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Kuwait enforces strict hospital parking rules

Traffic Department issues 361 citations in 24 hours

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The General Traffic Department (GTD) in the Interior Ministry continued its campaigns to control parking violations in hospitals, resulting in the issuance of 361 violation citations in just 24

hours recently.

A security source revealed that GTD issued 118 no-parking and obstructing traffic citations recently at Amiri Hospital, 104 in Jahra Hospital, 80 in Adan Hospital and 59 in Farwaniya Hospital.

He said traffic campaigns are ongoing at all hospitals, urging drivers to stop in designated parking spaces in multi-level parking lots to avoid traffic violations.

According to the ministry, GTD carried out intensive field

campaigns in front of hospitals in various governorates, targeting those who violate the Traffic Law. It confirmed that the campaigns focused on no parking and random parking violations, which obstruct traffic and impede emergency vehicles from reaching hospitals. They also inconvenience patients and disrupt their movement due to parking at entrances, exits and designated passageways, which is a traffic violation.

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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

The lion to the pig, 'If I defeat you, they will say I killed a pig'



What honor is there in killing a pig? If you manage to hurt me, it would be a disgrace for me.



If you don't confront me, I will tell everyone you are a coward.



Purity of my fangs matters more to me than staining them with your blood.



Respect yourself and don't let anyone control your actions.



The madman told the lady, "I'm drawing Paradise and dividing it into sections."



She asked, "Can I buy a piece of it? How much does it cost?"



She dreamed she was walking in the bliss of Paradise.



Your wife didn't buy Paradise. She comforted me and treated me with kindness.

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Amiri Diwan photo

Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs and the Head of the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince receive Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Blind Association and board members.

Minister of Amiri Diwan, Head of Crown Prince Diwan receive Kuwait Blind Association chief

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): The Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and the Head of the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Blind Association Fayez Al-Azmi and the board members.

Sheikh Hamad affirmed the wise political leadership's commitment to supporting people with disabilities, removing any obstacles they may face, and harnessing all available resources to ensure their empowerment and full integration into society.

He also congratulated the Kuwait Blind Association on assuming the presidency of the Asian Blind Federation and obtaining membership in the Council of the World Blind Union, expressing his pride in this achievement, which enhances Kuwait's standing in regional and international forums.

Sheikh Hamad and Sheikh Thamer praised the pioneering role played by the Association since its establishment in serving its members and providing them with comfort and empowerment, enhancing their active participation in society.

Posting for views? Man arrested over false clip

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: As part of the Ministry of Interior's efforts to monitor social media content and address misinformation immediately, the Criminal Security Sector's Capital Investigations Department arrested an individual who posted a viral video showing a woman attempting to open a vehicle door in one of the Capital Governorate areas, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to a press release issued by the Ministry of Interior, Rawda Investigations Department launched an immediate inquiry on the video. The vehicle's driver was summoned and interviewed, confirming that the incident did occur but that he did not know the woman involved.

After reviewing surveillance footage, it was determined that the woman mistakenly tried to enter the vehicle, believing it belonged to an acquaintance. The person who arrived to pick her up from the scene was also identified.

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GCC officials meet to strengthen trade and industrial cooperation

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Marwa Al-Jaidan pointed out that enhancing economic and trade integration among the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries is vital in achieving stability and sustainable growth, in addition to honing the ability to deal with global challenges efficiently.

In her opening remarks at the 61st preparatory meeting of the Undersecretaries of the Ministries of Commerce in GCC countries -- hosted and chaired by Kuwait, Al-Jaidan said the global economy is currently witnessing a delicate phase characterized by volatility and challenges due to inflationary pressures,

fluctuating energy prices, and the impact of successive international crises on supply chains.

She added that these challenges, despite their difficulty, hold promising opportunities for those with proactive vision and collective action. She underscored the importance of empowering nationals and economic institutions in the GCC countries through the exchange of expertise and capacity development to boost the resilience of Gulf economies in dealing with changes.

She stressed the need to strengthen institutional frameworks for cooperation in the areas of digital trade and customs procedures, as well as easing the movement of goods and services across borders, to

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Cabinet greenlights laws on int'l crimes, missing persons

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Minister of Justice, Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait, announced that the Council of Ministers, during its meeting on Tuesday, approved two draft decree-laws - one on combating international crimes and the other on the protection of missing persons.

He indicated that both drafts will be submitted to His Highness the Amir

Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, for issuance in accordance with constitutional and legal procedures.

Al-Sumait emphasized that the two draft laws reflect Kuwait's unwavering commitment to upholding the principles of international justice and the rule of law.

He praised the efforts of the Permanent National Committee for International Humanitarian Law, which played a major role in preparing the final drafts

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Newswatch



8 The first phase of Zain Great Idea regional edition kicks-off with intensive bootcamps

9 NBK Wealth receives the award of Outstanding Private Bank for high-net-worth clients

12 'Distance and Closeness' exhibition celebrates growing cultural ties between Kuwait and China

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) chief Major General **Talal Al-Roumi** announced Wednesday that KFF obtained the ISO 9001:2015 certification after meeting international quality requirements across all sectors.

In a KFF statement, Al-Roumi said the achievement follows directives and support from the political leadership and adds to the force's institutional development and excellence.

It reflects KFF's commitment to the highest standards of quality and institutional excellence, in line with state efforts to develop government work, improve operational efficiency, ensure top security and safety standards, and strengthen community security, he said. (KUNA)

JEDDAH: Saudi Crown Prince, Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of RUA Al-Haram Al-Makki Company, Prince **Mohammad bin Salman**, announced on Wednesday the launch of King Salman Gate, a multi-purpose development project in **Makkah**.

The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported that the project covers a total building area of up to 12 million square meters next to the Great Mosque of Makkah. (KUNA)



Students participate in 'Greening Week' activities to promote environmental awareness.

'Greening Week' blooms across Kuwait schools

Schools across Kuwait celebrated "Greening Week" to promote environmental awareness among students and encourage the expansion of green spaces within school premises, supporting the country's vision for a sustainable environment.

The event witnessed wide participation from

school administrations and students who planted trees and various plants in schoolyards, reflecting the Ministry of Education's commitment to sustainability and its role in fostering environmental responsibility among youth.

The celebration included awareness activi-

ties emphasizing the importance of tree planting in improving air quality and combating climate change, along with student competitions that displayed creativity and teamwork, reinforcing values of environmental citizenship and community engagement. (KUNA)



KUNA photos



Kuwait Army photo

Kuwait's Army Chief of Staff with the Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait.

Kuwait Army Chief meets Japan envoy

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Kuwait's Army Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuriaan, discussed on Wednesday with the Japanese Ambassador to the country, Kenichiro Mukai, topics of mutual interest.

In a press release, the Chief of Staff said that this came during Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuriaan's reception of the Japanese Ambassador, accompanied by the Japanese Military Attache, Colonel Ryo Tatsukawa.

Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:30	Asr	14:51
Sunrise ..	05:48	Maghrib ..	17:18
Zohr	11:34	Isha	18:35

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 12-38 km/h.

By Night: Mild with light variable wind to light to moderate

Weather

northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	38	24
Kuwait Airport	37	23
Abdaly	38	16

Jahra	37	22
Failaka Island	35	21
Salmiyah	35	25
Ahmadi	35	21
Nuwaisib	35	22
Wafra	37	21
Salmly	35	14

First Deputy PM receives envoys, discusses common concern issues

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah on Wednesday received a number of ambassadors and envoys, discussing issues of common concern.

The Ministry of Interior said in a press statement that Sheikh Fahad Yusuf received in his office at the ministry's headquarters the Jordanian ambassador Senan Rakan Al-Majali, the Syrian acting charge d'affaires Tamim Madani and the ambassador of Lesotho, Manthabiseng Arcyilia Phohleli.

It quoted him as affirming depth of the relations between the State of Kuwait with sisterly and friendly states and its keenness on cementing the cooperation with these countries in various fields particularly the



Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef

security sphere.

The minister and the envoys discussed means of enhancing the coordination between Kuwait and their countries.

Moreover, the minister also held a meeting with ambassadors of the friendly Caribbean and Latin America states in line with the approach to enhance the cooperation with these countries.

Sheikh Fahad Yousef affirmed depth of the friendly relationships with these countries and keenness on expanding spheres of cooperation and swapping expertise at various levels.

For their part, the envoys expressed appreciation for the warm hospitality, lauding the State of Kuwait's interest in strengthening the relations with the sisterly and friendly states.

'Be Kuwaiti, promote local items in co-ops'

Strategic food reserves 'very good': Al-Awad

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Chairwoman of the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies Maryam Al-Awad affirmed that cooperative work in the country is based on economic, social and productive foundations, not making profits, as some believe.

In a television interview, Al-Awad pointed out that the legislature limited the percentage of profits and returns from purchases to not more than 12 percent, while allocating an entire budget item called 'social services', for beautifying facilities,

landscaping, and recreational activities that serve the community.

She also stated that being the first woman to assume the presidency of the union since its founding in 1971 is a huge responsibility entrusted to her by Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah. She considers this assignment an extension of the political leadership's support for the empowerment of women in various fields, as per the directive of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Regarding the 'Cooperative Goods' competition, Al-Awad affirmed that the union focuses on quality and fair pricing, indicating a tender was issued to supply goods from Oct 12 to 23. She confirmed a decision on the bids will be taken soon, and that these goods will be offered exclusively under the name, 'Cooperative,' within cooperative societies, prohibiting their display in parallel markets. She urged the leading companies that meet the requirements to participate in the competition.

About the support for national products, she disclosed that the union issued circulars obligating cooperatives to al-

locate distinct locations for Kuwaiti products on their shelves. She asserted that "national products deserve to be at the front, putting them at the back of the shelves is unacceptable." She indicated that the union is working hard to correct this situation through the issuance of circulars and field visits.

On the strategic food and consumer stock in the country, she stressed "it is very good". She pointed out that COVID-19 pandemic experience has proven the strength of the country's supply system, as it has not witnessed shortage of basic or luxury goods.

On the fish sector, she said this sector is under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, not the union. However, she did not rule out the possibility of considering its entry in the future, especially since the union's bylaws grant it the authority to contract directly with companies and factories without intermediaries.

She also revealed that the union owns the 'Cooperative Tuna' brand, which is manufactured in Thailand, and that it is currently searching for other leading international factories to achieve higher quality.

KUNA Dialogue dissects journalism challenges

'Media credibility vital for audience trust'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Participants in the KUNA-hosted dialogue on Wednesday affirmed that media credibility is essential for boosting transparency and bolstering confidence with the audience.

The chief editor of the Kuwaiti daily newspaper, Al-Qabas, Walid Al-Nisf, said in his address at the discussion panel that staying abreast of digital transformation in journalism has become necessary.

He revealed that in 2015, newspapers had 60 percent of the advertisement budget in Kuwait, compared to nine percent nowadays. Al-Qabas had sent a delegation to the British newspaper, The Guardian, to study their digital transformation experience and their strategists recommended investment be focused in the digital media.

Nasser Al-Otaibi, the editor-in-chief of Al-Jarida daily, indicated that he has no issues with the divergence of coverage among the media outlets, "So that the Kuwaiti media would not have a single color."

Adnan Al-Rashed, President of the Kuwaiti Journalists Association, said during the panel that the daily newspapers depend heavily on KUNA to collect news. KUNA during the 1990-1991 Iraq aggression turned into the official tongue of the state of Kuwait, he said.

Journalists and media personnel taking part in a KUNA-hosted dialogue on Wednesday looked

into some of the challenges thrust upon them at a time where an accelerating digital drive has transformed the industry.

The participants, a list that reads like a who's who from the wider Arab region's media industry, agreed that pushing forward with a full-fledged digital drive has become a "definitive necessity," as opposed to a mere option, in addition to being a tool that can be employed for faster and more efficient news delivery, they said.

Social media

In the age of social media and digital platforms, print-based journalism is facing challenges in making the online transition, thanks largely to pitfalls such as fallible information posted on social media platforms by anonymous individuals, said Federation of Arab News Agencies (FANA) chief Dr. Fareed Ayyar. This further highlights the role of state-run news agencies as the most reputable source for news and information given the "informatics chaos" seen on social media platforms, added the FANA secretary general, acknowledging Kuwait's state news agency, KUNA, as among the regions pre-eminent news bodies since its inception back in 1976.

KUNA's foreign bureaus also contribute immensely towards the news agency's global coverage, he said, while the state-run Kuwaiti news

agency is also an active participant in the activities and endeavors organized by FANA, many of which take place in Kuwait, he said.

On some of the transformations seen in the media industry, the chief of Jordan's news agency PETRA Nabil Ghishan cited technological innovations, including the emerging Artificial Intelligence industry, as the most prominent given how such tools can sway public opinion and influence the decision-making process, he said.

Praising the indelible mark that Kuwait has left on the region's media industry, Bahrain News Agency chief Abdullah Buhaji said that Kuwaiti culture is among the most prominent and renowned, while Kuwait's designation as the "Capital of Arab Culture 2025" is fitting given its contributions to the field.

PETRA's former chief Ramadan Rawashdeh reiterated the shortcomings of digital platform when it comes to delivering news to the public, saying that while such tools remain popular among the younger generation, state-run news agencies remain the most relied upon source for news and information. Participants in the "KUNA Dialogue" symposium affirmed that news agencies play a vital role in delivering accurate and reliable news from their official sources, relied upon by newspapers, radio stations, and television networks.



KUNA photo

MPW staff working in the evening to complete 4th Ring Road maintenance.

'Maintenance work on 4th Ring Road on track, to be completed as per schedule'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan affirmed the ministry's commitment

to closely following up on major road maintenance projects on the ground, ensuring their implementation meets the highest standards of quality and safety, and expediting completion in line with the country's infrastructure

development goals, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Dr. Al-Mashaan explained that ministry teams were present at the Fourth Ring Road site, opposite Shuwaikh, on Wednesday to monitor the latest progress in the ongoing major maintenance works, which include laying a Type 1 asphalt layer under the new

maintenance contracts. Supervisory teams are continuously tracking the project's progress to ensure adherence to approved technical specifications and scheduled timelines.

Dr. Al-Mashaan highlighted the ministry's continued efforts to enhance the efficiency of the road network and improve safety for all road users.

Other Voices

Sheikh Fahad ... pros and cons

By Ahmad alsarraf

Before fully immersing himself in his sensitive duties, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef visited a book fair held a few months ago. During his visit, Al-Yousef surprised many by stating that he had never read a single book in his life.

What the Minister of Interior stated reflects a reality that applies to over 90 percent of the population and the Arab nation. In our societies, reading books is the exception rather than the norm. Among the elite, there is a belief that reading negatively influences the thoughts and beliefs of avid readers, fearing it may lead to changes in thinking and the acceptance of diverse opinions.

Hence, many clerics tend to discourage their followers from reading. The late scholar Muhammad Metwally Shaarawy, one of the most influential figures of his time, once said that he read only one book and urged his followers to follow his example.

Meanwhile, my brief interaction with the Minister of Interior, along with my modest knowledge of him, revealed another side of him, one that is marked by a great deal of compassion, logic, and intelligence.

I am not flattering him, as I have never asked him for any favours. This is my honest and frank opinion. Yousef also has a quick temper, which likely contributes to his frequent complaints of irritable bowel syndrome, much like many of us.

This tough, disciplined security officer has surprised many with his knowledge and skills that even those who have read dozens of books might not have mastered. These skills are evident in many of his actions and decisions, along with his command of politics, despite never having practiced it formally, as well as his expertise in security matters.



alsarraf

Those who selected him for this mission recognized these qualities, which have made him the least beloved political figure to some who cannot be blamed for their stance, and the most admired by others, each for their own reasons.

This may not have been seen with any of his predecessors or other politicians.

We saw the same in his recent decision to visit the United States, meet with senior US administration officials, and conclude agreements with them. The visit was unprecedented by all standards, with no previous government official having even considered undertaking such a mission.

What is more deserving of praise are the recent strong and successive arrests of smugglers involved in drug trafficking, contraband, and the illegal export of diesel, cigarettes, and subsidized food supplies from Kuwait.

More importantly, there is an increasing number of military personnel involved in these crimes, particularly the serious ones. Perhaps this has always been the case, simply waiting for someone with the strength, resolve, and intelligence of Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef to take charge, strike at their hideouts, and end the cover-ups.

We saw the same at the Central Prison, which has long been a source of terrorism and corruption rather than a penal institution, despite rumors of continued violations involving exceptional treatment for some prisoners who receive five-star services.

Also, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef's role in exposing tens of thousands of forged citizenship cases and other crimes cannot be overlooked.

In conclusion, I hope that First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef will instruct the Public Relations and Security Media Department to stop publishing the names and faces of those arrested for any crime, as they are still undergoing investigation and have not yet been convicted.

I am confident that his sense of justice will most likely prompt him to grant this request, so thank you in advance.

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Kuwait leadership role hailed in culture, media promotion

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): The Acting Director-General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Mohammad Al-Menai affirmed on Wednesday that Kuwait's selection as the Arab Capital of Culture and Media for 2025 reflects

the country's pioneering journey.

Speaking ahead of the panel discussion organized by the agency under the title "KUNA Dialogue," part of the broader celebrations of Kuwait's designation as Capital of Arab Culture and Media 2025, Al-Menai emphasized the importance of Kuwait's leadership in advancing the media and cultural sectors.

He noted that Kuwait leadership's commitment to developing the media and cultural system reflects Kuwait's dedication to building a progressive society and achieving comprehensive development, while also enhancing the

country's regional and international standing.

Al-Menai highlighted the significance of this seminar, calling it a valuable opportunity to reflect on the evolution of national media, from past to present, and to exchange deep insights on the future of the media sector amidst rapid global transformations.

He further stressed that KUNA, as a national news agency, believes strongly in the strategic integration of media roles, viewing its mission as extending beyond traditional news reporting to actively supporting the broader national media message and upholding the principles of professional responsibility.

Al-Menai expressed his sincere gratitude to the Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, and the Ministry of Information for their efforts in facilitating the event. He also thanked all participants and attendees for their presence and contributions to its success.



Al-Menai

MoH nods approval and pricing of 392 new medicines

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance national drug security and ensure that citizens and residents have access to safe and effective treatments at fair prices, the Ministry of Health, led by Minister Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi, issued a ministerial decision to approve and price 392 new medicines, pharmaceutical preparations, and dietary supplements. This decision positions Kuwait's approved prices as the lowest among Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, reports Al-Anba daily.

The decision is in line with the ministry's comprehensive strategic approach to balance patient interests with the sustainability of the pharmaceutical market. This is achieved through periodic reviews of price lists, adoption of higher-quality and more efficient drug alternatives, and the discontinuation of outdated or costly medications, ensuring public benefit and maintaining the efficiency of healthcare services.

The new list includes modern medicines that represent a significant advancement in various therapeutic areas, addressing both the daily and chronic needs of patients. This expansion marks a

notable expansion of the approved medicines list, which include treatments for obesity, hypertension, allergies, and eye pressure, as well as advanced therapies for tumors and cancer, the new formulation of Mounjaro injections, and the latest treatments for Alzheimer's disease, migraine, and influenza.

The decision also involved the removal of several older medicines, which have been replaced by more effective and cost-efficient alternatives. This brings the total number of approved medicines and pharmaceutical preparations priced or reviewed in Kuwait over the past year to 1,580.

The Ministry of Health confirmed that the new pricing system is based on Gulf and international reference prices and is subject to periodic review by specialized technical committees that monitor global market developments to ensure balanced pricing.



Dr. Al-Awadhi

'Kuwait keen on fighting terrorism with int'l help'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Assistant Foreign Minister for Development and International Cooperation Affairs and Chairman of the Committee for Implementing UN Security Council Resolutions Ambassador Hamad Al-Meshaan affirmed Kuwait's keenness to host the Counter-Terrorism Forum experts' meeting, strengthening global coordination and supporting international counter-terrorism objectives.

In a press statement, Al-Meshaan emphasized that the two-day meeting gathered 49 representatives from 27 countries and organizations under the theme "Enhancing International Judicial Cooperation and Handling Evidence in Terrorism Cases," jointly chaired by Kuwait and Kenya.

He noted that Kuwait previously hosted a Global Counter-Terrorism Forum workshop last October on "Disengagement, Deradicalization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration," in collaboration with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, with participation from 90 policymakers and experts.

The ambassador highlighted Kuwait's active role in countering terrorism through bilateral cooperation with friendly nations, especially regarding the issue of foreign terrorist fighters, reflecting Kuwait's humanitarian commitment and dedication to promoting international peace and stability.

He added that Kuwait has facilitated the repatriation of over 1,500 foreign terrorist fighters and their families from northeastern Syria since 2018 and continues to assist partner nations in exchanging expertise and strengthening judicial cooperation globally.



Al-Meshaan

It stated that this approach aims to guarantee the availability of medicines at carefully considered prices without compromising quality standards or manufacturing safety, thereby maintaining the stability of the national pharmaceutical market, particularly for essential and chronic medications that form the backbone of treatment in both public institutions and the private sector.

The ministry explained that this decision coincides with the adoption of seven new ministerial decrees this month aimed at regulating the pharmaceutical sector in the country. This reflects the Ministry of Health's commitment to advancing the legislative and regulatory framework of the pharmaceutical sector in line with global standards. These decrees seek to improve the efficiency of drug and medical preparation registration, ensure companies and distributors comply with the established prices, and enhance both field and electronic monitoring tools to regulate the pharmaceutical market, promoting the highest levels of transparency and sustainability within the healthcare system.

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



The lion to the pig, ‘If I defeat you, they will say I killed a pig’

HOW do you maintain and hone your strength? If you want to stand out among your peers, you must act with composure and avoid reacting, because it presents you as weak.

One should not be at the mercy of slogans that lead him astray, especially when facing challenges. He may become so preoccupied with one problem that he forgets his other problems, leading to failure in his challenge. After that, defeats will follow, and he will lose his strength and become weak, driven by the whims of others.

The following story teaches us how to face challenges with wisdom, and the next story shows how acts of charity can win hearts and open the path to Paradise.

Once upon a time, a mighty lion was wandering through the forest when he was confronted by a boastful and arrogant pig.

The pig said defiantly, “Fight me if you dare.”

The lion replied calmly, “Pig, you are no match for me. If I fight and defeat you, people will say a lion killed a pig. What honor is there in that? And if you manage to hurt me, it would be a disgrace for me.”

The pig replied, “If you don’t confront me, I will tell everyone you were afraid of me, and that you are cowardly and weak.”

The lion wisely responded, “Let them say what they will. The purity of my fangs matters more to me than staining them with your blood.”

What honor is there in killing a pig? If you manage to hurt me, it would be a disgrace for me.

If you don’t confront me, I will tell everyone you are a coward.

Purity of my fangs matters more to me than staining them with your blood.

Respect yourself and don’t let anyone control your actions.

The madman told the lady, “I’m drawing Paradise and dividing it into sections.”

She asked, “Can I buy a piece of it? How much does it cost?”

She dreamed she was walking in the bliss of Paradise.

Your wife didn’t buy Paradise. She comforted me and treated me with kindness.

The truth lies in self-respect. Never let others dictate your actions or drag you into battles unworthy of you. Your worth is defined by your commitment to your principles, not by the opinions of others.

The Road to Paradise

A wealthy woman passed by a madman sitting on the ground, holding a small stick and drawing lines in the dirt. Feeling a sense of pity, she approached him and asked, “What are you doing?”

He replied calmly, “I’m drawing Paradise and dividing it into sections.”

The woman smiled in surprise and asked, “Can I buy a piece of it? How much does it cost?”

He answered, “Only 20 Riyals.”

Without hesitation, the woman gave him 20 Riyals, along with some food she was carrying.

That night, the woman dreamed she was walking in the bliss of Paradise. When she woke up, she told her husband what had happened. Curious, her husband went to the man the next day and said, “I want to buy a piece of Paradise from you.”

But the man replied firmly, “I don’t sell Paradise.”

The husband, surprised, asked, “Why not? You sold a piece to my wife yesterday.”

The madman smiled and said, “Your wife didn’t buy Paradise for 20 Riyals. She comforted me and treated me with kindness. However, you want Paradise without offering anything. Paradise is not a commodity for sale. The path to it is through comforting others.”

What prevents the government from appointing an official spokesperson who can respond, even to critics, and refute rumors? This would help the government avoid issuing decisions without fully considering their repercussions and impact.

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In countries around the world, every political or social institution has an official spokesperson who answers journalists’ questions and engages with the public through social media.

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Dozens of organizations have exploited the Palestinian cause for profit, while many Arabs and Muslims have abandoned it.

Anyone who fails to help present the facts to the world and refute the lies is either a spy or a Zionist agent awaiting a dark fate.

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Unfortunately, some brain-washed individuals believe these lies.



Abdali customs seize huge quantity of drug pills.

Iraqi held in smuggling of drugs in his car tyre

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The General Administration of Customs has successfully thwarted an attempt to smuggle a large quantity of narcotic pills into the country. A total of 7,952 pills were discovered hidden in the vehicle of an Arab expatriate at the Abdali border crossing, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to an official statement released today, customs inspectors grew suspicious of a vehicle driven by an Iraqi resident attempting to enter the country. Following preliminary checks, the vehicle was referred for further examination at the technical inspection facilities.

Sniffer dogs were deployed during the inspection and provided a clear indication of concealed substances in the vehicle’s spare tyre. Upon investigation, authorities uncovered the hidden narcotics.

The administration confirmed that the vehicle, the contraband, and the suspect have been detained, and a formal report has been filed. The case has been handed over to the competent authorities to proceed with the necessary legal action.

Customs officials emphasized their ongoing commitment to improving inspection techniques and strengthening co-operation with security agencies to prevent the smuggling of illegal substances and safeguard the health and security of society.

GTD issues 464 citations in overtaking violations

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The General Traffic Department continued its field campaigns targeting violators of overtaking rules and those obstructing traffic.

In the recent campaign, a total of 464 traffic violation citations were issued within 24 hours.

A security source told the newspaper that patrol officers continue to intensify such campaigns in various governorates to apprehend those who violate overtaking regulations at turns and traffic lights, with the aim of facilitating traffic flow and reducing behaviors which cause congestion and disrupt traffic flow.

The source confirmed that traffic campaigns are ongoing in all governorates to monitor overtaking violations, stressing these violations are among the most common causes of traffic obstruction and accidents.

The Ministry of Interior previously announced that vehicles could be impounded for two months for violators of overtaking rules and regulations, with a fine of KD15. In the event of a repeat violation, the case will be referred to the Traffic Court for legal action.

Royal’s graft case hearing on Dec 16

Court rejects bail for lawyer

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The Ministerial Court has adjourned to December 16 the “secret expenses” case filed by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef against former Defense Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad.

During the session, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad’s legal team delivered an extensive defense, presenting both legal and substantive arguments. They highlighted the lack of concrete evidence to prove the allegations against their client.

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No bail for lawyer: The Criminal Court rejected a request to release a lawyer accused of trafficking and smuggling drugs from London, along with a young man and woman. This request was made after the defendants were caught in a well-planned entrapment set up by the Drug Control General Department at the Interior Ministry, following intelligence gathering about the defendants’ activities.

During the hearing, the defense team requested the release of the defendants on bail, but the court rejected the request and ordered the continuation of their detention. The hearing was adjourned until Nov 3 to listen to the statements of witnesses.

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Decision annulled: The Administrative Court, headed by Counselor Mohammad Bahman, annulled the decision issued by the Registry Department of the Cassation Court at the Ministry of Justice to refrain from registering an appeal, on grounds that

the value of the lawsuit under judgment did not exceed KD30,000.

The court stressed that this refusal is a clear violation of the law and an infringement on the authority of the judiciary.

Attorney Abdullah Al-Kandari, lawyer for the plaintiff, stated that the lawsuit was filed after the department refused to register the appeal that he submitted against an appellate ruling awarding his client KD1,000 as final compensation for moral damages. The court argued that the value of the claim fell below the permissible limit for an appeal despite the fact that the lawsuit was originally unquantified.

Al-Kandari pointed out that the ruling of the Administrative Court confirms that the right to litigation is constitutionally guaranteed for all citizens, and that no administrative body should obstruct or limit this right through procedural decisions. He said the role of the department is limited to registering appeals and completing formal procedures, not deciding on the admissibility of an appeal -- a jurisdiction reserved solely for the Court of Cassation.

The ruling stated that any claim otherwise constitutes interference in the work of the judiciary and the squandering of the right to litigation guaranteed by the Constitution. It clarified that the department is not the competent authority to determine the admissibility of an appeal, as its task is to register the documents submitted to it in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure.

Based on the above, the Administrative Court overturned the decision to refuse to register the appeal, obligating the department to register the appeal documents in accordance with the legally prescribed procedures. It also obligated the two defendant administrative bodies to pay the expenses and KD200 for actual attorney fees.

Liquor , heroin with duo in vehicle



The foreign liquor bottle and sachets of heroin.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Hawalli rescue personnel have referred two individuals to the General Department for Drug Control (GDCC) after they were found in possession of heroin and a bottle of imported alcohol, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the incident took place during a routine campaign in the Salmiya area, where officers stopped a four-wheel-drive vehicle carrying two people who appeared to be in an abnormal state. Upon questioning, it was discovered that one of the individuals had a prior record related to drug use.

When asked about his background, the suspect attempted to dispose of a transparent bag believed to contain heroin.

Officers conducted a precautionary search of both the suspect and the vehicle, which led to the discovery of a second bag containing heroin as well as a bottle of imported alcohol.

2 probed in false asset disclosure

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) has referred a cooperative society board member and a supervisor at a government institution subject to financial disclosure regulations to the Public Prosecution on suspicion of submitting a false financial disclosure statement, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Nazaha urged all individuals subject to financial disclosure requirements to accurately complete and submit their disclosures within the legally mandated deadlines to protect public funds, promote transparency and integrity, and strengthen public confi-

dence in state institutions.

□ □ □

Transfer decree: Decree No. 197/2025, which was published in the official gazette “Kuwait Al-Yaum” stipulates the transfer of 60 (B) public prosecutors to serve as third-class judges at the Court of First Instance, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to the decree, the Minister of Justice shall implement its provisions, which come into effect from the date of issuance and publication in the official gazette.

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Council OKs major overhaul to hotel building regulations

Amendments set to diversify Kuwait’s economy

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Chairwoman of the Technical Committee at the Municipal Council Munira Al-Amir announced that the committee has completed its review and approval of proposals to amend the building regulations, which are related to the requirements and specifications for hotel buildings throughout the country.

In a press statement, Al-Amir explained that these amendments aim to develop the hotel investment environment and provide more flexibility in design and construction as per the modern standards in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

She said the most important aspects of the amendment include updating the definitions of hotel buildings, hotel units, public services, health facilities and hotel services, in accordance with modern urban concepts. She added that the term ‘motel’ was deleted from the list, since it is not present in the local market.

She added the proposed system expanded the scope of plots permitted for hotel construction to include investment and commercial plots, coastal strip plots and service sector (No. 16), in addition to the designated plots or buildings as per the previous decisions of the council.

She revealed that the list specified the minimum plot area in Kuwait City at 750 square meters for in-



Munira Al-Amir, Chairwoman of the Technical Committee at the Municipal Council

vestment plots and 500 square meters for commercial plots, while outside Kuwait City, the minimum should not be less than 1,000 square meters for investment plots and 750 square meters for commercial plots.

She indicated that the amendments include a technically precise reorganization of building percentages in and outside the city, setting additional percentages for public services that vary according to the plot size. She cited as an example the plots measuring less than 1,500 square meters within the city that are allowed to add 50 percent of the building area for public services, while plots larger than 1,500 square meters can add up to 100 percent. Outside the city, the increase ranges from 40 to 70 percent for investment plots, and 70 to 100 percent for commercial plots.

She also clarified that the new system introduced special regulations for mixed-use cases, allowing hotels integrated with separate commercial activities to be built with special licenses. She pointed out that commercial areas should not exceed 40 percent of the total plot area, with a minimum project area of 1,500 square meters within

the city and 3,000 square meters outside.

She disclosed that the new schedule specifies areas excluded from the building percentage like the stairs, corridors, elevators, skylights, service floors, evacuation floors, garden floors, basements and parking floors, to avoid confusion in calculating the overall building percentages.

She affirmed that the provisions were formulated in accordance with the latest engineering codes, which were approved as per the Kuwait Code.

Regarding design, she said the amendments stipulate that the size of a hotel unit should not be less than 20 square meters, and that the width of corridors between units should not be less than two meters and not more than three meters, with the necessity of adhering to the Kuwait Code’s standards for accessibility according to the overall design. She added the size of the hotel management office is set at a maximum of 300 square meters.

She stated that the amendments include incorporating the requirements of the Accessibility Code, making it mandatory to allocate 10 percent of rooms and suites for people with special needs. She stressed that this reflects the Kuwait Municipality’s commitment to follow inclusive design standards.

She went on to say that the new schedule regulates the mechanism for issuing commercial licenses for hotels, allowing separate commercial licenses for commercial units and public services according to specific percentages. She said parking requirements were also updated to match the type of plot and the number of rooms and suites, while fully adhering to the Accessibility Code.

She asserted that these amendments are part of ongoing efforts to develop and update building regulations in line with the efforts of the State to support tourism, diversify the national economy, and enhance investment attractiveness in the hotel sector.

MEW starts power connection applications in Al-Mutlaa

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy has announced the commencement of receiving applications for electricity connections in Al-Mutlaa Residential City, covering 358 plots in the N1 suburb, specifically in parts of Block 1 and Block 4, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement, the ministry confirmed that the connection process is

being carried out in close coordination with the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) to ensure smooth implementation and timely provision of services to citizens. It added that technical teams are continuing their work to complete the necessary infrastructure, including substations and network extensions, to meet the growing demand in the newly developed area.



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Electricity connections rise to 700 plots

Audit Bureau approves KD10.45 mln contract for Doha desalination plant

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The State Audit Bureau (SAB) approved the contract of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy for the maintenance work in Doha Seawater Reverse Osmosis Desalination Plant, along with equipment, to increase the alkalinity of the produced water (Phase One) at a total cost of KD10.45 million.

Sources informed the newspaper that SAB’s audit and review contributed to savings estimated at KD36,713,000 after reducing some items and deleting one due to redundancy.

In another development, the latest monthly report of the ministry revealed that electricity was supplied to 700 plots in various residential sectors in September. The private residential sector recorded the highest number of electricity connection with 672 plots,

followed by the government and investment sectors with nine plots each, and the industrial and agricultural sectors with five plots each.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the report, indicating that the total load provided to new customers reached 81,599 kilowatts with Jahra Governorate ranking first in terms of electricity connection, followed by Farwaniya Governorate, Ahmadi Governorate, Capital Governorate, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate and Hawalli Governorate.

According to the report, the total electricity connection load increased in September, reaching 81,599 kilowatts, compared to 75,881 kilowatts in August -- a difference of 5,716 kilowatts.

Meanwhile, the Statistics Department at the ministry disclosed that 563,751 megawatts were imported from the Gulf Interconnection Network in September.



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah honors participants during the 4th International White Cane Day celebration at the Community Development Center in Abdullah Al-Mubarak.

Sheikh Athbi champions inclusion efforts

Farwaniya marks White Cane Day

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Under the patronage and in the presence of Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah, the “4th International White Cane Day” celebration was held on Tuesday morning at the Community Development Center in Abdullah Al-Mubarak.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the event, titled “Visual Impairment: Between Social Rights and Development Visions”, was organized in coordination with blind media advisor Abdulrahman Al-Adwani.

The celebration was attended by Honorary President of the Kuwait Sports Club for the Disabled Sheikhha Sheikhha Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Nafisa Charitable Foundation Ibrahim Taher Al-Baghli, Assistant Undersecretary for the Medical, Psychological, and Social Services Sector at the Public Authority for Disability Affairs Dr. Khalifa Al-Hailaa, and Head of the Community Development Center in Abdullah Al-Mubarak Sharifa Al-Rashidi.

Several officials from both the public and private sectors, as well as representatives of civil society organizations involved in the care and rehabilitation of the visually impaired, also attended the event, along with a select group of community and media figures.

The initiative reflects Farwaniya Gover-

norate’s commitment to raising community awareness about the rights of the visually impaired and supporting efforts aimed at empowering and integrating them into all aspects of public life, in line with the political leadership’s directives to care for and support this valued group.

Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser affirmed that the celebration of International White Cane Day reflects the values of solidarity and humanity that define Kuwaiti society.

He noted that the Farwaniya Governorate places strong emphasis on supporting and empowering people with disabilities.

During a tour of the exhibition held alongside the event, the governor expressed his gratitude to Abdulrahman Al-Adwani for his kind invitation and sincere efforts in raising awareness about issues affecting the blind community.

A number of participants and supporting organizations were honored in recognition of their contributions and community initiatives.

At the end of the ceremony, the organizers extended their gratitude to the governor for his patronage, presence, and continued support of humanitarian and community activities, as well as his role in strengthening community partnerships and promoting the values of cooperation and giving within Kuwaiti society.

Limit set on assistant undersecretaries

Cabinet ‘greenlights’ Civil Service measures to reduce senior posts

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers has informed the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, and Acting Chairman of the Civil Service Council, Sharida Al-Muoshherji, of a circular with recommendations for implementing the Civil Service Council’s decision taken at its meeting 18/2025 concerning the new organizational structure and the procedures for handling assistant undersecretaries whose terms have ended, as well as those whose terms are still active but are surplus to the requirements of the new structure, reports Al-Anba daily.

The circular stated:

The Cabinet, in its meeting No. 71 - 36/2025, held on September 16, 2025, reviewed the Civil Service Council’s letter No. 424, dated August 20, 2025, which included notification of the issuance of the Civil Service Council’s decision regarding assistant undersecretaries. This decision was taken at meeting No. 18/2025, held on August 11, 2025, and covers the following points:

1. Emphasizing the commitment of all government agencies to the Civil Service Council’s decision from its meeting No. 10/

2025, held on May 15, 2025, which limits the number of assistant undersecretaries in any government agency to a maximum of two.

2. Recommending the Council of Ministers to notify ministers to terminate the services of assistant undersecretaries whose contracts have expired but who continue to work, and to end the assignments of department directors appointed as assistant undersecretaries by Wednesday, December 31, 2025.

3. Submitting a recommendation to the Council of Ministers that, in cases where assistant undersecretaries still have valid contracts but are not included in the new organizational structure of the entity, the excess assistant undersecretaries be terminated through the appropriate legal measures by Wednesday, December 31, 2025.

The Council had issued Resolution No. 1251, article 1 of which emphasizes the commitment of all government agencies to the Civil Service Council’s resolution taken at meeting No. 16/2025, held on May 15, 2025, which stipulates that the number of assistant undersecretaries in any government entity shall not exceed two.

Private sector joins hands with municipality to preserve shores

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Kuwait Municipality expressed appreciation to the private sector for participating in its beach cleanup campaigns, reports Al-Rai daily.

In cooperation with the private sector and under the patronage of Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali, the Municipality recently organized a campaign titled, “Our Beaches Are Beautiful, Let Us Preserve Them”, to clean the Kuwait Towers Beach.

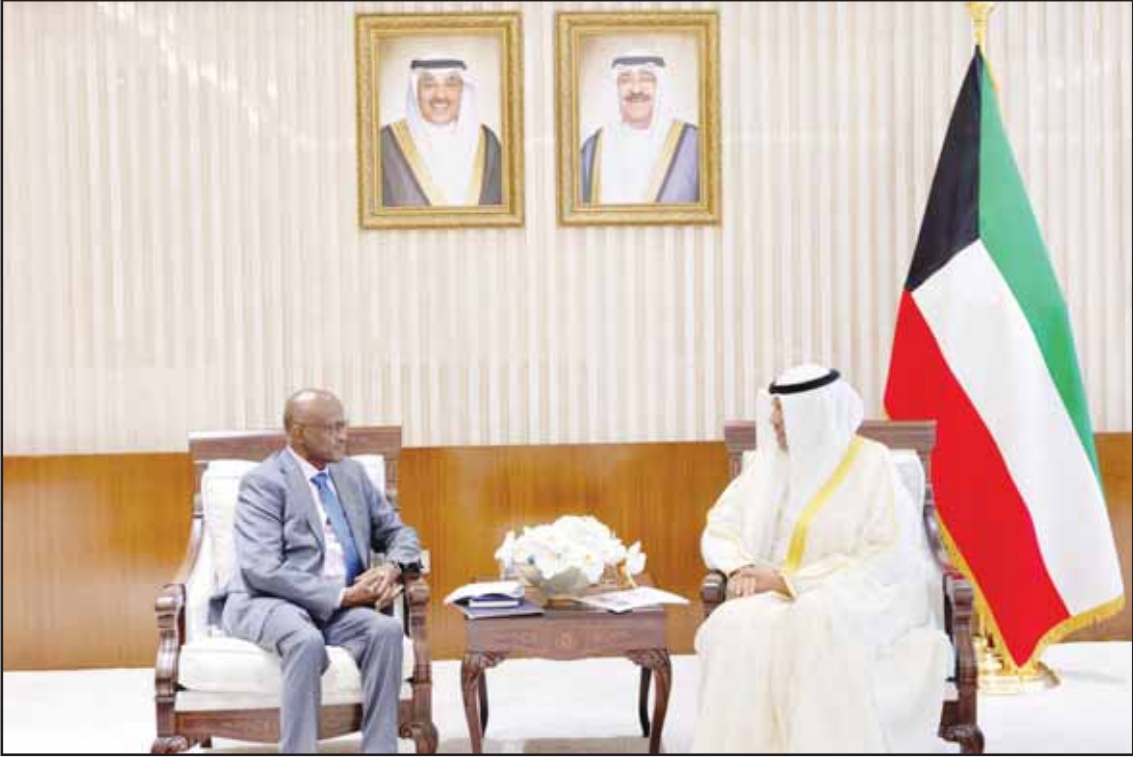
In a press statement, the Public Relations Department at the Municipality commended Kuwait Continental Hotel Group and its employees for their efforts to maintain the cleanliness of the beach. It disclosed that the campaign includes conveying awareness messages to encourage citizens and expatriates to maintain the cleanliness of beaches and public facilities.

It added that “the field team from the Public Sanitation and Road Works Depart-



Private sector participating in beach cleanup campaign.

ment at the Capital Governorate provided full support to the waterfront beach cleanup drive, with representatives of several participating governmental and civil society organizations in attendance.”



KUNA photo
The Minister of Foreign Affairs meets the Ethiopian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs on the occasion of his visit to the country.

Foreign Minister hosts Ethiopian official

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met on Wednesday with the Ethiopian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hadera Abera along with an accompanying delegation. The Ethiopian minister is currently on an official visit to the State of Kuwait. The two sides discussed during the meeting the bilateral relations between the two friendly countries, means of cementing these ties in various spheres, in addition to broaching regional and international developments. (KUNA)

Minister commends officer’s dedication

1st Deputy PM honors Lance Cpl for thwarting illegal border entry

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah on Wednesday honored Lance Corporal Khaled Al-Dhafiri of the General Department of Land Border security, in recognition for his dedication and integrity.

The Ministry of Interior said in a press statement that Al-Dhafiri was honored for his success in thwarting an illegal entry attempt at Al-Salmi border checkpoint, where a person tried to infiltrate the country using an entry printout belonging to another individual.

Security checks later revealed that the suspect was wanted in several pending cases.

The ministry affirmed that this security achievement reflects the vigilance and professionalism of Land Border Security officers in safeguarding the country’s borders and preventing unlawful crossings, praising their commitment and high sense of responsibility in upholding the law.



KUNA photo
The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior honors a corporal at the land ports security for his dedication to his duty.

Arab League affirms importance of adopting personal data protection convention

Kuwait joins experts in finalizing regional digital privacy framework



The third meeting of the joint committee of experts and representatives of the ministries of justice and interior and relevant authorities in Arab countries.

CAIRO, Oct 15, (KUNA): The Arab League on Wednesday affirmed the importance of adopting the draft Arab Convention on Personal Data Protection to ensure information security and safeguard digital privacy across member states within the Arab region.

This came during the opening of the third meeting of the joint committee of experts and representatives from Arab ministries of justice, interior, and relevant authorities, chaired by Algeria, with the participation of Kuwait.

Director of the Legal Affairs Department at the Arab League, Minister Plenipotentiary Dr. Maha Bakhit, said in her speech that the draft convention stems

from the decision of the Council of Arab Ministers of Justice No. (37) based on Algeria’s initiative to establish a comprehensive Arab framework for protecting personal data.

Bakhit affirmed that the draft convention represents a vital step toward strengthening Arab cooperation in the field of data protection and ensuring digital privacy amid rapid regional and global technological transformations.

She explained that the meeting aims to finalize discussions on the articles of the draft convention, prepare its final version, and submit recommendations to the upcoming joint session of Arab Ministers of Justice and Interior scheduled for November.



KUNA photos
Kuwait’s participation in the meeting of the joint committee of experts and representatives from Arab ministries of justice, interior, and relevant authorities.

Kuwait’s ambassador highlights pavilion’s success at Osaka Expo

TOKYO, Oct 15, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador to Japan Sami Al-Zamanan on Wednesday praised Kuwait’s outstanding participation at Expo 2025 Osaka, describing the Pavilion as one of the most visited and well-received among international exhibits.

Kuwait was among the prominent participants at the six-month-long Expo, which concluded this week in Osaka under the theme of “Designing Future Society for Our Lives,” the Kuwait Pavilion, titled “Visionary Lighthouse,” attracted large crowds.

“Kuwait’s participation at Expo Osaka was truly remarkable. The pavilion stood out as one of the best and most popular, which was reflected by the long queues of visitors and the outstanding feedback,” Al-Zamanan said in a statement to KUNA.

“Upon entering Kuwait’s pavilion, visitors were greeted with an extraordinary experience filled with interactive elements that showcased Kuwait’s rich history, natural environment, cultural heritage, trade routes, and humanitarian legacy,” the diplomat said.

The journey, he noted, “seam-



Sami Al-Zamanan, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Japan

lessly connected the nation’s past and present with its future ambitions toward sustainability, all presented in an engaging and enjoyable way.”

According to the ambassador, the pavilion left visitors with “a lasting impression and a deeper understanding of Kuwait and the region,” adding that the Kuwaiti restaurant inside the venue enriched the visit by offering “an authentic taste of the country’s diverse culinary identity.”

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The local real estate sector is witnessing qualitative transformation due to the increasing use of the modern language of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies.

Artificial intelligence has become a vital tool in redrawing the map of the local real estate market and transforming it into a more intelligent, transparent and efficient environment. With the government’s intensified efforts toward digital transformation, the importance of adopting modern technological solutions is growing as an unavoidable

option in light of growing regional and global competition.

Real estate and information system experts interviewed by the newspaper believe that artificial intelligence applications have brought about a qualitative shift in all aspects of real estate work. They are now capable of analyzing big data to extract future market trends, predict price movements, and identify promising areas for investment. They also entered the field of automated real estate valuation, which enables accurate and immediate estimates of market value based on real data, enhancing transparency and reducing the likelihood of human error.



Al-Saleh

Abdullah Al-Saleh, CEO of Sakan Real Estate Platform, pointed out that AI is no longer just an analytical tool or a technical luxury, as it has become the foundation for building a comprehensive system of digital real estate products that will reshape the sector by 2027. He pointed out that the most prominent of these

products is the ‘smart agent’, a digital real estate broker that performs most of the tasks of a traditional broker using AI technologies.

Former Regional Director for Information Systems at the United Nations and the World Bank Mohammad Abbas Al-Thaka stated that the real estate sector in Kuwait is undergoing an accelerated digital transformation, led by AI and its advanced applications in the fields of machine learning and big data analysis, becoming a key tool in reshaping the future of the local real estate market.

Dr. Safaa Zaman, a faculty member at Kuwait University and head of Kuwait Information Security Association, said AI has radically transformed the real estate sector, stressing that it is no longer a complementary tool, as it is now the major driver in reshaping the real estate landscape in Kuwait and the whole world.

man error.

They affirmed that smart systems contribute to improving customer experience through chatbots and virtual assistants capable of providing immediate responses and accurate recommendations.

Meanwhile, AI-powered marketing tools help target the right segments and customize offers according to each customer’s needs. They enable smart asset and building management by monitoring energy consumption and implementing predictive maintenance, reducing operating costs and increasing efficiency.

Abdullah Al-Saleh, CEO of Sakan Real Estate Platform, pointed out that AI is no longer just an analytical tool or a technical luxury, as it has become the foundation for building a comprehensive system of digital real estate products that will reshape the sector by 2027. He pointed out that the most prominent of these

Continued from Page 1

Cabinet greenlights

in coordination with various government entities.

Al-Sumait expressed his sincere gratitude and appreciation to both current and former members of the committee for their efforts, perseverance, and tireless national efforts that contributed to the comprehensive completion of the two draft laws.

He emphasized that this achievement is the result of continuous collective work, spanning years of research, review, and coordination among the relevant authorities.

Al-Sumait explained that the draft decree-law on combating international crimes addresses the four most serious offenses recognized by the international community - genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression - for ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable and do not evade punishment.

The draft decree-law on the protection of missing persons is inspired by Kuwait’s national experience during the 1990 Iraqi invasion. It emphasizes the rights of missing persons and their families, the need to uncover their fates, and to provide compensation to their families, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 2474/2019 and relevant international agreements.

Al-Sumait stressed that the two draft decrees reflect the State of Kuwait’s

commitment to protecting human dignity and reinforcing justice and the rule of law, in line with the vision of the wise political leadership.

GCC officials

keep pace with rapid global transformations and serve the interests of the GCC countries and their citizens.

She stated that the meeting is held at a critical time, marked by an increasing need to unify positions and coordinate in various commercial and economic fields, and to highlight the common Gulf interest in regional and international forums to strengthen the Gulf presence in the global economic scene.

She commended the positive developments witnessed in land connectivity projects between the GCC countries, particularly the railway project between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, which is a strategic step towards intensifying Gulf logistical and trade integration, thereby, shortening distances, reducing costs, and increasing the efficiency of intra-GCC trade.

Meanwhile, acting Director General of the Public Authority for Industry (PAI) Shemlan Al-Juhaidli affirmed that the industrial sector has become a major driver of economic diversification and a pivotal element in building strong economies that are capable of competing regionally and internationally.

In his opening remarks at the 47th pre-

paratory meeting of the Undersecretaries of the Ministries of Industry in GCC countries -- in preparation for the 55th session of the Industrial Cooperation Committee, he explained “the current phase requires us to continue working as a team, unifying efforts to overcome global challenges, and seizing the promising opportunities offered by the industrial revolution and modern technologies. Our meeting is an extension of a distinguished journey of joint Gulf action in the industrial sector, a journey that has witnessed continuous growth and tangible development, reflecting the wise vision of our wise leaders who prioritized industry on the path of sustainable economic development.”

He revealed the agenda of this meeting includes practical steps toward achieving the desired industrial integration among the GCC countries, improving the investment environment, and developing Gulf supply chains to support the sustainability and growth of national industries.

He said “we are confident that the recommendations and outcomes of the meeting will have a positive impact on supporting the Gulf industrial cooperation process and affirm the position of industry as a significant element in building a more prosperous future for our citizens.”

He extended his sincere congratulations to the Kingdom of Bahrain on hosting the next session of the Industrial Cooperation Committee, wishing it success

while confirming full support for it. He pointed out this reflects the approach of solidarity and joint Gulf action, and enhancing the industrial integration process among GCC countries.

The meeting covers several topics like enhancing Gulf industrial integration, addressing the localization standard for national products, report on exempted goods, penalties for violations, implementation of circular economy initiatives, establishment of an industrial innovation center, following up the work of the Technical Secretariat Office for Combating Harmful Practices in International Trade, initiatives to withhold exemptions from foreign production requirements, cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), adoption of the Gulf Industry Day, and plan to launch the Gulf Industrial Platform.

15 Kuwaiti

Al-Maqamis said that the number of Kuwaiti flights arriving in Egypt as part of this airlift has reached 15 flights so far, carrying approximately 360 tons of relief food supplies.

He explained that this aid will be distributed to tens of thousands of the most vulnerable families in the Gaza Strip, who are facing dire humanitarian conditions due to the blockade and shortages of basic food supplies.

This new batch of aid is part of the ongoing humanitarian efforts made by Kuwait to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, he pointed out.

He added that KRCS participated in the second Kuwaiti airlift alongside local and international humanitarian partners, as well as charities within Kuwait, to ensure aid reached those in need.

Al-Maqamis affirmed Kuwait’s ongoing commitment to humanitarian efforts, reflecting its values and leading humanitarian role.

Kuwait enforces

The recent campaign led to the issuance of a number of violation citations, in addition to the impoundment of violating vehicles in accordance with Article 207 of the Executive Regulations of the Traffic Law, stipulating that vehicles will be impounded for a period not exceeding two months if they obstruct traffic.

GTD confirmed that these campaigns are carried out in an intensive manner in all governorates, as part of a comprehensive plan aimed at instilling traffic discipline and easing traffic flow in front of hospitals. It called on drivers to abide by the law and use only designated parking spaces to ensure everyone’s safety.

Meanwhile, the ministry affirmed its continuous commitment to implement

the law without leniency, as well as the continuation of its efforts to guarantee the safety of road users and raise traffic awareness among all segments of society.

Previous issues of the newspaper reported about major traffic campaigns targeting violators of the parking ban in hospitals in the six governorates.

Posting for

It was later revealed that the individual who posted the video circulated it on social media with false information that misled viewers, and failed to notify the relevant authorities, in order to achieve personal gain and increase views.

The person responsible for posting the video was arrested, legal action was taken against him, and the case was referred to the competent authorities.

The Ministry of Interior urged everyone to report any negative behavior or incidents directly to the appropriate authorities instead of sharing or circulating them on social media.

It stressed the importance of accuracy and warned against publishing or sharing any clips or information without verifying their authenticity through official sources, adding that such actions constitute a legal violation and that perpetrators will be held accountable.

Mills plans to confront US president again with campaign for Senate

Obama joins fight for House control, urges vote for Calif districts to counter Trump

LOS ANGELES, Oct 15, (AP): Barack Obama is entering the fight for US House control by appearing in a 30-second ad urging California voters to approve a November ballot proposal that could add as many as five Democrat-held House seats in California.

Proposition 50 would dramatically reshape California's congressional districts with the intent of adding Democratic seats in Congress. It's crafted to gain Democratic House control, aimed at offsetting President Donald Trump's moves in Texas and elsewhere to help win more Republican seats in the 2026 midterm election.

"Republicans want to steal enough seats in Congress to rig the next election and wield unchecked power for two more years," Obama says in the ad, looking directly into the camera. "You can stop Republicans in their tracks."

Democratic Gov Gavin Newsom has framed the election as a referendum on all things Trump, who is unpopular in liberal-leaning California outside of his conservative base. Voting on the proposal is underway and concludes Nov 4.

Republicans and other opponents say the proposal amounts to a Democratic power grab that would set aside district lines crafted by an independent commission that was created by voters more than a decade ago.

The duel between California and Texas, the nation's two most populous states, has spread nationally. North Carolina Republican legislative leaders announced plans Monday to vote next week on redrawing the state's House district map, taking up Trump's call to secure more GOP seats nationwide and resist rival moves by Democrats.

Republicans hold a 219-213 majority in the U.S. House, with three vacancies.

If approved in California, it's possible the new political map could slash five Republican-held House seats while bolstering Democratic incumbents in other battleground districts. That could boost the Democratic margin to 48 of California's 52 congressional seats, up from the 43 seats the party now holds.



Democratic Gov Janet Mills delivers her State of the State address on Jan 30, 2024, at the State House in Augusta, Maine. (AP)

Also:
PORTLAND, Maine: The New England governor who told President Donald Trump to his face that she would

see him in court now plans to challenge Maine's Republican US senator at the ballot box.
Democratic Gov. **Janet Mills** cited

her White House confrontation with the Republican president in February as proof that she should serve in the Senate, a bid she formally announced with a campaign launch video Tuesday.

"I'll stand up to Trump, just as I did in February," Mills said in a telephone interview previewing her campaign with The Associated Press on Sunday.

Mills' comment referred to Maine's legal challenge to Trump's executive order barring transgender athletes from school sports. She publicly resisted pressure from the president during an audience with him and other governors in February.

Mills says she's running to help mount a broader resistance to Trump, who she complained has cut food and health care aid for children and low-income Americans in the enormous tax breaks and spending cuts bill enacted in July. She said she's also running to oust five-term Republican Sen. **Susan Collins**, who voted for the measure.

"I think the moment demands a lot more than we're seeing from Susan Collins," Mills said in the interview.

"It demands a fighter and someone who will stand up and fight for the future of democracy and fight for the interests of Maine people, just as I have done for my entire career."

Democrats face an uphill challenge in their effort to retake the majority in the Senate in next year's midterm congressional elections. The party would need to gain a net of four seats, while Trump carried most of the states holding Senate elections next year.

National Democrats see Maine as an important target. It is in the only place on the 2026 Senate election map where Republicans are defending a seat in a state carried last year by Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris.

Mills ticked through a list of former Maine senators "who have a proud tradition of defending democracy against those who threatened it," including Margaret Chase Smith, William Cohen, George Mitchell and Olympia Snowe. Smith, Cohen and Snowe served as Republicans, while Mitchell was a Democrat, though all were known to have crossed party lines.

US President Trump honors Kirk with Presidential Medal of Freedom

WASHINGTON, Oct 15, (AP): US President Donald Trump on Tuesday posthumously awarded America's highest civilian honor to Charlie Kirk, the assassinated activist who inspired a generation of young conservatives and helped push the nation's politics further to the right.

Receiving the award on Kirk's behalf was his widow, Erika. Her voice cracking and often falling to a whisper as she wiped away tears, Erika Kirk talked about her late husband's life, political beliefs and legacy.

"Thank you, Mr President, for honoring my husband, in such a profound and meaningful way. And thank you for making this event a priority," she said. "Your support of our family and the work that Charlie devoted his life to will be something I cherish forever."

The ceremony coincided with what would have been Kirk's 32nd birthday. It came about a month after the Turning Point USA founder was fatally shot while speaking to a crowd at Utah Valley University.

In a sign of Kirk's close ties to the administration, he was the first recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom in Trump's second term. The president also spoke at Kirk's funeral in September, calling him a "great American hero" and "martyr" for freedom, while Vice President JD Vance accompanied his body home to Arizona on Air Force Two along with Erika Kirk.

"We're here to honor and remember a fearless warrior for liberty, beloved leader who galvanized the next generation like nobody I've ever seen before, and an American patriot of the deepest conviction, the finest quality and the highest caliber," Trump said during the medal ceremony.



Erika Kirk and US President Donald Trump listen as a military aide reads the citation before Trump posthumously awards the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Charlie Kirk in the Rose Garden of the White House on Oct 14, in Washington. (AP)

LA county officials approve emergency declaration over immigration raids

LOS ANGELES, Oct 15, (AP): Los Angeles County officials voted Tuesday to declare a state of emergency that gives them power to provide assistance for residents they say have suffered financially from ongoing federal immigration raids.

The move allows the LA County Board of Supervisors to provide rent relief for tenants who have fallen behind as a result of the crackdown on immigrants.

The immigration raids that ramped up over the summer have spread fear in immigrant communities, prompting many to limit their outings. Federal agents have rounded up immigrants without legal status to be in the US from Home Depots, car washes, bus stops, and farms. Some U.S. citizens have also been detained.

The local state of emergency can also funnel state money for legal aid and other services.

Funds for rent will be available to people who apply via an online portal that would be launched within two months, Supervisor Lindsey Horvath's office said. The motion could also be a first step toward an eviction moratorium, but that would require a separate action by the supervisors.

Landlords worried it could be another financial hit after an extended ban on evictions and rental increases during the COVID-19 pandemic. The declaration was passed by a 4-1 vote, with Supervisor Kathryn Barger opposing.

Horvath and Supervisor Janice Hahn said the raids have spread fear and destabilized households and businesses. In late August, there were more than 5,000 arrests in Los Angeles as part of the crackdown. About a third of the county's 10 million residents are foreign-born. Several cities in the region canceled their Fourth of July celebrations and summer movie nights as families stayed home due to safety concerns.



Federal law enforcement officers stand guard in the open gate of the fence built on Beach Street outside the Broadview ICE processing facility in suburban Broadview on Oct 14. (AP)



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, (center), reviews the honor guard with Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic during a welcome ceremony at the Serbia Palace in Belgrade, Serbia on Oct 15. (AP)

EU's Von der Leyen tells Serbia to act on reforms and implement Russia sanctions

BELGRADE, Serbia, Oct 15, (AP): The European Union's top official on Wednesday told Serbia's populist leader to "get concrete" about its proclaimed goal of joining the 27-nation bloc, including implementing sanctions against traditionally ally Russia.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen also pressed President Aleksandar Vucic over democratic reforms as he faces accusations of a crackdown on protests against his increasingly authoritarian rule in the Balkan country.

"We live in a fractured world with a widening gap between democracies and autocracies," von der Leyen said at a joint press conference with Vucic. "And you know very well where the European Union stands."

Serbia remains the only country in Europe that has not imposed sanctions on Moscow over its war in Ukraine. Though he formally says becoming an EU member is Serbia's strategic goal, Vucic has

strengthened relations with Russia and China and stalled on democratic reforms, a precondition for joining the bloc.

Monthslong rallies by university students and other anti-government protesters, and the government's crackdown, have posed the biggest challenge to Vucic. The protests erupted in response to a train station canopy collapse on Nov. 1 last year that killed 16 people in the northern city of Novi Sad. Many in Serbia believe the disaster was the result of graft-fueled negligence in infrastructure deals with Chinese companies.

Vucic has refused to schedule early parliamentary elections as demanded by protesters. Dozens of people have been detained or have lost jobs for protesting while Serbian riot police have been accused of using excessive force against the demonstrators.

"We stand for freedom instead of oppression, including the right to peaceful assembly," von der Leyen said. "We

stand for partnership instead of submission. We stand for diplomacy instead of aggression."

"Now is the moment for Serbia to get concrete about joining our union," she added, listing reforms in the rule of law, electoral framework and media freedom as key first steps.

"We need to see greater alignment on our foreign policy, including sanctions against Russia," von der Leyen said. "We want to count on Serbia as a reliable partner."

Belgrade has historically close ties to Moscow and depends almost entirely on Russia for energy. The main Serbian oil monopoly NIS is under US sanctions because of its majority Russian ownership.

Vucic predicted a "tough winter" and urged EU support in combating a looming energy crisis. But he defended his government's response to protests, claiming police used "minimum force" despite widespread reports of violence.

NATO's two newest members offer to buy more US arms for Ukraine

BRUSSELS, Oct 15, (AP): NATO's two newest members, Finland and Sweden, said Wednesday that they would buy more weapons from the United States to give to Ukraine, a day after data showed that foreign military aid to the war-torn country had declined sharply in recent months.

Over the summer, NATO started to coordinate regular deliveries of large weapons packages to Ukraine to help fend off Russia's war. The aim was to send at least one load a month of targeted and predictable military support, each worth around \$500 million.

Spare weapons stocks in European arsenals have all but dried up, and NATO diplomats have said that the United States has around \$10-\$12 billion worth of arms, air defense systems and ammunition that Ukraine could use.

Under the financial arrangement - known as the Prioritized Ukraine Requirements List, or PURL - European allies and Canada are buying American weapons to help Kyiv keep Russian forces at bay. About \$2 billion worth has already been allocated.

Finland's defense minister, Antti Häkkinen, said that his country has "decided to join the PURL, because we see that it's crucial that Ukraine gets the critical US weapons." Finland will also provide a separate package of its own military equipment.

United States Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, (center right), speaks with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, (center left), and Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General Alexus G. Grynkeiwich, (center), during a meeting of the North Atlantic Council in defense ministers format at NATO headquarters in Brussels on Oct 15. (AP)

Swedish Defense Minister Pål Jonson said that "Sweden stands ready to do more." He welcomed discussions among other Nordic countries and the Baltic nations - Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - on sending an extra load too.

"This is critical now because we've been seeing the wrong trajectory when it comes to support to Ukraine, that it's



United States Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, (center right), speaks with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, (center left), and Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General Alexus G. Grynkeiwich, (center), during a meeting of the North Atlantic Council in defense ministers format at NATO headquarters in Brussels on Oct 15. (AP)

been going down and we want to see more stepping up," Jonson told reporters at NATO headquarters, where defense ministers were meeting.

Estonian Defense Minister Hanno Pevkur also expressed concern about a drop in Western backing, noting that "the reality is that the share of the US contributions to Ukraine has decreased significantly this year."

Dutch politician Wilders returns to campaign trail

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, Oct 15, (AP): Dutch far-right lawmaker Geert Wilders said Wednesday that he's returning to the campaign trail, with two weeks to go before a general election after he briefly suspended his election activities following reports that he was a possible target of a suspected plot in Belgium to kill politicians using an explosives-laden drone.

Wilders' populist Party for Freedom, known by its Dutch acronym PVV, won the last election in late 2023 and was the biggest bloc in a four-party ruling coalition until earlier this year, when Wilders pulled his ministers out of the government in a dispute over a crackdown on migration.

His manifesto for the upcoming election calls for measures including for a total halt to asylum-seekers entering the Netherlands, military patrols at borders to enforce the ban and the closure of recently opened asylum-seeker centers.

His party leads polls heading into the Oct. 29 election for all 150 seats in the Second Chamber, the lower house of the Dutch parliament. The Netherlands' system of proportional representation combined with a splintered political landscape all but guarantees a coalition government.

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

"Elections are coming, it is campaign time and I feel a great responsibility toward the Netherlands and PVV voters," Wilders said in a written statement on X. "So I am getting back to work."

He said he would attend a string of television and radio debates leading up to the vote. Wilders noted that he has



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

lived under round-the-clock protection for 21 years because of "countless death threats of all shapes and sizes."

It remains to be seen if Wilders can cobble together a right-wing coalition if he wins the most seats. The leader of the center-right Party for Freedom and Democracy has said that she won't join a coalition with the PVV.

America

Storm decimates 2 Alaskan villages: More rain and wind were forecast Wednesday along the Alaskan coast where two tiny villages were decimated by the remnants of Typhoon Halong and officials were scrambling to find shelter for more than 1,500 people driven from their homes.

The weekend storm brought high winds and surf that battered the low-lying Alaska Native communities along the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta in the southwestern part of the state, nearly 500 miles (800 km) from Anchorage. At least one person was killed and two were missing. The Coast Guard plucked two dozen people from their homes after the structures floated out to sea.

Hundreds were staying in school shelters, including one with no working toilets, officials said. The weather system

followed a storm that struck parts of western Alaska days earlier. (AP)

St Louis sheriff jailed: The sheriff in Missouri's most populous county was jailed Tuesday and faced mounting calls to resign just 10 months into the job over accusations that he ordered deputies to handcuff the jail chief and then meddled with an investigation.

Federal Judge John Bodenhausen ordered the bond revoked for 28-year-old Alfred Montgomery, the sheriff of St. Louis, after the prosecution argued in court filings that there was a serious risk he would "attempt to threaten, injure or intimidate" witnesses or jurors.

St. Louis Mayor Cara Spencer issued a statement Tuesday calling for Montgomery to resign and describing the situation as "absurd." Days earlier, the Missouri attorney general's office tried and failed yet again to oust Montgomery. (AP)

INTERNATIONAL

Asia

Mt Lewotobi Laki-Laki unleashes burst of hot ash: Mount Lewotobi Laki-Laki, one of Indonesia's most active volcanoes, erupted for a second straight day Wednesday, spewing towering columns of hot ash that later blanketed villages. No casualties were immediately reported.

Indonesia's Geology Agency said an eruption in the early morning sent lava and clouds of ash up to 10 kilometers (6 miles) high. Another burst less than nine hours later sent a towering mushroom-shaped ash cloud as high as 8 kilometers (nearly 5 miles) into the air.

The rumbling volcano on remote Flores island erupted three times Tuesday. Avalanches of searing gas clouds mixed with rocks and lava fell down the slopes in the morning and midday eruptions. The third eruption of the day lit up the night sky with glowing lava and bolts of lightning.

Several villages have been blanketed in ash and debris, Hadi Wijaya, head of the Center for Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation, said in a statement. He warned residents to be vigilant about heavy rainfall that could trigger lava flows in rivers originating from the volcano.(AP)

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10 killed after oil tanker catches fire in Indonesia: Ten people were killed and 21 others injured after a fire broke out aboard an oil tanker undergoing repairs at a shipyard on Batam Island in Indonesia's Riau Islands province early Wednesday.

The victims were technicians working on the tanker Federal II at PT ASL Shipyard Indonesia in the Batuaji area.

The blaze started at around 4 a.m. local time, said Raden Bimo Dwi Lambang, police chief of Batuaji, adding that a similar incident had occurred on the same vessel in June, killing four workers.

Authorities have launched an investigation into the cause of the fire. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

Vietnam releases draft Party Congress documents: The 13th Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) Central Committee on Wednesday released draft documents to be submitted to the 14th National Party Congress, inviting public feedback.



In this photo released by Geological Agency (Badan Geologi) of the Indonesia's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Mount Lewotobi Laki-Laki spews volcanic material during an eruption in East Flores, Indonesia on Oct 15. (AP)

Speaking at an international press conference on the announcement, Lai Xuan Mon, standing vice chairman of the CPV Central Committee's Commission for Information, Education and Mass Mobilization, said the draft documents comprise three reports.

They include a draft political report by the 13th CPV Central Committee to the 14th National Party Congress, a draft summary report on theoretical and practical issues drawn from 40 years of Vietnam's socialist-oriented renewal process, and a draft summary report on 15 years of implementing the Party Charter (2011-2025), along with proposals for its amendment and supplementation.

The drafts are open for feedback from officials, Party members, people from

all walks of life and overseas Vietnamese from Oct. 15 to Nov. 15 through conferences, seminars, forums, the VNeID electronic identification application and media channels.

Professor Ta Ngoc Tan, vice chairman of the CPV Central Theoretical Council, said a notable new point in this set of documents is the emphasis on developing the private sector as a key driving force of the national economy, alongside the leading role of the state-owned economy. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

3 dead in northeast Australia house fire: Three people have been found dead following a house fire in the northeast Australian state of Queensland on Wednesday morning.

Fire and rescue crews were deployed to the fire at a two-storey home in the city of Gladstone, over 400 kilometers north of Brisbane, around 6 am local time on Wednesday.

The residence was fully engulfed in flames when crews arrived and partially collapsed before the fire was brought under control.

The bodies of three people, who were initially reported missing, were found during a subsequent search.

Authorities were unsure what had caused the fire.

Police established a crime scene at the property and commenced an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the fire. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

8 killed, 4 injured in China driving accident: A suspected drunk driving incident occurred on Tuesday night in the city of Liaocheng in east China's Shandong Province, resulting in the deaths of eight individuals and injuries to four others, according to authorities of Chiping District of Liaocheng.

Initial investigations revealed that the driver, surnamed Du, 37, was driving a passenger car while allegedly under the influence of alcohol, when he collided with several electric bicycles, at around 10:46 p.m. on Tuesday. As a consequence, one person was killed at the scene of the incident, while seven others died despite receiving hospital treatment. Four other individuals are in stable conditions in hospital.

Du is currently in police custody. Preliminary investigations indicate that the accident was caused by drunk driving, with Du's blood alcohol concentration level at 195.3 mg/100 ml. The case will be further investigated. (Xinhua)

Milei up for re-election in 2027

US President Trump threatens to pull support for Argentina if politics move leftward

WASHINGTON, Oct 15, (AP): US President Donald Trump on Tuesday threatened to pull assistance for Argentina - led by a political kindred spirit whose philosophy is similar to that of the Republican administration - if the nation's internal politics don't align with his interests in upcoming elections.

The comments came during a meeting with Argentine President Javier Milei, whose country is set to hold midterm elections for its legislative body later this month. US presidents typically do not weigh in on the candidacies in other countries' democratic elections.

Referring to an opponent who was "extremely far-left" and encompassed a "philosophy that got Argentina into this problem in the first place," Trump warned that the United States wouldn't "waste our time" with largesse toward Buenos Aires if Milei does not prevail. In addition to the midterms that will be a referendum on his policies, Milei himself is up for reelection in 2027.

"We're not going to let somebody get into office and squander the taxpayer money from this country. I'm

not gonna let it happen," Trump said from the Cabinet Room as he prepared to eat lunch with Milei. "If he loses, we are not going to be generous with Argentina."

Even so, Trump insisted that the \$20 billion assistance to Argentina, which administration officials strenuously deny is a bailout, was about helping "our neighbors" rather than any ties to the upcoming midterms.

"It's just helping a great philosophy take over a great country," the US president said. "Argentina is one of the most beautiful countries that I've ever seen, and we want to see it succeed. It's very simple."

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent added that the administration believed Milei's coalition in the upcoming midterms would "do quite well and continue his reform agenda."

As he opened his lunch with Milei, Trump noted that the Argentine president, who is an economist by trade, is "MAGA all the way." That traditionally refers to his campaign slogan, "Make America Great Again," but this time, it also meant "Make Argentina Great Again."



US President Donald Trump greets Argentina's President Javier Milei, as he arrives at the White House on Oct 14, in Washington. (AP)

Trump's meeting with Milei was already making waves back in Argentina, with Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, leader of the left-leaning Peronist

opposition and a two-term former president, writing on social media: "Trump to Milei: 'Our agreements are subject to whoever wins election'. Ar-

gentines ... you know what to do!"

The former president is serving a six-year sentence under house arrest since June for corruption, but she remains the most influential leader of Peronism, an ideologically flexible, labor rights-focused populist movement, which emerged in the 1940s and dominated politics for decades.

Ahead of his White House meeting and during it Milei lavished praise on Trump, deploying a tactic that has helped transform Milei's cash-strapped country into one of the Trump administration's closest allies.

Milei, speaking in Spanish, said he is "very honored, especially in this moment when we are giving thanks for Trump's great leadership."

"We can follow a peaceful route and make Argentina a strong example for freedom and prosperity," Milei said.

That bromance has already paid off for Argentina - most recently, to the tune of a \$20 billion bailout.

The Trump administration made a highly unusual decision to intervene in Argentina's currency market after Milei's party suffered a landslide loss in a local election last month.

Along with setbacks in the opposition-dominated Congress, the party's crushing defeat created a crisis of confidence as voters in Buenos Aires Province registered their frustration with rising unemployment, contracting economic activity and brewing corruption scandals.

Alarmed that this could herald the end of popular support for Milei's free-market program, investors dumped Argentine bonds and sold off the peso.

Argentina's Treasury began hemorrhaging precious dollar reserves at a feverish pace, trying shore up the currency and keep its exchange rate within the trading band set as part of the country's recent \$20 billion deal with the International Monetary Fund.

But as the peso continued to slide, Milei grew desperate.

He met with Trump on Sept 23 while in New York City for the United Nations General Assembly. A flurry of back-slapping, hand-shaking and mutual flattery between the two quickly gave way to Bessent publicly promising Argentina a lifeline of \$20 billion. Markets cheered, and investors breathed a sigh of relief.



Police, firemen and security officials inspect the damage at the site of a car explosion on a shopping street in Guayaquil, Ecuador on Oct 14. (AP)

Pickup truck explodes in Ecuador

A pickup truck exploded on a busy shopping street in the port city of Guayaquil in Ecuador on Tuesday evening killing one person and injuring two others in what the governor called an intentional attack.

Maj. Jorge Montanero of the Guayaquil fire department told local television station Ecuavisa that the person killed was a cab driver who was nearby. He added that police were inspecting all vehicles in the surrounding area as well.

"We're evacuating all of the buildings as a precaution," Montanero said. Asked if it could have been a car bomb, he said they would have to wait for police to

investigate. "We don't know, but a normal car doesn't blow up like that," he said.

Guayaquil's police chief Francisco Zumárraga said police had found a "new threat" and that there would be a controlled detonation. He said they would find those responsible.

The Attorney General's Office said that it had opened an investigation and was interviewing witnesses and reviewing surveillance camera recordings.

There were a series of car bombing in Ecuador in 2023, as violence surged in the weeks after a presidential candidate was assassinated. (AP)

Former Kenyan prime minister Raila Odinga dies at age of 80

NAIROBI, Kenya, Oct 15, (AP): **Raila Odinga**, a former prime minister of Kenya and perennial presidential candidate whose populist campaigns rattled authorities and gave him an outsized influence on political life in his East African country, died Wednesday of a heart attack while traveling in India. He was 80.



Odinga

His death was confirmed by the Devamatha Hospital in India's Kerala State, where he was taken after he collapsed during a morning walk. A statement from the hospital said Odinga suffered a cardiac arrest and didn't respond to resuscitation efforts.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on the social platform X that he was saddened by the death of Odinga, describing him as "a towering statesman." Other tributes to Odinga paid tribute to his commitment to democracy in Kenya. There were somber scenes at his home in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, where mourners including President William Ruto gathered.

Odinga had recently signed a political pact with Ruto that saw

his opposition party involved in government policymaking and its members appointed to the cabinet.

But his ambition was to become Kenya's president, and he ran five times over three decades - sometimes with enough support that many believed he might win. The closest he came to taking the presidency was in 2007, when he narrowly lost to incumbent Mwai Kibaki in a disputed election marred by ethnic violence.

Although he never succeeded, for many he was a revered figure and statesman whose activism helped steer Kenya away from single-party rule and into vibrant multiparty democracy.

Odinga, a member of the Luo ethnic group in Kenya's western Nyanza province, reached the peak of his political career in the 2007 presidential race, winning the support of kingpin leaders from other tribes who merged around him and drawing massive crowds during campaign events across Kenya.

Although Kibaki, of the Kikuyu ethnic group, had posted good economic figures in his first term, his government had been weakened by corruption scandals. The official results - Odinga's 44% against Kibaki's 46% - was the closest in Kenyan history.



This photograph shared by Indian State Rajasthan Chief Minister's office shows Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma inspecting a charred passenger bus after a suspected short circuit sparked a deadly bus fire near Jaipur, India on Oct 14. (AP)

20 dead as bus catches fire in India

A suspected short circuit sparked a fire on a passenger bus in northern India on Tuesday, rapidly engulfing the vehicle in flames and burning at least 20 people to death, authorities said.

The bus with 35 to 50 passengers aboard was minutes from starting its journey between the towns of Jaisalmer and Jodhpur in Rajasthan state when the fire broke out, local ruling party lawmaker Mahant Pratap Puri told The Associated Press.

"Passengers didn't get time to deboard the bus as the fire spread

quickly," Puri said.

The bodies of 19 passengers were recovered from the bus, while one person succumbed to their burns on the way to a hospital, Puri said. At least 15 passengers were critically injured and admitted to a hospital for treatment.

Smoke began to emerge from the vehicle's rear due to a suspected short circuit barely five minutes after it departed Jaisalmer, Puri said. The driver managed to stop the bus along the roadside near a military station, but within moments, the flames engulfed the vehicle. (AP)

Pakistan agrees to 48-hour ceasefire with Afghanistan following days of violence

ISLAMABAD, Oct 15, (AP): Pakistan said Wednesday it agreed to a 48-hour ceasefire with Afghanistan following days of violence that have killed dozens of people on both sides of the border.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said the ceasefire was at Afghanistan's request. There was no immediate confirmation from the Taliban government.

Pakistan accuses Afghanistan of harboring armed groups, a charge rejected by the Taliban rulers. Pakistan is grappling with militant attacks that have increased since 2021, when the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan.

The escalation of tensions is likely to destabilize a region where groups, including the Islamic State and al-Qaeda, are trying to establish a foothold and resurface.

Earlier Wednesday, before the ceasefire announcement, Pakistan said its forces killed dozens of Afghan security forces and militants in overnight fighting. The clashes had stopped briefly Sunday following appeals from Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Pakistan forces said they had repelled "unprovoked" assaults, but denied targeting civilians after the Taliban government said more than a



People walk through rubble as a hydraulic shovel demolish a structure during an operation against illegal settlement of Afghan refugees conducted by local government, on the outskirts of Karachi, Pakistan on Oct 15. (AP)

dozen were killed and over 100 others wounded when Pakistan targeted sites in a border area of Afghanistan's southern Kandahar province.

Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban government's chief spokesman, said

Pakistan used light and heavy weapons in assaults on Spin Boldak in Kandahar. Afghan forces returned fire and killed several Pakistani soldiers, seized military posts and captured weapons including tanks, Mujahid added.

Madagascar's military coup leader says 'taking position of president'

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar, Oct 15, (AP): Madagascar's military coup leader said Wednesday that he is "taking the position of president" in an interview with The Associated Press at his barracks.

Col. Michael Randrianirina, who led a rebellion by soldiers that ousted President Andry Rajoelina, said he expects to be sworn in as the Indian Ocean country's new leader in the next few days.

Randrianirina announced Tuesday that the armed forces were taking power in Madagascar, capping weeks of protests against Rajoelina and his government by mainly youth groups.

He said he is taking the role as head of state after the country's High Constitutional Court invited him to do so in the absence of Rajoelina, who fled Madagascar following the uprising.

"There must be an oath-taking" to make his position official, Randrianirina said. The protests reached a turning point on Saturday when Randrianirina and soldiers from his elite CAPSAT military unit rebelled against Rajoelina and joined demonstrations calling for the president to step down, forcing Rajoelina to flee.



CAPSAT military unit commander Col. Michael Randrianirina during an interview with The Associated Press in Antananarivo, Madagascar on Oct 15. (AP)

"We had to take responsibility yesterday because there is nothing left in the country, no president, no president in the senate, no government," Randrianirina said. Rajoelina, who has been president since 2018, has rejected the

military taking power as an illegal coup. Randrianirina said the new military leadership would quickly appoint a new prime minister who would form a government, but didn't give an exact time frame for that to happen.

Kuwait oil drops to \$63.68 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil dropped USD 1.05 during Tuesday’s trading to reach USD 63.68 per barrel compared with USD 64.73 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Wednesday. Brent futures also lost 93 cents to USD 62.39 pb and West Texas Intermediate declined 79 cents to USD 58.70 pb.

Putin opens Russian Energy Week

OPEC chief hails strong partnership with Russia

MOSCOW, Oct 15, (KUNA): Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Haitham Al-Ghais praised on Wednesday its distinguished relations with Russia, affirming it as a key partner in ensuring stability and sustainability for global oil markets.

Talking to KUNA on the sidelines of the Russian Energy Week 2025 forum, Al-Ghais said that OPEC and Russia’s partnership represents a successful model of international cooperation based on shared interests and vision for market stability, ensuring balance of supply and demand.

He added that the OPEC+ alliance has proven its effectiveness over the years in facing economic

challenges, noting the continuous coordination among the participating countries in enhancing confidence in the oil industry.

Russian President Vladimir Putin pointed out yesterday to the participants of the Energy Week Forum that “Russia hosts representatives from political, economic, and academic circles from around the world to discuss pressing global issues facing the oil sector.”

The 8th International Forum is held in Moscow, Russia, from October 15 to 17, with participation including representatives from several countries, chiefs of major companies and organizations working in the field of energy, as well as specialized scientists and experts.

All Share Index slips 15.48 points

Boursa Kuwait closes lower amid broad market pressure

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Wednesday’s session in negative territory, with the All Share Index slipping 15.48 points, or 0.17 percent, to close at 8,843.34 points.

Trading activity was robust, as 708.9 million shares changed hands through 30,492 transactions, generating a total turnover of KD 152.7 million (USD 465.7 million).

The Main Market Index declined 26 points, or 0.31 percent, to 8,452.29 points, with 414.8 million shares traded across 18,704

transactions worth KD 63.8 million (USD 194.5 million).

The Premier Market Index also retreated, shedding 13.62 points, or 0.15 percent, to close at 9,377.84 points. It saw 294.11 million shares traded over 11,788 transactions, valued at KD 88.8 million (USD 266.4 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index slipped 11.10 points, or 0.13 percent, settling at 8,842.67 points. A total of 276.19 million shares were traded through 11,221 cash transactions, with a value of KD 45.3 million (USD 138.16 million).



Anwar Fayad receiving the recognition

Committing to integrity & growth

Kamco Invest recognized among region’s top in-house legal teams

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest AUMs in the region, has been recognized for having one of Kuwait’s top in-house legal teams in The Legal 500’s inaugural GC Powerlist: Kuwait 2025. This recognition highlights Kamco Invest’s excellence in legal and compliance leadership and its vital role in supporting the firm’s business growth and governance framework across regional and international markets.

The GC Powerlist: Kuwait 2025 marks a significant milestone for Kuwait’s legal community. For the first time, The Legal 500 has released a standalone edition dedicated to the country, celebrating general counsel and in-house legal teams who are redefining the role of legal leadership. According to The Legal 500, the honorees exemplify the agility, foresight, and influence that modern legal professionals bring to shaping corporate strategy, driving innovation, and navigating complex regulatory environments.

Anwar Mahmoud Fayad, Executive Director of Legal Affairs & Compliance, received the recognition for the outstanding contribution of his team to enabling the company’s strategic objectives through robust governance, sound compliance, and pragmatic legal solutions.

Fayad, who has over 25 years of regional and international experience in investment banking, real estate, and corporate law, commented: “We are honored to be featured among Kuwait’s leading legal teams in The Legal

500’s GC Powerlist. This recognition reflects Kamco Invest’s deep-rooted commitment to integrity, governance, and innovation. Our legal function is not only a safeguard but also a strategic enabler, working closely with our business lines to ensure that growth is built on a strong regulatory and ethical foundation.”

Fayad added: “The evolving role of in-house counsel in Kuwait, as reflected in this milestone publication, demonstrates how legal leadership has become integral to business success. At Kamco Invest, we take pride in contributing to this transformation by aligning our legal and compliance efforts with the firm’s long-term vision and the region’s dynamic investment landscape.”

Under Fayad’s leadership, Kamco Invest’s Legal Affairs & Compliance team has played a pivotal role in major mergers and acquisitions, the structuring of complex investment vehicles, and large-scale real estate transactions across the UK, US, and Europe. The department has also overseen significant regional debt issuances for financial institutions, ensuring full compliance with evolving regulations and international standards.

This recognition by The Legal 500 reinforces Kamco Invest’s position as a trusted financial institution that upholds the highest standards of transparency, accountability, and ethical governance, key pillars that continue to strengthen investor confidence and corporate resilience across the region.

Business

Industry leaders and global partners join Kuwait forum

Al Mulla Industries shows innovative manufacturing and transport solutions at Customer Connect 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Al Mulla Industries (AMI), a subsidiary of Al Mulla Group, hosted its third Customer Connect – 2025 under the theme “Where Innovation Meets Partnerships” at the Hashemi Ballroom, Radisson Blu Hotel.

The event brought together clients, strategic partners, and industry leaders from Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), leading private sector enterprises, and representatives from diverse industries, alongside global principals Carrier Transicold, D Hollandia, and Cold Car.

The gathering showcased technical presentations and product displays featuring the latest innovations in static equipment, heavy steel fabrication, transport superstructures, and refrigerated transport solutions.

Director of Trading & Manufacturing Group and Rental & Leasing Group, Mr. Elie Zoghbi, joined by General Manager Mr. Satish Gupta and the AMI management team, welcomed the invitees and reaffirmed AMI’s dedication to excellence, innovation, and partnerships which drive progress.

Al Mulla Industries offers a wide portfolio of top-quality products to private industry segments and government institutions, including in Oil & Gas, Chemical, Construction, Logistics, Cleaning, Food & Beverage, Healthcare, and Defense sectors.

Leveraging advanced technology, AMI enhances quality, reduces delivery times, and consistently meets high standards, serving as the preferred vendor for K-Com-



Photos during the event.

panies, ministries, and many industries in Kuwait and across the GCC and MENA.

In fact, the company is the only steel manufacturer in Kuwait that has dedicated R&D facilities, provides professional support and parts availability enabling maximum uptime and

value to sustain customers’ operational growth.

AMI’s compliance with local regulations and standards assures its clientele of conformity and dependability.

With over 40 years of leadership, AMI delivers standard and customized solutions supported

by dedicated R&D facilities, a Stellantis Level 3 certified workshop, and 24/7 after-sales support. Certified under ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001, the company continues to provide reliable, compliant, and efficient solutions for evolving market needs regionally.

The first phase of Zain Great Idea regional edition kicks-off with intensive bootcamps

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The first phase of the Zain Great Idea tech startup accelerator regional edition kicked off with intensive training bootcamps that brought together leading global, regional, and local experts across Zain markets.

The program’s new cohort spent weeks learning practical ways to accelerate their tech startups and prepare for regional and international growth.

In Kuwait, before the bootcamp, Zain hosted an orientation session at its Shuwaikh HQ, joined by the company’s executive management team, where participants met ZGI partners and received an overview of the bootcamp’s roadmap and objectives.

The new regional format is designed to open doors to mentorship, funding, and broader exposure for founders in Kuwait and across the region.

Entrepreneurs engaged directly with program partners, including executive management from ZainTECH and Zain Ventures, in addition to Abdulaziz Al-Dhubaib, Founder of Nizek Tech, Saud Al-Subaie, Founder of Cuadro Business Consulting, Omar Al-Othman, Co-founder of Prismic Media, and Fahad Al-Ibrahim, CEO of Prismic Media.

- Across Zain markets, orientation sessions connected entrepreneurs with program partners and leading global and local experts
- One-to-one and speed mentoring sessions covered wide range of skillsets

tures, the Group’s investment arm for emerging technologies, and ZainTECH, its regional digital and ICT solutions arm.

For the first time in the program’s 15-plus year history, applications were opened to candidates from Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, creating new opportunities for mentorship, funding, and international exposure.

Zain Ventures aims to identify and invest in promising startups from the cohort. ZainTECH will work closely with ZGI to support selected startups joining the Silicon Valley phase, offering expertise in cloud computing, artificial intelligence, analytics, robotics, and other advanced



One of the bootcamp sessions.

technologies that drive growth.

The expansion marks a major milestone for ZGI, as previous editions focused on the Kuwaiti market. The new regional launch underscores Zain’s long-term commitment to advancing technological innovation and entrepreneurship across the region.



A group pic of the mentors from the speed mentoring sessions.



A group pic of the ZGI Kuwait cohort.

As part of the Private Banker International's Global Wealth Awards

NBK Wealth receives the award of Outstanding Private Bank for high-net-worth clients

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: As part of the Private Banker International Magazine's 34th annual Global Wealth Awards, NBK Wealth Group received the award of Outstanding Private Bank for High-Net-Worth clients for the year 2025. The ceremony was held in Singapore to honor leading private banking and wealth management firms that contribute to shaping the future of the sector.

This award confirms NBK Wealth Group's leadership and strong commitment to providing private banking solutions and exceptional wealth management services that cater to the diverse and growing needs of clients, in addition to its ability to help achieve sustainable growth and provide added value for clients with focus on building long-term relationships that rely on trust and transparency.

As one of the most reliable awards in the field of global wealth management, The PBI Global Wealth Awards celebrate the resilience and innovation of private banks and wealth management firms worldwide, acknowledging their excellence in the industry through the services, products, and strategies they provide across different locations, in addition to their support for digital transformation in the sector.

The PBI Awards span across multiple categories, including Outstanding Private Bank (The Middle East, Europe, Asia), Most Effective Investment Offering, Best Use of Technology, Best ESG Strategy, and Best Customer Experience.

This prestigious award has been granted to NBK Wealth Group based on several criteria, most importantly the strategic excellence that measures an institution's ability to develop and execute effective strategies in the face of economic challenges, as well as innovative financial solutions and products for High-Net-Worth Clients, in addition to digital transformation and use of technology to enhance customer experience and simplify operations.

Moreover, the criteria also included sustainable and so-

cially responsible practices that focus on commitment to responsible investment as per ESG standards, outstanding customer experience, geographical dispersion, and institutional influence which includes the volume of operations, regional and international presence, and finally strategic partnerships.

Not only does this award verify NBK Wealth's excellence in providing innovative solutions and ability to seek to help clients earn rewarding profits—further winning their trust and confirming its leadership—but it also reflects the Group's strong brand. NBK Wealth Group is the biggest wealth management firms locally and one of the largest regionally, as it draws its strength from the regionally and internationally leading brand of NBK Group, which celebrates a long record of achievements and global awards in recognition of its efforts in the banking sector.

The Group strongly focused on catering to the needs of High-Net-Worth Clients, along with seeking to achieve growth in their managed assets and providing them with customized solutions. It has also entered into several effective strategic partnerships aimed at providing diverse investment opportunities selected for the clients, such as the partnership with JP Morgan Asset Management, which enhances the bank's ability to provide comprehensive investment solutions.

Furthermore, NBK Wealth Group seeks to go beyond enhancing its clients' wealth and strives to become the number one trusted choice in the field, in addition to diligently helping them seek to build a continued and multi-generational legacy.

NBK Wealth is a foundational part of NBK Group and one of the leading wealth management groups in the Mid-



NBK Wealth's award for Outstanding Private Bank for high-net-worth clients for the year 2025.

- The award reflects the Group's leadership and ability to cater to the growing needs of clients.
- The win of NBK Wealth confirms the strength of its prestigious brand.
- NBK Wealth seeks to enhance its clients' wealth base and build a multi-generational legacy.
- The Group works diligently to become the number one trusted choice for clients.

private banking services, including comprehensive financial planning, investment portfolio management, specialized consultation services in family finances, real estate, credit and monetary management, credit services, and wills. The Group distinguishes itself by focusing on understanding the unique financial goals of every client, as well as designing customized strategies that seeks to achieve the highest profits. Moreover, the Group is part and parcel of NBK Group, which is deemed as one of the largest institutions in the Middle East, which gives it a strong foundation and wide experience in the local, regional, and global markets. Therefore, NBK Wealth's award further consolidates the Group's trustfulness and commitment to innovation in every business aspect.

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

Courtesy of Visa

NBK launches exclusive FIFA World Cup 2026™ campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Reinforcing its commitment to delivering unique experiences that resonate with the diverse aspirations and lifestyles of its customers, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has unveiled an exclusive campaign in partnership with Visa, granting customers to win a once-in-a-lifetime experience at the FIFA World Cup 2026™, to be hosted across Mexico, Canada, and the United States.

In conjunction with the campaign, the Bank introduced the NBK 247Cashback FIFA World Cup 2026™ Limited Edition Visa Prepaid Card, a bespoke offering tailored for football enthusiasts and launched in celebration of the FIFA World Cup 2026™. The card is now available on NBK Mobile Banking application, where customers can apply seamlessly, add it instantly to their digital wallet, and start using it right away.

The campaign will grant 12 winners, each accompanied by a guest of their choice, the opportunity to experience the excitement of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ through twelve exclusive packages. These include a package to attend the opening ceremony in Mexico, another to witness the final match in New York, as well as additional packages covering the semi-finals, quarter-finals, and Round of 32 matches.

The prizes will include business class flights, luxury hotel accommodation in Mexico, Canada and United States, and exclusive welcome gifts from Visa.

To qualify, customers are required to register using the registration page and spend a minimum of KD 250 per month using their eligible NBK Visa Credit or Prepaid Cards during the campaign period, whether in Kuwait, abroad, or online. Every KD 1 spent locally gives you 10 points, Every KD 1 spent internationally gives you 20 points and any card issued during the campaign period gives you 50 points.

Commenting on the campaign, **Mr. Hisham Al-Nusif**, Chief, Consumer Banking at NBK, stated: "In line with NBK's ongoing commitment to strengthening and deepening relationships with its customers, we remain dedicated to delivering world-class products and services, complemented by exclusive and unparalleled offers."

"Football is among the most celebrated sports both in Kuwait and around the world. We are proud to offer exclusive packages that will enable winners and their companions to attend the FIFA World Cup 2026™, courtesy of Visa. In addition, we have introduced the NBK 247 Cashback FIFA World Cup 2026™ Limited Edition Visa Prepaid Card, giving our football fans to enjoy a distinctive banking experience with a global sporting spirit. Clients can conveniently apply for the card through the NBK Mobile Banking App, add it instantly to their digital wallet, and start using it right away. NBK 247 Cashback Visa Platinum Prepaid Card holders can also exchange their card for the NBK 247 Cashback FIFA World Cup 2026™ Limited Edition Visa Prepaid Card," added Al-Nusif.

He noted that the campaign underscores NBK's commitment to offering exceptional rewards designed to meet the aspirations of its customers. He further emphasized the Bank's dedication to providing exclusive benefits and year-round offers, including special discounts and distinctive campaigns that grant access to major international



Hisham Al-Nusif

Al-Nusif:

- This campaign underscores NBK's commitment to delivering exceptional rewards that truly meet the aspirations of its customers
- NBK Visa Credit and Prepaid Cards go beyond being a simple payment method, offering customers access to a world of exclusive privileges and benefits
- The NBK 247 Cashback FIFA World Cup 2026™ Limited Edition Visa Prepaid Card is now available for customers using NBK Mobile Banking application to earn up to 24% cashback on their purchases. Seeking a distinctive banking experience with a global sporting flair
- Twelve winners and their companion will enjoy premium hospitality, including business class flights, luxury hotel accommodations in Mexico, Canada and United States and exclusive welcome gifts.

tournaments.

"NBK Visa Credit and Prepaid Cards are more than just a payment tool; they are the highest cashback in Kuwait, up to KWD 1,000 per month, and provide unlimited NBK Miles points, Avios points and Oasis Club Miles on your purchases. They serve as a gateway to a world of benefits for our customers. This includes access to exclusive campaigns launched by the Bank, reflecting our commitment to providing an integrated and enriching banking lifestyle," said Al-Nusif.

Mohamed Reyad, Visa's Country Manager for Kuwait, said: "As a proud worldwide partner of FIFA, Visa is committed to leveraging our sponsorship so our valued bank partners, such as NBK, can deliver memorable experiences for their customers. The FIFA World Cup 2026™ is a truly global celebration that brings people together, and through this campaign, NBK Visa cardholders can be part of that excitement. By combining the convenience, security, and global acceptance of Visa with unforgettable moments at one of the world's most iconic sporting events, we are turning everyday payments into extraordinary and rewarding experiences for our cardholders."

The FIFA World Cup 2026™ stands as one of the world's most prominent sporting events, eagerly anticipated by millions of fans every four years.

Through this campaign, NBK reaffirms its commitment to delivering exceptional services and rewards to its customers, in appreciation of their continued trust and loyalty.



Kuwait Minister inaugurates Economic Transformation Forum in Washington

Forum highlights private sector role in national transformation

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Minister of Electricity, Water, Renewable Energy and Finance, and acting Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Sabih Abdulaziz Al-Mukhaizeem inaugurated the "Economic Transformation in Kuwait - Foundations for a New Era" forum, organized by Kuwait Banking Association in cooperation with Nsquare Capital at George Washington University.

Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the United States of America (USA) Sheikh Al-Zain Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, chairpersons and chief executive officers of Kuwaiti banks, and prominent Kuwaiti banking leaders attended the event.

The event highlights the pivotal role of the financial and private sectors in supporting the transformation process, sheds light on promising opportunities for partnerships with the international investment community, and presents a modern and comprehensive picture of the Kuwaiti economy by focusing on its institutional foundations, development of the regulatory environment, and its openness to global partnerships and investments. It also showcases the advanced financial structure and balanced economic vision, driven by effective cooperation between the public and private sectors.

In his opening remarks at the event, Al-Mukhaizeem affirmed that Kuwait has always been a pioneer in the financial field, starting with the establishment of one of the world's first sovereign wealth funds in 1953, and continued with the development of a robust



Minister Al-Mukhaizeem opens 'Economic Transformation in Kuwait' Forum in Washington.

and internationally integrated banking system that enjoys the trust of investors in various continents. He pointed out that through strong institutions, sound financial regulation and an investment culture, Kuwait built a unique credibility in regional markets that is difficult to match.

He added "I would like to focus on the future, not the past -- a future in which finance, banking and investment are the engines of transformation, driving diversification, innovation and sustainable growth in partnership with the private sector and global allies. Today, Kuwait is entering a critical phase in its economic journey. Diversification is no longer a political choice, it has become a necessity."

Bank expands campus presence to foster financial literacy

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait promotes A+ Student Account at KILAW



Johair Marafi, General Manager – Retail Banking

Marafi emphasized that ABK's participation on campus reflects its commitment to understanding and meeting students' financial needs, fostering direct engagement within academic institutions, and building long-term relationships while raising awareness about the range of banking solutions designed to support students and meet their evolving needs.

She concluded by reaffirming ABK's commitment to expanding its presence across universities in Kuwait, intensifying its efforts to support students with innovative financial products and services, and continuing its collaboration with educational institutions to enhance financial literacy and empower students to make informed financial decisions.

Johair Marafi:

- The Bank is committed to continuing its collaboration with educational institutions to enhance students' financial and banking awareness.

As ABK continues to advance financial inclusion and empower the youth, its presence at Kuwait International Law School stands as a testament to the Bank's dedication to creating a positive impact among students pursuing higher education.

Since its establishment in 1967, ABK has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region that offers a wide array of personal, corporate, and private banking products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK Capital.

Across the region, the Bank offers individuals and corporates the convenience of comprehensive banking and financial services in the Egyptian market through ABK-Egypt's network of 46 branches.

This is in addition to ABK's three branches located in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai International Financial

Centre (DIFC) in the United Arab Emirates, servicing both Kuwaiti and Emirati individual and corporate clients.

ABK is a strong supporter of Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association's 'Let's Be Aware' awareness campaign. Through its various initiatives, the Bank aims to promote financial inclusion by educating Kuwaiti society about customer rights, responsibilities, and the different types of banking and special needs services. Additionally, ABK consistently provides strategic information on how to avoid banking and financial fraud, loan application requirements, digital services, and more.

For more information about ABK, please follow the Bank's Instagram account @abk_kuwait, visit eahl.com, contact Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 or visit one of the Bank's branches across Kuwait.

AAW welcomes British Ambassador-designate to Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Chairman and CEO of Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. (AAW), Mr. Faisal Ali Al Mutawa, and Deputy CEO, Mr. Khalid Faisal Al Mutawa, welcomed the British Ambassador-designate of the United Kingdom to Kuwait, H.E. Mr. Qudsi Rasheed, today at the company's headquarters. The two parties discussed opportunities for cooperation and ways to strengthen trade relations with British companies.

Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. Chairman and CEO, Mr. Faisal Ali Al Mutawa, said: "We are delighted to welcome and congratulate



AAW welcomes new British Ambassador to Kuwait.

late His Excellency the new British Ambassador to Kuwait on his appointment. We look forward to enhancing collaboration with British businesses and exploring new opportunities for partnership, trade, and investment. We would like to thank His Excellency for his visit and wish him every success in his new role."

Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Company is one of the largest retail and distribution companies in Kuwait, operating across various industries. The company is the distributor for over 100 global brands in Kuwait's wholesale and retail market.



Meshal Alshayee receiving the Forbes Most Sustainable Projects Award, with Mohammad Alarbeed.



A group photo of the honorees with Her Excellency Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, Minister of Climate Change and Environment in the UAE, and Forbes officials.

Bank wins 2025 ‘Most Sustainable Projects in the Middle East’ Award

Forbes names KFH Group CEO Khaled AlShamlan among Middle East Sustainability Leaders

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: KFH Group Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, has been recognized on Forbes Middle East magazine’s “The Middle East’s Sustainability Leaders 2025” list.

KFH Head of Group Compliance and Governance, Meshal Alshayee, accepted the recognition on behalf of AlShamlan at an award ceremony on the sideline of the 2025 Forbes Sustainability Leaders Summit in Abu Dhabi. The ceremony gathered leaders from the sustainability, technology, and financing sectors committed to enhancing green practices and sustainability.

Forbes recognizes executives who drive sustainability and impact in the region’s largest companies across 15 industries, including banking, energy and utilities, food and agriculture, investment and holding companies, renewable energy, and others.

KFH Group CEO, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan was ranked as the top CEO in Kuwait and the fifth in the Middle East’s banking sector.

Forbes said that KFH invested \$934.45 million in sustainable Sukuk in 2024. The bank also reported that 51% of issued credit cards were made from recycled plastic.

The magazine added that KFH expanded to 11 KFH Go branches, installed LED

lighting, and replaced traditional lighting across its head office and branches as part of its efforts to increase energy efficiency. KFH Auto ecofriendly Showroom received the Global Sustainability Assessment System GSAS – Gold Level Certificate, first-of-its-kind in Kuwait.

The Most Sustainable Projects in the Middle East Award

Moreover, KFH won the Most Sustainable Projects in the Middle East award for 2025 from Forbes Middle East magazine. This recognition is for the bank’s sustainability initiatives, which included investing \$934.45 million in sustainability and green Sukuk in 2024.

The award was received by Head of Group Compliance and Governance, Meshal Alshayee who expressed his pride in the achievement. This recognition highlights KFH’s significant contribution to sustainability, specifically through its successful investments in greenand sustainability Sukuk. KFH was also recognized for its strong commitment to environmental sustainability and its integration of sustainable practices into all operations. This distinction is based on the bank’s proactive adoption of Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) principles,



Khaled AlShamlan

which serve as a core element of its corporate strategy and align with the Kuwait 2035 vision for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

While receiving the award, Alshayee highlighted KFH’s sustainability endeavors, indicating that the Bank achieved MSCI ESG “A” rating by Morgan Stanley. KFH was also included in the FTSE4Good

for its exceptional performance in the ESG practices and commitment to sustainable finance.

Additionally, KFH Auto Showroom won the GSAS Gold Level Sustainability Assessment Certificate, the first environmentally friendly building that fully complies with sustainability standards.

Alshayee also underscored KFH’s efforts in sustainability, such as signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and an agreement on the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs).

KFH organized the first-ever Sustainable Business Program for SMEs, which is designed to give these businesses a competitive advantage and help them achieve their goals. This initiative underscores KFH’s vision to promote sustainable development and its leadership in stimulating the entrepreneurial environment.

He emphasized the continuation of the “Keep It Green” initiative, emphasizing its role in enhancing environmental protection and reducing carbon emissions for a more sustainable future.

He further noted that KFH is the first institution to issue impact measurement reports. KFH is also the first bank to re-

lease annual Sustainability Report as well as Carbon Footprint Report, which include valuable insights, and detailed plans that outline the efforts to reduce carbon emissions. The report also sheds light on minimizing the negative environmental impact of activities that are not aligned with environment protection efforts in the coming years, in accordance with global initiatives for combating climate change.

It is worth noting that Forbes Middle East selected KFHfor this award in recognition of its 2024 success in allocating sustainable investments to green and sustainability Sukuk, with a total value of \$934.45 million.

Forbes Middle East’s methodology considers several criteria, including sustainability and ESG reporting, green and sustainable finance initiatives, and performance indicators such as changes in greenhouse gas emissions, reliance on renewable energy, and the adoption of energy-efficient technologies. The magazine also tracksthe progress made in these areas.

Forbes Middle East also reviews questionnaires as well as sustainability and ESGreports. This process is further refined by classifying each sector separately.

Government shutdown delays release of critically important inflation figures

Powell warns: ‘No Risk-Free Path’ as uncertainty deepens

WASHINGTON, Oct 15, (AP): The government shutdown is delaying another major economic report, leaving policymakers at the Federal Reserve with a cloudier picture even as the economy enters a challenging phase of stubbornly persistent inflation and a sharp slowdown in hiring.

The Labor Department’s monthly inflation data was scheduled for release Wednesday, but late last week was postponed until Oct. 24. The department is recalling some employees to assemble the data, which was collected before the shutdown began. The figures are needed for the government to calculate the annual cost of living adjustment for tens of millions of recipients of benefit programs such as Social Security.

The shutdown could make things worse for agencies like the Fed if it continues, because government agencies cannot collect the raw data that are then compiled into the monthly reports on jobs, inflation, and other economic trends. The September employment report, for example, which was due to be released Oct. 3 but was not issued because of the shutdown, was essentially completed before the government closed and could be released fairly quickly once the shutdown ends. But October data could be delayed much longer.

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said Tuesday in remarks to the National

Association for Business Economics that the central bank for now is looking at data from the private sector, such as payroll processor ADP, which issues its own monthly report on hiring by U.S. businesses, to gauge the economy. It is also relying on anecdotal reports from the hundreds of businesses that the regional Fed banks consult with.

But while there are many firms that compile jobs-related data, there are fewer alternative sources of information to track inflation and growth, Powell added.

“We’ll start to miss that data and particularly the October data,” Powell said. “If this goes on for a while, they won’t be collecting it. And it could become more challenging.”

The Fed is already in a difficult spot, Powell has said, as it grapples with two policy goals that are nearly in conflict. It is tasked by Congress with seeking both maximum employment and stable prices.

Right now, inflation remains above the Fed’s target of 2%, with the latest figures showing prices rose 2.9% compared with a year earlier, according to the Fed’s preferred measure. Typically, elevated inflation would lead the Fed to raise its key interest rate, or at least keep it elevated.

Yet hiring has also weakened considerably, and the unemployment rate has ticked up to a still-low 4.3% in August from 4.2% in the previous month. When the Fed’s other goal of maximum employment is threatened, it usually responds with the opposite approach: Cutting rates to spur more borrowing and spending.

On Tuesday, Powell noted those challenges and said, “There really isn’t a risk-free path.”

Robotaxi pioneer expands internationally after US success

Waymo to launch driverless taxi tests in London

LONDON, Oct 15, (AP): Robotaxi pioneer Waymo plans to expand to London next year, marking the company’s latest step in rolling out its driverless ride service internationally.

Waymo said Wednesday that it will start testing its self-driving cars on London streets in the coming weeks - with a human “safety driver” behind the wheel - as it seeks to win government approval for its services.

In a blog post, Waymo said it will “lay the groundwork” for its London service in the coming months. The company said it will “continue to engage with local and national leaders to secure the

necessary permissions for our commercial ride-hailing service.”

Waymo’s self-driving taxis have been operating in the United States for years, and currently serve the cities of Phoenix, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Austin. This year, the company made its first moves to expand internationally by teaming up with local partners in Japan for testing, though no launch date has been set for commercial service there.

The company began as a secret project within Google and was then spun out from the tech giant. Waymo will have to follow new U.K. regula-

tions on self-driving cars that pave the way for autonomous vehicles to take to the country’s roads. They require self-driving cars to have a safety level “at least as high as careful and competent human drivers” and meet rigorous safety checks.

The company will be able to take part in a pilot program for “small-scale” self-driving taxi and bus services that the government plans for spring 2026.

Waymo will also have to stick to rules from Transport for London, the city’s transport authority, which oversees licensing for its famous traditional black cabs as well as other taxi operators like Uber.

TSA warns of checkpoint delays

FAA tower closures highlight impact of federal shutdown

WASHINGTON, Oct 15, (AP): A startling message came over the radio from an air traffic control tower near Los Angeles less than a week into the federal government shutdown: “The tower is closed due to staffing.”

Without enough air traffic controllers to guide planes into and out of Hollywood Burbank Airport, the tower went dark for almost six hours on Oct. 6, leaving pilots to coordinate their movements among themselves. Flight delays averaged two-and-a-half hours in one of the first visible signs that the shutdown was already taking a toll on the nation’s aviation system.

Since the shutdown began Oct. 1, the Federal Aviation Administration has reported controller shortages in cities across the U.S., from airports in Boston and Philadelphia, to control centers in Atlanta and Houston. Flight delays have spread to airports in Nashville, Dallas, Newark and more.

And already there has been an increase in unscheduled absences among security screeners at some airports. The union representing Transportation Security Administration employees says the absences haven’t yet caused major disruptions, but it warned longer lines at security checkpoints could soon become a reality after workers received their final paychecks over the weekend.

Experts and union leaders say the disruptions are a stark reminder that the aviation system is already stretched too thin by chronic understaffing and outdated technology. They warn the cracks in the system could rapidly deepen the longer the shutdown drags on and critical aviation workers are without their regular paychecks.

“It’s like having a drought the year after you had a drought,” Greg Raiff, CEO of Elevate Aviation Group, told The Associated Press.

These concerns aren’t new. In 2019, the aviation system buckled under the weight of a 35-day government shutdown - the longest in U.S. history - during President Donald Trump’s first term.

Around the three-week mark, air traffic controllers, many of them working up to 60 hours a week, sued the government over their missed paychecks. One terminal at the Miami International Airport was forced to close because security screeners were calling out sick in large numbers. Some even quit altogether.

“Here we are so many years later, and the problems have not been addressed,” said aviation attorney Ricardo Martinez-Cid, a Florida Bar-certified expert on aviation law who regularly represents crash victims. “Now we’re in a worse position when we had been put on notice. We had the opportunity to address it.”

Since then, the country has faced repeated warnings. In January, a mid-air crash over the Potomac River involving a commercial jet and a military helicopter killed 67 people. A series of equipment failures and radar outages this year also highlighted the need for upgrades.

Before the latest shutdown, both the FAA and TSA were already dealing with staffing shortages. That includes a shortage of about 3,000 air traffic controllers.

Nick Daniels, president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Asso-

ciation, has said staffing levels have reached a “critical” point, the lowest in decades. The shortage is so severe that even a few air traffic controllers missing work can disrupt operations at already understaffed facilities.

“And on top of that,” he said, “they’re working with unreliable equipment.”

The shutdown began just as the FAA was starting to make some progress on addressing the shortage of controllers and modernizing the outdated equipment they rely on that keeps disrupting flights when it malfunctions.

The agency says it topped its goal of hiring 2,000 controllers this year after streamlining the application process at its academy in Oklahoma City, but it will take years still to eliminate the shortage. And it had just begun looking for companies to help oversee a \$12.5 billion effort to overhaul its aging and complex technology systems.

Now, the shutdown is delaying those long-needed efforts. And union leaders say the staffing shortages may be worse by the time the government reopens.

Johnny Jones, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Government Employees chapter representing TSA workers, expressed concern that the shutdown could drive even more security screeners to leave the agency, especially given the uncertainty that the workers already have faced this year. That includes the Trump administration’s attempts to revoke their collective bargaining rights.

Daniels, meanwhile, warned it could stoke fear among newer controllers and trainees who might reconsider the career entirely to avoid working in future shutdowns.

It’s a long-standing concern. In 2019, after the 35-day shutdown ended, a congressional committee hearing dug into the impacts on air travel.

“All of these air traffic controllers and aviation safety professionals were used as pawns in a political fight that had nothing to do with aviation. This is wrong and must not be allowed to happen again,” warned the union leader representing air traffic controllers at the time.

At the hearing, there were also bipartisan calls for reform to keep the FAA funded “without interruption, even when the rest of the government shuts down,” as one lawmaker put it. Stories were shared of controllers and TSA agents taking on extra jobs to pay rent, mortgage and other bills despite working longer shifts to fill the gaps in staffing.

Lawmakers and industry officials who testified agreed: The shutdown made the aviation system less safe.

“We implore all involved, please heed not only our warnings but the entire stakeholder community’s warnings. This vicious budgetary cycle of stops and starts with little to no stability or predictably has simply got to stop,” said Nick Calio, then-president and CEO of Airlines for America, an industry trade group representing airlines including Delta, United and Southwest.

And yet the system remains vulnerable to shutdowns seven years later, Martinez-Cid said. “We’re long overdue for a wake-up call.”

New rules set strict requirements for drivers and vehicles

Hong Kong passes bill to regulate ride-hailing platforms

HONG KONG, Oct 15, (AP): Hong Kong lawmakers passed a bill Wednesday to regulate online ride-hailing services, requiring platforms like Uber, along with their vehicles and drivers, to be licensed, after years of backlash from the city’s taxi industry.

The first licensed platforms are expected to start operating in late 2026 at the earliest, officials said.

In granting a license, Hong Kong’s transport commissioner can consider the firm’s experience, financial capacity and intended investments in the region. Licensed companies will need to maintain “proper and efficient” services and ensure all vehicles and drivers on their platforms hold valid permits, according to the new rules.

Drivers are required to be at least 21, have held a private car driving license for at least one year and have no serious traffic convictions within five years. They also need to pass a test and take a pre-service course.

The bill marks an important step in the development of ride-hailing services in Hong Kong, which currently bans drivers of private vehicles from providing paid services to customers without a permit.

Uber Hong Kong welcomed the voting results. “This decision marks a significant milestone in integrating ridesharing into the city’s transport system and ensuring riders and drivers benefit from clear rules,” it said.

Police have previously arrested some Uber drivers suspected of driving

without a permit and in 2018, more than two dozen drivers were fined.

Some taxi companies have long resisted online platforms like Uber, seeing them as a threat to their business.

Uber, which started operating in Hong Kong in 2014, has faced multiple legal and regulatory challenges in its overseas expansion but remains popular in the Asian financial hub, where many residents are frustrated with what they describe as poor taxi services.

Officials proposed a cap on the number of vehicles offering ride-hailing services under the new rules, which will be specified in a subsidiary legislation next year. If that legislation is passed, they will invite applications for licenses.

Uber Hong Kong said it looked forward to “constructive discussions” on vehicle quota mechanisms.

Anyone who operates a ride-hailing platform and provides services without a license will face a fine of up to 1 million Hong Kong dollars (about \$128,600) and a maximum jail term of one year, according to the bill.

A platform that arranges cars or drivers without valid permits to serve passengers could be punished by a maximum penalty of six months imprisonment and a fine of 10,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$1,286) per violation on a first conviction. For subsequent conviction, the maximum jail term would double, in addition to a higher fine.

‘A shining star’ lost

D’Angelo, R&B singer who became an icon with ‘Untitled,’ dies at 51

LOS ANGELES, Oct 15, (AP): D’Angelo, the Grammy-winning R&B singer recognized by his raspy yet smooth voice and for garnering mainstream attention with the shirtless “Untitled (How Does It Feel)” music video, has died. He was 51.

The singer, whose real name was Michael Eugene Archer, died Tuesday, according to a statement from the family.

The singer’s family confirmed in a statement Tuesday that he died after a prolonged battle with cancer. They called him “a shining star of our family and has dimmed his light for us in this life,” adding that they are “eternally grateful for the legacy of extraordinarily moving music he leaves behind.”

In his music, D’Angelo blended hip-hop grit, emphatic soul and gospel-rooted emotion into a sound that helped spearhead the neo-soul movement of the 1990s. Earlier this year, the Virginia native celebrated the 30th anniversary of his debut studio album “Brown Sugar,” a platinum-selling

offering that produced signature hits like “Lady” and the title track. The 1995 album earned him multiple Grammy nominations and cemented him as one of R&B’s most original new voices.

D’Angelo’s sultry vocal style - a mix of raspy texture and church-bred fluidity - set him apart from his peers. That voice became inseparable from the striking visuals of his 2000 single “Untitled (How Does It Feel).” The minimalist, shirtless music video became a cultural touchstone, igniting conversations around artistry, sexuality and vulnerability in Black male representation. The song earned him a Grammy for best male R&B vocal performance and propelled his sophomore album “Voodoo,” topping the Billboard 200 chart and winning the Grammy for best R&B album.

Beyond his own catalog, D’Angelo’s artistry shined in collaborations. He memorably duetted with Lauryn Hill on the soulful ballad “Nothing Even Matters,” a highlight of her landmark 1998 album “The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill.” He



This March 7, 2013 file photo shows D’Angelo at ‘The Music of Prince’ tribute concert at Carnegie Hall in New York on March 7, 2013. (AP)

also contributed to The Roots’ 1996 album “Illadelph Halflife” and was part of the supergroup

Black Men United, which yielded one song: “U Will Know,” which D’Angelo wrote and co-produced, for the film “Jason’s Lyric” in 1994.

D’Angelo was partnered to Grammy-nominated R&B singer Angie Stone in the ’90s. The pair met while he was finishing “Brown Sugar” and bonded over their similar backgrounds: Both are from the South and both grew up in the church. Stone worked on the album with D’Angelo and the pair co-wrote the song “Everyday” for her 1999 debut album, “Black Diamond.”

Stone described D’Angelo as her “musical soul mate,” to The Associated Press in 1999, adding that their working relationship was “like milk and cereal Musically, it was magic. It’s something that I have not been able to do with any other producer or musician.”

They had a son together, the artist Swayvo Twain, born Michael Archer Jr.

Stone died earlier this year in a car crash. She was 63.

D’Angelo also has a daughter, Imani Archer.

Variety

EAST HAMPTON, N.Y.: Alec Baldwin and his younger brother Stephen escaped injury when their vehicle struck a tree in New York.



Baldwin

Alec Baldwin said that neither he nor his brother were injured, but the vehicle they were in had extensive damage. The elder Baldwin also thanked East Hampton police for their response to and handling of the crash. No other injuries were reported in the accident. (AP)

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MILAN: The European Commission has fined luxury fashion houses Gucci, Chloé and Loewe over 157 million euros (nearly \$183 million) for anti-competitive practices restricting independent retailers’ ability to set prices for their luxury goods.

The Commission said the companies’ fixing of resale prices breached the bloc’s competition rules, harmed consumers and would not be accepted.

“The decision sends a strong signal to the fashion industry and beyond that we will not tolerate this kind of practice in Europe, and that fair competition and consumer protection apply to everyone, equally,” commission vice president Teresa Ribera said in a statement on Tuesday. The commission said that the three brands restricted the ability of independent retailers to set their own prices for high-end apparel, leather goods, footwear and accessories sold both online and in physical stores.

The brands required the retailers to stick to recommended retail prices, set maximum discount rates as well as periods for sales, mirroring practices in the brands’ own direct sales channels.

The practices “deprived the retailers of their pricing independence and reduced competition between them,” the commission said. (AP)

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WASHINGTON: The Supreme Court on Tuesday rejected an appeal from conspiracy theorist Alex Jones and left in place the \$1.4 billion judgment against him over his description of the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting as a hoax staged by crisis actors.

The Infowars host had argued that a judge was wrong to find him liable for defamation and infliction of emotional distress without holding a trial on the merits of allegations lodged by relatives of victims of the shooting, which killed 20 first graders and six educators in Newtown, Connecticut.

The justices did not comment on their order, which they issued without even asking the families of the Sandy Hook victims to respond to Jones’ appeal. An FBI agent who responded to the shooting also sued.

A lawyer who represents Sandy Hook families said the Supreme Court had properly rejected Jones’ “latest desperate attempt to avoid accountability for the harm he has caused.”

“We look forward to enforcing the jury’s historic verdict and making Jones and Infowars pay for what they have done,” lawyer Christopher Mattei said in a statement.

A lawyer representing Jones in the case didn’t immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

Jones filed for bankruptcy in late 2022, and his lawyers told the justices that the “plaintiffs have no possible hope of collecting” the entire judgment.

He is separately appealing a \$49 million judgment in a similar defamation lawsuit in Texas after he failed to turn over documents sought by the parents of another Sandy Hook victim.

In the Connecticut case, the judge issued a rare default ruling against Jones and his company in late 2021 because of what she called Jones’ repeated failure to abide by court rulings and to turn over certain evidence to the Sandy Hook families. The judge convened a jury to determine how much Jones would owe. (AP)

Film



This image released by Disney shows Jodie Turner-Smith (center) in a scene from ‘Tron: Ares.’ (AP)

‘Tron: Ares’ powers up a flashy, digital odyssey

‘Tron’ returns with dazzling action, nostalgia

LOS ANGELES, Oct 15, (AP): “Tron: Ares” may have the tagline “No Going Back” but Disney doesn’t like to leave money on the table. So here we are, going back with a third entry in a cult franchise that’s somewhat trapped between the human and digital worlds.

Ride-or-die Tron-iacs are going to need a few things to be happy - the cool motorbikes that kick off light walls, those glowing Frisbee things attached to everyone’s back, and, of course, Jeff Bridges. Director Joachim Rønning gives us all those things and much, much more. Maybe too much.

“Tron: Ares” bites off so much - a light cycle chase through downtown Vancouver, a laser attack by a massive, hovering vehicle, a Jet Ski pursuit, dozens of crushed police cars and endless flipping between Earth and no less than three computer grids - that it gets a bit deafening and numbing after two hours, like a late-stage Marvel movie.

How do you go back and yet forward at the same time? The filmmakers have rather cleverly done that by incorporating plot points from the first two movies and building out with new characters and blurring the divide between flesh and digital worlds.

We begin with a financial battle between two massive technology firms - Emcom and Dillinger (think Apple versus Google) - who have both come up against the same artificial intelligence ceiling.

They can create anything they like in the real world using what looks like 3D printers using lasers but it lasts only for 29 minutes before collapsing into ash. (Twenty-nine minutes is also the limit to our attention span for this plot.)

The leaders of both firms - Greta Lee, playing Encom’s white hat hacker and Evan Peters, playing Dillinger’s very evil CEO - are in a race to find the hidden Permanence Code that Bridges’ Kevin Flynn created back when the world ran on floppy disks. The fate of the planet rests on whoever finds it. If it’s Encom, health care for everyone and a cure for cancer; if it’s Dillinger, a new military of superhuman fighters and, we guess, fascism.

Expendable

Enter Jared Leto, who is a Dillinger’s AI master control, executing all his CEO boss’ orders to the letter and who is often reminded that he’s expendable. He and his scary deputy (Jodie Turner-Smith) start off robotic, but there’s something weird in his wiring - he starts to have all the feels and yearn to be real. (“Tron: Ares” has now officially become a reboot of Pinocchio.)

Leto does well here as the title character, able to deliver a few good lines while executing a rock star strut in a skintight suit, making slow-mo somersaults to avoid deadly light discs or powering his light cycle

at dizzying speeds. But it’s Lee who steals the show, a very human action heroine for 2025.

The screenplay - by Jesse Wigutow, with a story by David DiGilio and Wigutow - adds odd pockets of humor, but not enough and sometimes stashed right next to a key figure bleeding out. There are references to “The Wizard of Oz” and “Frankenstein” and the writers make Leto’s soldier a serious fan of ‘80s synth pop, especially Depeche Mode, which is a call-back to the music swirling at the time of the 1982 original.

If we’re talking music, we’ve got to talk about Nine Inch Nails, who have taken over soundtrack duties from Daft Punk, who composed “Tron: Legacy” in 2010. Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross are a perfect fit, layering menacing, mechanical sounds on top of thick bars of synth. (They even get on-screen cameos as fighter pilots.)

All this struggle and synths - which sometimes feels like an ad for Ducati motorcycles - peaks when The Dude himself appears. Bridges is the payoff, the constancy in a franchise that desperately needs his cool charm. “Fascinating,” he says with a smile as he meets Leto. Suddenly, going back is worth it.

“Tron: Ares,” a Walt Disney Studios release that hits theaters Friday, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association for violence and action. Running time: 119 minutes. Three stars out of four.

Laufey to release children’s book ‘Mei Mei The Bunny’

Winfrey picks Majumdar’s ‘A Guardian and a Thief’ for book club

NEW YORK, Oct 15, (AP): Megha Majumdar’s “A Guardian and a Thief,” already a finalist for the National Book Award and Kirkus Prize, is now Oprah Winfrey’s book club pick.

Set in the near future, “A Guardian and a Thief” depicts a world of drought, flooding, crime and food shortages as it contrasts a woman whose family is about to emigrate from India to the US with the resident of a shelter who has stolen her purse and the passports it contains. It’s Majumdar’s first novel since her acclaimed debut, “A Burning,” came out in 2020.

“I was spellbound from Page 1,” Winfrey said in a statement Tuesday. “Megha Majumdar is one of those exquisitely skilled authors who takes us into the story of characters and cultural conflicts and leaves us spellbound until the last word and beyond. Who was the ‘Guardian’ who was the ‘Thief’? I’m still thinking

about it.”

Majumdar’s conversation with Winfrey can be seen on Winfrey’s YouTube channel and other outlets where podcasts are available. Winfrey’s book club is currently presented by Starbucks. Other recent picks include Elizabeth Gilbert’s memoir, “All the Way to the River,” and a novel by Richard Russo, “Bridge of Sighs.”

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She’s won a Grammy, collaborated with Barbra Streisand and performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Now Laufey is taking on a new challenge: creating a children’s story inspired by her mascot-alias, Mei Mei The Bunny.

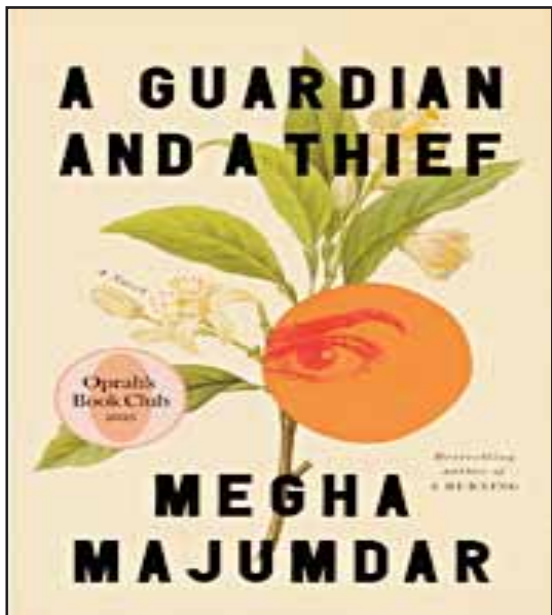
Penguin Workshop announced Tuesday that Laufey’s picture book, “Mei Mei The Bunny,” will be published April 21. Illustrated by Lauren O’Hara,

the book tells of Mei Mei’s determination to become a professional musician even as she encounters some initial struggles.

“I’m so excited to now share Mei Mei The Bunny in storybook form!” Laufey said in a statement. “Mei Mei has been a part of my life for over the last few years and opening up the world around her has been the most beautiful exploration. I hope that anyone at any age can find something in Mei Mei’s story that inspires them and connects them to the people in their lives.”

Born Laufey Lín Bing Jónsdóttir in Iceland, the 26-year-old Laufey is known for her distinctive blend of pop, classical and jazz.

Her release from 2023, “Bewitched,” won a Grammy for best traditional pop vocal album. Earlier this year, she released the album “A Matter of Time.”



This cover image released by Knopf shows ‘A Guardian and a Thief’ by Megha Majumdar. (AP)



Minister Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi speaks at the inauguration of the exhibition.



Chinese Embassy Charge d'Affaires Liu Xiang



Sheikha Hussa Al-Sabah (left) with Liu Xiang



Officials and cultural figures attend the inauguration of the Chinese art exhibition in Kuwait.



Kuwait champions cultural dialogue at Chinese art exhibition

‘Distance and Closeness’ exhibition celebrates growing cultural ties between Kuwait and China

KUWAIT, Oct 15, (KUNA): Representative of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and Culture, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi affirmed the leadership’s commitment to supporting cultural dialogue and enhancing human communication among nations.

In his speech during the opening ceremony of the exhibition “Distance and Closeness: Chinese Art in Kuwait,” held under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister and organized by Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah as part of Kuwait Capital of Arab Culture and Media 2025 program, Al-Mutairi said the event represents a milestone in cultural cooperation between Kuwait and the friendly People’s Republic of China. He commended the General Supervisor of

Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah Sheikha Hussa Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah for her outstanding efforts and unique initiatives that contributed to organizing this distinguished cultural event and for her pioneering role in promoting Kuwait’s artistic and cultural presence internationally.

Al-Mutairi expressed deep appreciation for the official visit made by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the People’s Republic of China in 2023, which laid the foundations for a new phase of comprehensive strategic cooperation between the two countries and strengthened cultural, economic, and humanitarian exchange.

For her part, Sheikha Hussa Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah said the exhibition reflects the vision of her late husband, Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-

Ahmad Al-Sabah, who believed that art is a universal language fostering dialogue, understanding, and human closeness through shared creativity.

She added that the exhibition will continue until the end of 2026, representing a major cultural event within Kuwait’s designation as the Arab Capital of Culture and highlighting deep-rooted ties between Kuwait and China through the universal language of art and creativity.

Meanwhile, Chinese Embassy Charge d’Affaires Liu Xiang affirmed that the exhibition symbolizes the genuine friendship between China and Kuwait, reflecting their growing cultural exchanges under Kuwait’s wise leadership, while participants hailed it as a bridge linking civilizations through art and shared heritage.



Photos from the ‘Distance and Closeness: Chinese Art in Kuwait.’



Officials and dignitaries at the event.



Photos by Rizalde Cayanan, Courtesy of DAI

Meta moves to protect teens from harmful content

Instagram limits teen access to PG-13 content

NEW YORK, Oct 15, (AP): Teenagers on Instagram will be restricted to seeing PG-13 content by default and won’t be able to change their settings without a parent’s permission, Meta announced on Tuesday.

This means kids using teen-specific accounts will see photos and videos on Instagram that are similar to what they would see in a PG-13 movie - no sex, drugs or dangerous stunts, among others.

“This includes hiding or not recommending posts with strong language, certain risky stunts, and additional content that could encourage potentially harmful behaviors, such as posts showing marijuana paraphernalia,” Meta said in a blog post Tuesday, calling the update the most significant since it introduced teen accounts last year.

Anyone under 18 who signs up for Instagram is automatically placed into restrictive teen accounts unless a parent or guardian gives them permission to opt out. The teen accounts are private by default, have usage restrictions on them and already filter out more “sensitive” content - such as those promoting cosmetic procedures.

The company is also adding an even stricter setting that parents can set up for their children.



The Instagram logo is seen on a cell phone in Boston Oct 14, 2022. (AP)

The changes come as the social media giant faces relentless criticism over harms to children. As it seeks to add safeguards for younger users, Meta has already promised it wouldn’t show inappropriate content to teens, such as posts about self-harm, eating disorders or suicide.

But this does not always work. A recent report, for instance, found that teen accounts researchers created were recommended age-inappropriate sexual content, including

“graphic sexual descriptions, the use of cartoons to describe demeaning sexual acts, and brief displays of nudity.”

In addition, Instagram also recommended a “range of self-harm, self-injury, and body image content” on teen accounts that the report says “would be reasonably likely to result in adverse impacts for young people, including teenagers experiencing poor mental health, or self-harm and suicidal ideation and behaviors.”

Meta says the new restrictions go

further than its previous safeguards. Teens will no longer be able to follow accounts that regularly share “age-inappropriate content” or if their name or bio contains something that isn’t appropriate for teens, such as a link to an OnlyFans account. If teens already follow these accounts, they’ll no longer be able to see or interact with their content, send them messages, or see their comments under anyone’s posts, the company said. The accounts also won’t be able to follow teens, send them private messages or comment on their posts.

Meta said it already blocks certain search terms related to sensitive topics such as suicide and eating disorders, but the latest update will expand this to a broader range of terms, such as “alcohol” or “gore” - even if they are misspelled.

The PG-13 update will also apply artificial intelligence chats and experiences targeted to teens, Meta said, “meaning AIs should not give age-inappropriate responses that would feel out of place in a PG-13 movie.”

For parents who want an even stricter setting for their kids, Meta is also launching a “limited content” restriction that will block more content and remove teens’ ability to see, leave, or receive comments under posts.



Tourists view exhibits at the Grand Egyptian Museum in Giza, Egypt, Oct. 14. (Xinhua)

Grand Egyptian Museum to close in preparation for official opening

CAIRO, Oct 15, (Xinhua): Egypt’s Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) is temporarily closed to the public from Oct. 15 to Nov. 3 in preparation for its official opening, scheduled for early November, according to an announcement published Monday on the museum’s official website.

Following a nearly year-long soft-opening phase, the museum will be officially inaugurated in a grand ceremony on Nov. 1 and will reopen on Nov. 4.

The museum’s trial phase included 12 galleries displaying

thousands of artifacts, as well as the Grand Staircase showcasing monumental statues and artifacts from different periods of ancient Egyptian history.

Throughout the soft-opening period, officials kept the vast Tutankhamun Hall closed to preserve it as the centerpiece of the grand opening. The hall will feature the complete collection of the young king -- some 5,398 pieces -- including his iconic golden mask, two coffins, and other treasures, according to Egypt’s official MENA news agency.

Variety

NEW YORK: Angel Reese is taking her game from the court to the catwalk and making history along the way.

The Chicago Sky forward is expected to become the first professional athlete to walk in the Victoria’s Secret Fashion Show on Wednesday, joining the brand’s high-profile “Wings Reveal” lineup in New York.

Reese, 23, will don the signature angel wings that have defined the show for decades, a new stage for an athlete known for her confidence, charisma and crossover appeal. She is a former Louisiana State University national champion

and NCAA tournament most outstanding player in 2023.

The show begins at 7 p.m. Eastern and will be livestreamed on YouTube. The show is a mix of music and celebrities, with Tyla performing at the 2024 and lingerie-clad models such as Gigi Hadid and Adriana Lima donning angel wings on the catwalk.

Reese has become one of the most visible figures in women’s sports. Her style, outspokenness and social media influence have helped bridge the gap between sports, fashion and pop culture. (AP)

MILAN: Fendi on Tuesday named Maria Grazia Chiuri as its new creative director, replacing Silvia Venturini Fendi, who stepped aside last month to become honorary president of the

fashion house founded by her grandparents and now owned by the French luxury conglomerate LVMH.

Chiuri’s first collection for the Rome-based fashion house will be previewed next February during Milan Fashion Week.

Chiuri, 61, most recently served as creative director of LVMH’s Dior and is a former co-creative director at Valentino alongside Pierpaolo Piccioli. She started her career at Fendi designing handbags.

“Maria Grazia Chiuri is one of the greatest creative talents in fashion today, and I am delighted that she has chosen to return to Fendi, to continue expressing her creativity,” Bernard Arnault, chairman of LVMH, said in a statement.

Venturini Fendi had taken over womenswear in addition to menswear after the departure last year of Kim Jones, who

became artistic director for womenswear and couture in 2020 following the death of fashion giant Karl Lagerfeld, who shaped Fendi over half a century.

Fendi this year celebrated the 100th anniversary of its founding as a handbag maker and furrier in Rome by Edoardo and Adele Fendi. Their five daughters - Paola, Anna, Franca, Carla and Alda - transformed it into a global luxury fashion house.

“I return to Fendi with honor and joy, having had the privilege of beginning my career under the guidance of the house’s founders, the five sisters,” Chiuri said in a statement.

Chiuri’s appointment comes amid a major game of musical chairs among creative directors at major houses, with many debuts taking place during fashion weeks in September and October. (AP)

China’s policies pave the way for gender equality in sci-tech

Chinese women forge key contributions to space exploration

BEIJING, Oct. 15, (Xinhua): A new generation of female talent, from astronauts to chief designers, is forging crucial contributions to China’s space exploration endeavors, supported by national policies promoting gender equality in sci-tech innovation.

The story of Wang Yaping, the first female astronaut to enter China’s space station, is a case in point. Her space dream was ignited in 2003 when China sent its first taikonaut Yang Liwei into space. “I watched the bright rocket flame on TV, and an idea flashed through my mind -- China now has a male taikonaut, when will there be a female one?” Wang said. Through arduous efforts, she became a crew member of the Shenzhou-10 space mission in 2013. Wang, who once dreamed of being a teacher, delivered a 40-minute open class, China’s first live space lecture, from the spaceship on June 20, 2013 -- to over 60 million students nationwide.

The impact of that lesson extended far beyond the classroom. “I’ve received many letters from children and young people. One that impressed me most was from a Beihang University postgraduate,” she recalled.

This letter was written by a woman six years after she watched Wang explaining gyroscope principles from space. The woman revealed in the letter that she was studying the same principles in her university laboratory, six years after seeing Wang delivering her class. “This is the very meaning of our space class -- to plant the seeds of scientific and space dreams in children’s hearts,” Wang said.

In November 2021, meanwhile, Wang’s extravehicular activities during the Shenzhou-13 mission made her the first Chinese female to conduct a spacewalk.

Her achievements, notably, are paved with the same rigorous training undertaken by male astronauts.

Wang said that space has never changed its environment or lowered its threshold because of the arrival of women -- and that ample flight data show that there are no significant differences between males and females in their ability to adapt and work in space. “It is the concept of gender equality that has given me the opportunity to carry out two space flight missions and realize my dreams,” Wang noted. “It is conceivable that more and more women will participate in manned spaceflight missions. It will have a very important impact on the large-scale and long-term human exploration of space in the future.”

Standing firmly behind astronauts like Wang is another woman -- Huang Wei-



Astronaut Wang Haoze is out of the return capsule of the Shenzhou-19 crewed spaceship at the Dongfeng landing site in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, April 30, 2025. The three astronauts of the Shenzhou-19 crewed mission were all out of the return capsule on Wednesday afternoon, and the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) declared the mission a success. (Xinhua)

fen, chief designer of the China manned space program’s astronaut system.

In 1992, when China’s manned space program was officially approved, the task of selecting and training astronauts fell to the then 28-year-old Huang. With no existing system to follow, she designed China’s first comprehensive astronaut training plan in just three months -- a blueprint that laid the foundation for the nation’s astronaut preparation efforts for over two decades.

Under Huang’s stewardship, a sophisticated training regime encompassing over 100 subjects across eight categories was developed.

The pioneering nature of her work brought immense challenges, and Huang has admitted to moments of tears behind closed doors. “But after crying, I would go back to work with full force, solving one problem after another. Thinking that I am doing this for the country and the nation, I immediately feel revived. I have never thought of giving up.” Her task, though not in the public eye, is her driving force. “My mission is to cultivate more and better astronauts for the country, to enable them to fly with our dreams and complete hard work,” she said. “Safeguarding their spaceflight is my purpose.”

This synergy between the visible heroine and the unseen mastermind is bolstered by a national framework of institutional support. As highlighted in the recently released white paper “China’s Achievements in Women’s Well-Rounded Development in the New Era,” China has implemented a series of measures to support female sci-tech talent in undertaking national projects and participating in decision-making, and to improve their evaluation and incentive mechanisms. Support measures include the National Natural Science Foundation of China easing the age limit for female applicants.

Such initiatives reduce pressure in taking care of children and families that women working in science and technology experience, support their devotion to research work, and allow them to balance family and career, said Wang, who is also a part-time vice president of the All-China Women’s Federation.

According to the white paper, there were 2.846 million women in China’s research and development sector in 2024 -- an increase of 1.692 million from 2012. Women now account for 45.8 percent of China’s sci-tech workers.

Wang and Huang are not the only female contributors to the country’s space quest. This list also includes the likes of Liu Yang, China’s first female astronaut, Zhang Yuhua, deputy commander-in-chief of the Chang’e-5 lunar probe system and deputy commander of the Tianwen-1 Mars probe, Zhang Runhong, the first female “01” commander at a launch site and countless others.

Ranging from Wang’s lessons from orbit that inspire generations to Huang’s steadfast commitment on the ground -- Chinese women are moving beyond participation to taking command and leading in core areas of the national space program, proving that with equal opportunity, the sky is not the limit -- it’s just the beginning.

A simple way to cross-train, strengthen muscles

Walking is good for you: Walking backward can add to the benefits

NEW YORK, Oct 15, (AP): Here's a simple way to switch up your walking routine: try walking backward.

Taking a brisk walk is an exercise rich in simplicity, and it can have impressive mental and physical benefits: stronger bones and muscles, cardiovascular fitness and stress relief, to name a few. But like any workout, hoofing it for your health may feel repetitive and even boring after a while.

Backward walking, also known as retro walking or reverse walking, adds variety to an exercise routine. Turning around not only provides a change of view, but also makes different demands on your body.

Janet Dufek, a biomechanist and faculty member at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, has researched the mechanics of both walking and landing from jumps to identify ways of preventing injuries and improving physical performance. And as a former college basketball player and a regular exerciser, she’s also done her fair share of backward walking.

In humans, reverse locomotion can increase hamstring flexibility, strengthen underused muscles and challenges the mind as the body adjusts to a new movement and posture.

“I see a lot of people in my neighborhood and they walk, and that’s good,” she said. “But they are still stressing the same elements of their structure over and over again. Walking backward introduces an element of cross-training, a subtly different activity.”

Kevin Patterson, a personal trainer in Nashville, Tennessee, recommends the treadmill as the safest place to retro walk. You can adjust it to a slow speed. However, Patterson likes to turn off the treadmill - termed the “dead mill” - and have clients propel the belt on their own. “It can take a while to get the treadmill going, but from there we have them be the horsepower for the treadmill,” he said.

Patterson said he uses backward walking with all his clients as an “accessory exercise” - a weight-training



Janet Dufek, a professor at the School of Integrated Health Sciences at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, poses at the school, Sept. 8, 2025, in Las Vegas. (AP)

term for add-on movements designed to work a specific muscle group - or during warm-ups. The activity typically makes up a small part of the workouts, he said.

“The treadmill is great for older clients because you have the handles on the side and you reduce that risk of falling,” he said.

Dufek suggests working a one-minute segment of backward walking into a 10-minute walk and adding time and distance as you get comfortable.

You can also do it with a partner; face each other, perhaps clasp hands. One person walks backward, and the other strolls forward and watches for problems. Then switch positions.

“At first, you start really, really slowly because there’s a balance accommodation and there is brain retraining. You are learning a new skill,” Dufek said. “You’re using muscles in different ways.”

If you work your way up to running and get really good at it, you can try running a marathon backward - 26.2 miles or 42.2 kilometers. Yes, people have done that.

Dufek classifies backward walking

as a form of cross-training, or incorporating a mix of moves into a fitness program. Doing a range of exercises can help prevent overuse injuries, which can occur after repeatedly using the same muscle groups.

For many people, cross-training involves different activities and types of exercise: for example, running one day, swimming the next, and strength training on a third day. But the modifications required to walk backward work in the same way, but on a micro level.

Do small tweaks make much of a difference? Once an avid runner, Dufek said she had several pairs of running shoes and did not wear the same pair two days in a row.

“The shoes had a different level of wear, a different design,” she said. “Just by changing that one element, in this case footwear, it would provide a slightly different stress to the system.”

Physical therapists instruct some of their clients to reverse walk, which can be useful after knee injuries or for people in rehabilitation or recovering from surgery. “Backward walking is very different than forward walking from a force perspective, from a movement pattern perspective,” Dufek explained. Instead of landing heel first, “you strike the forefoot first, often quite gently, and often the heel does not contact the ground.”

“This reduces of the range of motion in the knee joint, which allows for activity without stressing the (knee) joint,” Dufek said. Backward walking also stretches the hamstring muscles, the group of muscles at the back of the thigh. Dufek is interested in finding out if it improves balance and reduces fall risks in older adults by activating more senses of the body.

There is nothing unnatural about backward walking. In fact, backward running is a key skill for top athletes.

Basketball players do it. So do soccer players. American football players - particularly the defensive backs - do it continually.

Nations meet to discuss green shipping regulations

CO2 levels hit record high last year, intensifying extreme weather: UN

GENEVA, Oct 15, (AP): Heat-trapping carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere jumped by the highest amount on record last year, soaring to a level not seen in human civilization and “turbo-charging” the Earth’s climate and causing more extreme weather, the United Nations weather agency said Wednesday.

The World Meteorological Organization said in its latest bulletin on greenhouse gases, an annual study released ahead of the UN’s annual climate conference, that CO2 growth rates have now tripled since the 1960s, and reached levels not seen in at least 800,000 years.

Emissions from burning coal, oil and gas, alongside more wildfires, have helped fan a “vicious climate cycle,” and people and industries continue to spew heat-trapping gases while the planet’s oceans and forests lose their ability to absorb them, the WMO report said.

The Geneva-based agency said the increase in the global average concentration of carbon dioxide from 2023 to 2024 amounted to the highest annual level of any one-year span since measurements began in 1957. Growth rates of CO2 have accelerated from an annual average increase of 2.4 parts per million per year in the decade from 2011 to 2020, to 3.5 ppm from 2023 to 2024, WMO said.

“The heat trapped by CO2 and other greenhouse gases is turbo-charging our climate and leading to more extreme weather,” said WMO Deputy Secretary-General Ko Barrett in a statement. “Reducing emissions is therefore essential not just for our climate but also for our economic security and community well-being.”

Climate Analytics CEO Bill Hare called the new data “alarming and worrying.”

Even though fossil fuel emissions were “relatively flat” last year, he said, the report appeared to show an accelerating increase of CO2 in the atmosphere, “signaling a positive feedback from burning forests and warming oceans driven by record global temperatures.”

“Let there be no mistake, this is a very clear warning sign that the world is heading into an extremely dangerous state - and this is driven by the continued expansion of fossil fuel development, globally,” Hare said. “I’m beginning to feel that this points to a slow-moving climate catastrophe unfolding in front of us.”

WMO called on policymakers to take more steps to help reduce emissions.

While several governments have been pushing for further use of hydrocarbons like coal, oil and gas for energy production, some businesses and local governments have been mobilizing to fight global warming.

Still, Hare said very few countries have made new climate commitments



A person checks his mobile phone as farmers burn crop residue after harvest near Bundelkhand expressway in India, on Nov. 17, 2024. (AP)

to come “anywhere near dealing with the gravity of the climate crisis.”

The increase in 2024 is setting the planet on track for more long-term temperature increase, WMO said. It noted that concentrations of methane and nitrous oxide - other greenhouse gases caused by human activity - have also hit record levels.

The report was bound to raise new doubts on the world’s ability to hit the goal laid out in the 2015 Paris climate accord of keeping the global average temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times.

United Nations climate chief, Simon Stiell, has said the Earth is now on track for 3 degrees Celsius (5.4 Fahrenheit).

Meanwhile, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s global data for this year through June reveals that carbon dioxide rates are still rising at one of the highest rates on record, yet not quite as high as from 2023 to 2024.

The agency’s monthly data for the long-running Hawaii monitoring location for 2025 through August also showed CO2 rates are still increasing, but not as much as between 2023-2024.

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The world’s largest maritime nations gathered in London on Tuesday to consider adopting regulations that would move the shipping industry away from fossil fuels to slash emissions.

If the deal is adopted, this will be the first time a global fee is imposed on planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions. Most ships today run on heavy fuel oil that releases carbon dioxide and other pollutants as it’s burned.

Nations are meeting at the International Maritime Organization headquarters through Friday. The Trump administration unequivocally rejects the proposal and has threatened to retaliate if nations support it, setting the

‘Hunger crisis looming’

Funding cuts could push millions into hunger: UN

GENEVA, Oct 15, (AP): The United Nations’ food aid agency said Wednesday that severe funding cuts from its top donors are hurting its operations in six countries and warned that nearly 14 million people could be forced into emergency levels of hunger.

The World Food Program, traditionally the U.N.’s most-funded agency, said in a new report that its funding this year “has never been more challenged” - largely due to slashed outlays from the US under the Trump administration and other leading Western donors.

It warned that 13.7 million of its food aid recipients could be forced into emergency levels of hunger as funding is cut. The countries facing “major disruptions” are Afghanistan, Congo, Haiti, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, it said.

“We are watching the lifeline for millions of people disintegrate before our eyes,” Executive Director Cindy McCain said.

WFP said it expects to receive 40% less funding this year, leading to a projected budget of \$6.4 billion - after receiving some \$10 billion last year.

“This is not just a funding gap

- it’s a reality gap between what we need to do and what we can afford to do,” McCain said. “We are at risk of losing decades of progress in the fight against hunger.”

The Rome-based agency says global hunger is already at record levels, with 319 million people facing acute food insecurity - including 44 million at emergency levels. Famine has broken out in Gaza and Sudan.

In Afghanistan, food assistance is reaching less than 10% of people who are food insecure - meaning that they don’t know where their next meal will come from, the agency said.

WFP says it has received about \$1.5 billion from the United States this year, down from nearly \$4.5 billion last year, while other top donors have also cut funding.

Many United Nations organizations, including the migration, health and refugee agencies, have announced sharp aid and staffing cuts this year because of reduced support from traditional big donors. The humanitarian aid community has also been affected by sharp cuts to the US. Agency for International Development, or USAID.

New CA law

Eateries must list allergens

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Oct 15, (AP): California will become the first state in the nation requiring restaurants to list major food allergens on their menus starting in 2026 under a new law.

The law Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Monday applies to businesses with at least 20 locations. They will have to disclose ingredients including milk, eggs, shellfish and tree nuts when they know or “reasonably should know” that they are in their products.

California state Sen. Caroline Menjivar, a Democrat, said the bill was inspired in part by her own experiences living with severe allergies to many nuts and fruits.

“Soon, the millions of Californians with food allergies, many of whom are young children, will be able to fully enjoy dining out without fear or apprehension at these qualifying restaurants,” she said when the bill passed in the Legislature. “In turn, these businesses will be able to offer allergen families a unique additional assurance that will drive customers to their establishments.”

But the California Restaurant Association has said previously the law will be costly and burdensome for businesses. The group said it is pleased the bill no longer applies to small restaurants, but is concerned the legislation could lead to “predatory lawsuits” against businesses.

The nonprofit Food Allergy Research and Education said the bill is not perfect but is a “meaningful step” to protect people with food allergies.

Hepatitis A outbreak kills 10 in Prague

NY confirms first local chikungunya case

MINEOLA, N.Y., Oct 15, (Agencies): New York health officials have confirmed the state’s first locally acquired case of chikungunya virus, and the first such case in the country in six years.

The state Department of Health said Tuesday that the mosquito-borne virus, which has been spreading in China and elsewhere, was identified in a person living in Nassau County on Long Island.

The county’s health department, in a separate statement, said the individual began experiencing symptoms in August after having traveled outside of the region, but not out of the country.

It’s not clear how exactly the person, who authorities have not named, contracted the virus. Health officials say the person was likely bit by an infected mosquito, but they also say the virus has not been detected in local mosquito pools and there is no evi-

dence of ongoing transmission.

The type of mosquito known to carry chikungunya is present in parts of the New York City metropolitan area, including suburban Long Island. The disease cannot be spread directly from one person to another.

Since mosquitoes are less active during the fall’s cooler temperatures, the current risk of transmission is “very low,” said state Health Commissioner James McDonald.

Chikungunya is found mostly in tropical and subtropical regions, according to the state health department. Its symptoms include fever and joint pain, headache, muscle pain, joint swelling and rashes.

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Hepatitis A: A growing outbreak of hepatitis A is spreading across the Czech Republic, with Prague reporting

826 cases since January and 10 deaths, the Prague public health authority HygPrah said on Tuesday.

According to the National Institute of Public Health (SZU), most fatalities occurred among people with liver disease or weakened immunity.

Nationwide, more than 1,500 infections have been recorded in the first nine months of 2025, which is four times more than in the same period last year.

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Dengue: Recent heavy rains and flooding in northern Vietnam have increased the risk of dengue fever outbreaks, Vietnam News Agency reported on Monday, citing health experts.

In September alone, the country recorded 21,152 cases of dengue fever and six related deaths, according to the report.

A decade of sporting partnership opens with a grand spectacle

IBAK-KDD successfully conducts the 10th edition of KDD-KBL in Kuwait



The winners of 10th edition of KDD-KBL celebrate after the closing ceremony.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The 25th of September 2025 will be remembered as a red-letter day in the history of the sporting partnership developed between the Indian Badminton Association-Kuwait (IBAK) and the Kuwaiti Danish Dairy Company (KDD).

A vast array of guests lined up in the evening at the IBAK Gym in Salwa to inaugurate the 10th edition of the KDD-KBL.

Chief Guest of the day was Mr V. V. Subramanian, the Vice-President & Chief Business Officer of KDD. The Special Guest of the evening was Ms Aisha Al Wayer, CEO of Aspire Kuwait.

They were accompanied on the dais by Special Invitee Mr James Zhang, MD of ARG Kuwait, Mr Praveen Singh, Director - Financial Services Group, Al Mulla Exchange, and various sponsors attached to each of the eight participating teams. The IBAK Organizing Committee was seen in its full strength behind the dais.

A special memento commemorating the 10th anniversary of the tournament was presented to Mr Subramanian. The other guests were presented with colourful flower bouquets.

All the athletes were orderly organized in front of the dais, headed by their respective captains in a colorful array of jerseys and proudly behind their individual team flags that were distributed by the respective representatives of each of the teams.

Dr Manimara Chozhan welcomed all the guests, players, and supporters who thronged the packed hall to witness some competitive badminton that will be conducted over four days from 25th September to 3rd October.

A souvenir commemorating the decade of the tournament was released by the Chief Guest, who received the first copy. All the guests were also presented with copies of the souvenir.

All the captains of the eight participating teams then presented their team flags to the organizers, and they were aligned and hoisted on top of the dais. Ms Aisha declared the tournament open and wished all the players the very best for their matches.

The eight participating teams of the competition had around 140 players grouped into seven categories. A cake, which symbolized the opening of the tournament, was then cut and distributed to the gathering, and the games opened to a thrilling roar of anticipation from the teams, players, supporters, and the gathered crowd.

The Eight Teams Were:

- Team USC (Owned by Mr Alex Koshay and Mr Jyothirajan)
- Team Vikings (Owned by Mr Srinivas)
- Team Elite Badminton Club (Owned by Mr Hussain H. H.)
- Team Scorpions (Owned by Mr Nikhil & Mr Santhosh)



The officials of the tournament.

Team Oriental (Owned by Oriental Insurance Company)

Team ISA (Owned by Mr Rajeev)

Team Royal Stars (Owned by Mr Binoy Rajan)

Team 5.30 (Owned by a conglomerate of players)

The competition got off to a fiery start as soon as the festivities were concluded, and all teams swung into action with zeal and fervour.

The competition, being conducted in two pools of four teams each and employing the round-robin cum elimination format, was spectacular as well as passionate.

Over the first two days of the competition, four teams successfully managed to enter the knock-out stages. The drama and passion that is commonplace in such an intense competition

continued into the late hours on the first day, and the athletes were back on court the following day with renewed vigour and enthusiasm.

Matches swung back and forth with many games going up to the last point of the third game. In a nerve-racking and muscle-creaking plethora of games, the players gave their all on the courts, leaving the audience wanting more.

Some of the youngsters taking part in such a competition for the very first time got a ringside view of the heat and intensity of battle and rose up to the occasion for their respective teams, notching up important tie wins.

Each Tie Had Seven Categories:

- Professional Men's Doubles
- Advance Men's Doubles
- Super Combo Men's Doubles

Ladies Doubles

Mixed Doubles

Intermediate Men's Doubles

Open Men's Doubles

The four battle-weary teams that qualified for the knock-outs were:

Team USC, Team Vikings, Team Elite Badminton Club, and Team Scorpions.

KDD supplied free products under the "Good for Me" brand throughout the tournament.

After a series of intense and closely contested matches, the tournament concluded with the following results:

Champion: Team USC

Runner-up: Team Scorpions

Semi-finalists: Elite Badminton Club and Team Vikings

Final Match Summary: During the final battle, Team USC

took the lead by winning the Professional Men's Doubles.

Team Scorpions fought back by winning both Advanced Men's Doubles and Super Combo Men's Doubles.

The Ladies Doubles and Intermediate Doubles were won by Team USC, giving them a narrow advantage.

Team Scorpions responded by winning the Open Men's Doubles, but Team USC sealed victory by clinching the decisive Mixed Doubles match.

Looking Ahead:

Adding to the event's significance, Dr Manimara Chozhan, Chairman of IBAK, announced the official IBAK Tournament Calendar for 2026, giving the badminton community much to look forward to in the coming year.

As KDD-KBL steps into its next decade, it stands as a testament to how sport can unite, inspire, and elevate. The league continues to promote badminton at the grassroots level, providing a platform for amateur and semi-professional players to compete and grow.

IBAK remains committed to improving badminton in Kuwait. As part of these efforts, IBAK will conclude the year 2025 by organizing:

- IBAK Al-Mulla Exchange Cup on 30th and 31st October 2025
- Inter-School Tournament in December 2025

For more information, visit www.ibakwt.org or email ibakcommittee@gmail.com

Jamaica routs Bermuda, inches closer to World Cup qualification

Curacao loses group lead with home draw against Trinidad

KINGSTON, Jamaica, Oct 15, (AP): Jamaica routed Bermuda 4-0 and inched closer to securing a place at the World Cup for the second time.

Dante Leverock scored an own goal before Bobby De Corva-Reid and Shamar Nicholson extended Jamaica's half-time lead to 3-0 with goals in the 26th and 35th minutes. Djuan Richards finished off the scoring in the 76th.

The "Reggae Boyz", who were coming off a 2-0 loss to Curacao, now lead Group B with nine points.

Jamaica, guided by former England manager Steve McLaren, can qualify for next year's World Cup if it beats Curacao on Nov. 18.

Jamaica's only previous World



Ismael Diaz (2nd right) of Panama scores during the 2026 FIFA World Cup Concacaf qualifier football match between Panama and Suriname in Panama City, Panama. (Xinhua)

Cup appearance was in 1998.

Bermuda is out of contention after a fourth consecutive loss.

Curacao lost the group lead with 1-1 home draw against Trinidad and Tobago.

Kenji Gorre put the home team ahead in the 19th minute, but Tyrese Spicer equalized in the 58th.

Curacao's Blue Stars have eight points in Group B, three clear of third-place Trinidad and Tobago.

Ismael Diaz' goal six minutes into stoppage time gave Panama a 1-1 draw against Suriname to remain in the mix for a World Cup spot.

Suriname, which has never reached the World Cup, and Panama each have six points in Group A. Guatemala has five competition points after a 1-0 win over El Salvador.

Twelve teams from Central America and the Caribbean, divided into three groups, are vying for three direct spots from CONCACAF qualifying for next year's World Cup. The United States, Canada and Mexico have qualified automatically as World Cup co-hosts.

Trump threatens to pull 2026 World Cup games from Boston despite FIFA control

WASHINGTON, Oct 15, (AP): President Donald Trump threatened to relocate World Cup matches set to be played next year in suburban Boston, after suggesting that parts of the city had been "taken over" by unrest.

Foxborough, Massachusetts, home to the NFL's New England Patriots and about 30 miles from Boston, is set to stage matches as the U.S. co-hosts the 2026 World Cup with Mexico and Canada.

Trump was asked about Boston's mayor, Michelle Wu, a Democrat whom he called "intelligent" but "radical left."

"We could take them away," Trump said of the World Cup games. "I love the people of Boston and I know the games are sold out. But your mayor is not good."

He suggested "they're taking over parts of Boston" without offering details, but added "we could get them back in about two seconds."

The Trump administration has already deployed National Guard troops to Washington and Mem-



Trump

phis, and efforts to do so in Chicago and Portland, Oregon, have sparked legal fights.

Wu's office did not react directly to Trump's threat, issuing a statement that read, "Boston is honored and excited to host World Cup matches, and we look forward to welcoming fans from around the world to our beautiful city, the cradle of liberty and city of champions."

Trump's comments came during his meeting with Argentina President Javier Milei and it wasn't immediately clear what he was referring to by parts of Boston having been seized. Earlier this month, however, there were multiple arrests in connection with a pro-Palestinian protest that turned violent on Boston Common. Four police officers were injured.

Trump has previously suggested he could declare cities "not safe" for the 104-game soccer tournament and after a detailed hosting plan that FIFA confirmed in 2022. It includes games at NFL stadiums near New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

World Cup host sites aren't up to Trump. The 11 U.S. cities - plus three in Mexico and two in Canada - are contracted with FIFA, which would face significant logistical and legal issues to make changes in the eight months before the June 11 kickoff.

Miami's Spoelstra says coaching '28 Olympic basketball team will be 'honor of a lifetime'

MIAMI, Oct 15, (AP): Erik Spoelstra was 13 the last time the Olympics were held in Los Angeles, and he remembers what it was like watching those games on television.

He'll have a better view in 2028.

USA Basketball made it official on Tuesday, announcing that Spoelstra, the longtime coach of the Miami Heat, has been confirmed by its board of directors as the coach of the men's team for the 2027 World Cup in Qatar and the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles. He takes over for Golden State coach Steve Kerr, whose tenure ended when the Americans captured a fifth consecutive Olympic men's basketball gold at the Paris Games in 2024.

"Absolutely, absolutely humbled. I mean, it is the honor of a lifetime," Spoelstra - a two-time NBA champion as Heat head coach - said in an interview with The Associated Press. "And I'm just really appreciative of it and being a part of the USA Basketball program. The Olympics are incredible, no matter where it is, but to have the opportunity to compete on your own soil, that's simply remarkable."

USA Basketball men's national team managing director Grant Hill ultimately made the pick to offer Spoelstra the job. Spoelstra was on Kerr's staff for the 2023 World Cup in Manila and the 2024 Olympics, which made him a logical candidate.

"I have known Erik Spoelstra for the better part of two decades and have gotten to know him bet-

ter throughout our time with USA Basketball," Hill said. "Spo is not only an outstanding coach, but a great colleague, friend and father, all of which make him the perfect choice to continue the USA Basketball men's national team coaching legacy through 2028."

Spoelstra will become the third person who coaches the U.S. men in a home Olympics, joining Bob Knight (who won gold in 1984 at Los Angeles) and Lenny Wilkens (who won gold in 1996 at Atlanta). Spoelstra is the first Heat coach to hold the job and will do so in the city where his boss, Heat president Pat Riley, became a coaching icon while leading the Los Angeles Lakers.

"When they asked me, one of the first people I thought of was Pat, because I felt that at some point he should have been the head coach for the USA program," Spoelstra said. "And then my second thought was, 'Oh, it's going to be in L.A.' It's amazing, the serendipity of it. It's a way for me to honor him as well because it will be in L.A., where he had so much success. I feel humbled by that."

"None of this would have happened without Pat and I'm the beneficiary of the opportunity. If I wasn't part of the Miami Heat organization and worked for Pat all these years, this opportunity with USA Basketball would have never happened."

Spoelstra, a father of three, agreed to take the job only after deciding what the demands - both time and travel - would mean for his kids.

If Paris was any indication, they'll be fine.

"My kids still talk about it, being in Paris and celebrating the wins when we would come back on the bus. We'd go back into the hotel lobby and all the families were there cheering for us and hugging all the players and all staff. It was absolutely priceless," Spoelstra said. "And then to finish off the night celebrating with ice cream for your kids, it was just amazing."

Spoelstra was the presumed front-runner for months to get the job. It'll come with immense pressure, since the Americans no longer can expect to be easy winners of Olympic gold. The U.S. had to rally from a 17-point deficit to beat Serbia in the semifinals in Paris last summer, then needed a flurry of four 3-pointers from Stephen Curry in the final minutes to hold off France for the gold medal.

"The game is global now," Spoelstra said. "It's where it should be. Great players are coming from everywhere."

Spoelstra never really thought about a chance to coach the Olympic team, or even being involved in the program, until a conversation he had one day with Heat CEO Nick Arison, the son of team managing general partner and Basketball Hall of Famer Micky Arison. Nick Arison - who was part of the support staff when Duke's Mike Krzyzewski was coaching the national teams - told Spoelstra that meeting that if he ever got asked to be part of USA Basketball, he needed to accept the offer immediately.

Key step toward Olympics

UIPM chief hails Beijing Obstacle Worlds

GENEVA, Oct 15, (Xinhua): Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM) president Rob Stull said he is looking forward to the UIPM Obstacle World Championships in Beijing, calling it an important opportunity for the sport's growth as it moves toward the Olympic stage.

The championships will take place from October 21 to 25. China is set to host four consecutive editions of the event from 2025 to 2028.

"I think China's a great place to kick this off. Why China? Because of the population base. You're able to reach so many people," Stull told Xinhua on Tuesday. "Municipalities realize that this is a good investment. It's a good train to get on. That's a great opportunity." The obstacle course was officially added to modern pentathlon at the 72nd UIPM Congress in Monaco on November 12, 2022, replacing horse riding as one of the five disciplines. The 141st International Olympic Committee Session later approved the inclusion of modern pentathlon in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games, marking Paris 2024 as the last Olymp-

pics to feature horse riding.

The head-to-head, ninja-style obstacle race will make its Olympic debut at LA28 in a 90-minute format alongside fencing, swimming, laser shooting and running.

"We need to modernize one of the oldest sports on the Olympic program created by the founder Pierre de Coubertin. We need an event that would attract the youth. It cannot be long, it has to be accessible and be able to reach everyone," Stull said.

According to the UIPM website, it is "the only recognized governing body of obstacle sport in the Olympic movement." "Obstacle racing doesn't have an IOC-recognized federation," Stull said. "We're in the process of integrating with the obstacle community, which is very loosely organized. We want to bring them into the family and give them a place to be tied with a recognized Olympic federation." "You get a lot of benefits by being part of an Olympic family, and our benefits will extend to that community," he added. "The events will be better organized. We have full-time staff who are dedicated to this."

A key preparation phase for the Kuwaiti national team

Stars’ perfect run continues as Warriors fight to keep up

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The Stars and Warriors clubs continue to dominate the Kuwait National Men’s Ice Hockey League for the season, maintaining a thrilling race for the top spot.

The Stars recorded their fifth consecutive victory, raising their total to 15 points and holding firm at the top of the standings. The defending champions Warriors kept up the pressure by defeating the Ice Stars 11–3. The Ice Stars remain third in the table with 9 points.

In their latest matchup, the Stars cruised past the Mooseheads with a commanding 14–3 win, while the Warriors kept up the pressure by defeating the Ice Stars 11–3. The Ice Stars remain third in the table with 9 points.

Fahid Al-Ajmi, President of the Kuwait Winter Games Club, which organizes the league, emphasized the importance of this season as a key preparation phase for the Kuwaiti national team ahead of the Division IV Ice Hockey World Championship, to be hosted by Kuwait in April next year.

Al-Ajmi praised the high level of



Action from Kuwait National Men's Ice Hockey League.

play this season, noting the participation of 11 professional players across the five competing teams, which has significantly boosted the league’s competitiveness and excitement. He also commended all players for their strong performances and commitment throughout the tournament.

Najm undergoes treatment in UAE

Saudi Arabia Volleyball Federation names Dr Taleb as head statistician

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The Saudi Volleyball Federation has appointed Dr. Abdullah Taleb, the statistician for Kuwait Volleyball Club and the national team, to work at the 2025 Saudi Volleyball Federation Cup in Dammam. Dr. Taleb’s extensive experience in volleyball statistics has been instrumental in developing the sport at both Kuwait Club and the national team level.

Dr. Taleb expressed his gratitude to Kuwait Club President Khaled Al-Ghanem, the board members, and volleyball director Mohamed Al-Otaibi for facilitating his assignment. He also thanked the Saudi Volleyball Federation for trusting him with the role of Head of the Statistics Committee and said he hoped to meet their expectations.

Previously, Dr. Taleb served as assistant coach and statistician for

Al-Arabi Club (2011–2017) and for Kazma Club in 2014, helping those secure league and cup titles. That same year, he represented Al-Qadsia in the Gulf Championship in Bahrain. He has also contributed to national teams from 2013 to 2023 and has been with Kuwait Club since 2019 in the same capacity.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Club is covering medical treatment for player Abdulaziz Najm in the UAE. Najm sustained a severe cartilage tear during training and traveled to Dubai for treatment. He is expected to be out for around six weeks.

Najm thanked the club’s management for covering his treatment and expressed his hope for a quick return to the court.

In the ongoing Federation Cup, Burgan defeated Al-Yarmouk 3–0, and Al-Arabi beat Al-Sulaibikhat 3–1. Today, Al-Shabab faces Burgan, while Kazma plays against Al-Arabi.



Dr. Abdullah Taleb

Standings:
Kazma – 14 points
Kuwait Club– 12 points
Al-Qadsia, Al-Shabab, Burgan – 11 points each
Al-Yarmouk – 6 points
Al-Arabi – 5 points
Al-Sulaibikhat – 2 points
Al-Nasr – 0 points

Pakistan spins to victory as South Africa’s streak ‘ends’

Noman claims 10 wickets in hosts 93-run win

LAHORE, Pakistan, Oct 15, (AP): Pakistan ended world test cricket champion South Africa’s 10-match winning streak with a clinical 93-run victory on a turning wicket in the first test on Wednesday.

Left-arm spinner Noman Ali continued to prosper on turning home wickets with a rich match haul of 10-191 as the Proteas were bowled out for 183 after lunch on Day 4.

Noman has bagged 46 wickets in his last five home tests, including 20 against England and another 16 against the West Indies, after Pakistan chose last year to counter touring sides by making spinning wickets.

Noman followed his 6-112 in the first innings with a haul of 4-79 in a marathon unchanged spell of 28 overs, while Shaheen Shah Afridi mopped up the tail with some impressive reverse swing to finish with 4-33, as South Africa fell way short of its 277-run target.

“It’s gone exactly to plan,” said Pakistan captain Shan Masood, who was also in charge when his team finished bottom of the table in the last World Test Championship cycle.

“We had a lot of challenges in the middle and you have to give credit to South Africa, they kept coming back into the game. They’re a great measuring stick for us because they’re world champions. I’m glad we finished it off.”

Resuming on 51-2, South Africa lacked experience to deal with the spinners on an abrasive wicket that saw it concede a 109-run first-innings lead.

Afridi struck with the third ball of the morning when Tony de Zorzi (16), who scored a century in the first innings, was undone by a sharp delivery that thudded onto his back



Pakistan’s Hasan Ali bowls during the fourth day of the first test cricket match between Pakistan and South Africa, in Lahore, Pakistan. (AP)

leg.

Tristan Stubbs’ struggle against spin continued before he got a leading edge from a mistimed reverse sweep against Noman and gave a chest-high catch to Salman Ali Agha in the slips on 2.

Dewald Brevis and Ryan Rickelton tried to put the chase back on track with an attractive 73-run stand but both fell before lunch to give Pakistan a clear advantage.

The 22-year-old Brevis, playing in only his third test and renowned for his batting exploits in white-ball cricket, had an early reprieve when Pakistan went for an lbw review from the first ball he faced off Noman.

Brevis then cut loose as he hoisted Noman for a straight six and two boundaries in one over before raising his half century with an edged boundary. He also lofted the left-arm for another straight six.

He reverse swept Noman for another four soon after completing his half century off 51 balls before he was bowled off a delivery that spun enough to clatter into the stumps.

Off-spinner Sajid Khan ended Rickelton’s long vigil when Agha held on to another low catch in the slips. He faced 145 deliveries for his 45 runs as South Africa limped to 137-6 at lunch.

Khan trapped Senuran Muthusamy lbw soon after the break with a full-pitched delivery that didn’t spun much, the left-hander missing out on an ambitious sweep, before Afridi cleaned up the tail.

“We have a bit to learn and we need to clean up our game and come back better in the next match,” said captain Aiden Markram, who is leading the team in the two-test series in the absence of the injured Temba Bavuma.

“We probably could have scored a few more runs in the first innings. A lot of us got in and got out, and we didn’t capitalize. If we tidy that up, it’ll put us in good stead.”

Markram was impressed with left-arm spinner Muthusamy getting 11 wickets in the match after putting in lot of hard work “behind the scenes.”

“He is exceptional,” Markram said. “He works really hard, bowls lots of balls, and takes his practice quite seriously. So it’s no surprise that he’s reaping the rewards out there in the middle, and I’m just really happy that he could maintain that form going forward.”

The second test in Rawalpindi begins on Monday. South Africa’s spin resources will get beefed up with the return of the experienced Keshav Maharaj, who missed the first test due to injury.

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The 23-member Kuwait national handball team has fully engaged in training at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex, led by Icelandic coach Aron Kristinson. The players have shown full commitment, following the instructions of both the technical and administrative staff, as they aim to secure a spot for the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 7 to 21 November 2025.

This domestic preparation phase will be followed by an international camp in Tunisia from 20 October to 11 November, where Kuwait will participate in a friendly tournament alongside Tunisia, Iran, and Guinea. The team will return to Kuwait before departing for Saudi Arabia on 11 November.

Faisal Siwan, Director of National Teams at the Kuwait Handball Federation, praised the players’ dedication and professionalism, describing it as a clear demonstration of their commitment to representing Kuwaiti handball at the highest level. He emphasized that the team’s goal is to reach the podium at the Islamic Solidarity Games while preparing strongly for the 22nd Asian Men’s Handball Championship, which Kuwait will host from 15–26 January 2026 as a qualifier for the 2027 World Cup in Germany.

The Asian Handball Federation has confirmed the participating teams: Kuwait (host), Qatar, Japan, Bahrain, South Ko-



Ali Safar, the goalkeeper of Kuwait’s handball team in action.

rea, Iran, UAE, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, China, Oman, Hong Kong, India, Jordan, and Australia. The tournament draw was held yesterday at the Safir Al-Fintas Hotel.

In other news, Kuwait goalkeeper Ali Safar, also of Kuwait Club, has received an invitation to join Bosnian league leader Graanica, who compete in the EHF Champions League, highlighting the growing recognition of Kuwaiti handball talent abroad.

Best of the Rest

Uganda selects squad for Championship: The Uganda Amateur Boxing Federation (UABF) has selected 16 boxers who will represent the country at the Africa Zone 3 Boxing Championship.

Kenya will host the Zonal Championship from October 15 to 25th in the capital Nairobi.

“We have selected a strong team who are products of the Champions League. We have identified new talents, and we expect them to perform well on national duty,” said Moses Muhangi, president of UABF.

This Championship, sanctioned by the African Boxing Confederation (ABC) and the International Boxing Association (IBA), will attract Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Ethiopia, Somalia, Gabon, Congo Brazzaville, Central African Republic and Cameroon. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

Serrano to defend titles against Cruz: Amanda Serrano will defend her featherweight titles in her native Puerto Rico against Erika Cruz in a rematch of their bloody bout in 2023.

The fight will take place Jan. 3 at the Coliseo Roberto Clemente in San Juan, Most Valuable Promotions announced Tuesday.

Serrano (47-4-1, 31 KOs) became Puerto Rico’s first undisputed champion when she beat Cruz by unanimous decision at Madison Square Garden on Feb. 4, 2023. But she has been fighting above the 126-pound weight class recently for the final two bouts of her trilogy with 140-pound champion Katie Taylor. (AP)

United States edges Australia

Messi magic powers Argentina to win

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., Oct 15, (AP): Lionel Messi had two assists and helped start a play that led to another goal, as reigning World Cup champion Argentina beat Puerto Rico 6-0 in a relocated international friendly on Tuesday night.

The match was originally scheduled to be played Monday in Chicago, before promoters moved the game last week. Officials in Chicago said low ticket sales were to blame; officials with the Argentine soccer federation said the immigration crackdown in Chicago was responsible.

Playing on the field he calls home with Inter Miami in Major League Soccer, Messi flicked a quick lob to set up Gonzalo Montiel’s score in the first half and then had a nifty back pass that created Lautaro Martínez’s second goal of the night in the 83rd minute.

Alexis Mac Allister had two goals for Argentina, which also benefited from an own goal midway through the second half.

It was a peculiar matchup in so many ways.

There were the circumstances behind the move, sparked at least in part by an immigration crackdown that had seen more than 1,000 arrested since last month in the Chicago area. Tickets were available a couple hours before the game for as low as \$25, which is rare for anything involving Messi. The stadium was about half-filled at kickoff, though it did fill somewhat more as



Australia forward Connor Metcalfe, front, pursues the ball with United States defender Mark McKenzie in the first half of an international friendly soccer match in Commerce City, Colo. (AP)

the match went along.

It also pitted the world’s No. 3 ranked team, according to global governing body FIFA, in Argentina against the world’s No. 155-ranked team in Puerto Rico - which even had some college players in its lineup.

Goalkeeper Sebastian Cutler - wThe match was part of Argentina’s preparations for the World Cup, which will be played in the U.S., Mexico and Canada next year from June 11 to July 19. The match came on the same day that President Don-

ald Trump, for at least the second time, threatened to relocate World Cup matches.

He said Tuesday that the U.S. could take away matches that are set to be played next year in suburban Boston, after suggesting that parts of the city had been “taken over” by unrest.

Haji Wright scored in the 33rd and 51st minutes off passes from Cristian Roldan, and the United States rallied to beat Australia 2-1 on Tuesday to end the Socceroos’ 12-game unbeaten streak on a night Christian Pulisic left the game be-

cause of an injury.

Jordan Bos had put the No. 25 Socceroos ahead in the 19th minute on Australia’s first shot but Wright equalized just after Pulisic appeared to hurt his right leg.

The 16th-ranked Americans defeated a top 25 opponent for just the second time in 10 matches and improved to 12 wins, seven defeats and one draw since coach Mauricio Pochettino took over.

Wright, who plays for second tier Coventry in England, has 11 goals in 13 games for club and country since August.

Roldan, a member of the 2022 Ecuador and Mexico draw: Jordy Alcivar scored on a penalty kick in the first half to help Ecuador secure a 1-1 draw against Mexico on Tuesday in a warmup match for both teams for the 2026 World Cup.

Germán Berterame opened the scoring in the third minute, but Alcivar tied it in the 20th.

Mexico, which will play in the next World Cup as co-hosts with Canada and the United States, extended its winless streak to four matches.

Mexico had a 4-0 loss to Colombia last Saturday and has not won a match since beating an alternate United States squad in the Gold Cup final on July 6.

Mexico will try to end that streak in November when it plays Uruguay.

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NEWS



Qatar's Boualem Khoukhi, left, celebrates after scoring the opening goal against United Arab Emirates during the 2026 World Cup qualifying soccer match between Qatar and United Arab Emirates at the Hamad Bin Jassim Stadium in Doha. (AP)

Sports

Saudi Arabia and Qatar secure World Cup spots



Saudi Arabia's Saleh Abu Alshamat, left, attempts a shot at goal in front of Iraq's Ibrahim Bayesh Al-Kaabawi during the World Cup 2026 Asian qualifier fourth-round Group B soccer match between Saudi Arabia and Iraq at Alinma Bank Stadium in King Abdullah Sports City, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. (AP)

One of the best days in my career: Julen

JEDDAH, Oct 15, (AP): Qatar and Saudi Arabia secured places at next year's World Cup after topping the two groups in the fourth round of Asian qualifying.

Qatar edged the United Arab Emirates 2-1 in Doha, and Saudi Arabia drew 0-0 with Iraq in Jeddah to become the seventh and eighth teams to qualify from Asia for the expanded 48-team World Cup.

The Qataris and Saudis had home advantage in the fourth stage. Saudi Arabia, after beating Indonesia last Wednesday, got the draw it needed on home soil against Iraq to win Group B. The home team had most of the possession in a game of few chances but couldn't find a breakthrough. Iraq would have qualified for the first time since 1986 with a win.

Asia was allocated eight automatic places at the 2026 World Cup, and Japan, South Korea, Australia, Iran, Uzbekistan, and Jordan qualified from the third round in June.

It marks the first time that Qatar, which lost all three group-stage games when it hosted the 2022 tournament, has advanced through qualification. Saudi Arabia, selected to host the 2034 World Cup, will appear for a seventh time next summer in the tournament being co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

"It's one of the best days in my career," Qatar coach Julen Lopetegui told the host broadcaster. "Today, I think it is one big achievement we have to enjoy."

For Lopetegui, it is another chance to coach at a World Cup after he was fired by Spain just two days before the start of the 2018 tournament, after he accepted the job as Real Madrid manager.

"I am very happy for the fans, and the players - they worked hard and believed," Lopetegui said. "I am very happy for this country, I am happy for me, my family, and my staff. We are going to the World Cup and I hope we can make history."

The victory put Qatar atop Group A, ahead of second-place UAE, which now moves on to a November playoff against Iraq. Oman was eliminated after finishing third in the group. The winner of the Asian playoff in November gets one more shot at a spot in the finals by advancing to the inter-continental qualifying tournament.

Qatar's best first-half chance was on the half-hour, when Mohammed Al-Mannai's header bounced just wide of the UAE goal.

Two minutes into the second half, Khoukhi opened the scoring by heading a free kick from Akram Afif past goalkeeper Khalid Essa. With 17 minutes remaining, Afif provided another assist, crossing from the left for Pedro Miguel to head home at the far post.

Qatar was reduced to 10 men when Tarek Salman was shown a straight red card in the 87th minute. After eight of the 15 minutes added on, the UAE pulled a goal back through Sultan Adil's shot from inside the area to ensure a tense finish. UAE would have advanced with a draw.

Spain maintains perfect record

England cruises to World Cup; Ronaldo and Portugal miss chance to clinch spot

LONDON, Oct 15, (AP): England became the first country from Europe to qualify for the 2026 World Cup, but Cristiano Ronaldo and Portugal will have to wait after conceding a stoppage-time equalizer against Hungary.

England won 5-0 at Latvia, with captain Harry Kane scoring twice in the first half, to assure first place in its group with two matches to spare. The English, who will be appearing at an eighth straight World Cup, haven't conceded a goal in six matches in qualifying so far under German coach Thomas Tuchel.

Portugal looked set to join England in next year's tournament in North America after two goals from the 40-year-old Ronaldo established a 2-1 lead over Hungary in Lisbon. A win would have guaranteed Portugal a first-place finish, but Dominik Szoboszlai made it 2-2 in the first minute of added-on time to leave second-place Hungary five points back with two games left.

Ronaldo at least left the match with another scoring record. He now has 41 goals in World Cup qualifiers, breaking a tie for 39 he had with Guatemala player Carlos Ruiz.

Italy, which has failed to qualify for the last two World Cups, guaranteed itself at least a place in the playoffs after beating Israel 3-0 in a match laced with tension, played amid a hefty police and military presence, and preceded by a pro-Palestinian march attended by an estimated 10,000 people.

The second-placed Azzurri moved three points behind Norway, which has a much healthier goal difference. Both teams have two matches left next month, including a game against each other in Italy in the final round of qualifiers.

Spain stayed top of its group, three points clear of Turkey, by beating Bulgaria 4-0 to maintain its 100% start to the qualifying campaign.



Hungary's Barnabas Varga, top, and Portugal's Nelson Semedo jump for the ball during a World Cup 2026 Group F qualifying soccer match between Portugal and Hungary in Lisbon. (AP)

Turkey also won, 4-1 at home to Georgia, and at least looks set for the spot in the playoffs.

Tuchel is putting his own stamp on the England team - and might potentially be winning over some critics who wanted an English person in charge of the national team.

He has made some big calls, like leaving out high-profile players like Jude Bellingham and Phil Foden from the squad and taking on England's fans for being too quiet in the last match, but is getting some impressive results - albeit against mediocre opposition.

If the 5-0 win in Serbia last month was the statement result in Tuchel's tenure so far, this latest thrashing was another sign of the assuredness and ruthlessness in the

team. Anthony Gordon opened the scoring, Kane added two more in the first half, and there was an own-goal as well as a strike from substitute Eberechi Eze after halftime.

Expect Ronaldo to still get to a record sixth World Cup, but he must wait another month for that to be confirmed.

Portugal missed a chance to wrap up qualification early, with Szoboszlai converting a low cross at the back post to quieten the home fans at the Estádio José Alvalade.

Atilla Szalai gave Hungary an eighth-minute lead with a header from a corner before the enduring Ronaldo stole the show, finding space to tap in his 142nd and 143rd international goals - another record he holds in the men's game.

The Al-Nassr striker has now scored

at least two goals in a game for Portugal on 37 occasions, UEFA said.

Portugal needs just a point from its next match, in Ireland on Nov. 13, to clinch a seventh straight qualification to the World Cup.

On a night of scoring doubles, Mikel Merino netted twice for Spain as the European champions made it four wins from four matches in qualification and are yet to concede a goal.

After an own-goal, Mikel Oyarzabal added a late fourth for Spain, which plays Georgia away and Turkey at home next month.

Turkey, for whom Merih Demiral scored twice against Georgia, has not just three points but an inferior goal difference of 12 to make up to the Spanish.

South Africa, Ivory Coast and Senegal join World Cup party



Senegal's Sadio Mane, centre, celebrates with teammates after scoring his side's first goal during a World Cup Group B qualifying soccer match between Senegal and Mauritania at the Stade Abdoulaye Wade in Dakar, Senegal. (AP)

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 15, (AP): South Africa is back at the World Cup for the first time since hosting the tournament in 2010. Ivory Coast and Senegal will also be there as the latest teams from Africa to qualify.

South Africa secured a spot in North America after beating Rwanda 3-0 on Tuesday to top its qualifying group, despite being docked three points for fielding an ineligible player in earlier games.

South Africa's victory meant Nigeria finished second in the group and will have to qualify through a playoff, despite beating Benin 4-0 at home after a hat trick from star striker Victor Osimhen. Benin had led the group before the last round.

Ivory Coast also secured automatic qualification after a 3-0 win over Kenya, one point ahead of Gabon. The Elephants had missed the last two tournaments.

Senegal reached its third straight World Cup after beating Mauritania 4-0 to qualify as the winner of Group B, two points ahead of Congo

Robert's injury adds to Barca woes

MADRID, Oct 15, (Xinhua): FC Barcelona's injury concerns deepened as striker Robert Lewandowski became the latest player sidelined with a muscle injury.

The Polish forward sustained a hamstring problem in his left thigh while on international duty, Barcelona confirmed in a medical report. The club did not specify a recovery time, but Spanish daily Diario AS estimated an absence of around four weeks.

Lewandowski is the third Barca player to return injured during the international break. Midfielder Dani

Olmo picked up a calf injury in training with Spain and is expected to miss three weeks, while Ferran Torres left Spain's squad with a slight muscle strain but should be fit for Saturday's La Liga home match against Girona.

Both Lewandowski and Olmo are likely to miss the season's first Clasico away to Real Madrid on October 26.

Meanwhile, Raphinha and Lamine Yamal are expected to be available, though coach Hansi Flick will manage Yamal's minutes carefully due to his recurring pelvic issue.

Mallorca owner Kohlberg says FIFA ticket prices risk damage to the sport's image

NEW YORK, Oct 15, (AP): The owner of Spanish soccer club Mallorca says FIFA risks damage to the sport's image with its ticket prices for next year's World Cup.

Andy Kohlberg, a former professional tennis player who took control of the club two years ago, spoke following a promotional event and said "the message (that) has gotten out so far has been primarily negative and that's not a good thing."

FIFA has refused to put out a ticket price grid for the tournament in the

U.S., Mexico and Canada, as it has for every other World Cup since at least 1990, and has said only the most expensive regular seat is \$6,730 for the final and the cheapest ticket for the 104-game tournament is \$60.

FIFA's website has offered hospitality tickets at prices up to \$73,200 per person for the eight matches at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, including the final on July 19.

In addition, FIFA's resale site says the governing body will take a 15%

fee from a seller's revenue and charge a 15% fee to a buyer.

"They have to be careful. It's gotten a lot of bad press," Kohlberg said. "You have to cater to the mainstream fan and at the same time provide an elevated experience for people who want to pay for that. But you can't mix them too much with ticket prices at such a high average and alienate the core fan base, which in terms of numbers is a lot higher but in terms of dollar revenues at a stadium event may not be so high."

FIFA said in a statement "the pricing model adopted generally reflects the existing and developing market practice in our co-hosts for major entertainment and sporting events on a daily basis, soccer included." It added "resale fees align with industry trends across various sports and entertainment sectors" and "the revenue FIFA generates from the World Cup is reinvested to fuel the growth of the game."

FIFA did not release any additional pricing details.

Kohlberg expressed caution about

La Liga's decision to move Barcelona's Dec. 20 match against Villarreal from Spain to Miami Gardens, Florida, the first major European league game to be played in the United States.

"We have to be pretty discerning and careful 'cause it angers some of our fans," Kohlberg said. "It's a lot more controversial in Spain, that people get upset when a game is played out of their country and out of their stadium, whereas in the U.S., they welcome the NFL playing in London. It's

not the same over there. It's a different culture and different mentality, so you have to tread pretty carefully."

Kohlberg hasn't decided whether to attend the match at the Miami Dolphins' Hard Rock Stadium.

"I'll be paying attention," he said, "but looking at the media and what the pushback is and has been in Spain and is that subsiding or getting worse? And what's the American market's reaction to that game in terms of attendance and fan viewership and what the experience has been?"