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## Opinion

■ Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

### In Kuwait, investors are expected to offer incentives to the state, not the other way around

THROUGHOUT the world, countries work hard to develop their infrastructure to promote social stability by stimulating the economy, creating job opportunities for improving the standard of living for their citizens, and enhancing prosperity locally.

The more advanced and reliable a country's infrastructure, the more attractive it becomes to both foreign and local investors.

Recognizing that the private sector is a natural partner to the public sector, governments often offer incentives to encourage private investment—aiming to create a mutually beneficial partnership.

Given that the private sector is the natural partner of the public sector, governments are keen to offer greater incentives to the private sector to ensure that the partnership is mutually beneficial.

As a result, major projects in those countries, particularly infrastructure projects such as metros, railway networks, roads, and even health and education facilities, are often awarded through long-term,

stable agreements that include substantial incentives for contracting companies, whether local or foreign. Foreign firms, in particular, are granted more favorable terms as they bring in external capital and contribute to the local economy by employing local labor.

Most countries around the world adopt the "build, operate, transfer" (B.O.T.) system to implement national projects, involving the private sector in development through long-term usufruct agreements that may extend for 50 years or more.

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'Traders pillar of economy'

### SME National Fund moves to recover KD10mln debts

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel says the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development continues to support entrepreneurs, who represent a fundamental pillar of national economic development, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement following his chairmanship of the National Fund's Board of Directors meeting held recently, Minister Khalifa Al-Ajeel explained that the National Fund has been implementing comprehensive measures since March to recover debts and outstanding financial dues from a number of struggling projects, as part of its commitment to preserving public funds and strengthening financial and administrative discipline. These measures are being taken in line with the legal frameworks governing the fund's operations, specifically Law No. 98/2013.

The National Fund has begun implementing a structured plan to collect and settle debts in an organized manner that ensures the protection of public rights without harming entrepreneurs. The collection procedures are aimed at promoting fairness and protecting public funds, while continuing to provide technical and financial support to serious projects with real economic viability.

Al-Ajeel revealed that the meeting was held to follow up on the progress of relevant financial and administrative files, noting that these efforts are part of the government's vision to create a fair and sustainable financial environment that enhances entrepreneurs' confidence and supports their role in contributing to the national economy.

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## SHARE DIGITAL EXPERTISE WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: KUWAIT

# 'Israeli violations subvert world order'

### Full commitment to ceasefire urged

NEW YORK, Oct 18, (KUNA): The Arabian Gulf Group at the United Nations has warned that the continued Israeli occupation violations not only threatened regional security, but also undermined the foundations of the world order.

This came in a statement delivered by, on behalf of the group, by the Third Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations Rashed Al-Abhouh before the Second Committee of the United Nations in a special session on the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Al-Abhouh cautioned that the Israeli occupation behavior threatened chances of

sustainable development and peace in the region.

The humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip, has reached an unprecedented level of deterioration as a result of the occupation's aggression over the past two years, he regretted.

He noted that the Israeli occupation's war has led to widespread destruction of infrastructure, killing of thousands of civilians, rising rates of poverty and unemployment, and the complete collapse of health, education, and economic services in the Gaza Strip.

Moreover, this suffering has extended to the West Bank, including the occupied East Jerusalem, where Palestinians face discriminatory policies, home demolitions, land confiscation, and restrictions on movement, in addition to escalating settler attacks and illegal settlement expansion, he lamented.

The Third Secretary expressed the Gulf Group's deep concern about the impact of the occupying power's practices on the education sector, as the systematic destruction in Gaza has deprived large numbers of children of their right to education.

He voiced the Gulf Group's condemnation of the occupation's continued depletion of natural resources in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan Heights through the confiscation of land and water and its exploitation for illegal settlement and economic projects, including the wind turbine project, which has caused significant environmental and health damage to Syrian communities. Al-Abhouh stressed the need for full commitment to the ceasefire agreement, and facilitation of the entry of urgent humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip to end the famine and achieve stability.

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### KPC chops health benefits to curb financial expenses

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: As part of its spending rationalization strategy, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has approved a series of amendments to the health services provided to its employees, introducing alternatives aimed at curbing excessive spending and promoting financial efficiency.

According to the decision, KPC approved the implementation of several proposed initiatives to reduce healthcare costs and expenses related to the group health insurance policy for KPC employees and its subsidiaries.

One of the main changes includes the cancellation of the maternity and childbirth benefit, previously capped at an annual maximum of KD 1,500 per person, from the group health insurance policy.

Among the main initiatives proposed in the decision is the provision of maternity and related services to beneficiaries through Ahmadi Hospital or health facilities affiliated with the Ministry of Health. The plan includes increasing the availability of appointments at the maternity clinic in Ahmadi Hospital.

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### Tourist numbers on rise: envoy

## Uzbeks eye major Kuwait investment

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Kuwait Ayub Khan Yunusov said the representatives of 20 Kuwaiti companies will visit his country next month to meet with their Uzbek counterparts and identify opportunities for cooperation.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the Uzbek Language Day celebration, Yunusov dis-



People visit the 'Watheefi' career fair in Hawalli Governorate, Kuwait. The Watheefi career fair launched on Thursday with the participation of more than 80 entities from the public and private sectors. The job fair aims to provide job opportunities and provides a direct communication opportunity for Kuwaiti youth and job seekers. (Xinhua)

### Digitization of charitable sector achieved: Kuwait

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Chairman of the Union of Charitable Societies and Charitable Foundations Saad Al-Otaibi said the charitable sector in the country has reached advanced stages in using modern technologies related to artificial intelligence (AI), stressing that digitization has become one of the distinctive pillars of the performance of charitable societies and charities.

In a statement to the newspaper on the sidelines of a press conference that the Union held Saturday at the Athar Volunteer Center in Rawda to announce the launching of the sixth edition of the 'Uncle Khaled Al-Essa Al-Saleh Award for Institutional Excellence', Al-Otaibi pointed out that Kuwait is among the first countries in the Gulf and Arab world to develop digital donations, making them easy, streamlined and highly secure. He praised the specialized central platform developed by the Ministry of Social Affairs to control, monitor and secure donations to charitable organizations and charities, which he described as an effective and advanced model for AI applications in the charitable sector in the country.

Al-Otaibi disclosed that the Award is considered a milestone in promoting standards of institutional excellence in the Kuwaiti charitable sector and an effective means of instilling the concepts of governance and transparency in the institutional performance of charitable organizations and charities.

He pointed out that the award, in its sixth edition, aims to encourage charitable organizations and foundations to adhere to governance, transparency and technology regulations, in line with

Continued on Page 5

### Newswatch

### Al-Barjas in FIEP meeting

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): Undersecretary of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Lt. Gen. Hamad Al-Barjas and his accompanying delegation will



Al-Barjas

partake in an International Association of Gendarmeries and Police Forces with Military Status (FIEP) meeting.

The gathering to be held under French presidency highlights the impacts and challenges of artificial intelligence on gendarmeries, the KNG said in a press release.

The KNG joined the FIEP in 2019. The FIEP, which comprises Arab and foreign countries, aims at bolstering coordination and cooperation, and sharing expertise in security, counterterrorism and crisis management, it added.

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait Municipality is intensifying field campaigns against stores that display goods on sidewalks without obtaining a permit.

Barjas Al-Saeedi, the head of an inspection team in Al-Jahraa Governorate, said in a statement to KUNA on Thursday that his group recorded today ten violations, exploiting spaces outside the stores without a license.

Legal procedures are taken against the violators, he has added. (KUNA)

### Kuwait focuses on AI to promote relief programs

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) said on Saturday that the first-ever Gulf Red Crescent Conference on Artificial Intelligence will take place on October 22 under the patronage of Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya.

Speaking to KUNA, KRCS Chairman Khaled Al-Maqamis said the gathering is a pioneering step towards building a single Gulf vision to invest artificial intelligence (AI) in serving humanitarian action, promoting Kuwait's status as a major platform for human innovation and pan-Gulf cooperation.

He added that the conference will be held in collaboration with the GCC General Secretariat between Oct 22-23 at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center.

The conference will coincide with the Gulf Red Crescent Day, which falls on October 23, attracting a host of Gulf and non-Gulf experts and specialists and international humanitarian organizations' representatives, Al-Maqamis noted.

The gathering comes in the context of the Kuwait charity's commitment to keeping abreast of modern technological advancement and tapping artificial intelligence in promoting humanitarian action and developmental media and exploring horizons of AI in advancing humanitarian and relief programs, he noted.

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Al-Yahya



### 9 KFH: World's Best Islamic Bank for 2025



### Burgan Bank concludes its 10th platinum sponsorship in the 4th Watheefi national career fair



KUNA photo

Towering Kuwait City skyscrapers as seen from the Martys Park on a crisp morning.



Prayer Timings			
Fajr .....	04:32	Asr .....	14:49
Sunrise ..	05:50	Maghrib ..	17:15
Zohr .....	11:33	Isha .....	18:32

# Local

**Expected weather for next 24 hrs:**  
**By Day:** Rather hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.  
**By Night:** Mild to rather cold with light variable wind to light

Weather			
to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 06-26 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	38	27	
Kuwait Airport	38	20	
Abdaly	39	20	
Bubyan	36	15	
Jahra	39	26	
Fallaka Island	36	20	
Salmiyah	35	27	
Ahmadi	36	22	
Nuwaisib	40	23	
Wafra	39	22	

Ambassador Scheurwater praises volunteers as children reconnect with nature

## Canada, Kuwait join hands for ‘Green Thanksgiving’ celebration

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Canadian Ambassador to Kuwait Tara Scheurwater expressed her happiness over the number of Kuwaiti volunteers participating in the Canadian Thanksgiving celebration, confirming the presence of volunteers from several organizations and entities like the Canadian Women’s Network in Kuwait, Public Authority for Youth (PAY) and Shamiya Nature Reserve.

Scheurwater made the statement at the children’s event organized by the Embassy of Canada in Kuwait, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), Shamiya Nature Reserve, PAY and the Canadian Women’s Network on the occasion of Canadian Thanksgiving

Day and to raise environmental awareness at Shamiya Park on Saturday morning.

According to Scheurwater, “in Canada, we celebrate Thanksgiving in early October because it is essentially a celebration of the harvest season. It is closely linked to nature and the feelings of gratitude we feel towards the world around us. We decided to organize our event today in this wonderful location with our distinguished partners who always welcome the people of Kuwait with open arms. Kuwaitis have created a unique facility that celebrates nature and introduces children and all visitors to the importance of planting and caring for plants, while raising awareness on recycling and environmental conservation.”

Meanwhile, Director of the UN-Habitat Program in

Kuwait Dr. Amira Al Hassan said “we are now in October, which is the month of urban activities for the UN-Habitat Program in various cities around the world. As it is our custom every year, we are organizing an event in cooperation with Shamiya Nature Reserve. We have organized many activities with them over the past years. This is the third year that we are holding an awareness activity for children in cooperation with the Canadian Embassy in Kuwait.”

She explained that “the activity aims to harness the energies of young people to train children through educational activities inspired by the elements of the nature around us. For example, all the materials used in today’s four main activities – seeds, plants, leaves and others – are taken from the natural environment within the reserve

itself. The activities take into account the diversity of children’s interests, such as an artistic activity for creative talents, a story-reading activity, and an agricultural activity that includes planting seeds and seedlings.

She said the goal of the event is “to step away from technology and reconnect with nature, especially in light of the climate changes the world is witnessing today.”

She affirmed that Shamiya Nature Reserve, which is affiliated with PAY, is a key partner in organizing these events. She asserted “the Authority supports us continuously, not only on this occasion, but throughout the year. We hold activities every Saturday, from morning until noon. These activities vary according to the seasons. For example, we previously organized date season events. In the coming period, we will hold the ‘Seed Exchange Day’.”

## Digital visa push drives Kuwait’s tourism boom

6K daily visas issued with eased restrictions

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Immigration departments in Kuwait’s six governorates have approved the issuance of approximately 235,000 visit visas so far, all submitted through the “Kuwait Visa” platform since its launch in July, reports Al-Anba daily.**

According to security sources, visit visas are now available to all nationalities, with no restrictions as were previously imposed. Each department approves around 1,000 visit visas per day, totaling approximately 6,000 daily in all six residency departments. No single nationality dominates the visits, as some days see more Arab expatriates, while other days see a higher number of Asian expatriates.

The total number of visit visas reached 235,000, boosted further by the influx of visitors during the 26th Gulf Cup hosted by Kuwait.

These significant facilities aim to boost tourism in the country by making it easier for visitors to obtain tourist, business, or family visas.

The sources indicated that there are ongoing discussions

about the issuance of visit visas for fourth-degree relatives.

They said, “How can we issue a visit visa for the cousin of an expatriate whose salary does not exceed KD 250, or a little more or less?”

The sources also indicated that issuance of family visit visas for elderly individuals are under review, adding that the acceptance of this type of visit currently depends on the expatriate’s job and salary.

The sources warned against expatriates bringing relatives for work, emphasizing that any visitor caught working will be deported along with the sponsor who brought them and barred from re-entering the country.

They highlighted that those wishing to visit Kuwait only need to apply through the “Kuwait Visa” platform to obtain an electronic visa for eligible categories.

In response to a question about whether any resident of a GCC country is entitled to an entry visa, the sources explained that this privilege is limited to specific groups such as managers and doctors, who are granted visas upon arrival.

They added, “It is still preferable to obtain a visa through the Kuwait Visa platform, which offers four main services - tourist visas, family visits, government visits, and business visas. Also, the platform waives the usual salary requirements for family visits and the national carrier requirement.”

Experts and officials discuss AI-driven security

## 12th eGovernment Forum kicks off

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Organized by the Union of Engineering Offices and Consultant Houses of Kuwait and RAZEN Events Management, in cooperation with the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) and the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), the 12th eGovernment Forum (EGOV12) and its accompanying technology exhibition officially launched this morning.



Engineer Bader Al-Salman

This was announced in a joint press release by the Union of Engineering Offices and Consultant Houses of Kuwait and RAZEN Events Management, the organizers of the event.

On this occasion, Eng. Bader Al-Salman, President of the Union of Engineering Offices and Consultant Houses of Kuwait, said: “We extend our sincere appreciation to H.E. Mr. Omar Saud Abdulaziz Al-Omar, Minister of State for Communications Affairs, for his patronage of the Forum. We also thank both the Central Agency for Information Technology and the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority for their continued support.

CAIT and CITRA.

This year’s theme, ‘AI-Powered Cybersecurity Services,’ addresses a vital issue — the evolving relationship between artificial intelligence and information security.

Through the eGovernment Forum, we continuously aim to highlight topics directly linked to Kuwait’s digital transformation strategy and national cybersecurity priorities.

We hope that, with the participation of sponsors, supporting institutions, and specialized speakers, the Forum will contribute meaningfully to Kuwait’s efforts in this important domain.”

### Forum Objectives

The Forum aims to raise awareness about AI applications in information security, with a focus on their role in Security Operations Centers (SOC) and incident response. It will showcase best practices, innovations, and emerging technologies, offering a platform for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and partnership building.

Key discussions will address ways to mitigate AI-driven cybersecurity

risks through effective tools, continuous monitoring, and workforce development. Participants will gain practical insights into implementing AI-enabled security measures within their organizations, including future trends in adversarial AI and ethical considerations in both AI and cyber-security.

Acknowledgment to Sponsors and Partners

The Union of Engineering Offices and Consultant Houses of Kuwait and RAZEN Events Management extend their appreciation to all institutions supporting the Forum.

**At the top of the list are the Platinum Sponsors:**

- Kuwait Finance House (KFH)
- Zain
- Digitus Group

**The Gold Sponsors include:**

- Ministry of Finance
- TASDEED Electronic Payment System

- Automation Company

The Official Carrier is Kuwait Airways, and the Media Sponsors are Al-Qabas Newspaper and Ishtiqaat Company.

Special thanks are also extended to the government partners — the Central Agency for Information Technology, the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority, and the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, the Forum’s long-standing supporter.

The organizers concluded by expressing their gratitude to all experts, speakers, and media organizations participating in and covering this important technological event.

### Other Voices

## Being happy in old age

By Ahmad alsarraf

THERE is nothing more difficult than spending the final years of life in poor mental health, with a sick body and a weary mind. However, much of this can be prevented or eased by preparing early, paving the way for a happy, or at least relatively comfortable, old age.

The first and most important rule is to let go of the belief that life is fleeting and short, and that we must enjoy every second at any cost.



alsarraf

I don’t dispute the truth behind this saying, but I reject the irresponsible belief in it, as it often leads some people to ignore the consequences of their actions and give free rein to their desires, overindulging in food and drink, smoking, staying up late, and falling into laziness.

These choices often come at a high cost in old age, with hospital beds, tubes inserted and removed from various parts of the body, and long periods of illness.

In 2000, Dr. Roger Rosenblatt wrote a book titled “The Rules of Aging”, which served as a guide to dealing with the later years of life. He was sixty at the time.

But a quarter of a century later, his experiences shifted his perspective. After turning 85, he wrote a second part, offering a summary of his insights. These were lessons that took years to learn and are relevant and applicable at any age.

1. No one is really thinking about you. Everyone, without exception, is focused on themselves. This may seem like a harsh truth, but it is also liberating.

Constantly worrying about other people’s problems and

tragedies can be draining. Feeling hurt because others don’t care about us is equally damaging. But the older we get, the more important it is to understand this.

2. Make friends with young people. They are energetic, enthusiastic, and full of life.

3. Avoid visiting the doctor unless absolutely necessary; even doctors give this advice.

4. Get a pet. Dogs and cats have their problems and often nap more than their owners, but it is hard to find any creature on Earth that will think you are more wonderful than your dog does.

5. Don’t believe the great things said about you. Even if they are true, and especially if they are true. This protects you from self-admiration and arrogance, which is always a good thing.

6. Everyone, without exception, is carrying some kind of pain. If you want to be kind, start now by easing the pain of others.

7. Listen to Bob Marley, Umm Kulthum, or Abdel Wahab. And don’t hesitate to sing, alone or with others.

8. Join a group or circle of friends, especially for men, since women are usually already part of one group or another.

Socializing comes naturally to women, which is why the world might be better off if women ran its affairs. Women know how to coexist in groups. Men, on the other hand, tend to be solitary and static, like generals without wars, riding iron horses.

They don’t naturally gather, but it is important for men to join groups with shared interests to avoid loneliness.

9. Although regret is a part of life, learn to live with it because it is inevitable.

10. Start and end your day by listening to your favorite music or songs, and don’t worry about what others might say.



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### Digital shift

## Kuwait joins Arab health conference

AMMAN, Oct 18, (KUNA): The Arab Board of Health Specializations Forum 2025 kicked off Thursday in the Jordanian capital, Amman, under the theme “The Arab Board of Health Specializations Forum in the Era of Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence.”

A delegation from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health, headed by Undersecretary Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, along with representatives of health and academic institutions from Arab countries, is participating in the forum.

In his speech at the opening ceremony, Iraqi Minister of Health and Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Arab Board of Health Specializations, Dr. Saleh Al-Hasnawi, said the council is strengthening its efforts to keep pace with developments in digital transformation and artificial intelligence in the fields of education, training, and healthcare. This contributes to developing Arab medical competencies and raising the quality of health services.

He emphasized the importance of employing modern technologies in medical training and designing educational programs, noting that the council is constantly updating its mechanisms and training programs to align with global developments.

Dr. Al-Hasnawi highlighted the council’s pivotal role in training and medical accreditation, stressing its aim to graduate an elite group of Arab doctors and specialists capable of leading the health sector in their countries.

He also underscored the significance of the Council of Arab Health Ministers as a key pillar in supporting the work of the Arab Board of Health Specializations, adding that investing in human resources is the cornerstone of building healthy and advanced societies.

For his part, Assistant Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Ambassador Dr. Hussein Al-Hindawi, affirmed that the League’s General Secretariat attaches great importance to developing specialized Arab medical education and keeping pace with digital transformation and artificial intelligence in the health sector.

He praised the efforts of the Arab Board of Health Specializations in qualifying Arab medical cadres and updating training curricula to align with global technological advancements.

Dr. Al-Hindawi explained that the Arab League, through the Council of Arab Health Ministers and its Technical Secretariat, is preparing new Arab strategies for primary health care and family medicine (2026-2030), in addition to developing a plan to leverage the Arab health diaspora to support health systems across Arab countries.



KUNA photo

The Kuwaiti Ambassador to Jordan and embassy staff present the honorary shield to Princess Basma bint Talal.

### Princess Basma praises regional cooperation

## Kuwait joins Charity Bazaar in Amman

AMMAN, Oct 18, (KUNA): The

Kuwaiti Embassy in Jordan participated in the 61st annual International Diplomatic Corps Charity Bazaar, organized by the Jordanian Um Al Hussein Charity Association in cooperation with accredited diplomatic missions and under the supervision of the Jordanian Foreign Ministry.

Kuwaiti Ambassador to Jordan Hamad Al-Marri told KUNA that participation in the Diplomatic Corps Bazaar reflects Kuwait’s ongoing commitment to supporting humanitarian and charitable work and promoting the values of social solidarity toward the most vulnerable segments of society.

He added that the bazaar embodies the spirit of cooperation and convergence among peoples and cultures, representing a unique opportunity to learn about the heritage of participating countries and their cultural and

civilizational diversity.

He stressed that Kuwaiti embassies around the world, under the directives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are always keen to take part in such events that combine humanitarian work with cultural exchange.

Ambassador Al-Marri noted that the patronage of Princess Basma Bint Talal over the bazaar “reflects Jordan’s firm commitment to charitable work and embodies the shared values between the two brotherly countries in supporting and empowering humanity.”

He added, “The noble efforts of the Um Al Hussein Charity in caring for children and providing them with a safe and supportive environment represent an inspiring model of humanitarian work that we in Kuwait are keen to support and strengthen.”

Ambassador Al-Marri and members of the Kuwaiti Embassy in Jor-

dan presented an honorary shield to Princess Basma Bint Talal in appreciation of her patronage of the bazaar and her continuous efforts with the Um Al Hussein Charity.

The Kuwaiti pavilion at the bazaar attracted a large number of visitors who expressed their admiration for the diverse exhibits showcasing aspects of authentic Kuwaiti heritage, as well as the quality and craftsmanship of local industries, including handicrafts and traditional foods.

The Diplomatic Corps Charity Bazaar is one of the most prominent annual events in the Jordanian capital, Amman, as it combines humanitarian and cultural dimensions and aims to support the Um Al Hussein Charity, affiliated with the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development, which cares for orphaned children and provides them with a safe environment and decent life.



# Hamas, Israel friction threatens Gaza accord

“I WOULD like to retell a beautiful story about noble morals as I received it from the source,” columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“A merchant was in his shop in Baghdad one day when a girl came to him and asked to buy something. While she was talking to him, she uncovered her face, which confused him. She then said, “I did not come to buy anything, but I have been going around the market for a few days trying to find a man whom I could fall in love with and marry.” She went on to say that she was rich and would be happy if he married her.



“The merchant responded by pointing out that he was already married to his beloved cousin and was blessed with a nice son. He added that he had promised his wife not to marry another woman or replace her with anyone else.

“The woman said she would be content with having him in her house twice a week. The merchant agreed, and the marriage contract was concluded. Then he went to his house and told his wife, “One of my friends asked me to stay with him tonight.” He then went and spent the night with his new wife.

“He visited her every afternoon for eight months. His cousin disapproved of his behavior and said to her servant, “When he leaves, watch where he goes”. The servant followed him to the shop and waited until noon when he left. She then followed him and found that he entered the woman’s house. The servant then went to the neighbors and asked, “Who owns this house?” They replied, “It belongs to a girl who married a merchant.” The servant returned to her mistress and informed her. The mistress told her, “Do not let anyone know about this,” and she did not reveal anything to her husband.

“After one year, the man fell ill and eventually passed away. His wife then collected the estate, which amounted to 8,000 dinars. She set aside the son’s share of 7,000 dinars and divided the remaining 1,000 dinars into two halves. She kept one half for herself and instructed the servant to deliver the other half to the second wife. The second wife refused to accept the money and asked the servant to return to her mistress and tell her that the merchant had divorced her, so she did not deserve the money.

“The source of the story mentioned that it was not confirmed whether the merchant had indeed divorced the second wife or if she had willingly given up her rights. The position of the first wife is also remarkable, as it reflects her integrity. I wonder if examples of such good people still exist among us.

“The Gaza agreement between Israel and Hamas is likely to fail. Earlier, in January and March 2025, the two parties reached agreements, but Israel violated the terms by launching sudden airstrikes on March 18, reigniting full-scale fighting.

“The Gaza agreement is expected to fail because Israel aims to completely eliminate Hamas. Reconstruction in Gaza cannot proceed without addressing Israel’s security concerns, which involves forcibly disarming Hamas. Netanyahu has consistently emphasized his goals, including the complete destruction of Hamas.”

## Also:

“It has been said that debt blinds the eyes, meaning that borrowing can lead to serious consequences if not properly managed. This saying applies to many developing countries, where debt has become an incurable problem,” former Director General of the Arab Planning Institute **Dr. Bader Othman Malallah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Public (government) debt, in its simplest form, is a loan taken by the government today, with interest paid from future revenues. Borrowing is not considered income. While borrowing helps meet current financial needs, it poses risks for the future. Statistics show that global public and private sector debt has reached around 240 percent of global GDP, exceeding \$100 trillion.

“According to World Bank data, developing countries’ debt is estimated at \$11.4 trillion. Debt service, covering both principal and interest, amounts to approximately \$1.4 trillion. In some countries, spending on debt service exceeds spending on education and healthcare.

“Many of these countries are so deeply trapped in debt that they are unable to escape it for several reasons. Debt has stripped them of the ability to find a path to stability. Most developing nations have fallen into the debt trap not due to conspiracy or the effects of global-

ization, but primarily because of internal challenges such as weak economic growth, budget deficits, poor macroeconomic indicators, chronic economic imbalances, and long-standing financial distortions that have remained unaddressed for decades.

“Another reason is borrowing to cover chronic budget deficits or to finance projects that either fail to generate returns or fall short of expectations. Other factors include weak credit ratings due to limited or shrinking financial buffers, rising debt service and borrowing costs, increasing interest rates, and financial market volatility.

“Specialized reports and studies predict that if current policies remain unchanged, and if developing countries continue to delay essential structural reforms, the debt burden could rise to 100 percent of global GDP. This outlook is driven by factors such as population growth, increasing demands for government spending, persistent budget deficits, the need to address climate change, institutional weaknesses, and poor fiscal policies resulting from limited foreign exchange reserves and high borrowing costs.

“The unprecedented growth in debt is not limited to developing countries. The United States’ debt has reached approximately \$36 trillion, Japan’s around \$9.2 trillion, the United Kingdom’s about £2.7 trillion, and France’s roughly €3.3 trillion. It is clear that the debts of these countries exceed their GDP, creating a huge problem and placing their economies under considerable pressure, pushing them on the path to crisis.

“However, it is inaccurate to compare these countries to developing nations, and it is entirely inappropriate to justify the high debt in developing countries. Developed countries benefit from deep debt markets, high solvency and currency reserves, strong institutions, effective debt and economic management, and lower borrowing costs. These advantages are not available to developing countries.

“Several Middle Eastern countries, including Arab countries, have followed this risky path without prioritizing financial and economic reforms, and have failed to respond to the International Monetary Fund’s repeated calls for such measures. As a result, these countries and their citizens are now facing difficult circumstances.

“No matter how much developing countries strive to maintain a healthy and reasonable debt ratio, the negative consequences of rising debt persist. These can only be curbed through a strong, resilient economy capable of achieving high and sustainable growth.”

□ □ □

“The White House announced a ceasefire in Gaza and the beginning of the implementation of President Donald Trump’s 20-point plan to end the war. This plan includes the release of both living and deceased Israeli captives, as well as approximately 2,000 Palestinian detainees,” Doctor of Law and Kuwaiti Lawyer **Dr. Nayef Al-Adwani** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.



“The agreement was reached after the prolonged war had exhausted both sides, weakened their forces, and resulted in huge human and material losses, all amid growing domestic and international pressure.

“However, new wars are likely to erupt due to the vagueness, fragility, and ease of breaching, modifying, or evading the agreement’s provisions, particularly by the Israeli side, especially after the release of its hostages held by Hamas. This is a major concern for both the Israeli public and government.

“Meanwhile, Hamas stands to benefit from the halt in Israeli bombing and systematic destruction, as well as from the influx of aid to alleviate famine and widespread fear among the people.

“The pressing question is - Who will guarantee and monitor the ceasefire? Who will govern the Gaza Strip? Who will disarm Hamas and take control of its weapons? Who will lead Gaza’s reconstruction, resettle the displaced, and rehouse those who lost everything? What is the timeline for achieving these goals? Who will manage the new war?

“One war may have ended, but others are bound to begin, driven by power struggles and violations of the agreement. Until the train of reconstruction and stability is placed firmly on its tracks and begins moving forward, problems will continue, and new conflicts will emerge.”

— Compiled by Simi K.Kutty



KUNA photo  
Chief of Staff of the Kuwait Army, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shariaan, poses for a picture with the 35th Armored Martyrs Brigade.

## Army chief lauds combat readiness of 35th Brigade

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Chief of Staff of the Kuwait Army, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shariaan, visited the 35th Armored Martyrs Brigade on Thursday, October 16, where he was received by the Commander of the Land Forces, Brigadier General Hamad Al-Suwaidi, along with several senior officers, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The General Staff of the Army stated in a press release that during the visit, Lieutenant General

Al-Shariaan received a briefing on the brigade’s missions and duties, as well as its combat and field readiness and training levels.

The General Staff affirmed that Lieutenant General Al-Shariaan conducted a field tour of several brigade facilities, where he was updated on the progress of work and the implementation of training and operational plans.

Lieutenant General Al-Shariaan was briefed on the brigade’s armament, advanced systems, and

equipment. He observed a training demonstration featuring simulators and interactive screens used in field exercises to improve personnel efficiency and boost combat readiness.

The statement quoted Lieutenant General Al-Shariaan praising the dedicated efforts of the brigade’s personnel in carrying out their duties, and emphasizing the importance of enhancing efficiency and combat readiness through continuous training and joint exercises.

# 12-years jail upheld in assault on security officer with sword

Jordanian accused of setting alight eatery gets bail

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Misdemeanor Section in the Appeals Court suspended the imprisonment of a former deputy general manager, a department head and an accountant at the Public Authority for Sports for one year, with bail of KD1,000, while it upheld the acquittal of a former general manager and another director.**

The Court of First Instance had earlier sentenced the three defendants to one year in prison with hard labor for disbursing sums in violation of the regulations and decisions regarding salaries.

In another case, the Court of Appeals upheld the 12-year prison sentence with hard labor imposed on a citizen convicted of assaulting a security officer and severing four tendons in his hand using a Japanese sword. He was also convicted of detaining his Ukrainian wife inside his home in Shamiya where drugs, weapons and ammunition were found during the raid.

The court confirmed in its ruling that the defendant committed acts that posed a grave threat to public safety, as he assaulted a public employee on duty and used deadly tools, in addition to possessing prohibited substances and unlicensed weapons. This necessitated a harsher sentence to ensure deterrence.

Moreover, the Court of Cassation refrained from punishing a Jordanian accused of setting fire to a Pizza Hut branch in Jabriya.

Instead, it ordered him to sign a one-year pledge of good behavior and pay a bail of KD300. It overturned the two-year prison sentence imposed by the lower courts.

The Cassation Court made the decision after finding out that a similar ruling -- refraining from imposing punishment -- was issued previously when the defendant set fire to a Starbucks branch in Rumaithiya.

□ □ □

**Case dismissed against ex-KFA head:** Lawyer Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan, the legal counsel representing former President of Kuwait Football Association Abdullah Al-Shaheen, stated that the Qatari Court of Cassation issued its final and conclusive ruling on October 6, dismissing the criminal case against his client and others, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Lawyer Al-Qattan revealed that the court affirmed their innocence and upheld the Court of Appeal’s ruling, which had acquitted them of all charges.

In a press statement, he explained that the Qatari Court of Cassation ruled that the expiration of the criminal case due to the statute of limitations constitutes a judgment on the merits of the case, resulting in the acquittal of the accused.

The ruling was based on the court’s findings from the assigned technical expert’s report, which concluded that Al-Shaheen and others were cleared of any alleged amounts. This, along with the official acquittals documented in the case files and the signed settlements between the parties, constitutes a final and irrevocable acquittal that is binding on all parties without exception.

Lawyer Al-Qattan revealed that he has initi-

ated legal action against anyone spreading false information about the case through statements or publications on various platforms.

He emphasized that the goal is to protect reputations and rights and to prevent the recurrence of such abuses.

Lawyer Al-Qattan also called on the Ministry of Information to take measures to halt the dissemination of false news and misleading claims circulated by certain suspicious accounts and platforms.

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**Man acquitted in drugs case:** The Criminal Court acquitted a defendant of possessing psychotropic substances for the purpose of trafficking and personal consumption, as it found the arrest and search procedures invalid and the investigations upon which the warrant issued by the Public Prosecution was based were not serious.

According to the case files, an officer from the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) at the Interior Ministry said his secret investigations indicated that the defendant was in possession of narcotics and psychotropic substances for the purpose of trafficking and personal consumption. He obtained a warrant from the prosecution to arrest him and search his residence, where suspected narcotics were found.

The officer testified that the defendant admitted the crime and revealed there are more drugs in a warehouse. Upon entering the warehouse, additional suspected substances were found.

However, the defendant denied the charges when interrogated by the prosecution.

Attorney Walid Masoud, lawyer for the defendant, appeared in court with his client.



Al-Anba photo

Police cars patrolling in the Capital Governorate, Kuwait.

## Mol beefs up security, conducts traffic raids

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The General Directorate of Emergency Police carried out a field security and traffic campaign on Thursday after deploying mobile patrols in various areas of the Capital Governorate, in order to strengthen security presence, improve traffic discipline, and apprehend violators without setting up permanent checkpoints, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to an official statement issued by the Ministry of Interior, the campaign’s results included:

- Issuance of 519 traffic citations
- Arrest of wanted individuals, absconders, two persons found in possession of narcotics, and three violators of the residency and labor laws
- Seizure of 8 wanted vehicles and referral of 21 violating vehicles to the impoundment garage
- Referral of one violator to the General Traffic Department.

## ‘Protecting digital space national responsibility’

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): Chairman of the Board of Directors at the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) Dr. Khaled Al-Zamel affirmed Saturday that protecting the digital space is a national responsibility akin to protecting land and maritime borders.

This came in during his speech at the Kuwait Cyber League Hackathon, organized by Dawrat in collaboration with Zain, with participation from students, enthusiasts, and professionals in the field.

He pointed out that the event aims to sharpen the generation’s knowledge to safeguard personal and national digital assets, emphasizing that cybersecurity has become the first line of defense for nations.

For his part, CEO of Dawrat Mohammad Al-Suraye affirmed in a similar speech the importance of these initiatives in bringing youth together to develop their skills in cybersecurity to build a generation capable of facing cyberattacks.

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Officials and honorees pose for a group photo during the National Diwan for Human Rights (NDHR) ceremony. NDHR photo

# NDHR awards outstanding advocates of human rights

Individuals and entities recognized

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18:** The National Diwan for Human Rights (NDHR) held a ceremony to honor several individuals and entities in recognition of their outstanding efforts in supporting the diwan’s work and promoting human rights values and principles in Kuwait, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ceremony highlighted the contributions of those who have played a major role in advancing NDHR’s activities and programs.

The honorees included the following individuals for their active contributions to academic support:

- Retired Major General Fahad Al-Obaid, former Director General of the General Administration of Correctional Institutions at the Ministry of Interior, in recognition of his efforts in the “Sandhom” initiative;
- Lana Abu Obaid, former Head of the Committees, Organizations, and International Agreements Affairs Sector at NDHR;
- Dr. Jassim Al-Hamdan, Dean of Student Affairs at Kuwait University;
- Dr. Hamad Al-Aslawi from the College of Social Sciences;
- Several students from the College of Social Sciences at Kuwait University for submitting outstanding research papers on human rights issues from both academic and societal perspectives;
- Several NDHR employees for their outstanding contributions in supporting the organization’s activities

and programs, in recognition of their dedication and efforts.

In his speech during the ceremony, Minister Plenipotentiary Anas Al-Shaheen, Chairman of the Tripartite Committee for NDHR Operations, expressed his pleasure at the gathering.

He stressed that the recognition reflects appreciation for the sincere efforts that have helped achieve the NDHR’s goals and promote the values of human dignity.

Al-Shaheen highlighted that the ceremony is a gesture of gratitude toward all those who have contributed to advancing human rights, and praised the spirit of cooperation and teamwork.

He affirmed the continued efforts to achieve further milestones that enhance Kuwait’s position as a global humanitarian center.

At the end of the ceremony, Al-Shaheen expressed his thanks and appreciation to all the honorees.

## Kuwait, WB pledge stronger co-op

# Minister Al-Mukhaizeem holds talks with World Bank VP for Middle East

WASHINGTON, Oct 18, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and Acting Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investments Dr. Sabeeh Al-Mukhaizeem on Thursday met with the World Bank Vice President for the Middle East and North Africa, Ousmane Dione.

Minister Al-Mukhaizeem, during the meeting, touched on the necessity to boost the relationship with the WB local office in Kuwait particularly after appointment of a new director.

For his part, Dione expressed gratitude to Kuwait for paying its contribution to the general and voluntary increases to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development’s budget.

Moreover, the two sides affirmed



KUNA photo  
Acting Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investments, Dr. Sabeeh Al-Mukhaizeem, meets with World Bank Group Vice President for the Middle East and North Africa, Ousmane Dione.

necessity of boosting cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the World bank particularly in the sectors of education, health, energy and water.

## Farwaniya holds 3rd complaints panel meet

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Under the patronage of Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah, and as part of his continued interest in the activities of the Governorate Council committees, the Complaints and Petitions Committee held its third meeting on Thursday morning, chaired by

Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs at the Ministry of Health Dr. Al-Mundar Wael Al-Hasawi.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the meeting was attended by committee members, including Vice-Chairman Saad Al-Hadba, Member Ali Al-Shanfa, and

several representatives from relevant authorities.

The meeting was also attended by Director of Farwaniya Security and Governorate Council Member Brigadier General Muhammad Eid Al-Ghasab, and Maintenance Supervisor at the Engineering Affairs Department of the Ministry of Education and Governorate Council Member Eng. Jamal Al-Aiban, along with representatives from Farwaniya Municipality and the Ministry of Public Works.

The attendees discussed a number of complaints and petitions submitted by citizens, as well as the actions taken by the relevant authorities in response.

The Committee Chair highlighted the committee’s commitment to facilitating procedures, removing obstacles facing citizens, and handling complaints promptly, which reflects its commitment to strengthening communication between residents and official bodies.



Farwaniya Governorate photo  
Public health, security and Municipality officials attend Farwaniya complaints session.

## 267 seats set, 30 reserved for disabled

# CSC approves MoE scholarship plan

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: In a move that confirms the dedication of Kuwait to empower national manpower and improve their academic competencies, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) approved the 2025/2026 scholarship plan of the Ministry of Education, reports Al-Rai daily.

The plan allocates 267 seats for internal and external scholarships for ministry employees, covering all academic levels – from diplomas to postgraduate studies – including 30 seats designated for people with disabilities.

The CSC affirmed the adherence of the Education Ministry to all the scholarship and study leave regulations, as well as the relevant Civil Service Council decisions, instructions and circulars to ensure smooth nomination and approval procedures.

It also stressed the importance of accurately entering candidates’ data into the integrated systems, including the latest academic qualification, GPA or percentage, awarding institution, completion date and type of scholarship.

It emphasized the need to ensure that the qualification title stated in the nomination letter matches the title entered in the system to prevent processing delays.

The CSC stated that nominations submitted by the Education Ministry will be reviewed, and initial approvals will be granted if the conditions stipulated in the scholarship regulations are met. This process aims to facilitate candidates’ academic acceptance and accreditation by the relevant cultural offices.

It highlighted as well the necessity of attaching the scholarship application form, a copy of the academic qualification, and an equivalency certificate if the qualification was obtained outside Kuwait or from a private university. Nomination letters must be

submitted at least 60 days prior to the start of study, in accordance with the Ministry of Higher Education’s instructions.

The CSC clarified that any nomination letters submitted in violation of the guidelines or after the specified deadlines will not be considered. Therefore, the concerned departments in the Education Ministry must verify all data and attachments before submitting applications.

It underscored the importance of including a table specifying the approved number of seats for each scholarship category and called on the Ministry of Education to provide its requirements for the necessary specializations for academic diplomas and bachelor’s degrees. It requested for the names and telephone numbers of the employees in charge of overseeing scholarships and study leave for coordination purposes when needed.

**Following are the scholarship plan details:**

- Academic Diploma and Bachelor’s Degree (Funded): 40 seats
- Academic Diploma and Bachelor’s Degree (Unfunded): 90 seats
- Academic Diploma and Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing (Funded): two seats
- Postgraduate Studies (Unfunded): 90 seats
- Scholarship to the Arabian Gulf University in Bahrain (Funded): 10 seats
- Scholarship to Distinguished Universities for Bachelor’s and Postgraduate Studies (Funded): five seats
- Scholarship for People with Disabilities – Academic Diploma and Bachelor’s Degrees (Funded): 15 seats
- Scholarship for People with Disabilities – Postgraduate Studies (Unfunded): 15 seats

## News in Brief

# PAHW starts processing housing requests for revoked citizenship

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) announced that it began accepting applications from individuals whose spouses’ citizenships were revoked under Article 8 of the Nationality Law, from Thursday, October 16, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

PAHW clarified in a statement that applications must be submitted in person at the main headquarters of the Citizen Service Department during official working hours to complete the housing application process.

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**Ahmadi education admin post filled:** Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei issued a decision assigning Human Resources Supervisor in Ahmadi Educational District Hawra Mukhtar Hussein Lari to carry out the duties of Director of Administrative and Technical Affairs Department in the district, which is affiliated with the General Administration of Human Resources and Personnel Affairs under the Administrative, Financial and Technical Affairs Sector, reports Al-Anba daily. This assignment will be in addition to the current responsibilities of Lari and will remain in effect until her return.

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**PAAAFR opens sale of winter plants:** The Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) announced the commencement of the sale and distribution of agricultural plants for the 2025 winter season, reports Al-Anba daily.

The initiative started Wednesday and will continue until Dec 31. Sales take place during official working hours, from Sunday to Thursday, between 8:00 am and 12:00 noon, at the Al-Omariya Nursery.

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**Acting PAMA head appointed:** Minister of Justice and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Minors Affairs (PAMA) Nasser Al-Sumait issued a decision assigning Alia Fahad Abdulrahman Al-Sagr as Deputy Director General for Legal and Charitable Affairs, and Deputy Director General for Administrative and Financial Affairs, Administrative Development and Training, in addition to her duties as acting Director General of the Authority, reports Al-Rai daily.

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KUNA photo  
Nasser Al-Qahtani, Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Italy

## FAO marks 80 years of fighting hunger

# Kuwait joins call for hunger-free world

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) held, at its headquarters in Rome, celebrations on the 80th anniversary of its establishment with the theme “Hand in hand for better food and a better future!”

The theme calls for global solidarity to build a more sustainable and equitable food system for all people.

The celebrations, part of the World Food Forum (WFF), saw the participation of the organization’s 194 members in addition to figures such as Pope Leo XIV, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani, FAO Goodwill Ambassador, Jordan’s Princess Basma bint Ali, and others.


Kuwaiti Ambassador to Italy Nasser Al-Qahtani and Kuwait’s Permanent Representative at FAO Yousef Juhaileh also took part in the celebrations.

Pope Leo XIV delivered a speech during the celebrations calling for avoiding the use of hunger as a weapon during conflicts, saying that such action was a violation of international humanitarian law.

He said that governments and global institutions must intensify efforts to rid the world of hunger, saying that this was a moral and political imperative.

For his part, FAO’s Secretary General Qu Dongyu revealed that some 637 million people suffer from severe malnutrition, adding that billions could not sustain the cost of food and agricultural systems -- a matter that required innovation on part of all humanity.

He announced during the occasion the establishment of a museum and a special network for FAO to celebrate the organization’s heritage in supporting agriculture and food systems.



KUNA photo  
Deputy Foreign Minister during the political consultation meeting.

## Kuwait and Ethiopia hold third round of political consultation

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait and Ethiopia discussed on Thursday ways to boost ties in all possible fields during the third round of political consultation.

The meeting, headed by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and visiting Ethiopian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hadera Abera Admassu, also touched on issues of mutual interest and the latest regional and international developments.

A luncheon was held in honor of the visiting Ethiopian official and the accompanying delegation.

## Rental draw set for Oct 28

# PAHW to hold first housing lottery for disabled women

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Women’s Housing Committee at the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) has invited female citizens with disabilities, who have submitted rental housing applications and previously updated their information, to participate in a special housing lottery that will take place in Sulaibiya and Taima on October 28 at 10:00 AM in Abbas Marafi Hall of the PAHW building in South Surra, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the committee explained that this initiative is part of PAHW’s efforts to empower women and enhance their access to appropriate housing, in line with Article 27 of the Housing

Welfare Regulations. The article stipulates the provision of suitable rental housing to Kuwaiti women with disabilities, whether married, divorced, or widowed by a non-Kuwaiti, without considering the usual application priority system.

The committee praised the state’s strong support for women with disabilities and its commitment to removing barriers to ensure their full integration into society.

It also highlighted that this marks the first time in PAHW’s history that a special lottery is being held exclusively for female citizens with disabilities, which reflects its commitment to fairness and equality among all citizens.

## KAAA offers intensive exam training

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Board Member and former Chairman of Kuwait Accountants and Auditors Association, (KAAA), Rashid Awad Al-Hatalani says this year’s course attracted 50 participants from both the public and private sectors, with the association employing highly qualified and skilled trainers in all subjects, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He revealed that the subjects covered in the registration exam course included financial accounting for commercial establishments, management account-

ing, cost accounting, commercial laws, professional responsibilities, auditing, and audit evidence. Al-Hatalani explained that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has set exam dates for all the subjects covered in the course. The exam for financial accounting for commercial establishments will be held on Sunday, December 14, the management accounting and cost on December 17, the commercial laws and professional responsibilities exam on December 21, and the auditing and audit evidence exam on December 24.

# Hajj registration soars on Sahel as strict health guidelines apply

## Over 21,500 applicants register in just 4 days

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Ministry of Islamic Affairs announced that 21,500 people have applied to perform Hajj rituals for the 1447 AH Hajj season through the unified government e-services application (Sahel) since the start of the registration period.

Director of the Hajj and Umrah Affairs Department at the ministry Sattam Al-Muzain posted on the ‘X’ platform that this number of applicants was registered after only four days of opening the registration.

Moreover, the ministry has laid down the health requirements and guidelines for travelers from Kuwait to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for Hajj 1447 AH.

Based on information provided by the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the pilgrims must declare that they are free of diseases, which affect the minimum physical ability to perform Hajj. Diseases that prevent a person from performing Hajj rituals



MolA photo  
Sattam Al-Muzain, Director of the Hajj and Umrah Affairs Department at the ministry

include vital organ failure, chronic lung diseases that require oxygen, heart failure whose symptoms appear at rest or with minimal effort,

late-onset chronic blood diseases, and neuro-motor disabilities that affect cognition and motor impairment.

The ministry stressed the need to prevent patients suffering from the aforementioned diseases from registering, warning that if they register without adhering to these instructions, their application will be cancelled.

Regarding the recommended vaccinations before traveling to perform Hajj, the ministry clarified that certain categories of those wishing to perform Hajj or undertake seasonal work are required to prove their immunization against COVID-19 before traveling to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It stated that the health authorities in the Kingdom might take additional preventive measures at the ports of entry for those arriving from countries deemed vulnerable to health risks.

The ministry indicated that the registration for those wishing to perform Hajj continues until Nov 22 through the Sahel app. It added registration will be held for several seasons until all registered pilgrims are sorted through the system, and the registrants shall retain their lottery ranking until the nomination request is received.

## Continued from Page 1

### In Kuwait,

In Kuwait, however, the situation is different. Instead of promoting the private sector as a development partner, some government agencies hinder productive projects of the private sector through restrictive decisions, such as recent measures affecting industrial, agricultural, and service plots. These decisions run counter to Cabinet’s directives aimed at encouraging private sector participation and, in effect, contribute to rising inflation by reducing market competitiveness.

In most countries around the world, local or foreign companies take on the construction and financing of airports, railways, and roads. These companies then recover their investments through a mutual benefit or usufruct system. This ensures that governments avoid financial burdens and do not expose public budgets to deficits. The B.O.T. system creates a stable, supportive, and investment-friendly environment while enabling governments to achieve sustainable development goals.

This is clearly evident in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and other neighboring countries that have moved away from the policy of state monopolization of development projects. These countries have realized that such a policy limits the economy’s potential, discourages both local and foreign investment, and increases dependence on already strained state resources, thus ultimately hindering efforts to diversify income sources.

In the past, certain decisions hindered the stability of local development. The burdensome conditions imposed on the private sector, especially those related to industrial, service, and agricultural plots, created widespread concern. Both local and foreign investors require incentives and attractive terms to increase their participation in the local market.

Such restrictions have driven investors to seek more stable environments that offer greater support and facilities.

For example, the Chinese-Kuwaiti partnership has been discussed for nearly three years, yet no tangible achievements have materialized so far. While progress may be underway, it remains slow.

Kuwait appears to be moving against the global trend. Here, investors are expected to offer incentives to the state, rather than the state providing incentives to attract investment. This raises an important question – Which party truly needs the other, and who is seeking to attract foreign investment?

### ‘Israeli violations

He welcomed for the signing of the Gaza Agreement during the Sharm el-Sheikh Peace Summit, which was based on the plan proposed by US

President Donald Trump and thanks to the commendable efforts of Qatar, Egypt, and Türkiye.

The Third Secretary also voiced the Group’s anticipation of the issuance of the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Obligations of the Occupying Power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory next Wednesday.

It would be an important legal reference that consolidates the principles of international justice and accountability and strengthens efforts to end the occupation and guarantee the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, he clarified.

Regarding the report of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Al-Abhouh said that the Gulf Group is deeply concerned about the report findings, which showed the depth of the human suffering of the Palestinian people and the Syrian population in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan Heights due to the ongoing occupation policies of repression, expansion, and illegal settlement.

He reiterated the Gulf Group’s firm support to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among them their right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state on the June 4, 1967, borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

He called on the international community to assume its legal and moral responsibilities to end the occupation, lift the siege on the Gaza Strip, halt all occupation violations, and hold those responsible accountable in accordance with the international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Also, the Gulf Group at the UN voiced support to initiatives aiming at investing technology to make information pertinent to multilateral treaties available to the public so easily, transparently and free of charge.

Addressing the Sixth UN Committee on behalf of the group late Thursday, Kuwaiti Diplomatic Attaché Jana Al-Dhifairi said that amid rapid changes in legal and technological realms, it is indispensable to double efforts to transfer knowledge and share expertise, leading to balanced international relations based on mutual respect and understanding.

She cited the Kuwait Declaration, which was adopted during the 45th session of the GCC, as underlining the significance of strategic investment in information technology, mainly artificial intelligence, big data analytics, cloud computing and cybersecurity.

The declaration also stressed the necessity of developing digital infrastructure, expanding emerging technologies and grooming young people for digital transformation.

The Kuwaiti diplomat also explained the importance of technology and digital infrastructure in GCC development goals, saying that mutual interest has

positively reflected on GCC advance in communication development and information technology index.

She spoke highly of international efforts purposed to invest technology in treaty-making practices as a strategic tool of developing governance systems, respecting human rights and establishing the rule of law in international relations.

## Digitization of

the aspirations of the State and the vision of the oversight bodies in the ministries of Social Affairs and Foreign Affairs, and to reflect the distinguished Kuwaiti model of charitable work.

He confirmed that the number of charitable organizations, which applied for the award since the announcement of the start of applications on Aug 15, has exceeded 30. He revealed there is widespread Gulf participation in this year’s award, including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the Sultanate of Oman, as well as other Arab countries such as Jordan. He added this affirms that Kuwaiti charitable work has transcended geographical borders to become a model to be emulated regionally.

He indicated that the end of October is the deadline for applications and the start of the evaluation phase for participants by the judging committees. He said the results will be announced at a ceremony in honor of the winners on Nov 20, 2025.

He added “over the past few years, we have witnessed the significant impact this Award has had in encouraging associations and charities to develop their systems, adopt technology, document compliance and governance evidence, and avoid conflicts of interest—all of which are essential factors for ensuring sustainability and community trust. Today, we are proud that more than 90 associations and charities have become active members of the Union, reflecting the rising awareness on the importance of integration and coordination under an institutional umbrella that brings together efforts and unifies visions.”

## SME National

He also recalled that the fund’s Board of Directors had previously approved an amendment to the loan repayment mechanism for beneficiaries, extending the repayment period to 15 years. This excludes the grace period, which may reach up to three years as stipulated by law, as well as exceptional deferral periods, such as the four-year deferral granted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Al-Ajeel explained that the amendment was made in response to requests from small and medium-sized enterprise owners seeking greater flexibil-

ity in managing their financial obligations. The goal is to strike a balance between empowering entrepreneurs and preserving the Fund’s financial sustainability.

In addition, sources close to the National Fund revealed that debt collection procedures, which are already underway, involve more than 60 distressed projects.

They indicated that the Fund is considering adopting a new conciliatory approach with struggling entrepreneurs, and avoiding legal action as the initial step in dealing with them, adding that this approach is part of a plan to resolve accumulated debts, which exceed KD 10 million.

## KPC chops

Furthermore, the payment and reimbursement system under the group health insurance policy has been suspended. Instead, beneficiaries will receive treatment at Ahmadi Hospital or Ministry of Health facilities in cases where insurance coverage limits are exceeded, medical conditions are excluded from insurance coverage, or treatment is sought at medical centers outside the network of health service providers.

Other important changes include the removal of parental treatment at Ahmadi Hospital from new employment contracts, as well as the removal of health-care coverage for retirees’ families at the same hospital. These policy amendments will take effect on April 1, 2026.

The policy also includes approval to extend the group health insurance system for a new three-year term, starting April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2029. The possibility of further extension will be reviewed at a later stage.

Kuwait Oil Company has been tasked with taking all necessary steps to implement the provisions of Clause 3 of this decision, including initiating the process of securing the best offers and prices from local insurance companies. This will be carried out in accordance with the insurance policy system of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and its subsidiaries.

## Uzbeks eye

He also affirmed the presence of a number of Kuwaiti investments in his country, the most recent of which is in the health sector in the city of Sirgana, through the establishment of medical laboratories there.

Regarding the occasion, Yunusov stated that his country celebrates Uzbek Language Day on Oct 21 each year, stressing it is a precious national occasion to renew pride in cultural identity and strengthen the status of the mother tongue as an official language, which expresses the unity of the Uzbek people and their ancient history.



KUNA photos  
A delegation from the Embassy of the State of Kuwait, headed by Counselor Nawaf Al-Rujaib, visits the cemetery of the martyrs of the State of Kuwait in the military cemetery in the Egyptian governorate of Suez, coinciding with the 52nd anniversary of the victories of the October 1973 War.

## Delegation honors martyrs

# Kuwait reaffirms solidarity with Egypt through tribute

CAIRO, Oct 18, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Embassy in Cairo on Thursday underlined the depth of Kuwait-Egypt ties, rooted in a shared destiny and tested through wars and hardship.

Embassy Counselor Nawaf Al-Rujaib told KUNA this came during a delegation visit he led to the graves of Kuwait’s fallen at the Suez War Memorial Cemetery, marking the 52nd anniversary of the October 1973 victories.

The visit honored soldiers’ sacrifices, where Arab blood was shed defending rights and sovereignty, he said, noting Kuwait’s significant military and economic contributions.

Al-Rujaib paid tribute to Kuwaiti

Army martyrs on the Egyptian front, reaffirming Kuwait’s solidarity with Arab states and its consistent support for Arab causes and crisis responses.

He commended Egypt’s regional and international role in encouraging security and stability, and its care for the graves of Arab martyrs.

The visit featured honors with a military band playing the martyr’s anthem and the recitation of Al-Fatiha (prayer verse) at Kuwait’s graves.

The embassy delegation was received by Third Army Chief of Staff Major General Adel Al-Ghuwaid and included Deputy Military Attache Brigadier General Ayedh Al-Helfy.



Federal shutdown on track to surpass 16-day closure in 2013

# Senate Dems, holding out for health care, reject govt funding bill for 10th time

WASHINGTON, Oct 18, (AP): US Senate Democrats rejected for the 10th time a stopgap spending bill that would reopen the government, insisting they won't back away from demands that Congress take up health care benefits.

The vote failed on a 51-45 tally, well short of the 60 needed to advance with the Senate's filibuster rules.

The repetition of votes on the funding bill has become a daily drumbeat in Congress, underscoring how intractable the situation has become. It has been at times the only item on the agenda for the Senate floor, while House Republicans have left Washington altogether. The standoff has lasted over two weeks, leaving hundreds of thousands of federal workers furloughed, even more without a guaranteed payday and Congress essentially paralyzed.

"As we are positioning as two sides that are seemingly dug in on this 16th day of a shutdown, real people are wondering is their government going to be there for them?" said GOP Sen Lisa Murkowski of Alaska.

The shutdown is on track to surpass the 16-day closure in 2013, which was also a debate over the Affordable Care Act. The longest shutdown ended in 2019, after 35 days.

While the military was paid this week, it's unclear how long that will last. The White House budget office told Congress that it cost \$6.5 billion to cover this one pay period. The next one is two weeks.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune again and again has tried to pressure Democrats to break from their strategy of voting against the stopgap funding bill. It hasn't worked. And while some bipartisan talks have been ongoing about potential compromises on health care, they haven't produced any meaningful progress toward reopening the government.

"The Democratic Party is the party that will not take yes for an answer," Thune, a South Dakota Republican, said in an angry speech on the Senate floor.

He had also offered to hold a later vote on extending subsidies for health plans offered under Affordable Care Act marketplaces, but said he would not "guarantee a result or an outcome."

Democrats say they won't budge until they get a guarantee on extending the tax credits for the health plans. They warn that millions of Americans who buy their own health insurance - such as small business owners, farmers and contrac-



House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (left), and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, speak to reporters outside the Senate chamber as they charge President Donald Trump and the Republicans with the government shutdown, at the Capitol in Washington on Oct 16. (AP)

tors - will see large increases when premium prices go out in the coming weeks. Looking ahead to a Nov. 1 deadline in most states, they think voters will demand that Republicans enter into serious negotiations.

"The ACA crisis is looming over everyone's head, and yet Republicans seem ready to let people's premiums spike," said Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer in a floor speech.

Meanwhile, Thune tried a different tack with a vote to proceed to appropriations

bills - daring Democrats to vote against funding legislation for the Department of Defense. They also voted that down.

Democrats have rallied around their priorities on health care as they hold out against voting for a Republican bill that would reopen the government. Yet they also warn that the time to strike a deal to prevent large increases for many health plans is drawing short.

When they controlled Congress during the pandemic, Democrats boosted subsidies for Affordable Care Act health plans. It pushed enrollment under President Barack Obama's signature health care law to new levels and drove the rate of uninsured people to a historic low. Nearly 24 million people currently get their health insurance from subsidized marketplaces, according to health care research nonprofit KFF.

Democrats - and some Republicans - are worried that many of those people will forgo insurance if the price rises dramatically. While the tax credits don't expire until next year, health insurers will soon send out notices of the price increases. In most states, they go out Nov. 1.

Sen. Patty Murray, the top Democrat on the Senate Appropriations Committee, said she has heard from "families who are absolutely panicking about their premiums that are doubling."

"They are small business owners who are having to think about abandoning the job they love to get employer-sponsored health care elsewhere or just forgoing coverage altogether," she added.

Some Republicans have acknowledged that the expiration of the tax credits could be a problem and floated potential compromises to address it, but there is hardly a consensus among the GOP.

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., this week called the COVID-era subsidies a "boondoggle."

President Donald Trump has said he would "like to see a deal done for great health care," but has not meaningfully weighed into the debate. And Thune has insisted that Democrats first vote to reopen the government before entering any negotiations on health care.

If Congress were to engage in negotiations on significant changes to health care, it would likely take weeks, if not longer, to work out a compromise.

## WH asks court to allow deployment of National Guard in Chicago area

WASHINGTON, Oct 18, (AP): The Trump administration on Friday asked the Supreme Court to allow the deployment of National Guard troops in the Chicago area, escalating President Donald Trump's conflict with Democratic governors over using the military on US soil.

The emergency appeal to the high court came after a judge prevented, for at least two weeks, the deployment of Guard members from Illinois and Texas to assist immigration enforcement. A federal appeals court refused to put the judge's order on hold.

The conservative-dominated court has handed Trump repeated victories in emergency appeals since he took office in January, after lower courts have ruled against him and often over the objection of the three liberal justices. The court has allowed Trump to ban transgender people from the military, claw back billions of dollars of congressionally approved federal spending, move aggressively against immigrants and fire the Senate-confirmed leaders of independent federal agencies.

In the dispute over the Guard, U.S. District Judge April Perry said she found no substantial evidence that a "danger of rebellion" is brewing in Illinois during Trump's immigration crackdown.



Military personnel in uniform, with the Texas National Guard patch on, are seen at the US Army Reserve Center on Oct 7, in Elwood, Ill., a suburb of Chicago. (AP)

But Solicitor General D. John Sauer, Trump's top Supreme Court lawyer, urged the justices to step in immediately. Perry's order, Sauer wrote, "impinges on the President's authority and needlessly endangers federal personnel and property."

Eleven people were arrested at a Friday protest outside a US Customs and Immigration Enforcement facility in the West Chicago suburb of Broadview. Law enforcement

had urged demonstrators to stay in designated "protest zones."

In recent weeks, the Broadview ICE facility has been the site of tense protests, where federal agents have previously used tear gas and other chemical agents on protesters and journalists.

A federal judge in Oregon also has temporarily blocked the deployment of National Guard troops there.

Bolton pleads not guilty in Justice Dept case

## Trump commutes sentence of ex-rep Santos

NEW YORK, Oct 18, (AP): US President Donald Trump said Friday he had commuted the sentence of former US rep George Santos, who was slated to serve more than seven years in federal prison after pleading guilty to fraud and identity theft charges.

Joseph Murray, one of Santos' lawyers, told The Associated Press late Friday that the former lawmaker was released from the Federal Correctional Institution in Fairton, New Jersey, around 11 p.m., and was greeted outside the facility by his family.

The New York Republican was sentenced in April after admitting last year to deceiving donors and stealing the identities of 11 people - including his own family members - to make donations to his campaign. He reported to FCI Fairton on July 25 and was housed in a minimum security prison camp with fewer than 50 other inmates.

"George Santos was somewhat of a 'rogue,' but there are many rogues throughout our Country that aren't forced to serve seven years in prison," Trump posted on his social media platform. He said he had "just signed a Commutation, releasing George Santos from prison, IMMEDIATELY."

"Good luck George, have a great life!" Trump said. Santos' account on X, which has been active throughout his roughly 84 days in prison, reposted a screenshot of Trump's Truth Social post Friday.



Former US rep George Santos arrives at federal court for sentencing, April 25, 2025, in Central Islip, NY. (AP)

**Also:**  
**GREENBELT, Md:** John Bolton arrived at a federal courthouse Friday to surrender to authorities on charges accusing the former Trump administration national security adviser turned critic of the president of emailing classified information to family members and keeping top secret documents at his Maryland home.

Bolton did not comment to reporters as he entered the courthouse in Green-

belt, Maryland, where he is expected to make an initial appearance before a judge on the 18-count indictment brought against him on Thursday.

It's third criminal case brought in recent weeks by the Justice Department against a Trump adversary, and is unfolding against the backdrop of growing concerns that the Republican president is using the law enforcement agency to seek retribution against his perceived enemies.



Protesters take part in a rally at Skanderbeg square in central Tirana, Albania, on Oct 17 against war crimes trials being pursued against some of their leaders in The Hague. (AP)

### Thousands rally in Albania against court prosecuting Kosovo war vets

Kosovo war veterans and thousands of their supporters gathered Friday in the Albanian capital, Tirana, in a protest against a European Union-backed court prosecuting their former fighters who waged the 1998-99 war for independence from Serbia, claiming the tribunal is biased and unjust.

Demonstrators from Kosovo and other European countries filled Tirana's main Skanderbeg Square in support of arrested former leaders of the Kosovo Liberation Army, or KLA - a former Kosovo Albanian guerrilla group that led the fight for independence.

Many held national Albanian and KLA flags, while a group of former fighters and some youngsters were in KLA uniform. Songs about the KLA and freedom were heard. The protest was organized by the veterans' association known as OVL-UCK, and supported by Albania's government and prime minister, under the motto:

"Freedom has a name. Justice for the liberators."

Kosovo's former President Hashim Thaci, former Parliament Speakers Kadri Veseli and Jakup Krasniqi, and ex-lawmaker Rexhep Selimi are on trial and have been in custody since 2020 at the EU-backed Kosovo Specialist Chambers court, based in The Hague, Netherlands. They face charges that include murder, torture and persecution of civilians during and after the war.

A big poster with their photos and bearing the slogan "Heroes of war and peace" hung from the podium.

"Albanians do not trust the Specialist Chambers. Processes at The Hague are biased and unfair," said Hysni Gucati, head of the OVL-UCK.

Alfred Moisiu, 95, Albania's former president, was also present and called for justice, saying the defendants "have been detained without evidence, on fabricated charges." The rally was peaceful. (AP)

## Trump calls on Ukraine, Russia to 'stop where they are' and end war

WASHINGTON, Oct 18, (AP): US President Donald Trump on Friday called on Kyiv and Moscow to "stop where they are" and end their brutal war following a lengthy White House meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Trump's frustration with the conflict has surfaced repeatedly in the nine months since he returned to office, but with his latest comments he edged back in the direction of pressing Ukraine to give up on retaking land it has lost to Russia.

"Enough blood has been shed, with property lines being defined by War and Guts," Trump said in a Truth Social post not long after hosting Zelenskyy and his team for more than two hours of talks. "They should stop where they are. Let both claim Victory, let History decide!"

Later, soon after arriving in Florida, where he's spending the weekend, Trump urged both sides to "stop the war immediately" and implied that Moscow keep territory it's taken from Kyiv.

"You go by the battle line wherever it is - otherwise it's too complicated," Trump told reporters. "You stop at the battle line and both sides should go



US President Donald Trump, (right), speaks before a lunch with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, (from left), as White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and Vice President JD Vance listen in the Cabinet Room of the White House on Oct 17, in Washington. (AP)

home, go to their families, stop the killing, and that should be it."

The comments amounted to another shift in position on the war by Trump. In recent weeks, he had shown growing impatience with Russian President Vladimir Putin and expressed greater openness to helping Ukraine win the

war. After meeting with Zelenskyy in New York on the sidelines of the annual UN General Assembly last month, Trump even said he believed the Ukrainians could win back all the territory they had lost to Russia since Putin launched the February 2022 invasion.

## Lawyers ask ICC to probe 122 EU officials for crimes against humanity in Mediterranean

BARCELONA, Spain, Oct 18, (AP): The European Union's cooperation on migration with the fractured North African nation of Libya is in the spotlight again after human rights lawyers filed the names of some 120 European leaders - including French President Emmanuel Macron and former German Chancellor Angela Merkel - to the International Criminal Court, accusing them of committing crimes against humanity with migrants in the Mediterranean Sea.

The group led by lawyers Omer Shatz and Juan Branco filed a 700-page legal brief on Thursday. The Associated Press has obtained a copy of the brief.

Their case is based on six years of investigation, interviews with more than 70 senior European officials, minutes of high-level European Council meetings and other confidential documents. It follows a previous request to the ICC's



Migrants who fell in the water struggle to cling on to a float before being rescued by humanitarian rescuers, around 35 miles away from Libya, in the Mediterranean Sea, on Oct 18, 2021. (AP)

prosecutor's office to investigate European officials for migration policies they argued led to the interception, detention, torture, killing and drowning of tens of

thousands of people trying to reach European shores. That request, filed in 2019 and admitted in 2020 as part of the ICC's Libya investigation, did not cite any specific suspects by name.

### Europe

**Europe's political group expels Fico's party:** Europe's main center-left political family on Friday kicked out the party of Slovakian Prime Minister Robert Fico, who is accused of cozying up to Russian President Vladimir Putin while undermining the rule of law in his own country.

The Party of European Socialists voted unanimously to expel Fico's Smer party for taking political positions in recent years that contradict "severely and deeply the values and principles our family stands for," Secretary-General Giacomo Filibeck said.

In May, Fico was the only leader of a European Union country to travel to Moscow for festivities marking the 80th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II, despite EU calls for a boycott. (AP)



Fico

**Italy's police probe car explosion:** A car belonging to one of Italy's leading investigative journalists exploded outside his home overnight, prompting an investigation by Italy's anti-Mafia authorities and condemnation Friday from Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and others. No one was injured. The explosion late Thursday targeting Sigfrido Ranucci, lead anchor of state-run RAI3's Report investigative series, occurred on the eighth anniversary of the car bomb slaying of Maltese investigative journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia. (AP)

**Polish court frees Ukrainian suspect:** A Polish court on Friday blocked the extradition to Germany of a Ukrainian man suspected of involvement in the 2022 attack on the Nord Stream gas pipelines and ordered his release, a ruling that was welcomed by Poland's prime minister.

Volodymyr Zhuravlov, 46, was arrested near Warsaw Sept. 30 on a German warrant. German prosecutors have described him as a trained diver and allege that he was part of a group that placed explosives on the pipelines near the Danish island of Bornholm three years ago. (AP)



Car, truck collision kills 2 in Tokyo

Former Japanese PM Murayama dies

TOKYO, Oct 18, (Agencies): Japan’s former prime minister Tomiichi Murayama, who was known for his 1995 “Murayama statement” apologizing to Asian victims of his country’s aggression, died Friday. He was 101.

Murayama died at a hospital in his hometown Oita, southwestern Japan, according to a statement by Mizuho Fukushima, the head of Japan’s Social Democratic Party.

As head of what was then known as the Japan Socialist Party, Murayama led a coalition government from June 1994 to January 1996.

He is best remembered for the “Murayama statement,” an apology he issued on the 50th anniversary of Japan’s unconditional surrender ending World War II on Aug. 15, 1995. It’s seen as Japan’s main expression of remorse for its wartime and colonial past.

“During a certain period in the not too distant past, Japan, following a mistaken national policy, advanced along the road to war ... and, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations,” he said in the state-



Former Japanese prime minister Tomiichi Murayama, (center), visits a devastated area in Kobe, western Japan, in January 1995, following an earthquake with over magnitude 7 in the area. (AP)

and state my heartfelt apology.”

Murayama was first elected to parliament in 1972 as a socialist lawmaker after working for a labor union and serving in a local assembly.

When he became prime minister in 1994, he broke with his party’s longtime opposition to the Japan-US security alliance and Japan’s Self-Defense Forces, recognizing them as constitutional in a speech given in the face of yelling by angry members of his party.

**Also:**

**TOKYO:** Two people have been killed and multiple others injured after a car and a truck collided on an expressway near Tokyo, local media reported.

An emergency call was made at around 6:40 a.m. local time on Friday, reporting the accident on the Kan-Etsu Expressway in Kamisato, Saitama Prefecture, Kyodo News said, citing local authorities.

Of the five men in the car, two died and three others sustained injuries ranging from minor to serious, while the truck’s driver, who was the only person in the vehicle, sustained minor injuries, according to police.

S.Koreans tied to alleged online scams in Cambodia arrive home to face inquiries

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, Oct 18, (AP): Dozens of South Koreans allegedly involved in online scams in Cambodia are about to be flown back home aboard a charter plane, officials said Friday.

The repatriation follows the death of a South Korean student who was reportedly forced to work in a scam center in Cambodia. His death triggered public outrage in South Korea, prompting the government to send a delegation to the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, for talks on joint responses.

Cambodian Interior Ministry spokesperson Touch Sokhak said 64 South Koreans are set to be repatriated from Cambodia late Friday.

South Korean national security director Wi Sung-lac earlier told a briefing in Seoul that the two countries were in the final stages of negotiations on the charter flight, with about 60 South Koreans due to leave Phnom Penh at around midnight local time (1700 GMT).

Upon arrival, the South Koreans, who were previously detained amid crackdowns on scam centers in Cambodia, will face investigations, Wi said, an apparent bid to determine whether they willingly joined scam organizations or were forced to work after being drawn in via false job ads.

Scam centers in Cambodia are estimated to have about 200,000 workers,



South Koreans, wearing caps, allegedly involved in online scams in Cambodia arrive at the Incheon International Airport, in Incheon on Oct 18. (AP)

Thai PM vows to enhance all-round cooperation with China

Chinese and Canadian FMs pledge to improve bilateral ties

BEIJING, Oct 18, (Xinhua): Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks with his Canadian counterpart, Anita Anand, in Beijing on Friday, with both sides pledging to improve bilateral ties.

Wang, who is also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, said that this year marks the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Canada. The course of the development of China-Canada relations shows that the two countries can become partners that achieve mutual success and common development on the basis of mutual respect, he added.

Wang noted that China is willing to work with Canada to take the 55th anniversary of their diplomatic ties and the 20th anniversary of their establishment of a strategic partnership as opportunities to resume dialogue and exchange at all levels, guided by the important consensus reached between the leaders of the two countries.

He called on the two sides to advance the resolution of each other’s legitimate concerns, explore and tap into cooperation in various fields, expand people-to-people and cultural exchange, and strengthen communica-



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, holds talks with Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand in Beijing, capital of China on Oct 17. (Xinhua)

tion and collaboration on multilateral affairs. He also said that they should work together to uphold multilateralism, safeguard the international economic and trade order, and steer China-Canada relations onto a track of healthy, stable, sustainable development at an early date.

Anand said that the momentum to improve bilateral relations between the two countries is currently favorable, and that positive progress has

been achieved. Canada adheres to the one-China policy, and is willing to strengthen its high-level exchange with China and deepen mutual trust. It is also ready to make good use of dialogue and consultation mechanisms in areas such as diplomacy, the economy and trade, and to promote cooperation in fields including trade, agriculture, tourism, energy, and people-to-people and cultural exchange, she noted.

Canada firmly supports multilateralism and free trade, Anand said.

**Also:**

**BANGKOK:** Thai Prime Minister and Minister of Interior **Anutin Charnvirakul** said Friday that the new government will strengthen all-round cooperation with China.

Anutin made the remarks during a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Thailand **Zhang Jianwei**.

The prime minister commended the development of Thailand-China relations, noting that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries. He said the new government will work to further advance bilateral relations and consolidate friendship between the two peoples.

BEIJING, Oct 18, (AP): Mongolia’s parliament has voted to oust the prime minister in an unusually public power struggle within the ruling Mongolian People’s Party.

Opponents of Prime Minister Gombojavyn Zandanshatar managed to pass a controversially worded resolution Friday that effectively dismissed him from office.

The parliament was also debating a request to resign from its speaker, Amarbaysgalan Dashzegve, the prime minister’s chief rival in the internal party struggle.

It wasn’t immediately clear who might succeed Zandanshatar, who is acting prime minister until a successor is named, or whether he would challenge his dismissal. He was named prime minister in June.

The political upheaval comes at a critical time because the budget for next year has yet to be passed. Teachers, who are demanding salary hikes in the budget, went on strike this week and medical doctors are threatening to do so too.

The ruling party feud began after Zandanshatar lost a party leadership election to Amarbaysgalan.

The prime minister’s supporters then accused the speaker of being involved



Mongolian Prime Minister Gombojavyn Zandanshatar speaks to Russian President Vladimir Putin during their meeting on the sidelines of the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, Russia on Sept 4. (AP)

Venezuela’s ambassador to UN condemns US strike in Caribbean

LAS CUEVAS, Trinidad, Oct 18, (AP): Venezuela’s ambassador to the UN, Samuel Moncada, condemned a recent US strike on a small boat in Caribbean waters that killed six people, calling it “a new set of extrajudicial executions.”

He called on the UN Security Council to investigate what he called a “series of assassinations,” noting there have been five lethal attacks and 27 reported deaths since the strikes in the Caribbean began in September, targeting what US officials say are suspected drug traffickers.

Among those believed to be killed in the latest strike that occurred Tuesday are two fishermen from Trinidad and Tobago, whom Moncada referenced in his speech.

As Moncada spoke at the UN, people in the sleepy fishing town of Las Cuevas in northern Trinidad mourned the disappearance of Chad Joseph. His relatives believe he was killed in the strike, although they offered no other evidence that he was aboard the boat that was hit.

“People are crying. Why is Donald Trump destroying families?” Afisha Clement, Joseph’s cousin, told The Associated Press.

She said Joseph had moved to Venezuela six months ago and was working on farms in hopes of earning more money.



Images of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro cover walls in downtown Caracas, Venezuela on Oct 16. (AP)

to no avail as they condemned the strikes.

“He was a quiet person,” Christine Clement, Joseph’s grandmother, said from her living room. “He has left the whole village in sadness.”

The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian, a local newspaper, reported that also missing is a man only identified as “Samarou.”

At UN headquarters, Moncada held up the newspaper’s front page that detailed the lives of the two men from Trinidad.

“There is a killer prowling the Caribbean,” Moncada said. “People from different countries...are suffering the effects of these massacres.”

Only a couple of miles separate Venezuela and Trinidad and Tobago at their closest point, and the ongoing military strikes have spooked fishermen in the twin-island nation.

“There is no justification at all,” Moncada said. “They are fabricating a war.”

The administration of US President Donald Trump has said it considers alleged drug traffickers as unlawful combatants who must be met with military force.

Democrats have said the strikes violate US and international law, while some Republicans have sought more information on the strikes and their legal justification.



Head of the Bangladesh’s interim government and Nobel laureate Dr. Muhammad Yunus attends an event during the signing of a political charter called ‘Jury National Charter’ was announced, outside Bangladesh’s national parliament complex in Dhaka, Bangladesh on Oct 17. (AP)

Clashes break out near Bangladesh parliament

Major political parties in Bangladesh signed a roadmap Friday for political reforms proposed by the interim government while police clashed with protesters who wanted the document to include more

provisions for the activists who helped oust the previous government.

Police officers fired tear gas and used stun grenades and batons to disperse several hundred protesters outside the national Parliament building in the capital Dhaka. Some of them clashed with police while others vandalized a police vehicle. Witnesses said several people were injured in the clashes. (AP)

Antananarivo, Madagascar, Oct 18, (AP): An army colonel who seized power in a military coup was sworn in as Madagascar’s new leader Friday in a lightning-fast power grab that ousted the president and sent him fleeing the country and into hiding.

Col Michael Randrianirina, the commander of an elite army unit, took the oath of office to become the new president at a ceremony in the main chamber of the nation’s High Constitutional Court, in front of its nine red-robed judges.

His ascent to the presidency came just three days after he announced that the armed forces were taking power in the Indian Ocean island of around 30 million people off Africa’s east coast.

The nation had been rocked by three weeks of youth-led anti-government protests that started with frustration over chronic water and electricity outages but snowballed into anger with the leadership of President Andry Rajoelina. At least 22 people were killed in the protests after an initial crackdown by security forces, the United Nations said.

“Today marks a turning point for our

Madagascar High Constitutional Court judges congratulate Col Michael Randrianirina, sworn in as president, at the main chamber of the nation’s High Constitutional Court, in Antananarivo, Madagascar on Oct 17. (AP)

nation, for the Madagascar people themselves are thirsting for profound change in the way our country is governed,” Randrianirina said in a speech from a podium next to a red, green and white Madagascan flag. He called for peace and unity and promised to “break away from the harmful practices of the past.”

Afghan, Pakistani delegations in Doha for crisis talks

ISLAMABAD, Oct 18, (AP): Afghan and Pakistani delegations arrived in the Qatari capital, Doha, on Saturday, hoping to defuse the deadliest crisis between them in several years after more than a week of fighting killed dozens of people and injured hundreds on both sides.

Both governments have sent their defense ministers to lead the talks, which, Pakistan said, would focus on “immediate measures to end cross-border terrorism emanating from Afghanistan and restore peace and stability along the border.”

Each country says it is responding to aggression from the other. Afghanistan denies harboring militants who carry out attacks in border areas.

Regional powers, including Saudi Arabia and Qatar, have called for calm, as the violence threatened to further destabilize a region where groups including the Islamic State group and al-Qaida are trying to resurface.

A 48-hour ceasefire intended to pause hostilities expired Friday evening. Hours later, Pakistan struck across the border.

Pakistani security officials confirmed to The Associated Press that there were strikes on two districts in Afghanistan’s eastern Paktika province.

The targets were hideouts of the



Locals inspect the site of a cross-border attack by the Pakistani army in Afghanistan’s eastern Paktika province on Oct 18. (AP)

Army leader Randrianirina sworn in as Madagascar’s new president



Madagascar High Constitutional Court judges congratulate Col Michael Randrianirina, sworn in as president, at the main chamber of the nation’s High Constitutional Court, in Antananarivo, Madagascar on Oct 17. (AP)



# Business

Inflation turns ‘safe’ cash into a silent wealth killer

## Kuwait crude oil down to \$62.52 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti crude oil price dropped USD 1.25 on Friday to reach USD 62.52 per barrel (pb), compared with USD 63.77 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum

Corporation (KPC) said Saturday. Brent futures rose by 23 cents to USD 61.29 pb and West Texas Intermediate went up by eight cents to USD 57.54 pb.

### Other Voices

## Oil surplus this year and next ... shortage expected in later years

By Kamel Al-Harami  
Independent Oil Analyst

This is the outlook for oil prices in the coming months, as Brent crude is hovering around \$61 a barrel, and U.S. oil is trading in the mid-fifties per barrel. Both levels are unsatisfactory and are hurting oil producers.

However, the blame lies with all producers. Each one is pushing to increase production to gain market share, trying to capture new markets or a bigger share. Since oil production is essentially open to all, with no monitoring of production quotas, prices are allowed to drop further, while producers anticipate higher demand growth in the coming years.

With the current political situation becoming more stable and less tense, and ongoing efforts to resolve conflicts behind closed doors, the world is moving towards greater understanding, stability, and tranquility. This progress paves the way for oil prices to remain steady, with hopes for an increase in oil demand.

However, it remains to be seen whether India will refrain from buying and importing Russian crude oil. The question is - who can supply India with surplus oil at equally attractive discounted prices and terms? Replacing a major supplier like Russia, especially with such favorable conditions, will be a big challenge for India, requiring considerable political muscle to wean itself off Russian oil.

We have to wait and see how India will handle the pressure from the U.S. administration to break its oil supply ties with Russia, and how India will be rewarded by the U.S. for complying. It is very difficult for India to switch suppliers on such short notice.

The situation looks similar to what Europe is currently facing regarding oil and gas supplies from Russia. With Russian-built refineries in Europe, there is a real risk of panic and shortages of petroleum products in many European countries, unless the U.S. temporarily eases its re-

strictions and allows Europe to continue trading with Russia in hydrocarbon activities.

Today, all oil-producing countries are pushing to sell more oil into the market, creating a surplus and causing further weakening of oil prices. There is concern that prices could drop to \$60 a barrel, or even the mid-fifties, similar to the current U.S. oil price of around \$57 a barrel, sparking panic in the oil markets.

Meanwhile, OPEC+ appears unable or unwilling to curtail supply, seemingly having learned a lesson that any crude oil supply reduction and resulting price increase mostly benefit non-OPEC producers, leaving OPEC+ with minimal gains. As a result, their current policy of not interfering in the market may be the most practical solution by spreading the pain equally.

We hope that OPEC+ has indeed learned this lesson and will avoid further supply cuts unless they clearly stand to benefit first.

We expect oil prices to decline further once the geopolitical tensions between Russia, the U.S., and Ukraine begin to ease in a satisfactory manner, helping to avert the threat of conflict and crisis.

The current ample oil supply, despite peak demand season, raises questions about how low prices might fall, and whether oil-producing countries will intervene to stabilize or boost prices. U.S. crude is already trading near the breakeven point for profitability, and many producers around the world may not be able to sustain such low prices for long. However, in the absence of firm action from OPEC+, intervention seems unlikely.

The coming months will be critical for oil-producing countries and companies, especially in terms of their financial performance and year-end results. Weak profits, or even losses, will certainly be unwelcome news for shareholders and stakeholders alike.

Current oil prices are undeniably weak, and any recovery is likely to take time. Let's hope Brent crude doesn't fall to the \$50 level like U.S. WTI crude, as that would be deeply troubling for oil-exporting nations.

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By NBK Wealth

When investors consider risk, they usually think of volatility, which is the short-term price movement of an asset. Cash, with its stable nominal value and liquidity, appears safest, while equities seem riskiest due to their daily swings and the visibility of market crashes.

This logic holds until time horizon and inflation are introduced. What feels safe in the short run can be harmful in the long run, while what feels risky can become the most reliable preserver of wealth.

The main problem with cash is inflation. With U.S. inflation averaging 2.5% annually over the past 20 years, purchasing power would fall by about 40% over that period. Investors holding cash or short-term Treasuries, which yielded only about 1.7% on average, effectively earned negative real returns resulting in a slow, almost invisible erosion of wealth.

Equities, by contrast, show the opposite pattern. Short-term volatility is undeniable; the S&P 500 fell about 57% between October 2007 and March 2009. Yet over long horizons, U.S. equities have consistently delivered positive real returns.

### Defining Risk

Risk is commonly defined as volatility, measured by the standard deviation of returns. For most investors, however, the real risk is not short-term fluctuation but the failure to meet long-term financial goals. An investor saving for retirement should worry less about daily market moves and more about whether the portfolio's purchasing power will be preserved 15 or 20 years ahead.

Evaluating risk without reference to time horizon is incomplete and misleading.

- Time horizon therefore plays a critical role:
- Short term (0-3 years): focus on liquidity and capital preservation.
- Medium term (3-10 years): balance growth and stability.
- Long term (10+ years): prioritize compounding and inflation protection.



## AI integration to enhance efficiency and data-driven decision making

## Kuwait Airways launches first AI training course

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: As part of its ongoing efforts to develop and enhance employee performance, Kuwait Airways organized its first training course on artificial intelligence. The course focused on fields related to public relations, marketing, and social media.

Commenting on the launch of the course, the Director of Corporate Communications and Marketing at Kuwait Airways, Hamad Bader Al-Ozainah, stated, "This training course is the first of its kind on artificial intelligence organized by the Training and Development Department at Kuwait Airways. This course will be expanded in the future to include other specializations that will play a vital role in developing and enhancing employee performance, developing their professional and intellectual capabilities, and fostering new horizons for innovation and creativity, all of which will positively impact the company's overall performance."

Al-Ozainah added that the course included the use of well-known applications and programs such as ChatGPT, Microsoft 365 Copilot, DeepSeek, and other modern technologies designed to support employees in finding effective solutions for their daily tasks, as well as in organizing advertising and media campaigns, among other functions. He emphasized that using these programs effectively requires intensive practice and training to achieve optimal results, whether in conducting research, generating analyses, or monitoring the company's performance across social media platforms.

Al-Ozainah stated that the objective of this course is to enhance employee efficiency and performance in line with the technological advancements in artificial intelligence, particularly within the air transport sector. He explained that Kuwait Airways continues to focus on educating and equipping its employees in an optimal manner that aligns with the scale and pace of development in the region.

Al-Ozainah noted that this initiative is part of Kuwait Airways' comprehensive digital transformation strategy, which aims to enhance the company's technological infrastructure and integrate artificial intelligence tools into various operational and administrative functions. This integration, he explained, will help accelerating procedures and enhance decision-making accuracy through data-driven insights and smart analysis. He pointed out that Kuwait Airways, in line with its strong commitment to investing in the human element, strives to create a work environment



Captain Al-Fagaan honors head of the Corporate Communications and Marketing team, Waleed Sami.



Captain Abdulmohsen Al-Fagaan honors the Director of the Training Center, Ghezlan AlTashah.



Waleed Sami with the Corporate Communications and Marketing team.

that encourages innovation and enhances employees' capabilities with the skills needed to navigate future technologies. This approach supports the establishment of a culture of continuous learning within the company in general.

Al-Ozainah concluded by emphasizing Kuwait Airways' commitment to staying at the forefront of the lat-

est developments in the aviation industry, particularly in the field of artificial intelligence and its wide-ranging applications. He noted that the national carrier consistently prioritizes the development of the company's internal work system, whether through the adoption of cutting-edge technologies and or by training employees to achieve its desired goals.

## Significance of grasping your personality traits

By Hala Al-Humaidhi

In a rapidly shifting world, it's become vital for individuals to truly understand themselves before they can comprehend anyone else. One's personality traits aren't just understood at face value – they're like a sturdy foundation built for success in not just work but also in relationships and the daily decision-making that colors one's life. Understanding your personality type – how you think, how you react under different circumstances, what truly lights your motivational fire, or what gets your goat – gives you the clearest of maps to see how you function in life. That awareness is truly a superpower when it comes to navigating a work environment. Many conflicts or misunderstandings between individuals don't arise from bad intentions. In fact, they're often the byproduct of differing styles that rub each other the wrong way. An analytical person on a Precision Path sees only what should be there, while a creative person on the Big Picture Highway sees what's in front of them and what's probably just around the corner. When each understands the other's style, lives become a whole lot smoother, and a work



Hala Al-Humaidhi

environment can transform from a field of friction to a space of collaboration.

Understanding personalities also plays a large part in the societal component of life. People keep making the same mistakes in their jobs and their relationships, and they never stop to consider whether the problem lies in either of those two scenarios or in the way they're just coping with life. Getting a hold of the ol' personality is the first step in the gigantic, laborious, crawl-to-the-next-level kinda self-developing that we all do. It's how we become better leaders, better friends, and better humans – more conscious, more accepting, and generally more capable of not going through life on some unguided tour to the same old spots.

## ALSAYER Group sponsors Breast Cancer Awareness campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: As part of its ongoing commitment to supporting health and community initiatives, ALSAYER Group has announced its sponsorship of the Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign organized by the First Step Volunteer Team under the slogan "Shnatra... Take the Initiative for Early Breast Cancer Screening," coinciding with October – the Global Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The campaign aims to enhance community awareness of the importance of early breast cancer screening, as it represents a crucial step in increasing recovery rates and reducing the risk of complications through early detection. The campaign's activities include a series of awareness events, educational workshops, and free medical screenings, in cooperation with several medical institutions and volunteers across various locations in Kuwait throughout the month of October.

On this occasion, Eng. Nehad Al Haj Ali – Group Manager- Corporate Excellence Dept. at ALSAYER Group, stated:



Photo during the campaign.

"At ALSAYER Group, we place great importance on community health and proudly support initiatives that contribute to spreading health awareness among individuals. Our sponsorship of the campaign (Shnatra... Take the Initiative for Early Breast Cancer Screening) reflects our ongoing commitment to corporate

social responsibility and reinforces the importance of empowering women, encouraging them to care for their health and undergo regular checkups that can help save lives."

He added that ALSAYER Group believes awareness is the first line of defense against diseases, emphasizing that collaboration with active volunteer teams such

as "The First Step" embodies the spirit of community partnership that the Group continuously strives to promote across various fields. This initiative comes as part of ALSAYER Group's continuous efforts to support awareness and health programs that contribute to building a more informed, healthy & sustainable society.





Bank wins 9 awards from Global Finance magazine

# KFH: World’s Best Islamic Bank for 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Group has been recognized with 9 prestigious awards in the 18th Global Finance annual awards for the Best Islamic Financial Institutions in 2025. The awards acknowledge the Group’s leadership in the Islamic finance industry, its success in implementing a sustainable growth strategy, and the strengthening of its global position.

The awards are:

- World’s Best Islamic Bank
- World’s Best Islamic Retail Bank
- World’s Best Islamic SME Bank
- World’s Best Takaful Provider
- World’s Best Islamic Project Finance Provider
- Best Islamic Bank in the Middle East
- Best Islamic Bank in Türkiye (Kuveyt Turk)
- Best Islamic Bank in Kingdom of Bahrain (KFH Bahrain)
- Best Bank in Kingdom of Bahrain (KFH Bahrain)

The awards were presented at a special ceremony held alongside the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group (WBG) meetings in Washington D.C., USA. The event was attended by KFH Group Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, and a delegation of senior executives, including the CEO of KFH-Bahrain, Shadi Zahran, CEO of KFH-Turkey, Ufuk Uyan, KFH Group Chief International Banking Officer, Abdullah Al-Haddad, the CEO of KFH Capital, Abdulaziz Almarzooq, and the Head of Public Relations and Media at KFH Group, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh.

KFH Group CEO, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, said upon receiving the awards that their acquisition reflects KFH’s distinctive position and the success of its strategy in driving sustainable growth and establishing its global presence as a leading Islamic banking group.

He added: “These awards represent a new achievement for KFH, validating the Bank’s unwavering commitment to providing customers with innovative banking solutions that meet the highest international standards in Islamic finance. The awards also reflect the confidence of our customers and partners, which serves as a motivation to further develop our business and enhance the Bank’s standing both locally and globally.”

AlShamlan pointed out that the World’s Best Islamic Bank award underscores the Group’s successful strategy in building a giant banking entity that tops all listed banks and companies on Boursa Kuwait in terms of market capitalization, supported by strong financial solvency and competitive performance. “With a significant inter-



Khaled AlShamlan, Shadi Zahran, Ufuk Uyan, Abdullah Al-Haddad, Yousef Al-Ruwaieh, Fahad Alsaad, and Mohammed Bou Saqr

national footprint spanning 10 countries and over 600 branches, KFH is steadily advancing its strategic ambition to be counted among the world’s top 100 banks”, he added.

Speaking about the World’s Best Islamic Retail Bank award, AlShamlan explained that this recognition highlights KFH’s excellence in delivering innovative, customer centric banking solutions that enhance their experience and reaffirm the Bank’s commitment to meeting

AlShamlan:

- The awards reflect KFH’s distinctive position and successful strategy in driving sustainable growth and reinforcing its global presence

its clientele needs with the highest levels of convenience and security.

He further noted: “As KFH advances in adopting technology and digital trans-

formation, it remains committed to investing in its digital infrastructure and providing smart banking solutions in line with global developments. These efforts enhance the Bank’s resilience to the evolving market changes and customer needs.”

As for the World’s Best Islamic SME Bank award,

AlShamlan noted that KFH holds the leading position in the SME sector. “KFH is a strategic partner in the growth of this segment. The Bank has financed numerous successful businesses, recognizing the sector’s vital role in generating employment opportunities and promoting national economic development” said AlShamlan.

Talking about the World’s Best Takaful Provider award, AlShamlan mentioned that KFH was the first in Kuwait to establish a Takaful insurance company, expanding coverage options for individuals and businesses. The Bank also reinforced its leadership by signing the first-of-its-kind Global Takaful Alliance agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

He went on to say that the World’s Best Islamic Project Finance Provider award reflects how KFH places great importance to major projects emphasizing their role in economic development. He said that KFH contributed to financing strategic sectors across Kuwait and the region including petrochemicals, oil and gas, power and water, renewable energy, infrastructure, services and many more.

AlShamlan further emphasized that winning the Best Islamic Bank in Turkey, Best Islamic Bank in the Kingdom of Bahrain and Best Bank in the Kingdom of Bahrain awards, reflect the Group’s synergy and its outstanding performance in the markets where it operates, guided by a unified flexible strategy tailored to the nature of each market.

Awards criteria

It is worth noting that Global Finance magazine grants its awards to financial institutions that lead the expansion of the Islamic finance industry through innovative and Sharia-compliant financial solutions. KFH was selected following a meticulous assessment by the magazine’s editorial, in consultation with bankers and analysts worldwide. The criteria for selecting top firms include growth in assets, profitability, geographic reach, strategic relationships, new business development and innovation in products and digital solutions, in addition to reputation and customer satisfaction.

Global Finance

Founded in 1987, Global Finance is one of the well-established specialized publications in finance and economics, with a readership exceeding 50,000 ranging from senior executives to decision makers at financial institutions across 193 countries around the world.



## Leadership Beyond Horizons

### 9 awards earned locally and globally

- World’s **Best** Islamic Bank
- World’s **Best** Islamic Retail Bank
- World’s **Best** Islamic SME Bank
- World’s **Best** Takaful Provider
- World’s **Best** Islamic Project Finance Provider
- **Best** Islamic Bank in the Middle East
- **Best** Islamic Bank in Turkey (Kuveyt Turk)
- **Best** Islamic Bank in Kingdom of Bahrain (KFH Bahrain)
- **Best** Bank in Kingdom of Bahrain (KFH Bahrain)





In line with its dedicated strategy for investing in Kuwait’s national talents and furthering its ESG efforts

Burgan Bank concludes its platinum sponsorship in the 4th Watheefti national career fair

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Building on its human capital investment strategy and its ongoing efforts to develop Kuwait’s national talents, Burgan Bank participated as a platinum sponsor in the fourth edition of Watheefti, Kuwait’s largest national career fair. Alongside 120 of Kuwait’s top employers from across the nation’s most prominent and vital sectors, the Bank presented its unique employer offering to more than 40,000 promising candidates and young talent. Taking place over the course of three days at The Arena, under the patronage and presence of HE Mr. Abdulrahman Badah Al-Mutairi, Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, and featured more than 14 different sectors and industries – making it one of the most vibrant talent-oriented conferences in Kuwait.

“As part of our ongoing commitment to developing national talent and supporting the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035 and maintaining the highest Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) standards, Burgan Bank’s renewed participation in the fourth edition of Watheefti was a valuable opportunity to connect with Kuwait’s brightest young professionals - whose ambitions align with our strategy for innovation-led sustainable growth,” said Mr. Naqeeb Amin, General Manager – Human Resources and Development for the Group at Burgan Bank. “Our success is powered by our people and their unwavering commitment to Burgan’s values of ownership, transparency, teamwork, and passion. Which is why we continue to invest heavily in recruiting, nurturing, and advancing Kuwait’s best talent.”

During the event, Burgan Bank offered instant job opportunities to participants who were identified as high potential – reaffirming its belief in the strength of young Kuwaiti talent. Additionally, as part of the recruitment process, the Bank’s HR team also short listed candidates interviewed during the fair and initiated the second round of interviews with the relevant departments.

“Our continued participation in leading career fairs is a key pillar of Burgan Bank’s talent acquisition and development strategy, which places employee growth at the center of our sustainable success,” said Mr. Abdulwahab Jamal Abdulraheem, Executive Manager – Talent Acquisition at Burgan Bank. “These events give us the opportunity to meet ambitious young professionals with a passion for innovation, while introducing them to the wide range of career paths available in Kuwait’s fast-evolving banking and financial sector - especially as Burgan continues to lead with digital transformation and the adoption of new financial technologies.”

It is worth noting that career fairs confirm that Kuwait is full of youthful talents who, with the right guidance and development, are capable of leading Kuwait’s economy and vital sectors. In line with its commitment to Kuwaitization and investing in national calibers, Burgan Bank values its annual participation in impactful events such as Watheefti and other leading employment fairs for the opportunity they create to engage with Kuwaiti calibers in valu-



Mr. Abdulwahab Jamal Abdulraheem, Executive Manager – Talent Acquisition at Burgan Bank



Mr. Naqeeb Amin, General Manager – Human Resources and Development for the Group at Burgan Bank



able conversations around their aspirations for personal and professional development. In addition, the Bank’s on-ground presence among its community allows representatives to directly introduce Burgan Bank’s progressive work environment and its culture of continuous learning.

Besides promoting employment and growth opportunities, Burgan Bank representatives were committed to engaging with the career fair visitors, spreading financial literacy. This comes as part of the Bank’s committed support for the “Let’s Be Aware” (Diraya) campaign, led by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) with the support of Kuwaiti banks.

As a certified Great Place to Work®, Burgan Bank continues to advance its talent acquisition, management, and development strategies using the latest data-driven, AI-supported technologies. This strategic approach earned Burgan Bank multiple regional and international accolades, including three Brandon Hall



HE Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs during his visit to Burgan’s booth.

Group Human Capital Management (HCM) Awards of Excellence as well as the GCC Excellence Award in the Recruitment and Development of Nationals from the Council of Ministers of Labor and Council of Ministers of Social Affairs in the GCC States Executive Bureau, among other recognitions.

To offer available job opportunities to youth & graduates

ABK partakes in ‘Watheefti’ career fair for the fourth consecutive year

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced its participation in the annual “Watheefti” career fair for the fourth consecutive year. This event is the largest gathering of its kind, bringing together companies and job seekers under one roof, and reflects ABK’s strong belief in the importance of supporting national talent and providing suitable employment opportunities.

The Fair took place over three days, offering a chance to learn about Kuwaiti skills and competencies across various sectors, interact with visitors, and inform them about available jobs in the local market. ABK’s team introduced graduates and fair attendees to the key job openings available at the bank and answered various inquiries related to the nature of work in its different departments and in the banking sector in general.

On this occasion, Afrah Al Arbash, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, stated, “We are delighted to participate in the “Watheefti” career Fair due to its great importance in highlighting the latest developments in the job market and its ability to attract a large number of talents to its events. This allows us to learn about their potential and attract them to join our team across different departments and sections.”

She emphasized that ABK’s participation in the Fair reflects its support for national talent and its encouragement



**Afrah Al Arbash:**

- The participation reflects our support for national talent and we provided an overview of the key benefits we offer our employees

for them to work in the private sector. She pointed out that this reflects the bank’s commitment to supporting the efforts of relevant authorities in providing professional opportunities that contribute to developing the capabilities of new graduates and honing their skills, which helps them contribute to building the future of the State of Kuwait and achieving the desired development at all levels.

Al Arbash further noted that participating in career fairs forms a launching point for graduates and youth to kick-start their professional journey by connecting them with employers, introducing them to different sectors and the leading companies in the local market, and giving them the opportunity to apply for positions that match their qualifications, personal potential, and future

ambitions.

She added that ABK is keen to participate in career fairs held throughout the year to highlight the benefits it offers its employees, which make it an ideal choice for a career in the banking sector within the State of Kuwait, noted that the bank constantly invests in developing its team’s capabilities by organizing numerous training programs and awareness workshops to enhance their potential and help them learn about the latest changes in the banking industry, thereby increasing their productivity level.

Finally, Al Arbash commended the great success of the “Watheefti” career fair, praising the high turnout at the ABK booth, which hosted a number of activities and competitions for attendees.



Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi at the bank’s pavilion.



Al-Arbash Intermediate School, a group of HR staff during the exhibition



Minister Al-Mutairi with Bourisli, Al-Khashti, and Zain’s HR team.

Sponsoring 4th Watheefti Expo, Kuwait’s largest career gathering

Bourisli: Zain seeks purpose-driven national talent who share our passion for creating positive change

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Zain Kuwait sponsored the 4th edition of Watheefti, the largest career gathering in Kuwait. The event was held over the weekend at The Arena under the patronage of H.E. Minister of Information & Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Badah Al-Mutairi.

The opening ceremony was attended by Nawal Bourisli, Chief Purpose and HR Officer, and Waleed Al-Khashti, Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer, along with Zain’s HR team and senior executives from leading employers across the public and private sectors.

At the fair, Zain offered graduates and job seekers a comprehensive overview of the career opportunities and professional development paths available at the company, especially in technology and digital innovation.

The company also showcased its efforts to invest in young national talent and equip them with future skills in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data science, and more. This approach reflects Zain’s strategic direction to strengthen the presence of national talent in the technology sector and to empower them professionally in support of a more competitive market.

Commenting on the occasion, Nawal Bourisli said: “At Zain, we embed purpose into our culture and our teams, and we strive to attract purpose-driven national talent who share our passion for creating positive impact. This is the compass that guides our hiring and development decisions. We want teams that believe technology is a means to elevate human well-being, and



Watheefti offered a valuable opportunity to engage closely with graduates.

that translate this belief into action by harnessing innovation and serving customers with a mindset that delivers our purpose: Better Lives. Lasting Connections.”

She added: “Our participation in Watheefti aligns with our 4WARD strategy, which places people and purpose at the heart of Zain’s business. It is embodied by UNITY, an internal cultural and operational transformation program that unifies teams around a shared goal and puts purpose and the customer experience at the core of performance. UNITY translates our leadership’s vision to become a human-centric TechCo, where purpose is the standard for decision-making and a multiplier of impact.”

At Zain’s booth, visitors were also introduced to Zain Group’s graduate training program Generation Z (GenZ), which channels the Group’s efforts to invest in young national talent and prepare a new generation of entrepreneurs. The company also invited university students to apply to the Zain FUN program for part-time opportunities.

Watheefti is the largest job fair in Kuwait. The event was held over the weekend at The Arena Kuwait with the participation of more than 110 companies from 14 sectors, serving over 40,000 graduates and job seekers, and featured a wide range of knowledge and interactive activities such as panel sessions, talks, workshops, and interviews.





Director Jafar Panahi poses for a portrait photograph for the film 'It Was Just an Accident' at the 78th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, on May 21, 2025. (AP)

### 'I am not a hero'

## Panahi insists he just wants to make films

NEW YORK, Oct 18, (AP): The Iranian filmmaker Jafar Panahi has been imprisoned, banned from traveling, put under house arrest and ordered to stop making films for 20 years. And, yet, Panahi has continually made films. Many of them rank among the greatest of the century.

Most would call that courageous. Not Panahi. "My problem was that I was told not to make films. I had to make films. It's very simple," Panahi says. "I can come and claim I make things for my masses, for my people, for my country. No, I'm just looking for ways to make films."

"I looked for solutions and I found them." And, since he was first jailed in 2009, Panahi has found some extraordinary solutions. He made "Taxi" (2015) largely inside a car, serving as driver himself. "This Is Not a Film" (2011), he made in his living room, on an iPhone.

To evade authorities, the 65-year-old Panahi has often had to direct scenes remotely, or switch locations on a near-daily basis. His latest, "It Was Just an Accident," was made clandestinely in Iran following a seven-month stint in prison that only ended in 2023 once Panahi went on a hunger strike. He made the movie, opening in the US this week, inspired by the stories his fellow prisoners told.

In "It Was Just an Accident," an anguished revenge thriller, a former prisoner spots in Tehran the man he thinks was his abusive interrogator in jail. But because he was blindfolded during interrogations – like Panahi, himself, was – he's not sure. With the man gagged and bound in the back of his van, he drives to other former prisoners, and they debate what to do.

### Approval

"At the end of the day, I was a special person there," Panahi, in a recent interview in Manhattan, said through an interpreter of his time in Evvin Prison. "There were people there who would go on hunger strikes for 20 or 30 days and no one would hear about it. If I didn't eat for two days, the entire world would find out."

Panahi has long been one of the most acclaimed filmmakers in movies, but he's been absent from the world stage for more than 15 years. In that time, film festivals have sometimes reserved an open seat for him, with a "Jafar Panahi" placard.

After being released in 2023, Panahi's travel ban was lifted. He still made "It Was Just an Accident" underground, refusing to request government approval for his script. In one instance, during a night shoot when Panahi wasn't present, his crew was detained by police.

But for the first time in nearly two decades, Panahi is able to travel with his film. At the Cannes Film Festival in May, he won the Palme d'Or. Accepting the prize on stage, he implored: "No one should dare tell us what kind of clothes we should wear, what we should do or what we should not do. The cinema is a society."

With heightened concerns over censorship in other countries, Panahi has been given a hero's welcome abroad. At the New York Film Festival, where his arrival was delayed by visa complications due to the travel ban implemented in June for visitors from 12 countries, Martin Scorsese hailed Panahi as one of the most important filmmakers working.

Yet Panahi doesn't consider himself a hero, and dislikes being labeled a political filmmaker. For him, it's more simple.

"In cinema, it's typical for people to constantly be looking for reasons not to work," Panahi says. "I kept saying: I am a filmmaker. I have to make films. And it is my right to make films."

Panahi, like other filmmakers working under authoritarian regimes, has tested Oscar regulations. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences mandates that all nominees for best international film be submitted by a country. As expected, Iran didn't select "It Was Just an Accident." Instead, France made Panahi's film, which was co-produced in France, its submission.

Panahi, though, would rather see governments taken out of the process entirely.

"If we want to send a film to Cannes or Venice or elsewhere, we don't have an issue," he says. "But as soon as we're talking about the Oscars, we have to go and beg our governments."

### Violence

Still, Panahi has refused to flee Iran. He loves his country, he says, and knows emigrant life isn't for him. His friend and countryman, Mohammad Rasoulof last year dramatically fled Iran on foot in order to resettle in Germany and premiere "The Seed of the Sacred Fig" in Cannes. But Panahi returned to Iran the day after winning the Palme.

"It made many people happy but it also made the government officials unhappy," says Panahi. "State officials used the same formula as before and considered us spies for the CIA and Israel. On the other hand, many people, especially the families of political prisoners and independent filmmakers, were very happy I returned."

Following the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in 2022, a wave of protests spread against the Iran's mandatory hijab laws and treatment of women. Panahi was imprisoned at the time of the protests but took great inspiration from them. Several female actors in "It Was Just an Accident" appear in the film without hijabs.

"I really don't want to give morality lessons. I want to cause and create questions," Panahi says. "I want to ask what happens in the future, and encourage people to think if we will respond to violence with violence."

Panahi first looked through a camera at age 10. He became fascinated with the ability to capture life around him, and saved up to buy his first camera. Though some of his friends favored landscapes, he preferred photographing people. "I found myself shooting the streets," he recalls.

In the decades since, nothing has really changed for Panahi. "I haven't created the darkness. The darkness is there and the problem is with the people who created the darkness," says Panahi. "I'm just showing the reality."

At the New York Film Festival, Panahi remembered something his father told him when he was a child that's stuck with him ever since: "You're not allowed to bow to anyone other than God."

### David Attenborough, 99, breaks record as oldest winner

## 'General Hospital' wins big at Daytime Emmys

PASADENA, Calif., Oct 18, (AP): Paul Telfer of "Days of Our Lives" and Nancy Lee Grahn of "General Hospital" won lead acting honors at the Daytime Emmys on Friday, with ABC's "General Hospital" claiming six trophies in the major categories, including drama series.

Sir David Attenborough broke Dick Van Dyke's record for oldest Daytime Emmy winner, taking the trophy for daytime personality, non-daily as host of Netflix's "Secret Lives of Orangutans."

Attenborough, who is 99, wasn't on hand. The Brit's career as a writer, host and narrator spans eight decades.

Van Dyke was 98 when he won as guest performer in a daytime drama series for "Days of Our Lives" in 2024.

Telfer, a 45-year-old native of Scotland, plays Xander Kiriakis on Peacock's "Days of Our Lives," which he first joined in 2015.

"My mom always loved soaps and she loved villains," he said. "She's been gone for over 20 years, and so to win this on a soap opera playing the villain is really amazing. Thanks, Mom."

Grahn earned her third career trophy at the 52nd annual awards, having played Alexis Davis on "General Hospital" since 1996. She regularly uses her platform to speak out on political matters, and she carried a silver clutch that she had hand-lettered with the words "Democracy dies in silence."

"Our democracy is worth fighting for, the people in it are worth caring about, and whether you have a platform or not, now is the time, guys, to show up, stand up, speak up for human decency, for democracy," she said, shouting, "Stand up!" multiple times to the audience.

Jonathan Jackson of "General Hospital" and first-time nominee Susan Walters of "The



Deborah Norville accepts the Lifetime Achievement Awards during the 52nd Annual Daytime Emmy Awards on Friday, Oct 17, at Pasadena Civic Auditorium in Pasadena, Calif. (AP)

Young and the Restless" won supporting acting honors.

Jackson accepted the trophy for playing Lucky Spencer, a role he originated in 1993 and has played on and off ever since.

"General Hospital" also claimed trophies for Alley Mills as guest performer in a daytime drama and its writing and directing teams.

It was Mills' second career win for playing Heather Webber. The 74-year-old, who first won in 2023, is best known as the mom on "The Wonder Years."

"We're living in really dark times right now. Everything's crazy," Mills told the audience at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. "We just got to



Actor Lisa Yamada accepts the Outstanding Emerging Talent in a Daytime Drama Series award for her performance in 'The Bold and the Beautiful,' during Daytime Emmy Awards on Oct 17. (AP)



Actor Jonathan Jackson speaks onstage after winning Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Daytime Drama Series for his performance in 'General Hospital.' (AP)



Paul Telfer accepts the Outstanding Lead Actor in a Daytime Drama Series award for his performance in 'Days of Our Lives.' (AP)



Nancy Lee Grahn waves to the audience after winning Outstanding Lead Actress in a Daytime Drama Series for 'General Hospital.' (AP)

### Film

### Aziz Ansari's gig economy comedy falls short

## 'Good Fortune' stays earthbound

LOS ANGELES, Oct 18, (AP): Aziz Ansari tries to meld social commentary and comedy in his new film "Good Fortune," about wealth disparity and the shackles of the gig economy. It's populist territory that is ripe for a big screen skewering and Ansari, who wrote, directed and stars, is attempting something sincere, noble and broadly entertaining. But a modern day "Sullivan's Travels" this is not.

"Good Fortune," in theaters Friday, gets a little lost in the logistics of its familiar high concept premise, involving a guardian angel (Keanu Reeves) who makes the poor guy (Ansari) switch with the wealthy guy (Seth Rogen). In its attempts to be empathetic toward everyone, it ambles around between absurdity, social realism and Apatowesque antics trying to find its groove. And yet nothing is ever quite laugh out loud funny, which is shocking considering the people involved, and its messages are essentially toothless.

Workers unite? Find joy in the small things?

Perhaps the idea that no matter how bad life gets there are always cheap tacos and dancing and laughter should be life-affirming. And yet it feels hollow, like fodder for an emboldered throw pillow in the discount bin, instead of what it should be: Frank Capra for the billionaire age.

Still, "Good Fortune" is the rare mainstream comedy that doesn't turn its lens away from the tents and RVs all over Los Angeles and the plight of the omnipresent gig worker, toting food all around town and facing the



This image released by Lionsgate shows Keanu Reeves, (left), and Sandra Oh in a scene from 'Good Fortune.' (AP)

wrath of a rating system that blames the driver for everything.

Arj (Ansari) is a kind of perfect victim, a college educated film editor who has found himself at the mercy of round the clock freelance work and still unable to afford a place to live. We see how unfair the app-based-for-hire system is in comedic situations: He stands in line for two hours for a viral cinnamon bun. When the shop runs out and the client cancels the transaction, he loses that money and that time.

Then there are all those parking and traffic tickets that keep coming, and one night while trying to charge his phone at a Denny's, his car gets

towed. It's yet another bill he can't afford to pay, and it gets more expensive every day.

He gets a sliver of hope when a wealthy venture capitalist named Jeff (Rogen) hires him to be his assistant on a one-week trial basis. Jeff lives a life of leisure and excess, in a Bel Air mansion where his biggest concerns are finding a disco floor for his birthday party and a shaman for an Ayahuasca trip. He's a caricature of a VC bro and also basically a decent guy. But when Arj uses the company card to cover a personal expense which he promises to pay back, he's sacked. That's when Reeves' guardian angel

Gabriel decides to intervene.

Gabriel is a junior angel looking for more to do (because job dissatisfaction exists among celestial beings as well) and decides to save Arj though this little switcheroo. But it ends up backfiring because for Arj, things really are better with immense wealth, and the movie never quite figures its way out of that puzzle. There is no joy in watching Jeff live like common people for a week either, or Gabriel have his own crisis of self as a chain-smoking, hard drinking dishwasher at an all you can eat restaurant. Reeves is particularly underserved by the script, which basically only asks him to be a beautiful, well-meaning idiot.

Perhaps the writing staff of "The Studio" should have taken a pass on this screenplay. Or any number of the food delivery drivers Ansari shadowed while researching the movie, which does in fact resemble "Sullivan's Travels," but not in a flattering way.

The only character I wanted more of is Keke Palmer's Elena, one of Arj's co-workers at a hardware store who is mostly there as a plot device to show Arj that it is possible to love your minimum wage life, but somehow rises above the most human of the bunch. "Good Fortune" has its heart in the right place, but it lacks a spark and internal engine that might have made it more entertaining, and ultimately impactful.

"Good Fortune," a Lionsgate released in theaters Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "language and some drug use." Running time: 98 minutes. Two stars out of four.



‘An essential and irreplaceable rock soldier’

# Frehley, Kiss’ original guitarist, founding member, dies at 74

LOS ANGELES, Oct 18, (AP): Ace Frehley, the original lead guitarist and founding member of the glam rock band Kiss, who captivated audiences with his elaborate galactic makeup and smoking guitar, died Thursday. He was 74.

Frehley died peacefully surrounded by family in Morristown, New Jersey, following a recent fall, according to his agent.

Family members said in a statement that they are “completely devastated and heartbroken” but will cherish his laughter and celebrate the kindness he bestowed upon others.

Kiss, whose hits included “Rock and Roll All Nite” and “I Was Made for Lovin’ You,” was known for its theatrical stage shows, with fire and fake blood spewing from the mouths of band members dressed in body armor, platform boots, wigs and signature black-and-white face paint.

Kiss’ original lineup included



Ace Frehley, lead guitarist for the hard-rock glam band KISS, performs with a Les Paul guitar during a concert at the Civic Center in Harford, Conn., Feb. 16, 1977. (AP)

Frehley, singer-guitarist Paul Stanley, tongue-wagging bassist Gene Simmons and drummer Peter Criss.

Frehley’s is the first death among the four founding members.

Band members took on the personas of comic book-style characters - Frehley was known as “Space Ace” and “The Spaceman.” The New York-born entertainer and Rock & Roll Hall of Famer often experimented with pyrotechnics, making his guitars glow, emit smoke and shoot rockets from the headstock.

“We are devastated by the passing of Ace Frehley,” Simmons and Stanley said in a joint statement. “He was an essential and irreplaceable rock soldier during some of the most formative foundational chapters of the band and its history. He is and will always be a part of KISS’s legacy.”

Born Paul Daniel Frehley, he grew up in a musical family and began playing guitar at age 13. Before joining Kiss, he played in local bands around New York City and was a roadie for Jimi Hendrix at age 18.

Kiss was especially popular in the mid-1970s, selling tens of millions of albums and licensing its iconic look to become a marketing marvel. “Beth” was its biggest commercial hit in the US, peaking at No. 7 on the Billboard Top 100 in 1976.

As the Kennedy Center’s new chairman, President Donald Trump named Kiss as one of this year’s honorees.

In 2024, the band sold their catalog, brand name and intellectual property to Swedish company Pophouse Entertainment Group in a deal estimated to be over \$300 million.

Frehley frequently feuded with Stanley and Simmons through the years. He left the band in 1982, missing the years when they took off the makeup and had mixed success. Stanley later said they nearly replaced Frehley with Eddie Van Halen, but Vinnie Vincent assumed the lead guitar role.

Frehley performed both as a solo

artist and with his band, Frehley’s Comet.

But he rejoined Kiss in the mid-1990s for a triumphant reunion and restoration of their original style that came after bands including Nirvana, Weezer and the Melvins had expressed affection for the band and paid them musical tributes.

He would leave again in 2002. When the original four entered the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2014, a dispute scrapped plans for them to perform. Simmons and Stanley objected to Criss and Frehley being inducted instead of then-guitarist Tommy Thayer and then-drummer Eric Singer.

Simmons told Rolling Stone magazine that year that Frehley and Criss “no longer deserve to wear the paint.” “The makeup is earned,” he added. “Just being there at the beginning is not enough.”

Frehley and Kiss also had a huge influence on the glummy

style of 1980s so-called hair metal bands including Mötley Crüe and Poison.

“Ace, my brother, I surely cannot thank you enough for the years of great music, the many festivals we’ve done together and your lead guitar on Nothing But A Good Time,” Poison front man Bret Michaels said on Instagram.

Harder-edged bands like Metallica and Pantera were also fans, and even country superstar Garth Brooks joined the band members for a recording of their “Hard Luck Woman” on a 1994 compilation.

Frehley would appear occasionally with Kiss for shows in later years. A 2023 concert at Madison Square Garden was billed as the band’s last. While Stanley and Simmons said they would not tour again, they’ve been open to the possibility of more concerts, and they’ve stayed active promoting the group’s music and memorabilia.

## Film



Sydney Sweeney poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film ‘Christy’ during the London film festival in London, Friday, Oct. 17. (AP)

From Spice Girl to fashion mogul

# Beckham grabs the chance to tell her own tale

NEW YORK, Oct 18, (AP): Now here’s something you might not quite believe about Victoria Beckham, glam Spice Girl turned high-profile fashion designer: At theater school, they purposely put her in the back row. Because she was too heavy.

“It was really difficult,” she says now of the memory from her youth, sipping a sparkling water in a Manhattan hotel in between work engagements. “We were all judged on how we looked. I was young. I had bad skin, my weight was going up and down, I had really lank hair.”

Beckham was also bullied in school and told she was a bad learner, revelations that come in a new documentary, “Victoria Beckham.” The three-part Netflix series traces her career and especially her ascension in the fashion world – building up to a grand Paris runway show at a palace in front of 600 people.

That 2024 show – with a rainstorm threatening to scuttle the whole thing – is presented as a career pinnacle for a designer who spent years proving herself alongside giants of the field, showing she wasn’t simply a celebrity slapping her name on a label.

Of course the show also features liberal doses of Beckham’s soccer legend husband David – just as Victoria appeared in his own recent, popular Netflix documentary “Beckham” (both were produced by David Beckham’s own Studio 99).

Some reviews have said Victoria’s documentary feels more guarded and less revelatory. In any case, Victoria Beckham says she wanted to tell her own story, her own way. She focuses only briefly on what a certain generation knows her best for – the four years she spent as Posh Spice – and mostly on the two decades she’s been building her eponymous fashion and beauty brand.

Other revelations: While she was the richer partner when they married in 1999 and in fact bought their first house, it was David Beckham who later invested in her label and helped get it going.

She also talks about how her company almost fell apart due to bad business decisions– like spending 70,000 pounds (about \$94,000) on office plants and 15,000 (about \$20,000) more to water them – and how she learned, with investors, to right the ship.

Beckham, 51, sat down with The Associated Press this week during a visit to New York. The interview



This image released by Netflix shows Victoria Beckham in a scene from her self-titled documentary. (AP)

has been edited for length and clarity.

**AP:** The other Beckham documentary appeared only two years ago. Why did you feel the need for your own?

**Beckham:** Well, his documentary wasn’t about me, you know. I was in the documentary as David’s wife and I’ve been part of his journey and I was so honored to talk about that. People’s response to me in that really surprised me, and there was something quite liberating about that because when I saw myself ... I didn’t like how I came across. But then I think I’ve always felt that way about myself. I suppose it gave me the confidence to do my own.

**AP:** What specific stories did you want to tell?

**Beckham:** I’ve been in the fashion industry for almost two decades. I was in the Spice Girls for four years – and have been so defined by that four-year period in my life. A time that I’m so proud of, but I’ve been fighting preconceptions because of that period. I feel that only now is my brand in a place where me talking about my past will not affect the brand that I’ve built.

**AP:** You say this is an inspirational story. How so?

**Beckham:** I’m not ashamed to say I’m really ambitious. And it’s been the first time that I’ve ever looked back and, having that bird’s eye view on my journey so far, even I found it inspiring what I have done ... the fact that I have been told “No” so many

times, told that I’m not enough, not good enough. And by the way, that started when I was a child, when I was at school. If anybody watches this documentary and I can give them the confidence to follow their dreams, that’s another really good reason to do it.

**AP:** Do you think people have misperceptions about you?

**Beckham:** Oh absolutely, I think that for many years I was misunderstood, before social media, you know, the media told the narrative, and then there were paparazzi pictures where most of the time I looked incredibly unhappy. And I think looking at the documentary telling my story from ME explains the “why.” I can’t blame people for looking at the pictures of me looking really grumpy.

**AP:** You talk about your weight struggles as a girl in theater class. Have you spoken about that before?

**Beckham:** Never quite like this. The opportunity has never really presented itself. And I know a lot of people can relate to my story because of all the messages that I’ve had since people have watched the documentary. ... From, yes, people that I know, but people that I don’t know, people who say, “I can relate, I have been through that.” It’s taken this process finally for me to feel at my age proud of what I’ve achieved, and also to finally believe that I am enough.

**AP:** It seems like you spend relatively little time in the series on the Spice Girls years.

**Beckham:** I’m so respectful of my time with the Spice Girls. I still see all of the girls now. I wouldn’t be who I am now ... the Spice Girls gave me the confidence to be me. I remember Geri (Halliwell) saying to me, “You’re funny, be funny.” I’m shy. And they really gave me my personality back. ... I think people would be surprised to know that I was only a Spice Girl for four years. I’ve been in fashion nearly two decades, but people like to pigeonhole.

**AP:** Two decades later, do you think there are still people who wonder whether it’s really you doing the designing?

**Beckham:** Maybe. I don’t know. ... I think I’ve earned my place to be showing where I am. I think that I’ve more than proved myself and earned the right to be there. Now I have to work hard to maintain that.

## Education

### Chatbots in classrooms

## Big Tech paying millions to train teachers on AI

SAN ANTONIO, Oct 18, (AP): On a scorching hot Saturday in San Antonio, dozens of teachers traded a day off for a glimpse of the future. The topic of the day’s workshop: enhancing instruction with artificial intelligence.

After marveling as AI graded classwork instantly and turned lesson plans into podcasts or online storybooks, one high school English teacher raised a concern that was on the minds of many: “Are we going to be replaced with AI?”

That remains to be seen. But for the nation’s 4 million teachers to stay relevant and help students use the technology wisely, teachers unions have forged an unlikely partnership with the world’s largest technology companies. The two groups don’t always see eye to eye but say they share a common goal: training the future workforce of America.

Microsoft, OpenAI and Anthropic are providing millions of dollars for AI training to the American Federation of Teachers, the country’s second-largest teachers union. In exchange, the tech companies have an opportunity to make inroads into schools and win over students in the race for AI dominance.

AFT President Randi Weingarten said skepticism guided her negotiations, but the tech industry has something schools lack: deep pockets.

“There is no one else who is helping us with this. That’s why we felt we needed to work with the largest corporations in the world,” Weingarten said. “We went to them - they didn’t come to us.”

**Partnership**

Weingarten first met with Microsoft CEO Brad Smith in 2023 to discuss a partnership. She later reached out to OpenAI to pursue an “agnostic” approach that means any company’s AI tools could be used in a training session.

Under the arrangement announced in July, Microsoft is contributing \$12.5 million to AFT over five years. OpenAI is providing \$8 million in funding and \$2 million in technical resources, and Anthropic has offered \$500,000.

With the money, AFT is planning to build an AI training hub in New York City that will offer virtual and in-person workshops for teachers. The goal is to open at least two more hubs and train 400,000 teachers over the next five years.

The National Education Association, the country’s largest teachers union, announced its own partnership with Microsoft last month. The company has provided a \$325,000 grant to help the NEA develop AI trainings in the form of “microcredentials” - online trainings open to the union’s 3 million members, said Daaiyah Bilal, NEA’s senior director of education policy. The goal is to train at least 10,000 members this school year.

“We tailored our partnership very surgically,” Bilal said. “We are very mindful of what a technology company stands to gain by spreading information about the products they develop.”

Both unions set similar terms: Educators, not the private funders, would design and lead trainings that include AI tools from multiple companies. The unions own the intellectual property for the trainings, which cover safety and privacy concerns alongside AI skills.

The Trump administration has encouraged the private investment, recently creating an AI Education Task Force as part of an effort to achieve “global dominance in artificial intelligence.” The federal government urged tech companies and other organizations to foot the bill. So far, more than 100 companies have signed up.

**Opportunities**

Tech companies see opportunities in education beyond training teachers. Microsoft unveiled a \$4 billion initiative for AI training, research and the gifting of its AI tools to teachers and students. It includes the AFT grant and a program that will give all school districts and community colleges in Washington, Microsoft’s home state, free access to Microsoft CoPilot tools. Google says it will commit \$1 billion for AI education and job training programs, including free access to its Gemini for Education platform for US high schools.

Several recent studies have found that AI use in schools is rapidly increasing but training and guidance are lagging.

The industry offers resources that can help scale AI literacy efforts quickly. But educators should ensure any partnership focuses on what’s best for teachers and students, said Robin Lake, director of the Center on Reinventing Public Education.

“These are private initiatives, and they are run by companies that have a stake,” Lake said.

Microsoft CEO Brad Smith agrees that teachers should have a “healthy dose of skepticism” about the role of tech companies.

“While it’s easy to see the benefits right now, we should always be mindful of the potential for unintended consequences,” Smith said in an interview, pointing to concerns such as AI’s possible impact on critical thinking. “We have to be careful. It’s early days.”

At the San Antonio AFT training, about 50 educators turned up for the three-hour workshop for teachers in the Northside Independent School District. It is the city’s largest, employing about 7,000 teachers.

The day started with a pep talk.

“We all know, when we talk about AI, teachers say, ‘Nah, I’m not doing that,’” trainer Kathleen Torregrossa told the room. “But we are preparing kids for the future. That is our primary job. And AI, like it or not, is part of our world.”

Attendees generated lesson plans using ChatGPT, Google’s Gemini, Microsoft CoPilot and two AI tools designed for schools, Khanmigo and Colorín Colorado.

Gabriela Aguirre, a 1st grade dual language teacher, repeatedly used the word “amazing” to describe what she saw.

## Variety

**NEW YORK:** Former first lady **Michelle Obama** will be promoting her upcoming book on fashion, “The Look,” through a special, six-part companion series to the podcast “IMO” that she hosts with her brother, Craig Robinson. Guests will include Jane Fonda, model-activist Bethann Hardison and designer-former J. Crew executive Jenna Lyons.

Higher Ground, the media company founded by Michelle Obama and former President Barack Obama, announced Thursday that “IMO: The Look” will premiere Nov. 5 and run weekly over the following six weeks.



Obama

Obama’s book, a look at her fashion choices during her time in the White House and throughout her public life, is scheduled for Nov. 4. Obama’s previous books include “Becoming,” one of the bestselling memoirs in history by a former political figure.

Obama will launch “The Look” podcast series with an appearance at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, where she will be joined by entertainer-producer Tracee Ellis Ross. (AP)

**DUBAI:** A group of university students and faculty members from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) took part in a study tour from Wednesday to Friday, exploring Chinese cultures and visiting local operations of Chinese enterprises.

Organized by the China Merchants Foundation and Sinotrans, with support from the Chinese Consulate General in Dubai, the event -- Merchants Group C ME FLY: International Logistics Study Tour -- brought together around 80 participants from the University of Sharjah and the University of Birmingham Dubai. (Xinhua)

**HURGHADA, Egypt:** The eighth edition of Egypt’s inter-

national El Gouna Film Festival (GFF) opened Thursday night on the Red Sea coastal resort city of Hurghada, with a significant focus on humanitarian issues through a deepened partnership with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

In a powerful declaration of its “Cinema for Humanity” motto, this year’s event has adopted food security as its central theme, strategically aligning with the WFP’s mission.

This commitment is highlighted by the “Bread” Short Film Competition, launched in collaboration with the WFP, which serves as a platform to inspire Arab filmmakers to use their craft to raise awareness and drive action against regional food insecurity. (Xinhua)



Pharmacologist explains protein powder contamination

Protein powders, shakes contain high amounts of lead

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

By C. Michael White  
University of Connecticut

**P**owder and ready-to-drink protein sales have exploded, reaching over US\$32 billion globally from 2024 to 2025. Increasingly, consumers are using these protein sources daily.

A new study by Consumer Reports, published on Oct. 14, 2025, claims that some such protein products contain dangerously high levels of lead, as well as other heavy metals such as cadmium and arsenic. At high levels, these substances have serious, well-documented health risks.

I am a clinical pharmacologist who has evaluated the heavy metal content of baby food, calcium supplements and kratom products. Lead and other heavy metals occur naturally in soil and water, so achieving zero-level exposure would be impossible. Additionally, the level of lead exposure that Consumer Reports deems safe is significantly lower than those set by the Food and Drug Administration.

However, regardless of the safety cutoff, the study does show that a few products are delivering a concerning high dose of heavy metals per serving.

The new study assessed 23 powder and ready-to-drink protein products from popular brands by sending three samples of each product to an independent commercial laboratory.

Consumer Reports considered anything over 0.5 micrograms per day from any single source to be above recommended maximum lead levels. That number comes from the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, which established recom-

mended maximum levels for a variety of substances that could cause cancer or fetal harm.

It is significantly more conservative than the safety standard for lead exposure used by the FDA for drugs and supplements. The discrepancy is driven by Consumer Reports’ aspirational goals of very low exposure versus the more realistic but actionable requirements from the FDA.

According to the FDA, the limit for the amount of lead that a person should consume from any single dietary supplement product is 5 micrograms per day. That number is 10 times higher than the Consumer Report limit.

The FDA has another standard for the total daily amount of lead a person can safely consume from food, drugs and supplements combined. This number, called the Interim Reference Level, or IRL, for lead is based on concentrations of lead in the blood that are associated with negative health effects in different populations.

For people who could become pregnant, that level is 8.8 micrograms per day, and for children it’s 2.2 micrograms per day. For everyone else, it’s 12.5 micrograms per day. Every food, drug and dietary supplement that contains lead contributes to the total daily exposure, which should be less than this amount.

The nonprofit advocacy group found that 16 of the 23 products it tested exceeded 0.5 micrograms, the level of lead in a standard serving that the organization deems safe.

Four of the 23 products exceeded 2.2 micrograms, the FDA’s cutoff for the total daily amount of lead children should consume. Two products contained 72% and 88%, respectively, of the total daily amount of lead that the FDA deems safe for pregnant women.

In addition, Consumer Reports found that two of the 23 products delivered more than what it considers a safe

amount of cadmium per serving, and one had more arsenic than was recommended.

The organization’s safety cutoff for cadmium is 4.1 micrograms per day, and for arsenic it is 7 micrograms per day. These numbers align fairly closely with the FDA’s recommended exposure limit for cadmium and arsenic from a single product. For cadmium, the FDA’s limit is set at 5 micrograms per day for a given dietary supplement product and 15 micrograms per day for arsenic.

The study found that the source of protein was key: Plant-derived protein products had nine times the lead found in dairy proteins like whey, and twice as much as beef-based protein.

Lead and other heavy metals are present in high amounts in volcanic rock, which comes from molten rock called magma beneath the Earth’s surface. When volcanic rock is eroded, the heavy metals contaminate the local soil and water supply. What’s more, some crop plants are especially efficient at extracting heavy metals from the soil and placing them in the parts of the plants that consumers ingest.

Fossil fuels, which come from deep within the Earth, also billow heavy metals into the air when they are burned. These substances then settle out into the soil and water. Finally, some fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides also contain heavy metals that can further contaminate soil and local water.

High levels of heavy metals have been found in plant-based protein powder, spices like cinnamon, dark chocolate, root vegetables like carrots and sweet potatoes, rice, legumes such as pea pods and many herbal supplements.

Occasionally exceeding the daily recommended heavy metal doses is unlikely to result in serious health issues.

Repeated, heavy exposure to heavy metals can cause

harm, however. When they accumulate in the blood, these substances can delay or impair mental functioning, damage nerves, soften bones and raise blood pressure - which in turn increases the risk of strokes and heart attacks. Heavy metals can also increase the risk of developing cancer.

It’s important to note that all the products Consumer Reports flagged have lead levels significantly lower than the maximum daily exposure levels established by the FDA.

Consumers can limit exposure by choosing dairy- or animal-based sources of protein products, since they generally seemed to have less heavy metal contamination than plant-based ones. However, some plant-based protein products in the study did not have high levels of heavy metals. Heavy metal levels vary widely in the environment, so the results from the Consumer Reports study show a snapshot in time. They might not be consistently accurate across batches if, for example, a manufacturer changes the source of its raw ingredients.

For protein products that do show an especially high heavy metal content, using them more sporadically, rather than daily, can reduce exposure. Studies suggest that organic plant-based products generally yield less heavy metal content than traditionally farmed ones.

Finally, the Consumer Reports study measured heavy metals in a single serving of protein products, so it’s helpful to understand what constitutes a serving for specific products and to avoid sharply increasing daily consumption.

Overall, the wide variation in lead levels across different protein powders and ready-made protein products highlights the need for manufacturers to tighten product testing and good manufacturing practices. (AP)

Risk to public is low: experts

California confirms two mpox cases

**NEW YORK, Oct 18, (AP):** Two Californians diagnosed with mpox may be the first US cases resulting from the local spread of a different version of the virus, health officials said.

The Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services this week confirmed the first case through testing at a state lab. Los Angeles County health officials on Thursday reported a second, similar case.

The risk to the public is low, officials say.

These are not the US first cases of what is known as clade I mpox. But all six previous cases were among international travelers who were believed to have been infected abroad.

Both infected people in California were hospitalized, and they are now recovering at home. Officials declined to give other details. But “at this point in our investigations, we have not identified any association between the two cases,” Long Beach health department acting public affairs officer Jennifer Ann Gonzalez said.

Long Beach is located in Los Angeles County but has its own city health department. Investigators there say they have not found a close contact who traveled abroad, nor have they confirmed additional cases. A few of the person’s close contacts have been given a vaccine, said Nora Balanji, the Long Beach department’s communicable disease coordinator.



Vials of the Jynneos vaccine for monkeypox are taken from a cooler at a vaccinations site, Aug. 29, 2022, in the Brooklyn borough of New York. (AP)

“We don’t have any proof that there has been ongoing community transmission,” she said. “It’s something we’re looking into. That’s something we’re concerned about.”

Mpox - also known as monkeypox - is a rare disease caused by infection with a virus that is in the same family as the one that causes smallpox. It is endemic in parts of Africa.

Milder symptoms can include fever, chills and body aches. In more serious cases, people can develop lesions on the face, hands, chest and genitals.

One version of the virus - called clade II - was the source of an international health crisis in 2022, when infections escalated in dozens of countries, mostly among men who have sex with men. At one point, the US was averaging close to 500 cases per day.

The infections were rarely fatal, but many people suffered painful skin lesions for weeks. Those

outbreaks waned later that year, thanks in part to the Jynneos vaccine made by Bavarian Nordic.

The other version - known as clade I - likewise can spread through sex, but also through other forms of contact. In Africa it has infected a broader range of people, including children.

A newer form of the clade I virus has been widely transmitted in eastern and central Africa. The World Health Organization declared the situation a public health emergency, but last month it said the problem had waned enough that it was no longer an international emergency.

Still, “it’s concerning if this virus has come here and now is starting to be transmitted from person to person,” said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious diseases expert at Vanderbilt University.

The case report comes amid a federal government shutdown and the layoffs of hundreds of employees at the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - the agency that usually would be involved in responding.

Balanji said a few CDC experts have been available to talk to her department about the situation. But Schaffner noted that “the longer the shutdown, the more impaired public health responses are to any outbreaks.”

A U.S. Department of Health and Human Services spokesperson referred questions to local health officials.



Kuwait medical team after performing the rare cerebral artery bypass surgery. KUNA photo

Landmark op showcases Kuwait’s medical advancements

Kuwait successfully performs rare cerebral artery bypass surgery: MoH

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA):** The Ministry of Health (MoH) on Thursday announced successful performing of a rare cerebral arteries bypass surgery on a Kuwaiti citizen in his forties after he had a sudden stroke that led to a deep coma.

In a press release, the ministry added this is a national medical achievement showing the advancement of specialized surgical services in Kuwait.

The surgery was performed at Ibn Sina Hospital under the leadership of neurosurgeon Dr. Faisal Al-Bader, noting that the surgery successfully re-

stored blood flow to both the right and left hemispheres of patient’s brain.

The patient has gradually recovered, and regained his neurological functions, returning to his normal life, it pointed out.

He was suffering from “Moyamoya”, a rare disease that causes gradual narrowing of the brain’s arteries, thus leading to a severe decrease in blood flow and repeated strokes, it elaborated.

Most cases are registered in Japan, and some Asian countries, and dealing with them is a great challenge, it said.

The statement quoted Al-Bader as

saying that such cases were treated outside Kuwait, expressing his pleasure for this medical level inside the homeland.

Al-Bader voiced appreciation to Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi and Undersecretary Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi for their continued support.

Albader earned his medical degree from Kuwait University and completed neurosurgical training at Aix-Marseille University in France, becoming Board-Certified. He pursued subspecialty training in Skull Base and Cerebrovascular surgery.

New guidance promotes fertility benefits

Trump announces deal with drugmaker to cut cost of common IVF fertility drug

**WASHINGTON, Oct 18, (AP):** Drugmaker EMD Serono will reduce the cost of a common fertility medication through a deal struck with the Trump administration, President Donald Trump said Thursday while also unveiling new federal guidance he said will encourage employers to offer fertility coverage.

The new guidance will allow companies to offer fertility benefits separate from major medical insurance plans, like they do with dental and vision plans, Trump said.

“We want to make it easier for all couples to have babies, raise children and start the families they have always dreamed about,” Trump said.

The Oval Office announcement offers a first glimpse at how Trump plans to follow up on his executive order earlier this year aiming to reduce the cost of in vitro fertilization, a medical procedure that helps people facing infertility build their families. But it falls far short of his promise as a candidate to make IVF treatment free. It marks the third deal the administration has made with pharmaceutical companies to cut drug prices in recent weeks.

EMD Serono’s Gonal-f is among several drugs frequently used by patients going through IVF treatments - which involve using hormones to trigger ovulation, producing multiple eggs that are retrieved from the ovaries to be fertilized or frozen. The drugs can be expensive, often costing patients thousands of dollars for a single IVF cycle. Many patients trying to get pregnant through IVF go through more than one cycle.

The White House and EMD Se-



rono said the drug, along with all its other IVF medications, will be available at a discount on TrumpRx, a government website where patients will be able to buy drugs directly from manufacturers. The Trump administration contends that the new website, which is expected to be running in 2026, will cut pharmaceutical costs by allowing people to buy them without a middleman.

Trump said the Food and Drug Administration will also be working with EMD Serono to expedite approval of another one of its fertility drugs available in Europe, called Pergoveris.

Dr. Mehmet Oz, who heads the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, said that as a result of the changes: “There are going to be a lot

of Trump babies. I think that’s probably a good thing.”

Thursday’s announcement comes after Trump issued a February executive order pledging to make IVF more affordable. During his campaign last year, Trump pledged that if he was elected, he would make IVF treatment free.

“Under the Trump administration, your government will pay for - or your insurance company will be mandated to pay for - all costs associated with IVF treatment,” he said at an event in Michigan. “Because we want more babies, to put it nicely.”

That pledge came in the wake of growing pressure after his Supreme Court nominees helped overturn the right to abortion in Roe v. Wade that kicked off an effort in GOP-led states to impose new restrictions, including some that have threatened access to IVF by trying to define life as beginning at conception.

Asked on Thursday about conservatives who have religious objections to IVF and are critical of his support for it, Trump said he wasn’t aware of those views.

“I don’t know about the views of that,” Trump said. “I’m just looking to do something because, you know, pro-life, I think this is very pro-life.”

“You can’t get more pro-life than this,” he added.

Roger Shedlin, CEO of the fertility and family building benefits company WIN, on Wednesday expressed excitement about what he called “steps in the right direction.”

“Any initiative that addresses the cost of drugs will have a material positive impact on the overall cost of the fertility cycle,” he said.



This photo provided by NASA shows a meteor from the Orionid shower on Oct. 13, 2015. (AP)

Halley’s comet debris

How to watch the Orionid meteor shower this week

**NEW YORK, Oct 18, (AP):** The Orionids - one of two major meteor showers caused by remnants from Halley’s comet - will peak with the arrival of a new moon, providing an excellent opportunity to see shooting stars without interference from moonlight.

During Tuesday morning’s peak, expect to see up to 20 meteors per hour in ideal viewing conditions, said Thaddeus LaCoursiere, planetarium program coordinator at the Bell Museum in St. Paul, Minnesota. Viewing lasts until Nov. 7.

“Weather permitting, it will be a great show,” LaCoursiere said.

Halley’s comet passes near Earth every 75 years. Debris left by the comet leads to two major meteor showers every year.

“Sometimes the Orionids leave trains, these bright lingering streak in the sky,” LaCoursiere said.

Here’s what to know about the Orionids and other meteor showers.

As the Earth orbits the sun, several times a year it passes through debris left by passing comets and sometimes asteroids. The source of the Orionids is debris from Halley’s comet.

When these fast-moving space rocks enter Earth’s atmosphere, the debris encounters new resistance from the air and becomes very hot, eventually burning up.

Sometimes the surrounding air glows briefly, leaving behind a fiery tail - the end of a “shooting star.”

You don’t need special equipment to see the meteor showers that flash across the sky annually, just a spot away from city lights.

‘National priorities’

FDA prioritizes select drugs for fast review

**WASHINGTON, Oct 18, (AP):** The Food and Drug Administration on Thursday announced the first round of experimental drugs that will receive drastically expedited reviews at the agency, part of an effort to prioritize medicines the Trump administration deems as “supporting US national interests.”

The nine medicines announced by the FDA include potential treatments for vaping addiction, deafness, pancreatic cancer and other conditions.

Several of the drugs would compete with higher-priced drugs already on the U.S. market.

At the White House, President Donald Trump highlighted the injectable infertility drug, Pergoveris, which is currently sold in Europe for patients going through IVF treatments. Trump said FDA approval of the drug in the U.S. would help lower IVF costs for American families, one of his campaign pledges.

Another drugmaker received the specialty review to expand U.S. manufacturing of ketamine, the powerful anesthetic that has grown into a trendy psychedelic treatment.

Under the program announced earlier this year, the FDA will aim to decide whether to approve the drugs in one to two months, an unprecedented pace for the in-depth safety and effectiveness reviews performed by agency scientists.

FDA’s accelerated approval program generally issues decisions in six months for drugs that treat life-threatening diseases. Regular drug reviews take about 10 months.

Since arriving at the agency, FDA Commissioner Dr. Marty Makary has suggested the agency could dramatically speed up approvals for certain high-priority drugs, pointing to the truncated process used to authorize the first COVID-19 vaccines under Operation Warp Speed.

Many aspects of the so-called commissioner’s National Priority Voucher program overlap with older FDA programs. But the broad criteria for awarding the vouchers gives Makary and other FDA officials unprecedented discretion in deciding which companies will benefit from the sped-up reviews.



# Yad Sports wins praise for backing Kuwaiti handball

**By Khaled Al-Enezi**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff  
KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Mishal Al-Qabandi, Assistant Treasurer of the Kuwait Handball Federation, highlighted the significant role of Yad Sports Channel in supporting handball. The channel covers all youth handball competitions and events on YouTube, including draws and press conferences, providing a comprehensive platform that ensures youth tournaments receive the media exposure they deserve.

The channel's team includes Faisal Al-Mahboub, Saud Al-Faraj, Khal-doun Al-Yahya, Faiz Al-Shammari, and Amr Abdulrahman.

Al-Qabandi praised the team, say-



Mishal Al-Qabandi, Assistant Treasurer of the Kuwait Handball Federation, with officials.

ing, "This dedicated national team is passionate about handball and Kuwaiti sports. Their efforts in promoting youth handball have led the federation's board to fully support them and facilitate all necessary procedures, enabling them to carry out their important role in developing the sport, especially for youth categories that often lack sufficient media coverage."

On behalf of himself and the federation, Al-Qabandi expressed deep gratitude to Yad Sports members for their hard work and dedication. He noted that their contribution is crucial to the growth and success of youth tournaments, while also encouraging healthy competition among teams and players.

# SA rises to second in the eight-team standings South Africa thumps Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Oct 18, (AP): South Africa moved closer to the Women's Cricket World Cup semifinals after cruising to a 10-wicket victory against Sri Lanka in a rain-affected game.

Captain Laura Wolvaardt's brisk 60 off 47 balls and Tazmin Brits' unbeaten 55 off 42 hurtled South Africa to 125 without loss in 14.5 overs. They reached a revised target of 121 with 5.1 overs to spare and their fourth successive win.

Sri Lanka opted to bat first and was 46-2 after 12 overs when rain stopped play for more than five hours. Play resumed just before the cutoff time and was reduced to 20 overs per side. Sri Lanka added 59 runs in eight overs to offer 105-7.

"Very relieved we got a game in the end," Wolvaardt said. "It was frustrating sitting out for four or five hours but happy with the two points. We just treated it as a normal T20 game and wanted to get ahead of the game as soon as we could and not leave it late."

South Africa rose to second in the eight-team standings, a point behind semifinal-qualified Australia. But Sri Lanka has yet to register a win; it has two points from two rain abandoned games against Australia and New Zealand.

Of the eight matches in Colombo so far, three have been rained out, and Sri Lanka-Australia was almost the fourth.

Before the rain, Sri Lanka's Vishmi Gunaratne was struck on the knee while taking a single and taken off on a stretcher. But the five-hour delay gave her time to recover, and she returned



South Africa's captain Laura Wolvaardt hits a boundary during the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup match between South Africa and Sri Lanka at Premadasa Stadium in Colombo, Sri Lanka. (AP)

and top-scored with 34 before falling on the final ball.

Fast bowler Masabata Klaas showed impressive swing to take both wickets before the rain but couldn't bowl after the rain because of the revised rules

under the DLS method.

In the chase, Wolvaardt and Brits were aggressive against the seamers and used their feet well against the spinners as they smashed 12 boundaries. Brits added two sixes.

The Sri Lanka bowlers found it difficult to grip the wet ball and Brits hit the winning runs by smashing Piumi Wathsala for a six over mid-wicket, which also brought up her half-century after two successive ducks.

# Yao/Hu break world record, win 10m air pistol mixed team gold

Zifei claims 50m rifle mixed title with Zhao

GUANGZHOU, Oct 18, (Xinhua): Two-time World Cup winning pair Yao Qianxun and Hu Kai of Anhui surpassed the world record en route to a commanding 17-9 victory over Shandong's Ma Qianke and Tian Kunzheng in the 10m air pistol mixed team event, as the rifle and pistol competitions of China's 15th National Games concluded here on Saturday.

Scoring 298 and 294 points respectively, Yao and Hu combined for 592 in qualification, surpassing the previous world record of 587 set by India's Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary in 2021. Ma and Tian advanced to the gold medal match with 581 points.

In the final, the two teams traded points early and were tied three times up to 6-6 before Anhui pulled away to lead 13-7 and sealed the title 17-9.

"Overall, both of us performed quite well," said 20-year-old Yao. "While competing, I just focused on the moment and tried to enjoy the process." The victory marked Hu's second gold of the Games, following his team triumph in the men's 10m air pistol. Although the 23-year-old failed to defend his individual crown earlier in the week, he said the experience gave him perspective.

"Losing the individual event was actually a good thing for me," Hu said. "I don't see the National Games as the ultimate goal - I need to look toward the



Yao Qianxun (left) and Hu Kai of Anhui in action during the 10m air pistol mixed team event at China's 15th National Games in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. (Xinhua)

future from a higher standpoint." Earlier Saturday, 18-year-old prodigy Wang Zifei capped a remarkable campaign by winning her third gold medal, partnering veteran Zhao Zhonghao to take the 50m rifle three positions mixed team title.

The pair, representing Zhejiang, qualified first and faced teammates Han Jiayu and Shen Yuchen in an all-Zhejiang final, edging them 34-26. Tianjin defeated Shandong 32-24 for bronze.

18-year-old Wang, unbeaten in the 10m air rifle on the World Cup circuit this season, finished a disappointing sixth in the event in Guangzhou, but bounced back to win the women's team gold with Olympic champion Huang Yuting and 2023 world champion Han Jiayu, before adding a 50m rifle three positions individual title earlier.

"I think my performance at this National Games was quite good, and I gained a lot of valuable experience,"

Wang said. "In my first final (in women's 10m air rifle), I was really nervous, but as the competition went on, I gradually adapted and learned how to adjust myself on the field. It's been a meaningful experience." With the rifle and pistol events now completed, Zhejiang emerged as the dominant force, collecting four golds and three silvers. Shaanxi followed with two golds, three silvers, and one bronze, while Anhui finished third with two golds.

# Special Olympics honors Dr. Al-Awadi

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Kuwait Special Olympics will honor Dr. Youssef Al-Awadi for receiving the 2025 Global Golisano Health Award, one of the most prestigious recognitions under the International Special Olympics Healthy Leadership Program. The award will be presented during the opening ceremony of the Third Health Screening Program on October 22 at the Boulevard, where 150 athletes with intellectual disabilities will receive health screenings across eight medical specialties.

Rehab Boursali, National Director of Special Olympics Kuwait, congratulated Dr. Al-Awadi, emphasizing that this global recognition highlights his remarkable contributions to athletes with intellectual disabilities. She praised his efforts in promoting equal access to health and fitness services, leading community and dental health initiatives, and organizing local, re-



Dr. Youssef Al-Awadi

gional, and international programs to enhance healthcare opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

# FIBA blocks Ogwumike's switch to Nigeria for WCup & Olympics

WASHINGTON, Oct 18, (AP): Nneka Ogwumike's dream to play for Nigeria at the Olympics is over.

The international basketball federation turned down her application to compete for the African nation at next year's World Cup and at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. It was the third time that FIBA has denied Ogwumike's appeal to play for Nigeria. She had been trying to play for the country, where her parents were born, since the Tokyo Games in 2021.

"After the second time trying to appeal I made my peace with it. The third time, I was like, let me say I gave it my all. I'm kind of at the point where I'm very much over it," Ogwumike said in a phone interview with The Associated Press. "It's unfortunate but there's just certain things you can't control."

FIBA said in a statement to the AP that Ogwumike's petition was denied.

Her first application was turned down because FIBA said she tried to switch from the U.S. to Nigeria too close to the start of the Olympics. The governing body then said her appeal to play in last year's Paris Games came after the deadline and that she had been an important part of the U.S. national team in its victories in the 2014 and 2018 World Cup. FIBA tries to discourage athletes from playing for more than one senior national team in their careers.



Seattle Storm forward Nneka Ogwumike wears a warmup shirt depicting former Storm point guard Sue Bird after her statue unveiling earlier in the day, before facing the Phoenix Mercury in a WNBA basketball game, Sunday. (AP)

"My involvement with USA is for them, their strongest point, but it doesn't necessarily make the sense that it does to the individual that's being penalized for it," Ogwumike said. "You guys are going to continue using this excuse over and over again. I'm not about to beat a dead horse. I gave it an honest try so I feel fine about it."

USA Basketball gave its blessing for Ogwumike to try to play for Nigeria. She was left off the American team at the Tokyo Games team despite being one of the best players in the WNBA because of a knee sprain she suffered in June that year. Her recovery time would have had her back in time for the Olympics.

Ogwumike, who averaged 18.3 points and 7.0 rebounds this season for Seattle, wasn't the only U.S. player to be denied a chance to play for Nigeria. Elizabeth Williams also had sought to

play for them, but she too was denied. Ogwumike's younger sister Chiney had her application approved with reservations.

"Because Chiney never played on a world championships team, that's why there's different statuses," Nneka Ogwumike said. "They also told me that if I had gotten my passport a little earlier then my chances would have been better."

Ogwumike said that when she was younger she was told by USA Basketball to not try to get a passport from another country.

"It would hurt our chances of playing for USA," Ogwumike said. "I wasn't even trying to get it for basketball. I was just trying to get it because my parents are Nigerian. And I'm the first generation born here, so they kind of scared us into not getting passports from other countries from which our families were from."

Nigeria has been one of the up-and-coming teams in international play in recent years. The country became the first African nation to reach the quarterfinals of the Olympics at the Paris Games before losing to the U.S. The addition of Ogwumike would have potentially given the team a better chance to advance even further, which is something that the 35-year-old former MVP feels hurt her case.

"That's kind of the undercurrent of what they weren't necessarily saying directly to us but we assumed was happening," Ogwumike said.

# 'We should do it again next year' Aces celebrate third championship with parade

LAS VEGAS, Oct 18, (AP): Eight years to the day the WNBA and NBA Board of Governors confirmed the relocation of the San Antonio Stars to Las Vegas, the Aces celebrated their third championship in four years with a parade down the famed Strip on Friday night.

"We're back!" exclaimed owner Mark Davis, donning a white satin team jacket on stage at the Toshiba Plaza outside T-Mobile Arena. "Las Vegas, we are world champions."

Led by a group of classic low-rider automobiles showing off their hydraulics, five double-deck buses traveled from Tropicana Boulevard down Las Vegas Boulevard, the last one carrying the Aces, who threw streamers and confetti to thousands of fans who began arriving four hours before the start of the parade and lined the road that's been known for some of the world's greatest headliners dating to the 1960s Rat Pack era.

The celebration ended with confetti and fireworks littering the sky while Queen's "We should do it again next year" blared through the sound system.

On this night, there were no bigger stars than the



Las Vegas Aces forward A'ja Wilson celebrates during a rally to celebrate the team's WNBA championship in Las Vegas. (AP)

Aces, who overcame a 14-14 start to the season and a pair of rugged playoff series before sweeping the Phoenix Mercury in the WNBA Finals.

Leti Poblete and her husband, Dion, watched the Aces' first two championship parades in 2022 and 2023 on television. They weren't about to miss a chance at attending the third.

"So glad we did," Leti Poblete said. "It was an amazing experience. It was exciting to be with the rest of the Aces fans, and it was awesome to see the players up close and on top of their bus! I even caught their 2025 WNBA Championship souvenir towels."

"We are really proud of these awesome basketball players and incredible women. This basketball dynasty represents Las Vegas well."

From kids to senior citizens to political dignitaries, Toshiba Plaza was packed for a fourth professional championship since 2022, the Aces winning three and the NHL's Golden Knights winning the Stanley Cup in 2023.

"We should do it again next year," said coach Becky Hammon, who wore her signature hoodie blazer, this one with "GRATITUDE" emblazoned in gold across the back.

Change Name

I, Somnath Namdev Thakare, father of Atharv Somnath Thakare My son's passport shows his name as Atharv, but his real and correct name is Atharv Somnath Thakare.

# Kuwait sea club launches RC boats championship with 60 racers

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): The Kuwait Science Club (KSC) announced on Saturday the launch of its International Remote-Controlled (RC) Boats Championship at Al-Khairan, featuring 60 racers from eight countries, including Kuwait, the UAE, Qatar, the United States, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia.

In a statement, the Club described the championship as one of the region's and world's most prominent RC marine events, held under the supervision of an international jury and closely followed by en-

thusiasts worldwide.

Ali Kazem Al-Juma, KSC Secretary General, said the Club has a strong track record in organizing international competitions. He emphasized that the championship is intended to become a permanent fixture on the Club's annual calendar, aiming to expand the base of RC boat racing enthusiasts. Al-Juma noted the event's strong appeal to youth and affirmed that the Club is mobilizing all resources to ensure the competition reflects Kuwait's reputation for excellence.

He added that the championship will continue in the coming years, channeling youth energy into competitive and constructive activities, and invited the public and enthusiasts to attend and enjoy the races.

Abdulaziz Al-Yaqoub, championship supervisor, explained that the racing RC boats are comparable to real boats in both performance and speed, reaching 100 km/h or more, powered by gasoline engines ranging from 26cc to 29cc.

He detailed that the competition features four

classes: Mono 26cc, Catamaran 26cc, Mono 29cc, and Catamaran 29cc, running over three days. The championship uses a points-based system, aggregating each racer's scores across timed heats: starting with preliminary qualifiers and quarterfinals (six heats per stage), followed by semifinals (eight heats) and a 10-heat final to determine the winners.

Al-Yaqoub added that the idea was proposed a year and a half ago to the KSC Board, which facilitated approvals and government permits, allowing all procedures to be completed in just three months.



# Al-Salmiya looks to strengthen title bid against Al-Arabi

Kuwait Club aims to maintain form

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The fifth round of the Zain Premier League wraps up today with two key fixtures. Kuwait Club visits Al-Shabab at Al-Ahmadi Stadium at 5:40 PM, while Al-Arabi hosts Al-Salmiya at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium at 7:55 PM.**

The round kicked off on Friday with Al-Jahra claiming its first victory of the season, defeating Al-Fahaheel 1-0 thanks to a goal by Fahad Ayed, bringing its tally to 4 points, equal to Al-Tadamon.

In today's opener, Kuwait Club, leading the league with 10 points, aims to maintain its winning form and secure a fourth consecutive victory. The team is also preparing for upcoming Asian Challenge League

Group B matches, which start next Saturday and feature Al-Seeb (Oman), Al-Ansar (Lebanon), and Bashundhara Kings (Bangladesh). Meanwhile, Al-Shabab, with 7 points, seeks to continue its strong performance and remain competitive.

In the second fixture, Al-Salmiya, currently with 9 points, hopes to claim a crucial win in Mansouriya to keep its title hopes alive after more than 25 years without a league crown. The "Sky Blues" aim for their fourth straight victory, signaling their intent to compete for the title.

Al-Arabi, with 8 points, looks to secure another win after recording two draws and two wins so far. A victory would boost the team's confidence ahead of its journey to Kyrgyzstan for the Asian Challenge League, where it will compete in Group C against Regar-TadAZ (Tajikistan), Al-Safa (Lebanon), and Muras United (Kyrgyzstan), with matches beginning next Saturday.



In this file photo, an Al-Arabi player attempts to curl the ball over the defensive wall.

## Al-Bahwah confident as Kazma continues strong rise

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18:** Kazma Sports Club's volleyball team maintained its lead in the Federation Championship standings with an impressive 3-1 victory over Al-Arabi in one of the most anticipated matches of the 13th round, held at the Kuwait Volleyball Association Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex.

In other results from the same round, Burgan swept Al-Shabab 3-0, Kuwait Club cruised past Al-Sulaibikhat with the same score, and Qadsia defeated Al-Nasr 3-0.

With this win, Kazma continues to soar at the top of the table with a perfect 17 points from six straight victories. Kuwait Club follows in second place with 15 points, while Qadsia and Burgan share third and fourth with 14 points each. Al-Shabab is fifth with 11 points, Al-Yarmouk sixth with 6, Al-Arabi seventh with 5, Al-Sulaibikhat eighth with 2, and Al-Nasr remains ninth without a point.

Kazma Volleyball Team Manager Khaled Al-Bahwah credited the team's



Players challenge for the ball during Kazma and Al-Arabi match.

strong start to the combined efforts of the coaching staff, management, and players, emphasizing that the club's consistent support has been key to its success.

Al-Bahwah praised the team's Brazilian professionals, Costa and Ademar, for their high-level performances, noting that they have exceeded expectations. He also highlighted Abdullah Al-Mulla

as a significant addition who has strengthened the squad.

"Our ambitions go beyond the Federation Championship," Al-Bahwah affirmed. "We're aiming to compete for every title this season. We're also preparing for our international participation in the Arab Clubs Championship next January, for which we'll hold an overseas training camp to ensure top-level preparation."

## Best of the Rest

**Nakai leads a podium sweep for Japan:** Ami Nakai produced a big upset to beat three-time world champion Kaori Sakamoto and lead a Japanese podium sweep in women's figure skating at the first round of the Grand Prix series Saturday.

Competing in her first senior Grand Prix, Nakai put both hands to her mouth in shock at seeing her score of 149.08 in the free skate - a personal best by over 11 points - and 227.08 overall.

Skating to "What a Wonderful World," Nakai was the only skater in the event to attempt a triple axel jump, even if she put a hand down to steady herself on the landing.

"Never did I think that I would be able to win, but I won this debut Grand Prix event, so I'm just elated," Nakai, previously best known for a bronze at the 2023 world junior championships, said through an interpreter.

Sakamoto was second on 224.23 after rare errors on spins and Rion Sumiyoshi took the bronze with 216.06, overtaking Isabeau Levito of the United States in the free skate.

Britain's Lilah Fear and Lewis Gibson took the ice dance lead with a score of 84.38 for their Spice Girls rhythm dance.

Allison Reed and Saulius Ambrulevicius took second for Lithuania on 80.98 and the 2022 Olympic champion Guillaume Cizeron fell during his dance with new partner Laurence Fournier Beaudry for France but their performance to "Vogue" was still good enough for third on 78. The ice dance event concludes Sunday.

World champion Ilia Malinin of the United States starts his Grand Prix campaign later Saturday with the men's short program. The pairs free skate is also Saturday. World

champions Riku Miura and Ryuichi Kihara lead after the short program. (AP)

□ □ □

**Mayer ends bid for president of FIA:** Former Formula 1 race steward Tim Mayer on Friday ended his bid for president of the sport's governing body, citing ballot rules that he said effectively set up incumbent Mohammed Ben Sulayem to stand unopposed in the December election.

Mayer, an American who is the son of McLaren team co-founder Teddy Mayer, already faced being left off the FIA ballot when it is finalized next week because he had failed to gain the necessary support of vice presidential candidates from various regions in the world.

"There will be a formal vote, but it will be for only one candidate," Mayer said at a news conference ahead of this weekend's United States Grand Prix at the Circuit of the Americas in Texas. "This is no longer a democratic process when choice is replaced by control."

FIA rules make it a daunting task to organize an opposition campaign. Mayer had to travel around the world chasing the votes of 245 member clubs in 149 countries to assemble lengthy lists of candidates for other posts.

Mayer said he logged "about 200,000 miles" and complained the rules unfavorably tilted the ballot toward Ben Sulayem. He noted the only South American on the list of eligible vice presidential candidates had already committed to the incumbent.

Other declared candidates include Swiss racing driver Laura Villars and Belgian journalist Virginia Philipott, who both said they intended to become the FIA's first female president. But Mayer was the most visible candidate of the group of challengers, and they also face the same ballot access restrictions. (AP)

## Suwannarut holds lead heading final at Macao Open

# Nakajima leads by two after third round in India with Fleetwood, Lowry in contention

**NEW DELHI, Oct 18, (Agencies):** Japanese golfer Keita Nakajima shot a bogey-free, 7-under 65 to take a two-stroke lead at DP World India Championship after the third round Saturday, moving in sight of his second title on the European tour.

The 25-year-old Nakajima, a former top-ranked amateur, has two European Ryder Cup stars as his nearest challengers with Tommy Fleetwood (69) in second place and Shane Lowry (69) a stroke back in third.

No. 2-ranked Rory McIlroy, the main attraction at Delhi Golf Club, shot 68 and was in a tie for 15th place - seven strokes off the lead heading into the final round.

"I'm probably two shots too far behind to have a realistic chance," McIlroy said.

Nakajima birdied four of his first eight holes, and then three in a row from No. 12 over a combined 70 feet to jump clear of then-leader Fleetwood. He parred his way home to retain the lead in his bid for a first title on the tour since March 2024, which also came in India at the Hero Indian Open.

Nakajima said the secret to his



Keita Nakajima of Japan plays a shot on the 3rd green during the DP World Tour Championship golf tournament in New Delhi, India. (AP)

good third round was being able to watch his playing partner, Lowry.

"I love his swing tempo," Nakajima said, "and I copied him. So that's why my swing (was) better than yesterday. And mindset was great."

Fleetwood held the overnight lead, birdied two of his first three holes and also the par-5 No. 8.

His only bogey came at the 17th after three-putting from 30 feet, but he made amends with a birdie at the last to make it into the final group.

"Keita is not far enough ahead where he's completely in control," said Fleetwood, who won the Tour Championship on the PGA Tour in August and was the top points

scorer for Europe in its Ryder Cup victory last month.

"Just go into tomorrow, enjoy it. Final group is always great. You've got to enjoy those moments. You don't know when they're going to come again."

The 2025 Macao Open entered its third round on Saturday, with Thailand's Sarit Suwannarut maintaining his strong form to take a two-shot lead.

Having built a solid advantage over the first two rounds, Suwannarut delivered another steady performance, carding a four-under-par round to reach 16-under overall after three rounds, keeping himself in prime position heading into Sunday's final round.

Australia's Brett Rankin, who started the day tied for third, made a strong charge with eight birdies, finishing the day at 14-under and moving into second place. China's Ding Wenyi, who impressed in the opening round, sits third at 13-under after three rounds.

With only five strokes separating the top five positions, which comprises seven players, the competition remains fierce heading into the final day.

## Brignone faces uncertainty over Oly as she rehabs from injuries

**MILAN, Oct 18, (AP):** World Cup champion Federica Brignone doesn't know when she will be able to put her skis back on never mind get back into competition, less than four months before the start of the Italian skier's home Olympics.

Brignone broke multiple bones in her left leg - and also tore her ACL - during a giant slalom crash at the Italian championships in April.

That was meant to be a celebratory final week of competition after Brignone's best season, in which she won the overall World Cup title as well as the giant slalom and downhill crystal globes.

"I don't think I'll be able to get back to exactly how I was before," Brignone said Saturday. "In fact I'm sure I won't."

The 35-year-old Brignone was expected to be one of Italy's stars in the Milan-Cortina Games in February, instead she could be watching it from the sidelines.

"Since I hurt myself I have not had precise dates," Brignone said. "It's very complicated to be able to give those, I am working week by week, certainly I'm getting better, certainly I'm working hard. I will continue to do physiotherapy until I'm able to try and put on skis."

Brignone, who works one her reha-

ilitation for around seven hours every day, said that it is only recently she has been able to go up and down stairs "like a normal person."

"I don't know when I'll be back on the slopes, certainly not November," Brignone added. "Honestly, until I put my skis back on I don't know if I'll be able to ski at the Olympics ... and we have a really strong team so if one of them deserves the place more than me, they deserve it more than me."

"Obviously I'm confident, otherwise I wouldn't be doing everything that I'm doing, I wouldn't be working really hard like I'm doing now."

Despite the uncertainty, Brignone was full of smiles as she spoke at a media day organized by the Italian winter sports federation.

"It's not these Olympics that will change my life, change my career," Brignone said. "I've done what I've done and in fact I achieved much more than I could have ever dreamed of. It would be something more, it would be a beautiful dream."

"It's fantastic to have the Olympics at home, obviously something that I that I would have liked to do because otherwise I would have already stopped. But I also need this positive energy to heal to return to normal life, because with such an injury it's not a given."

## Leipzig edges promoted Hamburger

# Leverkusen holds off Mainz in seven-goal spectacle

**MUNICH, Oct 18, (AP):** Álex Grimaldo scored twice and was booked for complaining as Bayer Leverkusen almost squandered a two-goal lead before beating Mainz 4-3 in the Bundesliga on Saturday.

Grimaldo converted a penalty and Christian Kofane got another goal before Lee Jae-sung pulled one back for Mainz. Grimaldo scored again before the break but was booked in the 69th when he clearly didn't agree with referee Florian Exner's decision to award Mainz a penalty when Philipp Mwene fell under minimal contact from Arthur.

The decision survived a VAR review despite little evidence of a foul, and Nadiem Amiri scored against his former side from the spot.

Martin Terrier thought he sealed Leverkusen's win late, then Amiri sent Armando Sieb through to score in the 90th to ensure a nervy finish for the visitors.

It was Leverkusen's third straight win under new coach Kasper Hjulmand, who was back at his former team. Hjulmand had an unhappy spell in charge of Mainz in 2014-15.

Leipzig held on beat promoted Hamburger SV 2-1 after the home fans honored Hamburg's Danish forward Yussuf Poulsen with a huge tifo in tribute to his 12 years at the club in his first game back. Leipzig was still in the third division when Poulsen joined from Lyngby in 2013.



Leverkusen's Jonas Hofmann, right, tries to block a shot from Mainz's Nadiem Amiri during the German Bundesliga soccer match between FSV Mainz 05 and Bayer 04 Leverkusen, in Mainz, Germany. (AP)

Heidenheim drew with Werder Bremen 2-2, Augsburg drew in Cologne 1-1, and Christian Eriksen made his first start for Wolfsburg in a 3-0 loss at home to Stuttgart. It was Wolfsburg's fourth straight Bundesliga defeat and a sixth league game in a row without a win.

Daniilho Doekhi's first-half double put Union Berlin on its way to a 3-1 win over Borussia Mönchengladbach and extend the visitor's atrocious start to the Bundesliga.

Gladbach came into the game as the only one of the league's 20 teams still to record a win six games

into the season, and it was behind after three minutes.

Doekhi's unstoppable header from a corner was followed by a rebound goal when he reacted quickest to a shot from Ilyas Ansaah that came back off the post.

Haris Tabaković pulled one back for Gladbach seven minutes later when he curled a shot into the far corner.

Visiting Gladbach had much of the play during a busy second half but could not get an equalizer and more misery came when Rani Khedira scored a third for Union in the 81st minute.

The result moved Union into seventh place. Gladbach fell to the bottom of the Bundesliga.

Mönchengladbach's new sporting director Rouven Schröder is maintaining faith in interim coach Eugen Polanski despite another disappointing result.

Gladbach lost 3-1 at Union Berlin to leave it bottom of the Bundesliga after Polanski's fourth game in charge on Friday.

Polanski, who had been coach of the under-23 team, took over when Gerardo Seoane was fired after Gladbach failed to win any of its opening three league games. Gladbach hasn't won any since, either.

"Basically the confidence is there," Schröder said of Polanski, whose team has conceded 14 goals in four matches after letting in three more in Berlin.

"The game showed some things that were good, but of course other things that were not good," Schröder said of lackluster defending.

Schröder, who was celebrating his 50th birthday on Saturday, was appointed Tuesday as the replacement for Roland Virkus, who resigned last month ending an association of 35 years with the club.

Schröder, a former defender, worked briefly as a coach before moving into management with Greuther Fürth, Werder Bremen, Mainz, Schalke, Leipzig, Austrian team Salzburg, and now Gladbach.

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NEWS





LA Clippers forward/center John Collins (20) grabs the pass as he is double teamed by Golden State Warriors center Al Horford (20) and Warriors forward Draymond Green (23) in the second quarter during an NBA preseason game at Chase Center in San Francisco. Clippers won 106-103. (AP)

# Sports

Kuwait handball team opens campaign against Kazakhstan

## Kuwait delegation arrives in Manama for the third Asian Youth Games



Al-Marri poses with Kuwaiti Youth Handball Delegation ahead of departure to Manama.

MANAMA, Oct 18: The Kuwaiti sports delegation arrived in Manama, Bahrain, to participate in the 3rd Asian Youth Games, taking place from October 22 to 31. Kuwait will compete with a 75-member team—comprising both male and female athletes—across 14 individual and team sports, including swimming, triathlon, athletics, badminton, table tennis, golf, equestrian (show jumping and endurance), handball, judo, taekwondo, muay thai, and jiu-jitsu.

Bahrain is hosting the Asian Youth Games for the first time, welcoming 45 nations that will contest 253 events across 24 sports, including 124 for boys and 114 for girls. Some competitions will begin before the official opening ceremony on October 22, featuring men's futsal, handball, and volleyball, followed by the rest of the events.

The Kuwaiti delegation is led by Ali Jaber Al-Marri, Assistant Secretary-General of the Kuwait Olympic Committee and Head of the Mission, alongside Mohammed Al-Saadi, the committee's Technical Director. The administrative and medical staff includes Reem Al-Rashidi, Hani Al-Mil, and Noura Al-Saad.

Accompanying the delegation is Kuwait's national handball team, featuring players Omar Madouh, Salim Al-Salim, Nayef Al-Ajmi, Faisal Ismail, Ali Al-

Hindal, Hussein Sami, Mohammed Faisal, Hussein Al-Istad, Ahmed Al-Mithen, Abdulhadi Mohammed, Yaqoub Mohammed, Abdulmohsen Al-Hashel, Mohammed Al-Farhan, Abdulatif Waleed, Abdulaziz Adel, and Abdulwahab Al-Mutawa, supported by the coaching and administrative staff: Shabeeb Al-Hajri, Khaled Al-Mulla, Hani Al-Dawas, Youssef Al-Shahin, Marwan Abdelqader, and Ivan Dragic.

Other Kuwaiti national teams will depart for Bahrain in stages, according to the start dates of their respective events.

Kuwait's national handball team launches its campaign today against Kazakhstan at Umm Al-Hassam Sports Hall, in the preliminary round of Group B, which also includes Iran, China, the UAE, and Thailand.

A total of 19 Asian teams are competing in handball, divided into four groups. The top two teams from each group will advance to the main round, followed by the semifinals under a knockout format.

Vice President of the Kuwait Handball Federation Shabeeb Al-Hajri affirmed that the players are motivated and ready to deliver strong performances in Bahrain, aiming to raise Kuwait's flag high in the continental event.

He noted that Kuwaiti handball is built on a proud legacy of achievements and emphasized that this youth squad features promising talents who represent the future of the senior national team. Al-Hajri reaffirmed the federation's commitment to nurturing young players and developing their skills to help them reach the podium at international competitions.

He added that the handball tournament is expected to be highly competitive due to the close level of play among Asian teams, as well as the increasing popularity of the sport across the continent.

Head of the Kuwaiti delegation Ali Al-Marri expressed his appreciation for the warm welcome received upon arrival in Bahrain, noting that it reflects the deep-rooted fraternal ties between the two nations.

He commended the organizers' professionalism and hospitality, extending gratitude to the Bahraini authorities for their efforts in hosting this major continental event.

Al-Marri wished the organizing committee success in delivering a successful Games, and voiced confidence that Kuwaiti athletes will achieve notable results, climbing the podium and raising Kuwait's flag proudly in Asia.

## Sheikh Ahmed Al-Jaber: Arab Veterans Tennis Championship remarkable sporting milestone



Sheikh Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah awards champions.

AMMAN, Oct 18: The 5th Arab Veterans Tennis Championship concluded recently in Amman, Jordan, with the participation of 160 players representing 14 Arab countries. The event was organized by the Arab Tennis Federation in co-operation with the Jordan Tennis Federation and the Jordan Tennis Club.

In his closing remarks, Jordan's Minister of Youth Raed Al-Adwan praised the tournament for bringing together Arab athletes who embodied the true spirit of sportsmanship and Arab unity. He commended the organizers for their efforts, noting that the championship highlighted the positive image of Arab sports and strengthened ties among participating nations.

For his part, Sheikh Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, President of the Arab Tennis Federation, described the championship as a distinguished sporting event that united Arab athletes on

courts defined by fair play and camaraderie.

Sheikh Ahmed Al-Jaber expressed appreciation for the excellent organization and warm hospitality extended by the Jordanian hosts, praising the dedication and professionalism of both the Jordan Tennis Federation and the Jordan Tennis Club in ensuring the tournament's success.

He emphasized that such championships enhance bonds of friendship among Arab athletes and serve as a platform for cooperation and cultural exchange through sport.

Sheikh Ahmed Al-Jaber concluded by wishing continued success to all participants and expressed his hope to see the Arab tennis family reunited in future editions of the event.

The Kuwaiti delegation delivered an outstanding performance, winning six gold and silver medals and three bronze medals across various age categories in singles, doubles, and mixed doubles competitions.

## Forest fires Postecoglou as Haaland hits brace for City

Newcastle suffers loss at Brighton

**LONDON, Oct 18, (AP): Around 20 minutes. That's how long it took Nottingham Forest to fire manager Ange Postecoglou after losing to Chelsea 3-0 in the Premier League on Saturday. As for Erling Haaland, he needed five minutes in the second half to do his latest damage, scoring twice for Manchester City in their 2-0 win over Everton to move to 11 goals in eight games in the league. Postecoglou departed after just 39 days in charge of Forest, which didn't win any of its eight matches under the Australian after he replaced Nuno Espirito Santo on Sept. 9.**

In a terse 39-word statement issued while the City Ground was emptying following the defeat to Chelsea, Forest said Postecoglou

was "relieved of his duties as head coach with immediate effect" after "a series of disappointing results and performances."

British media had already been linking former Burnley and Everton manager Sean Dyche with the beleaguered Postecoglou's job. Goals early in the second half by Josh

Acheampong and Pedro Neto, and another by Reece James in the 84th minute, earned Chelsea a victory that prompted loud jeers inside the City Ground at full-time. Postecoglou had been in a defiant mood in recent weeks, even delivering a five-minute monologue on Friday in which he rejected talk that he was a "failed manager" and promised to win a trophy at Forest - just like he did at Tottenham last season before being fired. However, Forest lost six and drew the other two of its eight games under Postecoglou.

That included four losses from five in the league, scoring just one goal in the process, to leave Forest rooted in the bottom three. Malo Gusto became the fifth Chelsea player to be sent off this season after collecting a second yellow card in the 87th minute. Haaland has 23 goals in 13

games for club and country this season, having just come off a hat trick for Norway against Israel in a World Cup qualifier last week.

The striker has said he is in the best form of his career, and it seemed inevitable he would make no mistake when Nico O'Reilly teed up a cross from the left in the 58th. Haaland leapt high and buried his header. Five minutes later, Haaland peeled away from his marker in the box and met a cut-back from Savinho with a shot that went through the legs of defender James Tarkowski and past the unsighted Jordan Pickford in goal. Jack Grealish wasn't able to play for Everton under the terms of his loan move from City.

Nick Woltemade's latest goal for Newcastle - a deft flick between his legs into the corner - proved to be in vain in a 2-1 loss at Brighton, for which Danny Welbeck scored twice. Fresh off his debut for France, Jean-Philippe Mateta scored a hat trick - including an equalizer from the penalty spot in the seventh minute of stoppage time - in a breathless 3-3 draw against Bournemouth, while Burnley beat Leeds 2-0 and Sunderland won at home to Wolverhampton 2-0.



Manchester City's Jeremy Doku, right, kicks the ball ahead of Everton's Dwight McNeil during the Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and Everton in Manchester, England. (AP)

## Afghanistan withdraws from tri-series in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Oct 18, (AP): The Afghanistan Cricket Board has withdrawn its national team from next month's Twenty20 tri-series in Pakistan after it said three local cricketers were killed in Pakistan military strikes in southeastern Paktika province.

The ACB said on social media Saturday that the cricketers were "targeted during a gathering" in Urgun district when they returned home after playing a friendly cricket match in Sharana, the capital of Paktika province.

Paktika officials said the players had been visiting a home at the time of the strike that killed 10 people.

ACB spokesman Said Nasim Sadat identified the players killed as Kabeer Agha Argon, Sibghatullah Zirok, and Haroon, who, like many Afghans, only goes by one name.

Fellow cricketer Saifullah Khan was in the hospital where the wounded cricketers were being treated.

"We are athletes and ambassadors of peace," he said. "We don't want there to be anymore bombings or killings like this."

On Saturday, several thousand people attended the funeral prayers in Paktika. They sat in the open air as loudspeakers broadcast sermons and condemnations.

"The ACB considers this a great loss for Afghanistan's sports community, its athletes, and the cricketing family," the board said in its statement.

"In response of this tragic incident and as a gesture of respect to the victims, the Afghanistan Cricket Board has decided to withdraw from participating in the upcoming Tri-Nation T20I Series."

Afghan captain Rashid Khan and the Afghanistan Sports Journalists Federation welcomed the decision. The federation condemned the strike as a "barbaric and shameful act, which stands in clear violation of all international laws."