



Be exemplary envoys of Kuwait's values and principles, PM tells graduates  
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## KUWAIT EXTENDS CONDOLENCES TO QATAR OVER EGYPT TRAFFIC TRAGEDY

# Trump eyes historic Mideast reset

World leaders gather in Sharm El-Sheikh for 'Peace Summit' on Gaza

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (Agencies): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable of condolences to Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, expressing sympathy over the accident, which claimed the lives of several Amiri Diwan staff members and left others injured while on official duty in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.**

In the cable, His Highness the Amir offered his condolences and heartfelt sympathies to the families of victims, wishing the injured speedy recovery.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable of condolences to Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, expressing sympathy over the tragic traffic accident in Egypt's Sharm El-Sheikh, which claimed the lives of several Amiri Diwan staff members and injured others while on official duty.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince offered his heartfelt sympathies and condolences to the families of victims and wished the injured a swift recovery.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent on Sunday a cable of condolences to Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani.

Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign conveyed Kuwait's deep sympathy and condolences to Qatar following the death of three members of the Qatari Amiri Diwan

and the injury of others in a tragic traffic accident in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, while they were on official duty.

In a press statement, the ministry extended heartfelt condolences and sincere sympathy to the Qatari leadership, government, and people over this loss, and wished the injured a speedy recovery.

Qatar Foreign Ministry announced on Sunday the death of three members of the Qatari Amiri Diwan and the injury of two in a traffic accident in Sharm El-Sheikh while they were on duty.

In a statement, the Ministry expressed deep sorrow and grief over the three deceased identified as Saud Al-Thani, Abdullah Al-Khiyarain, and Hassan Al-Jaber.

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### Opinion

**Ahmed Al-Jarallah**

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

## King of Morocco's speech – the voice of the people to the government and parliament

WHEN the late King Hassan II of Morocco (May God have mercy on him) told a French journalist, "Any ruler who does not love his people will not rule them for long", he was laying down the golden rule for a kingdom that has upheld this principle for nearly 600 years.

When I previously stated that Moroccan democracy is mature enough to correct its mistakes without any severe consequences, I was drawing from the country's centuries-old experience.

This is precisely why the speech delivered by King Mohammed VI at the opening of the current parliamentary term serves as the foundation for a new phase of legislative and governmental action.

In his speech, King Mohammed VI focused primarily on the concerns of the Moroccan people, followed by what he personally observed during his visits to cities in the country, often without a royal entourage. The King, as the primary supervisor of the government's executive actions, interacts directly with citizens.

In this context, when King Mohammed VI said in his recent speech, "We call upon you (the MPs) to be vigilant and committed to defending the causes of the nation and its citizens," it was a clear message of accountability, as the MPs represent the oversight authority over the

government's actions.

On the other hand, His Majesty emphasized that the Members of Parliament must identify and deal with shortcomings.

"This issue is not the responsibility of the government alone, but rather the responsibility of everyone, especially you, the honorable parliamentarians, because you represent the citizens", King Mohammed VI stated in his speech.

The constitutional monarchy practiced in Morocco is the result of decades of experience and the tireless efforts of political parties and groups that work with dedication and sincere cooperation to build a modern, advanced state without compromising the nation's stability.

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KUNA photo

Kuwait's Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait delivering his opening speech.

## Kuwait keen to strengthen GCC judicial ties: Minister Al-Sumait

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA):

The 35th meeting of GCC Justice Ministers reflects the regional desire to boost cooperation, Justice Minister Nasser Al-Sumait said on Sunday.

Delivering his opening speech at the meeting, Minister Al-Sumait affirmed that the GCC judicial system was witnessing continuous development especially in the field of joint

cooperation.

He hoped that the meeting would reach agreements that would boost cooperation within the judicial domain, saying that all participants were eager to share visions meeting the aspirations of the region's leaderships and people.

Continued on Page 5

## Baladia 139 fixes problems quickly

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): The Municipality's (Baladia 139) application helps to directly connect with the public, answer their complaints, and resolve issues promptly, said a Municipality official on Sunday.

Speaking to KUNA, official spokesman and Director of Public Relations at the Kuwait Municipality Mohammad Al-Sandan said that the application aimed to streamline municipal services and speed up transactions.

He noted that complaints of violations were dealt with between four to 72 hours according to the level of the complaint, adding that the process of submitting the complaints was simplified via users taking photos of the said violation and sending it and the location through the application.

Municipal teams will be sent to deal with the situation and users will receive notifications with photos of the violation or complaint resolved, he affirmed.

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## Pharmacies to go self-service

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi on Sunday issued a ministerial decision to regulate the licensing of private pharmacies and set guidelines for the distribution of medicines and medical products in Kuwait.

The decision is part of a comprehensive framework designed to ensure professional discipline and the safe, standardized distribution of medications in a way that serves public health.

According to the decision, pharmacy licenses will be granted only to Kuwaiti pharmacists with a minimum of 10 years experience and an academic qualification accredited by the relevant national authorities.

A minimum distance of 400 meters must be maintained between any two pharmacies, ensuring a balanced and equitable distribution of pharmaceutical services in different areas.

The decision also regulates the delivery of medications through properly equipped vehicles that

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Photo by Samer Shiqr

Photo taken during the Fourth Gulf Digitization Week featuring the International Artificial Intelligence Forum and the Gulf Conference on Modern Archiving and Document Management held in Al-Hashemi Hall at the Radisson Blu Hotel, under the patronage of Minister of State for Communication Affairs Omar Saud Al-Omar.

## Regional experts gather to advance smart governance

## Kuwait leads Gulf efforts in digital transformation

By Mohammad Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: The Fourth Gulf Digitization Week kicked off Sunday, featuring the International Artificial Intelligence Forum and the Gulf Conference on Modern Archiving and Document Management.

The event was held in Al-Hashemi Hall at the Radisson Blu Hotel, under the patronage of Minister of State for Communication Affairs Omar Saud Al-Omar.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority

(CITRA) Dr. Khaled Al-Zamel and Director General of the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) Najat Hussein Ibrahim attended the event, along with the representatives of foreign embassies, most notably the South Korean Embassy – the guest of honor of the conference.

Other participants are representatives of the Ministry of Interior and several other Kuwaiti ministries and agencies, as well as the representatives of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Sultanate of Oman.

The forum has eight main themes, including digital transformation in institutions, future of artificial intel-

ligence, digital governance, smart education and quality of government services.

It includes three workshops and 12 scientific lectures presented by local and international experts in the fields of digitization and artificial intelligence applications.

Kuwaiti inventor Salem Al-Otaibi presented a practical demonstration of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in character simulation, while global companies, such as Huawei, Fortinet and Advanced Systems showcased their latest technical solutions.

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## Decline in juvenile cases reflects changing trends

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: Official statistics released by the Juvenile Public Prosecution revealed a significant decline in the number of cases filed against juveniles during the first half of 2025 compared to the same period in 2024, reflecting a relative improvement in oversight and community awareness.

According to the statistics, the Juvenile Prosecution received 932 cases in the first six months of 2025, down from 1,194 cases during the same period in 2024, marking a decrease of approximately 22 percent. About 875 cases were reviewed this year of which

710 were referred to the competent courts, 143 were withheld, and 22 cases are still under review.

As for last year, the number of cases under consideration reached 1,216, of which 1,005 were referred to court, 202 were withheld, and 9 cases remain pending.

Lawyer Jassim Bandar commented on these figures, explaining that the decline in case numbers does not necessarily indicate an improvement in juvenile behavior. Rather, it may reflect a shift in the criminal behavior patterns, with some forms of criminal behavior moving into the digital realm. Many of the cases currently registered against juveniles involve cyber as-

sault, cyberbullying, possession of prohibited materials, and petty theft. Such offenses often stem from a lack of parental supervision and inadequate educational guidance.

He stressed that Juvenile Law No. 111/2015 is founded on a reform-oriented philosophy aimed at rehabilitating juveniles rather than punishing them.

Lawyer Bandar noted that the state pays special attention to establishing specialized institutions for behavioral therapy and social care, with the goal of protecting this vulnerable group from delinquency and repeat offenses.

Continued on Page 5

### Newswatch

**KUWAIT CITY:** The Council of Ministers has issued a decision to revoke the citizenship of eight individuals, along with those who had acquired citizenship through them, in accordance with Article 21 (bis A) of Amiri Decree No. 15/1959 concerning the Nationality Law and its amendments, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The referenced article states that Kuwaiti citizenship shall be revoked if it is proven to have been obtained through fraud, false statements, or inaccurate testimony.

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**BAGHDAD:** Kuwait's Ambassador to Iraq Hasan Zaman met on Sunday with Iraqi National Security Advisor Qasim Al-Araji.

During the meeting, both sides discussed bilateral ties and ways to enhance them, regional security and their countries' roles in reinforcing stability in the region. (KUNA)



8 Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait organizes Breast Cancer Awareness seminar

NBK strengthens global engagement with high-level participation in IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings

Burgan Bank successfully fully prices \$500 million in international bonds



Prayer Timings			
Fajr .....	04:28	Asr .....	14:53
Sunrise ..	05:47	Maghrib ..	17:22
Zohr .....	11:35	Isha .....	18:38

# Local

**Expected weather for next 24 hrs:**  
**By Day:** Hot and humid especially over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 08-32 km/h with a chance for fog forming at night.  
**By Night:** Mild and humid with

## Weather

light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h with a chance for fog forming over some areas.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	36	25
Kuwait Airport	36	23

Abdaly	37	18
Bubyan	—	13
Jahra	36	22
Failaka Island	34	21
Salmiyah	33	26
Ahmadi	34	21
Nuwaisib	36	23
Wafra	36	20



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince



HH the Prime Minister

## Amir congratulates Spain King on his country's National Day

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah congratulated in a cable on Sunday Spanish King Felipe VI on his country's National Day.

His Highness the Amir wished King Felipe VI good health and the Spanish people further progress and development.

### Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable of congratulations to the King of Spain Felipe VI, on the occasion of his country's National Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished the Spanish King and his people further progress and development.

### Prime Minister

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable of congratulations to the King of Spain Felipe VI on his country's National Day.

## HH Amir receives Crown Prince, PM and officials

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Sunday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Mubarak Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah.

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His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Sunday, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince also received Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Mubarak Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah.

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Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya received a phone call on Sunday from Omani Foreign Minister Badr Al-Busaidi, discussing the close bilateral relations between the two countries, the frameworks for strengthening and developing them in various fields, and the latest regional and international developments.



KUNA photo

Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Abu Al-Wafa hands over the letter of invitation to Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya (right).

## Amir invited to peace deal summit

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday an official invitation from Egyptian President Abdulfattah El-Sisi to attend Monday's Sharm El-Sheikh Summit dedicated to signing the agreement ending the war in

the Gaza Strip.

A statement by the Foreign Ministry said that the letter of invitation was handed over by Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Abu Al-Wafa to Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya during a ceremony.

## Be exemplary envoys of Kuwait's values and principles, PM tells graduates



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and senior government officials.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah presents certificates to the successful graduates at the ceremony.



PM Diwan photos

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): Under the patronage and presence of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the graduation ceremony for the "Ambition" program for new recruits took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The ceremony was held on Sunday for the 10th and 11th training cohorts (2024/2025) at the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute.

It was attended by Head of the Prime Minister's Office Abdulaziz Al-Dakhil, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the institute Abdullah Al-Yahya, Director-General of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, along with senior officials from the government, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In a press statement, His Highness the Prime Minister congratulated the graduates on their distinguished achievement, highlighting their competence and readiness to serve Kuwait in diplomatic fields, expressing confidence in their ability to continue the legacy of their predecessors responsibly and effectively, and to be exemplary ambassadors of Kuwait's values and enduring principles.

His Highness also praised the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and all its staff for continuously fulfilling their mission of representing Kuwait abroad, strengthening the country's international relations, and enhancing its regional and global standing.

On his part, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute, Ambassador Nasser Al-Subaih, delivered a speech emphasizing

Kuwait's commitment to preparing a new generation equipped with knowledge, competence, initiative, and responsibility, and wished the graduates success in serving their country under the leadership of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince.

Diplomatic attache Mohammad Al-Sharida, speaking on behalf of the graduates, affirmed that their graduation marks the beginning of their service to the nation and pledged that they and their colleagues will devote their full capabilities and efforts to serve their country.

The ceremony concluded with His Highness the Prime Minister honoring the 10th and 11th cohorts of the "Ambition" program at the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute.

# Kuwait: World must do more for equality

## 'Eradicating poverty our ultimate goal'

**NEW YORK, Oct 12, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait has called for intensifying global efforts to eradicate poverty, achieve equitable development and sustainable financing, protect environment and expand social security networks.**

This came in a speech delivered on Saturday by the Third Secretary of Kuwait's Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Rashed S. Al-Abhoul, before the general debate of the Second Committee of the United Nations on Economic and Financial Affairs.

The Kuwait diplomat affirmed that eradicating poverty in all its forms will remain Kuwait's ultimate goal.

10 years after of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, only 35 percent of them have made tangible progress, while nearly half remain stalled and 18 percent have fallen below the 2015 baseline, Al-Abhoul regretted, noting that the annual financing gap has exceeded USD 4 trillion.

He added that climate challenges are more urgent than ever, as disasters such as floods, droughts, and forest fires have caused severe losses, leading to an annual contraction of about 5 percent in some economies.

Al-Abhoul called for the establishment of a flexible and accessible climate finance mechanism.

He also urged the establishment of partnerships to help achieve tangible development progress, promote facilitated financing, alleviating debt burdens, mobilizing resources for humanitarian priorities, and directing investments to strengthen sustainable agriculture, food supply chains, innovation, and digital infrastructure.

Al-Abhoul pointed out that the existing international financial system is simply no longer capable of keeping pace with the scale of current challenges, stressing that the time has come for a comprehensive reform to make it fairer and more transparent.

The Third Secretary highlighted the importance of institutional models for solidarity in development, pointing in this regard to Kuwait's establishment of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development in 1961 as an embodiment of this

noble concept.

The Kuwait fund has offered finance to more than a thousand projects in more than a hundred countries, he said.

He touched on the situation in the Middle East and the grave violations of human rights and the environment that are taking place there.

The Kuwaiti diplomat underlined the need to take action and not "remain silent when we are all concerned in this committee with following up on development challenges." He expressed Kuwait's condemnation in the strongest terms of the Israeli occupation's use of starvation of civilians as a weapon, and its strong denunciation of the Israeli occupation's terrorizing of unarmed civilians in flagrant violation of international law.

Al-Abhoul called, on behalf of Kuwait, for lifting of restrictions on the flow of humanitarian aid, ensuring its safe delivery, and holding accountable all those who use food and life as a tool of war.

The Third Secretary emphasized that the next five years will be crucial and must be marked by tangible and measurable achievements.

## KIPIC targets higher income for fiscal '25/'26

## Factors behind reversal of losses and profitability

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) aims to raise its profits for fiscal 2025/2026 by increasing its sales in local and international markets, which have been robust since the beginning of the year, say reliable sources.

Sources pointed out that KIPIC recovered from the losses it suffered in previous years through the growth of its net profits, which amounted to about KD52.2 million in the 2024/2025 budget. They cited five main factors behind this growth. First is the increase in the refining capacity of Zour Refinery, which reached 615,000 barrels per day in May 2024, ranking seventh globally in terms of production quantities. They explained that the refining capacity of the refinery in the years prior to its operational opening ranged between 205,000

and 410,000 barrels per day.

The second factor behind KIPIC's profit growth over the past year is the commencement of the merger of oil companies, particularly the merger of KIPIC into Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) to shake off the losses.

The third factor is the result of the implementation of the spending rationalization policy pursued by the CEO of KNPC, who also serves as the acting CEO of KIPIC, Wadhwa Al-Khatib. The KNPC spending rationalization committee implemented spending rationalization last year, achieving financial savings for KIPIC estimated at KD27 million through this approach. Sources explained that the implementation of rationalization coincided with the provision of better products.

The fourth factor is the focus on stimulating KIPIC's sales in global markets by opening new markets. In the first half of 2025, the company was able to expand its sales of sulfur and

diesel, in addition to producing the best type of low-sulfur jet fuel, and then exporting all of its products that comply with international requirements.

The fifth factor is the company's interest in digital transformation, focusing on developing all aspects related to global technologies, including artificial intelligence, as these technologies are extremely useful in detecting and anticipating errors before they occur, which contribute to stable production.

Sources added there are other important factors behind KIPIC's profitability, such as the signing of numerous contracts with international companies specializing in smart energy, renewing contracts with the largest global platforms related to technological development in the field of oil refining, and strengthening relationships with major refining companies to mutually benefit from each other's expertise.



KUNA photo

Former Director of the Higher Institute for Communications and Navigation, Captain Munther Al-Kandari talking to the course attendants.

## Staff briefed on media progress

## 'Training of Trainers' course begins

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): The KUNA Center for Development of Media launched its "Training of Trainers" program on Sunday, continuing until October 16, with the participation of several KUNA staff members.

The program, presented by former Director of the Higher Institute for Communications and Navigation, Captain Munther Al-Kandari, addresses the concept of training, the difference between training and educa-

tion, and development and training needs.

It also covers training design, the production of training methods and tools, and presents a number of training strategies and models. Additionally, the program, which adopts both theoretical and practical approaches, addresses the formulation of training objectives, training methods and tools, preparation of training packages, the concept and tools of communication, and effective communication skills.

## Kuwait expresses concern over Pakistan-Afghan border conflict

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait expressed concern over the escalation and armed clashes in the border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan, said the Foreign Ministry on Sunday.

A statement by the Ministry added that the escalation would have a negative impact on security and peace in the region.

The State of Kuwait called on both sides to exercise self-restraint and commence dia-

logue to resolve their issues through peaceful means, said the Foreign Ministry, noting that Kuwait was supports of all efforts to achieve security, stability, and welfare for both Pakistan and Afghanistan.



## PAI orders closure of industrial units

# Deportations, jail & heavy fines for waste-dumpers or polluters

## Tourist spots, desert areas, seaside under strict check

## 43 minors driving cars

## 164 illegal aliens, two caught drunk in raids

## Car selling under one roof

KFF personnel tackling a gas tank blaze in a factory.

# Burns, injuries as KFF tackles blazes in 3 different localities

guished a fire that broke out in the kitchen of an apartment in a building in Bneid Al-Gar due to a gas explosion on Friday

KFF explained that the smoke detector triggers an alarm whenever it detects a gas leak.

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The resolution takes effect from the date of its issuance and publication in the official gazette "Kuwait Al-Youm".



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# PAHW unveils roadmap for developer ventures

Strong interest from local, global firms

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) has established a clear roadmap for selecting real estate developers for its inaugural development projects.**

Director of the Investment Department and General Manager of the Real Estate Developer Project at PAHW Engineer Ahmed Al-Ansari confirmed that the purchase of qualification brochures for the first developer projects has attracted great interest from local, Gulf, and international companies.

In a televised interview, Al-Ansari explained that PAHW is currently responding to inquiries from applicants, a process that will continue until October 16. It will announce the list of qualified developers for these projects at a later date.

The next phase will involve providing real estate developers with detailed documents covering financial, technical, and operation-

al requirements, management mechanisms, and the minimum criteria for financing and operating the projects, with the aim of achieving integration between the public and private sectors.

The private sector is highly flexible in meeting the needs of citizens eligible for housing care. Developers will be able to offer a variety of villa and house models, both attached and detached, of different sizes and quality levels.

Eligible citizens will have the option to add extra features or components to their housing units in coordination with the real estate developers. However, the state will not bear any financial costs for these additions.

Al-Ansari stated that the primary goal of this system is to reduce the waiting period for housing care by providing fast and sustainable solutions.

He clarified that the real estate developer system is not an alternative to the current traditional housing system, but rather an additional option that gives citizens the flexibility to choose what best suits their needs.

Al-Ansari revealed that the real estate developer projects launched by the authority cover three main areas - Mutlaa with approximately 2,500 housing units, East Saad Al-Abdullah with 1,200 units, and a third project covering Jaber Al-Ahmad and West Saad Al-Abdullah with a combined total of 1,000 units.

## Fatwa work continues amid restructuring

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: The Ministry of Islamic Affairs confirmed that the Fatwa Authority, affiliated with the Director of Iftaa and Hajj, continues its work in accordance with the approved procedures and competencies.**

The ministry explained that the recent organizational amendment is part of the up-

date of its administrative structure, whereby the Fatwa Authority was abolished as an organizational unit, based on the comments of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), whose approval of the structure did not include an organizational unit called 'Fatwa'.

The ministry confirmed that the abolition of the Authority will not affect its work, as the main aim is to develop the administrative work system and institutional performance.

## Abdulaziz Al-Saqr Center supports 'New Kuwait 2035' Vision

## KCCI graduates 3rd batch of AI-ready workforce

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: The Abdulaziz Hamad Al-Saqr Center for Development and Training, which is the training arm of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), held the graduation ceremony for the third batch of the "Newly Recruited Candidates Qualification and Training" project on Wednesday, October 8, 2025, at the KCCI headquarters.**

According to a press release issued by KCCI, this program builds on the success of the previous two editions, which received positive feedback from various entities and institutions. The month-long program, from September 14 to October 8, 2025, included 33 trainees from the public and private sectors, as well as individuals interested in enhancing their professional skills.

The project aims to equip new employees with the basic skills and knowledge needed to enter the workplace efficiently and professionally, in line with labor market demands and supporting the realization of the "New Kuwait 2035" vision.

The program included four main phases covering a range of integrated topics, such as communication skills and work ethics, basic administrative writing, data analysis and decision-making, problem-solving and total quality management, improving job efficiency, basic legal skills, cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Microsoft Office skills.

This edition introduced new topics like AI and digital technologies, along with practical training tailored to the realities of the Kuwaiti labor market.

At the conclusion of the program, certificates were awarded to the trainees, and a select group of national lecturers were honored for their contributions to the program's success.

This program is part of a series of initiatives launched by the Abdulaziz Hamad Al-Saqr Center for Development and Advancement to empower and qualify national cadres.

Abdulaziz Hamad Al-Saqr Center for Development and Advancement is a non-profit organization specializing in short-term and long-term training programs in economics, commerce, management, technology, and insurance. It also offers international programs that provide certificates accredited by regulatory authorities in Kuwait, supporting sustainable development and meeting the needs of the private sector.



The third batch of the 'Newly Recruited Candidates Qualification and Training' project.

KCCI photo

## Online recruitment runs from October 12 to 31

## Kuwait University opens administrative job vacancies

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: Acting Secretary General and official spokesperson of Kuwait University (KU) Dr. Noura Al-Suwaihi announced the university's need to fill several vacant administrative and technical positions during the current month of October, in accordance with the applicable regulations, conditions, and candidate selection procedures, reports Al-Seyassah daily.**

Dr. Al-Suwaihi stated that interested applicants should visit the KU website <http://www.ku.edu.kw> and navigate to Menu > Jobs to apply during the period between October 12 and October 31.

She emphasized that this initiative reflects KU's commitment to systematically organizing the process of filling administrative vacancies.



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NOW	NOW
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Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Sabah undergoes the necessary tests for blood donation during the campaign.

KUNA photo

## Citizens and residents show strong support

## Ahmadi governorate organizes sixth blood donation campaign

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): Ahmadi Governorate organized its sixth blood donation campaign on Friday under the patronage and attendance of Governor Sheikh Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, under the slogan "A Drop of Your Blood, a Life for Others."**

The campaign, which ran from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., witnessed a remarkable turnout from citizens and residents, with 152 blood bags donated, reflecting the community's awareness of the importance of blood donation and support for the national strategic stockpile.

Governor Sheikh Humoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah told KUNA that the large turnout reflects the growing community

awareness of the vital role blood donation plays in saving lives. He praised the efforts of the participating bodies and volunteers for their cooperation in making the campaign a success.

He also expressed his gratitude to all supporting entities, most notably the Ministry of Health, represented by the Blood Transfusion and Emergency Medical Services Departments, the Commercial Bank of Kuwait, the Tamdeen Group, The Warehouse Mall management, and other participating and supporting organizations, in recognition of their contribution to achieving the campaign's goals and enhancing the spirit of giving in the community.



Kuwait's Namaa Charity distributes food aid to residents of the Garsbale camp in Somalia.

KUNA photo

## Kuwait's Namaa Charity delivers 250 food baskets in Somali camp

**KHARTOUM, Oct 12, (KUNA): Kuwait's Namaa Charity, affiliated with the Social Reform Society, distributed food baskets to more than 250 individuals in the Garasbaaley camp on the outskirts of Mogadishu, Somalia, in cooperation with the local Zamzam Foundation, as part of a humanitarian partnership to enhance food security in vulnerable areas.**

In a statement to KUNA, Khaled Mubarak Al-Shamri, Head of the Development and Relief Sector at Namaa Charity, said that the food baskets contained basic necessities, noting that

the beneficiaries were identified through careful field studies in cooperation with local partners to ensure that the support reaches those in need.

Al-Shamri expressed his deep gratitude and appreciation to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah for their continuous support for humanitarian work, emphasizing that Kuwait has become a global humanitarian center and a source of pride in the field of giving.



Crown Prince, Prime Minister extend greetings

## Amir congratulates Presidents of Fiji and Equatorial Guinea on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Sunday sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Fiji, Ratu Naiqama Tawakecolati Lalabalavu, on the occasion of his country’s Independence Day.

His Highness the Amir wished the President and the people of Fiji further progress and development.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also sent on Sunday a congratulatory cable to the President of Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, on the occasion of his country’s Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished the President good health and the people of Equatorial Guinea continued progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Sunday sent a cable to the President of Fiji, Ratu Naiqama Tawakecolati Lalabalavu, on the occasion of his country’s Inde-

pendence Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished President Lalabalavu good health and further progress and development for his country and people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent on Sunday a congratulatory cable to the President of Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, on the occasion of his country’s Independence Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished him lasting good health and his country continued progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Sunday sent a cable to the President of Fiji, Ratu Naiqama Tawakecolati Lalabalavu, on the occasion of his country’s Independence Day.

His Highness the Prime Minister also sent a congratulatory cable to the President of Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, on the occasion of his country’s Independence Day.



KUNA photo  
Official bodies participating in the 19th relief flight of the second Kuwaiti airlift to aid Gaza.

## Kuwait continues humanitarian support with 19th Gaza aid flight

CAIRO, Oct 12, (KUNA): The 19th relief plane from Kuwait’s air bridge arrived Sunday at Al-Arish Airport carrying 40 tons of food and essential supplies destined for the Gaza Strip.

Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) representative Zaid Al-Shehab said to KUNA after the plane’s arrival that this flight is part of “Fazza for Gaza” humanitarian campaign supervised by KRCS.

He affirmed that the campaign reflects Kuwait’s firm commitment to supporting the Palestinian people during the difficult humanitarian circumstances resulting from the ongoing Israeli occupation aggression on Gaza, embodying Kuwait’s deep-rooted values of solidarity.

Al-Shehab noted that this is the sec-

ond Kuwaiti air bridge organized to deliver urgent aid to Gaza, emphasizing that such continuous humanitarian efforts demonstrate Kuwait’s unwavering dedication to assisting its brothers and promoting global humanitarian cooperation.

Al-Shehab expressed appreciation to the Kuwaiti charitable organizations contributing to the preparation of the aid shipments, as well as Kuwait’s Embassy in Egypt and the Egyptian Red Crescent for ensuring the swift delivery of aid to Gaza’s victims.

The 19th plane carrying relief supplies for Gaza took off from Abdullah Al-Mubarak Air Base on Sunday, flying toward Al-Arish Airport in Egypt, where the cargo will be transported to the Gaza Strip.

## King of

In recent events, the King and the Royal Palace have closely monitored developments, working to ensure that the demands of young people are met. On several occasions, the King toured cities personally to assess the situation on the ground, often setting aside protocol. His primary concern had been to reassure the public and affirm his solidarity with the people.

The King was very clear in his message to government officials and parliamentarians - “We call on everyone, each from their position, to combat all practices that waste time, effort, and resources. We do not accept any negligence that harms public investment.” His statement was aimed to ensure outcomes based on a “win-win” principle can be achieved.

This has been in place for years, as any disruption to the balance undermines the entire equation and renders efforts ineffective. It is one of the core principles on which modern democratic states are built, where the aim is to turn crises into opportunities while maintaining justice.

Based on this, King Mohammed VI outlined the priorities for the next phase, stating, “It has become necessary to reconsider the development of mountainous regions, which cover 30 percent of the national territory, and to provide them with an integrated public policy that takes into account their specificities and numerous potentials, so that the production cycle between rural and urban areas is completed.”

The King’s directives were clear to all state institutions - listen attentively to the people, understand their demands, and treat them with fairness.

The palace’s stance on the youth protests was also clear, urging restraint, discouraging vandalism, and emphasizing that public property belongs to the people. This guidance was evident when young protesters voiced their concerns in a civilized manner.

Shortcomings in government performance occur in any country. However, when there is strong oversight over the legislative, executive, and administrative bodies, reforms tend to happen faster. This is exactly what occurred in Morocco.

Recent events have proven the validity of the golden rule established by King Hassan II (May God have mercy on him). King Mohammed VI has now added a new principle - the voice of the people must be heard by both the government and parliament.

## Decline in

Furthermore, Lawyer Fatima Al-Shatti stressed that the primary responsibility lies with the family, school, and society as a whole.

She urged parents to closely monitor their children’s behavior both in real life and online, particularly with the growing number of applications that can be misused for cybercrimes.

Lawyer Al-Shatti also highlighted the importance of launching awareness programs in schools and youth centers to educate adolescents about the legal consequences of their actions.

In addition, Lawyer Israa Al-Haddad viewed the decline in juvenile cases in 2025 as a positive sign, but cautioned that it should not replace the need to strengthen family engagement and educational efforts.

She called for intensified legal awareness campaigns in schools and through the media.

Lawyer Al-Haddad stated that every rehabilitated juvenile is an investment in society’s safety and the nation’s future, warning that a minor behavioral issue left unaddressed today could escalate into a serious problem tomorrow.

## Baladia 139

He went on to say that, the application tracks the performance of municipal inspectors, executives, and employees in dealing with complaints and violations.

Executives could monitor the performance of municipal teams handling complaints through the application and are given monthly data to track performance, he affirmed.

Al-Sandan added that the Municipality would continue to update the application to avoid malfunctions and better serve the public.

## Kuwait keen

During prosperity or tragedy, countries in the region are eager to boost cooperation, affirmed the minister who took the chance to expressed deepest sorrow over the Israeli occupation’s recent aggression against the State of Qatar.

He also touched on the situation in the Gaza Strip, saying that justice must be served to those affected by the crimes of the Israeli occupation, reflecting during the meeting the GCC support to the Palestinian people.

Meanwhile, Jassem Al-Budaiwi, Secretary General of the GCC, affirmed that sincere efforts in supporting the joint Gulf action to upgrade the justice system have earned them a high standing and advanced positions at the regional and international levels.

This came in his remarks during the 35th meeting of the GCC Ministers of Justice in Kuwait, chaired by Nasser Al-Sumait, the Kuwaiti Minister of Justice and current the president of the current session.

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

### KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: The Women with Disabilities Team organized a breast cancer awareness event recently under the umbrella of the Women’s Social and Cultural Society.

The event included an interactive dialogue session moderated by Secretary General of the Society Haifa Al-Mousa. The lecturers were Dr. Nadia Al-Essa -- a Breast Radiology Consultant at Al-Salam International Hospital, Nawal Rajab -- a consultant on the Will Team for People with Disabilities, and Laila Jamal -- a cancer survivor and head of Be Strong Team.

In a statement to the newspaper, Al-Mousa underscored the importance of raising awareness on early breast cancer screening in combating the disease, especially since treatment is ineffective once it reaches the advanced stages. He affirmed the unwavering

## Community service, Islamic outreach praised

## Kuwait’s mosque marks 60 years in Singapore

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): A Singaporean official said that the Abdulrazzaq Mosque in Singapore has reflected Kuwait’s long legacy in serving the Islamic and Singaporean community in the country.

Delivering a speech during the 60th anniversary of the first Kuwaiti mosque in the country, attended by Kuwaiti Ambassador to Singapore, the Kuwaiti Ambassador Ahmad Al-Shuraim, Singaporean Acting Minister-in-Charge of Muslim affairs, Associate Professor Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, lauded Kuwait for its efforts to spread the teachings of Islam beyond its borders.

He praised the mosque for being in service of the community for six decades, recognizing its positive impact on Singapore through its various programs and efforts.

The mosque has made the leap into the digital age, offering services for the community through cyberspace and social media presence, he added.

Meanwhile, a statement by the Kuwaiti Embassy revealed that the Abdulrazzaq Mosque, constructed in



KUNA photo  
Kuwaiti Ambassador Ahmad Al-Shuraim with Singaporean Acting Minister-in-Charge of Muslim affairs Muhammad Ibrahim.

1965, was officially opened in 1966 under the auspices of Singapore’s first President Yusof bin Ishak.

The mosque has remained since then a vital social and religious insti-

tution and an embodiment of strong Kuwaiti-Singaporean relations.

The anniversary celebration was attended by various figures of Singaporean society.

# Women with Disabilities organizes first breast cancer awareness drive

Initiative promotes early screening, inclusive health education



Photo by Rezk Tawfiq  
Speakers during the breast cancer awareness event organized by the Women with Disabilities Team under the umbrella of the Women’s Social and Cultural Society. From left: Secretary General Haifa Al-Mousa, Consultant Nawal Rajab, and Dr. Nadia Al-Essa.

commitment of the Society to efficiently play its awareness-raising role in combating breast cancer.

She revealed the Society has adopted a work program that includes a

series of events and activities during and outside of Pink October as part of a sustainable annual plan aimed at raising awareness, promoting early screening, and empowering women to

make informed health decisions.

She said this is the first time that the Women with Disabilities Team organized a breast cancer awareness event for women with disabilities, reflecting the efforts of the Society to reach all segments of women. She added the event focused on three pillars: health education about breast cancer and its risks, access to screening services, and prompt treatment follow up.

Meanwhile, Dr. Nadia Al-Essa revealed that breast cancer is the most common cancer among women globally, ranking first with one million cases in 2020, according to statistical reports from the World Health Organization (WHO), representing 24.2 percent of the total incidence of cancer in general.

She pointed out that breast cancer ranks first among women in Kuwait, citing statistics from Kuwait Cancer Control Center. She said the number of recorded cases among Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti women reached 640 and 41.2 percent of whom are Kuwaiti women. She added the recent Ministry of Health statistics indicate that Kuwait ranks first in the Gulf region in breast cancer incidence.

Continued from Page 1

## Pharmacies to

comply with quality standards, guaranteeing that medicines reach patients safely and with official invoices and documentation.

It establishes strict guidelines for the storage of medicines and medical products in accordance with approved safety and quality standards, and explicitly prohibits the display or sale of any expired or unlicensed products.

The decision mandates that pharmacies obtain approval from the Ministry of Health before installing any outdoor advertisements, with the aim of unifying the logo and professional identity of private-sector pharmacies. It also requires adherence to the provisions of Law No. 26/1996 and Law No. 70/2020 concerning Professional Accountability and Documentation of Responsible Practices.

Moreover, Al-Awadhi issued Ministerial Resolution No. 240/2025 for regulating the display and sale of medicines and medical products through self-service vending machines at non-fixed points of sale.

This decision complements the legislative framework governing the circulation of medicines in the private sector and ensures compliance with health and regulatory standards.

According to the resolution, private pharmacies are authorized to display and sell medicines or medical products listed in Ministerial Resolution No. 238/2025 via self-service vending machines, provided they meet all requirements and conditions specified by the Ministry of Health.

Applications must be submitted electronically through the designated email of the Drug Inspection Department of the Drug Control Sector.

The decision emphasized the necessity of providing a valid pharmacy license and the presence of a licensed pharmacist or pharmacy technician responsible for the machines. It also requires ownership or rental documents for the machines and their location, along with a special permit for drug delivery.

## Trump eyes

It added that Abdullah Al-Kawari and Mohammad Al-Buainain were injured in the accident.

The Qatari Embassy in Cairo confirmed, in a statement, that it immediately began following up on the accident with Egyptian authorities, and the arrangements are underway to transfer the deceased to Doha aboard a Qatari aircraft later today.

The two injured staff members are currently receiving the necessary medical treatment at Sharm El-Sheikh International Hospital.

The Embassy extended its condo-

lences and sympathy to the families of the deceased, wishing the injured a swift recovery. It also conveyed its appreciation to the Egyptian authorities for their cooperation, care, and prompt facilitation in handling the incident.

In other news, US President Donald Trump is setting off for Israel and Egypt on Sunday to celebrate the US-brokered ceasefire and hostage deal between Israel and Hamas and urge Middle East allies to seize the opportunity to build a durable peace in the volatile region.

It’s a fragile moment with Israel and Hamas only in the early stages of implementing the first phase of the Trump agreement designed to bring a permanent end to the war sparked by the Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel by Hamas-led militants. Egypt announced on Saturday that an international summit will be held in the city of Sharm El-Sheikh on Monday, under the title “Peace Summit”, with the aim of ending the war on the Gaza Strip and laying the foundations for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

In a statement on its official website, the Egyptian Presidency said that the summit will be co-chaired by President Abdelattah El-Sisi and US President Donald Trump, with the participation of leaders from more than twenty countries.

Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, the UAE, Turkiye, Indonesia, Pakistan, France, Germany, the UK, as well as UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, and representatives of the European Union and the African Union, are expected to participate.

The statement pointed out that the summit aims to reach international understandings to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza, ensure the flow of humanitarian aid to Palestinian civilians, and establish a timeline for launching political negotiations that lead to a permanent and comprehensive solution based on the two-state solution. Trump thinks there is a narrow window to reshape the Mideast and reset long-fraught relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

It is a moment, the Republican president says, that has been helped along by his administration’s support of Israel’s decimation of Iranian proxies, including Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The White House says momentum is also building because Arab and Muslim states are demonstrating a renewed focus on resolving the broader, decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict and, in some cases, deepening relations with the United States

“I think you are going to have tremendous success and Gaza is going to be rebuilt,” Trump said Friday. “And you have some very wealthy countries, as you know, over there. It would take a small fraction of their wealth to do that. And I think they want to do it.”





Flooding is seen near Vallecito Reservoir on Oct 11, 2025, near Bayfield, Colo. (AP)

Flooding forces evacuation in Colorado

The remnants of a tropical storm brought flooding across parts of the Southwest on Saturday, prompting hundreds of evacuations in southwestern Colorado as mountain streams raged above their banks and crews toiled to protect property with sandbags.

Hardest-hit areas included Vallecito Creek, where almost 400 homes were under an evacuation order north of a reservoir 15 miles (24 kilometers) from the small tourist city of Durango.

The Upper Pine River Fire Protection District urged people to

avoid bridges, with trees being washed downstream. The high school in nearby Bayfield was opened to take in evacuees.

Rising floodwaters topped flood control systems that were built after inundations almost 20 years ago. The water was expected to peak Saturday night, and after a lull Sunday, yet more heavy rain was forecast for Monday and Tuesday.

After telling customers to leave, Blue Spruce RV Park & Cabins general manager Debby McCall was waiting to hear if authorities would tell her to go too. (AP)

Sheriff says no survivors in blast at Tennessee explosives factory

McEWEN, Tenn., Oct 12, (AP): A blast in rural Tennessee that leveled an explosives plant and was felt for miles around killed 16 people and left no survivors, authorities said.

The explosion left a smoldering wreck of twisted and charred metal and burned-out vehicles at the Accurate Energetic Systems plant, which supplies explosives for the military.



Davis

The cause of the blast is not known. Investigators are combing the incinerated property foot-by-foot searching for possible evidence.

"There's a gauntlet of emotions there," Humphreys County Sheriff Chris Davis said during a news conference, pausing to clear his throat before he asked for prayers for the families of the victims in a shaky voice.

"We've recovered no survivors," he added.

During a vigil at Hurricane

Chapel in McEwen, senior pastor Tim Farris noted that many in attendance know each other, the victims and their families.

"There's a lot of people hurting. A lot of people who are crying a lot of tears," he said. "We are sad that our community is going through this, but it's a tremendous opportunity for the church to minister to a lot of those people today."

Farris said he spoke with some families of victims on Friday who were in shock and numb, and they did not show much emotion. That had changed by Saturday, he said.

"Speaking with some of the families today, they were very emotional," Farris said. "They can hardly speak or anything, they are so emotional. I think as this goes on, it's going to hit more people. The depth of this, the reality of it. That's when they're going to need people the most."

Pamela Jane Brown was among those who came out to pray for friends missing in the blast and their families. She said an acquaintance of her family was driving by the plant when it exploded, and he was "hurt pretty good ... all cut up and bruised," but is now recovering at home.



Police vehicles are parked after a deadly shooting Friday night in downtown Leland, Miss on Oct 11. (AP)

8 killed in Mississippi shootings

High school homecoming celebrations in Mississippi ended in gunfire, with two separate shootings on opposite sides of the state Friday night that left at least eight people dead and many more injured, authorities said.

Six were killed in downtown Leland after a high school football homecoming game in the Mississippi Delta region on the state's western edge, according to the county coroner. On the east side of the state, a pregnant woman was among the dead, Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves said.

In Leland, four people were killed

and two died later at a hospital, according to a statement from Washington County Coroner La'Quesha Watkins.

Some 20 people were injured in the gunfire after people gathered in the downtown area following the game, state Sen. Derrick Simmons said. Of those, four were in critical condition and were flown from a hospital in nearby Greenville to a larger medical center in the state capital, Jackson, Simmons told The Associated Press. He was being updated on developments from law enforcement authorities in the Delta. (AP)

Nat'l Guard sent to Illinois by WH can stay but can't be deployed for now: court

US President Trump orders Pentagon to pay troops amid government shutdown

WASHINGTON, Oct 12, (AP): US President Donald Trump said Saturday that he has directed the Defense Department to use "all available funds" to ensure US troops are paid Wednesday despite the government shutdown, a short-term fix that will not apply to the hundreds of thousands of federal workers who have been furloughed.

Trump said in a social media post that he was acting because "our Brave Troops will miss the paychecks they are rightfully due on October 15th."

The Republican president's directive removes one of the pressure points that could have forced Congress into action, likely ensuring that the shutdown - now in its 11th day and counting - extends into a third week and possibly beyond. But no similar action seems forthcoming for federal employees already without pay while thousands are now being laid off during the lapse in government operations. The White House budget office started the layoffs on Friday.

Trump blamed Democrats and said he was exercising his authority as commander in chief to direct Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth "to use all available funds to get our Troops PAID on October 15th."

The Republican president added, "We have identified funds to do this, and Secretary Hegseth will use them to PAY OUR TROOPS."

U.S service members were in danger of not receiving their next paycheck on Wednesday after the government shut down on Oct. 1, the start of the federal budget cycle. The U.S. has about 1.3 million active-duty service members, and the prospect of troops going without pay has been a focal point when lawmakers on Capitol Hill have discussed the shutdown's negative impact.

Trump did not say where he's getting the money, but a spokesperson for the White House Office of Management and Budget said Pentagon research and development funds would be tapped.

The Pentagon said it identified about \$8 billion of unobligated research development testing and evaluation funds from the last fiscal year that will



Illinois State Police move protesters back after declaring an unlawful assembly outside the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in Broadview, Ill on Oct 11. (AP)

be used to issue the mid-month paychecks, "in the event the funding lapse continues past October 15th."

Federal workers typically receive

lost salaries.

It was unclear if the president's directive applies to the US Coast Guard, which is a branch of the U.S. Armed Forces but is overseen by the Department of Homeland Security during peacetime.

The nation's third shutdown in 12 years has again raised anxiety levels among service members and their families as those in uniform are working without pay. While they would receive back pay once the impasse ends, many military families live paycheck to paycheck.

During previous shutdowns, Congress passed legislation to ensure that troops kept earning their salaries, but discussion of taking a similar step by lawmakers appeared to have fizzled out.

Asked earlier this week if he would support a bill to pay the troops, Trump said, "that probably will happen."

"We'll take care of it," he said Wednesday. "Our military is always going to be taken care of."

The shutdown began on Oct. 1 after

Democrats rejected a short-term funding fix and demanded that the bill include an extension of federal subsidies for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act. The expiration of those subsidies at the end of the year will result in monthly cost increases for millions of people.

Also:

**CHICAGO:** National Guard troops sent to Illinois by US President Donald Trump can stay in the state and under federal control, but can't be deployed to protect federal property or go on patrol for now, an appeals court ruled Saturday.

The decision comes after federal Judge April Perry on Thursday ruled to temporarily block the National Guard deployment for at least two weeks, finding no substantial evidence that a "danger of rebellion" is brewing in Illinois during Trump's immigration crackdown.

The appeals court on Saturday granted a pause in the case until it can hear further arguments.

Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy prison date to be set Monday

PARIS, Oct 12, (AP): The date for Nicolas Sarkozy's imprisonment will be set Monday, after the former French president was sentenced to five years in prison for criminal conspiracy in a scheme to finance his winning 2007 campaign with funds from Libya.

Sarkozy, 70, says he's innocent. He denounced the verdict as "a scandal" and filed an appeal. He is the first former president of modern France sentenced to actual time behind bars.

Sarkozy, who was involved in several other legal cases, was France's president from 2007 to 2012. He has been retired from active politics for years but remains very influential, especially in conservative circles.

In a surprise decision, the Paris court said the prison sentence, which would otherwise have been suspended on appeal, is effective immediately.

Sarkozy must be incarcerated without delay, the court explained, because "of the seriousness of the disruption to public order caused by the offense."

Still, Sarkozy was given 18 days since the ruling to "organize his professional life" before his summoning by the National Financial Prosecutor's office to set a date for incarceration.

Sarkozy's supporters criticized the ruling because Sarkozy, since he ap



Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy, right, and his lawyer Jacqueline Lafont, center, arrive at the courtroom on Nov 23, 2020 in Paris. (AP)

pealed, is presumed to be innocent according to French law.

The debate has been recently revived after far-right leader Marine Le Pen was sentenced in March to a five-year ban on running for public office for embezzling EU funds, also taking effect immediately despite her appeal.

Sarkozy's case does not appear as an exception in France's judicial system.

The justice ministry said in 2024, 90% of adults convicted and sentenced to at least two years in prison were immediately incarcerated.

The court said Sarkozy, as a presidential candidate and interior minister, used his position "to prepare corruption at the highest level" from 2005 to 2007, to finance his presidential campaign with funds from Libya - then led by longtime ruler Muammar Gaddafi.

The panel of three judges stated that Sarkozy's closest associates, Claude Guéant and Brice Hortefeux, held secret meetings in 2005 with Abdullah al-Senoussi, Gadhafi's brother-in-law and intelligence chief, despite the fact that he was "convicted of acts of terrorism committed mostly against French and European citizens."

Al-Senoussi is considered the mastermind of attacks on a Pan Am jumbo jet over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988 and a French airliner over Niger the following year - causing hundreds of deaths. He was convicted and sentenced in absentia to a life sentence by a Paris court in 1999 for the attack on the French UTA Flight 772.

The court also said there was evidence Sarkozy endorsed meetings between Guéant, then his chief of staff, and an intermediary able to provide secret financial arrangements.



Kosovo lawmakers during a parliament session in Pristina, Kosovo on July 7, 2021. (AP)

Kosovo holds municipal elections with governing party aiming for Pristina city hall

PRISTINA, Kosovo, Oct 12, (AP): Kosovo is holding municipal elections on Sunday, with the governing left-wing Self-Determination Movement, or Vetevendosje!, seeking to capture the capital's city hall amid lingering political tensions and strained relations with Serbia.

About 2.1 million registered voters are choosing mayors and in 38 municipalities and around 1,000 local council members. Preliminary results are expected by midnight, though many municipalities are likely to head to runoffs in about a month, as in previous polls.

The most closely watched race is in the capital, Pristina, where former culture minister Hajrulla Çeku of Vetevendosje! is challenging incumbent Perparim Rama from the conservative Kosovo Democratic League.

Vetevendosje! aims to build on its showing in February's parliamentary election, when it won 48 seats in the 120-member legislature, still short of a governing majority.

Voting in the Serb-majority north draws particular attention, where Srpska Lista, the dominant Serb party seen as closely aligned with Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic, is expected to maintain control of most of its strongholds.

The European Union-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia remains stalled. The two neighbors have remained at odds since Kosovo declared independence in 2008, a move Serbia still refuses to recognize.

The local vote comes just two days after Kosovo's Parliament ended an eight-month political stalemate by completing the election of its full leadership, including a representative from the ethnic Serb minority.

On Saturday, acting Prime Minister Albin Kurti, Vetevendosje!'s leader, was tasked with forming a new Cabinet within 15 days - a challenge as other major parties have so far declined to enter coalition talks.

Kurti faces pressure to stabilize domestic politics, address economic chal

lenges and revive EU-mediated normalization talks with Serbia.

Kosovo's independence remains a flashpoint in the Balkans. About 11,400 people were killed, mostly ethnic Albanians, in the 1998-1999 war that ended after a NATO air campaign drove Serbian forces out. While most Western countries recognize Kosovo's statehood, Serbia, supported by Russia and China, does not.

In Friday's vote Nenad Rasic, from a small ethnic Serb party named For Freedom, Justice and Survival, was elected as deputy speaker with 71 votes in favor. All nine lawmakers from the main Serb party, Srpska Lista, voted against and 24 members from two smaller right-wing ethnic Albanian parties abstained.

Srpska Lista, which won nine out of 10 seats reserved for the ethnic Serb minority, is considered as very close to Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic and his government in Belgrade. Kosovo's Albanians view that relationship as a risk of inciting ethnic tensions.

Zelensky and US President Trump discuss bolstering Ukraine air defense in phone call

KYIV, Oct 12, (Xinhua): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that he discussed the possibility of bolstering his country's air defense in a phone call with US President Donald Trump.

"I informed President Trump about Russia's attacks on our energy system, and I appreciate his willingness to support us," Zelensky said on X.

According to him, the two leaders talked about opportunities to bolster Ukraine's air defense, as well as concrete agreements to achieve that goal.

Zelensky said that there are "good options and solid ideas" on how to strengthen Ukraine.

Earlier this week, Ukraine imposed emergency power outages in Kiev and nine regions across the country after Russian missile and drone strikes largely targeted the country's energy facilities.

On Sept 27, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told the UN General Assembly that Moscow remains open to negotiations to end the war in Ukraine.

Also:

**MOSCOW:** Russia has shot down 72 Ukrainian drones and other projectiles over the past 24 hours, the Defense Ministry said on Sunday.

Russian air defense systems intercepted nine US-made HIMARS rockets, one Neptune long-range cruise missile, and 72 fixed-wing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), the ministry said in a statement.

Vyacheslav Gladkov, governor of the Belgorod Region, said the region continued to face heavy drone attacks over the past day. Ukrainian forces targeted 12 municipal districts with about 130 UAVs, killing one civilian and injuring three others, he said.



US President Donald Trump meets with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the Oval Office at the White House on Aug 18, in Washington. (AP)

Gladkov also said that 52 settlements came under Ukrainian fire during the same period. At least 34 projectiles were launched, and 129 UAV attacks were recorded, with 45 of the drones shot down or neutralized over the region.



**MOSCOW:** Three people were killed and two others injured when two vessels collided on Russia's Lake Baikal, regional investigators said Saturday.

According to the Eastern Interregional Investigative Department for Transport of the Russian Investigative Committee, the boat collision occurred near the village of Listvyanka.

Investigators have opened a criminal case regarding the incident.

Europe

**3 injured in Germany market shooting:** Three people were injured on Saturday afternoon after gunfire broke out in the city of Giessen, central Germany's Hesse state, local media reported, citing a police source.

The shooting occurred shortly after 3 p.m. (1300 GMT) inside a betting shop in the downtown area, according to Germany's news agency dpa.

The gunman fled on foot and remains at large. Police said they are searching for the suspect but do not believe there is an ongoing threat to the public.

No information has yet been disclosed about the condition of the injured. Both the identity of the suspect and the

motive of the attack remain unclear as investigations continue. (Xinhua)



**Estonia closes road thru Russian territory:** Estonia has temporarily closed access for its citizens to a road they normally use that passes through a stretch of Russian territory, after the interior minister reported on a group of Russian soldiers standing there, Estonia's public broadcaster said Sunday.

Estonia's Police and Border Guard Board said in a statement Friday that the closing took place that day "after border guards observed a larger-than-usual unit moving on the territory of the Russian Federation."

The Estonian border agency said that the closure of the Saatsje Boot is necessary to ensure the safety of people in Estonia and to prevent possible incidents. (AP)



Asia

**Typhoon to bring violent winds, rain to Japan's Izu Islands:** Typhoon No. 23 is moving east over the sea south of Japan's Shikoku and is expected to approach the Izu Islands on Monday, bringing violent winds and heavy rain to the area.

The storm has a central pressure of 980 hectopascals, with maximum winds of 30 meters per second, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA).

Winds may strengthen to 50 meters per second on the islands, with waves reaching 9 meters, the JMA predicted.

Residents are urged to exercise extreme caution against violent winds, landslides, flooding, swollen rivers, high waves, and to remain alert for lightning and tornado-like gusts. (Xinhua)

**1 killed, 4 injured in boat collision on Tokyo's canal:** One man was killed and four others were injured when two workboats collided on the Toyosu Canal in Tokyo's Koto Ward at around 6:40 a.m. local time Wednesday, local media reported.

According to the Tokyo Coast Guard Office, the vessels that collided were the Senbamaru No. 12 and the Senbamaru No. 80. The No. 80, which had been pushing a barge, struck the No. 12 while it was underway.

All five victims, including the 58-year-old man who died and the four injured crew members, were aboard the Senbamaru No. 12.

The site of the accident lies about 700 meters north of Toyosu Station on the Yurakucho subway line, surrounded by high-rise apartment buildings and company warehouses. (Xinhua)

**4 killed as truck rams into 11 vehicles in Philippines:** Four people were killed and some were injured as a truck rammed into 11 vehicles and three houses along a highway in Quezon province, southeast of Manila, police said Sunday.



Tourists enjoy the autumn scenery in the Changchun Botanical Garden in Changchun, northeast China's Jilin Province, on Oct 12. (Xinhua)

Police reported that an accident happened late Saturday night in Lucena City as the speeding truck lost control, rammed the sidewalk gutter and plowed into vehicles and houses.

The fatalities include the 34-year-old male truck driver and a resident of one of the houses, while some injured people were sent to a local hospital.

Three of the vehicles caught fire after the crash, police added. (Xinhua)

**2 NZ citizens charged after drugs found in luggage:** Australian authorities have arrested and charged two New Zealand nationals over an alleged attempt to import 40 kg of cocaine concealed in luggage.

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) and Australian Border Force (ABF) said on Sunday that the two men, both aged 21, were selected for baggage examination following their arrival in Australia at Sydney Airport on Friday.

During the search, ABF officers found 20 kg of a white substance in each of the men's suitcases. Initial testing of the substance returned a positive result for cocaine.

The two men were arrested by the AFP and each charged with one count of importing a commercial quantity of a border-controlled drug and one count of possessing commercial quantities of unlawfully imported border-controlled drugs.

Both offenses carry maximum penalties of life imprisonment.

The AFP and ABF said that the amount of cocaine has an estimated street value of 13 million Australian dollars (8.4 million US dollars) and had the potential to supply 130,000 street-level deals. (Xinhua)

**Teen in critical condition after shark attack in Australia:** A teenager has been hospitalized with life-threatening injuries after being bitten by a shark in Australia's far north and remained in a critical condition on Sunday morning.

Emergency services were called to Thursday Island off the north coast of the Australian state of Queensland around 6:20 p.m. local time on Saturday following reports that a male aged in his mid-teens had been attacked by a shark while swimming.

The teenager was transported to a local hospital with life-threatening abdominal injuries before being airlifted over 1,000 kilometers to a hospital in the Queensland city of Townsville.

A spokesperson for Queensland Health said that the boy remained in a critical condition on Sunday morning.

The species of shark involved in the attack has not been identified. (Xinhua)

Myanmar town lies in shambles as both sides in civil war vie for control

KYAUKME, Myanmar, Oct 12, (AP): Ten days after it was recaptured by Myanmar's military government, the town of Kyaukme stands eerily silent. Schools have reopened but the town's once-busy market is mostly empty. Vendors at some stalls closed them at the sight of the visiting journalists, visibly nervous.

The once-thriving town in Myanmar's Shan State is in shambles, an Associated Press journalist has confirmed on Friday in a rare visit to the war-torn area allowed by the country's military government.

The local army allowed an AP photographer to join a trip supervised by pro-military Myanmar media, the only representative of foreign media who was permitted to do so. The military doesn't allow a free press and bars journalists from entering conflict zones independently.

They saw the charred wreckage of official buildings, such as the courthouse, police station and government housing. Much of the area around the town's hospital was destroyed, with its operations temporarily shifted to a nearby Chinese temple. At least one of the town's fire engines was burnt out.

But civilian houses seemed to be mostly unscathed, except those near damaged official buildings, but most of the town's original population of 46,000 had fled.

The ethnic militia that previously controlled the town accused the army of causing the damage with air strikes and heavy weapons, while the government soldiers who took over the town said the militia destroyed structures as it retreated.

Because of its strategic location on a highway connecting central Myanmar to China, Kyaukme has been much fought over. About 115 kilometers (70 miles) northeast of Mandalay, the country's second-largest city, it has changed hands

twice since the army in 2021 ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, setting off the current civil war between the military government and an alliance of militias representing ethnic minorities and pro-democracy activists.

Kyaukme was captured by the Ta'ang National Liberation Army in August 2024, amid a wave of victories by opponents of military rule that left them apparently in control of most of the country's territory. The TNLA is the guerrilla army of the Palaung ethnic minority.

The town fell back into the hands of the military government on Oct. 1 after a three-week battle, in a significant victory for government forces.

The army has mounted a succession of successful offensives in recent months, ahead of elections set for the end of the year. Critics say the polls will be neither free nor fair, but the army hopes that high turnout will help legitimize the vote.

Before attacking Kyaukme, the army in July recaptured the town of Nawngkhio, considered a gateway to Myanmar's heartland because it sits at the crossroads of Myanmar's eastern hills and its central flatlands.

From there 55 kilometers (33 miles) to Kyaukme, the road is flanked by buildings damaged by bombs and bullets, or pummeled into debris. Army checkpoints manned by newly drafted soldiers stand every 500 to 1,000 meters (yards) along the route. A major bridge was damaged, but remains standing and is under repair.

The authorities blocked journalists' access to some residential areas, which they said were dangerous.

"There are still land mines that haven't been cleared in parts of the neighborhood," said Capt. Wai Yan Kyaw, who was stationed at one of the town's gates.



In this photo taken during a trip supervised by pro-military Myanmar media, the Goteik bridge is seen in Kawngkhio township, northern Shan State, Myanmar on Oct 10. (AP)



Afghan refugees sit next to their belongings loaded onto vehicles as they wait for opening of the border crossing point, which closed following Afghan and Pakistani security forces exchanged cross border firing, at a camp in Chaman, Pakistan on Oct 12. (AP)

Afghanistan kills 58 Pakistani soldiers in overnight border operations – Mujahid

KABUL, Afghanistan, Oct 12, (AP): Afghanistan said Sunday it killed 58 Pakistani soldiers in overnight border operations, in response to what it called repeated violations of its territory and airspace.

Earlier in the week, Afghan authorities accused Pakistan of bombing the capital, Kabul, and a market in the country's east. Pakistan did not claim responsibility for the assault.

The Taliban government's chief spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said Afghan forces have captured 25 Pakistani army posts, 58 soldiers have been killed and 30 others wounded. "The situation on all official borders and de facto lines of Afghanistan is under complete control, and illegal activities have been largely prevented," Mujahid told a news conference in Kabul. There was no immediate confirmation from Pakistan about casualties.

Pakistan has previously struck locations inside Afghanistan, targeting what it alleges are militant hideouts, but these have been in remote and mountainous areas. The two sides have also skirmished along the border in the past. Saturday night's heavy clashes underscore the deepening tensions.

The Taliban government's Defense Ministry said early Sunday morning its forces had conducted "retaliatory and successful operations" along the border.

"If the opposing side again violates Afghanistan's territorial integrity, our armed forces are fully prepared to defend the nation's borders and will deliver a strong response," the ministry added.

The Torkham border crossing, one of two main trade

routes between the two countries, did not open on Sunday at its usual time of 8 a.m.

The crossing at Chaman, southwest Pakistan, was also closed. People, including Afghan refugees leaving Pakistan, were turned away due to the worsening security situation.

An Associated Press reporter in Chaman heard jets over Spin Boldak, a city in Afghanistan's southern Kandahar province, and saw smoke rising after an explosion.

Pakistan accuses Afghan authorities of harboring members of the banned group Tehreek-i-Taleban Pakistan. Islamabad says the group carries out deadly attacks inside Pakistan, but Kabul denies the charge, saying it does not allow its territory to be used against other countries.

Pakistan is grappling with surging militancy, especially in areas bordering Afghanistan. It also accuses its nuclear-armed neighbor and rival India of backing armed groups, without providing any evidence.

The overnight border clashes could fuel regional instability, as India and Pakistan came close to war earlier this year over a tourist massacre in the disputed region of Kashmir.

India has also boosted its relations with Afghanistan's Taliban rulers, most recently announcing an upgrade of its technical mission in Kabul to a full embassy.

The Saudi Foreign Ministry called for "restraint, avoidance of escalation and the adoption of dialogue and wisdom to help de-escalate tensions and maintain the security and stability of the region." Saudi Arabia just reached a mutual defense pact with Pakistan.

and has ruled the country since then. Biya was declared the winner of seven subsequent elections. Cameroon has seen just two leaders since independence in 1960. (AP)

**'Attempted coup underway in Madagascar':** An attempted coup is underway in the Indian Ocean island of Madagascar, the country's president said on Sunday, a day after members of an elite army unit joined youth-led protests against the government and called for the president to step down.

Madagascar has been shaken by three weeks of the most significant unrest in years in the nation. The protests are led by a group calling itself "Gen Z Madagascar," and the United Nations says the demonstrations have left at least 22 people dead and dozens injured. The government has disputed this number. (AP)

Opposition leader Herminie wins presidential election in Seychelles

VICTORIA, Seychelles, Oct 12, (AP): Opposition leader Patrick Herminie won the presidential election in Seychelles, defeating incumbent leader Wavel Ramkalawan in a runoff vote, according to official results released early Sunday.

Herminie garnered 52.7% of the vote, with Ramkalawan taking 47.3%, the results showed.

Herminie represents the United Seychelles party, which led the country for four decades before it lost power in 2020. It was the governing party from 1977 to 2020. Ramkalawan, of the governing Linyon Demokratik Seselwa party, sought a second term.

"The people have spoken," Herminie said in brief remarks after he was declared the president-elect. "I am deeply humbled by the trust the people have placed in me, and I formally accept this mandate with gratitude, a profound sense of duty and an unshakeable faith in the strength and character of the Seychellois people." Herminie served as speaker of the national assembly between 2007 and 2016.

A majority of lawmakers in parliament will allow his party "to work collaboratively and constructively to deliver the best possible outcomes for our people," Herminie said.

The race between the two main contenders in Seychelles' election was decided in a runoff after there was no outright winner in the presidential vote two weeks ago.



Patrick Herminie (right) is officially elected as the president of Seychelles in Victoria, Seychelles on Oct 12. (Xinhua)

Early voting began Thursday, but most people in the island nation voted on Saturday.

Both Herminie and Ramkalawan ran spirited campaigns trying to address key issues for voters, including environmental damage and a crisis of drug addiction in a country long seen as a tourist haven.

The country has become synonymous with luxury and international travel, which has bumped Seychelles to the top of the list of Africa's richest countries by gross domestic product per capita, according to the World Bank.

But opposition to the governing party grew in recent months.

A week before the first round of voting, activists sued the government, challenging a recent decision to issue a long-term lease for a 400,000-square-meter (100-acre) area on Assomption, one of the country's 115 islands, to a Qatari company to develop a luxury hotel.

The lease, which includes reconstruction of an airstrip to facilitate access for international flights, has ignited widespread criticism that it favors foreign interests over Seychelles' welfare and sovereignty.

US clashes with Venezuela and allies at UN meeting

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 12, (AP): The United States clashed with Venezuela and its allies at an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council on Friday, with the Trump administration vowing to use its "full might" to eradicate drug cartels and the Maduro government saying it anticipates "an armed attack."

Venezuela asked for the meeting of the UN's most powerful body following deadly US military strikes on four boats that Washington says were carrying drugs.

Venezuela accused US President Donald Trump of seeking to topple President Nicolás Maduro and threatening "peace, security and stability regionally and internationally." The Trump administration has said three of the targeted boats set out to sea from Venezuela.

The strikes, which the US said killed 21 people, followed a buildup of US maritime forces in the Caribbean unlike any seen in recent times.

"The belligerent action and rhetoric of the US government objectively point to the fact that we are facing a situation in which it is rational to anticipate that in the very short term, an armed attack is to be perpetrated against Venezuela," Venezuela's UN Ambassador Samuel Moncada said.

While Venezuela got support from



Members of Bolivarian militias gather for military exercises in Caracas, Venezuela on Oct 4. (AP)

allies Russia and China, the rest of the 15-member council was cautious, calling for a de-escalation and adherence to the U.N. Charter, which requires all 193 member nations to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all other countries and to settle disputes peacefully.

Neither US Ambassador Mike Waltz nor his deputy attended the meeting, leaving Political Counselor John Kel-

ley to deliver the Trump administration's justification for the strikes.

"President Trump has been very clear that he is going to use the full power of America, and the full might of the United States, to take on and eradicate these drug cartels, no matter where they're operating from and no matter how long they have been able to act with impunity," Kelley said.

Africa

**Cameroon heads to polls:** Polls opened in Cameroon on Sunday in an election that could see Africa's oldest leader extend his rule by another 7 years.

Around 8 million voters, including over 34,000 overseas, are registered to participate at more than 31,000 polling stations in the Central African nation, Cameroon had over 29 million people in 2024, and like many sub-Saharan African countries, its population is overwhelmingly young.

Polls are expected to close at 6 p.m., and the results are expected at the latest by Oct. 26.

Analysts have predicted a victory for current President Paul Biya, who first became president in 1982 following the resignation of Cameroon's first president, Ahmadou Ahidjo,



# Boursa Kuwait closes mixed

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Sunday's trading session with mixed performance, as the All Share Index slipped 4.11 points, or 0.05 percent, to close at 8,775.99 points. The market saw total trading volumes of 780.3 million shares across 38,117 transactions, with a

value of KD 138.2 million (USD 483.7 million). The Main Market Index recorded a notable gain, rising 63.12 points, or 0.75 percent, to reach 8,491.54 points. This segment witnessed 551.5 million shares traded through 26,978 transactions, worth KD 73.8 million (USD 225 million).

## New discoveries drive growth

# KOC slashes shut-in wells to 5%, hitting global standard

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) has succeeded in reducing the percentage of shut-in wells scheduled for repair and maintenance from 14 percent to five percent of the total producing wells connected to the gathering centers, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting a reliable source from the oil sector.

The source confirmed that this achievement is in line with the global industry standard of five to 10 percent. He attributed such a success to the adoption of an integrated organizational structure, implementation of best practices in supply chain management and maintenance, and enhanced efficiency in repair and maintenance operations. He said these efforts contributed to an additional production of around 10,000 barrels per day, equivalent to 3.65 million barrels of oil annually.

In another development, the company achieved remarkable progress in natural gas production during the fiscal year through the application of advanced technologies, infrastructure development, and the discovery of new fields that opened wide prospects for future growth.

KOC recorded its highest-ever non-associated gas production rate in late November last year, reaching 683 million standard cubic feet per day. By the end of the fiscal year, non-associated gas production reached about 637.5 million standard cubic feet per day, compared to the annual target of 630 million standard cubic feet, reaffirming the continuous efforts of the company to realize its objectives in this field.

## Phase 2 to link securities licensing

# CMA participates in Smart Commercial License Project

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) continues to support Kuwait's digital transformation through its participation in the Smart Commercial License Project, sponsored by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

According to a press release issued by CMA, this strategic project aims to improve the business environment and enhance the efficiency of commercial licensing services via a unified digital system connecting relevant government agencies. The project seeks to standardize commercial license issuance procedures and facilitate access to accurate, reliable data through a smart digital document for streamlining processes and boosting institutional integration among relevant entities.

CMA's participation is based on a memorandum of understanding signed with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, aiming to regulate licensing applications, improve the business

environment, and simplify procedures between the two entities.

CMA has enhanced the project system by incorporating additional data related to licensed companies, including information on positions and jobs that must be registered, along with other categorized data for interim linkage purposes.

This cooperation builds on the successful completion of the first phase of the linkage project earlier this year.

Work is currently underway on the second phase of the project, which aims to integrate the securities license application process into a unified digital system across government entities. This will be achieved through application programming interfaces (APIs) that allow for regular and direct data exchange.

CMA has developed the necessary technical specifications for this phase and identified the required data in coordination with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

## Passengers get 20% off

# Jazeera Airways unveils Breast Cancer Awareness promotion

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Jazeera Airways is proud to announce a special October promotion, offering passengers 20% off one-way and round-trip fares, along with a dedicated benefit for women: 50% off seat selection.

This limited-time offer is available on select destinations exclusively through the Jazeera Airways website, mobile app, and call center with the promo code J9PINK20.

Bookings can be made between 12 and 18 October 2025, for travel from 1 November to 17 December 2025.

With this special offer, Jazeera

Airways reinforces its commitment to raising awareness and supporting women's well-being, encouraging travel with care, comfort, and community spirit.

Paul Carroll, Chief Commercial Officer, Jazeera Airways highlighted: "As we mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month, this is one of our efforts to spreading awareness, supporting women, and making travel more meaningful. We encourage our passengers to take this opportunity to travel, reconnect, and fly with purpose."

For bookings and more information, visit [www.jazeeraairways.com](http://www.jazeeraairways.com), the Jazeera Airways mobile app or call 177.



Jazeera Airways cabin crew

Afrah Al Arbash: Our employees' health is the true wealth we cherish and a fundamental prerequisite for our mutual success

# Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait organizes Breast Cancer Awareness seminar

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: To mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) organized an awareness seminar for the bank's employees regarding the disease and ways to prevent it. The seminar, held in cooperation with a group of specialists from International Hospital, Maidan Clinic, and Images Diagnostic Center, was part of the bank's dedication to the well-being of its team, encouraging them to prioritize their health, and adopt an optimal lifestyle.

The awareness seminar reflects ABK's continuous commitment to its responsibility of providing a healthy and supportive work environment, underscoring its role as a leading and responsible banking institution that gives employee health top priority at all levels.

The seminar, which was attended by bank officials, represented by both males and females employees from various departments and divisions, witnessed significant interaction from the attendees. All inquiries related to breast cancer and the most crucial health measures to adopt were addressed, in addition to emphasizing the importance of regular medical check-ups.

Numerous check-ups were conducted for employees on the sidelines of the seminar, which provided reliable and scientific information about breast cancer risk factors and symptoms, modern diagnosis and treatment methods, and encouraged early detection and seeking timely healthcare.

Furthermore, all participants were urged to spread the



Group photo on the sidelines of the event.

information gained and raise awareness within their family and social circles.

On this occasion, **Afrah Al Arbash**, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, stated, "The health of our employees is the true wealth we cherish. This initiative stems from our firm belief that knowledge is power, and that providing correct and reliable information about breast cancer can save lives, contributing to building a healthier and more productive work environment, and increasing the bank's

success in achieving its desired goals."

She added, "We believe that the health, safety, and well-being of every individual on our team is our responsibility, and a fundamental prerequisite for our mutual success. Therefore, we give the utmost importance to organizing various health seminars throughout the year as an integral part of our long-term commitment to the comprehensive health of our employees."

Al Arbash concluded her statement by saying that invest-



Part of the examinations for employees.

ing in employee health is an investment in the bank's future, as it continues to support initiatives to enhance health and preventive awareness among all members of its team.

This seminar adds to a series of initiatives that ABK is keen to organize to engage with its employees throughout the year, which includes organizing open days and comprehensive check-ups, various sports tournaments, and holding various workshops, thus contributing to enhancing its position as an attractive employer for talent and competencies in the Kuwaiti market.

# Business

Offering flexible financing terms and special profit rates

# KFH launches Zafafi financing product



Abdulaziz Alsaeed

## Alsaeed:

■ Zafafi is a strategic step that enhances the Bank's offerings that are tailored to support youth

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: In line with its commitment to launching innovative banking offerings that meet market needs and boost its competitive position, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has rolled out Zafafi product, one of the best financing solutions, to facilitate marriage requirements and enhance family stability. The product offers flexible terms and special profit rates.

KFH Executive Manager Personal Finance Products, **Abdulaziz Alsaeed**, said that launching Zafafi marks a strategic step that enhances the Bank's offerings which are tailored to support youth, fulfill their ambitions, and facilitate financial obligations concerning marriage.

"The new initiative also aligns with Sharia principles and supports the State's goals of building a cohesive and stable society," said Alsaeed.

He explained that Zafafi is among KFH's most distinguished consumer financing products, offering newlyweds, both men and women, flexible financing to meet their essential needs such as furniture, home appliances, cars, and other consumer-related items, with special profit rates and convenient terms.

Alsaeed added: "Newly married couples, individually or jointly, can apply for consumer financing of up to 25 times their net salary, up to a maximum of KD 25,000, repayable over a period of five years."

He pointed out that the newly launched product offers customers a grace period of up to 6 months prior to the first installment, helping ease financial commitments during the early stages of marriage.

Additionally, customers can benefit from KFH's installment deferment feature, which allows them to defer one installment each year, providing more flexibility to adjust payments according to personal circumstances.

Alsaeed further highlighted that KFH provides Zafafi customers with exclusive offers in collaboration with leading suppliers in the local market, including a wide range of premium consumer products as well as special discounts and promotions.

He clarified that newlyweds who wish to obtain financing under Zafafi product can apply through KFH



branches across Kuwait, or via KFHOnline.

Alsaeed reaffirmed KFH's ongoing commitment to financial inclusion and its leading role in offering advanced banking solutions that cater

to the needs of different customer segments. He emphasized that KFH continues to provide a comprehensive suite of youth-oriented products and services designed to support their needs.

# AmCham Kuwait organizes 'Back to Business' event to enhance community & partnerships

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: The American Business Council – AmCham Kuwait (ABCK-AmCham Kuwait) successfully hosted its "Back to Business" Annual General Meeting, bringing together members, U.S. Embassy representatives, and strategic partners for an evening of networking, collaboration, and engagement.

The event featured welcoming remarks from Pete Swift, Chairman of AmCham Kuwait, highlighting the Chamber's growing membership, upcoming programs, and ongoing efforts to support U.S.–Kuwait trade and private sector development. Arezou Harraf, Vice-Chair and Chair of the Strategic & Policy Committee, shared insights on strategic initiatives and partnerships across sectors including SMEs, healthcare, finance, sustainability, and inclusion. Paola de la Roche, Executive Director, provided an overview of the Chamber's responsible financial stewardship, ensuring continued value for members.

Attendees were also introduced to AmCham's committees and focus groups, which bring together industry leaders to discuss sector-specific challenges and opportunities. The evening concluded with remarks from Mr. Steven Butler, Chargé d'affaires in the U.S. Embassy Kuwait, reaffirming the strong collaboration between the U.S. Embassy and AmCham Kuwait.

To close the evening, a raffle added an element of fun and excitement. Prizes generously provided by AmCham partners included dining vouchers from Best Al Yousifi, and Crowne Plaza Farwaniya, which offered vouchers for two at both Al Noukhaza Restaurant and Al Shabestan Restaurant. Holiday Inn Salmiya contributed a Friday Brunch for two at Al Diwan Restaurant, a one-day weekend pass



Group photo during the event.

for two at EDGE 24Hr Fitness, and an Egyptian Night experience for two at Al Diwan All-Day Restaurant. Hyatt Regency Kuwait provided a Junior Suite stay for two with breakfast, along with two themed-night vouchers for two each. UTC offered kitchen appliances including a hand mixer, jug blender, digital kitchen scale, electric kettle, and food processor. Finally, Mr. Ayman Sawires, General Manager for IFA International Travel & Tourism, presented the last draw of the event.

ing, anroundtrip economy-class travel ticket to the USA.

AmCham Kuwait would like to especially thank its travel and tourism partner, IFA International Travel & Tourism, for their generous support, including presenting the final raffle draw: a roundtrip economy-class travel ticket to the USA. AmCham Kuwait continues to foster connections, advocate for the private sector, and provide members with practical opportunities to grow professionally while strengthening U.S.–Kuwait trade relations.

ing U.S.–Kuwait trade relations.

About ABCK-AmCham Kuwait  
A non-profit organization operating since 1985, composed of Fortune 500 corporations, small and medium-sized companies, and prominent business leaders and entrepreneurs, both American and Kuwaiti. ABCK-AmCham Kuwait has acted as an advocate for American interests in Kuwait. For more information, please visit [www.amchamkuwait.org](http://www.amchamkuwait.org) or follow @abck1985 on social media.



# NBK strengthens global engagement with high-level participation in IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) is participating with a high-level delegation in the 2025 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group, held in Washington, D.C., starting Oct 13, Monday, and continuing until October 18. This participation reflects NBK’s commitment to maintaining a strong presence in the world’s most prominent economic forums and engaging in discussions on key issues shaping the future of the global and regional economy.

The Bank’s delegation is headed by Mr. Isam Al-Sager, Vice Chairman and Group CEO, alongside Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group CEO, Mr. Faisal Al-Hamad, Chief Executive Officer - NBK Wealth Group; and Mr. Omar Bouhadiba, CEO of International Banking Group; as well as Mr. Rani Selwanes, General Manager of NBK - New York.

**A Packed Calendar of High-Level Engagements**

On the sidelines of the 2025 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group, the NBK delegation will take part in a series of high-profile events and meetings, in addition to holding several bilateral discussions with senior international officials. These engagements aim to explore prospects for joint cooperation and to strengthen NBK’s strategic relationships.

The Bank’s delegation is scheduled to engage with senior officials and global decision-makers on a range of pivotal topics that top the international economic agenda, with a particular focus on the key challenges and developments currently shaping the global banking and financial industry.

The delegation will also participate in the annual meeting of the members of the Institute of International Finance (IIF), taking place from October 14 to 17, as well as the annual International Banking Symposium organized by the Group of Thirty (G30). In addition, they will attend the reception hosted by Kuwait Banking Association for senior global banking leaders, held on the sidelines of the events and meetings, in the presence of the leaders of Kuwaiti banks, a number of heads of international banks, and representatives of European and Arab central banks, alongside prominent global public figures and decision-makers.

The NBK delegation will also attend a dinner banquet hosted by Her Excellency Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah, Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the United States of America, held in honor of the Kuwaiti delegation participating in this year’s meetings of the IMF and the World Bank Group.

**Exploring Global Economic Prospects**

The Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group stand as the largest global gathering of their kind, bringing together over 10,000 high-level participants, including central bank governors, finance and development ministers, private sector executives, civil society leaders, and distinguished academics.



- The delegation will hold a series of high-level meetings with senior international officials
- Discussions will focus on key challenges and emerging opportunities to enhance economic stability in Kuwait and the wider region
- NBK’s participation underscores its position as an active partner in the global economic dialogue

This annual gathering serves as a unique platform for shaping global economic policy and exchanging insights on the challenges and opportunities confronting the world economy. This year’s meetings carry particular significance amid the heightened uncertainty and evolving dynamics facing the global economic landscape.

Key topics on the agenda include global economic growth prospects, risks to the global financial system, including the impact of geopolitical tensions on inflation and markets, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and innovation. Discussions will also focus on debt management, development, and poverty reduction, with an emphasis on designing effective policies to support emerging economies and advance sustainable and inclusive economic growth worldwide.

The Annual Meetings feature several significant committees, with the most notable ones being the Development Committee, the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC), the Group of Ten, the Group of Twenty-Four, among others. In addition, the meetings include seminars, media sessions, press conferences, and numerous events that focus on the global economy, international development, and the stability and evolution of the global financial system.

Through its annual participation in the IMF and World Bank meetings, NBK underscores its role as an active partner in the global economic dialogue. The Bank engages with international counterparts to



NBK headquarters

discuss emerging challenges and opportunities, contribute to economic stability in Kuwait and the region, stay abreast of the latest developments in the global financial sector, and leverage best international practices to continually enhance its banking services and deliver efficient, high-quality solutions to its customers.

These meetings also provide a valuable opportunity to engage with senior officials from global financial institutions, gain in-depth insights into market trends and monetary and fiscal policy outlooks, and proactively understand and address the challenges confronting the global economy.

NBK has a global presence across 13 countries on four continents and holds one of the strongest credit ratings among major banks in the Middle East, according to the consensus of the three leading international credit rating agencies: Moody’s, Fitch, and Standard & Poor’s.

NBK is committed to participating in international forums and key meetings to stay abreast of the latest global developments, initiatives, and discussions on the global economy, international development, and the financial system. Such engagement reflects the Bank’s dedication to actively contributing to the global economic dialogue and strengthening its role as a bridge between Kuwait’s and the region’s financial markets and the broader global financial system.

## Other Voices

### Intel’s current challenges & potential path forward

By Hassan F Beidas

Intel is seeking \$5 billion to rebuild its lost dominance in the semiconductor industry. The company’s deal announcement with Nvidia last month brought confidence and hope to investors. This much-needed cash would help reposition Intel closer to the center of the booming artificial intelligence (AI) revolution. Following the announcement, Intel’s shares surged 23%, signaling renewed investor optimism.



Beidas

For years, Intel has struggled to keep pace with Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), which now stands as the world’s largest and most advanced chipmaker. While most of the industry shifted toward separating chip design from manufacturing, Intel chose the opposite path – keeping both operations under one company.

In 2021, Intel launched its own contract chipmaking venture known as Intel Foundry Services (IFS), aiming to compete with TSMC and Samsung. However, the initiative has faced difficulties attracting external customers, leaving Intel behind in the race to supply the world’s

leading tech firms.

Despite these setbacks, Intel still holds a valuable advantage: advanced chip-packaging technology that allows multiple chip designs to be interconnected efficiently. This innovation could give Intel’s new generation of chips a competitive edge and can secure more investments and partnerships needed to scale production.

Industry experts suggest that Intel’s best path forward may be to split the company into two entities: one focused on chip design and another dedicated to chip manufacturing. Such a separation could open the door to broader collaboration with major players like Nvidia, Qualcomm, and Advanced Micro Devices while also giving investors – including the U.S. government, which recently acquired a 10% stake – more flexibility to invest in specific segments of chip making or chip design rather than being exposed to both businesses.

However, breaking up Intel’s operations would not be simple. According to company reports the factories have been operating at a loss, and untangling decades of integrated production could be financially and operationally challenging. Still, Nvidia’s recent investment offers a promising spark. If it attracts further partnerships from other foundry customers, Intel could gain the capital needed to build state-of-the-art chip facilities and strengthen its position in the global semiconductor market.

## Empowered by Zuchongzhi 3.0 chip

### China’s superconducting quantum computer ready for commercial use

HEFEI, Oct. 12, (Xinhua): China’s superconducting quantum computer, similar to the “Zuchongzhi 3.0” model, has been deployed for commercial use, marking a crucial step toward the practical application of quantum computing.

Using the same chip series from the “Zuchongzhi 3.0,” the machine, featuring 105 readable qubits and 182 couplers, was set up by a team from the China Telecom Quantum Group (CTQG) and QuantumCTek Co., Ltd., leading quantum companies based in Hefei, capital of east China’s Anhui Province.

It processes quantum random circuit sampling tasks at a speed quadrillion times faster than the world’s most powerful supercomputer.

Quantum computing is widely regarded as a key technology for the next generation of information revolution.

In March this year, Chinese scientists, including Pan Jianwei, Zhu Xiaobo and Peng Chengzhi from the University of Science and Technol-

ogy of China, successfully built the 105-qubit superconducting quantum computing prototype “Zuchongzhi 3.0,” once again breaking the world record for quantum computational advantage in the superconducting system.

Quantum computational advantage, also known as “quantum supremacy,” refers to the point where quantum computers outperform the most advanced classical supercomputers in specific tasks.

Zhang Xinfang, a senior quantum computing researcher at the CTQG, said that this quantum computer, which boasts “the strongest quantum computational advantage,” will be connected to the “Tianyan” quantum computing cloud platform, making it accessible to users worldwide.

Since its launch in November 2023, the platform has received over 37 million visits, covering users in more than 60 countries, and the number of experimental tasks has surpassed 2 million.

## US consumer sentiment holds steady at 55 in Oct

By National Bank of Kuwait

Global markets ended the week mixed as investors digested steady US data, resilient Canadian employment, and rising political uncertainty abroad. The University of Michigan consumer sentiment index held at around 55 in October, signaling stable confidence, while Canada’s unemployment rate stayed at 7.1% despite strong full-time job gains. The US dollar index hovered around 99.3, posting its strongest weekly advance in a year as instability in France and Japan weighed on the euro and yen. Gold traded around \$4,000 after hitting a record high earlier in the week, supported by safe-haven demand, geopolitical tensions, and expectations of further Fed rate cuts. In Europe, ECB President Christine Lagarde said inflation is now near the 2% target and that growth should recover in 2026, emphasizing that the disinflation phase is over and signaling little urgency for more easing. She urged structural reforms and faster progress on the digital euro to strengthen the currency’s global standing amid shifting geopolitical and monetary dynamics. Over in Asia, The Reserve Bank of New Zealand delivered a larger-than-expected 50 bps cut to its cash rate, reducing it to 2.5% from 3%.

### North America

#### FOMC Meeting Minutes

The September FOMC minutes showed that officials were nearly unanimous in supporting a rate cut but split over how quickly to proceed. The committee voted 11–1 to lower the federal funds rate by 25 basis points to 4.00–4.25%, with Governor Stephen Miran dissenting in favor of a larger 50 bps cut. Among the 19 participants, a narrow 10–9 majority projected two additional quarter-point cuts by year end. Most members agreed further easing was warranted amid signs of labor market weakness and moderating inflation, though some argued policy might not be especially restrictive and advocated a more cautious approach. The committee also generally agreed that President Trump’s tariffs were unlikely to generate lasting inflationary pressures. Markets are pricing in two further rate cuts by year end.

#### UoM Consumer Sentiment

The University of Michigan’s consumer sentiment index for the U.S. was little changed at 55 in October 2025, compared to 55.1 in September and slightly above expectations of 54.1. Improvements in current personal finances and year-ahead business conditions were offset by weaker future personal finance expectations and durable goods buying conditions. The current conditions index rose slightly to 61 (from 60.4), while the expectations index dipped to 51.2 (from 51.7). Consumers viewed the overall economic outlook as largely unchanged from last month. Year-ahead inflation expectations eased marginally to 4.6%, while long-run expectations stayed at 3.7%.

#### U.S. Dollar Index

The U.S. dollar index held at 99.3 on Friday, just below Thursday’s two-month high

Previous Week Levels					This Week’s Expected Range		3-Month
Currencies	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.1563	1.1555	1.1630	1.1618	1.1540	1.1720	1.1679
GBP	1.3301	1.3258	1.3370	1.3358	1.3260	1.3500	1.3358
JPY	153.06	151.14	153.27	151.15	149.00	152.55	149.97
CHF	0.8062	0.7987	0.8068	0.7989	0.7830	0.8035	0.7908

of 99.56, and was set for a nearly 2% weekly gain, its strongest in a year, amid political uncertainty in France and Japan that pressured the euro and yen. Markets digested the University of Michigan’s October consumer sentiment, which was little changed at 55, with mixed views on personal finances and durable goods buying conditions. Meanwhile, the ongoing US government shutdown is expected to delay key economic data like CPI and labor reports, clouding the Fed’s policy outlook. Futures now imply a 95% chance of a 25 bp rate cut this month, while December cut odds are at around 90%.

The Greenback was last seen trading at 98.978.

#### Canada Labor Market

Canada’s unemployment rate held at 7.1% in September 2025, slightly below expectations of 7.2% but still the highest since August 2021. The number of unemployed rose by 11,900 (+0.7%) to 1.61 million, while total employment increased by 60,400 (+0.3%) to 21.02 million, far exceeding forecasts for a 5,000 gain and partially offsetting declines over the past two months. Full-time jobs surged by 106,100 (+0.6%), while part-time employment dropped by 45,600 (-1.2%). Both the employment rate and labor force participation rate edged up by 0.1 percentage point, to 60.6% and 65.2%, respectively, marking the first employment rate increase in three months.

The USD/CAD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.4004.

### Europe

#### Words From the ECB

ECB President Christine Lagarde said inflation is now close to the 2% target and the economy is expected to pick up in 2026, noting that wage growth is moderating and underlying price pressures are on track. Speaking to EU lawmakers in Strasbourg, she highlighted that higher tariffs, a stronger euro, and global competition are currently weighing on exports and growth, but these headwinds should fade next year. Lagarde reiterated that the disinflation process is over and that the ECB is in a “good place,” with balanced risks and an economy resilient to trade and geopolitical shocks. Policymakers, including Lagarde, de Guindos, and Lane, signaled no urgency to cut rates further from the current 2% deposit rate, though Bank of France Governor Villeroy maintained that another cut can’t be ruled out, especially amid France’s fresh political turmoil following PM Lecornu’s resignation. Turning to the euro, Lagarde emphasized the opportunity to strength-

en its global role amid geopolitical shifts and waning confidence in the U.S. dollar, citing U.S. protectionism and President Trump’s defiance of international cooperation as catalysts. She called for bold reforms to bolster Europe’s financial foundation, including expanding safe asset issuance and advancing the digital euro, saying the euro could become a “global anchor of trust” if Europe moves from talk to implementation of reforms.

The EUR/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.1618.

### Asia-Pacific

#### Australia Consumer Sentiment

Australia’s Westpac-Melbourne Institute Consumer Sentiment Index slid 3.5% in October to 92.1, marking the sharpest monthly decline since April. This drop erased gains seen between May and August and followed a 3.1% fall in September. Household financial sentiment deteriorated, with conditions compared to a year ago down 4.8% to 82.1, and expectations for the next 12 months tumbling nearly 10% to 97.1, the lowest in over a year. Assessments of the broader economy were mixed: the one-year outlook slipped to 89.9, a yearly low, while the five-year outlook improved modestly to 94.0. The index for “time to buy a major household item” edged down to 1.1% to 97.2, and unemployment expectations worsened, falling below the long-run average. Analysts noted that households appear rattled by recent inflation data. While a November cash rate cut is still possible, economists caution it is “far from assured.”

The AUD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.6469.

#### Reserve Bank of New Zealand

The Reserve Bank of New Zealand delivered a larger-than-expected 50 bps cut to its cash rate, reducing it to 2.5% from 3%, as it sought to counter persistent economic weakness. The central bank signaled openness to further easing, citing subdued activity through mid-2025 and growing slack in the economy. The NZD/USD pair fell 1% on the news, touching a six-month low, whilst two-year bond yields dropped 8 bps to 2.63%. The Kiwi remains the weakest G10 currency over the past year, down over 6% against the U.S. Dollar, reflecting diverging policy paths from peers such as the Reserve Bank of Australia.

The NZD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.5721.

### Kuwait

#### Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30550.



Reaffirming global investors’ confidence in its presence in international debt markets

# Burgan Bank successfully prices \$500 million in international bonds

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: In a strategic move that reflects global investors’ trust, Burgan Bank K.P.S.C. has successfully priced its USD 500 million five-year senior unsecured international bond, with a spread of 115 basis points above US Treasuries. This proposed issuance, denominated in USD under Regulation S with a fixed coupon rate of 4.875%, to be issued through Burgan Senior SPC Limited under the USD 1.5 billion Euro Medium Term Note (EMTN) program, is expected to reflect the Group’s strong financial position, prudent policies, and sustainable approach to implementing its strategy across its various international operations.

This offering is intended to be sold outside Kuwait. Based on investors’ indication of interests, the offering was geographically distributed among investors from the Middle East (30%), Europe (33%), and Asia (37%), reflecting the Bank’s diverse investor base and global confidence.

Commenting on the successful pricing of the bonds, and the global interests received, Mr. Tony Daher, Group CEO of Burgan Bank, said: “We are particularly proud of this achievement, which underscores Burgan Bank’s solid position as a keyplayer in international capital markets. It also reflects investor confidence in the Bank’s performance and balanced growth strategy, aimed at achieving sustainable results and reinforce returns for shareholders.”

He added that international investors’ notable demand for this issuance – which exceeded the offering size by more than 3.8 times, with the order book reaching approximately USD 1.9 billion – reflects the Bank’s strong reputation in global markets and demonstrates the strength of the Kuwaiti economy and the resilience of the local banking sector.

Standard Chartered Bank, HSBC, Citibank, Kamco Invest, and Mizuho are acting as Global Coordinators on this transaction. Additionally, ADCB, Bank ABC, DBS, ICBC,



Tony Daher, Group Chief Executive Officer

and Mashreq are acting as Joint Lead Managers. The bond issuance is expected to be listed on the London Stock Exchange’s International Securities Market.

This comes as part of Burgan Bank’s strategic plan to diversify funding sources and strengthen its capital base, supporting its operational expansion in Kuwait and regional markets in line with the Kuwait Vision 2035 goals.

The investment-grade credit rating of the issuance, at A by Fitch, and BBB+ by S&P, further enhances its appeal – driving strong interest from international private banking platforms and global asset managers. It further reinforces Burgan Bank’s position as a pivotal banking institution contributing to the country’s economic development.

**About Burgan Bank K.P.S.C.**

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is a Kuwait-based conventional bank with a significant focus on the corporate and financial



Burgan Bank headquarters

institution sectors. From its earliest days, the Bank has significantly sought to diversify its offering to cater to its growing retail and private banking customer base.

Burgan Bank has majority-owned subsidiaries, collectively known as the “Burgan

Bank Group”, in the MENAT region. This Group is supported by one of the largest branch networks across the region and includes: Gulf Bank Algeria – AGB (Algeria), Tunis International Bank – TIB (Tunisia), Burgan Bank Turkey (Turkey) and United

Gulf Bank (Bahrain). Furthermore, Burgan Bank has a presence in the UAE through its corporate office, Burgan Bank Financial Services Limited.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years, through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Moreover, Burgan Bank’s brand has been built on a foundation of real values – trust, commitment, excellence, and progression – which serve as a reminder of the high standards to which the Bank always aspires. In fact, the Bank’s core philosophy of ‘Driven by You’ is the foundation on which its products and services are continuously developed.

Burgan Bank has achieved the LEED v4.1 O+M: EB Gold Certification for its Head Office in Kuwait City. The Bank has also obtained the ISO/IEC 27001: 2022 Information Security Management Systems certificate (ISMS), ISO /IEC 27701:2019 Privacy Information Management Systems (PIMS), ISO/ IEC 20000-1: 2018 Information Technology Service Management System (ITSMS) and was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System (QMS), making it one of the few banks in the GCC and Kuwait to receive such certification for five consecutive times. At the same time, the Bank has the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twenty consecutive years. Moreover, in a testament to its dedication to the development of its human capital, Burgan Bank is the first bank in Kuwait to be certified as a Great Place to Work®, earning the distinct honor in 2023.

Burgan Bank is a majority-owned subsidiary of KIPCO (Kuwait Projects Company), one of the largest holding companies in the MENA region.

# Inflation increases again, challenging President Trump’s claim it’s ‘defeated’

Fed cuts rates despite inflation staying above 2% target

**WASHINGTON, Oct 12, (AP): Inflation has risen in three of the last four months and is slightly higher than it was a year ago, when it helped sink then-Vice President Kamala Harris’ presidential campaign. Yet you wouldn’t know it from listening to President Donald Trump or even some of the inflation fighters at the Federal Reserve.**

Trump told the United Nations General Assembly late last month: “Grocery prices are down, mortgage rates are down, and inflation has been defeated.”

And at a high-profile speech in August, just before the Fed cut its key interest rate for the first time this year, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said: “Inflation, though still somewhat elevated, has come down a great deal from its post-pandemic highs. Upside risks to inflation have diminished.”

Yet dismissing or even downplaying inflation while it is still above the Fed’s target of 2% poses big risks for the White House and the Federal Reserve. For the Trump administration, it could find itself on the wrong side of a potent issue: Surveys show that many Americans still see high prices as a major burden on their finances.

The Fed may be taking an even bigger gamble: It has cut its key interest rate on the assumption that the Trump administration’s tariffs will only cause a temporary bump up in inflation. If that turns out to be wrong – if inflation gets worse or remains elevated for longer than expected – the Fed’s inflation-fighting credibility could take a hit.

That credibility plays a crucial role in the Fed’s ability to keep prices stable. If Americans are confident that the central bank can keep inflation in check, they won’t take steps – such as demanding sharply higher pay when prices rise – that can launch an inflationary spiral. Companies often increase prices further to offset higher labor costs.

But Karen Dynan, a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, said this week that with memories of pandemic-era inflation still fresh and tariffs pushing up the cost of imported goods, consumers and businesses could start to lose confidence that inflation will stay low.

“If that proves to be the case, in hindsight it will be that the Fed cuts -- and I do expect several more -- are going to be seen as a mistake,” Dynan said.

So far, the Trump administration’s tariffs haven’t lifted inflation as much as many economists expected earlier this year. And it remains far below its 9.1% peak three years ago. Still, consumer prices increased 2.9% in August from a year earlier, up from 2.6% at the same time last year and above the Fed’s 2% target.

The government is scheduled to release the September inflation report on Wednesday, but the data will probably be delayed by the government shutdown.

Tariffs have pushed up the cost of many imported items, including furniture, appliances, and toys. Overall, the cost of long-lasting manufactured goods rose nearly 2% in August from a year earlier. It was a modest gain, but comes after nearly three decades when the cost of such items mostly fell.

The cost of some everyday goods are still rising more quickly than before the pandemic: Grocery prices moved up 2.7% in August from a year ago, the largest gain, outside the pandemic, since 2015. Coffee prices have soared nearly 21% in the past year, partly because Trump has slapped 50% import taxes on Brazil, a leading coffee exporter, and also because climate change-induced droughts have cut into coffee bean harvests.

Most Fed officials are still concerned that inflation is too high, according the minutes of its Sept. 16-17 meeting. Yet they still chose to cut their key interest rate, because they were more worried about the risk of worsening unemployment than about higher inflation.

But the concern for some economists is that the ongoing rollout of tariffs and the fact that many companies are still implementing price hikes in response could result in more than just a temporary boost to inflation.

“It is a big gamble after what we’ve been going through ... to count on it being transitory,” said Jason Furman, an economist at Harvard University and a former top adviser to President Barack Obama. “Once upon a time, (3% inflation) would have been considered really high.”

Just two weeks ago, Trump slapped new tariffs on a range of products, including 100% on pharmaceuticals, 50% on kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanities, and 25% on heavy trucks. On Friday, he threatened “a massive increase of tariffs” on imports from China

in response to that country’s restrictions on rare earth exports.

Some companies are still raising prices to offset the tariff costs. Duties on steel and aluminum imports have pushed up the cost of the cans used by Campbell Soups, leading the company’s CEO to say in September that it will implement “surgical pricing initiatives.”

Chris Butler, CEO of National Tree Company, the nation’s largest artificial Christmas tree seller, says his company will raise prices by about 10% this holiday season on its trees, wreaths, and garlands to offset tariff costs. About 45% of its trees are made in China, with the rest from Southeast Asia, Mexico, and other countries. The cost of labor and real estate is too high to make them in the United States, he said.

Butler also expects there will be a reduced supply of artificial trees and decorations this year, which could lift industry-wide prices further, because most production in China shut down when tariffs on that country hit 145% earlier this year. Production resumed after Trump reduced the duties to 30% but at a slower pace.

Butler has pushed his suppliers to absorb some of the cost of the tariffs, but they won’t pay all of it.

“At the end of the day, we can’t absorb the entirety of it and our factories can’t absorb the entirety of it,” he said. “So we’ve had to pass along some of the increases to consumers.”

Many Fed policymakers are aware of the risks. Jeffrey Schmid, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, who votes on interest rate decisions, said Monday that high inflation that results from a loss of confidence in the central bank is harder to fight than other price spikes, such as those that result from supply disruptions.

“The Fed must maintain its credibility on inflation,” Schmid said. “History has shown that while all inflations are universally disliked, not all inflations are equally costly to fight.”

Yet some Fed officials say that other trends are offsetting the impact of tariffs. Fed governor Stephen Miran, whom Trump appointed just before the central bank’s September meeting, said Tuesday that a steady slowdown in rental costs should reduce underlying inflation in the coming months. And the sharp drop in immigration as a result of the administration’s clampdown will reduce demand, he said, cooling inflation pressures.

“I’m more sanguine about the inflation outlook than a lot of other people are,” he said.

## Markets slide

# Trade truce collapses as US-China tensions heat up again

NEW YORK, Oct 12, (AP): For months, bubbling trade tensions between China and the U.S. seemed to calm to a simmer, with words like “thaw” and “truce” swapped in for warnings of economic “war.”

Now, hostilities appear to be returning to full boil.

A series of tit-for-tat moves this week by the two superpowers has thrust trade hostilities back in the global spotlight, roiling markets and raising alarms of what might come next.

“Let’s poke the bear again,” economist Aleksandar Tomic, an associate dean at Boston College, said of the renewed sparring. “Let’s stir the hornet’s nest.”

A look at where things stand in the U.S.-China trade standoff:

Tensions between China and the U.S. transcend any presidency or political party. But Donald Trump’s return to the White House has brought new levels of rancor. A volley of tariffs were introduced, raised and reduced in the year’s first half, igniting retaliation from Chinese leader Xi Jinping. But more recently, several months of relative calm had prevailed.

That truce showed signs of fizzling this week, though, with China announcing strict new limits on exports of rare earth minerals crucial to high-tech products. Trump, in turn, threatened an additional 100% tax on Chinese imports by Nov. 1 and export controls on American software. Both sides also hit one another’s ships with new port fees.

Whether public moves by Washington and Beijing are meant to advance private talks between the two sides is unknown. But they roiled stock markets, with Friday bringing the S&P 500 its worst day since April and a new dose of uncertainty about what is next.

“Either this is it, the so-called tariff truce is over and both sides are going to rapidly escalate or these are negotiation talks ahead of the talks between Xi and Trump,” said Marc Chandler, chief market strategist at Bannockburn Capital Markets in Cincinnati, Ohio.

With so much unknown about any possible behind-the-scenes negotiations between the two nations, it is

hard to gauge who might have the upper hand.

But China may sense an opening, with Trump challenged by a government shutdown and the impacts of the ongoing trade war.

American soybean farmers who long relied on Chinese sales are now being passed over for exports from Brazil, Argentina and elsewhere. U.S. investors have happily watched markets driven upward by excitement over artificial intelligence, but China dominates the world in the rare earth minerals that are key to technological hardware. American consumers who have come to expect an endless supply of cheap goods that roll off Chinese conveyor belts are bracing for higher prices.

“It becomes an issue of who can replace supply chains faster. And, at least right now, I think China is winning that one,” Tomic said. “I don’t know what the cycle of a soybean is, but I bet you can grow a soybean faster than you can build a toy factory.”

Trump has suggested a deal is still possible.

He has frequently made threats that turn out to be empty, used as part of a negotiating strategy. For now, Trump has not formally canceled a meeting planned with Xi later this month on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, though he said nothing was certain.

“I don’t know that we’re going to have it,” he said in the Oval Office on Friday. “I’m going to be there regardless, so I would assume we might have it.”

Chandler said it might appear to be a sudden, dramatic blowup between the U.S. and China, but it is really just more of the same from two parties embroiled in an acrimonious, long-running feud.

“It’s sort of like a divorce: The wife and the husband are accusing one another of things that, from the outside, look more complicated,” Chandler said. “This kind of story doesn’t have a good guy. We want to have a good guy and a villain. But these are just two large countries both seeking national advantage.”

## Rare earth export controls deepen US-China trade rift

# China vows not to back down amid Trump’s 100% tariff threat

BEIJING, Oct 12, (AP): China signaled Sunday that it would not back down in the face of a 100% tariff threat from President Donald Trump, urging the U.S. to resolve differences through negotiations instead of threats.

“China’s stance is consistent,” the Commerce Ministry said in a statement posted online. “We do not want a tariff war but we are not afraid of one.”

It was China’s first official comment on Trump’s threat to jack up the tax on imports from China by Nov. 1 in response to new Chinese restrictions on the export of rare earths, which are vital to a wide range of consumer and military products.

The back and forth threatens to derail a possible meeting between Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping and end a truce in a trade war in which new tariffs from both sides briefly topped 100% in April.

Trump has raised taxes on imports from many U.S. trading partners since taking office in January, seeking to win concessions. China has been one of the few countries that hasn’t backed down, relying on its economic clout.

“Frequently resorting to the threat of high tariffs is not the correct way to get along with China,” the Commerce Ministry said in its post, which was presented as a series of answers from an unnamed spokesperson to four questions from unspecified media outlets.

The statement called for addressing any concerns through dialogue.

“If the U.S. side obstinately insists on its practice, China will be sure to resolutely take corresponding measures to safeguard its legitimate rights and interests,” the post said.



An aerial view of a container port is seen in Qingdao in east China’s Shandong province, on June 6, 2024.

In addition to the 100% tariff, Trump threatened to impose export controls on what he called “critical software,” without specifying what that means.

Both sides accuse the other of violating the spirit of the truce by impos-

ing new restrictions on trade.

Trump said in a social media post that China is “becoming very hostile” and that it is holding the world captive by restricting access to rare earth metals and magnets.

The Chinese Commerce Ministry post said the U.S. has introduced several new restrictions in recent weeks, including expanding the number of Chinese companies subject to U.S. export controls.

On rare earths, the ministry said that export licenses would be granted for legitimate civilian uses, noting that the minerals also have military applications.

The new regulations include a requirement that foreign companies get Chinese government approval to export items that contain rare earths sourced from China, no matter where the products are manufactured.

China accounts for nearly 70% of the world’s rare earths mining and controls roughly 90% of their global processing. Access to the material is a key point of contention in trade talks between Washington and Beijing.

The critical minerals go into many products, from jet engines, radar systems and electric vehicles to consumer electronics including laptops and phones. China’s export controls have hit European and other manufacturers, as well as American ones.

The Commerce Ministry statement said that the U.S. is also ignoring Chinese concerns by going forward with new port fees on Chinese ships that take effect Tuesday. China announced Friday that it would impose port fees on American ships in response.



**‘She made films iconic and timeless’**

# Diane Keaton, star of ‘Annie Hall,’ ‘Godfather,’ dies at 79

LOS ANGELES, Oct 12, (AP): Diane Keaton, the Oscar-winning star of “Annie Hall,” “The Godfather” films and “Father of the Bride,” whose quirky, vibrant manner and depth made her one of the most singular actors of a generation, has died. She was 79.

People Magazine reported Saturday that she died in California with loved ones, citing a family spokesperson. No other details were immediately available, and representatives for Keaton did not respond to inquiries from The Associated Press.

The unexpected news was met with shock around the world.

“She was hilarious, a complete original, and completely without guile, or any of the competitiveness one would have expected from such a star,” Bette Midler said in an Instagram post. She and Keaton co-starred in “The First Wives Club.”

Keaton was the kind of actor who helped make films iconic and timeless, from her “La-dee-da, la-dee-da” phrasing as Annie Hall, bedecked in that necktie, bowler hat, vest and khakis, to her heartbreaking turn as Kay Adams, the woman unfortunate enough to join the Corleone family.

Her star-making performances in the 1970s, many of which were in Woody Allen films, were not a flash in the pan and she would continue to charm new generations for decades thanks in part to a longstanding collaboration with filmmaker Nancy Meyers.

She played a businessperson who unexpectedly inherits an infant in “Baby Boom,” the mother of the bride in the beloved remake of “Father of the Bride,” a newly single woman in “The First Wives Club,” and a divorced playwright who gets involved with Jack Nicholson’s womanizing music executive in “Something’s Gotta Give.”

Keaton won an Oscar for “Annie Hall” and would go on to be nominated three more times, for “Reds,” “Marvin’s Room,” and “Something’s Gotta Give.”

In her very Keaton way, upon accepting her Oscar in 1978 she laughed and said, “This is something.”

Keaton was born Diane Hall in January 1946 in Los Angeles. Her mother was a



Diane Keaton appears at the David Donatello awards ceremony in Rome on March 21, 2018. (AP)

homemaker and photographer, and her father was in real estate and civil engineering, and both would inspire her love in the arts, from fashion to architecture.

Keaton was drawn to theater and singing while in school in Santa Ana, California, and she dropped out of college after a year to make a go of it in Manhattan. Actors’ Equity already had a Diane Hall in their ranks, and she took Keaton, her mother’s maiden name, as her own.

She studied under Sanford Meisner in New York and has credited him with

giving her the freedom to “chart the complex terrain of human behavior within the safety of his guidance. It made playing with fire fun.”

She started on the stage as an understudy in the Broadway production for “Hair,” and in Allen’s “Play It Again, Sam” in 1968, for which she would receive a Tony nomination.

Keaton made her film debut in the 1970 romantic comedy “Lovers and Other Strangers,” but her big breakthrough would come a few years later when she was cast in Francis Ford Coppola’s “The Godfather,” which won best picture and become one of the most beloved films of all time.

The 1970s were an incredibly fruitful time for Keaton thanks in part to her ongoing collaboration with Allen in both comedic and dramatic roles. She appeared in “Sleeper,” “Love and Death,” “Interiors,” “Manhattan,” and the film version of “Play it Again, Sam.” The 1977 crime-drama “Looking for Mr. Goodbar” also earned her raves.

Allen and the late Marshall Brickman gave Keaton one of her most iconic roles in “Annie Hall,” the infectious woman from Chippewa Falls whom Allen’s Alvy Singer cannot get over. The film is considered one of the great romantic comedies of all time, with Keaton’s eccentric, self-deprecating Annie at its heart.

Keaton and Allen were also in a romantic relationship, from about 1968, when she met him while auditioning for his play, until about 1974. Afterward they remained collaborators and friends.

“He was so hip, with his thick glasses and cool suits,” Keaton wrote in her memoir. “But it was his manner that got me, his way of gesturing, his hands, his coughing and looking down in a self-deprecating way while he told jokes.”

She was also romantically linked to Pacino, who played her husband in “The Godfather,” and Warren Beatty who directed her and whom she co-starred with in “Reds.” She never married but did adopt two children when she was in her 50s: a daughter, Dexter, and a son, Duke.

In 1987 she began another long-standing collaboration with Nancy Meyers, which would result in four beloved films starting with “Baby Boom,” directed by Charles Shyer.

## Essential episodes

## Marc Maron’s ‘WTF’ podcast ends soon

LOS ANGELES, Oct 12, (AP): **Marc Maron** drops the 1,686th and final episode of his “WTF” podcast Monday.

The show began with the comic and actor mainly interviewing stand-up comedians. Maron would go on to talk to legends of music and Hollywood, and a sitting president.

Here’s a look at seven essential episodes from the 16-year history of the pioneering longform interview podcast.

“WTF” episode No. 67, April 26, 2010

Fairly famous names had come on Maron’s podcast from its 2009 debut, but Robin Williams, the Oscar, Emmy and Grammy winner and luminary of the stand-up stage, was a huge get just seven months into the show. Maron made the most of it with an unforgettable



Maron

interview that constantly shifted between comedy and tragedy. “Discussions of death,” Williams said after going on one long riff in his improv style. “It’s very freeing.” He delved into his past thoughts of suicide in a discussion that felt all the more important after Williams killed himself in 2014. Maron re-aired the episode, framed by his own tearful thoughts and memories.

It later earned a place in the National Recording Registry at the Library of Congress. Maron, who almost never listens to his recorded episodes, heard a clip from it for the first time last month when “WTF” superfan Judd Apatow came on and played his favorite show moments for the host.

“WTF” episodes No. 111 and No. 112, Oct. 4 and 7, 2010

The earliest episodes of “WTF” were largely devoted to Maron working out his long-simmering beefs with other stand-up comics. His last question to them often was, “Are We Good?” (The line would become a catchphrase and is the title of a new documentary about him.) Most listeners and Maron himself agree the phenomenon peaked with his epic, two-part peace negotiation with his fellow stand-up and former best friend Louis CK. It took the show, and the medium, to another level. Maron recently said their salvaged friendship did not survive CK facing accusations in 2017 of sexual misconduct involving several comedians.

“WTF” episode No. 245, Jan. 16, 2012

Comedian Todd Glass used the podcast to come out publicly as gay. It was an indicator that the show could be a place for personal revelations. In later years, comic Maria Bamford and actor Mandy Moore would share details on abusive relationships. Comedian and actor Pete Davidson would discuss, for the first time publicly, his diagnosis with borderline personality disorder. And actor Andrew Garfield would open up about his anxiety and the grief of losing his mother.

“WTF” episode No. 613, dropped on: June 22, 2015

It was a crowning moment for both Maron and for podcasting when then- President Barack Obama appeared on “WTF” for a long interview. With the Secret Service in tow, Obama went through the regular guest ritual of going to the modest Los Angeles home Maron dubbed “The Cat Ranch” and sat in the dirty garage studio where the first nine years of the show were based. A relaxed Obama used the talk to reflect on his two terms as president as they were coming to an end.

“WTF” episode No. 627, Aug. 10, 2015

When filmmaker Lynn Shelton appeared on “WTF” in August of 2015, it was a good but unremarkable episode. When it re-aired in 2020, its significance had grown wildly. The interview was the first meeting of Maron and Shelton, who began dating and became long-term life partners and collaborators. After her sudden and unexpected death, Maron, his voice quivering, poured out his feelings in an introduction to the old interview.

“WTF” episode No. 653, Nov. 9, 2015

For years on the podcast, Maron obsessed over “Saturday Night Live” mastermind Lorne Michaels and his power over the comedy world, in part because Maron never managed to make it on to the show.

So it was a big moment when Michaels finally became a “WTF” guest, and Maron gave him a blow-by-blow of his tryout for “SNL” two decades earlier. “God, you REALLY remember this,” Michaels said.

To this day, Maron has never appeared on “SNL.”

“WTF” episode No. 1026, June 10, 2019

Music would become increasingly important to “WTF” as years passed. Maron’s guitar playing and collecting hobby became an essential part of the show, which he would end with his riffing. Musical guests would eventually become as important as comedians and actors, as he had sit-downs with Bruce Springsteen, Mick Jagger and Neil Young. But his 2019 talk with singer Mavis Staples may be his best of the bunch. The two discussed making music with her family in the Jim Crow South and her shift from gospel great to funk-and-soul legend.

## Film



This image released by Roadside Attractions shows Jennifer Lopez in a scene from ‘Kiss Of The Spider Woman.’ (AP)

## Lopez’s diva glamour lights up a stark prison drama

# Tonatiuh dances away with ‘Spider Woman’

LOS ANGELES, Oct 12, (AP): The part of Luis Molina, the prisoner with a penchant for Hollywood’s Golden Age at the heart of “Kiss of the Spider Woman,” has been good to actors over the years. It’s what got William Hurt his first best actor Oscar, for Héctor Babenco’s 1985 film adaptation. Several years later, Brent Carver would win a Tony for John Kander and Fred Ebb’s Broadway musical.

Perhaps it shouldn’t be a surprise, then, that the standout in Bill Condon’s “Kiss of the Spider Woman” is the person playing Molina. Still, it takes a special kind of actor to make such an immediate impact as Tonatiuh, a relative newcomer, does in this film. They don’t even need all the window dressing of the fantasy movie musical sequences to make their scenes come alive.

“Kiss of the Spider Woman,” has had many lives, first as a novel by Argentine writer Manuel Puig, published in 1976 and widely banned. It imagines the meeting of two cellmates in an Argentine prison, Molina a romantic dreamer, and Valentín (Diego Luna), a Marxist revolutionary. They develop an unlikely bond as Molina recounts the plot to his favorite movie: A fictional musical called “Kiss of the Spider Woman” starring the fictional screen siren Ingrid Luna (played by Jennifer Lopez).

The latest is an adaptation of the Broadway musical, with Condon and late playwright Terrence McNally co-credited for the script. Set in Argentina in 1983, amid the military dictatorship’s war on its political opponents, the film alter-

nates between the dreary reality of the prison cell and the lavish MGM-styled musical world in Molina’s imagination. Valentín resists hearing about it at first - too busy being serious and reading Lenin. “Well, that sounds fun,” Molina deadpans, before throwing out his own quote, “The struggle is not over until all men are free.” No, it’s not Lenin, it’s Cyd Charisse in “Silk Stockings.”

But Molina is a persuasive sort and a transfixing storyteller and soon Valentín is wrapped up in this fantasy world too. Movies are dreams, Molina says, admitting that nobody claims that “Kiss of the Spider Woman” is the greatest movie ever made. In a funny aside that could be a self-conscious defense of the movie we’re watching, he says it’s “too ambitious for its own good, too many flavors in the stew.” And yet, he adds, “there’s so much beauty.”

The world of the movie within the movie is candy colored splendor, a stark contrast to the dour environs of the prison. With Kander and Ebb’s songs, Collen Atwood’s lush costumes, Scott Chambliss’ sets, and Sergio Trujillo’s classic choreography, Lopez has an enviable canvas to work with. And she seems to relish the heightened, glamorous spectacle of it all, singing and dancing and doing the MGM thing with all the diva gusto she can muster.

Molina imagines himself in the role of her devoted assistant, and Valentín as her love interest. And while it’s fun to see Tonatiuh and Luna all cleaned up and dashing in this fantasy world, you’re never exactly invested in the movie

within the movie, beside basking in the visual spectacle. In that way, it is an escape from the misery of the cell. But for an audience member, the cell is where all the interesting drama and growth is happening.

Valentín and Molina are obvious opposites. Valentín is consumed with entrenched ideas of what it means to be a man, and that meaning is only derived through struggle. Molina’s head might be in the clouds but within those fantasies are wisdom and shrewd survival instincts too. He’s not been bunked up with Valentín accidentally: He’s an informant. Naturally, this transactional situation turns into love and, of course, tragedy.

Condon (“Gods and Monsters,” “Dreamgirls,” “Beauty and the Beast”) is a journeyman filmmaker with an obvious passion for the material at hand. Oscar-nominated for writing the screenplay for “Chicago” (which he didn’t direct, Rob Marshall did), Condon directs his musical sequences more simply - allowing the dancing to shine. And it is fun to watch, a bit of frivolity and escapism.

But you’re always eager to get back to the cell for more Tonatiuh. Molina’s main stage might be a dull, claustrophobic prison cell, but Tonatiuh’s performance is vibrant technicolor.

“Kiss of the Spider Woman,” a Roadside Attractions released in theaters Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for “language, some violence, sexual content.” Running time: 128 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

## Variety

**LONDON:** British police have arrested two men on suspicion of murder after the former Lostprophets singer **Ian Watkins** was stabbed to death at a prison in northern England, where he was serving a 29-year sentence for child sex offenses.

Emergency services were called to HMP Wakefield in West Yorkshire on Saturday morning after Watkins, 48, was attacked with a knife. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

A murder investigation is underway following the arrests of two men, aged 25 and 43, West Yorkshire Police said in a statement.

In 2013, Watkins pleaded guilty to 13 charges, including trying to rape a baby, sexually touching a 1-year-old, encouraging a fan to abuse her child and making child pornography.



Watkins

At the time of his sentencing, Judge John Royce called Watkins a manipulative and dangerous sexual predator who had abused his fame to help satisfy his “insatiable lust.”

“Those who have appeared in these courts over many years see a large number of horrific cases,” Royce said in sentencing at Cardiff Crown Court. “This case, however, breaks new ground.”

Watkins was the lead singer for Lostprophets, a Welsh rock band that topped the UK charts in 2006 with its third album, “Liberation Transmission.” The band announced it was disbanding after Watkins’ arrest. (AP)

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**CAIRO:** Egypt’s Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities announced Saturday the discovery of a New Kingdom period (1550-1069 BC) military fortress in the country’s northeastern North Sinai province.

The fortress, located at the Tell El-Kharouba site in the Sheikh Zuweid area, is one of the largest and most important found along the ancient Horus Military Road, situated near the Mediterranean coast, the ministry said in a statement.

It highlights the advanced military planning of New

Kingdom rulers who built defensive structures to protect Egypt’s eastern border and secure one of the most strategic routes linking Ancient Egypt with Palestine, the ministry said.

Initial studies showed the fortress underwent several phases of restoration throughout history, it said.

The Egyptian archaeological mission continues excavations despite challenges from shifting sand dunes, hoping to discover the military port that served the fortress, it added.

Mohamed Ismail Khaled, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, said the mission uncovered a 105-meter-long southern wall, a 2.2-meter-wide side entrance, and 11 defensive towers of the fortress, and a 75-meter-long zigzag wall dividing the fortress north and south that surrounds a residential area for soldiers.

“The discovery of this massive fortress is an important step in reconstructing the full picture of Egypt’s defensive network along the eastern border during the New Kingdom,” demonstrating it was “a state of strong institutions capable of protecting its land and borders,” he added. (Xinhua)



‘Empowering girls builds a brighter future’

Michelle Obama’s Alliance pledges \$2.5m for girls’ education

NEW YORK, Oct 12. (AP): Former first lady Michelle Obama is putting new force behind efforts to ensure girls overcome educational barriers in some of the world’s most economically disadvantaged areas.

The Obama Foundation’s Girls Opportunity Alliance pledged Saturday to rally \$2.5 million for dozens of grass-roots groups who advance adolescent girls’ education by covering school-related costs, challenging patriarchal practices such as child marriage, counseling survivors of sexual abuse and providing other forms of support.

“These groups are changing the way girls see themselves in their own communities and in our world, helping create the leaders we need for the brighter future we all deserve,” Obama said in a video released Oct. 11, the International Day of the Girl. “Because when our girls succeed, we all do.”

Nearly three-quarters of the 119 million girls out of school worldwide are of secondary school-age, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund. Girls Opportunity Alliance - an outgrowth of an Obama White House initiative that invested \$1 billion in US government programs promoting adolescent girls’ education abroad - launched in 2018 with a focus on helping that population between ages 10-19 graduate.

But the latest announcement comes amid stark warnings from international aid groups that budget cuts will roll



In this Oct. 11, 2018, file photo, Michelle Obama participates in the International Day of the Girl on NBC’s ‘Today’ show in New York. (AP)

back recent progress. UNICEF projects that a 24% drop in wealthy countries’ global education funding will push six million girls out of school by the end of next year.

“The need right now, I think more than ever, is crucial,”

Girls Opportunity Alliance Executive Director Tiffany Drake said. “We were just in Mauritius and we heard it time and time again that organizations need funding. They need support.”

Girls Opportunity Alliance’s early October convening in Mauritius brought together Asian and African members of its network. The great demands on local leaders doing tireless work with little resources made it, in Drake’s view, perhaps the most moving gathering they’ve hosted.

But Jackie Bomboma, the founder of Young Strong Mothers Foundation in Tanzania, said connecting with other powerful women there left her encouraged with the knowledge that she’s not alone. A recipient of GOA’s latest grants, she said the Obama Foundation’s endorsement not only brings financial support, but increased trust from the international community and additional channels to get resources.

Growing up without a mother and having survived teenage pregnancy, Bomboma said Obama’s example has also instilled confidence in her and the girls she serves. Her non-profit provides psychological services, vocational training, entrepreneurship skills development and sexual health lessons to hundreds of girls at risk of child marriage, teenage pregnancy and school dropout.

“We call ourselves ‘watoto wa Michelle Obama,’ which

means ‘the children of Michelle Obama,’” she said. “So, everyone feels so proud to have such a mother who is very strong, who is very powerful and who is very loving.”

The Girls Opportunity Alliance fund is intentionally designed to provide a range of support. Drake said anyone can apply for up to \$50,000. The grant does not support general operations but instead goes toward a specific project outlined by the recipient.

Once they’ve joined the network, community leaders have access to monthly training sessions online and in-person gatherings, where they share strategies and learn from larger nongovernmental organizations such as UNICEF and Save the Children.

Girls Opportunity Alliance funds an undisclosed amount and then uses its wide reach to help organizations raise the rest on GoFundMe pages. The campaigns are promoted publicly on its social media accounts and throughout its donor network of celebrities and corporations.

The idea, according to Drake, was to use their “mega-phone” to heap additional attention on and garner more support for organizations that often struggle to get by in more remote locations. Girls Opportunity Alliance hopes every-day individuals are inspired to join them.

“We didn’t want to just tell people and say, ‘Google how you can help,’ Drake said. “We wanted to give them a place where they can take action.”

Photography



A photo in the ‘Lunar Eclipse Phases’ category.



A photo in the ‘Lunar Eclipse with Landscape’ category.



‘Lunar Eclipse with Landscape’ category photo.



‘Blood Moon’ category photo.



‘Blood Moon’ category photo.



KUNA photos  
‘Lunar Eclipse Phases’ category photo.

Kuwaiti photographers win Arab Astronomy Photography Contest: Al-Ojairi Center

The Al-Ojairi Scientific Center announced Saturday that six photographers from Kuwait and the Gulf region won top spots in the Arab Astronomy Photography Competition.

The competition was held under the Center’s patronage in cooperation with the Kuwait Foun-

ation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), the Physics Department at Kuwait University, and under the umbrella of the Kuwait Space Research Center.

Director General of the Center, Yousef Al-Ojeiri, told KUNA that the competition attracted dozens of

participants from Kuwait, the GCC, and other Arab countries. Entries were judged across three categories: “Blood Moon,” “Lunar Eclipse Phases,” and “Lunar Eclipse with Landscape.”

Al-Ojeiri stated that the winning Kuwaiti photographers were Dawood Sebae (Lunar Eclipse with Land-

scape), Sameera Mahmoud (Lunar Eclipse Phases), and Khaled Al-Mutairi (Blood Moon).

He emphasized that such competitions help foster a passion for astronomy, which the Center and its partners aim to promote among students, academics, and astronomy enthusiasts. (KUNA)

From garage to big screen: A love letter to cinema

Brazilian man fulfills lifelong dream with micro cinema

SAO PAULO, Oct 12, (AP): Carlos Costa would never forget the summer day his grandmother took him to the movies. He was 6 years old when he first walked into a dark theater to watch “O Trapalhão nas Minas do Rei Salomão,” a 1977 Brazilian comedy that remains one of the country’s biggest box office hits.

“When I saw that giant screen, wow, I was mesmerized. I thought: someday I’ll have a movie theater of my own,” he said. “Fifty years later, that dream has come true.”

In 2022, Costa opened Cine LT3, a 35-seat cinema in Sao Paulo. Using his savings and credit card, he spent about 100,000 reais (\$18,600) to renovate an old garage, buy vintage wooden seats - which he found in an old shuttered theater in the countryside - and transform the space into a movie theater.

The screening room now occupies what was once a studio - a space behind the garage of his small company that was left idle during the pandemic. Costa, who worked as a TV producer, opened the studios in 2012 and rents them out for screening tests and commercials. Where cars once stood, there are now tables and chairs where moviegoers can wait for their sessions, along with a small counter where he sells popcorn, snacks and soft drinks.

There’s also a small box office where Costa sells tickets

to walk-ins. To buy in advance, customers must send him a WhatsApp message to reserve directly.

“The movie theater is just me. I project the films, make the popcorn, sell the tickets, everything. For economic reasons, I can’t afford an employee,” Costa said. “But I also think that’s part of the charm. I know the regulars by name, and that’s what makes this place different.”

Cine LT3 has established itself as a small haven for film lovers, slowly building a loyal neighborhood community and drawing movie buffs with programming that stands apart from the city’s multiplexes.

Costa’s independent cinema is also part of a resistance of venues surviving outside the mall circuit. According to 2024 official data, there were only 423 screening rooms in small theaters like LT3 across the country. In contrast, nearly 90% of Brazil’s 3,542 cinema screens operate inside shopping malls.

Some of the country’s most traditional stand-alone cinemas now rely on corporate sponsorships to stay open. Many others have shut down and been demolished. In Sao Paulo, where the buildings remain, the former screening rooms have often been repurposed into evangelical churches or adult movie theaters. Even the venues that survived have faced the threat of closure in recent years. When that hap-

pens, local movie lovers often organize protests - and in some cases, they succeed. That was the case with Cine Belas Artes, located on one of the city’s most iconic corners, at the intersection of Avenida Paulista.

Maria Amélia Marcos, a 71-year-old teacher, was visiting LT3 for the first time on Thursday, though she often goes to other independent theaters around Sao Paulo. She believes these venues are essential to preserving the city’s cultural memory.

“Independent theaters are very important because they have a completely different appeal,” she said. The film selection is fantastic. I imagine the curators are very thoughtful people who want audiences to see the kind of movies they themselves would love to watch.”

Costa curates the lineup himself, focusing on art-house titles from Brazil and abroad. When The Associated Press visited the theater on Thursday, the schedule included a restored screening of “Paris, Texas,” part of a citywide retrospective marking the 80th birthday of German director Wim Wenders. Maída Alves, 63, a regular at LT3, had just left a screening of “Paris, Texas” when she spoke with the AP. For her, the venue holds deep emotional value. Having witnessed collective spaces emptying out during the pandemic, she sees the theater as a rare and essential common ground.



People waiting for a movie to start at the Cine LT3 built in an old parking garage in Sao Paulo, Thursday, Oct. 9, 2025. (AP)



Isolation harms both mental and physical health

Loneliness has higher health risk than demographics: study

BOSTON, Oct 12, (AP): Wysa, the leader in AI-guided mental healthcare, has released new research showing that loneliness is not just a social problem but a serious clinical risk factor, strongly linked to both mental and physical illness. In a nationally representative survey of 2,044 US adults, the study found widespread loneliness with clear associations to depression, pain, fatigue, and sleep disturbance.

The report, ‘Loneliness at the Crossroads of Mental and Physical Health’, reveals that nearly one in three Americans (29%) often or always feel lonely. Among those who often or always feel lonely, 59% screened positive for depression, more than eight times the 7% seen in those rarely or never lonely.

Loneliness also takes a heavy toll on physical health. 79% report moderate to severe pain daily, nearly double

the 41% among their less lonely peers, and 52% struggle with insomnia, more than triple the 15% who are rarely lonely. Fatigue is widespread too, with 46% affected, twice the 23% in the non-lonely group. Muscle or joint pain is reported by 39%, almost five times the 8% baseline, while 58% suffer frequent headaches or migraines, nearly four times the 15% among those who are seldom lonely.

The study also reveals important insights into how loneliness varies across age groups and living situations. Loneliness is most intense among young adults aged 18-24, with half reporting feeling often or always lonely, and it gradually declines with age to just 10% among those over 65. This suggests generational differences in social life constructs and community experiences, with loneliness a defining challenge early in adulthood.

The research overturns the common assumption that living alone is the primary risk factor for loneliness. Instead, adults living with parents or in shared adult households report some of the highest rates of persistent loneliness, with nearly half frequently feeling lonely. This highlights the critical distinction between physical cohabitation and emotional connection. Living with a partner offers the strongest protection against loneliness, with only one in five experiencing frequent loneliness.

This report underscores that while digital tools and AI-powered support play a growing role in reaching and assisting patients, regular human contact remains essential as the primary driver of effective care, ensuring patients feel genuinely connected and supported.

“Loneliness is no longer just a social issue; it is a

clinical crisis demanding integrated solutions,” said Jo Aggarwal, Founder and CEO of Wysa. “Despite technological advances, the findings highlight the need for human-centered care, supported by technology. Wysa’s AI extends the reach of clinicians by providing support and monitoring between appointments, while keeping human connection at the core. This approach helps address the emotional struggles that coexist with physical ill health.”

Patients overwhelmingly connect their physical health challenges to mental health factors such as stress, anxiety, and depression rather than strictly physical causes, yet healthcare remains fragmented, treating mind and body separately. This research underscores the need for healthcare models that integrate mental and physical health support.



A Gravity-1 carrier rocket carrying a wide-field satellite and two experimental satellites blasts off from waters off the coast of Haiyang, east China’s Shandong Province, Oct. 11. (Xinhua)

China expands commercial space capabilities

China launches Gravity-1 rocket from sea

HAIYANG, Shandong, Oct. 12, (Xinhua): China sent a Gravity-1 carrier rocket into space from waters off the coast of Haiyang, east China’s Shandong Province, on Saturday.

The rocket blasted off at 10:20 a.m. (Beijing Time), placing three satellites into their designated orbits. The Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center conducted the offshore mission.

A wide-field satellite and two experimental satellites were onboard the carrier rocket.

The Gravity-1 carrier rocket has a low-Earth-orbit payload capacity of 6.5 tonnes and is capable of delivering a 4.2-tonne payload to a 500-km sun-synchronous orbit, according to Xu Guoguang, chief designer and commander of the rocket.

The series of rockets can deploy

more than 10 satellites in a single mission, offering generous payload volume, sea or land-launch compatibility, and rapid-response capability, said Xu.

During this launch mission, the Gravity-1 Y2 carrier rocket executed a roughly 40-degree yaw manoeuvre, swinging its trajectory from south-east to due south within seconds, Xu noted.

Powered by a solid-propellant core stage augmented by four solid strap-on boosters, the carrier rocket remarkably enhanced both stability and adaptability under heaving sea conditions.

The Gravity-1 Y1 carrier rocket successfully completed its maiden flight on Jan. 11, 2024, setting a new record as the world’s most powerful solid-fuel rocket and China’s highest-capacity

commercial launch vehicle developed by a private enterprise.

The mission expanded the country’s capability in deploying diversified medium and low-orbit satellites on a large scale, further broadening China’s carrier rocket family.

Compared with the Gravity-1 Y1 mission, the Y2 flight demonstrates marked gains in quality, stability and consistency, delivering a demonstrably more reliable vehicle.

The Gravity family of carrier rockets, developed independently by the Chinese commercial aerospace company OrientSpace, is a standardized series of medium-to-heavy lift rockets designed expressly to meet the surging demands for large-scale networking and network replenishment of various types of satellites.

Food insecurity harming women’s health

Climate change is driving mental health issues for women in Kenya

KILIFI, Kenya, Oct 12, (AP): The daily grind of putting food on the table is stressful for people the world over, especially for women, who still provide the bulk of that work. A changing climate adds to the anxiety.

Kaloleni in Kilifi County is one of Kenya’s poorest areas. Women carry buckets of water for miles through the dusty landscape. Homes are mostly built of mud and have no indoor plumbing. Maize plants wither in the heat.

“These communities are struggling to grow their crops and have to spend money on food,” said Zul Merali from The Aga Khan University, who has set up a local institute for mental and brain health. “This creates a lot of pressure, particularly on women, because they are in charge of making sure that kids and families are fed.”

This farming community is one of Kenya’s most studied populations. A network of community health workers visit all households every month to check how people are doing. They fill in questionnaires that the government uses to understand needs in rural communities.

Humphrey Kitsao is a community health promoter who looks after 115 households in Kilifi County totaling 532 people. He’s done this work for 18 years and says he’s seen a lot of change.

Jasmit Shah is a data scientist at The Aga Khan University’s Brain and Mind



Elizabeth Amina Kadenge, a 41-year-old farmer, works on her farm in Kilifi, Kenya, on Aug. 12, 2025. (AP)

Institute who wanted to research the impact of climate change on the mental health of women in Kenya’s rural farming communities. While climate anxiety has been studied in the United States and Europe, no study on mental health had been done with women in this region. There was no baseline.

The university was already supporting Kenya’s government in its data collection in Kilifi County. For its own research on mental health and climate change, it only had to add some questions.

“The questions are quantitative: Do

you have any suicidal thoughts, and if you do, do you have them every day, several days a week, a few times a month?” Shah said. “Then we asked them a set of about 15 questions related to climate shocks, and looked at the correlation between climate shocks and people saying that they are having suicidal thoughts.”

Elizabeth Amina Kadenge is a 41-year-old farmer and mother of four in Kaloleni. At the time of the study, her maize harvest had been wiped out by drought. This year, it was wiped out again - by too much rain.

Ultraprocessed foods impact the brain like drugs

New evidence suggests food can be as addictive as drugs

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

□ □ □

By Claire Wilcox  
University of New Mexico

People often joke that their favorite snack is “like crack” or call themselves “chocoholics” in jest.

But can someone really be addicted to food in the same way they could be hooked on substances such as alcohol or nicotine?

As an addiction psychiatrist and researcher with experience in treating eating disorders and obesity, I have been following the research in this field for the past few decades. I have written a textbook on food addiction, obesity and overeating disorders, and, more recently, a self-help book for people who have intense cravings and obsessions for some foods.

While there is still some debate among psychologists and scientists, a consensus is emerging that food addiction is a real phenomenon. Hundreds of studies have confirmed that certain foods - often those that are high in sugar and ultraprocessed - affect the brains and behavior of certain people similarly to other addictive substances such as nicotine.

Still, many questions remain about which foods are addictive, which people are most susceptible to this addiction and why. There are also questions as to how this condition compares to other substance addictions and whether the same treatments could work for patients struggling with any kind of addiction.



A woman looks at products in the aisle of a store as her daughter naps in a shopping cart in Waco, Texas on Dec 14, 2010. (AP)

key functional domains, often referred to as the reward system, the stress response system and the system in charge of executive control.

First, using an addictive substance causes the release of a chemical messenger called dopamine in the reward network, which makes the user feel good. Dopamine release also facilitates a neurobiological process called conditioning, which is basically a neural learning process that gives rise to habit formation.

As a result of the conditioning process, sensory cues associated with the substance start to have increasing influence over decision-making and behavior, often leading to a craving. For instance, because of conditioning, the sight of a needle can drive a person to set aside their commitment to quit using an injectable drug and return to it.

Second, continued use of an addictive substance over time affects the brain’s emotional or stress response network. The user’s body and mind build up a tolerance, meaning they need increasing amounts of the substance to feel its effect. The neurochemicals involved in this process are different than those mediating habit formation and include a chemical messenger called noradrenaline and internally produced opioids such

as endorphins. If they quit using the substance, they experience symptoms of withdrawal, which can range from irritability and nausea to paranoia and seizures.

At that point, negative reinforcement kicks in. This is the process by which a person keeps going back to a substance because they’ve learned that using the substance doesn’t just feel good, but it also relieves negative emotions. During withdrawal from a substance, people feel profound emotional discomfort, including sadness and irritability. Negative reinforcement is why someone who is trying to quit smoking, for instance, will be at highest risk of relapse in the week just after stopping and during times of stress, because in the past they’d normally turn to cigarettes for relief.

Many studies over the past 25 years have shown that high-sugar and other highly pleasurable foods - often foods that are ultraprocessed - act on these brain networks in ways that are similar to other addictive substances. The resulting changes in the brain fuel further craving for and overuse of the substance - in this case, highly rewarding food.

Clinical studies have demonstrated that people with an addictive relationship to food demonstrate the hallmark signs of a substance use disorder. (AP)

Microcurrent therapy enters next phase

New heart failure treatment shows promise

ZUG, Switzerland, Oct. 10, (AP): Berlin Heals Holding AG, a leading clinical-stage medical device company focused on revolutionizing the care of Heart Failure with a first of its kind durable treatment, today announced it has completed enrollment in the First-In-Human (FIH) CMIC-III study to evaluate the safety of a new Less Invasive approach to implanting the CMIC device.

Topline data are expected in 2026 and will be submitted for presentation at a major Cardiology Congress. Berlin Heals is on track to expand this new Less Invasive approach to a wider population of patients and build on the body of evidence already seen in the first-generation surgical approach. As part of the FDA Breakthrough and TAP programs, we intend to pursue a pivotal FDA IDE trial that will lead to regulatory and reimbursement approvals for market launch.

“Completing enrollment in our first

patient marks a pivotal moment for the company and reflects the degree of unmet need we are hearing from people living with Heart Failure,” said Berlin Heals Holding Chief Executive Officer John Brumfield. “We are very grateful to the patients, their families and the trial investigators for their enthusiasm and look forward to sharing topline results from the Phase I study next year.”

“Based on results from the CMIC-I FIH and CMIC-II Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT), Microcurrent therapy showed great promise to positively transform the treatment for Heart Failure,” said Stefan Anker, M.D., Professor of Medicine at Charite, Berlin and Senior Author of the CMIC-II Manuscript. “If similar results can be shown in a less invasive implant approach, many more patients could benefit from this new therapy.”

Cardiac Microcurrent (CMIC) Therapy is delivered via a fully implantable medical device that consists of two electrodes connected to

an implantable generator that provides constant direct microcurrent across the diseased heart. This constant DC current reduces inflammation and reverse remodels the heart that has been shown in previous studies to improve cardiac function and reduce symptoms.

The first generation required a minimally invasive surgical procedure where a cardiothoracic surgeon placed an electrode on the outside of the heart. The new Less Invasive approach can be implanted in a cardiac catheterization lab through a conscious sedation out-patient procedure by a Cardiologist.

Heart Failure is a condition where the heart is weakened and cannot meet the body’s demand for blood flow. Symptoms include shortness of breath, fatigue and palpitations limiting ability to perform daily activities. The progressive disease leads to high frequency of hospital admissions, poor clinical outcomes and high cost of care.

AI-powered ‘bird facial recognition’ boosts avian conservation

KUNMING, Oct 12, (Xinhua): Every winter, tens of thousands of black-headed gulls complete their long journey from as far away as Siberia to Kunming, a city renowned as the “Spring City” in southwest China’s Yunnan Province.

This year, awaiting these regular visitors are not just welcoming Kunming residents, but also high-definition cameras and drones stationed at the city’s Dianchi Lake, ready to be activated in AI-powered “bird facial recognition” monitoring mode.

The enduring bond between the people and these gulls is a distinctive ecological and cultural feature of Kunming. Now, this relationship is being redefined by technology, as research teams collaborate with institutes and tech firms to integrate artificial intelligence deeply into bird protection -- creating an intelligent observation system centered on this novel identification method.

Since October 2022, Kunming Dianchi Plateau Lake Research Institute has used an intelligent observation program for gulls at a monitoring station near Haigeng Dam.

After two years of continuous tracking, this system revealed that the main flock’s arrival in Kunming in 2024 was about 10 days later compared to 2022 and 2023. The system will continue monitoring arrival times and population numbers this year, accumulating crucial data for migratory bird research, according to the institute.

Unlike traditional manual observation, the system utilizes high-definition cameras, drones, microphones and deep neural network algorithms to identify birds.

Distinctive features such as plumage, body size and beak shape serve as unique “identity markers,” enabling real-time species identification, population counting, tracking of migration routes and the creation of a dynamic Dianchi bird archive.

“Previously, manual monitoring of the same area required at least two professional birders for a full day. Now, the AI system accomplishes this in just hours with 90-percent accuracy, while simultaneously recording behavioral data like feeding and roosting,” said Pan Min, deputy director of the institute.

Traditional methods, reliant on human observation, were labor-intensive, demanded high expertise and struggled to ensure consistent accuracy. The integration of AI is now driving a digital transformation in bird surveys across China.

Employed at several demonstration sites in Kunming, the AI system has identified 17 bird species, building a database containing hundreds of thousands of images, videos and audio recordings. The team has also deployed acoustic recognition systems that identify species like the night heron and magpie via their unique call signatures.

According to Zhang Zhizhong, an engineer at the institute, the AI system allows researchers to not only monitor long-term changes in bird communities but also to study activity patterns, breeding habits and migration routes. This provides vital data for assessing wetland ecological health and biodiversity levels.

The reliability of this “bird facial recognition” technology was validated in a paper published by the research team in the Journal of Environmental Management in

May 2025 -- offering new perspectives for future biodiversity investigations.

Notably, the application of AI monitoring of birds is expanding beyond Kunming. In Shuanguihu National Wetland Park in Chongqing, also in southwest China, a big data platform uses ultra-high-definition cameras for real-time multi-target bird capture and identification. Similarly, at the Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve in east China’s Shandong Province, an AI system operational since 2022 has recorded over 1,200 birds, including oriental white storks and whooper swans, thereby providing robust data support for reserve management.

“The use of technological means allows us to understand and protect nature more scientifically and gently,” Zhang said.

Zhang added that while minimizing human disturbance, the introduction of AI and intelligent monitoring systems also addresses the shortcomings of incomplete and inaccurate data inherent in traditional methods -- thus creating new possibilities for biodiversity conservation.



Thitikul’s comeback secures LPGA Shanghai title in dramatic 5-hole playoff

# Schauffele wins Baycurrent Classic in Japan, honoring family heritage

YOKOHAMA, Japan, Oct 12, (AP): This may not have been Xander Schauffele’s most prestigious tournament victory, but it should be the American’s most memorable.

Schauffele shot a 7-under 64 on Sunday to win the Baycurrent Classic in Japan - a country where his mother grew up and where he has many connections.

Schauffele, who shot 19-under 265 over four rounds at the Yokohama Country Club, finished one shot ahead of American Max Greyserman, who was also the runner-up at this event a year ago as he chases his first PGA Tour title.

Schauffele has maternal grandparents living in Japan, and his mother has roots in Taiwan and grew up in Japan. His mother-in-law is also Japanese, and his wife is half Japanese and grew up in Japan’s southern island of Okinawa.

“I’ve been coming here since I was about 9 years old to visit my grandparents,” Schauffele said. “I sort of fell in love with this country a long time ago. I can’t wait to bring my son here when he’s old enough to sort of understand and appreciate the culture here in Japan.”

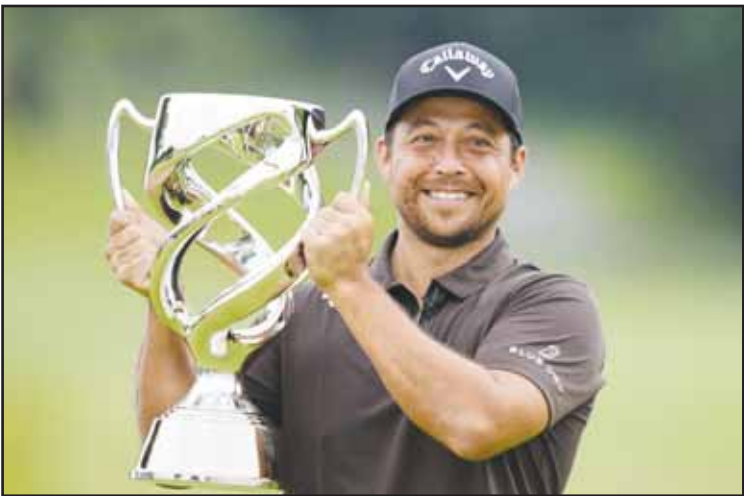
“Yeah, the ties run deep for the Schauffele family here in Japan,” he added.

Schauffele and his wife Maya became parents just over a month ago with the birth of a son.

“It’s still kind of fresh, but it’s definitely a cool thing being a dad, and I’m so excited to go home to him and Maya after this,” Schauffele said.

Schauffele was cheered during the tournament by family members who attended, including his 81-year-old grandmother, who walked the course with him. He said there would probably be a “get-together” with family members later to celebrate.

“I mean, I don’t get to see them very often, and they’ve always been gracious with their time to come out wherever the event was,” he said. “They’ve been awesome to me, and this is pretty cool. I’ve really wanted to share a win with them, so



Xander Schauele, of the U.S., poses for a photo with his trophy after he won the Baycurrent Classic golf tournament at the Yokohama Country Club in Yokohama, near Tokyo. (AP)

can’t wait to get together with them.”

Greyserman closed with a 65 and held or shared the lead through the first three rounds. American Michael Thorbjornsen finished with a 64 and was three strokes

behind the winner.

Schauffele has won two major championships - including the British Open in 2024, which was his last victory - and took gold in the Tokyo Olympics, which were delayed until 2021 by the pandemic. He’s also compiled a considerable list of other PGA Tour titles - but this PGA Tour title is different.

Soft conditions and still winds led to low scoring. American Matt McCarty shot an 11-under 60 - he still finished nine strokes back. Japanese Takumi Kanaya finished with a 9-under 62 and was five behind with winner.

McCarty had a chance at a 58 but hit into the trees on his final hole and settled for a bogey and a 60. Jim Furyk holds the PGA Tour record with a 58 in the final round of the Travelers Championship in 2016.

Jeenoo Thitikul came from four shots down with five holes to play to force a playoff with Minami Katsu, before producing another extraordinary shot on the fifth playoff hole to claim the LPGA Shanghai and become the first two-time LPGA tournament winner of the season on Sunday.

Top-ranked Thitikul’s 63 was the round of the day and included seven birdies and an eagle. The Thai player’s 24-under 264 closed what had appeared to be a comfortable margin for overnight leader Katsu of Japan, who had started the day two shots ahead and extended that to four after the 13th.

But the Thai player reeled that in with birdies on the 14th, 15th and 16th, before an incredible eagle with the ball bouncing along the mottled 17th green of Qizhong Garden Golf Club in Shanghai to draw level.

Katsu (65) could only respond with a birdie of her own at the 17th, but had another birdie chance on the final hole to claw back the victory only for the ball to slide past the hole and forcing the playoff.

Pars through the first four playoff holes, rotated between the 18th and the 10th, included Katsu having two birdie putts to win only to narrowly miss the hole on both.

# Messi powers Miami past Atlanta



Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi, left, runs with the ball as Atlanta United midfielder Tristan Muiyumba, right, defends during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (AP)

Whitecaps take sole possession of first place in West

WASHINGTON, Oct 12, (Agencies): Lionel Messi scored two goals and set up another as Inter Miami cruised to a 4-0 home MLS win over Atlanta United on Saturday.

Messi put his side ahead in the 39th minute by combining with Baltasar Rodriguez and curling a shot into the far corner from just inside the 18-yard box.

Jordi Alba doubled the lead just after halftime when he ran onto Messi’s perfectly weighted diagonal pass and lobbed a shot over goalkeeper Jayden Hibbert.

Luis Suarez made it 3-0 with a spectacular long-range volley after latching onto a headed defensive clearance.

Messi then controlled Alba’s long pass with his chest before firing low past Hibbert. The 38-year-old Argentina captain now has 26 goals and 18 assists in 27 MLS appearances this season.

Saturday’s result leaves Inter Miami with 62 points from 33 games, four points behind Eastern Conference leaders Philadelphia with one match-day remaining. Atlanta United is 14th in the 15-team standings.

Thomas Müller scored in the seventh minute of stoppage time, Nelson Pierre also scored a late goal and the Vancouver Whitecaps beat Orlando City 2-1 to take sole possession of first place in the Western Conference with a week left in the regular season.



Vancouver Whitecaps forward Thomas Müller (13) celebrate with teammates forward Nelson Pierre (42), defender Belal Halbouni (12) and midfielder Sebastian Berhalter, far right,celebrate after he scored the second goal against Orlando City during the second half of an MLS soccer match in Orlando, Fla. (AP)

Vancouver (18-6-9) has 63 points, three more than second-place San Diego, and closes the regular season next Saturday against Dallas.

Orlando (14-8-11) is seventh in the Eastern Conference with 53 points, one behind Nashville. Eighth-place Chicago has 52 points and Columbus has 51.

Müller capped the scoring with a finish off a feed from Ryan Gauld and has nine goal contributions (six goals, three assists) in six games with the Whitecaps.

Dagur Thorhallsson opened the

game due to an apparent knee injury and was replaced in the 18th minute by Duncan McGuire.

It was the first meeting between the clubs since April 20, 2019. The Whitecaps are 4-1-1 all time against Orlando City.

Gabriel Pec had a goal and an assist, Elijah Wynder also scored a goal and the LA Galaxy beat FC Dallas 2-1.

Pec put away a shot from nearly the penalty spot to give LA (6-18-9) a 2-1 lead in the 87th minute.

Dallas (10-12-11) is eighth in the Western Conference with 41 points, three behind seventh-place Portland. Salt Lake and Colorado are tied with 40 points apiece.

Logan Farrington was shown a straight red card (violent conduct) in the 16th minute and Dallas played a man down the rest of the way.

Wynder slipped behind the defense and ran onto a long ball-ahead played by Gabriel Pec and then scored on a shot from the edge of the penalty area that deflected off goalkeeper Michael Collodi, who had charged off his line, to give the Galaxy a 1-0 lead in the 42nd minute.

Anderson Julio put away a first-touch finish - off a cross played by Samuel Sarver - from the center of the area to make it 1-1 in the 52nd.

The Galaxy had 67% possession and outshot Dallas 13-9.

Paul Rothrock scored an early goal and Stefan Frei made it stand up as the Seattle Sounders edged Real Salt Lake 1-0.

scoring for Orlando City (14-8-11) in the 24th minute. On the counter-attack, Martín Ojeda flicked a short arcing cross to McGuire for a header to a charging Thorhallsson for the finish from the center of the area.

Pierre, who replaced Daniel Ríos in the 74th minute, scored his first career goal in MLS to make it 1-1 in the 81st. The 20-year-old homegrown made his third appearance for Vancouver and put away a first-touch finish off a shot by Sebastian Berhalter that deflected off the post.

Orlando’s Robin Jansson left the

# Canada & South Korea achieve golden double

MONTREAL, Oct 12, (Xinhua): Canada and South Korea both achieved a golden double at the 2025-26 ISU Short Track World Tour season opener in Montreal, Canada, while Sun Long secured a bronze for China.

The 2024-25 season Crystal Globe winner William Dandjinou dominated the men’s 500m final, finishing first ahead of Italy’s Pietro Sighele and compatriot Steven Dubois. China’s Lin Xiaojun was eliminated in the quarterfinals.

Courtney Sarault lit the home crowd again to win the women’s 1,000m gold, with South Korea’s Kim Gil-li and Corinne Stoddard of the United States finishing second and third, respectively.

In the men’s 1,500m, South Korea’s Rim Jong-un claimed gold on his World Tour debut, while his compatriot and veteran Hwang Dae-heon took the silver.

China’s Sun and Liu Shaoang both advanced to the final by finishing second in their respective semifinal heats, while Lin was eliminated earlier. During the final, Sun opted for a strategic race, staying with the pack for much of the distance before making a decisive move in the last two laps to secure third place.

South Korea pocketed its second gold of the day in the women’s 3,000m relay, with the Netherlands and Canada taking silver and bronze, respectively.

Also serving as the Special Olympic Qualification Classifications (SOQC) for the 2026 Milan Cortina Olympic Winter Games, the final rankings will be determined by a skater’s three best results across the four World Tour events, which are scheduled for another stop in Montreal next week, and Gdansk of Poland and Dordrecht of the Netherlands in November.

A maximum of three skaters per national or regional Olympic Committee for each distance will earn quota places in the individual events.

In the relay events, the eight highest-ranked national or regional Olympic Committees in the men’s 5,000m and women’s 3,000m relay SOQC will qualify, with a provision for the host country to take a spot if not already in the top eight.

Meanwhile, a maximum of 12 teams will qualify for the mixed team relay, with eligibility extended to national or regional Olympic Committees that have secured at least two quota places per gender.



Rim Jongun of South Korea skates to a first place finish in the 1500-meter final at the ISU Short Track World Tour Speedskating event in Montreal. (AP)

## Best of the Rest

**Diaz leads Colombia to 4-0 Mexico rout:** Bayern Munich winger Luis Diaz was on target as Colombia produced a second-half masterclass en route to a 4-0 friendly win over Mexico.

The Cafeteros went ahead through Bologna defender Jhon Lucumi, who volleyed home after James Rodriguez’s curling delivery from a set piece.

Diaz extended Colombia’s lead by running onto Rodriguez’s long pass and lifting a shot over onrushing goalkeeper Luis Malagon.

Jefferson Lerma then made it 3-0 as he smashed home a volley after pouncing on a rushed defensive clearance. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

**Zuculini brace fires Racing past Banfield:** Bruno Zuculini scored twice as Racing secured a 3-1 away win over Banfield in Argentina’s Primera Division.

The visitors went ahead in the 26th minute when Zuculini side-footed home from point-blank range after Gabriel Rojas’ cross from the left.

Zuculini struck again on the hour, heading in from five yards after Nazareno Colombo’s powerful shot was parried away by goalkeeper Facundo Sanguinetti.

The hosts were reduced to 10 men in the 78th minute when Lautaro Gomez was shown a straight red card for a studs-up challenge on Duvan Vergara.

Adrian Balboa made it 3-0 by cutting inside and firing low into the near corner following a swift counterattack. (Xinhua)

Sheng, Huang fail to reach the top four

# Unheralded Du and Liu shock Olympic champs to win air rifle mixed team gold

GUANGZHOU, Oct 12, (Xinhua): Liaoning’s 15-year-old Du Yuchen and 21-year-old Liu Baichen claimed the 10m air rifle mixed team title at China’s 15th National Games on Sunday, in an event that featured six Olympic champions as the rifle and pistol competitions kicked off in Guangzhou.

Competing against multiple Olympic and world champions, Du and Liu led the qualification with 634.9 points, followed by Zhang Qianying and Lin Feng of Fujian with 632.7, and Xia Siyu and Lu Dingke of Sichuan with 632.6. Pan Xiaorun and Li Xianhao of Yunnan finished fourth on 632.3.

“It definitely boosted our confidence. Scoring that high in qualification was like a shot of reassurance for both me and my teammate. It helped us go into the final feeling calm and confident,” said Du, who posted 318.3 points, averaging 10.61 per shot.

Reigning Olympic champions Sheng Lihao (Jiangsu) and Huang Yuting (Zhejiang) failed to reach the top four with their respective partners. World record holders Wang Zifei of Zhejiang and Peng Xinlu of Hunan also missed the qualification cut.

In the gold medal match, Du and Liu made a strong start, racing to a 6-0 lead and extending it to 12-4. Despite a spirited comeback by Zhang and Lin that narrowed the gap to 12-10, the Liaoning pair held their nerve to close out the victory 16-12.

Speaking about the key to their win, Du said, “I focused on doing my own job, without being distracted by their progress. The key was to believe in myself and my teammate.” “It’s all about mindset - keeping a steady mentality,” added Liu.

The victory marked Liaoning’s first shooting gold at the National Games in 16 years, leaving coach Li Zirui visibly emo-

tional in the mixed zone.

“Liu was very steady throughout. For 15-year-old Du, it’s really not easy to handle the pressure of such a big event and work so well with her teammate. This match was truly exciting for us,” Li said.

Li, 62, revealed that he had come out of retirement for these Games. “I actually retired two years ago, but I guess I still had some fight left in me. I wanted to finish these Games well, writing a perfect closing chapter for my career. After so many years of hard work, seeing it finally pay off feels truly rewarding,” he said.

The bronze medal match proved equally intense, as Xia and Lu of Sichuan rallied from 6-0 down to tie Pan and Li of Yunnan at 6-6 after a timeout. The teams traded points until 12-12, when Xia and Lu both shot 10.8, edging ahead by 0.1 to force Yunnan into a timeout.

However, Lu’s subsequent 8.8 allowed Yunnan to level at 14-14, setting up a de-

cisive final series. Sichuan held firm, firing two 10.6s to secure the bronze.

“I think my rhythm and adjustments were pretty good today. In the end, I managed to break through my own limits and withstand the pressure,” said Lu, silver medalist at the 2025 Asian Championships.

“I wanted to give the audience - and the leaders from my province - a little suspense,” Lu joked about his errant shot.

“Technically speaking, that one went off too quickly. For the final shot, I focused on calming down, slowing my actions, and taking my time before pulling the trigger.” Both athletes credited mutual trust as the key to their resilience. “Of course there were some ups and downs mentally, but the key was to focus on myself and trust my teammate,” Xia said.

The women’s 10m air rifle and men’s 25m rapid fire pistol gold medals will be contested on Monday.

## Required

The Commercial Section of the Embassy of Pakistan in Kuwait is seeking a suitable candidate to serve as the Trade Development Officer (TDO), who will report directly to the Head of the Commercial Section.

### Job Requirements :

- A graduate from a reputable university in Marketing, Project Management, International Trade, or Accounting & Finance, preferably with a master's degree.
- At least three years of work experience, preferably in trade-related matters, marketing, or business development.
- Strong ability to develop and maintain relationships with senior business executives and a proven aptitude for networking.
- Proven knowledge of trade and investment relations between Kuwait and Pakistan, as well as customs procedures.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in both English and Arabic.
- The applicant should be a Kuwaiti national or resident with legal status to work in Kuwait.

Interested candidates are to submit their CV to the following email address:  
**sadia.sufan@tdap.gov.pk**  
by 27/10/2025. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interviews.



# Kuwait Club and Qadsia set for high-stakes clash in round 11

By Hassan Mosa  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: Volleyball fans are in for an exciting evening at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex, as the 11th round of the Federation Volleyball Championship features a top clash between Kuwait and Qadsia at 7:00 PM. Earlier, at 5:00 PM, Kazma will face off against Al-Shabab in another highly anticipated match.

The standings see Kuwait Club leading with 12 points, followed closely by Kazma with 11 points, and Al-Shabab also on 11 points but behind on set difference. Qadsia and Burgan occupy fourth and fifth with 8 points, while Yarmouk sits sixth with 6 points. Al-Arabi and Al-Sulaibikhat have 2 points each, and Al-Nasr remains at the bottom with no points.

Kuwait Club aims to continue its winning streak under the guidance of Brazilian coach Carlos Eduardo, who relies on key players such as Estonian Oliver Vino, Canadian Nicolas Hogue, and local stars Abdullah Jassim, Amer Al-Salim, Adhabi Malik,



A Kuwait Club player takes a shot as Qadsia prepares to defend during the volleyball match.

and Omar Al-Anzi. The team is focused on securing a semifinal spot in the championship.

On the other side, Qadsia, with three wins and one loss so far, is determined to bounce back and stay in contention. The team's hopes rest on

players Rashed Anbar, Abdunnasser Al-Anzi, and Brazilian professionals Alison Melo and Caio Ribeiro.

Earlier in the day, Burgan faces Al-Shabab, with both teams looking to continue their strong performances in the tournament.

Sheikh Salman expresses pride in holding event in Riyadh

# Riyadh to host 29th AFC annual awards ceremony on Thursday

RIYADH, Oct 12: The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has announced that Riyadh will host the 2025 AFC annual awards ceremony this Thursday, bringing together top soccer personalities and sports figures from across Asia to celebrate the achievements of players during the 2024-2025 season.

The ceremony will be held at the King Fahd Cultural Center, marking the first time that Saudi Arabia hosts this prestigious continental event. Now in its 29th edition, the ceremony will honor excellence in 20 award categories, recognizing standout performances and contributions to Asian football.

AFC President and FIFA First Vice President Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa expressed his pride in holding the event in Riyadh, highlighting that it reflects Saudi Arabia's growing influence and leadership in both Asian and global football.

He noted that Saudi Arabia has

become a key hub for international football in recent years, thanks to the strong support of its leadership for sports development. Sheikh Salman also praised the Saudi Arabian Football Federation for its efforts in ensuring the success of the ceremony and for showcasing the prestige and progress of Asian football.

The AFC President pointed out that the confederation has undertaken strategic reforms in recent years to strengthen its identity and competitions. He added that this year's awards ceremony will reflect this direction through a fresh identity that embodies innovation and growth in Asian football.

He also revealed that all trophies and medals have been redesigned, including the "Diamond of Asia", the continent's highest honor, which will be awarded to distinguished recipients – a symbol of Asian football's rising stature and commitment to excellence.

Sheikh Salman congratulated all



A file photo of the AFC Best Player trophy ahead of the 2025 awards.

nominees, affirming that the AFC looks forward to celebrating the men and women whose achievements continue to inspire future generations, while commending the dedication of national and regional federations to advancing football across Asia.

## Khaitan parts ways with head coach

# Qadsia & Al-Nasr in stalemate as Maaloul reviews team form

By Hassan Mosa  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: Qadsia and Al-Nasr played to a 1-1 draw in a friendly at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium as both teams gear up for the resumption of the Zain Premier League next week.

Tunisian coach Nabil Maaloul used the match to evaluate his players' readiness and fine-tune the squad for the league restart. Maaloul returned last week from Tunisia, after traveling from Iraq, following Qadsia's 1-3 loss to Zakho in the opening round of Group A in the Gulf Club Champions Cup.

Kazma defeated Salmiya 4-2 in a friendly on Friday at Thamer Stadium, as both sides continue preparations for the league.

The match featured the return of Salmiya international goalkeeper Abdulrahman Al-Fadhli, who recovered from knee cartilage surgery performed in Bahrain last August. Salmiya will play a second friendly against Burgan this evening, ahead of their October 19 league clash in Round 5 of the Premier League.

Khaitan Club announced the departure



Maaloul rejoins Qadsia after short break.

of Tunisian coach Hatem Al-Muaddib and the appointment of Russian Alexander Vladimirovich as the new head coach of the first team.

Al-Muaddib becomes the second coaching casualty this season, after Salmiya coach Nasser Al-Shatti resigned following the first round.

# West Indies show grit against India

Campbell hits unbeaten 87

NEW DELHI, Oct 12, (AP): John Campbell put up a career-best 87 not out on Sunday as West Indies battled on in its second innings of the second test against India, despite the hosts enforcing a follow-on.

Campbell's previous best was 68 against New Zealand in 2020, and on a slow-turning pitch at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, he came up with a timely knock to keep the Indian attack at bay.

It was the West Indies' best batting performance of the series - a wicket-less session for the first time in two tests - and reached 173-2 (49 overs) at stumps.

Campbell faced 145 deliveries, while Shai Hope reached 66 not out. The duo put on 138 off 207 balls for the unbeaten third-wicket partnership, West Indies' highest partnership for any wicket in seven tests in 2025.

West Indies still trails by 97 runs after it was bowled out for 248 runs (81.5 overs) in the first innings.

India had scored 518-5 in its first innings with Yashasvi Jaiswal scoring 175, while skipper Shubman Gill was unbeaten on 129.

Kuldeep Yadav took 5-82 in 26.5 overs as the hosts gained a first-innings lead of 270 runs.

"We started the day well, but the wicket is really good to bat on. There isn't much pace off the surface, so we just tried to hit our lengths. The first innings was brilliant (for me), but they batted really well in the second innings," Yadav said after the close of play.

Jaydon Seales was the last man out in the first innings for 13 runs,



West Indies' John Campbell plays a shot on the third day of the second cricket test match between India and West Indies at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi, India. (AP)

out lbw to Yadav, who picked up his fifth five-for in 15 tests.

India enforced the follow-on despite batting-friendly conditions and the wicket offering slow turn. It showed with Jasprit Bumrah not coming on to bowl until the 33rd over of the second innings.

Mohammed Siraj had Tagenarine Chanderpaul caught for 10, a fine diving catch by skipper Gill, and then Washington Sundar bowled Alick Athanaze (7) at the stroke of tea with West Indies 35-2.

The final session saw fine resistance from the unbeaten duo as Campbell defied the bowlers with stoic defense mixed with aggression on loose deliveries.

Hope, who also batted well in the first innings, carried on his form as he hit his first half-century in 32 test innings. He hit eight fours and two sixes in all, reaching 50 off 80 balls.

It was Campbell who stole the limelight, however, as he notched up West Indies' first half-century of the series off 69 balls, and then reached his personal best. He hit nine fours and two sixes, with Indian bowlers looking tired towards the end.

Their 100-run partnership came off 149 balls, the first for West Indies in four innings in this two-test series.

And it came after the West Indies had lost four wickets in the morning session, reaching 217-8 at lunch.

Yadav took three wickets as the visitors sank to 163-6, starting from their overnight 140-4. Hope (36) and Tevin Imlach (21) resisted before the wrist spinner broke through.

Hope was bowled, while Imlach was lbw to Yadav. Yadav then added a third wicket of the morning when he trapped Justin Greaves lbw for 17. Siraj had bowled Jomel Warrican (1) as West Indies lost four wickets for 19 runs across seven overs.

India is 1-0 up in the two-match series, after it won 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.

## Hosts reach 313-5 at stumps

# Imam misses out on ton in Pakistan's strong start to 1st test against SAfrica

LAHORE, Pakistan, Oct 12, (AP): Opener Imam-ul-Haq missed out on his comeback test century as Pakistan recovered well from a brief collapse on an abrasive wicket to reach 313-5 against world champion South Africa in the first test on Sunday.

Imam played a fluent knock of 93 in his first test match after almost two years and together with captain Shan Masood, who made 76, gave Pakistan a strong start to its new World Test Championship cycle with a 161-run second-wicket stand.

The three South African spinners toiled hard but caught a break when they claimed three quick wickets without a run before Mohammad Rizwan (62 no) and Salman Ali Agha (52 no) struck unbeaten half centuries and gave Pakistan an early edge against the defending world test champion.

Both batters dominated the spinners with their strong sweep shots in a dominating final session for Pakistan that saw South Africa claiming the only wicket - struggling batter Babar Azam (23).

Rizwan had two narrow escapes before completing his half-century when captain Aiden Markram couldn't snap a low catch in the slip and then the batter successfully overturned an lbw decision through referral.

Agha was fortunate late in the final session when Markram spilled a regulation edge after left-arm spinner Senuran Muthusamy (2-101) had created an opportunity with the second new ball on a dry



Pakistan's Shan Masood, left, celebrates as teammate Imam-ul-Haq congratulates him after his fifty during the first day of first test cricket match between Pakistan and South Africa, in Lahore, Pakistan. (AP)

wicket.

Imam and Masood controlled the spin trio of Muthusamy, Simon Harmer (1-75) and Preenelan Subrayen (1-72) after Kagiso Rabada (1-43) provided the Proteas' breakthrough with his third ball by winning an lbw decision against Abdullah Shafique through television referral.

Both batted flawlessly against the spinners with some good running between the wickets and carried Pakistan to 107-1 by lunch. South Africa squandered two catching opportunities in Surbrayen's successive overs that could have dismissed both left-handers in the second session.

Toni de Zorzi couldn't grab a

reflex catch off Masood at forward short leg and Wiaan Mulder couldn't hold onto a sharp catch of Imam's drive at mid-off.

The aggressive partnership between Imam and Masood was Pakistan's joint-best partnership for the second wicket against South Africa, equaling Kamran Akmal and Younis Khan's stand of 161 at the same ground in 2007.

Subrayen finally broke the stand when he had Masood trapped lbw off a fuller delivery that didn't turn much. Then Muthusamy grabbed two wickets in two balls when de Zorzi didn't miss another opportunity close to the wicket to end Imam's brilliant knock.

Saud Shakeel left Muthusamy on

a hat-trick when he offered a tame return catch off the leading edge as Pakistan went to tea at 199-4.

Babar had a nervy start when he overturned a caught behind decision by television referral before hitting four boundaries but he was undone by Harmer's sharp turning delivery soon after tea as he prodded forward and South Africa won the lbw decision through the TV umpire and left Pakistan in a spot of bother at 199-5.

South Africa is coming off a 10-match winning streak that saw Temba Bavuma lead the side to the WTC title at Lord's in a five-wicket victory over Australia in the final.

Bavuma will miss this series due to a calf injury he sustained during the limited-overs series against England, with Aiden Markram stepping in as skipper for the Proteas.

Pakistan came into the new WTC cycle with only three wins in its last 12 test matches. Off-spinner Sajid Khan has recovered from flu and will pair with left-arm spinner Noman Ali to counter a strong South African batting lineup with Salman Ali Agha providing another spin option for the home team.

Fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi will be playing his first test in a year while Pakistan also included paceman Hasan Ali, who last played in this format against Australia at Sydney in January 2024.

Gaddafi Stadium is hosting only its second test match since test cricket returned to Pakistan in 2019 after a decade in hiatus.

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Marcus Meloni of the United Arab Emirates celebrates after scoring the goal during the FIFA World Cup 2026 AFC Asian Qualifiers group A playoffs match between the United Arab Emirates and Oman in Doha, Qatar. (Xinhua)

# Sports

## Iraq and UAE keep World Cup hopes alive

Indonesia suffers 2nd straight loss

**JEDDAH, Oct 12, (Xinhua):** Iraq took a big step toward the 2026 FIFA World Cup after a 1-0 victory over Indonesia on Saturday in Group B of the fourth round of the AFC Asian Qualifiers.

The match at the King Abdullah Sports City Stadium witnessed a tense battle, with Indonesia creating more chances in the early stages.

Iraq broke the deadlock with 14 minutes remaining. Following Indonesia's loss of possession deep in its own half, the ball fell to former Manchester United midfielder Zidane Iqbal, who fired a left-footed strike into the bottom corner for the winner.

Despite being reduced to 10 men after Zaid Tahseen received a second yellow card in stoppage time, Iraq held its nerve to secure the victory, which sent Indonesia to the bottom of the group with two consecutive losses.

In Group A, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) produced a late turnaround to defeat Oman 2-1 and keep its World Cup dream alive.

Oman started strongly, taking a 12th-minute lead after Amjad Al Harthi's shot took a deflection into the net. The UAE leveled the score in the 76th minute when Marcus Meloni powered a header into the net from Ali Saleh's cross.

Just seven minutes later, Caio Lucas unleashed a curling effort from distance that dipped beyond the Oman goalkeeper, sealing a 2-1 victory for the Emiratis.

The results set the stage for a dramatic final round of matches on Tuesday. In Group B, the victory puts Iraq level with Saudi Arabia ahead of their head-to-head. In Group A, the UAE now only needs to avoid defeat against Qatar to secure its spot in the World Cup finals, while Oman's campaign has come to an end.

Group winners will directly qualify for the World Cup. At the same time, runners-up enter a two-leg playoff scheduled for November, with the winner advancing to the inter-confederation playoffs in March 2026 in North America.



Iraq's Zaid Tahseen, right, is challenged by Indonesia's Mauro Zijlstra during the World Cup 2026 Asian qualifier fourth-round Group B soccer match between Iraq and Indonesia at Alinma Bank Stadium in King Abdullah Sports City, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. (AP)

### Morocco coach exploring alternative strategies

## Kuwait wraps up training ahead of friendly

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**DUBAI, Oct 12:** Kuwait concluded training today at Shabab Ahli Dubai Stadium in the UAE, preparing for a friendly match against Morocco local team tomorrow at Al Awir Stadium.

The Kuwaiti delegation arrived in the UAE from Tashkent following a friendly against Uzbekistan last Thursday, which ended in a 2-0 loss for Kuwait.

Portuguese coach Helio Sousa focused the past two days of training on correcting mistakes from the Uzbekistan game, stressing discipline, strict adherence to instructions, and maintaining high concentration to achieve a strong result.

Looking ahead, Kuwait will face Mauritania on November 25 in a play-off match for the Arab Cup, set to begin in Qatar in early December. The team will also hold a training camp in Cairo, Egypt, in November, with friendlies against Tanzania and Gambia on November 14 and 18, before traveling to Doha for final preparations.

In other news, Morocco defeated Egypt 2-0 last Friday in a friendly held at Al Bashir Stadium in Mohammedia,



Helio Sousa controls the ball during training session.

Rabat.

The Arab Cup draw placed Morocco in Group B, alongside Saudi Arabia, the winner of Oman vs. Somalia, and the winner of Yemen vs. Comoros.

Morocco coach Tarik Sektioui is exploring alternative strategies following requests from clubs Renaissance Berkane, FAR Rabat, and Wydad

Casablanca to release players after the Egypt friendly, allowing them to focus on continental competitions this month.

The squad includes seven FAR Rabat players, five from Renaissance Berkane, and two from Wydad Casablanca, but is without Osama El Milou, who withdrew due to injury.

## Kuwait to host XCAT World Powerboat Championship round on November 20

**BEIJING, Oct 12:** The International Powerboat Federation (UIM) has officially approved Kuwait as the host of the second and penultimate round of the 2025 XCAT World Powerboat Championship, scheduled to take place from November 20 to 22. The event will be organized by the Kuwait Sea Sports Club in cooperation with the Public Authority for Sport.

According to the club, the hosting agreement was signed during the UIM General Assembly held recently in China, where it was also decided that the final round of the championship will be held in Dubai on December 12.

The signing ceremony brought together key figures, including UIM Secretary-General Thomas Kurth, UIM President Raffaele Chiulli, XCAT Championship Director Sebastiano Pelle, Kuwait Sea Sports Club Secretary-General Khaled Al-Foudari, Powerboat and Wakeboard Committee Chairman Ali Al-Shammari, and Fujairah Marine Sports Club Executive Director Ahmed Al-Balushi.



Officials pose for a group photo after the General Assembly in China.

Al-Foudari described Kuwait's selection as a significant international achievement for the country's marine sports sector, highlighting Kuwait's strong record in organizing world-class championships and races.

Meanwhile, Al-Shammari expressed his appreciation to the international federation for its confidence in Kuwait, noting that the decision reflects the nation's prominent global reputation and its commitment to advancing marine sports.

### Haaland grabs hat trick for Norway

## Ronaldo draws blank as Portugal edges past Ireland



Nuno Mendes of Portugal, front, is tackled by Festy Ebosele of Ireland during a World Cup 2026 group F qualifying soccer match between Portugal and Ireland in Lisbon. (AP)

**LISBON, Oct 12, (AP):** Erling Haaland further enhanced his superstar reputation with a hat trick for Norway in a 5-0 home win against Israel, while Cristiano Ronaldo drew a blank as Portugal beat Ireland 1-0 in World Cup qualifying.

Haaland moved onto 51 Norway goals in just 46 matches, as Ronaldo failed to increase his all-time international men's scoring record of 141.

Both players missed a penalty - Haaland even missed his retake - on a night when fluffed spot kicks seemed contagious but didn't affect the outcomes. Spain's Ferran Torres and Italy's Mateo Retegui also had theirs saved.

European champion Spain beat Georgia 2-0 while Italy won 3-1 against Estonia to stop goal-hungry Norway getting too far ahead. Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma gifted a sloppy late goal to add to his blunders in recent years.

Spain tops Group E with nine points after a third straight win without conceding a goal.

Missing injured Barcelona prodigy Lamine Yamal, Spain took the lead midway through the first half thanks to Jeremy Pino.

Goal-scoring midfielder Mikel Oyarzabal made it 2-0 with a free kick midway through the second half.

Spain is three points clear of Turkey, which won 6-1 at Bulgaria with two goals from Juventus forward Kenan Yildiz.

Portugal's late winner secured a third straight victory and a five-point lead over second-placed Hungary in Group F.

Ruben Neves scored a stoppage-time header to make up for Ronaldo's 75th-minute penalty miss, which came when he blasted his shot straight down the middle and goalkeeper Caoimhin

Kelleher stuck out his left foot to balloon the ball upward.

Kelleher then jumped up and punched his right fist in celebration while Ronaldo held his face in his hands.

Fans in Lisbon delivered a moment of applause in the 21st minute in memory of Diogo Jota, who wore that jersey number for Portugal. The former Liverpool forward died in a car accident in July along with his brother.

Neves is now wearing the No. 21 and has a tattoo on his left calf in honor of his late friend.

In the group's other match, Hun-

gary beat Armenia 2-0 with goals from Daniel Lukacs and Zsombor Gruber.

Haaland was the only Norwegian player to score in Oslo, with Israel netting two own goals.

Norway has won all six games and is six points ahead of second-placed Italy. Haaland's side have a huge goal difference of +26, with 29 goals scored and three conceded.

Haaland guided in an angled shot in the 27th minute, added a powerful downward header in the 63rd and a back-post header in the 72nd.

He was even involved in Norway's third goal when his ominous presence

forced a blunder between the goalkeeper and defender Dan Nachmias.

Israel striker Anan Khalaili's own goal had put Norway ahead after 18 minutes.

There were pro-Palestinian protests before the game in Oslo.

By the time Donnarumma dropped a routine catch from a left-wing cross to give Estonia's Rauno Sappinen a tap-in, Italy was already coasting.

Italy had gone ahead early through striker Moise Kean, who plays for Fiorentina in Serie A. But Kean then limped off with what appeared to be a right ankle injury.