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Kuwait awaits 1st raindrops of Wasm

Strong winds trigger dust as shorter days and cooler nights loom

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Al-Ojairi Scientific Center announced that the Wasm season (natural rains in Kuwait and the region) is approaching and will begin on Thursday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to a press release issued by the center, the Wasm season lasts for 52 days, divided into four phases - "Al-Awa", "Al-Samak," "Al-

Ghafirah," and "Al-Zabana," each lasting 13 days.

The Wasm season is marked by the sun's continued southward tilt, causing a noticeable decrease in the angle of the sun's rays and fewer heating hours during the day. As the Wasm season begins, the weather moderates and temperatures drop.

The "Al-Awa" phase is characterized by moderate daytime weather and cool nights, with significant bird migration continuing.

At the start of the Wasm season, daylight hours shorten significantly while

nighttime hours increase, with sunrise occurring later and sunset earlier.

The onset of the Wasm season is marked by the beginning of rainfall, which signals the approach of a prosperous spring and the appearance of truffles.

Meanwhile, Kuwait is witnessing strong winds that trigger dust waves exceeding 50 km/h and lowering visibility in undeveloped regions, the national meteorological center said on Saturday.

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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

President Trump ... a thousand thanks

YOUR Excellency, US President Donald Trump, for the first time in the Arab world since the Tripartite Aggression against Egypt in 1956 and President Dwight Eisenhower's position that forced Britain, France and Israel to halt the attack, the Arab world witnessed an initiative of the magnitude you imposed to halt the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip.

You deserve thanks for that, as it has done justice to the Arab allies of the United States.

For the second time since 1956, Tel Aviv knows the limits of American support and has stopped there.

Meanwhile, it exploited Hamas' reckless adventure on Oct 7, 2023 to put imaginary plans on the table based on the illusion of 'Greater Israel' and rule of the Middle East, seeing this as its greatest opportunity.

Today, the world is much different than it was during the Tripartite Aggression or the 1967 War.

Consequently, any step toward peace in this region is fraught with risks unless a leader is available who can impose his will, and this is what you did in halting the Gaza War.

As Your Excellency said before, this is the basis of your efforts to end a conflict that has lasted for 3,000 years and has gone through many states. Many states and empires have passed through the Middle East, prevailing and then vanishing.

Geography and civilizations have remained, while the people have changed. Today, you are writing a new page in the history of this region, the title of which is your initiative, which put things in their proper place, even if it is late, for several reasons that cannot be discussed this time.

Had the will been present weeks after the war began, humanity might have saved thousands of lives on both sides.

Here, it must be noted that the leaders of the region are not prophets, and each has his own calculations.

Nevertheless, a fair solution was imposed on both sides - the Arabs and Palestinians on one side, and Israel on the other side. This, in itself, is a major achievement and an important step in the quest for peace in the region.

For eight decades, Tel Aviv has been trading peace and seeking war in order to force further concessions from the Arabs and seize territory, so that its enemies could forget their previous losses. The first time it stopped at the limits of its ambitions was when the late President Anwar Sadat imposed peace.

In contrast, the Arabs were losing their cards every time, because they rejected solutions and exploited war despite the lack of a force that could enable them to enter the negotiating table from a winning position.

On the other hand, Israeli leaders exploited Arab rhetoric to gain more western and international support -- both material and moral. They achieved this by exploiting the Jewish influence globally and attempting to atone for the guilt of the West in World War II.

Mr. President, an Arab proverb says, "Greed destroys what it has gathered." This is the case in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu deluded himself into believing that the more he persisted in the war, the more he could achieve Jewish ambitions in the Middle East. However, what happened over the past few days was the greatest shift in the Israeli path. The cessation of war in the Gaza Strip is, in effect, a prelude to halting Israeli ambitions in the region.

The United Nations' unanimous recognition of the Palestinian state, as well as the global public opinion's shift against Israel due to its brutal practices, have proven once again that violence cannot resolve conflicts, and that no party, no matter how powerful, can impose its terms.

Only dialogue and realistic peace initiatives can achieve peaceful coexistence in the Middle East and stop the bloodshed between Arabs and Israelis. Mr. Trump has achieved this.

Mr. White House, the Middle East has a vast geography, and 400 million people of all races, religions and ethnicities live here.

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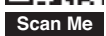
@Ahmedaljarallah

Ahmed aljarallah

ahmed@aljarallah.com



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Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister during his visit to the southeastern region of the French gendarmerie.

Kuwait 1st Deputy PM visits French gendarmerie, receives Interpol honor

PARIS, Oct 11, (KUNA): The visiting Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, accompanied by the Kuwaiti ambassador to France Abdullah Al-Shahin, on Friday visited the southeastern region of the French gendarmerie.

The Kuwaiti Interior Ministry said in a press statement that the first deputy prime minister was received upon his arrival by the Commander of the gendarmerie southeastern region, Frederic Boudier.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, who lauded the high capacity and the field experience of the French internal security forces, examined the base sections and was briefed on the diverse tasks by officers.

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Ministry of Interior photos
Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef receives the Interpol medal of highest honor in appreciation of the State of Kuwait's support for the organization.

Kuwait adds 2 names to sanctions list

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The Committee for the Implementation of Security Council Resolutions Issued Under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter to Combat Terrorism and Prevent the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Thursday added new names to the national list under the sanctions executive regu-

lations. The committee circulated these names to all companies and financial institutions in the country.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the circular, indicating that A.M.M., an Egyptian, and A.H.A., a non-Kuwaiti, are now on the national list under the sanctions executive regulations.

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Khaitan housing breach lands on Council agenda

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The Municipal Council, chaired by Abdullah Al-Mahri, will hold its seventh regular session for the fourth term on Monday.

Items in the agenda of the council included the following:

■ Request of the Ministry of Education to reorganize public schools in Ahmadi,

■ Request of the Ministry of Public Works to allocate the site of the wastewater treatment plant to South Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential City,

■ Request of Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) to relocate the fuel filling station in the southeastern part of Sabah Al-Ahmad residential area,

■ Complaint of Khaitan residents regarding the Indian community's violation of private housing laws in Khaitan (Blocks 5 and 10),

■ Technical opinion of the executive branch about the letter that Ahmed Abdulrahman Al-Awadhi submitted on behalf of the heirs of Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Awadhi regarding the addition of a dairy and cheese business,

■ Request of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to create an entrance from King Fahd bin Abdulaziz Road to serve South Sabahiya,

■ Technical opinion of the Kuwait Municipality on the proposal of Dr. Hassan Kamal to establish surface parking spaces, a waiting room and a pedestrian bridge for students at the College of Basic Education in Ardiya,

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Displaced Palestinians carry their belongings as they walk along the heavily damaged Al-Jalaa Street in Gaza City, Saturday, Oct. 11, 2025, after Israel and Hamas agreed to a pause in their war and the release of the remaining hostages. (AP)

US troops in Israel to help retrieve hostages, monitor ceasefire

Displaced Palestinians return home amid Gaza rubble

GAZA CITY, Oct 11, (AP): Tens of thousands of displaced Palestinians loaded cars, carts and bicycles with belongings and made their way back to their neighborhoods on Saturday, weaving through streets shrouded in dust as bulldozers began to claw through the wreckage of two years of bombardment.

Aid groups were preparing to scale up relief work, one of the many challenges ahead as a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas entered its second day.

"When people get there, they're going to find rubble. They'll find that their homes and their neighborhoods have been reduced to dust," UNICEF spokesperson Tess Ingram told The Associated Press on Friday.

As the ceasefire appears to hold, her organization and its partners are urging Israel to reopen more crossings and allow aid to flow into Gaza more freely. Meanwhile, about 200 U.S. troops arrived in Israel to help retrieve hostages and monitor the ceasefire.

"A ceasefire alone is not enough,"

Ingram said, speaking from central Gaza. "Yes, it stops the killing and injuring of children, hopefully, but it also needs to ensure a surge of humanitarian aid that begins to address the tremendous damage that has been done over the past two years."

COGAT, the Israeli military body in charge of humanitarian aid, said that more than 500 trucks entered Gaza on Friday, although many crossings remain closed.

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Kuwait hosts 1st Gulf pediatric confab, prioritizes child health

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Kuwait's Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi said the country prioritized childhood health based on its firm belief that human development starts with childcare from an early age, along with its ongoing support for scientific research, training and continuing medical education.

Al-Awadhi made the statement at the launching of the First Gulf Pediatric Conference, hosted by the State of Kuwait on Saturday under his patronage.

Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassim Al-Budaiwi attended the conference, with the participation of doctors and specialists from the GCC countries and a number of international medical centers and institutions.

According to Al-Awadhi, this medical event is the culmination of a long his-



Photo by Mohammad Morsi
Kuwait's Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi speaks at the launching of the First Gulf Pediatric Conference, hosted by the State of Kuwait on Saturday under his patronage.

tory of constructive cooperation among the Gulf states and an embodiment of the shared vision of improving healthcare services provided to children, as they are the true wealth and the foundation of a

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News watch

KUWAIT CITY: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi issued on Thursday a decision to form a joint quintet committee to boost monitoring of medicine and food products.

The Health Ministry said in a statement that the decision was made as part of its responsibility towards protecting society, indicating that more field inspections would be carried out to ensure safety for all.

The joint quintet committee includes representatives from several ministries, the Manpower Authority, the Municipality, and headed by the Health Ministry, it added.

It added that the committee would operate with a unified mechanism to expedite procedures and ensure total transparency and monitoring. (KUNA)



National Investments Company convenes Ordinary General Assembly to elect a new Board of Directors for the upcoming term

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:28	Asr	14:54
Sunrise ..	05:46	Maghrib ..	17:23
Zohr	11:35	Isha	18:39

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Rather hot and humid over coastal areas with moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.
By Night: Mild and humid over coastal areas with moderate south-

Weather			
easterly wind to light wind, with speeds of 8-30 km/h with a chance for fog forming over some areas.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	36	25	
Kuwait Airport	36	25	

Abdaly	37	22
Jahra	37	26
Salmiyah	34	26
Ahmadi	36	23
Nuwaisib	35	24
Wafra	36	25
Salmiyah	32	18

Kuwait targets private sector to counter money-laundering, terrorism finance

WASHINGTON, Oct 11, (KUNA): Head of the Kuwait Financial Intelligence Unit (KFIU) and Chairman of the National Committee for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Dr. Hamad Al-Mukrad held talks recently with officials at the US Department of the Treasury on issues of mutual concern and ways to boost bilateral co-operation.

The delegation, included representatives from Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior and the General Administration of Customs, reviewed Kuwait's recent progress in implementing measures outlined in The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) evaluation report published last October.

After the meeting, Dr. Al-Mukrad told KUNA that among the key steps completed in record time were amendments to Law No. 106/2013 on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT), as well as revisions to the International Cooperation Law concerning legal assistance and extradition.

He noted that the National Committee's member agencies had prepared a national risk assessment report and launched a year-long awareness campaign for the private sector on anti-money-laundering(AML) and counter-terrorism financing(CFT) compliance.

KFIU, he added, has strengthen domestic coordination and with financial institutions to improve the quality of reporting the effectiveness of Kuwait's AML/CFT framework.

Assistant Foreign Minister for Development and International Cooperation Affairs Ambassador Hamad Al-Meshaan said that cooperation with the US in AML/CFT and combating violent extremism remains a cornerstone of the bilateral relationship.

He told KUNA that the two sides had recently achieved progress through joint listings and sustained coordination between competent authorities, reflecting both countries' commitment to confronting security challenges and supporting global stability.

Both sides agreed to bolster cooperation through joint workshops, capacity-building initiatives, and information-sharing to enhance efforts at the national and international levels.

Earlier, First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah reaffirmed during his meeting with US Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem, Kuwait's commitment to advancing security cooperation with the US, particularly in counter-terrorism, organized crime, and cybersecurity.



KUNA photo
Kuwait's Financial Intelligence Unit delegation with US Treasury officials.

'Reform global fiscal order, be more just, transparent'

Developing countries debts mount to \$11.7 trillion: Kuwait

NEW YORK, Oct 11, (KUNA): Kuwait has called for reforming the global financial system to be more just and transparent.

This came in a speech delivered by the country's Diplomatic Attache, Rashid Farhan, before the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly, which is concerned with economic and financial affairs.

Farhan said that the global economy is witnessing a critical phase characterized by slow growth, rising debt burdens, and declining external financing flows, threatening the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

He pointed out that the external debt of developing countries has reached approximately USD 11.7 trillion, limiting their ability to invest in human development and infrastructure. He stressed that sustainable economic growth requires diversifying economies and strengthening the productive base through investment in infrastructure, technology, renewable energy, and sustainable agriculture. In this regard, he noted Kuwait's continued efforts to diversify the national economy and strengthen its position as a regional economic and commercial hub, based on its New Kuwait 2035 vision.

He highlighted the dire humanitarian and economic conditions in the Gaza Strip, where the recent genocide has led to widespread destruction of infrastructure and a near-total collapse of economic activity. This calls for supporting the Palestinian economy

and enabling its gradual recovery.

Financing development is a collective responsibility that requires a comprehensive reform of the international financial system to restore confidence and the ability of developing countries to invest in a more sustainable and equitable future and ensure that no country is left behind in the process of sustainable development, he concluded.

The State of Kuwait emphasized that digital diplomacy is a key element of its foreign policy, which is based on international cooperation and dialogue. Sarah Al-Hasawi, Kuwait's Diplomatic Attache, addressed the UN General Assembly's Second Committee, highlighting the need for a more humane and equitable approach to globalization amid rising economic, environmental, and technological challenges.

MoH services nod for Art. 8 affectees

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The Ministry of Health (MoH) recently received an official letter from the Central Agency for Remedying Status of Illegal Residents (CARSIR) concerning the provision of services to individuals whose Kuwaiti citizenship has been revoked. In response, the ministry issued a circular to all its sectors and health facilities instructing them to adopt the identification card issued by the Central Agency. The card grants holders access to medical treatment and education only, and ensures they receive necessary services free of charge, similar to those provided to Kuwaiti citizens, reports Al-Anba daily.

The directive applies specifically to in-

dividuals whose citizenship was revoked under Articles 5 and 8 and who have been classified as eligible for "Kuwaiti treatment" under decisions issued by the Cabinet.

The move follows Cabinet Resolution No. 296/2024, which approved a proposal from CARSIR to regulate, amend, and monitor the legal and service status of individuals whose Kuwaiti citizenship was withdrawn. The resolution authorizes the agency to coordinate with government bodies to implement the policy.

As part of the implementation, CARSIR has asked all entities affiliated with the Ministry of Health to recognize the card as official proof of eligibility for free healthcare and education services.



Kuwait University photo
Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait Kenichiro Mukai being presented with a Kuwait University memento.

KU and Japan universities to boost scientific cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Kuwait University President Prof. Dina Musa'ed Al-Mailem met recently with Ambassador of Japan to the State of Kuwait Kenichiro Mukai at Sabah Al-Salem University City.

The meeting is aimed at strengthening bilateral relations between Kuwait University and Japanese universities, as well as explore avenues for academic and scientific cooperation between the two sides.

It also tackled the importance of expanding horizons for future scientific cooperation, student and cultural exchange between the two countries, and development of academic partnerships that contribute to the exchange of expertise and enhancement of knowledge.

Al-Mailem affirmed that she is proud of the great relationship between Kuwait and Japan. She lauded the pioneering role of Japanese universities in scientific research

and modern technology, stressing that Kuwait University remains committed to strengthening academic and research cooperation between the two countries to achieve development and educational goals.

On the other hand, Mukai expressed his happiness over visiting Kuwait University. He commended its illustrious academic standing, while confirming that his country is keen on expanding academic cooperation with Kuwait University, particularly in the field of cybersecurity.

In addition, a coordination meeting between officials at Kuwait University and the Japanese Embassy has held with Assistant Deputy Director for Information Technology Support Services Dr. Mohammad Al-Marzouq, Japanese Ambassador Kenichiro Mukai and Cultural Attaché at the Japanese Embassy Rie Kurihara in attendance.

Kuwait stresses GCC cooperation in bid to upgrade postal sectors

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Minister of State for Communication Affairs Omar Al-Omar affirmed that the telecommunications and postal sectors are witnessing rapid transformations, with an impact on all areas of economic and social life.

In his speech during the 29th meeting of the Committee of Postal and Telecommunication Ministers in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries hosted by Kuwait, Al-Omar said these transformations serve as a challenge for the Gulf countries to keep pace with developments and invest in them in order to realize the ambitious economic and development visions. He pointed out that localizing the latest technologies and integrating digital intelligence and advanced solutions in this sector will not only enhance capabilities, but will also put the Gulf region at the forefront of global digital platforms.

He disclosed that the pioneering achievements in the fields of communications and postal services open ambitious horizons for developing them in a sustainable and strategic manner, while strengthening their position as an attractive platform for investment, a source of employment for nationals and a source of innovation and entrepreneurship. He stressed that solidifying Gulf cooperation, exchanging expertise and adopting the latest digital technologies and innovation in operational models are considered the cornerstone for transforming this vital sector into an integrated platform for excellence, keeping pace with global devel-

opments to better serve citizens and revitalize the national economy.

He stated that the meeting is rich in important topics and includes a number of recommendations submitted by specialized technical committees in the postal and telecommunications sector, stressing that these recommendations will constitute a practical roadmap for developing the sector, enhance Gulf integration, and raise the level of government services to meet the aspirations of the citizens of GCC countries.

On the other hand, GCC Secretary General Jassim Al-Budaiwi pointed out "the leaders of GCC countries continue to exert tremendous efforts to advance the path of joint economic and development work, thereby, achieving the highest level of integration among the GCC countries, fulfilling the aspirations of their citizens, and ensuring that joint Gulf action can keep pace with the demands of the times, as well as the regional and international developments, with efficiency and competence."

Al-Badawi confirmed the commitment of the committee to follow up the implementation of such directives in a way that boosts joint Gulf action and achieves the desired economic goals. He said the committee is keen on keeping pace with rapid developments in the postal, telecommunications and space technology sectors. He added that the efforts exerted by the GCC countries resulted in remarkable achievements and pioneering successes, reflecting the will and ambitious strategic vision of these countries, which are keen on maintaining their regional and global leadership.

Bid to streamline admin infrastructure

Suspend nominations and appointments, DGCA urges CSC

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has contacted the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to request for the temporary suspension of nominations and appointments in its sectors as per the civil service system, say reliable sources. Sources told the newspaper that the reason behind the temporary suspension request is the intention of the DGCA to complete the executive regulations for the new Civil Aviation Law issued under Decree-Law No. 85/2025.

Sources pointed out that this is in implementation of the new regulatory provisions included in the law relating to appointments, promotions and other ad-

ministrative and technical matters in the civil aviation sector.

Sources added the Ministry of Finance has also contacted the DGCA, recommending an evaluation of financial and administrative policies before completing nomination and appointment procedures.

Sources clarified this step aims to ensure that the new administrative structures are in line with the law and the upcoming regulations, thus, contributing to the efficiency and transparency in human resources management in the civil aviation sector.

Sources said the temporary suspension will ensure that the approved organizational structures and budgets are aligned with the new administrative system, which will be implemented after the issuance of the executive regulations. Sources reiterated that the measure is temporary and purely administrative in

order to guarantee the smooth transition to the new phase after the issuance of the law.

Sources indicated that the anticipated regulations will include clear mechanisms for appointment and career progression, precise job descriptions for technical and administrative positions, and regulation of the career paths of employees in the aviation, air navigation and safety sectors to keep pace with global developments in this field and ensure the efficiency of institutional performance.

Sources believe the new decree-law is a qualitative shift in the regulation of the civil aviation sector in the country, as it is aimed at developing the administrative and technical work environment and ensuring adherence to the highest standards of governance and transparency, which will positively impact the quality of services in this vital sector.

Other Voices

Nutrition myths ... experts

By Ahmad alsarraf

RESEARCHER Sophie Egan surveyed some of America's most prominent nutrition, diet, and health experts about common food-related myths they wish to debunk.

Some of these misconceptions are as follows:

1. Fresh fruits and vegetables are always healthier than canned, frozen, or dried versions. This is not true. Studies show that canned or dried fruits and vegetables can be just as nutritious as fresh ones, while also being more affordable and easier to store and transport. However, it is important to watch for added sugars, preservatives, saturated fats, and sodium. Opt for canned products with little to no added harmful ingredients.
2. All fats are harmful and reducing fat intake lowers the risk of heart disease. This is false. This misconception has led some people to replace necessary calories from fats with calories from refined carbohydrates, such as white flour and added sugar. Rather than helping with weight control, this shift has contributed to a significant rise in obesity rates.
- Not all fats are bad. While saturated and trans fats can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke, healthy fats, like monounsaturated fats (found in olive oil, other vegetable oils, avocados, and some nuts and seeds) and polyunsaturated fats (found in sunflower oil, walnuts, fish, and flaxseeds), are beneficial. These good fats provide energy, support hormone production, aid cell function, and help with the absorption of certain nutrients.
3. Eating more calories than we burn



alsarraf

can lead to weight gain. This is not entirely true. The types of foods we eat play a major role in weight gain or loss. It is not just about the quantity, but the quality of the calories consumed. To maintain a healthy weight, prioritizing a balanced, nutritious diet is essential.

4. People with type 2 diabetes should avoid eating fruit. This is a common misconception. Research shows that consuming one serving of whole fruit (not juice) daily, especially blueberries, grapes, and apples, is associated with a lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
5. Plant milks made from oats, almonds, rice, and hemp are more nutritious than cow's milk. This is false. Cow's milk contains about 8 grams of protein per cup, while almond milk typically has only one to two grams. Similarly, oat milk often contains added sodium and sugars, which can negatively impact health.
6. Eating potatoes is bad for your health. This is untrue. Potatoes are rich in vitamin C, potassium, fiber, and other nutrients, especially when eaten with their skins on.
7. You shouldn't feed peanuts or eggs to babies. This is false. It is actually recommended to introduce these foods early in babies' diets.
8. Plants lack protein. This is false. In reality, all plant foods contain all 20 amino acids, though typically in smaller amounts than animal foods. To get a complete protein profile, it is enough to eat a variety of plant foods throughout the day, such as beans, grains, and nuts.
9. Eating soy-based foods may increase the risk of breast cancer. There is no scientific evidence to support this claim. In fact, consuming soy products like tofu, tempeh, edamame, miso, and soy milk may actually have a protective effect against breast cancer.

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email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw



KUNA photo
MPW workers laying asphalt on Faiha roads.

'Faiha roads maintenance on track, final layer soon'

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan confirmed the ongoing implementation of new contracts for the comprehensive maintenance of Kuwait's road networks, as well as the ministry's commitment to maintaining high technical standards and completing projects quickly to ensure infrastructure sustainability and enhance traffic safety.

She said work teams in the Capital Governorate are currently overseeing the execution of Contract No. 8 - second phase, which involves applying the Type 3 final layer in Faiha, Block 4, and completing the earlier phases covering Blocks 1, 2, 3, and 5, all of which have been fully completed.

Contract Supervisor Engineer Abdulaziz Haidar stated that work is progressing according to schedule, under the direct supervision of Minister Dr. Al-Mashaan, to ensure adherence to approved technical standards and the highest quality of execution.

Jaber Bridge traffic raid traps multiple violators

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The General Traffic Department, represented by the Highways Department, Jahra Traffic Department, and Security Control Department, conducted a comprehensive traffic campaign on Thursday on the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Causeway, targeting vehicles and motorcycles violating traffic rules, in addition to arresting wanted individuals, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Ministry of Interior explained in a press release that this campaign is part of the ongoing efforts of the Traffic Affairs and Operations Sector to enforce the law, apprehend violators, and curb improper traffic behavior.

Hamas ends the game after destroying Gaza

“AS USUAL, the Muslim Brotherhood, including Hamas, adapts to unfolding events in a way that portrays them as always being right, always victorious, and justified in their actions, even at the expense of innocent lives,” columnist **Hamad Salem Al-Marri** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Following Hamas’s ill-conceived ‘Al-Aqsa Flood’ operation on October 7, 2023, the toll has been devastating. Around 64,000 Palestinians were killed, including 18,000 children and 12,400 women, approximately 163,000 injured, many with permanent disabilities, and 14,000 still missing, likely buried under the rubble of Gaza’s destroyed buildings.



Hamad Al-Marri

“Despite this staggering toll, Hamas leaders continue to insist that they have achieved victory, claiming their losses are merely tactical, while the losses of the Israeli side are strategic.

“Since the early days of the Gaza war, which Hamas triggered in an attempt to secure the release of Israeli prisoners, the group’s leaders have disregarded repeated advice from Arab leaders. This justification, initially used by the Israeli government to press pause on the conflict, has long since unraveled.

“Two years into the war, Arab leaders continue urging Hamas to accept U.S. President Donald Trump’s ceasefire plan, aimed at preventing Israel from seizing control of Gaza and forcibly displacing its population following widespread destruction. The plan offers safe passage for Hamas leaders and fighters out of Gaza and proposes transferring governance to an Arab-Muslim committee until a technocratic Palestinian government can be established. Despite this, Hamas continues to reject the proposal, labeling any acceptance as an act of betrayal.

“However, after surviving an assassination attempt by Israel at their residence in Qatar, and realizing that Israeli forces could potentially target them anywhere in the world, the remaining Hamas leaders shifted their stance and agreed to the Trump-backed ceasefire plan, now describing it as supportive of the rights of the Palestinian people.

“Hamas’s ill-conceived operation, the so-called ‘Al-Aqsa Flood,’ strengthened Israel’s position in Arab-Israeli negotiations on a two-state solution. It diverted Arab attention toward a devastating war in Gaza, and away from any real progress, and will now divert them again toward reconstruction efforts. As a result, the Arab world faces the burden of rebuilding Gaza after suffering massive loss of life, with no tangible benefit to the Palestinian people or their just cause.

“All of this unfolded because Hamas blindly followed Iran’s agenda to the extent that one of its leaders publicly stated the Al-Aqsa Flood was carried out in revenge for the killing of Qassem Suleimani. Hamas’s decision to capture Israeli hostages ignited a war that reduced Gaza to rubble. Now, after handing over those same hostages in a bid to halt the very war it triggered, the question remains - what did the Palestinian people gain from this recklessness, other than death, destruction, and starvation?

“Hamas may have ended the game, but after Gaza was destroyed.”

Also:

“Since Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah took office as Minister of Interior, the security services in the ministry have, for the first time, gone beyond the previous ban on publishing the photos and names of those accused of crimes and immoral acts that violate public morals and the law. While some citizens have expressed reservations for reasons they consider justified or personal, their opinions are respected,” Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“However, in a recent terrorist incident widely reported across media outlets including newspapers and television, the perpetrator’s name and nationality were withheld, leaving the public to wonder, guess, and speculate. We knew the terrorist was an Arab resident, and that the police found the tools of the crime in his apartment. But was that enough? The books could have come from his home country, or perhaps he bought them from local libraries or from friends who share his extremist beliefs.

“None of that matters as long as people are informed of his name and nationality. Why? To avoid spreading suspicion toward others, especially since Kuwait is known for its openness and its diverse population of Arabs and foreigners.

In every country - Arab, Islamic, or otherwise - if a resident of any nationality commits a crime, no matter the severity, the media (television, radio, newspapers, websites) quickly reports the crime along with the perpetrator’s name, nationality, occupation, date of arrival in the country, and information about their friends.

“Here in ‘This is Kuwait,’ we have become experts at hiding the news, as if we exist outside the rest of the world. In the terrorist states, their police, media, and press treat it like a celebration if they catch a Kuwaiti slipping at the airport or on the street, viewing it as a scandal, a crime, or even an attack on national security. They humiliate the

person, subject them to insults, and strip them of their clothes, belongings, and accessories. Yet here, we tend to protect criminals and terrorists.

“Dear Arab brothers, there are 22 countries and 22 nationalities, each with its own politics and dialects. While there is a general principle of reciprocity, why should we be accommodating at the expense of the reputation and dignity of our people and our country?

“Moreover, this man’s crime is not ordinary, like stealing bread from a baker, money from a money changer, or an apple from a fruit vendor. His crime is heinous and reprehensible, involving bloodshed, storming mosques, desecrating religious books, and disrespecting the Quran. None of this seems to have crossed your mind, yet you withheld his name because of his personal importance, his country, or his position. Some countries, especially Arab ones, have shown leniency toward us only because we tolerate the crimes and actions of their citizens residing among us.

“Excessive kindness can sometimes backfire. How often have we been subjected to insults and lies, and why have we stayed silent? How long will our relations with other countries remain unaffected by the arrest of a terrorist criminal? Will the security or reputation of those countries be shaken simply because a terrorist was arrested in Kuwait?

“We are an independent state, and the dignity of our nation, our people, and our security must never be compromised. The true measure of a state lies in the dignity of its people.”

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“The General Traffic Department intends to impose penalties on drivers who obstruct traffic and cause congestion, including impounding their vehicles for up to two months. While enforcing the law is important, we urge the Ministry of Interior to also consider practical solutions to improve traffic flow,” columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“In most countries, cars stop at traffic lights for only a few seconds, but here, vehicles often remain idle for up to 15 minutes. Why?

“Such long waits lead to heavy traffic congestion, with cars piling up in long lines and bringing movement to a halt. Why not adjust the timing so that no vehicle has to wait at a red light for more than a few seconds?

“The General Traffic Department could consider conducting a pilot experiment on one of Kuwait’s streets by programming the traffic light to open and close at shorter intervals. If the results improve traffic flow, the approach could then be implemented more widely throughout the country.

“There is another solution. London imposes a fee on drivers during traffic jams, and this fee varies throughout the day. A driver in London used to pay £11.50 (about KD 4) to enter central London. This makes them reluctant to enter the area during rush hour, whether before or after work.

“Singapore operates on the idea that cars are equipped with an electronic sensor. Drivers pay a fee each time they cross a bridge in the city, with each time and location having its own specific cost. The state then collects the fee electronically from the driver.

“Some believe that the best solution to reduce traffic congestion is to impose road tolls, which would discourage drivers from using the roads during rush hour. This idea is supported by a study from the British company INRIX, which specializes in traffic congestion data.

“The government could also learn from Brazil’s experience. In the capital of Brazil, there are no traffic lights or traffic jams. How? The city is a model of exceptional urban planning that perhaps no engineer elsewhere could have imagined. I worked at our embassy in Brasília in 1986 and witnessed this firsthand. You could drive through the entire city without stopping at a single traffic light.

“To explain the concept more clearly: imagine a driver passing under a small bridge while other cars cross above, either to the right or left. This is similar to the bridge under the Passports Roundabout opposite Rumaithiya. For example, a driver coming from the Fifth Ring Road toward Salmiya makes a slight turn under the bridge, while others cross above it, one turning right, another left.

“If the driver continues forward, he will reach another small bridge. Also, a driver on the Fifth Ring Road heading toward Salmiya can return to the Fifth Ring Road by taking a ramp that leads to a higher level, rejoining the highway. Alternatively, he can turn right toward Salwa and Ahmadi, or even head directly into Saudi Arabia, all without encountering any traffic lights.

“As citizens, it pains us to know that traffic congestion costs Kuwait about four billion dollars annually, according to a former MP. We hope officials will learn from Brazil’s experience in solving traffic problems before rushing to negotiate with Asian countries to establish new areas in Kuwait, which would only create recurring traffic issues and waste public funds.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

Bribe-takers jail extended

19 apprehended in co-ops graft scandal

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The detention renewal judge decided to extend the detention of individuals involved in the cooperative societies corruption network uncovered by the Ministry of Interior.

These individuals were found to be receiving bribes to pass products and prioritize their display in cooperative societies -- a violation of the rules and regulations governing cooperative work.

In July, the ministry announced the arrest of a corruption network consisting of 19 individuals in two separate incidents. These individuals include five employees of cooperatives and the Cooperative Societies Union, 14 intermediaries and employees of six commercial companies.

The ministry explained at the time that the defendants, including four members of the union, a member of the Board of Directors of a

cooperative, two employees of the union and the cooperatives, and nine employees of commercial companies, received money as bribes in exchange for granting illegal facilities, passing products from certain companies, and granting them priority display within the cooperatives.

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‘Continue insurance’: The Civil Division in the Court of First Instance ruled that the employer of a retired employee must continue his supplementary insurance from the date of his retirement, as he is entitled to it.

Attorney Dr. Fadhil Al-Basman, lawyer for the plaintiff, argued in court that his client has the right to benefit from the supplementary insurance, hence, the employer must be obligated to shoulder the expenses including KD400 attorney fees.

Al-Basman affirmed that the ruling is fair and enshrines the principle of equality among State employees. He explained that supplementary insurance is part of the acquired financial rights that should not be waived or suspended after retirement, as long as the employee met

the conditions for benefiting from it while he was in service.

He added the court based its ruling on the fact that supplementary insurance is an independent legal system aimed at protecting employees once their service ends, and that it must not be restricted or suspended except through a legal text in this regard. He pointed out that this ruling is an important judicial precedent, confirming the need to respect the insurance rights of citizens while ensuring the continuity of these rights after retirement.

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Female staff insulted: Some female employees in the Financial Affairs Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs filed a complaint in Salhiya Police Station, accusing the head of the Ministry Labor Union of insulting, assaulting and yelling at them, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The case was registered under Misdemeanor No. 1000/2025. Legal action is being taken, and the union head was summoned to hear his side regarding the allegations against him.

Man caught drunk

Many injured in violent school gangs altercation

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: As part of the efforts of security personnel to pursue wanted individuals and outlaws, a young man, who was in an abnormal condition, was arrested with a bottle suspected to contain intoxicants in his possession.

According to a security source, while patrolling along the Sixth Ring Road, the officers suspected a person in an abnormal state walking on the road. When they stopped him for investigation, they found that he was in possession of a bottle containing suspected intoxicants. He was immediately referred to the police station to complete the necessary procedures.

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Many injured in fight: Security forces have launched an investigation following a violent altercation among high school students that resulted in multiple injuries in Al-Oyoun, reports Al-Anba daily.

After receiving reports from concerned parents about the fight, Public Security personnel and patrol units arrived on the scene to break up the brawl and provide immediate assistance. Investigation is currently underway to determine the cause of the confrontation and to identify all parties involved.

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Drug addict held: Farwaniya Police patrols arrested an expatriate in his thirties for alleged drug use and possession in Farwaniya, reports Al-Anba daily.

During a patrol by the Farwaniya Security Directorate recently, officers became suspicious of a car whose driver tried to flee upon seeing the patrol. After forcing the driver to stop, they arrested him. He was found to be under the influence of drugs. A precautionary search uncovered drugs and drug paraphernalia, which were seized. The suspect was referred to the Drug Control General Department for necessary legal action.



KFF photo

A traffic police patrol at the accident scene.

Teenager perishes in Subiya Road accident

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: A horrific traffic accident occurred on Subiya Road recently, resulting in the death of an 18-year-old citizen and the injury of three other individuals.

According to a security source, the Operations Unit at the Ministry of Interior received a report about a collision between two vehicles, one of which rolled over.

Security patrols and ambulances rushed to the accident site. Upon their arrival, it was confirmed that the young man died on the spot, while the injured were taken to the nearest hospital.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) stated that its teams dealt with the accident and the case was referred to the concerned authorities.

New fraud uncovered in car ‘breach of trust’ case

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: A vehicle breach of trust case has led to the discovery of a suspect wanted in a fraud case, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the legal representative of a car rental company reported that a man born in 1980 rented a luxury vehicle and paid rent until December 8. After the agreed rental period expired, he delayed in making the payment and failed to return the vehicle, with an outstanding amount of KD 850 owed to the company.

The case was referred to the Criminal Investigations Department. Upon investigating the incident, checking the Ministry of Interior’s computer system, and making inquiries about the defendant, it was revealed that an arrest warrant had been issued against him for defrauding an expatriate. Attempts to contact the individual failed as he had switched off his phone. According to his brother, he had not returned to his family home for a week.

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Fire breaks out in factory: Fire broke out early Saturday morning at a concrete factory in Shadadiya, resulting in material losses but no casualties, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) explained that the fire originated in a tank containing highly flammable bitumen, necessitating immediate intervention to extinguish and contain the blaze. Firefighters from the Sulaibikhat and Istiqlal fire stations rushed to the location and brought the fire under control.



Al-Anba photo

The four suspects in police custody and the seized contraband.

Contraband street value totals KD1.15 mln

Military staffers among four arrested in major drugs haul

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The Ministry of Interior announced the arrest of four individuals in two separate cases involving the possession of large quantities of narcotics and psychotropic substances, with an estimated street value of approximately KD 1.15 million, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a statement, the ministry explained that the first case involves a drug trafficking network operating in Saad Al-Abdullah, Abdullah Al-Mubarak, and Hawwaly.

The network comprised three individuals, two of whom are military personnel employed by the Ministry of Interior, and the third a Bedoun resident.

The network is reportedly managed by an individual residing in a European country. The suspects were found in possession of 25 kilograms of mari-

juana, 100 Lyrice capsules, 2 grams of shabu, and 100 grams of hashish, with a total estimated street value of 150,000 dinars.

The second case stemmed from information indicating that a Gulf national was smuggling psychotropic substances into the country. He was arrested and found in possession of approximately 500,000 Captagon pills, intended for trafficking, with an estimated street value of around 1 million dinars.

The Drug Control General Department affirmed its continued efforts to monitor and track all activities related to the trafficking and smuggling of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

It emphasized its commitment to taking legal action against those involved, in order to protect society from this dangerous scourge.

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SCAN FOR ORDER

Municipality pushes for unified waste management framework

Committee seeks tighter cleaning, recycling rules

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The Environmental Affairs Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Alia Al-Farsi, during which it presented recommendations regarding the implementation of the solid waste management plan of Kuwait Municipality after the issuance of the municipal waste and public hygiene regulations.

These recommendations are as follows:

- Intensify awareness and educational efforts on solid waste management in the governorates in line with the requirements of future treatment projects in Mina Abdullah and the northern and central areas.
- Link treatment projects to the

municipal budget within a specific timeframe and a measurable follow up mechanism.

- Prepare a detailed State plan showing active and closed landfills.
- Launch a comprehensive and developed awareness program on waste management methods in the governorates, linking it to the public hygiene regulations and the Environmental Protection Law.
- In addition, the committee discussed the response of the executive authority to queries regarding the Fourth Ring Road maintenance contract. It recommended monitoring licensed disposal sites and ensuring that no damage to the infrastructure occurs, and that contractors



Al-Farsi

must restore them to the original condition after completion of work and monitor safety standards at all disposal sites.

The committee called for the formation of a national committee led by the Municipality, including relevant entities such as the Environment Public Authority, Public Authority for Industry, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, and Public Authority for Housing Welfare, to standardize technical specifications for recycled materials and establish legislative frameworks that facilitate their integration into government and private projects.

The committee presented six additional recommendations after discussing the executive authority's response to the question of Al-Farsi about cleaning work in cities and residential areas as follows:

- The Municipality should coordinate with governorate councils to lay down a plan to educate and raise awareness among waste sources about the correct procedures to be followed

when disposing household waste.

- Coordinate with the Municipality and obligate contractors with valid contracts to maintain the cleanliness and maintenance of containers, keeping them in good and clean condition throughout the contract term. They should be washed every three days, disinfected, and sprayed with pesticides and disinfectants throughout the contract term.
- Take the necessary measures, in accordance with Ministerial Resolution No. 354/2023 on the municipal waste management and public hygiene regulations, against individuals who fail to comply with the regulations, and impose fines on non-compliant cleaning companies.
- Expedite the issuance of new cleaning contracts in accordance with the regulations.
- Study the development of a new strategy for cleaners deployed in areas or around cooperative societies to ensure higher quality of cleaning work and prevent overcrowding of cleaners.

Principals and teachers suspended

MoE launches urgent investigation into unauthorized school activities

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Ministry of Education has announced the launch of an urgent investigation into two incidents involving school activities that were organized in violation of the regulations and instructions governing educational activities, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the ministry revealed that the Minister of Education, Jalal Al-Tabtabaei issued a decision to suspend those responsible for these activities until the investigations are completed.

It highlighted its national responsibility and commitment to upholding the integrity of educational institutions and adhering to the laws and regulations in effect in the State of Kuwait.

The ministry explained that the incidents constitute violations that require accountability. They especially violate Ministerial Decision No. 135/2025, which regulates the organization of celebrations and events

within schools. This decision requires that no activity or event be held without the supervision of the relevant educational activity departments and prior approval.

The ministry emphasized that it will not tolerate any disregard for instructions or breaches of approved regulations.

It went on to explain that the Minister of Education has issued a decision to suspend those responsible for the activities at the two schools involved, including the school principals and subject teachers, until the investigation is completed. This is in preparation for taking legal and administrative action against anyone found to have neglected their professional or administrative duties.

The ministry urged all school administrations in all educational levels to fully comply with the laws and ministerial decisions governing educational activities.

It stressed the importance of ensuring that all events held in schools are in line with educational objectives and serve the national interest, as well as avoiding any practices that fall outside the educational framework.



Al-Tabtabaei

KFAS visit promotes joint research and innovation

KU, Qatar Foundation strengthen academic ties

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Kuwait University President Prof. Dina Musa'ed Al-Mailem received a delegation from Qatar Foundation, headed by Prof. Hilal Al-Ashwal -- Advisor for Research, Development and Innovation, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Qatar Foundation, and Executive Director for Research, Development and Innovation.

This is part of an official visit organized by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), represented by KFAS Director General Dr. Amina Rajab Farhan, from Oct 6-8, 2025.

A number of university officials also

attended the meeting, with the aim of fortifying academic and research cooperation between scientific institutions in Kuwait and Qatar.

Al-Mailem welcomed the visiting delegation to Sabah Al-Salem University City, stressing that this visit is a crucial step towards building bridges of scientific and research cooperation between higher education institutions in the Gulf countries. She confirmed that this visit is needed to address challenges and achieve sustainable development in the Arabian Gulf region. She added it is an opportunity to expand the horizons of scientific and research cooperation

between the two brotherly countries.

She stressed that Kuwait University puts special emphasis on strengthening academic and scientific partnerships under student and scientific exchange initiatives, which align with the 'New Kuwait 2035' vision. She stated these partnerships are in line with the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may Allah protect him, to support education and scientific research and strengthen cooperation with regional and international institutions to achieve sustainable national development.

She emphasized that such a visit af-

firms the fruitful and sustainable partnership between the two countries, contributes to the exchange of expertise, and improves the global standing of Gulf universities and research institutions.

During the visit, the delegation toured Sabah Al-Salem University City, including the College of Science and the College of Engineering and Petroleum. They looked into the modern academic and research facilities at the university, were briefed on the significant projects at Sabah Al-Salem University City, and discussed avenues for joint research cooperation.



Kuwait University photo
Kuwait University President Prof. Dina Musa'ed Al-Mailem meets Qatar Foundation delegation in a KFAS-organized visit to boost academic and research cooperation.

Reform shortens path for young doctors

KIMS fast-tracks medical fellowships

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Secretary General of Kuwait Institute for Medical Specializations (KIMS) Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi confirmed the adoption of a new mechanism for applying to the medical fellowship programs of the institute.

In a press statement Thursday, Al-Mutairi explained that the new mechanism allows doctors to apply for fellowship after the fourth level of the board, provided they pass the final exam. He said this qualitative step aims to support young doctors and accelerate the career path of nationals in

the medical field.

He pointed out that the new system reduces the transition period from training to fellowship, hence, it enhances the efficiency of the medical education system in the country in line with the vision on investing in human capital and empowering and qualifying doctors according to the highest international medical and educational standards.

He affirmed that KIMS continues to develop its academic and clinical programs in line with international best practices in order to build a sustainable medical education system that keeps pace with modern scientific and medical developments.

Step supports nat'l workforce dev't

3K MEW employees get career boost

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Adel Al-Zamil approved the career advancement of more than 3,000 employees in the technical, administrative, legal, financial, computing, statistical and scientific sectors.

This is based on the career ladder that each employee is entitled to and the corresponding financial benefits.

Sources informed the newspaper that this step is in line with the strategy of the ministry to motivate its national staff and enhance their efficiency to keep pace with the growing demand for electricity, water and energy services, as well as to improve the work environment to meet the needs of the next phase.

Sources explained that the implementation of the 'career ladder' system aims to clearly define career paths



Al-Zamil

and ensure fairness and transparency in promotions. "This has been widely welcomed by the employees, as it reduces job stagnation and provides opportunities for professional development," sources disclosed.

Sources said promoting a junior engineer to an engineer entails a salary increase of KD110, from engineer to senior engineer KD165, from senior engineer to specialist engineer KD70, from specialist engineer to senior specialist KD75, and from senior specialist to senior engineer KD85.

Sources revealed Al-Zamil also approved the list of employees wishing to complete their studies at the diploma, bachelor's, masteral and doctoral levels. They indicated that the Civil Service Commission (CSC) allocated 80 positions to the ministry for this purpose, and those eligible were selected based on seniority, and as per the governing terms and regulations.

Sources stressed that these steps are in accordance with the vision of the ministry to develop human capital and provide a stimulating environment that ensures improved customer service and meets the growing demand for energy in the country.

State Audit Bureau names 4 new Director Generals under new plan

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: President of the State Audit Bureau, Issam Al-Roumi, has issued a decision to appoint four new director generals, in line with the bureau's administrative restructuring plan issued on July 20, 2025, which took effect on October 7, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The appointed director generals are:

- Dr. Saud Ghsab Mohammed Al-Zamanan - Director General of the Administrative, Financial, and

Legal Affairs Sector.

- Osama Abdullah Abdulwahab Al-Fares - Director General of the Pre-Audit and Technical Support Sector.
- Ghaida Abdullah Mubarak Al-Sabaj - Director General of the Audit Sector for Ministries, Government Departments, and Affiliated Entities.
- Mohammed Obaid Khaled Al-Dousari - Director General of the Audit Sector for Independent Entities, the Oil Sector, and Companies.



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AU, Life Energy join forces, unveil Solar Lab for a sustainable future

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The Australian University (AU) proudly hosted the inauguration ceremony of its newly established Solar Lab, a pioneering initiative generously supported and installed by Life Energy Co. This milestone marks a significant advancement in AU's commitment to sustainable energy research and education.

The establishment of the Solar Lab aligns with Kuwait's national vision for climate action and sustainability. Recognizing the urgency of addressing climate change, Kuwait has set ambitious targets for emission reduction, renewable energy integration, as part of its long-term strategies for 2040, and net zero emissions by 2050 for the oil and gas sector and 2060 for the country. The Solar Lab contributes directly to this vision by fostering knowledge creation, capacity building, and innovation to support Kuwait's transition toward a cleaner and more resilient future.

The ceremony took place at the AU Auditorium and attended by distinguished guests and representatives from leading organizations including the Ministry of Energy & Water & Renewable Energy, KNPC, KPC, ECO Environmental Consultants, and the Chairperson of the Sustainability Committee at the Kuwait Water Association, among others. In recognition of Life Energy's generous support, Mr. Al Radhan was presented with a commemorative trophy as a gesture of appreciation.

The event commenced with a welcome note by Dr. Suad Al Radhwan, Manager of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center at AU, followed by a keynote speech from Mr. Hamad Al Radhan, CEO of Life Energy, who shared insights into the importance of renewable energy and the vision behind the Solar Lab initiative. The official ribbon-cutting ceremony was jointly led by AU President Prof. Isam Zabalawi, Mr. Hamad Al Radhan, and Eng. Ahmed AlDoseri, Director of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Department at the Ministry of Energy & Water & Renewable Energy.

The inauguration ceremony not only celebrated the establishment of the Solar Lab but also marked the beginning of a long-term collaboration between AU and Life Energy, while opening the door to future partnerships with leading players in academia and industry. The initiative reflects a shared commitment to advancing renewable energy research, empowering future generations of AU engineers with hands-on experience, and contributing meaningfully to Kuwait's sustainability goals.



Group picture during the inauguration.

Australian University photo

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait awaits

Dhirar Al-Ali, the director of weather forecasting, told KUNA Kuwait is now affected with a northwestern high altitude with moderate winds leading to sea waves more than six feet in height.

Forecast temperature, in the coming hours, will range between 21-23 degrees minimum and 34-36 degrees maximum.

The dust is projected to begin receding as of tonight, when horizontal visibility improves.

The weather on Sunday will be tilting toward heat during the day, turns relatively humid at coastal regions. At night, it will be moderate and moist.

In the coming days, the weather will be humid at nighttime in the coastal regions when the winds turn southeasterly.

Kuwait adds

This step is in line with the commitment of Kuwait to implement the Security Council resolutions on combating terrorism, enhancing financial transparency, and preventing the exploitation of the financial system to support terrorist activities.

Khaitan housing

Response to the question of Abdulatif Al-Da'i about proliferation of refrigerators in some parts of the country.

The Municipality previously clarified that it has no jurisdiction over these types of refrigerators, as the phenomenon is not a commercial activity. It added that the regulations for licensing and use of public roads, squares and sidewalks have no provisions regarding the issuance of licenses for charitable refrigerators to store food and beverages in residential areas.

Kuwait 1st

He also attended a military parade including a mock clampdown on riots and order keeping operations with employment of drones and copters.

At the command headquarters, he attended a visual presentation about planning, security management of events and great occasions.

The statement quoted the French commander as welcoming the visit that signaled depth of the relations between the two friendly countries.

Separately, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef held talks on Friday with the Interpol President Major General Ahmad Nasser Al-Raisi on issues of common interest in the security realms.

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior said Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, accompanied by the State of Kuwait Ambassador to France Abdullah Al-Shahin, met Maj. Gen. Al-Raisi in the city of Lyon.

The talks covered combating organized crime, international trafficking and cross border challenges.

It quoted the First Deputy Prime Minister as affirming that the State of Kuwait has maintained keenness on bolstering the relations with the Interpol since the organization's establishment in 1965.

Kuwait has been active on various arenas of international security cooperation because it believes that the global cooperation in the security sector is the basis for protecting communities from terrorism and organized crime, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef said.

Kuwait has linked up its land, sea and air exits with the Interpol database, thus cementing the border security and facilitated early discovery of stolen documents, he added.

Moreover, Kuwaiti officers are temporarily employed to work at the Interpol

Secretariat General in Lyon and the Innovation Center in Singapore. Additionally, Kuwait participates in testing projects such as the AI program, the "silver notice" to recover assets, specialized committees such as the commissions for financial and legal affairs.

The statement noted that the two sides examined the top international experiences in combating electronic crimes and the international trafficking for taking lessons to sharpen the national cadres' skills and the security networks.

At the end of the meeting, Maj. Gen. Al-Raisi decorated the Kuwaiti first deputy premier with the Interpol medal of highest honor in appreciation of the State of Kuwait's support for the organization.

On Thursday Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef met with Kuwaiti ministers in the French City of Lyon, in the presence of Kuwait's Ambassador to France Abdullah Al-Shahin.

It was an open meeting where Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef listened to the views and feedback of scholarship students about their overseas education journey.

The minister affirmed the government is paying much attention to its scholarship students.

The government is working on addressing challenges facing these students in a manner that ensures their academic outstanding, he noted.

He urged the government-sponsored students to abide by Kuwait's values to be better representatives of their country abroad.

He extolled efforts by Kuwaitis studying outside the country, saying that their outstanding shows an honorable image of Kuwait youth and a source of pride.

Kuwait is proud of its sons and daughters who hold the highest prestigious certificates to be a main pillar to serve their homeland and contribute to its development path, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef emphasized.

Kuwait hosts

bright future for nations.

He stated that the conference reflects the shared commitment to promote health integration and unify efforts to develop national childcare programs and exchange expertise and successful experiences between sisterly countries.

He explained that the conference aims to provide a scientific platform, bringing together the heads of Gulf associations, experts, consultants and academics from various health institutions, universities and research centers to discuss the latest research and scientific discoveries in the field of pediatrics. "They also reviewed the health challenges that Gulf children are facing and ways to prevent and treat them early, thus, contributing to ensuring the health and safety of future generations," he added.

He stated that these scientific conferences are a valuable opportunity to improve communication between experts, strengthen academic and research cooperation, and launch joint initiatives to achieve the health and development goals of the Gulf.

On the other hand, Al-Budaiwi considers the conference a pioneering step on the path of Gulf health cooperation and a scientific platform that reflects the commitment of GCC states to make Gulf child health a priority in their visions, as it is a strategic investment in human capital and development.

He said the GCC leaders focus on human health as it is a fundamental pillar of development. He explained that the health systems in the GCC countries include approximately 863 hospitals and 3,400 health centers and complexes, thereby, enhancing their efficiency and readiness to meet the needs of citizens and expatriates.

He added that child health is the cornerstone of building the Gulf society, indicating that by 2023, the number of

children below 14 years old in the GCC countries reached 7.9 million, in addition to 2.2 million aged 15 to 19 according to data from the Gulf Statistical Center.

He affirmed that the health of this group is a top priority for the GCC countries, as they are the real wealth and the foundation of future development.

He disclosed the GCC countries are implementing numerous programs and initiatives related to the health of children and adolescents, including preventive and awareness campaigns that have contributed to reducing diseases and improving the quality of life.

He confirmed that vaccines reduced the infant mortality rate by 45 percent over the past five decades, in addition to initiatives such as the 'Breathe Aware' campaign to reduce respiratory diseases like asthma.

He revealed the ministries of health in the GCC countries are focusing more on the mental health of adolescents, and organizing special Gulf days and weeks like Gulf Children's Day, Gulf Vaccination Day, Gulf Diabetes Week and Gulf Cardiovascular Disease Awareness Week, all of which contribute to raising public awareness and promoting healthy and preventive behaviors.

He urged specialists to intensify research into rare childhood diseases and adolescent health, invest in the use of artificial intelligence in diagnosis and treatment, and exchange data and expertise between Gulf reference centers to build a system based on scientific evidence.

Dr. Sondos Al-Sharida, President of Kuwait Pediatric Association and Chair of the Conference Organizing Committee, stated that the conference has three main themes: Gulf cooperation and integration in developing unified medical practices, innovation, and scientific modernization to keep pace with global developments in the field of pediatrics.

She disclosed the conference includes 15 scientific sessions, each containing three to four lectures, in addition to 14 workshops with the participation of more than 64 lecturers from the region, Europe, America and Asia.

She considers the conference an important opportunity to unify Gulf efforts to address the growing health challenges that Gulf children are facing.

President of the Emirates Pediatric and Neonatal Society and the Federation of Arab Pediatric Societies Dr. Intisar Al Hammadi asserted that the conference is a milestone in Gulf medical cooperation and it proves the unity and integration among the GCC countries towards building a better, healthier future for the children in the region.

Al Hammadi expressed her deep appreciation to the State of Kuwait for hosting this important Gulf event, as it is a manifestation of the importance of collective action in developing a unified roadmap for developing the health services for children in the Gulf countries, promoting continuing medical education, and modernizing evidence-based practices, which will positively impact the health of future generations.

Displaced Palestinians

With a declared famine still underway in parts of the strip, UNICEF has 1,300 trucks ready to enter, with more on the way, Ingram said.

The aid is among the 170,000 metric tons that have been positioned in neighboring countries awaiting permission from Israel to restart deliveries that have been suspended.

The days since the announcement of the ceasefire have moved swiftly. Israel's military confirmed it had taken effect Friday and said the 48 hostages still in Gaza would be freed Monday. A U.N. official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss details not yet public, said Israel also approved expanded aid deliveries starting Sunday.



Participants of the 19th meeting of GCC government bodies tasked with human rights.

KUNA photo

Kuwait envoy underscores GCC 'human rights' strides

Tangible progress in key sectors

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11, (KUNA): The GCC states have gone through a long journey in boosting human rights and got advanced positions in international development indicators, Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah said on Thursday.

Sheikha Jawaher made the statement to KUNA following chairing the 19th meeting of GCC government bodies tasked with human rights held in Riyadh.

GCC states have achieved tangible progress in education, health and environment sectors, along women empowerment, supporting youth, maintaining children rights, and boosting elderly's role and those with disabilities, based on national laws and development visions of member states, she noted.

The meeting discussed cementing joint collaboration and coordination among GCC members to bolster and protect human rights as well as to achieve GCC human rights strategy for 2023-2025, Sheikha Jawaher pointed out.

Kuwait has been extending bridges of cooperation and coordination with GCC states in line with joint Gulf action, in a manner that ensures progress, prosperity and good living conditions for the region's nations, she concluded.

Strong ties span trade and politics

Belgium lauds Kuwait's regional role

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Special Envoy to the Middle East at the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Johan Vercammen affirmed that bilateral relations between Belgium and Kuwait are "excellent and witnessing continuous interaction."

In a press statement on the sidelines of his participation in the joint ministerial meeting between the European Union (EU) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), hosted by Kuwait, Vercammen disclosed that "communication between the two countries is at multiple levels. A senior Belgian official visited Kuwait at the beginning of the year, and April witnessed a trade mission visit of more than 40 Belgian companies. Political consultations between senior Kuwaiti officials and their counterparts in Brussels were held in the summer."

He praised the activity of the Kuwaiti Embassy in Brussels and its ambassador, whom he described as "very active in strengthening bilateral relations."

Regarding Kuwait's regional role, he said "Kuwait maintains a very balanced position in the region and has



Johan Vercammen, Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' special envoy to the Middle East

succeeded in building excellent relations with all regional parties. This is a significant diplomatic advantage and a very smart position, making it an important and reliable interlocutor for us, as it deals with everyone without dual agendas."

He added "the importance of the Gulf states is not limited to the economic aspect, as it extends to the political dimension, which influences the stability of the region and the world." He emphasized that Europe considers the Gulf "an indispensable partner in achieving regional and international

security and peace."

On the free trade agreement between the EU and GCC, he confirmed "the two sides are working hard to revive the idea of an agreement that was proposed many years ago and has been suspended since 2008. Today, geopolitical circumstances have changed, and there is a growing awareness in Europe about the importance of concluding this agreement, given its benefits for both parties."

He pointed out that Belgium and Kuwait are working on a memorandum of understanding in the health sector, indicating "there are other promising areas for cooperation, particularly in the ports and transportation sector, where Belgian expertise from the Port of Antwerp can contribute to developing cooperation with Kuwait."

He added that his current visit to Kuwait is primarily for the purpose of participating in the ministerial meeting between the EU and GCC, disclosing his country aspires to strengthen political and economic partnerships with Kuwait and other countries in the region.

He asserted that Kuwait has a prominent economic presence in Belgium. "Every Belgian citizen encounters Kuwait daily through the Kuwaiti gas stations we have," he revealed.



JOINT OPERATIONS

SAUDI ARABIAN CHEVRON INC. (SAC) KUWAIT GULF OIL COMPANY (K.S.C.)



Joint Operations (Saudi Arabian Chevron Inc. / Kuwait Gulf Oil Company), announces the under-mentioned Public Tenders for procurement of materials.

Kuwaiti and Saudi Merchants, registered with either Company wishing to participate in any of the under-mentioned Tenders are invited to collect the Tender documents from Purchasing Section, Purchasing & Logistic Division, Administration Building, Ground Floor, Joint Operations, Wafra, during the official working hours from **12 OCT 2025** up to **4 NOV 2025** for a non-refundable fee mentioned against each tender.

Tender Fees to be deposited in the National bank of Kuwait (NBK) Account No. 1001132057. Saudi Suppliers can collect the tender documents from Saudi Arabian Chevron office in Al-Khobar Telephone No.: (013) 8645104 - Fax No.: (013) 8985436

The closing date for the following Tenders will be on **Tuesday, 11 NOV 2025 @ 09:00 A.M.**

S.NO.	TENDER NO.	MATERIALS	FEES (IN KD)
1	040835 - R1	S / F LUFKIN PUMP	25
2	042800	PIPE CARBON STEEL, SAWL	5
3	042801	SAMPLE BOMB ASSEMBLY	15
4	043207	CHEMICAL, FORM PELLETTYPE CHEMISORBANT MEDIA	5
5	043208	VALVES (BALL, GATE AND GLOBE)	15
6	041679 - R1	CONTROL VALVES	25

Notes:

Gate Passes are required for Suppliers entering JO-Wafra Administrative Offices to collect the tender document and gate pass processing time is 48 hours. Please fill request for gate pass along with legible copies of Authorization letter, Civil ID, Car Registration, Supplier Registration (KGOC or SAC) to e-mail HBJH@chevron.com and CBMS@chevron.com at least 48 hours prior to arrival.

For additional information, you may contact:

Telephone No.: **23983639** - Ext. : **2502 - 3477**

Some leading Republicans highly critical of administration’s actions

Firings of federal workers begin as WH seeks to pressure Dems in govt shutdown

WASHINGTON, Oct 11, (AP): The White House budget office said Friday that mass firings of federal workers have started, an attempt by President Donald Trump’s administration to exert more pressure on Democratic lawmakers as the government shutdown dragged into a 10th day.

Russ Vought, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, said on the social media site X that the “RIFs have begun,” referring to reduction-in-force plans aimed at reducing the size of the federal government.

In a court filing, the budget office said well over 4,000 employees would be fired, though it noted that the funding situation was “fluid and rapidly evolving.”

The firings would hit the hardest at the departments of the Treasury, which would lose over 1,400 employees, and Health and Human Services, with a loss of over 1,100. The Education Department and Housing and Urban Development each would lose over 400 staffers. The departments of Commerce, Energy and Homeland Security and the Environmental Protection Agency were all set to fire hundreds of more employees. It was not clear which particular programs would be affected.

The aggressive move by Trump’s budget office goes far beyond what usually happens in a government shutdown and escalates an already politically toxic dynamic between the White House and Congress. Talks to end the shutdown are almost nonexistent.

Typically, federal workers are furloughed but restored to their jobs once the shutdown ends, traditionally with back pay. Some 750,000 employees are expected to be furloughed during the shutdown, officials have said.

In comments to reporters in the Oval Office on Friday night, Trump said many people would be losing their jobs, and that the firings would be focused on Democrat-oriented areas, though he didn’t explain exactly what that meant.

“It’ll be a lot, and we’ll announce the numbers over the next couple of days,” he said. “But it’ll be a lot of people.”

Trump said that, going forward, “We’re going to make a determination, do we want a lot? And I must tell you, a lot of them happen to be Democrat oriented.”

“These are people that the Democrats wanted, that, in many cases, were not appropriate,” he said of federal employees, eventually adding, “Many of them will be fired.”

Still, some leading Republicans were highly critical of the administration’s actions.

“I strongly oppose OMB Director Russ Vought’s attempt to permanently lay



The US Capitol is photographed on Oct 10, in Washington. (AP)

off federal workers who have been furloughed due to a completely unnecessary government shutdown,” said Maine Sen. Susan Collins, the chair of the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee, who blamed the federal closure on Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski called the announcement “poorly timed” and “yet another example of this administration’s punitive actions toward the federal workforce.”

For his part, Schumer said the blame for the layoffs rested with Trump.

“Let’s be blunt: nobody’s forcing Trump and Vought to do this,” Schumer said. “They don’t have to do it; they want to. They’re callously choosing to hurt people - the workers who protect our country, inspect our food, respond when disasters strike. This is deliberate chaos.”

The White House had previewed its tactics shortly before the government shutdown began on Oct. 1, telling all federal agencies to submit their reduction-in-force plans to the budget office for its review.

It said reduction-in-force plans could apply to federal programs whose funding would lapse in a government shutdown, are otherwise not funded and are “not consistent with the President’s priorities.”

On Friday, the Education Department was among the agencies hit by new layoffs, a department spokesperson said. A labor union for the agency’s workers said the administration is laying off almost all employees below the director level at the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, while fewer than 10 employees were being terminated at the agency’s Office of Communications and Outreach.

Notices of firings have also taken place at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, which leads federal efforts to reduce risk to the nation’s cyber and physical infrastructure, according to DHS, where CISA is housed. The agency has been a frequent Trump target over its work to counter misinformation about the 2020 presidential election and the COVID-19 pandemic. DHS said the layoffs were “part of getting CISA back on mission.”

Federal health workers were also being fired, though an HHS spokesman did not say how many or which agencies were being hit hardest. A spokesperson for the EPA, which also has an unspecified number of layoffs, blamed the Democrats for the firings and said they can vote to reopen the government anytime.

An official for the American Federation of Government Employees, which represents federal workers and is suing the Trump administration over the firings, said in a legal filing Friday that the Treasury Department is set to issue layoff notices to 1,300 employees.

The AFGE asked a federal judge to halt the firings, calling the action an abuse of power designed to punish workers and pressure Congress.

“It is disgraceful that the Trump administration has used the government shutdown as an excuse to illegally fire thousands of workers who provide critical services to communities across the country,” AFGE President Everett Kelley said in a statement.

Democrats have tried to call the administration’s bluff, arguing the firings could be illegal, and had seemed bolstered by the fact that the White House had not immediately pursued the layoffs once the shutdown began.

But Trump signaled earlier this week that job cuts could be coming in “four or five days.”



Smoke fills the air as debris covers the ground and vehicles after a powerful blast ripped through a military explosives manufacturing plant in Hickman County, Tenn. on Oct 10. (AP)

18 dead or missing in Tennessee military plant explosion

Officials were investigating a blast that leveled an explosives plant in rural Tennessee, as families of the 18 people missing and feared dead waited anxiously Saturday for answers.

The explosion Friday morning at Accurate Energetic Systems, which supplies and researches explosives for the military, scattered debris over at least a half-mile (800-meter) area and was felt by residents more than 15 miles (24 kilometers) away, said Humphreys County Sheriff Chris Davis.

Aerial footage showed the company’s hilltop location smoldering and smoky Friday, with just a mass of twisted metal, burned-out shells of cars and an array of debris left behind.

Davis, who described it as one of the worst scenes he’s ever seen, said multiple people were killed. But he declined to say how many, referring to the 18 missing as “souls” because officials were still speaking to family.

“What we need right now is we need our communities to come together and understand that we’ve lost a lot of people,” he said.

The company’s website says it processes explosives and ammunition at an eight-building facility that sprawls across wooded hills in the Bucksnot area, about 60 miles (97 kilometers) southwest of Nashville. It’s not immediately known how many people work at the plant or how many were there when the explosion happened. (AP)

Pentagon to build training facility for Qatari pilots in Idaho: Hegseth

WASHINGTON, Oct 11, (AP): The US military is moving forward with plans to build a dedicated facility in Idaho to train pilots from Qatar, an important US ally in the Middle East, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth announced Friday.

Hegseth, who made the announcement during a visit by Qatar’s defense minister, said the facility to be built at the Mountain Home Air Force Base would “host a contingent of Qatari F-15s and pilots to enhance our combined training, increase the lethality, interoperability.”

The arrangement is not unusual. Pentagon officials noted that similar facilities have been set up for other allies for decades, and the Idaho base already hosts a fighter squadron from Singapore.



US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth welcomes Qatar Minister of Defense Sheikh Saoud Al Thani, (left), to the Pentagon on Oct 10, in Washington. (AP)

But the news drew a sharp rebuke from close Trump ally and right-wing influencer Laura Loomer, who called the plan “an abomination” and accused the Qataris of being associated with Islamic terror organizations.

Although Loomer holds no formal position within the Trump administration, her online complaints have a history of achieving results. Her criticisms have led to the firing of officials on the National Security Council, Dr Vinay Prasad, the Food and Drug Administration’s vaccine chief, and Gen. Tim Haugh, the head of the National Security Agency.

Qatar, which hosts the biggest US military base in the Middle East, made clear that it will not have a base on US soil and that it will cover the costs of building the training facility.

“This will not be a Qatari air base,” the spokesman for the embassy in Washington said in a statement posted on X. “Rather, Qatar has made an initial 10-year commitment to construct and maintain a dedicated facility within an existing US air base, intended

for advanced training and to enhance interoperability in defending and advancing our shared interests around the world.”

The statement said the project will create hundreds of jobs for Americans and noted that the planning began several years ago and it received local approval.

When asked for more details about the future facility, Hegseth’s office said it had nothing to offer beyond the secretary’s remarks.

France’s re-appointed prime minister Lecornu calls for calm, political chaos

L’HAY-LES-ROSES, France, Oct 11, (AP): France’s newly re-appointed prime minister acknowledged Saturday that there weren’t ‘a lot of candidates’ for his job - and that he might not last long in the post given the country’s deep political divides.

Sebastien Lecornu, renamed by President Emmanuel Macron late Friday after a week of political chaos, called for calm and for the support of political parties to produce a budget for the European Union’s No. 2 economy before looming deadlines.

His appointment is seen as Macron’s last chance to reinvigorate his second term, which runs until 2027. His centrist camp lacks a majority in the National Assembly and he is facing increasing criticism even within its ranks.

But rivals from far right to far left slammed Macron’s decision to rename Lecornu, France’s fourth prime minister in barely a year. France is struggling with mounting economic challenges and ballooning debt, and the political crisis is aggravating its troubles and raising alarm across the European Union.

“I don’t think there were a lot of



From left: French Green Party leader Marine Tondelier, French Communist Party leader Fabien Roussel, French socialist party secretary general Olivier Faure, Stephane Peu, member of French Communist Party, Boris Vallaud, president of the socialist parliament members at the National Assembly, and Cyrielle Chatelain, member of French Green Party arrive for a meeting with French president Emmanuel Macron at the Elysee Palace, in Paris on Oct 10. (AP)

candidates,” Lecornu told reporters Saturday during a visit to a police station in the Paris suburb of L’Hay-les-Roses.

“You people are gonna have to start speaking to Spain,” Trump said. “You have to call them and find why are they a laggard.”

Possible target of Belgian attack plotters, says Dutch far-right politician Wilders

BRUSSELS, Oct 11, (AP): Dutch far-right politician Geert Wilders said Friday that he’s suspending campaigning for national elections later this month following reports that he was a possible target of a suspected plot in Belgium to kill politicians using a drone carrying explosives.

Three men were taken into custody after searches of their homes in the port city of Antwerp by police using explosives sniffer dogs. A homemade bomb was found at one home, but it wasn’t operational at the time, prosecutors said.

A bag of steel balls also was found there, while a 3D printer believed to be used to make parts for the planned attack was found at another residence. Prosecutors said it appeared “that the intention was to build a drone to attach a load.”

Prosecutors said the police raids



Dutch politician Geert Wilders speaks at the Danish People’s Party annual meeting, in Tinghallen, Viborg, Denmark on Sept 27. (AP)

were part of an investigation into “attempted terrorist murder and participation in the activities of a terrorist group.” They didn’t identify the politicians who might have been targeted.

But Belgian government ministers identified Prime Minister Bart De Wever as one target. On X, Wilders posted a Belgian news report that he and De Wever’s successor as Antwerp mayor, Els van Doesburg, were also on the hit list. All three are right-wing politicians.

Wilders said in a later message on X that Dutch counterterrorism authorities do not “expect a residual threat, but I have a bad feeling about this and am therefore suspending all my campaign activities for the time being.”

Earlier Friday, he canceled an appearance at an election debate with other political leaders ahead of an early general election scheduled for Oct. 29.

Power restored to 800,000 residents in Kyiv after Russian strikes on Ukraine energy grid

KYIV, Oct 11, (AP): Power was restored to over 800,000 residents in Kyiv on Saturday, a day after Russia launched major attacks on the Ukrainian power grid that caused blackouts across much of the country, and European leaders agreed to proceed toward using hundreds of billions of frozen Russian assets to support Ukraine’s war effort.

Ukraine’s largest private energy company, DTEK, said Saturday that “the main work to restore the power supply” had been completed, but that some localized outages were still affecting the Ukrainian capital following Friday’s “massive” Russian attacks.

Russian drone and missile strikes wounded at least 20 people in Kyiv, damaged residential buildings and triggered blackouts across swaths of Ukraine early Friday.

Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko described the attack as “one of the largest concentrated strikes” against Ukraine’s energy infrastructure.

Russia’s Defense Ministry on Friday said the strikes had targeted energy facilities supplying Ukraine’s military. It did not give details of those facilities, but said Russian forces used Kinzhal hypersonic missiles and strike drones against them.



Emergency services personnel work to extinguish a fire following a Russian attack in Kyiv, Ukraine on Oct 10. (AP)

The energy sector has been a key battleground since Russia launched its all-out invasion more than three years ago.

Each year, Russia has tried to cripple the Ukrainian power grid before the bitter winter season, apparently hoping to erode public morale. Winter temperatures run from late October through March, with January and February the coldest months.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in his nightly address Friday that Russia was taking advantage of the world being “almost entirely focused on the prospect of establishing peace in the Middle East,” and called for strengthening Ukraine’s air defense systems and tighter sanctions on Russia.

Trump suggests expelling Spain from NATO

WASHINGTON, Oct 11, (Agencies): U.S. President Donald Trump suggested that Spain be expelled from NATO for refusing to increase its defense spending.

“They have no excuse not to do this,” Trump told reporters at the White House during a meeting with visiting Finnish President Alexander Stubb. “Maybe you should throw them out of NATO frankly.”

“You people are gonna have to start speaking to Spain,” Trump said. “You have to call them and find why are they a laggard.”

Under pressure from Trump, NATO members in June agreed to raise their military spending to 5 percent of gross domestic product by 2035.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez rejected the target, calling it “incompatible with our welfare state and our world vision.”

Spain’s defense minister has defended her country’s commitment to NATO after Trump floated the idea that the southern European country should be expelled from the military alliance for not spending enough on its armed forces.

In comments made while meeting with F Stubb in the Oval Office, Trump said that Spain was a “laggard” and must be pressed to spend more on its military.

Trump was referring to Spain being the sole member of the 32-nation alliance not to commit to increasing military spending to 5% of GDP in an agreement reached in June.



Spain’s Defense Minister Margarita Robles arrives for a meeting of the Ukraine Defence Contact Group at NATO headquarters in Brussels on April 11. (AP)

Sánchez secured a last-minute exemption, saying that Spain will only spend up to 2.1%, which he called “sufficient and realistic.”

Spain’s Defense Minister Margarita Robles told reporters in Madrid on Friday that “we are not worried.”

“I believe that President Trump must know that Spain is one of the committed and loyal (NATO) allies,” she said.

INTERNATIONAL

Japan's Komeito leaves longstanding ruling coalition headed by LDP

TOKYO, Oct 11, (AP): The head of Japan's Komeito says it is leaving the ruling coalition headed by the Liberal Democratic Party due to concerns over corruption, in a major setback for the woman who hopes to become the country's next prime minister.

The decision announced Friday by Komeito leader Tetsuo Saito deals a serious blow to the Liberal Democrats, who last weekend chose Sanae Takaichi, an ultra-conservative lawmaker, as its leader.

Takaichi could still become Japan's first female prime minister, but the departure of the Buddhist-backed Komeito will compel the Liberal Democrats to find at least one other coalition partner in order to stay in power.

Speaking to reporters, she said Saito had "one-sidedly announced the decision to leave the coalition" even though she and her deputy, LDP Secretary General Shunichi Suzuki, had said the Liberal Democrats would discuss the issues he raised and respond promptly.

"We've been together for 26 years and it was extremely disappointing, but this is how we ended up," Takaichi said.

The ruling coalition had already lost its majorities in both houses of parliament. The lower house is due to vote on a new prime minister later this month.

Saito said his party, which has been a coalition partner with the



Tetsuo Saito, leader of Komeito, speaks to media after meeting newly-elected leader of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party Sanae Takaichi, on Oct 4 in Tokyo. (AP)

Liberal Democrats for 26 years, had raised several concerns in a meeting with its leaders.

They include objections to Takaichi's stance about Japan's wartime history and her visits to Yasukuni Shrine, seen as a symbol of its past militarism. Another was Takaichi's hardline position toward foreigners, part of a backlash against growing numbers of foreign workers and tourists.

But the deciding factor, he said, was the Liberal Democrats' response to scandals over the use of political slush funds.

ICC judges decline to release Duterte, citing flight risk

Two powerful quakes strike off southern Philippines, killing 7

MANILA, Philippines, Oct 11, (AP): Two powerful offshore earthquakes struck the same region in the southern Philippines hours apart on Friday with the first 7.4 magnitude temblor killing at least seven people, setting off landslides and prompting evacuations of coastal areas nearby because of a brief tsunami scare.

The second one had a preliminary 6.8 magnitude and also sparked a local tsunami warning by authorities. It was caused by movement in the same fault line, the Philippine Trench, at a depth of 37 kilometers (23 miles) off Manay town in Davao Oriental province, Philippine Institute of Seismology and Volcanology chief Teresito Bacolcol said.

"The second one is a separate earthquake, which we call a doublet quake," Bacolcol told The Associated Press. "Both happened in the same area but have different strengths and epicenters."

Bacolcol and other authorities expressed fears that the second nighttime earthquake could further weaken or collapse structures already undermined by the first one.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., facing his latest natural disaster after a recent deadly quake and back-to-back storms, said the potential damage was being assessed and rescue teams and relief operations were being prepared and would be deployed when it was safe to do so.

The first quake was centered at sea about 43 kilometers (27 miles) east of



In this photo provided by the 10ID DPAO, Philippine Army, residents stand beside a landslide, triggered by a strong earthquake, hit an area at Pantukan town, Davao de Oro province, southern Philippines on Oct 10. (AP)

Manay town and was caused by movement in the Philippine Trench at a depth of 23 kilometers (14 miles), government seismologists said.

At least seven people were killed, including two patients who died of heart attacks at a hospital during the first earthquake and a resident who was hit by debris in Mati city in Davao Oriental, Ednar Dayanghirang, regional director of the government's Office of Civil Defense, told The AP.

Three villagers died and several others were rescued with injuries by army troops and civilian volunteers in a landslide set off by the first quake in

a remote gold-mining village in Pantukan town in Davao de Oro province near Davao Oriental, Dayanghirang said.

Another resident died because of the first quake in the port city of Davao, disaster mitigation officials said without providing other details. They added that a few hundred residents were injured in the city.

Office of Civil Defense deputy administrator Bernardo Rafaelito Alejandro IV said that several buildings sustained cracks in their walls, including an international airport in Davao city, but it remained operational without

any flights being canceled.

"I was driving my car when it suddenly swayed and I saw power lines swaying wildly. People darted out of houses and buildings as the ground shook and electricity came off," Jun Saavedra, a disaster-mitigation officer of Governor Generoso town in Davao Oriental, told The AP.

"We've had earthquakes in the past, but this was the strongest," Saavedra said, adding that the intense ground swaying caused cracks in several buildings, including a high school, where about 50 students were brought to a hospital by ambulance after sustaining bruises, fainting or becoming dizzy because of the first quake.

Also:

THE HAGUE, Netherlands: Judges at the International Criminal Court on Friday rejected a request from former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte to be released from detention, finding he was likely to refuse to return for trial and could use his freedom to intimidate witnesses.

Prosecutors at the ICC accuse Duterte of crimes against humanity for the deadly anti-drugs crackdowns he oversaw while in office, first as the mayor of a southern city and later as president.

Duterte's legal team asked a pre-trial panel of judges to release the octogenarian, arguing he was in frail health and his condition was deteriorating in the court's detention unit.

Trump's quest for award falls short again despite high-profile nominations

Venezuelan opp'n leader Machado wins Nobel Peace Prize

OSLO, Norway, Oct 11, (AP): Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for her struggle to achieve a democratic transition in the South American nation, winning recognition as a woman "who keeps the flame of democracy burning amid a growing darkness."

The former opposition presidential candidate is a "key, unifying figure" in the once deeply divided opposition to President Nicolás Maduro's government, said Jørgen Watne Frydnes, chair of the Norwegian Nobel committee.

"In the past year, Ms. Machado has been forced to live in hiding," Watne Frydnes said. "Despite serious threats against her life, she has remained in the country, a choice that has inspired millions. When authoritarians seize power, it is crucial to recognize courageous defenders of freedom who rise and resist."

"This is something that the Venezuelan people deserve," Machado said in a call with the Norwegian Nobel Institute. "I am just part of a huge movement. ... I'm humbled, I'm grateful and I'm honored not only by this recognition, but I'm honored to be part of what's going on in Venezuela today."



Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado addresses supporters at a protest against President Nicolas Maduro in Caracas, Venezuela on Jan 9, the day before his inauguration for a third term. (AP)

"I believe that we are very close to achieving, finally, freedom for our country and peace for the region," she said, adding that "even though we face the most brutal violence, our society has resisted" and insisted on struggling by peaceful means. "I believe that the world will now understand how urgent

it is to finally, you know, succeed."

Maduro's government has routinely targeted its real or perceived opponents.

Machado, who turned 58 this week, was set to run against Maduro in last year's presidential election, but the government disqualified her. Edmundo

González, who had never run for office before, took her place. The lead-up to the election saw widespread repression, including disqualifications, arrests and human rights violations.

US President Donald Trump was passed over for the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday despite jockeying from his fellow Republicans, various world leaders and - most vocally - himself.

Machado, however, said she wanted to dedicate the win to Trump, along with the people of her country, as she praised the president for support of her cause.

Her campaign manager Magalli Meda confirmed that Trump congratulated Machado in a phone call Friday.

At the White House later, Trump listed the peace efforts he'd made while in office this year - something that's become a frequent habit as he appears before the media - and was wistful as he spoke about Machado winning.

"The person who actually got the Nobel Prize called me and said, 'I'm accepting this in honor of you because you really deserved it.'" he said.

"I didn't say, 'Then give it to me,'" he added, drawing chuckles from his advisers. "I think she might have. She was very nice."

SEOUL, South Korea, Oct 11, (AP):

At a massive military parade attended by foreign leaders, North Korean leader **Kim Jong Un** rolled out his nuclear-armed military's most powerful weapons, including a new intercontinental ballistic missile he may be preparing to test in coming weeks.

The parade, which began Friday night in the rain and marked the 80th anniversary of the founding of the ruling Workers' Party, highlighted Kim's growing diplomatic footing and his relentless drive to build an arsenal that could target the continental United States and his rivals in Asia.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said Saturday that the parade featured a new, yet-to-be-tested intercontinental ballistic missile called the Hwasong-20, which it described as the country's "most powerful nuclear strategic weapon system."

In a speech at the parade, Kim said



Kim

his military "should continue to grow into an invincible entity that destroys all threats," but made no direct mention of Washington or Seoul, according to comments published by KCNA.

Photos and videos from North Korean and Russian state media showed thousands of spectators packing the brightly lit square.

KCNA said the columns of soldiers who marched during the parade included "the invincible overseas operations unit that fully demonstrated the spirit of the Korean people," suggesting they were troops Kim had sent to Russia to join the war effort against Ukraine.

North Korea in recent years has flight-tested a variety of ICBMs that could potentially reach the U.S. mainland, including missiles with built-in solid propellants that are easier to move and conceal and can be prepared for launch more quickly than the North's previous liquid-fueled missiles.

The parade saw the debut of the massive Hwasong-20 mounted on an 11-axle launcher truck. The new missile's existence was first revealed in recent weeks as North Korea tested a new solid-fuel rocket engine that it said was intended for future ICBMs. State media said the engine, built with carbon fiber, is more powerful than past models.

Sudanese paramilitaries in Darfur kill 53

CAIRO, Oct 11, (AP): At least 53 people, including 14 children and 15 women, were killed in an attack by Sudanese paramilitaries that hit a shelter in a besieged Darfur city, a doctors' group said Saturday.

The shelling attack late Friday by the Rapid Support Forces on the city of el-Fasher also wounded another 21 people, including five children and seven women, said the Sudan Doctors' Network, a group of medical professionals tracking the Sudanese civil war.

The attack by the Rapid Support Forces hit the al-Arqam Home, which sheltered displaced families in el-Fasher, the provincial capital of North Darfur province, the group said. The shelter is located at the Omdurman Islamic University.

"This massacre represents a continuation of the scorched-earth policy practiced by the Rapid Support Forces against civilians, in flagrant violation of all international norms and laws," the medical group said.

The RSF didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The strike late Friday was the latest deadly attack on el-Fasher which has been for months the epicenter of the



In this photo released by the NGO Mercy Corps, Sudanese families displaced by RSF attacks in Kordofan take shelter in a football stadium in Kadugli, South Kordofan province, Sudan on May 27. (AP)

war between the Sudanese military and the paramilitaries.

The city has been under siege for over a year. The UN and other aid groups warn that 260,000 civilians remain trapped in the city after most of its population fled RSF attacks on the city and its surroundings.

The RSF has been trying for over the year to seize control of el-Fasher,

the Sudanese military's last stronghold in Darfur. The paramilitaries have bombed the city. They imposed a total blockade in July around its hundreds of thousands of people.

Sudan plunged into chaos when simmering tensions between the military and the RSF exploded into open fighting in April 2023 in Khartoum and elsewhere.

'Signaling deeper ties with Taleban'

India to upgrade Kabul mission to full embassy

SRINAGAR, India, Oct 11, (AP): India is upgrading its technical mission in Kabul to a full embassy, India's foreign minister announced Friday after meeting his Afghanistan counterpart in New Delhi. The announcement was made during the first high-level diplomatic engagement since the Taliban seized power in 2021 after two decades of US military presence.

Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said India was committed to Afghanistan's development and pledged support in sectors including trade, health and education. He said New Delhi was committed to Afghanistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"Closer cooperation between us contributes to your national development, as well as regional stability and resilience," he said, addressing Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi at a joint press briefing after their meeting in New Delhi.

In his remarks, Muttaqi said Kabul has "always sought good relations with India."

Muttaqi, who is among multiple Afghan Taleban leaders under UN sanctions that include travel bans and asset freezes, arrived in New Delhi on Thursday after the UN Security Council Committee granted him a



This photograph shared by Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, on the X platform shows him, right, handing over a symbolic key after making a gift of ambulances to Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in New Delhi, India on Oct 10. (AP)

temporary travel exemption. The visit follows Muttaqi's participation Tuesday at an international meeting on Afghanistan in Russia that included representatives of China, India, Pakistan and some central Asian countries.

The move underlines the deepening ties between India and Taliban-ruled Afghanistan despite their historic antipathy for each other.

Both have something to gain. The Taleban administration seeks international recognition. Meanwhile, India seeks to counter regional rivals Pakistan and China, who are deeply involved in Afghanistan.

India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri met Muttaqi in Dubai in January, and India's special envoy to Afghanistan visited Kabul in April to discuss political and trade relations.

Militant attack on Pakistani police station kills at least seven officers and wounds 13

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Oct 11, (AP): At least seven police officers and six militants were killed after gunmen attacked a police training center in northwestern Pakistan, triggering a fierce firefight that lasted for hours, officials said Saturday.

It's the latest violence to rock the area, which is the base for several armed groups, and comes as Pakistan struggles with a worsening security situation.

Friday night's assault targeted a police training facility in Ratta Kulachi, on the outskirts of Dera Ismail Khan city. Police said the attackers used heavy weapons and tried to force their way into the compound after a suicide bomber detonated an explosives-laden truck at the gate.

"After the initial blast, the attackers managed to storm the facility, where about 200 recruits and their trainers were present," Dera Ismail Khan police chief Sajjad Ahmad told The Associated Press.

The gun battle between police and militants lasted nearly six hours. Seven police personnel were killed and 13 were injured, Ahmad said.



Officials and others attend funeral prayers of police officers, who were killed when gunmen attacked a police training center, in Dera Ismail Khan in northwestern Pakistan, on Oct 11. (AP)

Assailants launched the coordinated assault using heavy weapons, according to a police statement.

Officers on duty returned fire, thwarting what officials described as an attempt to cause mass casualties. The explosives-packed truck rammed into the

training school's main gate, triggering a blast that collapsed part of a boundary wall, killing a police officer.

Moments later, militants in uniform entered the compound and opened fire with automatic weapons, the statement said.

Burkina Faso rejects proposal to accept deportees from US

DAKAR, Senegal, Oct 11, (AP): Burkina Faso says it has refused a proposal from the Trump administration to accept deportees from the United States.

The West African country was asked whether it would accept non-citizens expelled by the US, in addition to its own nationals, Foreign Minister **Karamoko Jean-Marie Traoré** said Thursday on national television.

"Naturally, this proposal, which we deemed indecent at the time, is totally contrary to the value of dignity which is part of the very essence of the vision of Capt Ibrahim Traoré," he said, referring to the country's military ruler.



Jean-Marie Traoré

The remark came only a few hours after the US Embassy in the capital Ouagadougou suspended most visa services for Burkina Faso residents, redirecting applications to its embassy in neighboring Togo. The embassy did not give a reason for the move.

Citing a US diplomatic note accusing Burkinabe nationals of not complying with visa usage rules, Karamoko Jean-Marie Traoré called the move a possible "pressure tactic" and said, "Burkina Faso is a land of dignity, not deportation."

The US Embassy in Ouagadougou and Department of Homeland Security didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

More than 40 deportees have been sent to Africa since July after the Trump administration struck largely secretive agreements with at least five African nations to take migrants under a new third-country deportation program. Rights groups and others have protested the program.

Mexico flooding kills at least 28 people

MEXICO CITY, Oct 11, (AP): Flooding caused by heavy rains in central and southeastern Mexico has set off landslides, damaged homes and highways, and left at least 28 people dead, authorities said Friday.

Videos on social media from different parts of the affected areas showed streets turned into rivers carrying away vehicles and houses almost completely covered in water.

Mexico deployed 8,700 military personnel to assist the population.

One of the hardest hit areas was the central state of Hidalgo, where 16 deaths have been reported, according to state Interior Secretary Guillermo Olivares Reyna.

At least 1,000 homes, 59 hospitals and clinics, and 308 schools have suffered damage in the state because of landslides and rivers topping their banks. Some 17 of the states 84 municipalities were without electricity, he said.

In neighboring Puebla state, nine people died and 13 were missing, according to Gov. Alejandro Armenta.

Kuwait crude oil down to \$66.11 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti crude oil price fell USD 1.52 during Friday’s trading to reach USD 66.11 per barrel (pb), compared with US 67.63 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Saturday. Brent future went down USD 2.49 to USD 62.73 pb and West Texas Intermediate down USD 2.61 to USD 58.90 pb.

Business

National Investments Company convenes Ordinary General Assembly to elect a new Board of Directors for the upcoming term



The National Investments Company (NIC) held its Ordinary General Assembly meeting on Thursday, October 9, 2025, at the company’s headquarters in Khaleejia Tower, with an attendance rate of 74.202%. The meeting agenda included a single item, the election of the members of the Board of Directors for the new three-year term (2025–2026–2027). Following the voting process, the results led to the re-election of five members for the new term: Khaled Waleed AlFalalah, Bader Nasser AlKharafi, SAK Real Estate Company, represented by Anas Khaled AlSaleh, Taibah Mohammad AlQatami, and Al-Bawaba Al-Watania General Trading & Contracting Company, represented by Fahad Abdulrahman AlMukhaizim. These members represent a distinguished group of professionals with extensive experience and expertise in investment, finance, and business management.

The newly elected Board of Directors subsequently convened and resolved to form the Board as follows:

- Khaled Waleed AlFalalah**
Chairman of the Board
- Bader Nasser AlKharafi**
Vice Chairman of the Board
- Anas Khaled AlSaleh**
Board Member of the Board
- Taibah Mohammad AlQatami**
Board Member of the Board
- Fahad Abdulrahman AlMukhaizim**
Board Member of the Board

On this occasion, Khaled AlFalalah, Chairman of the Board, expressed his appreciation for the shareholders’ confidence in the newly elected Board. He emphasized his commitment to continuing the company’s development journey, maintaining its strategic direction, expanding the asset base under management, and diversifying income sources in line with the evolving local, regional, and international markets.

AlFalalah further affirmed that the Board of Directors is dedicated to completing the imple-



Khaled Waleed AlFalalah
Chairman of the Board

mentation of the company’s comprehensive strategic plan for 2025, which extends over three years and was developed in collaboration with a leading global management consulting firm. This ambitious plan serves as an integrated roadmap aimed at strengthening the company’s position and reinforcing its leadership across various sectors. The plan focuses on key pillars including institutional development, digital transformation, operational efficiency, and enhancing the quality of services provided to clients and shareholders.

He added that the Board is keen to establish the general framework for executing this strategy through the company’s executive management, ensuring the achievement of the targeted goals with high efficiency and in accordance with the highest professional standards. The coming period, he noted, will witness concrete initiatives and strategic projects designed to promote sustainable growth and bolster the company’s standing in both the local and regional markets.

Al Falah also highlighted that the company



and its Board of Directors remain committed to developing integrated investment solutions and creating new opportunities that support NIC’s leading position in the investment sector. The company continues to focus on generating added value for shareholders

and clients through its extensive expertise and strategic partnerships. Furthermore, the Board seeks to strengthen the principles of good governance and transparency across all company operations, ensuring sustainable performance and long-term positive results.



Part of the audience

Other Voices

Oil prices plunges, hurting producers

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

Oil prices are unsatisfactory for producers... that much is certain. Currently trading at \$63 per barrel, prices are down \$3 from last week, with no signs of improvement in the coming weeks. This decline comes as producers continue to increase supply, which is further weakening the price.



Al-Harami

So why are oil producers flooding the market with more barrels despite the lack of real demand? Much of the additional supply is being directed to strategic reserves in countries like China and the United States.

These weak prices are negatively impacting oil-producing countries, many of which rely on oil revenues for more than 85 percent of their annual budgets. The resulting deficits are forcing some of them to borrow from international banks. The alternative of selling national assets raises a difficult choice - borrow or sell?

For most oil-producing countries in the Arabian Gulf, borrowing appears to be the preferable option over selling off overseas investments. Keeping these investments intact allows them to generate long-term returns and enhance financial portfolios. This seems to be the best choice for Kuwait. Other oil-producing countries may opt to sell a part of their assets to generate the cash needed, while retaining majority ownership and control at home. In reality, there are few other options available.

Alternatively, nations could begin exploring and investing in a long-term replacement for oil. This is a complex and time-consuming process, but one that must be pursued, especially Kuwait, as more than 95 percent of national income depends on oil.

At today’s price of \$63 per barrel, Kuwait faces a full budget deficit, given that the current budget requires an oil price of \$92 per barrel

to break even. Without reaching this breakeven level, we will continue to face deficits, forcing us to turn to foreign banks for short-term loans. This could remain the case for several years — or until oil prices rise sufficiently to stabilize the national budget.

At today’s oil price of \$63 per barrel, we are facing a total budget deficit, as our budget requires \$92 per barrel to break even. Without reaching this breakeven price, we will continue to run deficits and may need to seek short-term loans from foreign banks. This could be the case for several years or until oil prices rise to the necessary level to balance our budget.

In the meantime, Kuwait needs to find new sources of income generating between KD 10-15 billion annually. Relying solely on our sovereign wealth fund is neither sufficient nor sustainable in the long term, as our cash reserves from overseas investments will only last a few years, especially at the current oil price of \$63 per barrel.

The solution lies in combining income from oil with new revenue streams to bridge the gap between oil income and other sources. This is a hypothetical scenario aimed at securing additional long-term income.

To achieve this, a specialized committee should be formed, consisting of top experts in finance, banking, and commerce to create a think tank focused on finding alternatives to oil. Given the current low oil price and the budget’s need for \$92 per barrel to break even, the gap is significant, and deficits could reach around KD 5 billion by the end of March 2026.

The numbers are alarming, and tightening our belts and budgets is one way to reduce expenses. However, this seems nearly impossible as we must create new jobs, meet expansion plans, and improve our infrastructure.

In the long term, we need to seek international expertise to identify alternative sources of income. With low oil prices expected to persist for years, borrowing is not the solution.

Finding alternatives to oil revenue is the real solution.
email: nafikuw@yaho.com

Annual yield set at 5.535%, priced 175 bps above US treasuries

Kuwait International Bank prices \$300 million Tier 2 Sustainable Sukuk at record low spread

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the successful pricing of a \$300 million Tier 2 Sustainable Capital Sukuk. This achievement forms part of the Bank’s ongoing strategy to strengthen its financial position and reaffirm its commitment to ESG and sustainability principles.

KIB achieved significant success with the offering, which carried an annual yield of 5.535% and an over-subscribed order book that peaked at more than seven times, reaching USD 2.1 billion. The Sukuk were priced at 175 basis points above U.S. Treasury yields, signaling strong market demand and confidence in the Bank’s credit strength.

Priced at a record spread- the tightest spread ever achieved on a Tier 2 Sukuk- this issuance marks a major milestone for KIB, reflecting solid investor confidence in the Bank’s performance and strategic direction, while further cementing its solid reputation and leading position in regional and global markets.

Commenting on the issuance, KIB’s Chairman, Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, stated: “This successful Sukuk pricing reaffirms KIB’s continued strong performance and success. It also reflects the Bank’s solid financial position and high creditworthiness in both regional and international markets. KIB’s decision to issue these Sukuk is in line with the Bank’s carefully planned expansion strategy and its commitment to maintaining appropriate capital adequacy ratios in line with regulatory requirements.”

Al-Jarrah added: “After fulfilling all relevant controls and procedures and securing approvals from the concerned



KIB Chairman Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah

authorities, the Sukuk were successfully offered and priced on October 9, 2025. The issuance and settlement are scheduled for October 16, 2025, with the Sukuk set to be listed on the London Stock Exchange.”

KIB’s Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, stated: “The issuance of the Tier 2 Sukuk supports our strategy to enhance financial flexibility and strengthen our liquidity structure, enabling us to better serve customers and respond to market dynamics. This issuance reaffirms that Kuwait enjoys solid economic fundamentals and an attractive environment for global investments.”

Bukhamseen also indicated that the Sukuk issuance received a significant demand from investors, reaffirming the confidence that global markets place in KIB specifically, and in the Kuwaiti Islamic banking sector as a whole. He added: “This issuance is aligned with



KIB Vice Chairman, CEO Raed Jawad Bukhamseen

sustainability principles, reflecting our deep commitment to responsible banking and our integrated strategy to embed sustainability standards across all aspects of our operations, set to drive sustainable growth.”

Furthermore, Bukhamseen expressed his appreciation for the efforts of all parties involved in the arrangement and success of the issuance. A prestigious international consortium was appointed to manage the transaction, comprising Citigroup and Standard Chartered Bank as Joint Global Coordinators, alongside ASB Capital, Arqaam Capital, HSBC, Kamco Invest, KFJ Capital, KIB Invest, and QNB Capital as Joint Lead Managers and Bookrunners.

KIB’s Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Mohamed Said El Saka, commented: “This issuance represents an important step within KIB’s strategy to diversify financing instruments and enhance the efficiency of its capital



KIB Deputy CEO Mohamed Said El Saka

structure. These Sukuk were issued as a capital instrument, qualifying as Tier 2 Capital in accordance with Basel III Capital Adequacy requirements, and are expected to be rated BBB+ by Fitch. Compliant with Islamic Sharia principles, this issuance marks a significant step in reinforcing the role and importance of Sukuk as one of the key instruments in Islamic banking operations. Based on the Sharia concept of Wakala, Sukuk have become an increasingly important component of the global capital market.”

El Saka added: “This issuance reflects our continued commitment to providing tailored and innovative financial solutions linked to environmental and social governance, which contribute to driving the global transition toward a sustainable economy. The funds raised through this issuance will be allocated to finance or refinance projects that align with KIB’s Sustainability Framework.”

KPC Spain receives license to operate in Portugal

Kuwaiti delegation to Portugal stresses boosting economic ties

MADRID, Oct 11, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador to Portugal Hamad Al-Hazeem stressed Friday commitment to promoting economic and investment cooperation between Kuwait and Portugal and encouraging Kuwaiti companies to expand business in the Portugal market.

Speaking to KUNA, the ambassador said he met with Massimiliano Maiocco, the Operating Director of Kuwait Petroleum Company - Spain, a subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum International (Q8), and Retail and Marketing Manager Abdullah Al-Roumi at the Kuwaiti Embassy in Lisbon late Thursday to look into the company’s recent license to operate in Portugal.

He added that he coordinated an official meeting between the company’s team and Director-General of the Portuguese Business Confederation (CIP)

Rafael Rocha to discuss cooperation with the Portuguese private sector and joint investment opportunities in the energy and petroleum service sector.

He commended the company’s decision to expand its business in Portugal as a significant step towards Kuwaiti-Portuguese economic and trade relations.

The Kuwaiti ambassador underlined that the embassy would keep providing support and help to Kuwaiti companies wishing to invest in Portugal in a bid to promote economic and trade relations between Kuwait and Portugal.

For his part, Maiocco spoke highly of the Kuwaiti ambassador’s key role in strengthening relations between Kuwaiti and Portuguese companies and bolstering bilateral relations in a way that cements the Kuwaiti economy.

A holistic program combining financial management, cultural exchange, and inspiring adventures in the Swiss Alps

NBK Wealth organizes 6th edition of ‘Generation W’ 2025 for the next generation of senior private banking clients

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: As part of its strategic vision to prepare the next generation of visionary leaders in finance and investment, NBK Wealth Group hosted the sixth edition of its prestigious educational program.

“Generation W”. Designed exclusively for the second generation of senior private banking clients, the program seeks to instill a profound understanding of the principles of wealth and investment, while equipping participants with the expertise, discipline, and forward-looking perspective required to safeguard and seek to advance their families’ financial legacies with the highest standards of professionalism and responsibility.

The program offers a comprehensive learning journey, meticulously crafted to immerse participants in the world of wealth management. Through expert-led sessions, real-world case studies, and interactive workshops grounded in the latest research, combined with cultural experiences and enriching adventures in nature, the initiative strengthens critical thinking, builds lasting connections, and broadens participants’ horizons both personally and professionally.

Over four days at the La Réserve Hotel in Geneva, the sixth edition of Generation W brought together 22 participants from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, offering them an exceptional experience that blended in-depth learning in financial management and investment with cultural exchange and inspiring adventures in the Swiss Alps.

NBK Wealth Group offered participants the chance to benefit from the expertise of its global strategic partners through specialized sessions on finance, investment, and asset allocation led by experts from J.P. Morgan Asset Management and Intervest. Delivered in an engaging, dialogue-driven format, the sessions encouraged direct interaction, enabling participants to exchange ideas, ask questions, and explore the latest global trends in wealth management, equipping them with the insight to make more informed financial decisions in the future.

Cultural Experiences & Adventures

As part of the cultural experiences, the program featured an exclusive visit to the Musée Atelier Audemars Piguet on the occasion of its 150th anniversary. Participants were offered a rare opportunity to explore the art of Swiss luxury watchmaking, an encounter that seamlessly blended traditional craftsmanship with modern innovation, providing them with an inspiring perspective on this refined and timeless craft.

The journey continued with an exploration of Switzerland’s cultural and natural beauty, beginning in Montreux, where the calm lake-side atmosphere inspired moments of creativity and reflection. The program then took participants to the historic town of Gruyère, with its medieval charm and rich traditions, offering a unique blend of learning and inspiration. The participants also visited the serene



Faisal Al-Hamad, Nabil Maroof, and Musaad AlSudairy in a group photo with the participants in the sixth edition of the program.



Faisal Al-Hamad speaking in a dialogue session with participants.



Program participants during one of the discussion sessions.

town of Gstaad, renowned for its tranquil charm and picturesque landscapes, offering moments of reflection and relaxation.

A Holistic Experience

Commenting on the event, Mr. Faisal Al-Hamad, Chief Executive Officer -NBK Wealth Group, said: “Generation W is more than an educational program; it is a holistic experience designed to instill a leadership mindset in the next generation of our clients. By equipping them with knowledge, perspective, and vision, we aim to empower them to confidently shape their future and carry forward their families’ legacy with purpose and distinction.”

Al-Hamad added that the program reflects NBK Wealth’s “Beyond Wealth” philosophy, which places the client at the center of every experience and equips them with the knowledge and tools to create meaningful impact in their own lives and within their communities.

Furthermore, he explained that NBK Wealth Group approaches wealth from a comprehensive perspective that extends beyond numbers and assets to encompass human development, insight maturity, and financial awareness. From this standpoint, the Generation W program was carefully designed to integrate specialized educational

Al-Hamad: We are preparing the next generation of our clients to lead the future with a global outlook, grounded in trust and guided by a vision that transcends the traditional concept of wealth.

The program reflects our “Beyond Wealth” philosophy, inspiring participants to make informed, responsible, and sustainable financial decisions.

Now in its sixth edition, the program welcomed 22 participants from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Generation W offers participants the skills and insights to help them continue their families’ successful financial journeys.

The experience combined expert-led sessions by J. P. Morgan Asset Management and Intervest, real-world case studies, and interactive workshops.

It also offered exclusive opportunities, including a private visit to the Musée Atelier Audemars Piguet and enriching adventures in the Swiss Alps.

sessions with in-depth dialogues that inspired participants to reimagine concepts of value and make more conscious, sustainable financial decisions. The program also incorporated reflective experiences in nature, broadening participants’ intellectual and personal horizons.

In a candid and engaging fire-side chat, Al-Hamad shared invaluable advice that resonated deeply with participants as they prepared for their future. He emphasized the importance of patience in building confidence and experience, the need to enjoy the journey rather than focus solely on the destination, and the power of cultivating relationships

based on respect and integrity. He also highlighted the value of continuous learning, personal balance, and resilience, reminding the participants that mistakes are inevitable, but growth lies in how we reflect, adapt, and move forward.

“We are not only preparing the next generation of our clients to understand the markets, but also to lead the future with a global outlook, unwavering trust, and a perspective that transcends the traditional concept of wealth,” concluded Al-Hamad.

Reflecting on their session, Henry Noel-Smith at J.P. Morgan Asset Management, said: “The session

on equity investing took participants through practical scenarios that helped them understand how to value companies and recognize when it is the right time to invest.”

Meanwhile, Hazem Rasbeih at Intervest emphasized that Generation W represents a unique model for preparing young people to meet the challenges of wealth management in a rapidly changing world. He noted that the session was designed in two parts. The first introduced the Four Seasons of Credit, helping participants build a stronger understanding of how to think through alternative transactions and dynamically construct portfolios. The second part was more focused, allowing them to dive deeper into specific sectors such as aviation.

Participant Testimonials: A Journey That Shifted Mindsets

The 2025 edition of the “Generation W” program was met with strong acclaim from the next generation of NBK Wealth Group’s Private Banking clients, with participants expressing unanimous appreciation for its diverse activities and enriching experiences.

Participants reflected that the program shifted their understanding of wealth and its true meaning. Some realized that wealth management extends far beyond numbers

and analysis, emphasizing the importance of self-awareness and aligning financial decisions with personal values.

Others highlighted the program’s unique blend of education and adventure, noting that the mix of rich sessions, time in nature, and deep conversations with experts and peers left them with fresh insights and broader perspectives.

For many, the experience felt like a turning point. They discovered that wealth is not only about possessions, but about how it is managed and how it shapes their vision for the future. The program inspired participants to feel better equipped to make thoughtful and responsible financial decisions, while carrying forward new ideas and a renewed outlook.

A Global Vision

Launched in 2007, the Generation W program reflects NBK Wealth’s ‘Beyond Wealth’ philosophy, aiming to empower young people with knowledge, strengthen their confidence, and expand their global outlook.

NBK Wealth Group aspires to be the trusted partner of choice in wealth management, focusing not only on seeking to grow clients’ assets but also on building enduring legacies that span generations.

Built on a commitment to trust and long-term partnership, NBK Wealth Group is dedicated not only to seek growing clients’ assets but also to shaping lasting legacies that extend across generations. As the leading wealth management group in Kuwait and one of the largest in the wider region, it serves as a cornerstone of National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) Group, one of the Middle East’s foremost financial institutions. With decades of expertise and a strong foundation, NBK Wealth offers a comprehensive suite of services through its broad presence in nine cities across five countries, providing clients with seamless access to local, regional, and global markets.

The Group adopts a client-focused approach, delivering tailored solutions that address the distinct financial objectives of high-net-worth individuals and institutions. Its comprehensive offering spans private banking and wealth management services, including wealth planning, portfolio management, and specialized advisory across family affairs, real estate, cash and credit management, offshore trusts, and estate planning.

NBK Wealth is dedicated to understanding the distinct financial objectives of each client, crafting tailored strategies that seek to optimize returns while maintaining prudent risk management.

NBK Wealth is a brand registered under the name of National Bank of Kuwait S.A.K.P (“NBK”), for use by the Asset Management business of, among other NBK group entities, Watani Investment Company K.S.C.C., a leading investment firm and its affiliates worldwide, combined with the Private Banking services of NBK worldwide, which is one of the largest and oldest financial institutions in the region.

‘We seek to increase trade with Kuwait’

Kuwait & Azerbaijan delegation discuss economic cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11, (KUNA): Minister of Electricity, Renewable Energy, the Acting Minister of Finance, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Dr. Sabeeh Al-Mukhaizeem, discussed with the Azeri Minister of Economy Mikayil Jabbarov, means of boosting cooperation between the two friendly countries.

The Ministry of Finance said in a statement that the meeting was held in line with the two countries’ keenness on diversifying their economies and the mutual desire to broaden the coordination at the commercial and investment levels.

The two sides explored the two countries’ potentials and interests particularly in the sectors of investment and development, energy, renewable energy.

Azerbaijani Minister of Economy Mikayil Jabbarov affirmed on Thursday, the strength and solidity of the historical relations between his country and Kuwait at various levels, particularly economically and commercially.

He also noted his country’s determination to increase trade exchange, given Kuwait’s important strategic location.

In a speech at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), attended by representatives of the Kuwaiti private sector, Minister Jabbarov said that his country has a stable economy and a strong private sector and seeks to increase the rate of trade and investment exchange with Kuwait.

He noted that the investment environment in his country is encouraging and enjoys direct support and patronage from the government.

The minister reviewed a number of investment opportunities available to Kuwaiti investors in vital sectors, most notably food security, energy, and real estate, expressing his thanks to the Chamber for hosting the meeting.

In a press statement following the meeting, KCCI emphasized the importance of meetings that bring together business leaders in Kuwait and Azerbaijan, providing them with opportunities for cooperation that benefit both countries.

KCCI also emphasized the endeavor to transform shared priorities into tangible results that deepen cooperation frameworks, particularly in trade, expand investment flows, and promote sustainable growth for both countries, noting that trade between the two countries has witnessed significant development in recent years, but it falls short of the desired level.

The two countries could expand the scope of their sectoral cooperation and export basket, in addition to cooperating to enhance market access, certification of conformity, and logistics routes.

Targeted promotional efforts, particularly in the field of value-added goods and services, along with trade facilitation, trade missions, and investment partnerships, could contribute to stimulating more dynamic and mutually beneficial economic exchange.

The meeting included a presentation by representatives of participating Azerbaijani and Kuwaiti companies, introducing various areas of work and activities and reviewing the most prominent investment opportunities available for cooperation in both countries.

At the 2025 Private Banker International Global Wealth Awards

Gulf Bank wins ‘Best Private Banking Customer Experience’ Award

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: In a new achievement added to its impressive track record, Gulf Bank has won the “Best Private Banking Customer Experience” award at the 2025 Private Banker International (PBI) Global Wealth Awards, one of the most prestigious international awards in the wealth management sector.

The PBI Global Wealth Awards are presented by Private Banker International, a leading global platform specializing in news and analysis of the private banking and wealth management industry. For over 30 years, the PBI Awards have recognized financial institutions that demonstrate outstanding excellence in private banking services, innovation in wealth management, and leadership in meeting the expectations of high-net-worth clients. These awards are globally respected and are considered a benchmark of quality, innovation, and excellence in this specialized sector.

This award is a testament to Gulf Bank’s sustainable approach to delivering an exceptional banking experience tailored specifically to its high-net-worth clients. The bank focuses on offering a holistic blend of personalized service, bespoke investment solutions, and attention to the smallest details in the client relationship.

This achievement builds upon previous successes. In 2024, Gulf Bank received the “Best Next-Generation Offering” award from



Sattam Al Marzouq receiving the award

Sattam Al Marzouq: We are proud to receive this international recognition, which highlights the quality of our private banking customer experience.

the same institution during a ceremony held in Singapore. This reflects the bank’s leadership in serving a diverse range of affluent clients, including the new generation of investors.

Commenting after receiving the award at a recent ceremony in Singapore, Mr. Sattam Al Marzouq, Deputy General Manager of Consumer Banking, stated: “We are proud to receive this international recognition, which shines

a spotlight on the high quality of the customer experience at Gulf Bank—especially for our wealth management clients.”

He added: “This award not only honors our current services but also reinforces our ongoing commitment to continuously enhance and develop the client experience year after year, in line with global best banking practices. We firmly believe that real banking relationships are built on trust, transpar-

ency, and innovative solutions—values we strive to embody every single day.”

Al Marzouq noted that wealth management clients at Gulf Bank are assigned dedicated relationship managers who oversee all of their banking needs, offering tailored financial and investment solutions that help them achieve their goals, preserve their wealth, and contribute to its growth. These relationship managers remain in close, ongoing contact with clients, including regular in-person visits.

Clients also receive a debit card with airport lounge access, along with discounts on airline tickets and hotel bookings. Additionally, they can obtain premium credit cards (Visa Infinite or Mastercard World) that offer comprehensive travel and accident insurance, airport lounge access, Dine & Fly restaurant discounts, local concierge services, and access to the Gulf Points Program. This program offers exclusive discounts and promotions throughout the year.

Established in 2010, Gulf Bank’s Wealth Management Division is dedicated to providing high-quality, tailored services that align with the lifestyles and financial needs of its affluent clients. These services are designed to ensure a smooth and seamless banking experience, attracting more high-net-worth individuals seeking superior banking solutions.

15-year fixed mortgage rate also eases slightly to 5.53%

Average 30-year US mortgage rate falls to 6.3%, lowest in a year

WASHINGTON, Oct 11, (AP): The average rate on a 30-year U.S. mortgage edged lower this week, returning to its lowest level in about a year.

The average long-term mortgage rate slipped to 6.3% from 6.34% last week, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday. A year ago, the rate averaged 6.32%.

The modest drop brings the average rate back to where it was two weeks ago, after a string of declines brought down home loan borrowing costs to their lowest level since early October 2024.

Borrowing costs on 15-year fixed-rate mortgages, popular with homeowners refinancing their home loans, also eased this week. The average rate dropped to 5.53% from 5.55% last week. A year ago, it was 5.41%, Freddie Mac said.

“Despite the decline, rates continue to hover within a narrow band they’ve maintained since mid-September, as markets remain in a holding pattern amid fiscal and monetary uncertainty, including the ongoing government shutdown,” said Anthony Smith, senior economist at Realtor.com.

Mortgage rates are influenced by several factors, from the Federal Reserve’s interest rate policy decisions to bond market investors’ expectations for the economy and inflation. They generally follow the trajectory of the 10-year Treasury yield, which lenders use as a guide to pricing home loans.

The 10-year yield was at 4.13% at midday Thursday, up from around 4.09% the same time last week. The yield has been trending higher since it slid to around 4.02% on Sept. 11.

In late July, mortgage rates started declining in the lead-up to the Federal Reserve’s widely anticipated decision last month to cut its main interest rate for the first time in a year amid growing concern over the U.S. job market.

However, Fed Chair Jerome Powell has since signaled a cautious approach to future interest rate cuts. That’s in sharp contrast with other members of the Fed’s rate-setting committee, particularly those who were appointed by President Donald Trump, who are pushing for faster cuts.

Even if the Fed opts to cut its short-term rate further that doesn’t necessarily



A development of new homes in Eagleville, Pa., is shown on April 28, 2023. (AP)

mean mortgage rates will keep declining. Last fall, after the Fed cut its rate for the first time in more than four years, mortgage rates marched higher, eventually reaching just above 7% in January this year.

The average rate on a 30-year mortgage has stayed above 6% since September 2022, the year mortgage rates began climbing from historic lows. The housing

market has been in a slump ever since.

Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes sank last year to their lowest level in nearly 30 years. So far this year, sales are running below where they were at this time in 2024.

Still, the recent decline in mortgage rates could set the stage for a modest lift in sales in coming weeks, going by recent data on contract signings.

The National Association of Realtors’ seasonally adjusted index of pending U.S. home sales rose 4% in August from the previous month and 3.8% from the same month last year. There’s usually a month or two lag between a contract signing and when the sale is finalized, which makes pending home sales a bellwether for future completed home sales.

Meanwhile, many homeowners who bought in recent years after rates climbed well above 6% have moved to refinance their existing loan to a lower rate.

Mortgage applications, which include loans to buy a home or refinance an existing mortgage, fell 4.7% last week from a week earlier, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association. But applications for mortgage refinance loans made up 53.3% of all applications.

More prospective homebuyers are also applying for an adjustable-rate mortgage. Such loans, which typically offer lower initial interest rates than traditional 30-year, fixed-rate mortgages, accounted for 9.5% of all mortgage applications last week.

Mortgage rates will have to drop below 6% to make refinancing an attractive option to a broader swath of homeowners, however. That’s because about 80% of U.S. homes with a mortgage have a rate below 6% and 53% have a rate below 4%, according to Realtor.com.

Economists generally forecast the average rate on a 30-year mortgage to remain near the mid-6% range this year.

Trump threatens 100% tariff on Chinese imports starting Nov 1st

China’s rare earth metals seen as strategic leverage in trade talks

WASHINGTON, Oct 11, (AP): President Donald Trump on Friday threatened to place an additional 100% tax on Chinese imports starting on Nov. 1 or sooner, potentially escalating tariff rates close to levels that in April fanned fears of a global recession.

The president expressed frustration with new export controls placed on rare earth elements by China - and said on social media that “there seems to be no reason” to meet with Chinese leader Xi Jinping as part of an upcoming trip to South Korea.

Trump later told reporters he had not canceled his meeting. “But I don’t know that we’re going to have it,” he said during an Oval Office appearance on another subject. “I’m going to be there regardless, so I would assume we might have it.”

Trump also suggested there may be time to ratchet down his steep new tariff threat. “We’re going to have to see what happens. That’s why I made it Nov. 1,” he said.

On Thursday, the Chinese government restricted access to rare earth minerals, requiring foreign companies to get special approval for shipping the metallic elements abroad. It also announced permitting requirements on exports of technologies used in the mining, smelting and recycling of rare earths, adding that any export requests for products used in military goods would be rejected.

On social media, Trump described the export controls as “shocking” and “out of the blue.” He said China is “becoming very hostile” and that it’s holding the world “captive” by restricting access to the metals and magnets used in electronics, computer chips, lasers, jet engines and other technologies.

Trump said in a post that “starting November 1st, 2025 (or sooner, depending on any further actions or changes taken by China), the United States of America will impose a Tariff of 100% on China, over and above any Tariff that they are currently paying.” The president also said the U.S. government would respond to China by putting its own export controls “on any and all critical software” from American firms.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to an Associated Press request for comment.

The S&P 500 tumbled 2.7% on worries about the rising tensions between the world’s largest economies. It was the market’s worst day since April when the president last banded about import taxes this high. Still, the stock market closed before the president spelled out the terms of his threat.

Not only could the global trade war instigated by Trump be rekindled, but import taxes being heaped on top of the 30% already being levied on Chinese goods could, by the administration’s past statements, cause trade to break down between the U.S. and China in ways that could cause growth worldwide to slump.

While Trump’s wording was definitive, he is also famously known for backing down from threats. Ear-



President Donald Trump speaks during an event to announce new tariffs, April 2, 2025, in the Rose Garden at the White House in Washington. (AP)

lier this year, some investors began engaging in what the Financial Times called the “TACO” trade, which stands for “Trump Always Chickens Out.”

The prospect of tariffs this large could compound the president’s own political worries, potentially pushing up inflation at a moment when the job market appears fragile and the drags from a government shutdown are starting to compound with layoffs of federal workers.

The United States and China have been jostling for advantage in trade talks, after the import taxes announced earlier this year triggered the trade war. Both countries agreed to ratchet down tariffs after negotiations in Switzerland and the United Kingdom, yet tensions remain as China has continued to restrict America’s access to the difficult-to-mine rare earths needed for a wide array of U.S. technologies.

There is already a backlog of export license applications from Beijing’s previous round of export controls on rare earth elements, and the latest announcements “add further complexity to the global supply chain of rare earth elements,” the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China said in a statement.

There are other flashpoints in the trade relationship, including U.S. restrictions on China’s ability to import advanced computer chips, sales of American-grown soybeans and a series of tit-for-tat port fees being levied by both countries starting on Tuesday.

Trump did not formally cancel the meeting with Xi, so much as indicating that it might not happen as part of a trip at the end of the month in Asia. The trip was scheduled to include a stop in Malaysia, which is hosting the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

summit; a stop in Japan; and a visit to South Korea, where he was slated to meet with Xi ahead of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

Sun Yun, director of the China program at the Stimson Center, said Beijing’s move was a reaction to U.S. sanctions of Chinese companies this week and the upcoming port fees targeting China-related vessels - but said there’s room for de-escalation to keep the leaders’ meeting alive. “It is a disproportional reaction,” Sun said. “Beijing feels that de-escalation will have to be mutual as well. There is room for maneuver, especially on the implementation.”

Gracelin Baskaran, director of the Critical Minerals Supply Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C., said China holds leverage because it dominates the market for rare earths with 70% of the mining and 93% of the production of permanent magnets made from them, which are crucial to high-tech products and the military.

“These restrictions undermine our ability to develop our industrial base at a time when we need to. And then second, it’s a powerful negotiating tool,” she said.

Craig Singleton, senior director of the China program at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a think tank, said Trump’s post could “mark the beginning of the end of the tariff truce” that had lowered the tax rates charged by both countries.

“Mutually assured disruption between the two sides is no longer a metaphor,” Singleton said. “Both sides are reaching for their economic weapons at the same time, and neither seems willing to back down.”

Flight delays hit airports nationwide

US warns air traffic controllers missing work risk termination

WASHINGTON, Oct 11, (AP): Even though the U.S. has a stark shortage of air traffic controllers, ones who call in sick instead of working without a paycheck during the federal government shutdown risk being fired, the U.S. transportation secretary warned.

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said this week that he understands the controllers’ frustrations and worries. But during an appearance Thursday on Fox Business, he said that by calling in sick they are causing major disruptions to air traffic, and it won’t be tolerated.

“If we have some of our staff that aren’t dedicated like we need, we’ll let them go,” Duffy said, noting that more than 90% of controllers have been showing up to work during the shutdown. “... It’s a small fraction of people who don’t come to work. They can create this massive disruption. And that’s what you’re seeing rippling through our skies today.”

Airports across the country have experienced delays this week because of a shortage of controllers, more than half of which Duffy attributed to work no-shows. The worst problems have come at smaller airports in Burbank, California, and Nashville, Tennessee, but there have also been delays at major hubs in Newark, New Jersey, Chicago, Denver and Dallas-Fort Worth.

Even a small number of controllers not showing up for work is causing problems because the Federal Aviation Administration has a critical shortage of them. Duffy has made it a priority to increase hiring to try to eliminate the shortage in the next few years, but he said controllers who are “problem children” could still be fired.

A Transportation Department spokesperson reinforced that message in a statement Friday, saying, “if there are rare bad actors that

don’t show up purposefully and cause disruptions to our operations, consequences are inevitable.”

The controllers’ union, the National Association of Air Traffic Controllers, has also stressed that members need to keep working during the shutdown.

“We must be clear. NATCA does not condone a coordinated activity that disrupts the national airspace system or damages our reputation. Such actions are illegal. Risk your careers and destroy our ability to effectively advocate for you and your families,” Mick Devine, the union’s executive vice president, said in a video to members.

Like other affected federal workers, controllers are worried about how they will pay their bills during the shutdown when they won’t get paychecks. Duffy and the union’s president have acknowledged the unfairness of their situation, which only adds more stress to their already stressful jobs.

NATCA President Nick Daniels said controllers might have to take time off to work a second job just to make ends meet during the shutdown. But Duffy said that right now, he thinks the controllers who are missing work are “lashing out” in frustration.

“It’s going to eventually be that when people don’t have money, they have time to start making life choices and life decisions. And it shouldn’t be waiting for air traffic controllers to break because of having to take out loans, credit card debt, paying bills, gas, groceries, mortgages. Those things aren’t going to stop,” Daniels said.

Flight disruptions caused by controllers missing work might add to the pressure on Congress to reach an agreement to end the shutdown. That’s what happened in 2019, but so far Democrats and Republicans have shown little sign of getting close to ending their standoff.

First use of new UK digital rules

UK watchdog labels Google a ‘strategic’ market player

LONDON, Oct 11, (AP): Britain’s antitrust watchdog on Friday labeled Google a “strategic” player in the online search advertising market, paving the way for regulators to force the company to change its business practices to ensure more competition in that market.

The Competition and Markets Authority said its investigation found that the U.S. tech giant has “strategic market status” because it has “substantial and entrenched market power” in general search and search advertising.

It marks the first time the watchdog has issued the designation since new U.K. digital rules took effect at the start of the year.

The label doesn’t imply any wrongdoing. But the regulator said it means it has the power to consider using “proportionate, targeted” measures to make sure “general search services are open to effective competition” and that consumers and businesses are treated fairly.

Online search ads appear alongside results from Google’s search engine, usually tagged as “Ad” or “Sponsored” - versus online display ads, which appear on a company’s website. The CMA says Google accounts for more than 90% of the U.K.’s online searches and more than 200,000 of the country’s busi-

nesses rely on Google search ads to reach customers

Google said it expects to face new rules and regulations on how its search service works.

The CMA didn’t announce any immediate fixes, saying it plans to begin discussions later this year.

The watchdog has previously outlined possible remedies, including giving users “choice screens” for rival search services when they use products like the Chrome browser and Android mobile operating system. Another proposal is forcing Google to make search results ranking and presentation fair and non-discriminatory, and give businesses an effective way to complain if they’ve been treated unfairly.

“Many of the ideas for interventions that have been raised in this process would inhibit UK innovation and growth, potentially slowing product launches at a time of profound AI-based innovation,” Google’s senior director for competition, Oliver Bethell, said in a blog post. “Others pose direct harm to businesses, with some warning that they may be forced to raise prices for customers.”

Google, along with Apple, is the subject of a separate U.K. investigation into whether their mobile ecosystems should be given strategic market status, with a decision expected by Oct. 22.

‘Crypto capital of the world’

Crypto lobby uses political spending to shape pro-crypto congressional majority

COLUMBUS, Oct 11, (AP): At a five-star resort tucked in the mountains of Jackson Hole, Wyoming, the cryptocurrency industry was celebrating a historic start to the year on Capitol Hill. Its priorities were sailing through Congress with unusual speed and one senator did not hesitate to say why.

Sen. Tim Scott, chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, was asked during the August panel what had changed to clear the way for such progress.

“I got to tell you,” said Scott, R-S.C. “Thank you, to all of y’all, for getting rid of Sherrod Brown,” he said, referring to the Ohio Democrat who lost his Senate seat in 2024 to Republican Bernie Moreno.

Laughter and applause rippled through the room. “Literally, the industry put Bernie Moreno in the Senate,” he added, according to a video from the Wyoming Blockchain Symposium.

In 2024, crypto interests poured more than \$40 million into that race - more than four times their spending in any other Senate contest. Brown, who headed the committee when Democrats held the majority from 2021 to 2025, had long been one of Washington’s toughest critics of digital assets. That spending on behalf of Moreno, a businessman, sent a clear message: Challenge crypto, and the industry will come for you.

Brown, in a comeback bid, is seeking a fourth term next year, and Democrats are hopeful of their chances in an election without Republican President Donald

Trump at the top of the ballot. But crypto has even more to spend this cycle and is enjoying a Congress that, without Brown, has turned sharply in its favor.

“We saw what happened in the last administration,” Brian Armstrong, CEO of Coinbase, the nation’s largest crypto exchange, told The Associated Press. “We’re never gonna let that happen again.”

In a striking reversal after the skepticism from Democratic President Joe Biden’s administration, Congress this year has acted quickly to embrace the cryptocurrency industry after record spending in last year’s election.

Lawmakers have passed legislation establishing new regulations and consumer protections for stablecoins, a form of cryptocurrency typically tied to the U.S. dollar to limit volatility. Now, an even bigger priority for the industry - a broader bill aimed at clarifying how digital assets are regulated - is advancing through Congress.

From the White House, Trump has fully aligned himself with the industry, calling for the United States to become the “crypto capital of the world.” His family has also profited along the way, holding a significant stake in World Liberty Financial, a crypto venture that launched its own stablecoin earlier this year.

Supporters say the new policies will strengthen oversight and add consumer safeguards, helping to legitimize a sector long dogged by volatility and scandal - from the collapse of FTX to the conviction

of its founder, Sam Bankman-Fried.

“Americans continue to lose money every day in crypto scams and frauds,” Brown said in a 2023 statement crack down on abuses and can’t let the crypto industry write its own rulebook.”

As the Senate committee chairman, Brown was an outspoken critic of crypto and warned that digital assets opened the door to money laundering. He held several committee hearings over cryptocurrency issues, ranging from the negative impact on consumers to use of the currencies to fund illicit activities.

During the 2024 campaign, Brown remained defiant despite tens of millions in industry spending against him. He lost to Moreno, who has ties to the crypto industry, by just over 3.5 percentage points.

“Sherrod Brown’s race really indicated that it’s politically unpopular to be anti-crypto,” Armstrong told the AP. “There is no constituency for that.”

In 2024, the crypto industry spent more than \$130 million in congressional races, including \$40 million in Ohio and \$10 million each in Arizona and Michigan. The ads rarely mentioned cryptocurrency directly, instead focusing on promoting favored candidates - most often successfully.

“DC received a clear message that being anti-crypto is a good way to end your career,” Coinbase’s Armstrong wrote on social media after Brown’s loss.

Brown’s approach to crypto sounds different this time.

'Con Air' meets 'The Fugitive' in new Apple TV+ series

A plane crash, jailbreak, CIA secrets unfold in 'The Last Frontier'

NEW YORK, Oct 11, (AP): The new Apple TV+ series "The Last Frontier" begins with a plane crash in remote Alaska and a scramble for survivors. We learn the plane was carrying a nasty bunch of federal inmates. Then we find out that the nastiest of them is part of a vast CIA conspiracy.

The action hardly lets up in what's being called a cross between "Con Air" and "The Fugitive." Showrunner Jon Bokenkamp piles crisis after crisis in a nifty bit of hyper-aggressive storytelling.

"I am just super self-conscious about not wanting to bore the audience," he says. "I really like something that has a kinetic energy. Sometimes I have to remind myself to slow down."

The series stars Jason Clarke as the US Marshal in charge when the inmates stage a jailbreak at 30,000 feet (9,144 meters), littering his region with desperate criminals. Of 52 inmates on the flight, 23 die, 11 are captured but 18 are missing. Asked by the feds if he has secured the perimeter, he responds: "This is Alaska. There is no perimeter."

One of those missing inmates is a real piece of work: A lethal, intelligent CIA-trained killer who has a secret so dangerous that the agency sends one of their best to Alaska to help manage the situation, even if her allegiances are cloudy at best.

Bokenkamp, who created "The Blacklist," has a cinematic scope and a twisted sense of humor. Like when the prisoner plane goes down after a mysterious explosion, the inmates float in zero-G like in a midair ballet as Elvis' "Unchained Melody" plays.

"From the very opening, this isn't going to be just straight-

up action. It's going to a little different, a little fun, a little bit of a wink," he says. Each episode uses music cleverly and is named after a song used in that show - "Blue Skies" by Willie Nelson, "Winds of Change" by Scorpions and Hayes Carl's "American Dream."

There's more than just non-stop action; there's also quiet moments of family and community coming together: "At the end of it, you find it's filled you up with more than just action and cliffhangers. And that's a good feeling, I think," says Clarke, whose credits include "Zero Dark Thirty" and "Oppenheimer."

The action is set against a small family drama as the marshal and his wife and son deal with old trauma. As a nurse in Fairbanks, his wife is also on the front lines as the inmates are hospitalized. "I think that's incredibly important in 2025 to show women who are incredibly strong and who can do anything," says Simone Kessell, who plays the marshal's wife.

Bokenkamp and co-creator Richard D'Ovidio had originally been intrigued by the story idea of a planeload of inmates crash-landing in Manhattan during Labor Day weekend but eventually moved it rural and made it freezing. The show was filmed in Quebec, with input by US Marshals from Fairbanks.

Clarke, who grew up in rural Australia, said he relished the eight-week shoot in the snow, preferring to be outdoors to being in a studio even though the cold was punishing.

"It sets a mindset that you've got to be switched on right from the beginning because you've got to wear the right gear, you've got to protect yourself, you've got to get ready



This image released by Apple TV+ shows, (from left), Alfre Woodard, Gray Powell and Haley Bennett in a scene from 'The Last Frontier.' (AP)

for these action sequences," he says. "It sharpened the sword rather than dulled it for me."

"The Last Frontier" works on two levels, taking a weekly look at a different inmate on the run in the frozen tundra while also feeding the overall arc of the main secretive CIA asset story.

"We tend to take an episode and focus on a specific inmate, which gives it a little more of a procedural feel, and you get a beginning and a middle and an end," Bokenkamp

says. "I didn't want each episode to sort of end on some cliff-hanger that felt like you didn't get an answer. I wanted it to be a full meal."

An intriguing urban-rural divide emerges as soon as the CIA officer (played by an enigmatic Haley Bennett) arrives in Yukon Flats, clearly looking down her nose at rural folk she calls cowpokes. The locals, in turn, think she's out of touch.

Bokenkamp has spent his life between rural Nebraska and Los Angeles and has seen how each makes stereotypes of city life and rural life. "Both places misunderstood the other," he says. "I kind of wanted to talk about that."

The show celebrates the close bonds and the we're-in-it-together spirit of rural America. In places like Alaska, he says, you depend on your community. Even if you have a beef with your neighbor, that's put aside for an emergency.

"You really can't buy your way out of problems there. You really have to depend on one another in a way that I think is a little bit of a time capsule," he says. "It's a throwback for what community means. And I'm just really interested in that." Kessell, who lives in Australia and whose credits include "Yellowjackets," also was moved by the idea of portraying a small town coming together to help one another.

"I think we need to see that right now on our screens," she says. "I think we need to have hope and knowing that our neighbors will take care of us. I personally want to see that because, yes, we are in a divided time."

She called filming in weather that was minus 25 degrees F (minus 31 C) definitely an experience. "Would I have preferred Hawaii or Sicily? Yes," she says, laughing.

Variety

CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdelfattah Al-Sisi said Saturday that it is essential to keep close cooperation between Cairo and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in education, culture and heritage preservation.

He made the statement while welcoming UNESCO's newly elected Director General **Dr. Khaled Al-Enany**, with Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelaty attending, Spokesman for the Presidency Ambassador Mohammad Al-Shennawi said in a press statement.



Al-Enany

Congratulating Al-Enany on his recent win of the UN body's top post, Al-Sisi spoke highly of this win as a "historic achievement" that reflects Egypt's highly esteemed status and deep international appreciation of its cultural heritage, great culture and intellectual contributions as well as its influential presence in regional and international events.

The Egyptian president restated his country's commitment to the UNESCO's activities, human initiatives and joint action for building bridges of communication among different cultures and peoples. (KUNA)

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NEW YORK: Two jurors who voted in June to convict Harvey Weinstein of sexual assault said they regret the decision and only did so because others on the panel bullied them, the former movie mogul's lawyers said in a newly public court filing.

Weinstein's lawyers are seeking to overturn his conviction for first-degree criminal sex act, arguing in papers unsealed Thursday that the guilty verdict was marred by "threats, intimidation, and extraneous bias," and that the judge failed to properly deal with it at the time.

In sworn affidavits included with the filing, two jurors said they felt overwhelmed and intimidated by other jurors who pushed for a conviction on the charge involving TV and film production assistant and producer Miriam Haley, who accused Weinstein of sexual assault in 2006.

One juror said she was screamed at in the jury room and told, "we have to get rid of you." The other juror said anyone who doubted Weinstein's guilt was grilled by other jurors and that if he could have voted by secret ballot, "I would have returned a not guilty verdict on all three charges." (AP)

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LONDON: John Lodge, the singer and bassist of British rock band The Moody Blues for more than 50 years, has died. He was 82.

In a statement Friday, his family said "with the deepest sadness" that Lodge died "suddenly and unexpectedly." It added that Lodge "peacefully slipped away surrounded by his loved ones and the sounds of The Everly Brothers and Buddy Holly."

Birmingham-born Lodge joined the band in 1966, two years after its formation, along with fellow singer Justin Hayward, following the departure of Denny Laine and Clint Warwick. He remained with it until it stopped performing live in 2018.

Lodge featured on some of the band's best-known work, including 1967's psychedelic album "Days Of Future Passed," which is widely regarded as one of rock's first concept albums, and its follow-up a year later, "In Search Of The Lost Chord." (AP)

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NEW YORK: A defamation lawsuit that Drake brought against Universal Music Group was tossed out Thursday by a federal judge who said the lyrics in Kendrick Lamar's dis track "Not Like Us" were opinion.

The feud between two of hip-hop's biggest stars erupted in the spring of 2024, with the pair trading a series of vitriolic tracks that culminated in Lamar landing the "metaphorical killing blow" with his megahit that May, Judge Jeannette A. Vargas said in her written opinion.

While the track's lyrics explicitly branded Drake as a pedophile, Vargas said, a reasonable listener could not have concluded that "Not Like Us" was conveying objective facts about the Canadian superstar.

After the decision Drake's legal team said in a statement: "We intend to appeal today's ruling, and we look forward to the Court of Appeals reviewing it."

"Not Like Us" - described by Vargas as having a "catchy beat and propulsive bassline" - was one of 2024's biggest songs.

It won record of the year and song of the year at the Grammys and helped make this year's Super Bowl half-time show the most watched ever, as fans speculated on whether Lamar would actually perform it. (He did, but with altered lyrics.) (AP)

Film



Emma Stone poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'Bugonia' during the London film festival in London, Friday, Oct. 10. (AP)

A true crime story with a human face

Tatum, Dunst bring depth to 'Roofman'

LOS ANGELES, Oct 11, (AP): Down on his luck divorced dad who resorts to crime is becoming familiar territory for Channing Tatum as an actor. In "Logan Lucky" his mark was the Charlotte Motor Speedway. In "Roofman," in theaters Friday, it's McDonald's. In both films, there's a young daughter he wants to impress. The big, heartbreaking difference is that "Roofman" isn't just some fun, eccentric caper - it's based on a wild true story, involving a prison escape, a six-month secret stay inside Toys "R" Us and a local girlfriend who was none-the-wiser to his criminal ways.

The film, directed by Derek Cianfrance, who co-wrote the script with Kirt Gunn, takes some important liberties in telling the story of Jeffrey Manchester, though many of the wildest beats did actually happen, including offering up his coat to a McDonald's employee he was robbing. It's suspected that he hit over 40 of the fast-food joints across the country before he was nabbed in North Carolina.

After escaping from prison, where he was serving a 45-year sentence (mostly stemming from kidnapping charges), he really did live behind a bike display in a Charlotte Toys "R" Us, ate baby food to survive, decorated his makeshift bed with Spider-Man sheets and eventually started venturing out into the town and attending a local church where he began dating a single mom.

In "Roofman," Jeffery's life of crime starts with a minor humiliation. Already divorced, the U.S. Army veteran asks his daughter what she wants for her 6th birthday as she's blowing out the candles, which just seems to be setting himself up for failure. She wants a bike, which is out of his price range, and he has the grand idea to start robbing. It works until it doesn't.

Tatum is really good at making you immediately em-



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Channing Tatum, (left), and Kirsten Dunst in a scene from 'Roofman.' (AP)

pathetic to the plight of his character, who is written as a smart, good guy who just can't catch a break. Inside the toy store, he watches the jerky manager (Peter Dinklage) bossing his employees (including Leigh, his future girlfriend played by Kirsten Dunst) around and becomes a modern Robin Hood, secretly adjusting schedules to more humane hours and donating stolen toys to a church. He yearns to see his three kids, but he knows that's too dangerous and is bidding time until his old army pal (LaKeith Stanfield) can help him flee the country. Then he meets Leigh and falls in love.

"Roofman" wants to be a few things at once, a funny, low-stakes caper, a sweet romance between two no-longer-young divorcees, and a humane portrait of the lengths

working class-Americans must go to simply get by in a system that seems stacked against them. Shot on 35 mm film, it has a grainy, vintage look because it's 2004 and suddenly that feels like a very long time ago. And it mostly gets by with its aims, thanks to Tatum's beautiful performance that shows off his range, and Dunst, who does miracles with limited material. Her Leigh is a tired, working mom who is cautiously optimistic that things might just be good for a moment despite her new boyfriend's fake-sounding job and penchant for elaborate gift-giving. While I would have liked more of her side, at least she gets to be a character, unlike Jeff's ex-wife (Melonie Diaz) who is simply an obstacle to him seeing his kids. Why did they get divorced? The movie never asks. Perhaps because part of the answer might have something to do with a domestic disturbance 911 call that the film doesn't touch.

"Roofman" is best experienced as a movie and a movie alone, where two likable actors give fine performances and carry the story through its rougher parts. But there's something a little hard to digest when you try to synthesize the real Jeffrey Manchester, who sounds much more complex and fascinating, and the movie Jeffrey Manchester. The film succeeds in doing what it aimed for: Presenting a humane portrait of a guy who will be serving most of his life behind bars, in crowd-pleasing packaging. But what, ultimately, is the point of using the charming parts and ignoring the unsavory ones? For a filmmaker who has never shied away from the rough edges of reality, "Roofman" feels a bit dishonest.

"Roofman," a Paramount Pictures release in theaters Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "brief sexuality, nudity and language." Running time: 126 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

No Doubt reunites for Sphere residency, Stefani to make history

NEW YORK, Oct 11, (AP): Don't speak - scream, because No Doubt has announced the band's first run of shows in 14 years.

After surprising fans with a brief reunion at the 2024 Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival, the ska-punks have set their sights on Las Vegas. The band will embark on a six-show residency at the Sphere: May 6, 8, 9, 13, 15, and 16 in 2026.

The state-of-the-art, 17,500 capacity, \$2.3 billion arena has seen performances by Phish, the Backstreet Boys, Dead & Company, the Eagles and more. No Doubt is making history by joining them - singer

Gwen Stefani will become the first woman to headline the space.

"The opportunity to create a show at Sphere excites me in a new way. The venue is unique and modern and it opens up a whole new visual palette for us to be creative," Stefani said in a statement. "Doing it with No Doubt feels like going back in time to relive our history, while also creating something new in a way we never could have imagined."

Presale begins Wednesday at 10 a.m. Pacific; it requires that fans sign up on No Doubt's official website. Tickets will go on sale starting Oct. 17 at 10 a.m.

Pacific.

The Sphere opened in 2023. U2 kicked off performances at the venue with a 40-show residency.

No Doubt's last residency, titled "Seven Night Stand," took place in Los Angeles in 2012.

"I can't wait to get on stage again with my bandmates. There is a beautiful energy that happens when we play together, an electricity I have felt through all of our years," bassist Tony Kanal said in a statement. "To be able to leave it all on the table each night and take our fans on the insane journey that is Sphere is beyond our wildest dreams. See you in May!"



Gwen Stefani of No Doubt performs during the FireAid benefit concert in Inglewood, Calif., on Jan. 30, 2025. (AP)



A view of the Falcons and Hunting Exhibition, organized by the Saudi Falcons Club in Malham, north of Riyadh.



Falcons and Hunting Exhibition organized by the Saudi Falcons Club in Malham, north of Riyadh.



A section showcasing rare falcon displays and auctions at the exhibition.

Falcons and Hunting Exhibition in Riyadh offers unique historical experience

The Falcons and Hunting Exhibition, organized by the Saudi Falcons Club in the city of Malham, north of Riyadh, offers a unique experience for enthusiasts of cultural and traditional heritage, deeply rooted in the region's history, amidst a large public turnout.

The exhibition, which ends Saturday, is witnessing widespread participation from falcons and hunting enthusiasts from various regions of Saudi Arabia, the Gulf countries, and the world, reflecting the growing interest in this authentic cultural heritage and its symbolic significance in the history of the Arabian Peninsula.

The exhibition features diverse pavilions, including rare falcon displays and auctions, sections for hunting weapons and equipment, and platforms for products from craft families and environmental organizations.

It also features awareness-raising, cultural, and artistic activities, making it a prominent heritage and tourism destination that combines fun and knowledge and contributes to strengthening Saudi Arabia's presence in the field of preserving heritage and cultural identity. (KUNA)

Kuwait's Abdulwahab Al Rifai joins SIBF 2025 lineup

44th Sharjah Int'l Book Fair to host 1,200 events and celebrate 2,350 publishers from 118 nations

SHARJAH, Oct 11: Held under the theme 'Between You and a Book', the official agenda for the 44th Sharjah International Book Fair (SIBF 2025), is set to run from November 5-16, 2025 at Expo Centre Sharjah. Organised by the Sharjah Book Authority (SBA), the world renowned fair will host more than 2,350 publishers and exhibitors representing 118 countries.

SIBF 2025 will host over 1,200 events and activities with participation from over 250 guests from 66 countries, including acclaimed authors, artists, and intellectuals. The fair will also see 10 countries participating for the first time in the cultural programme, namely; Iceland, Jamaica, Nigeria, Mali, Chad, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea, Senegal, and Vietnam.

The fair will also present an expanded series of pre-booked workshops in both Arabic and English, led by leading voices in publishing and creative writing. In addition, 28 guest experts will host 750 workshops across diverse disciplines, offering insights and hands-on experiences for varied audiences.

This edition will also welcome Greece as the official Guest of Honour, with a special programme of activities featuring 70 participants including writers, poets, translators, illustrators, academics, musicians, actors, librarians, and publishing professionals. The celebration will also spotlight Greece's literary heritage, artistic excellence, and notable impact on world culture.

The announcement, made during a press conference at SBA headquarters, was attended by His Excellency Ahmed bin Rakkad Al Ameri, CEO of SBA; Panagiotis Kougou, Chargé d'Affaires for the Greek Embassy in the United Arab Emirates; H.E. Mohammed Hassan Khalaf, Director-General of the Sharjah Broadcasting Authority; H.E. Mohammed Al Amimi, General Manager of e& UAE; Khoula Al Mujaini, General Coordinator of SIBF; and Mansour Al Hassani, Director of Publishing Services at SBA.

What books show us about ourselves

Highlighting SIBF's ongoing legacy during his opening remarks at the press conference, H.E. Ahmed bin Rakkad Al Ameri spoke of the important and personal bond between people and books; and how every reader's interaction with the written word becomes part of their own life story, revealing something of who they are and the world they carry within. He noted that this relationship between reader and book is what inspired this year's theme, celebrating the dialogue and self-discovery that every reading experience invites.

He added, "Year after year, SIBF stands as a testament to the vision of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, who has always believed in the book as the most expansive space for dialogue between cultures and civilisations. This journey continues today under the leadership of Her Highness Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi, Chairperson of SBA, whose efforts are reinforcing Sharjah's status as a global hub for knowledge and creativity, while advancing the presence of Arabic literature across the world."

Strengthening the cultural bridge between Greece and the UAE

H.E. Panagiotis Kougou, Chargé d'Affaires for the Greek Embassy in the UAE expressed his country's deep appreciation for the recognition and its significance in strengthening the cultural bridge between Greece and the UAE. He highlighted that Greece's participation; designed by the Ministry of Culture under the General Directorate of Contemporary Culture; will showcase the modern spirit of Greek creativity through a diverse programme of literature, art, music, and dialogue, celebrating both the country's ancient legacy and its diverse contemporary voices.

During his speech, he stated: "We invite visitors to explore the diverse richness of Greek language, thought, and art, and at the heart of our participation will be our National Pavilion, inspired by ancient Greek architecture. It will bring together 58 Greek publishers and cultural institutions, and will showcase around 600 titles, in both Greek and translated editions. Our participation is also defined by a rich professional and cultural agenda, featuring more than 70 participants across diverse fields of expertise. As the Guest of Honour at SIBF, we reaffirm Greece's commitment to cultural diplomacy and international dialogue and highlights the deep, growing partnership between our two nations; grounded in mutual respect, shared values, and a common vision for cultural exchange."

Broadcasting the sights and sounds of SIBF

H.E. Mohammed Hassan Khalaf, Director General of Sharjah Broadcasting Authority, said: "We take pride in our media partnership with the Sharjah Book Authority, bringing the sights and sounds of this major cultural event to the world. The Authority has long been a strategic partner in Sharjah's cultural project, documenting the emirate's achievements and highlighting its activities. The Sharjah International Book Fair leads these efforts, restoring the book's prestige and significance in society."

He added: "This year, our coverage will be broadcast live from Expo Centre Sharjah with dedicated studios. Sharjah TV will cover the opening ceremony, Sabah Al Sharjah, Amasi, and other daily shows. Al Wusta TV will present From the Fair, while Al Sharqiya TV will air Huna Kitab and social media segments. Sharjah Radio will launch 'Between You and a Book' and 15 recorded shows, Pulse 95 Radio will provide three shows and 35 promotional segments, and Quran Radio will contribute to general coverage. The Maraya platform will also broadcast key events live to audiences."

A meeting point where civilizations and cultures converge

H.E. Mohamed Al Amimi, General Manager of e& UAE, highlighted the significance of the fair and the e&'s ongoing support for cultural development saying: "We are delighted to meet again at a platform that has established itself as one of the largest and most significant book fairs in the world. It has become a stage



The 44th Sharjah International Book Fair (SIBF 2025) will run from November 5-16 at Expo Centre Sharjah under the theme 'Between You and a Book.' A photo taken during the SIBF 2025 press conference.

through which the finest literary and intellectual creations are showcased, bringing together publishers and book lovers from across continents under one roof; a meeting point where civilisations and cultures converge. At e& UAE, we are proud to be the official sponsor of this prestigious event and to continue our partnership in supporting its journey year after year. This commitment stems from our belief that culture and knowledge are the two foundational pillars of development and progress, and that investing in ideas and the written word is an investment in the future and in generations to come."

Reading as a personal journey

Khoula Al Mujaini, General Coordinator of SIBF, highlighted the personal and transformative nature of reading, explaining how the relationship between reader and book shapes the experience of knowledge and imagination, saying: Each of us reads in our own way, sees, understands, and remembers in our own way. This is why books remain more than just pages and letters. They are small mirrors, reflecting who we are, not just who wrote them. They reveal a very special relationship between the reader and the book. From this idea comes the theme of the 44th Sharjah International Book Fair: "Between You and a Book." It is an invitation to rediscover this unique relationship between reader and book, to build personal bridges to knowledge, and to celebrate those moments when reading offers us a chance to learn in a way that is uniquely our own.

Supporting the book by empowering its creators

Mansour Al Hassani highlighted the Fair's role in empowering knowledge exchange and supporting the global publishing community. He emphasised that promoting books goes beyond reading, extending to all professionals involved in their creation, saying: "The Fair is more than a platform to showcase books; it brings together thousands of publishers, librarians, and cultural professionals from around the world, offering workshops, training, and conferences that explore digital transformation, translation rights, and the future of publishing, while fostering knowledge exchange and international collaboration."

2,350 publishers and exhibitors from around the world

This year, SIBF will welcome a participation of 2,350 publishers and exhibitors representing 118 countries from around the world. The fair features a comprehensive representation of Arab and international publishers, with 1,224 Arab publishing houses showcasing the richness of regional literature, and 1,126 international publishers bringing global perspectives and diverse voices. Together, these participants offer visitors a unique opportunity to explore a vast array of books, ideas, and cultural expressions, making SIBF one of the most comprehensive and internationally diverse literary gatherings in the world.

300+ cultural events led by 158 speakers

This year's cultural programme brings together 158 guests from 40 countries, including leading writers, thinkers, artists and intellectuals recognised with major Arab and international awards. The programme features over 300 cultural events, including panel discussions, workshops, and readings that highlight a wide range of creative work across literature, art, and writing. Participants include 66 international guests from 19 countries, 62 Arab guests from 20 countries, and 30 Emirati speakers contributing their insights and experience to the fair's agenda.

Pre-booked workshops will be offered, in both Arabic and English. Topics include writing thrillers, editing techniques, therapeutic writing and more. The sessions are led by a group of well-known Arab and international writers, including: Mohammed Suleiman Abdulmalik, Abdulwahab Al-Refaie, Dr. Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai, Sangeeta Mehta, and Lisa Dillman.

New additions for SIBF 2025

As part of its efforts to broaden cultural and intellectual engagement in new ways, SIBF 2025 introduces the 'Pop-Up Academy', and this interactive platform will feature 24 sessions led by influencers and specialists across literature, media, art and technology.

The fair will also feature the UK's 'Poetry Pharmacy', an interactive concept where visitors receive personalised "prescriptions" of poetry tailored to their needs, delivered in specially designed bottles with bilingual Arabic and English labels, transforming poetry into a playful and therapeutic experience.

Additionally, SIBF 2025 will include the 'Podcast Station' for the first time, hosting a selection of well-known Arabic podcast programmes including Asmar from Saudi Arabia, Karakapodcast from Oman and Kirsí Al Ithnayn from the UAE.

Emirati and Arab speakers

SIBF 2025 brings together an exceptional selection of literary and intellectual talent from across the Arab world, showcasing the creativity, insight, and diversity of voices shaping the region's cultural ecosystem. The fair hosts a distinguished group of Emirati writers, thinkers, and poets, including H.E. Issa Yousef, Director of the Sharjah Archaeology Authority; Dr. Sultan Al Ameemi, Chairman of the Emirates Writers and Authors Union; Ahmed Al Jasmii, actor and producer; Dr. Saeed Al Dhaheiri, Director of the Future Studies Centre at the University of Dubai and President of the Robotics and Automation Association; Dr. Hamad bin Seray, historian and researcher; Dr. Fahd Al Maamari, writer and researcher; and poet and director Nujoom Al Ghanem, among others.

Expanding the cultural dialogue further, SIBF 2025 also welcomes a prominent roster of Arab authors, specialists, and artists, including renowned Egyptologist Zahi Hawass; Egyptian Mo Gawdat; Egyptian writer and actor Khaled El Sawy; Tunisian writer, actor and director Dhafer L'Abidine; Kuwaiti writer and novelist Abdulwahab Al Rifai; Lebanese writer Jumana Haddad Jordanian writer and archaeologist Zeidan Kafafi; Saudi writer and media figure Mohammed Reda Nasrallah; Moroccan writer Dr. Hassan Aourid; Shukri Mabkhout, Tunisian academic and novelist; and Iraqi historian and writer Dr. Mohammad Jassim Al Mashhadani, President of the Arab Historians Association.

International authors and academics

International literary and cultural figures also feature prominently, from Nigeria's award-winning novelist Chimamanda Ngozi to Italy's physicist and author Prof. Carlo Rovelli, Ireland's Booker Prize-winning novelist Paul Lynch, the UK's psychologist and bestselling author Dr. Julie Smith, and the USA's global content creator Armen Adamjan. India's author and content creator Prajakta Koli, UK/Australia's science writer Gaia Vince, UK archaeologist and co-author of 'The Dawn of Everything' David Wengrow, and Canadian thriller writer Jennifer Hillier further enrich the fair's global presence.

Poetry cafe: celebrating language and rhythm

The cultural programme at SIBF 2025 will include a series of poetry evenings that bring together voices from across the world in multiple languages, including Arabic, English, Greek, Russian, Urdu, Punjabi, Tagalog, Malayalam, and more. The programme features poets such as Hamad Al Braidi from Qatar and Saeed Al Mani from Saudi Arabia, alongside Sizouza Danaei and Zafeiropoulou Eleni (Greek), Saara Ali (English), Ataul Haq Qasmi (Urdu), Syed Suleman Gilani (Punjabi), Luna Sicut Cleto (Tagalog), K. Satchidanandan (Malayalam), and Mikhail Levantovsky and Maksim Zamshev (Russian).

Thriller Festival from November 8-11

As part of its 44th edition, SIBF will host the 4th edition of the 'Thriller Festival' from November 8-11, in collaboration with Thriller Festival New York. The event offers fans of mystery literature a chance to engage with more than 13 international experts, including renowned authors, literary agents, and screenwriters.

Featured guests include British novelist Araminta Hall, Icelandic writers Ragnar Jónasson and Eva Björg, American authors Matt Witten, Stacy Williamson, and Daniel J. Miller, Pakistani novelist Omar Shahid Hamid, and Canadian author Jennifer Hillier. Through panel discussions and hands-on workshops, attendees will explore the latest trends in mystery, detective, and thriller writing, with a focus on narrative techniques and plot development in contemporary fiction. The edition this year will also host an interactive theatrical performance titled 'Murder in the Majlis', featuring students from the American University of Sharjah.

42 events at the Cookery Corner with 15 world chefs

The Cookery Corner brings together global flavours and cultural storytelling through 42 events led by 15 chefs from 14 countries. Among the featured culinary masters are Philip Khoury, Mama Wafaa, Noor Murad, Hawa Hassan and Suzana Velasoso, who will share their

culinary techniques and food experiences. The sessions turn cooking into a shared language, revealing the stories and traditions behind the world's diverse cuisines.

Greece Guest of Honour Programme

Greece's Guest of Honour programme at SIBF 2025 will offer a diverse celebration and showcase of cultural exchange, bringing the ancient and modern spirit of Greece to Sharjah. A highlight will be the Greek National Pavilion, echoing the grandeur of Greek temples, where visitors can browse over 600 titles from 58 publishers, with a spotlight on GreekLit's translation initiative; as well as the immersive "Greek Literature: The Long Journey" exhibition.

More than 70 Greek literary and cultural professionals will share their expertise through talks and workshops and animate the agenda with musical performances, theatre inspired by Yannis Ritsos, children's workshops on the Greek language, and Arabic renditions of literary gems. Collaborative sessions between Greek and Emirati creators will also facilitate lively dialogue, while a number of chefs including Alexandros Sperchos will treat guests to an authentic taste of Greece's culinary heritage.

Publishers' Training Programme with NYU

The 44th edition of the fair includes a Publisher's Training on the 1st of November, organised in collaboration with New York University (NYU). It brings together 161 publishers from across the world, including 75 from Africa. The training focuses on three core areas: managing audio content and building strategies for audio publishing; scaling family-run businesses into global brands; and exploring new approaches to international sales and distribution. Sessions will be led by industry experts, including Amanda Datchernio, Brooke O'Donnell, and Mariana Vigueud, who will share practical insights on modern publishing systems and strategies to strengthen the global presence of Arab and African publishers.

The 15th Sharjah Publishers Conference

The 15th Sharjah Publishers Conference will take place from November 2-4, bringing together representatives of publishing houses, literary agents and industry experts. The three-day event features 30 workshops and roundtable discussions addressing key issues and challenges facing the publishing sector. It also includes one-on-one business meetings to facilitate deals and explore new partnerships. Key speakers include Her Highness Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi, Chairperson of SBA; Madeline McIntosh; Vaidon Gregorios Kidoniatis; among others who will share insights on the future of publishing worldwide.

The 12th Sharjah International Library Conference

Running in conjunction with SIBF, the 12th Sharjah International Library Conference will take place from November 8-10, organised by SBA in partnership with the American Library Association (ALA). The event will bring together over 400 participants from around the world, including librarians and information professionals from academic, public, school, government, and private institutions. The conference provides a platform for knowledge exchange, professional development, and discussions on the latest trends and innovations in library science and the promotion of reading culture globally.

Visitor Services during SIBF 2025

To ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience for all attendees, SIBF will also offer a range of visitor services. Maritime transport connects Dubai to Sharjah Aquarium Station, while designated parking is available at Al Qasba and the Sharjah Aquarium, with shuttle services to Expo Centre Sharjah. Additional parking will also be provided at the Expo Centre Sharjah's multi-storey facility and surrounding areas, complemented by shuttle buses from key gathering points for convenient access to the fair.

Official partners supporting SIBF 2025's success

SIBF 2025 is supported by a distinguished group of official partners, each contributing to the fair's success and reach. E& serves as the Official Partner; Arada as the Development Partner; and Invest Bank and Bank of Sharjah join as Banking Partners. Sharjah Broadcasting Authority takes on the role of Official Media Partner, delivering comprehensive coverage of the event; and AD Media also joins as a Media Partner; while Expo Centre Sharjah and Sharjah Airport are the Strategic Partners; Trends contributes as the Knowledge Partner; and Central Finance joins as the Fintech Partner.

'Protect kids online'

Royals urge parents to fight 'predatory tech'

NEW YORK, Oct 11, (AP) — Prince Harry and Meghan urged parents to stand against social media companies that they said lure children with predatory algorithms designed to exploit their data amid the "explosion of unregulated artificial intelligence."

"Like so many parents, we think constantly about how to embrace technology's benefits while safeguarding against its dangers," Meghan said Thursday night at Spring Studios in Manhattan as the couple was named Humanitarians of the Year by the nonprofit Project Healthy Minds. "And that hopeful intention of separation is rapidly becoming impossible."

Underscoring that point, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex cited research from ParentsTogether. The advocacy group's staff, posing as children, reported experiencing a harmful interaction every five minutes they spent with an artificial intelligence chatbot on the app Character.AI.

"This wasn't content created by a third party. These were the companies' own chatbots working to advance their own depraved internal policies," Prince Harry said. "But here's what gives us hope: these families aren't facing this alone."

Their comments came at the annual gala for Project Healthy Minds, a millennial- and Gen Z-driven tech nonprofit that runs a free online marketplace aiming to connect patients with the exact mental health care they seek. To multiply their movement of families fighting for online safety, the couple also announced Thursday that their foundation's Parents Network would join forces with ParentsTogether.

ParentsTogether Executive Director Ailen Arreaza described their effort as "a David vs. Goliath fight."

"We are up against these multi-billionaire companies that are actively trying to get our kids addicted," Arreaza said Friday at Project Healthy Minds' World Mental Health Day Festival. "And so, we really try to destigmatize that shame and guilt that parents might feel."

The Duke and Duchess have made youth mental health a cornerstone of their philanthropic work since launching the Archewell Foundation in 2020 after stepping aside as working royals. Through its community of families who have experienced online harm and support for youth-led organizations shaping responsible technology, the nonprofit works to make digital spaces safer.

Damage

Their push has since expanded to not just stress social media's harms but highlight platforms' design features that they blame for amplify damaging content.

At a World Mental Health Day Festival panel presented by the Archewell Foundation, young people described how they believe lacking regulations expose them to online spaces ready to capitalize on their emotional needs and difficulties with self-regulating.

One teenage advocate said she developed an eating disorder as TikTok's algorithm pushed weight-loss recipe videos onto her infinitely scrolling "For You" page.

"When we talk about social media and how young people rely on it, we also need to talk about: how can we address these needs in-person so that they're getting the same support that they need?" Hopelab research assistant Jayla Stokesberry said.

Prince Harry has previously stressed the need to hold powerful social media companies accountable. He warned last year that young people are experiencing an "epidemic" of anxiety, depression and social isolation driven by negative experiences online. According to numerous studies, few guardrails exist to mitigate kids' exposure to age-inappropriate content including pornography and violence on social media, where they also face cyberbullying and sexual harassment.

The issue could also be considered personal for the couple. Meghan has been open about her mental health struggles due to what she describes as the royal family's intense pressures and tabloid attacks. Harry's own personal life has been the subject of much tabloid reporting, including targeted phone hacking and surveillance.

"Culture makers" such as Prince Harry and Meghan are important voices in mental health conversations because they inspire their enormous audiences to seek care, according to Project Healthy Minds CEO Phil Schermer. But Schermer emphasized that the "moment of inspiration is fleeting" and it's important for celebrities to take the extra step of partnering with trusted organizations that can actually deliver care.

He pointed to NBC television personality Carson Daly, the gala's host, as an example. Daly opened up about his own anxiety on the air after reading a 2018 essay by NBA champion Kevin Love about an in-game panic attack.

Daly, a Project Healthy Minds board member, said mental health is now the most common topic that comes up when fans recognize him in public. "I was like, 'I want to put all my eggs in this basket' because I see the power even when I tell my story, it unlocks so many other people telling their story," Daly told the Associated Press. "And I think that process - that's how the destigmatization works."



Meghan Markle, (left), and Prince Harry, The Duke and Duchess of Sussex, center, pose with Project Healthy Minds founder and CEO Phillip Schermer at the third annual World Mental Health Day Gala, hosted by Project Healthy Minds, at Spring Studios on Thursday, Oct. 9, in New York. (AP)

Annual flu vaccine key to preventing severe illness

Flu season has arrived – and so have updated flu vaccines

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

By Libby Richards
Purdue University

As the autumn’s cool weather settles in, so does flu season – bringing with it the familiar experiences of sniffles, fever and cough.

Every year, influenza – the flu – affects millions of people. Most will experience the infection as a mild to moderate illness – but for some, it can be severe, potentially resulting in hospitalization and even death.

While the start of flu season may feel routine, it’s important to remember that the virus changes every year, making annual vaccination an important part of staying healthy.

Public health experts are closely watching how this year’s flu season unfolds. Early reports suggest that the US may see a moderate level of flu cases, partly because last year’s flu activity was high and it’s uncommon to have two severe flu seasons in a row.

However, the US also uses data from the Southern Hemisphere’s earlier flu season, which lasts from April to October, to help predict what the season might look like. There, the flu season has been more severe than in years past.

Taken together, that means there could be a significant



A pharmacist gives a patient a flu shot in Miami on Sept 9, 2025. (AP)

number of flu cases in the US, particularly among children, older adults and those with chronic health conditions.

Each year, the flu vaccine is updated to best match the strains of influenza expected to circulate. Because flu viruses mutate frequently, the effectiveness of the flu vaccine can vary each year. However, even when the match between the seasonal flu and the vaccine that is designed around it isn’t perfect, vaccination remains the best protection against severe illness.

In the US, all flu vaccines for the 2025-2026 season will

be trivalent – which means they are formulated to protect against the three main groups of influenza virus strains. These are an A (H1N1) virus, an A (H3N2) virus and a B/ Victoria virus.

Recent vaccine policy changes have created some confusion, particularly around COVID-19 vaccines. Many people are wondering if getting the flu vaccine has become more complicated. The good news is that flu vaccines remain widely available and accessible. Pharmacies, doctors’ offices, public health clinics and many workplaces are offering the seasonal shot, often at little or no cost.

The 2025-2026 flu vaccine is available now. Manufacturers start shipping vaccines doses in July and August to ensure access by September. While public health experts won’t know the exact effectiveness of the flu vaccine until flu season is over, the flu shot usually cuts your chances of needing to see a doctor for the flu by about half.

Vaccination helps reduce the severity of illness, the likelihood of hospitalization and the spread of infection within our communities.

It’s important to note that you can get the flu shot at the same time as other vaccines, such as the COVID-19 vaccine or the RSV and pneumonia vaccines for older adults, without compromising effectiveness. If you’re unsure which vaccines are right for you, your health care provider or pharmacist can help you decide based on your age and health status.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recom-

mends that everyone 6 months and older receive the flu vaccine each year, with rare exceptions. That aligns with guidelines from other organizations, such as the American Association of Pediatricians.

The flu vaccine is especially important for:

- Adults 65 and older
- Children under 5 – and particularly those under 2
- Pregnant people
- People with chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease
- Health care workers and caregivers

Even if you’re healthy and rarely get sick, getting vaccinated protects not only you but also those around you who may be more vulnerable.

In addition to vaccination, everyday actions help reduce the spread of flu and other respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Stay home if you’re feeling unwell.
- Consider wearing a mask in crowded indoor spaces during peak flu activity, particularly if you have a cough.

Even though flu season is part of life, serious illness doesn’t have to be. By staying informed, getting vaccinated and practicing healthy habits, everyone can play a role in keeping their communities safe and healthy.

If you haven’t gotten your flu shot yet, now’s the time to protect yourself, and those you care for, this flu season. (AP)



Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. speaks at Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz listens during an event with President Donald Trump in the Oval Office of the White House, Friday, Oct. 10, in Washington. (AP)

Experts concerned

Kennedy reups unproven Tylenol and autism link

NEW YORK, Oct 11, (AP): Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. Thursday reasserted the unproven link between the pain reliever Tylenol and autism, and suggested people who opposed the theory were motivated by hatred for President Donald Trump.

During a meeting with Trump and the Cabinet, Kennedy reiterated the connection, even while noting there was no medical proof to substantiate the claim. He also mistakenly described a pregnant woman’s anatomy and linked autism to circumcision.

“Anybody who takes the stuff during pregnancy unless they have to is, is irresponsible,” Kennedy told Trump and fellow Cabinet members. “It is not proof. We’re doing the studies to make the proof.”

Kennedy has long espoused unconventional beliefs about public health, which have prompted concern among medical experts that, as health secretary, he could upend the country’s evidence-based health policies.

Kennedy noted during the meeting that he had seen a TikTok video on Thursday, which he said featured a pregnant woman “gobbling Tylenol” and cursing Trump. “The level of Trump derangement syndrome has now left the political landscape and now in the realm of pathology,” he said. Kennedy also said the woman was taking Tylenol “with a baby in her placenta.”

A fetus develops in the uterus, not the placenta. The placenta is a temporary organ that develops in the uterus during pregnancy and provides oxygen, nutrients, and hormones to the

growing fetus.

Kennedy’s statement came two weeks after he stood with Trump in the White House as the president used his office to promote unproven and, in some cases, discredited ties between Tylenol, vaccines and autism.

Kennedy also said Thursday that infant boys who are circumcised have double the rate of autism because they are given Tylenol after the procedure.

This claim seems to refer to a study in the Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine from 2015, which looked at ritual circumcision and the risk of autism spectrum disorder in boys under the age of 10 in Denmark.

It found that those who had undergone the procedure, which involves the removal of the foreskin from the penis, were more likely to develop autism than other boys in the study. Researchers suggested a potential link might be due to the pain of the procedure. Researchers noted that they had no data on painkillers or anesthetics used, and thus couldn’t address whether Tylenol was linked to autism.

Other researchers pointed out that the Denmark study looked at correlation, not causation. They also point to other studies that found no evidence to support a link between circumcision and autism.

In another development, AstraZeneca on Friday became the second major pharmaceutical manufacturer to announce it had agreed to lower the cost of prescription drugs for Medicaid under a deal struck with the Trump administration that avoided its threats of steep tariffs.

Steps to support healthy mourning

Losing a family pet opens the door to teaching kids about death, grief

NEW YORK, Oct 11, (AP): Losing a pet is the first time many children encounter death. The experience can become an opportunity for profound emotional learning and influence how young people understand and process grief when they are adults, according to psychologists and pet bereavement specialists.

Parents and guardians therefore have important roles to play when a family pet dies. Along with helping children accept the painful permanence of death, caregivers can guide kids through a healthy and healing mourning process that provides a foundation for coping with an inevitable part of life.

“People are so adverse to talking about death and grief, but it is the one thing that is guaranteed: We are all going to die. We need to be open to talking about that,” said Deirdra Flavin, CEO of the National Alliance for Children’s Grief.

Here are some things to consider when talking with children about death and supporting them through pet loss.

Depending on how old they are and their individual circumstances, children vary in their ability to comprehend the concept of death. The way they process grief, how long they mourn and the impact of the loss is also unique to each child, just as it is for adults. Experts say sadness, anger and other overwhelming emotions associated with grief may be more difficult for younger children to navigate, so having support is crucial.

Psychologists and bereavement counselors say some people feel the heartbreak from a pet’s death as intensely as the loss of any other loved one, reflecting the potential depths of human-animal bonds. In the case of children, their relationship with a pet, and whether the death was sudden or not, are other factors that may shape individual responses.

Colleen Rolland, president of the Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement, says parents usually know how intellectually and emotionally capable their children are of processing death.

Children as young as 4 years old might have been exposed to death through fairy tales and other stories but may struggle to understand its finality, Rolland said. Older children, who will know their loss is forever, may need more emotional support from friends and family, she said.

Elizabeth Perez said she learned



Meaghan and Chris Marr pose with their children and dogs for a photograph on Thursday, Sept. 25, 2025, in Cartersville, Ga. (AP)

quickly how differently her three children processed the death of their dog, Zoe, who was hit by a car nearly a year-and-a-half ago in front of their second daughter. The other two children were inside the family’s home in Pullman, Washington.

“Carmen would talk about how the images kept replaying in her head, she was having nightmares and couldn’t sleep,” Perez said, adding that her daughter hasn’t worn the dress she had on that day since.

Perez recalls she and her husband spending a lot of time with Carmen, now 11, and asking her questions about her feelings. Even their youngest child, who did not see the car hit Zoe and had spent the least amount of time with the dog, still tears up thinking about the April 2024 accident.

“It was really hard for the whole family. Everybody was feeling it differently and at different times,” Perez said. “We, as parents, did not feel prepared.”

Experts say it’s important to be honest and use clear language when discussing death with children. Adults often are inclined to protect children with euphemisms, such as a pet went to sleep, got lost or was put down.

“That can be alarming for children and cause a lot of confusion and fear. So, saying ‘The fish went to sleep’ might create concerns for the child when they are going to sleep,” Flavin said. “Particularly with younger kids because they are so literal in terms of the way that things are expressed to them.”

When Leah Motz’s daughter was 2 years old, she told her their 15-year-old dog, Izzy, had a “good life but his body is broken and it won’t be able to fix itself.” Motz recalled that before taking him to be euthanized near their home in Renton, Washington, she further explained they were going to “help Izzy die.”

Sometimes adults have a hard time recognizing the impact that losing a pet instead of a person might have on children. Rolland says child grief tends to be trivialized in general, and that people who are very devoted to their pets can produce as much stigma as sympathy.

“But pet loss is a very real form of grief,” she said.

Raquel Halfond, a licensed clinical psychologist with the American Psychological Association, says children’s behavior often indicates how they are feeling even if they are not expressing it verbally.

“Maybe you notice your child is having more tantrums. Suddenly there’s stuff that they used to love doing, they no longer want to do. Maybe they start to refuse to go to school. It’s really normal to have these for a while,” Halfond said.

Other signs to look for include uncharacteristic sadness, tears, anger and even silence, she said. A child’s emotional response is often independent of their willingness to talk about death, but she said it might be time to seek professional help if their emotions or behavior affect their ability to function.

Malaria cases

Mpox deaths in Africa top 2,000

ADDIS ABABA, Oct 11, (Xinhua): The death toll from Africa’s ongoing mpox outbreak has surpassed the 2,000 mark since the start of 2024, as the number of cases approaches 200,000, according to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

During an online media briefing on Thursday evening, Ngashi Ngongo, chief of staff and head of the Executive Office at Africa CDC, said that 29 mpox-affected African countries have reported 198,749 mpox cases since the start of 2024, including 54,525 confirmed cases and 2,066 deaths.

Data from the African Union’s specialized healthcare agency showed that the continent has reported 118,452 mpox cases so far in 2025, surpassing last year’s total of 80,297.

It said the number of confirmed mpox cases reported this year, at 34,812, also represents about 177 percent of the total 19,713 confirmed cases reported in 2024.

The latest data also showed that the weekly confirmed cases have dropped by 65.4 percent, from 1,620 in May to 560 last week. Amid the declining weekly cases, the number of countries that are reporting active cases also fell to 14 during last week, as compared to 17 active mpox-affected countries during the previous week, it was noted.

Malaria: Cape Verde has recorded 56 malaria cases, including 23 imported ones, Minister of Health Jorge Figueiredo said on Thursday, urging residents of Praia, the city most affected, to remain vigilant.

“We are going through a complex period related to malaria, and consequently, cases are emerging that we are closely monitoring,” the minister said.

Figueiredo said that while some cases have shown fluctuating patterns, challenges in tackling the disease are expected to persist through the end of the year.

“We are strengthening strategies to prevent the occurrence of malaria and epidemics, as well as serious health impacts on the population,” he added, calling on all multisectoral authorities, from environmental services to municipalities, to take part and to care for themselves and their communities.



A male Eastern Black Rhino calf born Sept. 13, 2025, approaches a pumpkin Friday, Oct. 10, as he makes his public debut at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo in Cleveland, Ohio. (AP)

Endangered black rhino debuts

A critically endangered rhino made its public debut Friday at a Cleveland zoo, dashing about its enclosure and giving a boost to the endangered species.

The 120-pound (55-kilogram) eastern black rhino was born earlier this month to 22-year-old mother Kibibbi and 25-year-old father Forrest at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. The zoo has a long history of caring for the species, which has fewer than 583 adults in the wild, alongside global partners.

“He is very playful, runs around, gets the zoomies, so it’s very fun to take care of him, especially when they’re this age,” animal keeper Stefanie Titerington said as the calf explored the Daniel Maltz Rhino Reserve.

Alex Budinger, a zoo visitor, was thrilled to catch a glimpse of the rhino that has not yet been named. The zoo is holding a contest for guests to choose from one of three names – Makena, Kenza or Kamari.

“We’re zoo members. We come here all the time, so we’re very excited that there’s a new baby to come and check out and we thought it was a great day to come out and see the rhino,” Budinger said. “It’s adorable and we enjoy coming and seeing it do some enrichment and chew up some pumpkins.” (AP)

Climate change and habitat loss blamed

Arctic seals, half of bird species now threatened

NEW YORK, Oct 11, (AP): Arctic seals are being pushed closer to extinction by climate change and more than half of bird species around the world are declining under pressure from deforestation and agricultural expansion, according to an annual assessment from the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

One bright spot is green sea turtles, which have recovered substantially thanks to decades of conservation efforts, the IUCN said Friday as it released its latest Red List of Threatened Species.

While many animals are increasingly at risk of disappearing forever, the updated list shows how species can come back from the brink with dedicated effort, Rima Jabado, deputy chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, told The Associated Press.

“Hope and concern go hand in hand in this work,” Jabado wrote by email. “The same persistence that brought back the green sea turtle can be mirrored in small, everyday actions – supporting sustainable choices, backing conservation initiatives, and urging leaders to follow through on their environmental promises.”

The list is updated every year by teams of scientists assessing data on creatures around the world. The scope of the work is enormous and important for science, said Andrew Farnsworth, a visiting scientist at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology who studies bird migration and wasn’t involved with the IUCN report.

“Every time one is done and every time there’s revision, there’s more information, and there’s more ability to answer questions” on species, some of which are still largely a mystery to researchers, Farnsworth said.

Because all the marine mammals native to the Arctic – seals, whales and polar bears – rely on the habitat provided by sea ice, they’re all at risk as it diminishes because of human-caused climate change, said Kit Kovacs, co-chair of IUCN’s Species Survival Com-



A hooded seal is released March 30, 2008, by the University of New England’s Marine Animal Rehabilitation Center in Biddeford, Maine. (AP)

mission Pinniped Specialist Group, which focuses on seals.

The three species highlighted in the latest IUCN report – harp, hooded and bearded seals – have been moved up to a designation of greater concern in the latest update, indicating they are increasingly threatened by extinction, Kovacs said.

The same melting of glaciers and sea ice destroying seal habitats also “generally will bring escalation in extreme weather events, which are already impacting people around the globe,” wrote Kovacs.

“Acting to help seals is acting to help humanity when it comes to climate change,” Kovacs said.

The update also highlighted Madagascar, West Africa and Central America, where Schlegel’s asity, the black-casqued hornbill and the tail-bobbing northern nightingale-wren were all moved to near-threatened status. Those are three specific birds in trouble, but numbers are dropping for around three-fifths of birds globally.

Deforestation of tropical forests is one of a “de-

pressing litany of threats” to birds, a list that includes agricultural expansion and intensification, competition from invasive species and climate change, said Stuart Butchart, chief scientist at BirdLife International.

“The fact that 61% of the world’s birds are declining is an alarm bell that we can’t afford to ignore,” Butchart said.

The annual U.N. climate summit will be held in November in Belem, Brazil, with much attention on the Amazon and the value of tropical forests to humans and animals. But Farnsworth, of Cornell, said he was “not so confident” that world’s leaders would take decisive action to protect imperiled bird species.

“I would like to think things like birds are non-partisan, and you can find common ground,” he said. “But it’s not easy.”

One success story is the rebound of green sea turtles in many parts of the world’s oceans. Experts see that as a bright spot because it shows how effective human interventions, like legal protections and conservation programs, can be.

Still, “it’s important to note that conservation efforts of sea turtles can take decades before you realize the fruits of that labor,” said Justin Perrault, vice president of research at Loggerhead Marineline Center in Juno Beach, Florida, who wasn’t involved with the IUCN report.

The overall success with green sea turtles should be celebrated and used as an example with other species, some of which, like hawksbills and leatherbacks, aren’t doing nearly as well, said Nicolas Pilcher, executive director of the Marine Research Foundation. And even for green sea turtles, areas still remain where climate change and other factors like erosion are damaging habitats, Pilcher said, and some of those are poorer communities that receive less conservation funding.

Undefeated Curacao moves closer to World Cup debut

Panama beats El Salvador to stay alive

WILLEMSTAD, Curacao, Oct 11, (Agencies): Goals from Livano Comenencia and Kenji Gorre led Curacao to a 2-0 win over Jamaica to take the home side another step closer to its first World Cup appearance.

Comenencia opened the scoring in the 11th minute, and Gorre added a goal in the 68th for the “Blue Stars” that moved them into first place in Group B after three matches of the final round of CONCACAF World Cup qualifiers.

Curacao, which until 2010 was part of the Netherlands Antilles, a group of islands with internal autonomy, is coached by Dick Advocaat, who was at the helm of the Netherlands national team for three stints and has managed South Korea, Belgium, and Russia.

With the win, Advocaat’s squad remains undefeated and has seven points, one more than the Jamaicans, who are in second place and are led by former England national team coach Steve McLaren.

Jose Fajardo scored in the first half as Panama revived its World Cup qualification hopes with a 1-0 away win over El Salvador on Friday.

Fajardo broke the deadlock just before the hour by tapping home at the far post after Michael Murillo’s run and cross from the right side of the penalty area.

The result marked Panama’s first win of the final round of CONCACAF World Cup qualifiers and leaves the Central American side second in Group A, behind Suriname by virtue of having scored fewer goals. El Salvador is third, two points further back.

The top team from each of the three groups will automatically qualify for the 2026 tournament in the United States, Mexico and Canada. The two best-ranked runners-up will advance to the inter-confederation play-offs.

Trinidad and Tobago, which had a comfortable 3-0 win over Bermuda on Friday, is second with four points.

Dante Sealy in the 10th minute, Tyrese Spicer in the 30th, and Koby Henry in the 49th scored goals for the “Soca Warriors.”

Bermuda suffered its third loss in a row and is nearly eliminated with no competition points.

Twelve teams, divided into three groups, are vying for three direct spots from regional qualifying for next year’s World Cup. The United States, Canada, and Mexico have qualified automatically as World Cup co-hosts.

Also , Virgil Misidjan scored a goal in stoppage time and Suriname salvaged a 1-1 draw against Guatemala to take first place in Group A.

Darwin Lom put the Guatemalans ahead in the 75th minute, but Misidjan’s



Panama’s Jose Cordoba, left, and El Salvador’s Styven Vasquez compete for the ball during a World Cup 2026 qualifying soccer match at Cuscatlan stadium in San Salvador, El Salvador. (AP)

goal in the 94th minute tied the match.

Suriname has five points, and they own the tiebreak over Panama, which got its first win of the final round, beating El Salvador 1-0 at home, and also

has five points.

Jose Fajardo scored in the 55th minute for the Panamanians, who played in their first and only World Cup in Russia in 2018.

FIFA investigates Equatorial Guinea for not traveling to qualifying game

Ivory Coast and Senegal edge closer to WC after resounding qualifying victories

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 11, (AP): Ivory Coast and Senegal moved closer to qualifying for next year’s World Cup after resounding victories in the latest round of African qualifiers.

Ivory Coast beat Seychelles 7-0 to remain top of Group F ahead of Gabon, which defeated Gambia 4-3 away thanks to four goals from captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang - who also was sent off late in the game - to keep alive the team’s hope of automatic qualification.

With one round remaining, Ivory Coast is one point ahead of Gabon and can clinch a spot at next year’s tournament by beating Kenya in its last game.

Senegal beat South Sudan 5-0 to also remain top of its group, two points ahead of Congo, which won 1-0 away to Togo.

The Congolese will need a win in their last match against Sudan and hope that Senegal loses at home against Mauritania in order to quali-

fy automatically.

Three teams still have a chance to qualify from Group C after Benin beat Rwanda 1-0 away while South Africa drew 0-0 with Zimbabwe.

That leaves Benin top of the group, two points ahead of South Africa, with Nigeria another point behind after beating Lesotho 2-1.

South Africa needs to convincingly beat Rwanda in the last round and hope Nigeria beat Benin in the last match.

South Africa was docked three points by FIFA for fielding an ineligible player in its first match against Lesotho.

Tunisia, which has already qualified, beat Sao Tome and Principe 6-0 while Sudan and Mauritania drew 0-0.

FIFA opened a disciplinary case against Equatorial Guinea after the team didn’t travel to a World Cup qualifying game, the latest incident in an increasingly chaotic campaign.

FIFA said its disciplinary commit-

tee will investigate why the Equatorial Guinea men’s team did not go to Malawi for a game scheduled Thursday. Both teams were still in contention to advance to a playoffs by finishing runner-up in the group behind winner Tunisia.

Equatorial Guinea already forfeited its first two games last November as 3-0 losses after FIFA ruled that veteran captain Emilio Nsue was not eligible to represent the country. Nsue had scored the goals in 1-0 wins against Namibia and Liberia.

A post on the team’s official Instagram account said the players voted in favor of not traveling to the game because their health was put at risk by being asked to fly overnight and land in Malawi on the morning of the game in Lilongwe.

The national soccer federation suspended coach Juan Michá over the incident and said on its own Instagram account that the players and coach had shown disrespect to the

people of Equatorial Guinea.

The Malawi soccer federation said in a statement simply that the game was canceled “due to unforeseen travel complications affecting the visiting team.”

FIFA typically would punish a team that does not fulfil its World Cup qualifying fixtures with a default loss.

Federations whose teams do not play a scheduled game also can be ordered to pay costs and compensation to opposing teams and FIFA.

Nsue was finally cleared by FIFA this year to resume playing for Equatorial Guinea despite the Spain-born player previously being technically ineligible for his entire international career with the west African country, which started in 2013. Nsue, now 36, had played for Spain’s Under-21 team, including at a European Championship.

Equatorial Guinea should complete its qualifying group in a game Monday at home to Liberia.

‘Disappointed to not get the win’

Balogun scores again as US draws with Ecuador



Ecuador’s Kendry Paez (10) and United States defender Miles Robinson (12) chase a pass during the first half of an international friendly soccer match in Austin, Texas. (AP)

AUSTIN, Texas, Oct 11, (AP): Folarin Balogun scored in the 71st minute, offsetting Enner Valencia’s first-half goal, and the United States tied Ecuador 1-1 in a friendly.

Balogun scored for the second straight game, his seventh goal in 20 international appearances, after Tim Weah intercepted a clearance and passed to Tanner Tessmann, who sent the ball wide to Malik Tillman.

Tillman crossed where Balogun got in front of Joel Ordóñez and from just inside the 6-yard box re-directed the ball past goalkeeper Hernán Galíndez and in off the inside of the near post.

The 16th-ranked Americans remained with one win in their last eight games against top 25 opponents since March 2024, 2-0 last month over a mostly second-string Japan roster.

“It’s good to build momentum,” Balogun said. “Disappointed to not get the win but I think we was the better side and there was a lot of positives to take into the next game.” The U.S. plays Australia on Tuesday at Commerce City, Colorado, and faces Paraguay and Uruguay next month, then has only a pair of March friendlies before coach Mauricio Pochettino calls in players for his pre-World Cup training camp.

The Americans had 66% possession and outshot Ecuador 11-8. Galíndez dived to parry Balogun’s shot from just inside the penalty area in the eighth minute and pushed Richards’ shot off his left post in the 26th.

“I felt like we dominated,” midfielder Weston McKennie said. “I

hope we take confidence. I hope we take the adrenaline from this game, playing forward, rotating the ball, having patience with the ball, and just always trying to be dangerous.” Pochettino returned to Austin, where he coached his first U.S. match on Oct. 12 last year. The U.S. is 11-7-1 since he took over.

No. 24 Ecuador, which finished second behind Argentina in South American World Cup qualifying, extended its team-record unbeaten streak to 12 games, including seven draws.

La Tri is at Mexico on Tuesday.

Valencia scored in the 24th minute when he touched a through pass from Jordy Alcivar wide of Chris Richards, broke in on goal with two more touches and shot just past Matt Freese’s outstretched right hand and inside the far post. Valencia, who turns 36 next month, is Ecuador’s goals leader with 48 in 101 international appearances.

Christian Pulisic, the top U.S. player, didn’t start because of a sore ankle and entered in the 73rd minute.

Max Arfsten on the left and Weah on the right started as wing backs in a 3-4-3 formation. Five days after his birthday, defender Tim Ream became the fourth non-goalscorer to play for the U.S. at 38 or older after Ed Murphy in 1969, Gordon Bradley in 1973 and Preki Radosavljević in 2001. Ream was joined by Richards and Miles Robinson on the back line.

Left back Antonee Robinson and forward Alex Zendejas did not dress.

India posts 518 in first innings of 2nd test

Gill shines as Jadeja rocks West Indies in day 2

NEW DELHI, Oct 11, (AP): India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja took 3-37 as West Indies reached 140-4 at stumps Saturday on day two of the second cricket test.

Through 43 overs, the visitors made a sedate reply to India’s first innings total of 518-5 declared (134.2 overs) and trailed by 378 runs at end of play.

At stumps, Shai Hope was unbeaten on 31 runs with Tevin Imlach batting on 14 not out at Arun Jaitley Stadium.

This was after Indian skipper Shubman Gill scored his 10th test hundred - 129 not out off 196 deliveries with 16 fours and two sixes. Opener Yashasvi Jaiswal was run out for 175.

Gill’s hundred was the highlight of the post-lunch session. He got to his milestone off 177 balls and in doing so, added 102 off 155 balls with Dhruv Jurel.

The keeper-batter scored 44 off 79 balls and helped speed along the run-scoring as India looked set to declare.

Gill scored 22 off the next 19 balls after this century, with the second 50 of his partnership with Jurel coming off 45 balls.

Jurel was bowled in the 135th over - with Gill declaring immediately.



India’s Ravindra Jadeja celebrates the dismissal of West Indies’ Tagnarine Chanderpaul on the second day of the second cricket test match between India and West Indies at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi, India. (AP)

West Indies then reached 26-1 at tea - opener John Campbell (10) passed the opening barrage from pacers Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj. But as he settled down, Sai Sudharsan caught a shot on his chest off Jadeja at short leg, and Campbell walked back dejectedly.

Sudharsan did not take the field in the final session and went for scans on his hand.

Tagnarine Chanderpaul and Al-

ick Athanaze continued the good work for West Indies, adding 66 off 121 balls for the second wicket.

Jadeja once again got the breakthrough - Chanderpaul was caught at slip for 34 off 67 balls.

He then also dismissed skipper Roston Chase - out for a seven-ball duck with a simple return catch as West Indies was down to 107-4.

In between, Kuldeep Yadav had Athanaze caught for 41 off 84 balls.

Overall, West Indies lost three wickets for 20 runs in six overs.

Despite the mini-collapse, it was the visitors’ best batting session of the series, with a 33-run partnership between Hope and Imlach for the fifth wicket to close down the day.

In the morning, Jaiswal was involved in a mix-up with Gill in the second over of the morning session, and was run out.

The left-handed opener only added two runs to his overnight score and was run out on the eighth ball of the day. He set off for a run, with partner Gill turning him back too late, and Chanderpaul’s throw from mid-off found him way short of the crease.

“It (run out) is part of cricket. I am always trying to bat as long as I can,” Jaiswal said. “If I am there, I feel I should take the game forward. There is always a thought in my head about my goal and the team’s goal, and how I can achieve the two.”

India had finished day one on 318-2. It leads the two-match series 1-0, after winning the first test in Ahmedabad by an innings and 140 runs.

West Indies has not beaten India in their last 26 tests - home or away - dating to 2002.

Devine scores 63 as New Zealand beats Bangladesh for first win

GUWAHATI, India, Oct 11, (AP): Sophie Devine notched her third half century of the tournament as New Zealand beat Bangladesh by 100 runs Friday for its first win at the Women’s Cricket World Cup.

Devine, who scored 112 and 85 in losing causes against Australia and South

Africa, scored 63 off 85 balls to help rescue the White Ferns from another shaky start. Brooke Halliday top-scored with 69 off 104 balls as New Zealand recovered from 38-3 to post 227-9.

“Our plan was clear - we wanted to be boring, looking for ones and twos,”

Halliday said. “We wanted to keep things simple with bat and ball. We knew if we did that, we will fare well.”

In reply, Bangladesh was bundled out for 127 runs in 39.5 overs with medium pacers Rosemary Mair, Jess Kerr and Lea Tahuu sharing eight wickets. Fahima Khatun top-scored for

Bangladesh with 34.

Opting to bat, New Zealand lost three wickets in 11 overs as wrist spinner Rabeya Khan continued her good form by having Georgina Plimmer stumped for four and then bowled Amelia Kerr for just one.

Suzie Bates was then run out for 29 but Devine and

Halliday added 112 runs off 165 balls for the fourth wicket to revive the Kiwi innings. Halliday scored 50 off 80 balls, while Devine reached 50 off 82 balls.

Devine-Halliday became the first New Zealand pair to have a 50-plus stand in three consecutive games. It was also the White Ferns’

second-best partnership for the fourth-wicket or lower in ODIs.

Halliday fell in the 39th over when she was caught off Fahima Khatun, while Devine was bowled in the 44th over. Maddy Green’s 25 off 28 balls with three fours held the lower-order together to cross 220.

In reply, Bangladesh’s batters collapsed in a heap as New Zealand’s medium pacers reduced them to 66-7.

None of the top five batters crossed five runs. Mair and Kerr made early inroads, before Tahuu wrecked the middle order to leave Fahima Khatun with little support.

Change Name

I, ALI ASGAR, holder of Indian Passport Number: T2415864 Permanent Address House V P MOHAMMEDIPURA TEMBA SAGWARA District: DUNGARPUR, State: RAJASTHAN, PIN Code: 314025 Do hereby Correct My Name ALI ASGAR BANGAD

Qadsia stays in contention after commanding straight-sets win



Al Arabi player strikes as a Qadsia player moves in for the block.

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Qadsia secured a commanding victory in the Volleyball Federation Championship top clash against rivals Arabi at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex, sweeping the match 3-0 with set scores of 25-17, 25-17, 25-22 in the ninth round of the tournament.

The same round saw a dramatic five-set contest where Kazma edged past Sulaibikhat 3-2 (sets: 21-25, 25-18,

22-25, 25-15, 15-12).

In the tenth round, Burgan defeated Nasr 3-0, while Shabab recorded the same result over Yarmouk.

Standings:

Kuwait Club leads with 12 points, Kazma and Shabab are tied at 11 points, with Kazma ahead on set difference,

Qadsia and Burgan have 8 points each,

Yarmouk has 6 points,

Arabi and Sulaibikhat hold 2 points each,

Nasr remains at the bottom with no points.

The 11th round, scheduled for tomorrow, will feature a key matchup between Kuwait Club and Qadsia, while Kazma takes on Shabab.

Per the tournament rules, the top four teams from the preliminary stage advance to the semifinals: first vs. fourth and second vs. third, with the winners meeting in the final on October 30.

Kazma enters as the defending champion, having defeated Kuwait Club 3-0 in last year's final.

Kuwait handball preseason tournament starts Oct. 20

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The 2025-2026 handball preseason tournament will get underway on October 20 at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex, featuring three opening-round matchups. The schedule includes Yarmouk vs. Sulaibikhat at 4:30 p.m., followed by Arabi vs. Nasr at 6:00 p.m., and concluding with Salmiya vs. Fahaheel at 7:00 p.m.

The Kuwait Handball Premier League is currently on pause after completing the first round of the second stage, allowing the national team to prepare for upcoming events — the Islamic Solidarity Games hosted by Saudi Arabia from November 3, and the Asian Championship in Kuwait next January, which serves as a qualifier for the 2027 World Cup.

The Kuwait Handball Federation announced the preseason competition to keep clubs active during the league break. Under the tournament format, all teams will compete in a single round-robin, with the top four sides advancing to the Golden Square (semifinals), played in a knockout format to determine the finalists.

In a move aimed at promoting player development, the Competitions Committee has approved the participation of youth and junior players without any limit on numbers. This initiative is designed to give young talents valuable experience by playing alongside senior athletes, helping to enhance their skills and readiness for future age-group leagues and national competitions.



Highlights from last season's preseason tournament.

KFA President to attend AFC Summit in Riyadh

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The Asian Football Confederation (AFC), based in Kuala Lumpur, has announced that the third edition of the Presidents and General Secretaries Conference for National and Regional Football Associations 2025 will be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from October 17 to 19. The event will see Kuwait represented among a distinguished group of football leaders and experts from across Asia and around the world.

The Kuwait Football Association (KFA) will be represented by its President, Sheikh Ahmad Al-You-suf Al-Sabah, and Acting Secretary-General, Dr. Saleh Al-Majroub. The conference will take place under the patronage of AFC President and FIFA First Vice President Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa, and



Sheikh Ahmad Al-You-suf Al-Sabah, President of the Kuwait Football Association

will be attended by FIFA President Gianni Infantino.

In a statement, Sheikh Salman described the conference as a key platform in advancing Asian football, highlighting the AFC's continued commitment to helping all member associations achieve sustainable growth through unity, innovation, and excellence.

The conference program features two main sessions – the first involving representatives of national football associations, and the second bringing together general secretaries from the five regional zones: ASEAN, Central Asia, East Asia, South Asia, and West Asia.

These sessions aim to empower football leaders with modern administrative and technical strategies to address emerging challenges and strengthen institutional performance across the continent's football federations.

11th Basketball Super Cup kicks off

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The 11th edition of the Basketball Super Cup gets underway today at the Kuwait Basketball Federation Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. The tournament opens with Kuwait SC, reigning Arab champions, taking on Qurain at 5:00 p.m., followed by a showdown between Qadsia and Kazma at 7:00 p.m.

This year, the Kuwait Basketball Federation introduced a new format for the Super Cup, featuring the top four teams from last season's league, replacing the previous system that only included the league and cup champions. Historically, Kuwait Club has dominated the competition, winning nine titles, while Kazma has claimed the trophy just once.

Kuwait Club enters the tournament with high confidence after clinching the Arab Championship in Dubai last week, defeating Al-Hikma of Lebanon in the final. The victory boosts their momentum as they aim to extend their dominance in domestic basketball.

Meanwhile, Qurain, led by Yahya Kleib, is looking to make a strong statement with



A Kuwait Club player controls the ball as the opponent moves in to defend.

a positive start in today's opener.

The second match promises a tough contest between Qadsia and Kazma, both of whom recently competed in the Arab Championship. Qadsia was eliminated in the round of 16 by Al-Manama of Bahrain, while Kazma finished fourth, falling to Al-Arabi of Qatar in the third-place playoff.

Aces sweep Mercury, win third title in four seasons



Las Vegas Aces center A'ja Wilson holds up the championship trophy after defeating the Las Vegas Aces in Game 4 of the WNBA basketball finals in Phoenix. (AP)

Wilson named WNBA Finals MVP

PHOENIX, Oct. 11, (AP): A'ja Wilson put in work in the paint, getting bucket after bucket despite multiple defenders draped all over her.

She got plenty of help from Chelsea Gray, Jewell Loyd and Dana Evans. The trio started raining 3s early in the second quarter.

The Las Vegas Aces - once again - were an offensive force in the WNBA Finals, and they were well on their way to their third championship in four seasons. They finished off a four-game sweep of the Phoenix Mercury with a 97-86 victory on Friday night.

"These guys are elite," Aces coach Becky Hammon said.

Wilson had 31 points and nine rebounds while Gray and Jackie Young each scored 18 points.

Five players scored in double figures.

The Aces made quick work of the league's first best-of-seven Finals. They scored 54 points in the first half and averaged more than 90 points per game in the series.

Wilson came to the postgame press conference wearing giant ski goggles from a Champagne celebration in the locker room and carrying a pink tambourine, shaking it after answers she liked.

"This is a symbol of the joyfulness we have right now," Wilson said, grinning. "I'm just so grateful to be with this bunch - and that's not the alcohol talking."

Wilson - honored as the Finals MVP - led the way for the Aces despite a poor shooting night. The four-time regular-season MVP finished 7 of 21 from the field, but made 17 of 19 free throws. Gray made four 3-pointers, including two in the fourth quarter to help turn back a final rally by the

Mercury.

The Aces were presented the championship trophy by embattled WNBA commissioner Cathy Engelbert, who was greeted with boos from the sizable contingent of Las Vegas fans who made the trip to Phoenix.

The Aces led 76-62 going into the fourth quarter, but the Mercury went on an 8-0 run that cut the deficit to 76-70 with 7:56 left. That was as close as they would get.

Kahleah Copper led the Mercury with 30 points, shooting 12 of 22 from the field. Alyssa Thomas had 17 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists.

Mercury coach Nate Tibbetts was ejected in the third quarter after receiving two quick technical fouls from official Gina Cross. Tibbetts was arguing a foul call against Mercury guard Monique Akoa Makani, and reacted in disbelief as he was escorted off the court.

Best of the Rest

Uzbek lifter breaks world records in men's 110kg at IWF: Akbar Djuraev of Uzbekistan set two world records and dominated the men's 110kg category at the IWF World Championships here on Friday.

Djuraev broke the snatch world record with a lift of 196kg on his third attempt and improved his total world record on the fifth attempt, securing the title with results of 196kg in snatch, 232kg in clean and jerk, and a total of 428kg.

Alireza Nasiri of Iran claimed two silver medals in the clean and jerk of 231kg and a total lift of 415kg. (Xinhua)

Bol switches from 400m hurdles to the 800: Dutch track star Femke Bol, the reigning two-time 400-meter hurdles world champion, has announced she will switch events to compete in the 800 meters.

The 25-year-old Bol has won two Olympic bronze medals in the 400-meter hurdles, and she ran a memorable anchor leg of the 4x400-meter mixed relay to capture gold for the Netherlands at the Paris Olympics. (AP)

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NEWS



Valentin Vacherot of Monaco plays a backhand return to Novak Djokovic of Serbia during their men's singles semifinal match of the Shanghai Masters tennis tournament at Qizhong Forest Sports City Tennis Center, in Shanghai, China. (AP)

Sports

Al-Azraq kicks off its training sessions in Dubai

Kuwait coach targets improvement after loss

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DUBAI, Oct 11: Kuwait kicked off its training sessions in Dubai, UAE in preparation for its upcoming friendly against Morocco's local team on Tuesday.

The Al-Azraq delegation arrived in the UAE the day before, coming from Tashkent, where it faced Uzbekistan in a friendly last Thursday, ending in a 2-0 defeat.

Despite the loss, the team delivered a respectable performance in its second match under Portuguese coach Helio Sousa, who rotated several players to give them game time.

Kuwait struggled in the first half, with mistakes exploited by Uzbekistan, who converted two key chances into goals. In the second half, Sousa made substitutions that improved the team's performance, creating scoring opportu-

nities, though the Al-Azraq couldn't find the net.

During yesterday's training, the coaching staff held a meeting with the players, stressing the importance of focus, correcting past errors, seizing chances, maintaining proper positioning, and team organization to achieve a positive result against Morocco and bounce back from the previous defeat.

The medical team also attended to players who suffered minor injuries in the Uzbekistan match, notably Bader Tareq, who left the field in the first half. The Morocco friendly marks Sousa's third match at the helm, following a 2-2 draw with Syria in Doha, Qatar, in September.

Looking ahead, the Kuwait Football Association has planned an intensive schedule during the November international break. The team will travel to Cairo, Egypt, on November 10 for a training camp until November 20. They will play friendlies against Tanzania and Gambia on November 14 and 18 before moving to Doha, Qatar, to face Mauritania on November 25 in the Arab Cup playoff.



Bader Tareq is helped off the pitch.

Al-Subaie, Channing, and Al-Nuaimi impress at Kuwait Equestrian Center Championship



Winners on the podium.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: Subhan Club rider Fawaz Al-Subaie captured the title of the Kuwait Equestrian Center Championship, held recently at the center's arena in Subhan, featuring top riders from local clubs.

Al-Subaie delivered a flawless performance in the main sixth round over 130 cm, finishing in 30.81 seconds after a jump-off to secure first place. He was followed by Britain's Nick Channing, Rakan Al-Hasawi, Yousef Al-Nuaimi, and Abdulrahman Al-Mudhahka.

In the fifth round (120 cm), Yousef Al-Nuaimi

claimed the top spot, outperforming Nick Channing, Hala Al-Mulla, Khaled Al-Khubayzi, and Mohammed Al-Marshoud.

Soju Babi emerged victorious in the fourth round (110 cm), followed by Abdullah Al-Muhanna, Aws Al-Tanak, Hamad Al-Shammari, Abdullah Al-Roudhan, and Mohammed Al-Mulaifi.

Meanwhile, Khaled Jumaa dominated the third round (100 cm), with Najat Abdullah, Abdulaziz Al-Masaeed, and Ali Al-Ajmi finishing close behind.

Kuwait claims gold and silver at the Arab Squash Championship

BEIRUT, Oct 11: Kuwait's Ammar Al-Tamimi captured the men's singles title at the 30th Arab Squash Championship in Lebanon after a hard-fought 3-2 victory over compatriot Bader Al-Maghribi in the final. With this result, Kuwait swept the top two podium spots, while Iraq's Mohammed Farman and Qatar's Azlan Amjad earned the bronze medals.

The team competition kicked off the day before yesterday, where Kuwait's national squad opened their campaign with a 3-0 win over Bahrain. The team featured Ali Al-Ramzi, Bader Al-Maghribi, and Abdullah Hani. Continuing their strong form, Kuwait defeated Lebanon 3-0 yesterday morning before taking on Palestine later in the evening.

Today marks a crucial stage in the tournament, with Kuwait set to face Qatar in the morning and then play a decisive title match against Iraq in the evening. Iraq will be aiming for its first-ever Arab Championship crown, while Kuwait's players are determined to extend their dominance and clinch the team gold.

Representing Kuwait are Ammar Al-Tamimi, Ali Al-Ramzi, Bader Al-Maghribi, Abdullah Hani, Ab-



Gold and silver medalists Al-Tamimi and Al-Maghribi

dulrahman Al-Maghribi, and Jassim Fayed, with the delegation headed by Waleed Al-Sumai'i and team manager Mishaal Al-Sharqawi.

France stays unbeaten, Germany gets back on track

Belgium held by North Macedonia

PARIS, Oct 11, (AP): Kylian Mbappé suffered ankle injury as he scored with a slaloming run to help France beat Azerbaijan 3-0 in World Cup qualifying.

He added an assist for France's second goal but did have to limp off late after he had tussled for a ball with an opponent.

France captain Mbappé will miss his team's World Cup qualifier against Iceland on Monday because of a right ankle injury, the French soccer federation said Saturday.

Just before the international break, he had hurt the same ankle while playing against Villarreal.

France confirmed that its star forward would not make the trip to Reykjavik, and that he would return to Real Madrid.

France maintained a perfect record after three games, while Germany got back on track by easing to a 4-0 win over Luxembourg.

France dominated Azerbaijan but struggled to create opportunities and it took an individual effort from Mbappé to break the deadlock in first-half stoppage time.

The Real Madrid forward gathered the ball in midfield and dribbled through numerous players before slotting a shot into the bottom right corner.

He has now scored in 10 straight matches for club and country.

Mbappé is France's second all-time scorer with 53 goals and needs

five more to overtake Olivier Giroud for the No. 1 spot.

The 26-year-old Mbappé also set up France's second goal with a lofted pass in the area for Adrien Rabiot to head home in the 69th minute.

Mbappé had been a doubt before the match with an injury to his right ankle and he appeared to hurt the same ankle late on, forcing him off in the 83rd minute.

His replacement, late call-up Florian Thauvin, immediately extended France's advantage with his first goal for Les Bleus since scoring on his last international appearance six years ago.

France tops Group D with nine points, five more than Ukraine which scored two late goals to win 5-3 at Iceland after its opponents had fought back from two goals down.

Iceland has three points, with Azerbaijan bottom with just one point.

Germany's campaign was thrown into immediate jeopardy when it lost to Slovakia last month. It now tops Group A - albeit only on goal difference - after Joshua Kimmich scored twice against Luxembourg, which played with 10 men for most of the match after defender Dirk Carlson was sent off in the 20th minute.

Northern Ireland beat Slovakia 2-0. Those two teams and Germany all have six points.

Belgium had 25 attempts on goal but was held to a 0-0 draw against North Macedonia, which tops Group



Germany's Jonathan Tah and Luxembourg's Seid Korac jump for the ball during the World Cup 2026 Group A qualifying soccer match between Germany and Luxembourg in Sinsheim, Germany. (AP)

J. Belgium trails North Macedonia by one point - although it has played a match less. Wales is a point further

back. Kazakhstan is six points behind North Macedonia after crushing Liechtenstein 4-0.

Group B leader Switzerland made it three wins out of three, and with no goals conceded, as two second-half goals earned it a 2-0

win at Sweden. Kosovo remained second, five points below Switzerland, after a 0-0 draw at home to Slovenia.

Vacherot stuns Djokovic, faces cousin Rinderknech in Shanghai final

SHANGHAI, Oct 11, (AP): Two cousins will meet in the final of the Shanghai Masters after qualifier Valentin Vacherot stunned a hobbled Novak Djokovic and relative Arthur Rinderknech fought back to beat Daniil Medvedev on Saturday.

The 204th-ranked Vacherot earned the biggest win of his career by downing Djokovic 6-3, 6-4. While Djokovic was aiming to add to his 100 career titles, the 26-year-old Vacherot will go for number one - against his cousin and fellow

Texas A&M alum.

A couple of hours after beating Djokovic, Vacherot walked back onto the court and hugged Rinderknech to help celebrate his cousin's 4-6, 6-2, 6-4 comeback over Medvedev and relish the rare moment.

But the four-time tournament champion did not make an excuse of his physical struggles.

Coco Gauff had more struggles with her serve but over-

came seven double faults to beat Jasmine Paolini 6-4, 6-3 and reach the Wuhan Open final.

Gauff will face Jessica Pegula in Sunday's title match after her fellow American came from behind to oust top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka 2-6, 6-4, 7-6 (2).

Gauff edged Paolini winning the battle of converted breaks seven-to-five as both top-10 players struggled with their service games.

The third-ranked Gauff fought back from three breaks in the second set, which included her run of five consecutive double faults, and won the final four games to advance to the final.

"I did what I needed to do to get through," Gauff said. The 21-year-old Gauff, who changed her serving coach in August, leads the women's circuit this season with 378 double faults, over 120 more than the next player.

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Editor-in-Chief

AHMED AL JARALLAH

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