup of Nations, the continent’s top soccer official said.

Morocco - which is building the world’s biggest soccer stadium to co-host the men’s World Cup in 2030 - has seen demonstrations this month in more than a dozen cities by young activists.

“Morocco is plan A, Morocco is plan B and Morocco is plan C,” Confederation of African Football (CAF) president Patrice Motsepe said at a news conference after its annual meeting, when asked about changing tournament plans. Chants of “Stadiums are here, but where are the hospitals?” have been heard at protests driven by an online collective called Gen Z 212, named after the country’s dialing code.

They are protesting what they say is lack of opportunity and underfunded health and education systems, and were supported in social media posts by national team players, including Sofyan Amrabat and Yassine Bounou.

The north African nation hosts the four-week, 24-team Cup of Nations from Dec. 21 for CAF, whose president was asked Monday if plans or dates could change.

“We are absolutely confident that we will as CAF cooperate, work together with the government ... and all the people of Morocco to host the most successful (Cup of Nations) in the history of this competition,” Motsepe said.

Motsepe’s first vice president at CAF is Fouzi Lekjaa, Morocco’s soccer leader and a financial adviser to the government, which is providing some of the projected \$5 billion spending on projects related to the World Cup.

Morocco was picked by CAF two years ago to replace Guinea as host of the 2025 tournament and will use nine venues, including expanding a 75,000-seat venue now called Grade Stade de Tanger, and renovating Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium in Rabat to 70,000 seats. Morocco is building the 115,000-seat Hassan II Stadium in Casablanca, which it hopes will stage the final of the 2030 World Cup being co-hosted with Spain and Portugal.

Woltemade misses start of Germany camp

Germany’s fragile defense weighs on coach Nagelsmann

BERLIN, Oct 7, (Agencies): Ahead of Germany’s 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers against Luxembourg and Northern Ireland, national coach Julian Nagelsmann has been forced into unexpected roster changes due to a mounting defensive crisis.

The Germans have kept a clean sheet in only seven of their last 25 games. A disappointing 2-0 loss to Slovakia ignited a debate about the coach’s constant tactical changes.

The return of Borussia Dortmund defender Nico Schlotterbeck is a headline development. The 25-year-old is needed to stabilize a wavering defense but only recently returned from a month-long absence with a significant knee injury.

“We need a skillful left foot that can deliver an opening pass to midfield,” Nagelsmann said, highlighting the difficulty of also missing injured Real Madrid defender Antonio Rüdiger.

Potential replacements like Bayern Munich’s Jonathan Tah, Eintracht Frankfurt’s Robin Koch and Newcastle United’s Malik Tiaw have struggled with poor form, while Dortmund’s Waldemar Anton lacks international experience.

The situation contrasts with the glory days of the 2014 World Cup win in Brazil, when Germany relied on a deep pool of central defenders. Nagelsmann is also searching for suitable full-backs.

With eight months until the 2026 World Cup in North America, the team remains a work in progress, raising concerns that contrast with the coach’s stated aim to win the tournament.

Dortmund coach and former Croatian international Niko Kovac called Schlotterbeck the country’s best central defender and emphasized the need for careful load management. The player was recently benched for a Champions League match to manage his workload.

Reports described a tense exchange between the two coaches, leaving Nagelsmann with a tough decision on whether Schlotterbeck is essential against underdog Luxembourg on Friday in Sinsheim.

The staffing shortage worsened with an illness to goalkeeper Oliver Baumann. Nagelsmann called in Freiburg’s Noah Atubolu as cover.

Several TV pundits, including Matthias Sam-

mer and Lothar Matthaus, advocated for a return of the retired Manuel Neuer.

Following the Luxembourg match, Germany faces Northern Ireland on Monday. After the loss to Slovakia, two victories seem necessary regardless of Nagelsmann’s decision on Schlotterbeck.

Newcastle forward Nick Woltemade did not join the Germany squad as planned on Monday ahead of World Cup qualifying games because of illness.

The 23-year-old Woltemade, who scored in Newcastle’s 2-0 win over Nottingham Forest on Sunday, has a flu infection, the German soccer federation said.

It’s unclear if he will be fit in time to face Luxembourg in Sinsheim on Friday or Northern Ireland in Belfast next Monday.

Woltemade will be expected to join the rest of the squad in the coming days. He has made a promising start at Newcastle, with three goals in eight days, including one during the 4-0 win at Union Saint-Gilloise in the Champions League on Wednesday. Altogether he has three in the Premier League.

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NEWS





Toronto Raptors' Gradey Dick, center left, and Denver Nuggets' Bruce Brown, center right, vie for the ball during the first half of a preseason NBA basketball game in Vancouver, British Columbia. Nuggets won 112-108. (AP)

# Sports

## Kuwait Club wins Arab Clubs Basketball Championship

Al-Arabi denies Kazma bronze

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**DUBAI, Oct 7:** Kuwait Club secured the 37th Arab Clubs Basketball Championship title with a thrilling 101-93 victory over Lebanon's Al-Hikma at Al-Nasr Club Hall in Dubai. Qatari side Al-Arabi claimed third place, defeating Kazma 83-80.

This triumph marks the second Arab title for Kuwait Club following its first win in 2022 in Kuwait. Kuwait played six matches in the tournament, starting with a loss to Ahli Tripoli (Libya) in Group B, before bouncing back with wins over Al-Antony (Lebanon), Al-Manama (Bahrain), Al-Nasr (UAE) in the round of 16, Al-Rayyan (Qatar) in the quarterfinals, and Kazma in the semifinals, culminating in their victory over Al-Hikma in the final.

Kuwait Club got off to a blistering start, opening the match with a 15-0 run, thanks to early three-pointers, before Al-Hikma began to recover. The first quarter ended 34-25 in favor of Kuwait Club, and it extended its lead to 65-49 by halftime.

After the break, Al-Hikma mounted a strong comeback, closing the gap amid a temporary lapse in focus by Kuwait Club, energized by the



Kuwait Club celebrates with the championship trophy.

cheering of Al-Hikma fans. Still, Kuwait Club held firm, finishing the third quarter 82-81 ahead.

In the fourth quarter, Al-Hikma

briefly took the lead at 85-84 and again at 91-87, but Kuwait Club responded under pressure. Hamad and Mohammed Adnan,

alongside their teammates, delivered crucial plays in key moments, guiding the team to a well-deserved 101-93 victory.

Ismail Al-Qarqawi, President of the Arab Basketball Federation (UAE), congratulated Kuwait Club, noting that it fully deserved the

championship after an impressive performance against one of the strongest Arab teams currently competing.

## Al-Shihab raises Kuwaiti flag high at Hockenheim



Kuwaiti racing driver Ahmed Al-Shihab.

**HOCKENHEIM, Germany, Oct 7:** Kuwaiti racing driver Ahmed Al-Shihab secured first place at the Germany race held at the renowned Hockenheim Circuit, part of the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland.

Al-Shihab expressed his pride, saying that raising the Kuwaiti flag at this prestigious European event was his greatest achievement and ultimate goal.

"I'm thrilled to win at a circuit famous for Formula 1 racing," he said. "I am determined to continue achieving victories and championships that shine a spotlight on Kuwaiti sports."

He added that the race was highly competitive, but his focus, determination, and perseverance enabled him to cross the finish line in first place.

## Kuwait concludes training in Uzbekistan ahead of friendly

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**TASHKENT, Oct 7:** Kuwait wrapped up its training sessions this evening in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, in preparation for a friendly match against the Uzbek national team on Thursday. The encounter comes as part of Al-Azraq's international break training program, aimed at building readiness for the crucial Arab Cup playoff clash against Mauritania on November 25 in Doha. The Arab Cup, organized under the supervision of FIFA, will kick off in early December.

The Uzbekistan Football Association has confirmed that the Olympic Stadium in Tashkent will host Thursday's fixture between the two national teams.

Head coach Helio Sousa is eager to see his players put on a convincing performance in his second game at the helm, following the 2-2 draw



Players preparing for their final training.

with Syria in September in Doha. Sousa is focused on helping the squad fully adapts to his tactical sys-

tem and playing style before official competitions resume.

However, the Portuguese coach

recognizes the challenge ahead, as Uzbekistan — led by Italian legend Fabio Cannavaro — recently secured qualification for the 2026 FIFA World Cup in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Following the Uzbekistan encounter, Kuwait will play a second friendly against Morocco's local team in Dubai. The squad will travel from Tashkent to the United Arab Emirates on Friday, with the match scheduled for October 14, before returning home on October 15.

Meanwhile, the Kuwait Football Association has revealed the team's November training camp schedule, which will take place in Cairo from November 10 to 20. The camp will include two friendly matches — against Tanzania on November 14 and Gambia on November 18 — before the team heads to Doha to face Mauritania on November 25 in the Arab Cup playoff.

### AC Milan vs Como in Perth

## Barcelona-Villarreal set for Miami, UEFA 'reluctantly' gives green light

**GENEVA, Oct 7, (AP):** UEFA will reluctantly not oppose the tradition-busting plans for Barcelona to play a league game in Miami and for AC Milan to feature in Australia, the European soccer body said.

Amid fierce opposition from fan groups across the continent, UEFA consent was a key step for La Liga's plan to stage Villarreal vs. Barcelona in Miami on Dec. 20 and Serie A's AC Milan vs Como in Perth in February.

UEFA blamed a lack of clear rules from world soccer body FIFA to block the proposed games, which many fans see as a threat to cut teams' ties to their home communities.

"While it is regrettable to have to let these two games go ahead, this decision is exceptional and shall not be seen as setting a precedent," UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin said in a statement.

UEFA said it will "actively contribute to the ongoing work led by FIFA to ensure that future rules uphold the integrity of domestic competitions and the close bond between clubs, their supporters and local communities."

The Football Supporters Europe network of fan groups said it will continue working to stop the games abroad going ahead, which it believes also unbalances the sporting integrity of domestic leagues.

"By forcing through these matches, La Liga and Serie A risk undermining their own history and long-term

success while inflicting long-lasting harm to football in Europe - and beyond," said FSE, which is recognized by UEFA as its official liaison partner on fan issues.

The Spanish and Italian leagues were long seen as most likely to push for so-called "out of territory" games,

as they seek to counter the global popularity and financial power of England's Premier League.

La Liga and its American commercial partner Relevent, an agency co-founded by Miami Dolphins owner Stephen Ross, had tried to place a Barcelona game in Florida since 2018 but

were blocked by FIFA rules.

Fresh plans were inevitable 18 months ago when FIFA withdrew from a legal action brought by Relevent in a Manhattan court. Weeks later, FIFA said it would review its rules and created a working group that includes UEFA lawyers.



Barcelona's Gerard Martin, left, challenges for the ball with Sevilla's Alexis Sanchez during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Sevilla and Barcelona at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan stadium in Seville, Spain. (AP)