



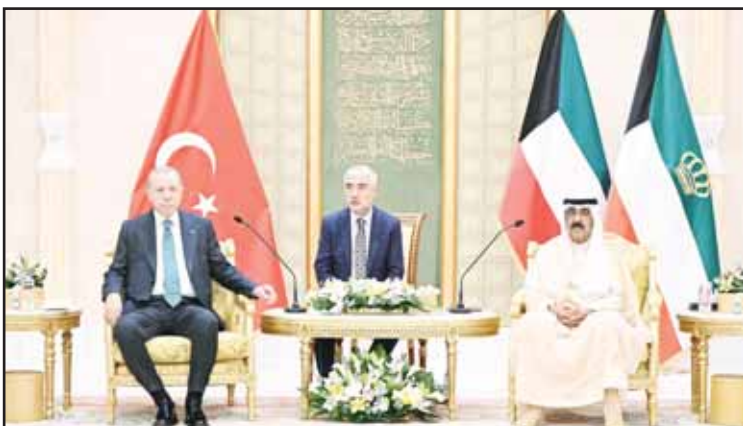
AMIR, TURKISH PRESIDENT WITNESS SIGNING OF MOUs, BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Kuwait, Türkiye to build on 60-year bonds

Erdogan gifts Turkish-made car to HH Amir



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan presented a Turkish car to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan head the official discussions.



Amiri Diwan photos
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan during the agreements signing ceremony.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and accompanying delegation departed from Kuwait on Tuesday following an official visit to the country that included official talks with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Bidding President Erdogan farewell at the airport was His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Also at the airport were His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior

Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah, as well as Amiri Diwan Affairs Minister Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Sabah.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereedah Al-Mosherji, Honorary accompanying Mission Head Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al-Sabah, and Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya and top state officials, were also bidding the President farewell at the airport.

In the presence of Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, a number of agreements were

signed Tuesday at Bayan Palace between Kuwait and Türkiye.

The agreements are as follows:

1. A Maritime Transport Agreement between the Government of Kuwait and the Government of Türkiye, along with a MoU between Kuwait's Ministry of Interior and Türkiye's Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure regarding the mutual recognition of seafarers' certificates, will be signed on behalf of the Government of Kuwait by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah, and on behalf of the Government of Türkiye by Minister of Foreign Affairs Hakan Fidan.

Continued on Page 5

'ME peace priority'

Collections begin for last batch

Italy eyes major role in reconstruction of Gaza

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Lorenzo Morini affirmed that his country strongly supports efforts to maintain peace in the Middle East, indicating that the recent Sharm El-Sheikh Summit is an important milestone in revitalizing the political process and strengthening collective action to end the cycle of violence and human suffering in the region.



Morini

to support stability and development efforts in the Middle East.

He added that Rome is ready to make financial and practical contributions through its companies, which have vast experience in the fields of reconstruction, infrastructure and energy, as well as to utilize its technical expertise in crisis management and sustainable development. He emphasized that the success of these efforts requires collective action and multilateral cooperation, not a unilateral initiative by Italy alone. He explained that the next phase necessitates intensified international coordination to ensure an effective response to the humanitarian and security needs of the Palestinians and pave the way for a comprehensive and lasting peace.

He then underscored the importance of strengthening cooperation between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union (EU) as a key element in consolidating regional security and stability. He stated that the two regions enjoy a high degree of political stability and economic wealth, and are linked by a network of shared strategic interests in the fields of energy, trade and security.

He pointed out that expanding partnership between the two sides could greatly contribute to stability efforts in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Mediterranean Basin, considering this move to be in the common interest of everyone, including Europe, which views the security and prosperity of these regions as the pillar of its own internal security and long-term stability.

KD14 mln paid to clear debts of citizens

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Nearly eight months after the Ministry of Social Affairs launched the third national campaign "Garimeen" to collect donations for repaying the debts of indebted citizens on March 14 (mid-Ramadan), the ministry is preparing to conclude the campaign in the next two weeks by settling the debts of the fourth and final batch of eligible beneficiaries, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to informed sources, the total amounts disbursed so far to clear debts have exceeded 14 million Kuwaiti dinars, freeing 2,300 indebted citizens.

The Supreme Committee for the campaign, chaired by Undersecretary Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi, is currently finalizing the list of citizens eligible for repayment in the fourth and final batch, with debts exceeding 15,000 dinars and up to a maximum of 17,000 dinars. This list will be submitted to the General Department for Sentences Enforcement at the Ministry of Justice, which will proceed with settling their debts according to established procedures.

The sources revealed that dozens of indebted citizens, with debts between KD 5,000 and KD 15,000 who meet the repayment criteria but experienced delays due to missing documents, recently received notifications via the Sahel app confirming their debts have been fully paid by the Sentences Enforcement Department.

Beneficiaries expressed praise for the Ministry of Social Affairs' procedures and the work of the six Sharia committees tasked with reviewing cases, verifying eligibility, and approving payments.

The sources added that extensive national cooperation between the Execution Department, bank officials, and creditor companies has significantly contributed to reducing the debts owed by these individuals, allowing the Supreme Committee to expand the number of beneficiaries. This step represents an advanced phase of the campaign, launched from a humanitarian vision aimed at easing the financial burdens of struggling groups.

Indians top as labor market witnesses over 2 pc growth

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The labor market in Kuwait, including domestic workers and those in similar positions, increased by 2.05 percent year-on-year at the end of the second quarter of this year, reaching 2.99 million workers compared to 2.93 million at the end of the second quarter of 2024, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to official data from the Central Statistical Bureau, Kuwaitis accounted for only 15 percent of the labor market during this period, with 448,920 Kuwaitis compared to 2.54 million non-Kuwaiti workers.

The private sector continues to comprise more than half of Kuwait's labor force, accounting for approximately 58.7 percent of the total workforce, with 1.75 million workers, of whom only 4.2 percent are Kuwaitis. The domestic worker sector ranked second, representing 25.3 percent of the workforce (757,090 workers), followed by the government sector, which makes up only 16 percent of the total workforce (477,640 workers, of whom 78.6 percent are Kuwaitis).

The Indian community continues in top place with the largest number of workers in Kuwait, totaling 892,540 workers and representing 29.9 percent of the Kuwaiti labor market by the end of the second quarter of 2025. Egyptian workers followed in second place, with approximately 470,280 workers, making up 15.7 percent of the labor market. Kuwaiti nationals ranked third, with 448,920 workers, accounting for 15 percent of the labor market.

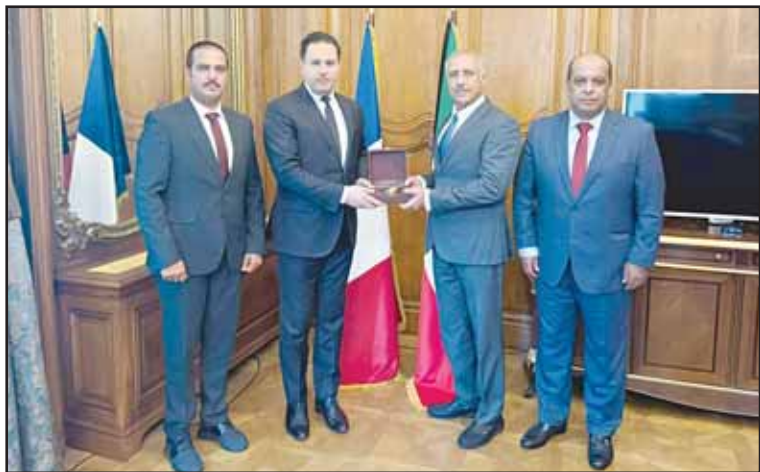
KISR program to push 'research'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) announced Tuesday the launch of the upgraded KISR Digital Repository (KDR), describing it as a qualitative step in bolstering the national research infrastructure and a key building block toward a more open and sustainable scientific community.

Fadela Taqi, Project Lead of the Digital Repository at KISR's National Scientific and Technological Information Center, said in a press statement that developing the repository aligns with KISR's strategic direction to adopt digital preservation solutions as a core pillar that safeguards institutional knowledge outputs and ensures their continuity against loss or damage.

She emphasized the importance of sustainable access for researchers, students and decision-makers, noting that digital preservation is central to amplifying the research and development impact of scientific projects by enabling the reuse of outputs in future initiatives, thereby deepening knowledge accumulation and advancing national development.

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo
Kuwait's ambassador to France Abdullah Al-Shaheen receives the Kuwaiti National Guard undersecretary Lt. Gen. Hamad Al-Barjas.

Kuwait, France ties 'historic'

Kuwait's ambassador to France Abdullah Al-Shaheen heaped praise on his country's "historic" and exemplary relations with Paris, singling out military ties as having seen the most progress.

Ahead of a gathering of the International Association of Gendarmeries

and Police Forces with Military Status (FIEP) in the French capital, the diplomat held talks with visiting Kuwaiti National Guard undersecretary Lt Gen. Hamad Al-Barjas, with the latter set to partake in the meeting over the impacts of artificial intelligence on gendarmeries. (KUNA)

Kuwait launches education reform project with OECD

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The issue of educational reform and curriculum development entered a new and pivotal phase following the announcement by the Ministry of Education regarding the launch of a cooperation project with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a speech at the project's launch ceremony, Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaie highlighted that the reform plan is built on three key pillars:

- Developing a strategic plan to reform the national curriculum for public schools
- Conducting a benchmarking study of

curriculum frameworks in mathematics, science, and English

■ Designing and implementing a new teacher re-licensing exam

Minister Al-Tabtabaie emphasized that the cooperation with the international organization marks a turning point in Kuwait's educational journey.

He explained that the launch of the cooperation project with the OECD is not merely a technical partnership, but a true expression of a national will to invest in human capital as the most reliable path to a prosperous future.

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo
Kuwaiti National Guard Undersecretary Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas, Commander of the UAE National Guard Major General Saleh Al-Ameri and their teams during the meeting.

Kuwait, UAE guards share expertise

PARIS, Oct 21, (KUNA): Kuwaiti National Guard Undersecretary Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas held talks with Commander of the UAE National Guard Major General Saleh Al-Ameri on ways to enhance cooperation and exchange expertise between the two sides.

In a statement by the National Guard's Moral Guidance Directorate, the meeting took place on the sidelines of the International Association of Gendarmeries and Police Forces with Military Status (FIEP) conference, currently being held in France.

Egyptian, son get 3 years in prison for bribing bailiff

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Court of Appeals upheld the ruling of the Criminal Court, which sentenced an Egyptian and his son to three years and four months in prison, followed by deportation after serving the prison sentence, for offering a bribe of KD160 to a bailiff at Raqqa Court in exchange for forging a draft court ruling.

The court also imposed the same sentence on the bailiff, who has since left the country, including a fine double the bribe amount. It was proven that he is involved in the crime and exploited his position to violate the law and undermine the integrity of the judiciary.

□ □ □

Overtaking violations: The in-

tensified campaigns of the General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry resulted in the issuance of 823 overtaking violation citations in just 24 hours.

A security source told the newspaper that traffic campaigns are ongoing in various governorates with the aim of instilling traffic discipline, ensuring smooth flow of traffic on the roads, and preventing practices that cause congestion and accidents.

The source confirmed that vehicles may be impounded for up to two months for violations related to overtaking, in accordance with the amended Traffic Law.

He added that hundreds of overtaking violations are recorded daily, prompting the General Traffic Department to intensify its campaigns to guarantee the safety of road users.

Newswatch

Maintain decency or face hefty fines

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): The National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters (NCCAL) said on Tuesday that stand-up comedy promoters will face tough fines if found violating rules and regulations concerning public decency.

NCCAL Assistant Secretary General for the Arts Sector, Musaad Al-Zamel told KUNA that the NCCAL will take matters seriously if a show violates the rules. He indicated that fines were meant to ensure that shows would deliver quality performances that respect societal values and morals.

□ □ □

KUWAIT CITY: Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs **Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi** announced that the "Visit Kuwait" platform will be the only approved platform for receiving applications from local and international companies wishing to organize tourism, cultural, artistic, entertainment, or other public events in Kuwait, reports Al-Seyassah daily.



KFH reports net profit to the shareholders of the bank of KD 492.7 million up to the end of Q3 of 2025, an increase of 2% compared to same period last year



NBK reports KD 467.4 million in net profit for 9M2025

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:33	Asr	14:46
Sunrise ..	05:53	Maghrib ..	17:12
Zohr	11:33	Isha	18:29

Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Rather hot with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 06-24 km/h.			
By Night: Mild to rather cold with light to moderate north-			
westerly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 06-26 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	38	25	
Kuwait Airport	36	18	
Abdaly	36	18	
Bubyan	38	14	
Jahra	37	21	
Fallaka Island	35	19	
Salmiyah	33	25	
Ahmadi	37	22	
Nuwaisib	38	20	
Wafra	37	18	

Haralambos Prasas showcases Kuwaiti history and culture in Europe

‘Lover of Kuwait’ establishes Cultural Center in Greece

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Greek researcher and artist Haralambos Prasas, who is known as ‘the lover of Kuwait’, considers Kuwait his second home, disclosing that he arrived in the country in 1977, where he began his work and formed strong relationships with Kuwaitis who appreciated his work and respected him as an individual.

During his recent visit to Kuwait, Prasas stated that after four years of continuous residence in the country, he returned to Greece, but remained connected to Kuwait in spirit and thought. He later founded

the Kuwait Center for History, Art, Culture and Humanity in Greece. He said it is the only center of its kind in the world, showcasing Kuwait’s history, heritage, people and authentic culture. He added the center houses more than 100 diverse items, including books on Kuwaiti history, photographs of prominent figures, Kuwaiti memorabilia, articles and heritage artifacts. He confirmed that everyone who visits the center is amazed by the presence of such a Kuwaiti cultural landmark 3,500 kilometers away.

According to Prasas, the inspiration for the center originated from his profound love for Kuwait, and that his entire family – his wife and children – participated in its

creation. He disclosed that “the center is open free of charge to all visitors. Journalists from Belgium, France and other European countries have visited it and featured it in their newspapers.”

He said the center is located on an island near Mykonos, one of the most popular tourist islands in Greece. He added that he continued to visit Kuwait twice a year after returning home to produce collections of commemorative medals documenting Kuwait’s history, such as the 20th and 25th Independence Anniversary Collections, and another series that depicts the journey of the late Amirs of Kuwait from 1917 to 1980.

He also mentioned producing a similar

collection on the history of the Kings of Saudi Arabia, indicating that the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in Athens follows and supports his work, and that all successive Kuwaiti ambassadors have visited the center and expressed their admiration for its contents.

He asserted that “Kuwaitis have refined taste and great appreciation for art, culture and heritage.” He feels proud to have dedicated his efforts to highlighting the humane and civilized image of Kuwait to the world.

He concluded “what I did came from the heart, because Kuwait is a country I love and I believe in its cultural and humanitarian message.”



Haralambos Prasas, Greek researcher and artist

Kuwait affirms reinforcing disability rights in line with int’l agreements

Expert urges inclusive employment for disabled across Arab region

BEIRUT, Oct 21, (KUNA): Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Sheikhha Jawaher Ibrahim Duaij Al-Sabah affirmed on Tuesday Kuwait’s commitment to Arab and international human rights conventions on promoting rights of persons with disabilities.

This came in her speech at the opening of the regional conference organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in Beirut, titled “Towards Inclusive Employment and Entrepreneurship Ecosystems in the Arab Region: Challenges and Solutions.”

Ambassador Al-Sabah said the regional conference aims to economically empower persons with disabilities, promote their integration, launch the Arab Charter for Employment Inclusion, and boost public-private sector partnerships.

She pointed out that Article 14 of Kuwait’s Law No. 8/2010 mandates no less than 4 percent inclusion rate across sectors, aligning with the country’s development plan (Vision 2035) and the 2024-2027 Government Action Plan.

She highlighted Kuwait’s key achievements in advancing the rights of persons with disabilities, including the April 2025 establishment of the National Committee to follow up on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) implementation.

Sheikha Jawaher also highlighted the February 2025 issuance of the Kuwait Code for Accessibility, aimed at transforming buildings into inclusive environments through universal design.

She described the launch of the Kuwait Reference for Disability 2025 as a national milestone reaffirming Kuwait’s commitment to legislation and international agreements.

She pointed out that the Municipal Council’s Technical Committee approved amendments to improve the tourism and hotel sectors to better accommodate persons with disabilities, requiring that 25 percent of hotel units be allocated for their use.

Al-Sabah affirmed the ongoing “Partners in Their Employment” campaign since 2018, which has trained 381 persons with disabilities, allocated 242 jobs, and successfully employed 79 in the public and 163 in the private sector.

On the sidelines of the conference, Sheikhha Jawaher discussed with UN Under-Secretary-General and ESCWA Executive Secretary Dr. Rola Dashti ways to enhance cooperation and exchange expertise in human rights.

In her opening remarks, Mehrinaz Al-Awadhi, Acting Deputy Executive Secretary for Programs at UN-ESCWA, emphasized that empowering persons with disabilities is a development imperative.

She warned that their exclusion from labor, social insurance, and pensions leads to poverty and wasted national potential.



KUNA photo
Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs, Ambassador Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah, meets with officials responsible for the work of persons with disabilities in the Arab region.

For her part, Regional Director for Arab States at the International Labor Organization, Dr. Ruba Jaradat, said that persons with disabilities, which constitute 15 percent of the global population, face high unemployment despite 80 percent being of working age.

She urged inclusive policies and training, noting only 16 percent in the Arab region receive disability benefits, compared to 39 percent globally, and emphasized that inclusion is a shared responsibility.

In his opening remarks, Lebanese Labor Minister Mohammad Haidar said the conference is a platform to exchange Arab expertise on building inclusive labor systems, stressing that the right to work is key to dignity, participation, and human-centered development.

Kuwaiti expert Rehab Bouresli on Tuesday called for tackling shared challenges facing Arab countries in turning the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into real job opportunities.

Bouresli, speaking at a high-level panel hosted by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

(ESCWA) in Beirut, highlighted key barriers such as weak alignment between laws and employment policies, lack of institutional will, low societal awareness, and inaccessible work environments.

She also noted the absence of reliable data, the gap in vocational training, and the lack of coordination with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Bouresli, who chairs the Kuwait Society for Families of the Disabled, stressed the need to shift from welfare to economic empowerment and to replace aid-based models with inclusive employment programs.

She warned that existing hiring quotas often remain symbolic due to poor enforcement and called for independent oversight and public-private-civil society partnerships.

She urged creating national employment data platforms and providing private sector incentives, while integrating disability into national development plans.

The regional ESCWA conference also saw the launch of the “Arab Charter on Inclusive Employment and Entrepreneurship for Persons with Disabilities,” in cooperation with the ILO and the Arab League.

Group explores visionary works of Kuwaiti sculptor Sami Mohammad

IWG visits Dar Mariam Museum for exclusive art tour

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The International Women’s Group – Kuwait (IWG) had the distinct honor of organizing an exclusive visit to Dar Mariam Museum, a newly established yet not officially inaugurated artistic space founded by Mr. Sami Mohammad, one of Kuwait’s most renowned sculptors and artists. This exceptional occasion marked the museum’s first official group visit, offering members a unique opportunity to appreciate Mr. Mohammad’s visionary work and to immerse themselves in Kuwait’s rich artistic and cultural heritage.

Mrs. Marika Kochlamazashvili, President of the International Women’s Group (IWG) and spouse of the Ambassador of Georgia, delivered a heartfelt message of appreciation during the presentation of a commemorative shield to the artist. In her remarks, Mrs. Kochlamazashvili extended profound gratitude to the renowned artist and pioneer of Kuwaiti modern art, Mr. Sami Mohammad for his warm hospitality and for opening the doors of his artistic world to the group.

The occasion was attended by spouses of ambassadors, distinguished IWG members, and H.E. Sheikhha AlAnoud Ibrahim Duaij Al Sabah, gathered in celebration of Kuwait’s rich and evolving artistic landscape.

The Contemporary Art Platform (CAP) played an important role in facilitating the group’s introduction to Mr. Sami Mohammad’s artistic legacy. Mrs. Ofelia Vardanyan CAP representative, provided valuable insights into the stories and inspirations behind the nearly 1,000 artworks displayed at the Dar Mariam Museum, enriching the visitors’ understanding of the artist’s creative journey. Ms. Vardanyan, praised Mr. Sami Mohammad for his outstanding contribution to Kuwait’s cultural heritage. She lauded the profound themes of freedom, perseverance, human dignity and power of Kuwaiti women, that define his exceptional body of work and continue to inspire audiences across generations.

Dedicated to the cherished memory of Mr. Mohammad’s late mother, Dar Mariam stands as a tribute to love, inspiration, and the enduring power of art. IWG members described the visit as a deeply touching and enriching experience, offering a glimpse into the heart of Kuwaiti creativity and cultural expression.

Through such initiatives, the International Women’s Group continues to strengthen cultural ties and promote friendship among women of the diplomatic and international communities in Kuwait, while also exposing its members to the many facets of Kuwait’s rich cultural heritage, traditions, and contemporary life.



IWG members gather at Dar Mariam Museum for a unique cultural experience.



IWG members honoring Sami Mohammad’s artistic legacy.



Sami Mohammad’s sculptures.

IWG photos

Other Voices

Lost everything but her dignity

By Ahmad alsarraf

Lebanese journalist Ricardo Karam wrote, “I visited Amani Bazzi, the woman who lost her husband and three children on September 21 in Bint Jbeil, southern Lebanon, as a result of an Israeli attack on her town, after she asked to see me.

I sat with her for two hours and listened as she slowly opened her heart, pain pouring out with every word. She said it was the first time she had cried since the tragedy occurred. Her daughter was still in a coma, fighting for her life, while she herself is trying to recover from her physical wounds, because the wounds of the soul never truly heal.

I met a 33-year-old woman who studied in convent schools, where she became familiar with Christian education, and continued her academic journey until she graduated from the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik. A woman who lived for love and family, devoted to her children and husband. Her home was once filled with laughter, warmth, and faith. In a single moment, she lost everything.

I sat before a woman who had not been visited by any of the country’s leaders, not even those who raise their voices to say slogans about mercy and humanity. She received no support from the state, nor a word of condolence from officials, except for a few. Only silence, disappointment, and pain.

We talked for a long time, about two hours of conversation, silence, and tears. Her mother sat beside her, whispering prayers, gently wiping away a grief that could never truly fade. And yet, amidst the rubble, I found a woman who was wise, composed, clear-minded, and deeply patriotic. A woman who had lost everything, but never her dignity or her love for her country.

Before I left, she handed me a piece of chocolate, saying it was “for the souls of her children,” so I would remember them. Prayers were pouring in from everywhere, including from the Monastery of Saint Charbel in Annaya.

I removed the miraculous bracelet of Our Lady of Lourdes that I wear day and night, and gave it to her. She placed it on her wrist, praying for the healing of her heart and her daughter. I left her room carrying her unforgettable gaze, a gaze that speaks of a country that has left its people alone to face the storm ... Pray for her.”

□ □ □

Because I’m not good at expressing myself the way Ricardo did in his moving post, I decided to do something more positive and practical. I sent Amani a sum of money to help, even in a small way, ease her ordeal. I also shared what I had done with a few friends and contacts, and several of them quickly followed suit and did the same.

Later, some of them told me that her father had announced the amount received from me and my friends was sufficient, and that they didn’t need any additional support at this time. His response reflected his integrity, his upbringing, and his deep sense of self-respect.

A friend asked me why I chose her specifically to help and encouraged others to do the same. I couldn’t find an answer other than to say that I hope to help anyone in need, which was why I founded the “Kuwait Humanitarian Friendship Society,” through which I make my donations. However, the society is not authorized to provide assistance to any organization outside Kuwait, except in times of disaster. I don’t know why I made an exception for Amani. Perhaps the reason lies in the final paragraph of the article.

Others also asked me why I publicly announced my donation. I told them that, in my experience, generosity is often contagious. What I did was never meant to offend the dignity of the recipient or her family. This is something I understood from their circumstances.

Moreover, giving, without condescension, even to someone in need, is a beautiful gesture, just like a kind word, a sincere wish, a prayer, or a quiet act of compassion.

Ricardo later wrote in another post, “I was inundated with thousands of messages, maybe more. From all sects, beliefs, and affiliations. From people who may disagree, argue, or even stand on opposing sides. Yet, for some reason I still don’t fully understand, this story touched everyone’s heart.

I ask myself why. Maybe because it’s simple... and honest... and painful. Because true pain needs no explanation. It speaks a language everyone understands.”

In the end, Lebanon is different.

□ □ □

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

diwaniya

كيوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Is Israel acceptance of a ceasefire just a ploy?

“THE “Sharm El-Sheikh” agreement, in all its provisions, calls for a ceasefire between both sides - the Israeli entity and the Palestinians - along with the exchange of living prisoners and the bodies of the dead, securing the entry of aid to the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, and rebuilding what was destroyed by the violence,” Kuwaiti writer **Ghanima Habib** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Ghanima Habib

“However, the question is - Will Israel abide by this agreement, which was signed through an American, Egyptian, Qatari, and Turkish initiative, and halt its brutal war against the people of Gaza? Or will its fate be like that of the first Oslo Agreement signed in Washington in 1993, and the second Oslo Agreement signed in Taba in 1995? In my view, the answer to these questions lies in three main points:

“First, the Israeli entity has no commitment; it has always failed to honor any agreements. Israel has always ignored international resolutions, and this has been their pattern since their occupation of Palestine in 1948.

“Second, most Israeli leaders, led by Netanyahu, still harbor the dream of annexing the West Bank and the entire Gaza Strip and forcibly displacing their populations to neighboring Sinai or to countries that might accept Palestinian refugees.

“Third, Israel may have accepted the “Sharm El-Sheikh Agreement” not as a step toward peace, but rather to reorganize its situation and strengthen its military capabilities and strategy to prepare for a fiercer war than before.

“The strength and determination of the people of Gaza came as a surprise, causing a major shock and exhausting the military, psychological, and social capacities of the Israeli entity. Despite the sacrifices they have made, martyrs, starving their children, destroying homes, and displacing families, these people stood firm in defense of their land and refused displacement, no matter the cost.

“What is strange about the atmosphere of celebration over the “Sharm El-Sheikh Agreement,” which was broadcast by all news channels and international media, is the absence of the two main parties to the conflict. Neither Netanyahu nor any Hamas officials were present.

“If we excuse the Hamas leaders due to the recent assassination attempt on them in Qatar a few weeks ago, what raises suspicion is Netanyahu’s absence, which confirms that he accepted the agreement’s terms under American pressure against his will. His bloody history in Palestine, Lebanon, and Yemen confirms his constant thirst for bloodshed. Perhaps his acceptance of the ceasefire with the people of Gaza is merely a “maneuver” to secure the release of prisoners and the transfer of Israeli casualties’ remains only.

“As observers and writers, all we can do is send a message of appreciation and respect to the people of Gaza for their steadfastness and defiance in the face of the Israeli military machine for 24 consecutive months. Through their resilience, they have shattered the Israeli dream of displacement. Their courageous stance reflects the strength of their will in resisting injustice and oppression.

“I hope the Nobel Prize committee will one day consider creating an award for steadfastness. If it does, the people of Gaza would deserve it without question.”

Also:

“The qualification of seven Arab football teams, including Saudi Arabia, for the upcoming World Cup in the United States received widespread coverage in newspapers and websites,” Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Saudi Arabia’s qualification is not surprising, as it reflects Saudi Arabia’s achievements not only in football and sports but also in its rise to become one of the world’s leading countries.

“Saudi football has evolved from a local or regional sport to an international level. It is no exaggeration to say that Saudi sports are now considered among the best in the world. Kuwait defeated South Korea, and we reached Spain. We could have finished higher in the competition if it weren’t for the referee’s bias against the Kuwaiti team.

“We have always acted with good intentions and put our trust in God, while others continue to stab us in the back. Kuwait has fallen behind not only in football but in many other areas. This setback is a tragedy no less severe than the tragedy of the Kuwaiti invasion.

“The youth of the current generation may not have learned about their country’s history and its great achievements in the latter half of the twentieth century. Perhaps we have become accustomed to moving past failure without holding those respon-

sible accountable. We must present our history honestly without exaggeration, falsification, or flattery. Just as there are those responsible for failure, there are also those responsible for success.

“I say this at a time when popular demands and comments are increasing, as if the government possesses a magic wand to solve all problems.

“Achievements and successes do not come from complacency or reliance on others, whether local or foreign. The true measure of success versus failure is tangible results, not propaganda.

“Our children have proven their capabilities, even if they don’t always take first place. Kuwait will not regain its sporting glory without effective leadership, passion, and a strong will. Money alone does not guarantee success; it is only a tool. True success comes from brilliant minds and sincere determination. Kuwait has not completely lost its standing in sports and football. Our youth continue to achieve notable successes. We must never lose hope for a bright future and always remember that success does not come easily; it is the result of relentless effort.”



“Social media platforms present overwhelming temptations and incentives for commenting, sharing, and interacting,” columnist **Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarrah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“This interaction does not always have to be objective; it often takes the form of naive comments. These temptations affect all age groups. Some countries and societies tolerate and accommodate both disciplined and undisciplined freedoms, creating an environment for political action, publishing, scientific research, and thinking and analysis based on scientific standards and controls that contain many contradictions and misunderstandings.

“Kuwait stands out from other Arab countries through its constitution, specifically Article 36, which states, “Freedom of opinion and scientific research is guaranteed...” This article is active and has not been removed from the constitution. It is clearly established in the explanatory memorandum of the constitution and is supported by final judicial rulings.

“Previous governments grew frustrated with the aforementioned Article 36. They collaborated with legal and parliamentary forces to weaken constitutional provisions or find legal means to restrict freedoms through the government and its loyal par-

ties. Laws governing publishing, publications, audiovisual media, and electronic publishing were amended to the extent that they could lead to indictments and convictions—sometimes initiated by the Ministry of Information even before cases reached the courts, and through the procedures of the Public Prosecution.

“Following amendments to the Audiovisual Media and Cybercrime Law, the rules governing social media platforms became deeply ingrained in society, spreading across all segments including schools, students, teachers, and employees. As a result, the courts became overwhelmed with cases, some filed by government agencies such as the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reversing the traditional roles of prosecution.

“The cases failed to consider the social and political consequences. Embassies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs closely monitor activities on the X platform. The media that creates prisons can be found in Kuwait and other Arab countries, reflected by the large number of opinion-related cases, regardless of age, profession, education, or gender. Everyone reacts in their own way, using their own styles of permissible and impermissible criticism.

“The vagueness of complaints and reports has blurred the lines between defamation, slander, and insults. Some even use terms like “maybe,” “appear,” and “possibly” to soften the tone of government criticism. The Cybercrime Law was introduced during a difficult political period in 2015 and was approved by the government and the National Assembly. Subsequent governments did not reassess the nature of the parliamentary period from 2013 to 2020, which was marked by the legislature’s encroachment on the government’s powers and a weakening of its executive role.

“We are witnessing a complex situation between a state with a democratic constitutional system and media and laws that lead to a centralized form of repression. We hope that the government will prioritize reviewing the 2015 Cybercrime Law in light of the circumstances surrounding that governmental and parliamentary period.”

— Compiled by Simi K.Kutty



Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al-Salem Al-Sabah meets the Bahraini Ambassador to Kuwait Salah Al-Maliki.



Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al-Salem Al-Sabah receives the invitation to attend the DIMDEX 2026 exhibition in Qatar.

Kuwait, Bahrain discuss boost in defense ties

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Kuwait Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al-Salem Al-Sabah discussed issues of mutual interest with Bahrain’s Ambassador to Kuwait Salah Al-Maliki.

The ministry of defense said in a statement that Sheikh Abdullah Al-Sabah received the ambassador at his office, where both sides discussed ways to strengthen defense cooperation between Kuwait and Bahrain.

The Minister of Defense received on Sunday, an invitation from Qatar’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defense Affairs

Sheikh Saud Al-Thani to attend the ninth Doha International Maritime Defense Exhibition and Conference (DIMDEX 2026).

The ministry of Defense said in a statement that Sheikh Abdullah Al-Sabah received the invitation during his meeting with Qatar’s Ambassador to Kuwait Ali Al-Mahmoud and Qatar’s Military Attache Brig. Eid Al-Sulaiti.

The meeting discussed topics of mutual interest, particularly military cooperation and ways to further strengthen the relations between Kuwait and Qatar.

Pay firm KD13m dues, MoH told

Ashour acquittal upheld

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Court of Appeal has concluded one of the most prominent cases related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a lawsuit filed by a medical company against the Ministry of Health.

The court ordered the ministry to pay KD 13,028,400, in addition to seven percent annual legal interest until full payment is made.

Lawyer Dr. Mohammad Munawar Al-Mutairi stated that evidence and documentation confirmed the company had fulfilled all its contractual obligations during the pandemic, including the full delivery of medical supplies that played a role

in combating the virus. Despite receiving the goods, the ministry refused to make the payment.

Lawyer Dr. Al-Mutairi stressed that honoring contracts and fulfilling obligations cannot be dismissed under the pretext of circumstances or internal reviews, as they are the foundation of trust in dealings with the state and essential to maintaining a stable business environment.



Acquittal upheld: The Court of Appeal upheld the Court of First Instance’s ruling which acquitted former MP Saleh Ashour and a citizen of money laundering involving KD 151,000 from the Al-Thaqalayn Charitable Society.

The case was filed by the Ministry of Social Affairs based on a complaint, accusing Ashour and others of violating the donations law.

The defendants had previously denied all charges, affirming that the procedures they followed were lawful and properly executed.

100 held in crackdown on crime

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The General Directorate of Emergency Police carried out an intensive field operation from October 12 to October 18, which resulted in the arrest of 100 individuals wanted for absenteeism, arrest warrants, expired residency, and criminal cases), the seizure of 51 vehicles wanted by the judiciary, and the detention of 24 persons without proper identification, reports Al-Anba daily.

Emergency personnel also resolved 13

fight, responded to 206 traffic accidents, and issued 4,016 various traffic citations.

According to security sources, the General Directorate of Emergency Police continues to carry out its security and humanitarian duties with efficiency and discipline.

It affirmed its commitment to protecting lives and property and maintaining security and stability in all governorates of the country.

Ex-EPA officials probed in public funds misuse

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) has referred former leaders and supervisors at the Environment Public Authority (EPA) to the Public Prosecution on charges of unintentional harm to public funds, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Nazaha affirmed its commitment to continue its efforts in examining, gathering evidence, and investigating all serious information it receives.

It praised the role of whistleblowers for assisting in accessing crucial information and data on corruption cases.

Nazaha emphasized its dedication to providing the highest levels of protection and confidentiality to whistleblowers, in accordance with the law and its executive regulations.

Encroachments targeted

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Public Relations Department at Kuwait Municipality has announced the launch of the third inspection campaign carried out by the inspection teams from the Public Sanitation departments in the six governorates, targeting road encroachments and unauthorized use of public spaces, reports Al-Anba daily.

The Department confirmed that the inspection team from the Public Sanitation and Road Works Department at the Municipality branch in Jahra Governorate recently conducted an inspection campaign in the governorate, resulting in the issuance of 10 violation citations for unlicensed exploitation of spaces in front of stores, as well as three warnings.

Irregularities drive retake of doctorate examination

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Administrative Court of Appeal ruled to annul the results of the entrance exam for the PhD program in Comparative Jurisprudence and Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence at the College of Sharia and Islamic Studies.

The court ordered the university to allow a student to retake the exam after finding significant deficiencies in the questions and procedures.

In its ruling, the court confirmed that one exam question was ambiguous and unclear despite being allocated ten marks. The student received a zero on that question, even though the relevant administrative body acknowledged its ambiguity and lack of clarity.

The court stressed that the exam duration of two and a half hours was insufficient given the number of required fields of study, which included five subjects, each with a separate textbook. This was also acknowledged by members of the Grievances Committee. In addition, part of the exam time was lost due to changes in a question and efforts to understand unclear questions.



A PAM inspection team at one of the shops in Souk Mubarakiya, Kuwait City.

PAM intensifies raids to safeguard labor market

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) conducted an extensive inspection campaign in Mubarakiya, headed by acting Director General Eng. Rabab Al-Osaimi, reports Al-Rai daily.

This campaign is part of the efforts of PAM to intensify oversight of the labor market and protect it, with the aim of ensuring that establishments comply with the laws and regulations governing the labor market in order to safeguard the rights of both the employees and employers.

Al-Osaimi confirmed that inspection campaigns are carried out regularly to ensure a safe and organized work environment, which supports economic development and maintains a balance between all stakeholders.

No injuries as fire breaks out in ‘Rabiya’ residence

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Fire broke out in a house in Rabiya, without causing any injuries, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the Kuwait Fire Force revealed that firefighting teams from the Ardiya and Farwaniya fire stations rushed to the location, evacuated the house and extinguished the fire before it spread further.

Exotica Cafe

مفـل مـحـل
MUGHAL MAHAL

MUGHAL MAHAL APP OFFER

20% OFF + 5% CASHBACK

IN WALLET

Terrace Mall, Salmiya

Overlooking Gulf Road, Salem Al Mubarak Street

SCAN QR TO DOWNLOAD THE APP

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

1800 188 / 5501 1985 | www.mughalmahal.com

Kuwait real estate calms after early October surge

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The local real estate market recorded mixed performance in various sectors in the second week of October.

The coastal strip witnessed an unprecedented qualitative leap with a growth rate of 163.6 percent, with two transactions valued at more than KD8.7 million. This entails the return of activity in this sector, which is usually associated with ‘heavy’ deals with a distinctive investment character.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the weekly statistical report issued by the Real Estate Registration and Documentation Department at the Ministry of Justice, indicating the number of real estate transactions from Oct 12 to 16 to-

Coastal strip sparks boom

taled 143 worth KD123.3 million, compared to 175 transactions worth KD127 million in the first week of the month. This is a decline of 18.3 percent in number and around three percent in value, indicating that the market entered a period of relative calm after a remarkable period of activity in early October.

For the residential sector, its performance declined by 16.3 percent in number of transactions and 5.9 percent in value, recording 97 transactions worth KD43 million, compared to 116 transactions worth KD45.7 million in the previous week. Observers attribute this decline to the anticipated implementation of the Vacant Land Monopoly Law early next year, which led to hesitation in buying and selling decisions.

In contrast, the investment sector continued its positive performance, achieving a qualitative increase of 3.3 percent in value, through 40 transactions worth KD50.2 million, compared

to 51 transactions worth KD48.6 million in the first week. This is a confirmation of the sustained attractiveness of the sector to investors seeking stable rental returns amid low interest rates.

The commercial sector maintained its numerical stability at four transactions, but recorded 24.3 percent decrease in value, reaching KD21.4 million compared to KD28.3 million in the previous week, indicating smaller transactions compared to the previous period.

Ahmadi Governorate topped the trading list with 40 transactions worth KD29.7 million, followed by Hawally Governorate with 37 transactions worth KD27.3 million, the Capital Governorate with 28 transactions worth KD38.7 million, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate with 15 transactions worth KD8.8 million, Farwaniya Governorate with 12 transactions worth KD8.7 million, and Jahra Governorate with 11 transactions worth KD3.4 million.

Sheikh Athbi commends efforts to improve services

Farwaniya Governor reviews municipal achievements



Farwaniya Governorate photo showing Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receiving Deputy Director General of Farwaniya Municipality.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received Deputy Director General of Farwaniya Municipality Eng. Nawaf Abdulaziz Al-Kandari, at his office on Monday morning.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, Eng. Al-Kandari presented during the meeting the latest important achievements of Kuwait Municipality in the Farwaniya Governorate.

Discussions covered a range of topics related to improving municipal services and strengthening coordination between the governorate and the municipality to enhance the quality of services provided to citizens and residents and support development goals.

The governor stressed the importance of ongoing fieldwork and close monitoring of development and oversight projects in collaboration with all relevant authorities.

He commended the municipality’s efforts to improve the overall appearance of the governorate and enhance the efficiency of its services.

At the end of the meeting, Eng. Al-Kandari expressed his appreciation to the governor for his ongoing support and cooperation, which contribute to advancing service development and performance levels in Farwaniya, and positively impacting residents’ daily lives.



Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 50.000	BHD 111.000/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 61000/-net	BHD 136.198

Terms & conditions apply*

Net-to-basket conversions permitted

Al-Mukhaizeem greenlights major fishing license, boat amendments

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy Dr. **Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem** approved Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Decision No. 70/2025, which amends the third paragraph of Article Two of Decision No. 543/2016 concerning the lengths and capacities of fishing gear, as previously amended by Decisions Nos. 750/2016 and 985/2018, reports Al-Seyassah daily.



Al-Mukhaizeem

The decision permits the conversion of net fishing licenses to floating basket fishing licenses and vice versa, subject to three conditions.

Published in yesterday’s issue of “Kuwait al-Youm”, the decision states in its first article that, as an exception to Article Five of Decision No. 1111/2016, amended by Decision No. 538/2017, net fishing licenses may be converted to floating basket fishing licenses and vice versa.

The decision outlines the conversion conditions, specifying that the conversion rate must not exceed 20 percent of the licenses for each type. If the number of ap-

plications exceeds this limit, priority will be given to those registered in PAAAFR general registry during the application period.

License type replacements are allowed only during the month of January each year, for a period of one month.

Article Two states that all regulations in this resolution will be subject to annual review by the Technical Committee for Fisheries Affairs. The Committee may recommend suspending these regulations, in whole or in part, whenever deemed necessary based on environmental conditions and fishing efforts.

Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem also approved another PAAAFR resolution regarding the lengths of fishing boats using floating baskets or gillnets.

Article One of this resolution amends paragraph three of Article Two of Resolution No. 543/2016, which concerns determining fishing boat lengths and capacities, as previously amended by Resolutions Nos. 750/2016 and 985/2018 (Fiberglass boats), to read as “Fishing boats using floating baskets or gillnets.”

The resolution specifies that the total length of fiberglass boats licensed to fish using floating baskets or gillnets in Kuwaiti territorial waters must not exceed 40 feet and must not be less than 20 feet. Also, boat engines must be outboard.

Positive sign for marine life

Kuwait 26th ‘Sea Turtle Rescue’ campaign kicks off November 8

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): The Kuwait Environment Protection Society (KEPS) announced the launch of the 26th season of the “Sea Turtle Rescue” campaign on November 8, which will focus on cleaning the Kuwait Towers beach. The campaign is being held in cooperation with the Embassy and the Japanese Society, with participation from government agencies, civil society organizations, and students from schools included in the 15th Green Schools Program for the current academic year.

KEPS Secretary General and Director of Programs and Activities Jenan Behzad said in a press statement on Sunday that the sea turtle rescue campaign aims to raise environmental awareness about the importance of preserving endangered species and protecting natural habitats along the Kuwaiti coast.

Behzad explained that this initiative is part of civil society efforts to support environmental sustainability, protect biodiversity, and highlight the historical and environmental significance of sea turtles in the Arabian Gulf.

She added that the campaign seeks to encourage community participation in preserving marine life and calls on volunteers, citizens, and residents to take part in field activities, which include beach cleaning, monitoring turtle nests, and raising awareness about the importance of the coastal ecosystem.

She stated that this initiative exemplifies international cooperation between the Kuwaiti Society, the Embassy, and the Japanese Society in the fields of environment, education, and volunteering, reflecting both sides’ commitment to supporting sustainable development goals and protecting marine life for future generations.

Behzad pointed out that last year, the 25th season of the operation took place, furthering its awareness goals of instilling the values of volunteer-



KEPS photo showing Secretary-General of the Environmental Protection Association, Jenan Behzad, receiving Japanese Embassy researcher Nemoto Mikako.

ing and environmental community participation among citizens and residents.

Regarding the types of turtles living in Kuwait, Behzad said they include green turtles, loggerhead turtles, hawksbill turtles, and leatherback turtles.

She explained that, despite environmental challenges facing turtles, recent studies have shown that green turtles have begun to regain their nesting activity, while hawksbill turtles continue to face challenges in their natural hatching rates.

She stressed that the return of turtles to Kuwaiti territorial waters is a positive indicator of the recovery of the marine environment in the northern Gulf, thanks to ongoing local and international efforts in environmental protection.

Female appointments rise slightly

CAPT awards KD7.77m grid tenders

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Board of Directors of the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) recently decided to award three tenders for the maintenance of parts of the electrical grid, with a total cost of KD7.766 million.

These tenders will be referred to the State Audit Bureau for audit and to obtain its opinion prior to the final contract approval.

One of the tenders is for the supply and installation of medium-voltage (11 kV) and low-voltage lines and related works along Salmi Road at a total cost of KD2.354 million. The other tender is for the maintenance and repair of insulated cable feeders in the southern part of the

country at a cost of KD2.706 million, while the last tender covers the maintenance and repair of insulated cable feeders in the central area at a total cost of KD2.706 million.

CAPT excluded the lowest bidders for non-compliance with the technical terms and specifications for the two cable feeder maintenance tenders.

Meanwhile, the statistical report issued by the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy in September revealed that the ratio of female to male appointments has shown a slower pace of growth, increasing by only 0.2 percent in the first nine months of this year. It disclosed that the total number of female employees appointed in January reached 9,770 (27.6 percent), which increased to 10,190 (27.8 percent).

CSC clears 1,630 citizens for new government jobs batch

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) announced on Monday the nomination of a new batch of 1,630 citizens registered in the Central Employment System, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press release, it stated that the batch includes candidates who previously did not meet the nomination procedures

of the entities they were referred to, as well as individuals who had declined earlier job offers at certain institutions.

CSC confirmed that it is continuing to receive job requirement data from government agencies as part of the second phase for the 2025/2026 fiscal year, in preparation for submitting it to the Civil Service Council for approval.

NASEM and KFAS conclude ‘Precision Medicine’ program

Experts push cross-border medical progress

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM), in collaboration with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), concluded the program titled “Precision Medicine - Enhancing Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration between Kuwait and the United States”, which was held in Washington, D.C., with the participation of a distinguished group of scientists and physicians from both Kuwait and the United States. The event was also attended by Kuwait’s Ambassador to the United States, Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah.

According to a press release issued by KFAS, the two-day program included intensive sessions and high-level scientific discussions focused on integrating genomic studies with environmental factors, policies, and governance in the field of precision medicine. The program also explored

ways to build technical infrastructure and enhance cross-border data exchange to support research and clinical applications.

The program’s scientific committee was chaired by Dr. Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah, Chairman of the Medical Liability Authority and a recipient of the Jaber Al-Ahmad Award for Young Investigators.

Dr. Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah contributed to overseeing the program’s scientific activities and drafting its outcomes, which aim to strengthen research collaboration between Kuwait and the United States in precision medicine and advanced medical technologies.

The event included participation from a distinguished group of Kuwaiti physicians, among them Dr. Waddah Al-Rifai, Professor and Arnold W. Lempka Chair of Surgery at Creighton University.

Dr. Al-Rifai delivered a lecture titled “Transforming Surgical Research into Clinical Excellence,” in which he highlighted how innovations in surgical research are translated into practical therapeutic applications that enhance patient outcomes.

He stressed the importance of technology transfer pathways in medicine and the clinical evidence required for the successful adoption of new technologies.

His presentation offered a practical

perspective that connected research findings to clinical practice and sparked discussion on capacity building and the standardization of protocols within healthcare institutions.

Dr. Zaid Al-Marzouq, a recipient of the Jaber Al-Ahmad Award for Young Investigators in Medical Sciences, a cardiac catheterization specialist, and Director of the Structural Heart Program in Boston, USA, also participated in the event.

He participated in the session titled “Implementing Precision Medicine Technologies into Clinical Workflows”. He moderated a discussion on integrating artificial intelligence tools, cloud platforms, and genomic analytics into daily medical practice.

Dr. Al-Marzouq highlighted the training needs of medical teams and addressed the sustainability of precision medicine applications within hospital settings. The workshop also witnessed notable participation from several Kuwaiti specialists, as part of the ongoing scientific collaboration between KFAS and NASEM.

Dr. Sulaiman Al-Mazidi, Head of the Surgery Department at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital, and Dr. Hamoud Al-Rashidi, Senior General Surgery Specialist, delivered a scientific presentation highlighting Kuwait’s pioneering experience in remote robotic surgery. Their work was recognized by the Guinness World Records for performing the longest remote surgery in the world.

The program also included several keynote lectures on vital topics such as cross-border data sharing, regulatory environments, and human capacity building in the field of precision medicine.

At the conclusion of the program, discussions resulted in a set of practical recommendations aimed at strengthening international partnerships and accelerating the translation of scientific discoveries into clinical impact.

Kuwait’s contributions to the event reflect KFAS’s ongoing efforts to promote scientific diplomacy, support national investment in precision medicine, and advance its strategic objectives.



Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah, Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the United States of America



Dr. Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah, Chairman of the Medical Liability Authority



Participants of the Kuwait–U.S. Precision Medicine Program gather at the Albert Einstein Memorial in Washington, D.C., marking the conclusion of the joint KFAS–NASEM event.



Part of one of the program’s sessions.

Officials push for unified strategies and digital innovation

Kuwait chairs 68th AIDSMO meeting in Rabat

RABAT, Oct 21, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait chaired the 68th meeting of the Executive Council of the Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO) in Rabat on Monday, drawing delegations of 12 Arab countries, including State of Kuwait.

Speaking to KUNA, Acting Director-General of Kuwait’s Public Authority for Industry Shamlan Al-Jahidly, who led the participating Kuwaiti delegation, said this two-day edition focuses on a pan-Arab industrial integration strategy, which is designed to overhaul the Arab industrial and mining sector and boost the competitive edge of Arab industrial products.

He pointed out the great role played by AIDSMO in promoting Arab coordination and integration in industry, mining and standardization as vital sector for sustainable developments.

For his part, AIDSMO’s Director-General Adel Al-Sager, also speaking to KUNA, said the organization is eager to establish a pan-Arab industrial basis capable of keeping abreast of rapid global changes.

He added that the organization is seeking to



Acting Director-General of Kuwait’s Public Authority for Industry Shamlan Al-Jahidly, leads the participating Kuwaiti delegation.

include modern technologies in its programs and initiatives, including Arab platforms for industrial and mining products, minerals and industrial indicators and a smart digital library.

Al-Huwailah pledges continued support

Kuwait, UNHCR vow closer humanitarian partnership

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs and Family and Childhood Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah on Monday discussed with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Representative in Kuwait Nasreen Rubaian ways to enhance cooperation.

In a press statement, Al-Huwailah said that the ministry continues to support UN and humanitarian efforts, stemming from Kuwait’s steadfast belief in its humanitarian mission.

For her part, Rubaian praised Kuwait’s pioneering role in humanitarian work, affirming that the country’s wise leadership has made it a global model of generosity and solidarity.



Meeting of the Minister of Social Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, with the representative of the UNHCR in Kuwait, Nisreen Rubaian.

KISR program

Taqi explained that the National Scientific and Technological Information Center began years ago establishing a digital repository to preserve KISR’s scientific output, starting with technical reports from its research projects, laying the groundwork for a comprehensive national repository documenting Kuwait’s local scientific production.

The first phase included setting up an integrated digitization lab to execute in-house digitization using specialized equipment and a Digitization Administration Framework (DAF) developed in cooperation with the Library of Alexandria, which added advanced capabilities to the KDR platform.

This phase resulted in the digitization of more than 10,000 scientific and technical reports from KISR projects, in addition to a set of government studies, initiatives and other documents, providing open access to these research outputs and enhancing knowledge transfer domestically and internationally.

Taqi noted the upgraded KDR is built on a modern digital architecture that keeps pace with the latest technologies, improving performance efficiency, broadening support for diverse forms of scientific and knowledge content, facilitating researcher access to outputs and strengthening knowledge exchange among scientific institutions.

She added that KDR is a pioneering national project to preserve KISR’s institutional memory and safeguard Kuwait’s scientific heritage, ensuring long-term availability for current and future generations and serving as a key resource to support upcoming studies and research.

Taqi commended the significant role of the Library of Alexandria in developing the new release of the repository, affirming that the longstanding 2011 memorandum of understanding enabled KISR to benefit from the Library’s advanced expertise in building and operating digital repositories in terms of technical infrastructure, content management standards and data accessibility.

“This achievement marks an important milestone toward realizing the strategic goals of the Science and Technology Sector. It would not have been possible without the strong support of KISR’s senior management, and we hope this release will constitute a qualitative addition aligned with Kuwait’s aspirations,” she concluded.

Kuwait launches

This project complements the six-pillar education reform plan presented to the Council of Ministers in January.

The OECD will support the ministry in implementing the reform plan across its three main pillars. These integrated efforts reflect Kuwait’s determination and ambition to become a global leader in education.

The ministry will provide the OECD with all necessary field data and information to ensure the effective and responsible implementation of the three pillars.

Addressing the OECD representatives, Al-Tabtabaie stated that the goal is for the Kuwaiti education system to compete on international benchmarks, and for Kuwait to be remembered as a model to be emulated, not merely an experiment observed from a distance.

Meanwhile, Dean of the College of Basic Education at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Dr. Mubarak Al-Dhurwa announced that the college has completed the development of new curricula, which will be implemented next year to keep pace with digital transformations and labor market demands.

He noted that this step represents a qualitative shift in the college’s performance and will contribute to improving the quality of its male and female teacher graduates.

In a statement to the daily, Dr. Al-Dhurwa revealed that a study is underway to launch a preparatory course for new students starting next year, indicating that the course will include subjects such as academic skills, Arabic, English, and mathematics, with the goal of enhancing students’ academic readiness before enrolling in educational specializations.

He stressed that the college receives between 4,000 and 5,000 students annually, who are prepared both academically and pedagogically before being assigned to practical training in the Ministry of Education, adding that the college graduates between 2,000 and 3,000 students each year.

Kuwait, Türkiye

2. MoU between Kuwait and Türkiye on cooperation in the field of energy will be signed on behalf of the Government of Kuwait by Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, Acting Minister of Finance, and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem, and on behalf of the Government of Türkiye by Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Alparslan Bayraktar.

3. MoU between Kuwait, represented by the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), and Türkiye, represented by the Investment and Finance Office of the Presidency of Türkiye, regarding cooperation in the field of direct investment promotion, will be signed on behalf of the Government of Kuwait by Director General of KDIPA Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and on behalf of the Government of Türkiye by Head of the Investment and Finance Office of the Presidency of Türkiye Ahmet Burak Daglioglu.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held official talks at Bayan Palace on Tuesday with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and senior officials from both sides.

Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah stated that during the talks, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations between Kuwait and Türkiye, discussed means of strengthening cooperation in various fields,

and exchanged views on key regional and international developments of mutual concern.

The meeting reflected the spirit of friendship and understanding between the two countries, affirming their mutual desire to enhance cooperation across all domains in a manner that serves their common interests and promotes regional stability.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held a banquet on Tuesday at Bayan Palace in honor of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his accompanying delegation on occasion of official visit to the country.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Tuesday a gift from visiting Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, at Bayan Palace.

The gift, an emblem of President Erdogan’s appreciation and pride in the bilateral ties between the two nations, is a Turkish made electric car by the name of Togg.

His Highness the Amir voiced his sincere appreciation for this generous gesture, wishing the President and the Turkish people further progress and prosperity.

Earlier, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the accompanying delegation arrived in Kuwait on Tuesday on an official visit.

Heading the reception at Kuwait International Airport were His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Also present were His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Chief of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah, Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sherceeda Al-Mousherji, Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya and senior state officials.

The Head of the honorary delegation accompanying President Erdogan will be Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

President Erdogan’s delegation includes Minister of Foreign Affairs Hakan Fidan, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Alparslan Bayraktar, Minister of Economy and Finance Mehmet Simsek, Minister of Defense Yasar Guler, Minister of Industry and Technology Mehmet Kacir, Minister of Trade Omer Bolat and other senior officials.

The visit of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Kuwait will renew both countries’ shared vision for cooperation and boost over 60 years of ties, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Türkiye Abdulaziz Al-Adwani said on Tuesday.

Speaking to KUNA, Ambassador Al-Adwani said that the visit to Kuwait and his meeting with His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah -- who also visited Türkiye last May -- reflects the depth of relations.

Exchanging visits and signing accords and agreements further strengthen six decades of cooperation, added the Ambassador who affirmed that relations were tested during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, with Türkiye siding with Kuwait,

leading to liberation in 1991 through an international coalition army.

He asserted that economic cooperation had been developing since 2000, noting that the two countries share similar views within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the GCC-Türkiye framework, and at the bilateral level.

In this regard, he commended the mutual support during the COVID-19 pandemic and also the Kuwaiti support for Türkiye during the devastating 2023 earthquake, which hit both Türkiye and Syria, with Kuwait allocating around USD 30 million to assist victims of the natural disaster.

The total number of government and popular campaigns for the earthquake victims reached USD 97.7 million, he added.

The Ambassador also mentioned that the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) had been cooperating with Türkiye since 1979, granting the first loan that year for a power project.

The KFAED also signed an agreement worth USD 20 million with Türkiye in 2016 to help assist Syrian refugees in the country, providing health and educational services, he revealed. Ambassador Al-Adwani noted that this was part of the USD 500 million Kuwaiti pledge during the 2015 third donors’ conference for Syria.

We're Hiring: Coordinator
(Part-Time / Full-Time)
! Oxford Learning Centre – Shaab

Are you a **native English speaker** with a passion for education and organization? Join our friendly team at Oxford Learning Centre, a well-established tutoring centre in Shaab.

Position: Coordinator

Availability: Part-Time or Full-Time

- Part-Time Hours:
 - Sunday–Wednesday: 4:00 PM – 8:00 PM
 - Thursday: 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM
 - Saturday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
- Full-Time Hours:
 - Sunday–Wednesday: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM or 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM
 - Thursday: Alternating shifts (9:00 AM – 1:00 PM or 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM)
 - Saturday: Every other Saturday (9:00 AM – 1:00 PM)

We're looking for someone reliable, organized, and enthusiastic about supporting students and staff in a dynamic learning environment.

To apply, send your CV to: kuwaitoxford5@gmail.com

Japan’s parliament elects Takaichi as nation’s first female prime minister

TOKYO, Oct 21, (AP): Japan’s parliament elected ultraconservative Sanae Takaichi as the country’s first female prime minister Tuesday, a day after her struggling party struck a coalition deal with a new partner expected to pull her governing bloc further to the right.

Takaichi replaces Shigeru Ishiba, ending a three-month political vacuum and wrangling since the Liberal Democratic Party’s disastrous election loss in July. Ishiba, who lasted only one year as prime minister, resigned with his Cabinet earlier in the day, paving the way for his successor.

Takaichi won 237 votes - four more than a majority - compared to 149 won by Yoshikoko Noda, head of the largest opposition party, the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, in the lower house, which elects the prime minister. Even though her coalition was two seats short of a majority, Takaichi received enough votes to win in the first round. She likely received votes from lawmakers in fringe minority parties from whom she has sought cooperation.

As the results were announced,



Lawmakers applaud as Sanae Takaichi, (center), is elected as Japan's new prime minister during the extraordinary session of the lower house, in Tokyo, Japan on Oct 21. (AP)

Takaichi stood up and bowed deeply. Takaichi, 64, appointed former Defense Minister Minoru Kihara as chief cabinet secretary.

Takaichi appointed her leadership rivals within the party to her government along with other veteran lawmakers. Toshimitsu Motegi, who previously served as both trade and foreign ministers, was named

foreign minister.

Former Agriculture Minister Shinjiro Koizumi was named defense minister. And former Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi was named internal affairs and communication minister. She also appointed Ishiba’s chief trade negotiator, Ryosei Akazawa, as economy and trade minister.

Philippines unveils new jail for legislators who may face corruption trial: top official

MANILA, Philippines, Oct 21, (Agencies): The Philippines has unveiled a new jail that may soon accommodate numerous powerful legislators, public works officials and others implicated in a massive corruption scandal involving flood control projects, a top official said Monday.

The jail, which could hold up to 800 detainees in metropolitan Manila, was shown to the media by Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla in the latest bid by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s administration to quell public outrage over the scandal.

The anomalies have linked dozens of Congress members, government engineers and construction company owners and sparked street protests in one of Asia’s most flood-prone countries. Remulla estimated that about 200 officials and other suspects could be indicted by the Sandiganbayan, a special anti-graft court for government officials. That led to the decision to build a new jail to detain suspects who could be facing months or years of trial, he said.

Remulla promised that the suspects, who may include former and incumbent members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, would not be given any VIP treatment, as has



Protesters gather during a farmer-led anti-corruption rally on Oct 21, near the Malacanang presidential palace in Manila, Philippines. (AP)

happened in the past with politicians convicted of crimes.

“What we are preparing are regular jail cells,” Remulla said in a news conference. “If a shoplifter who stole a bottle of lotion worth 100 pesos (\$1.7) from a shopping mall could be detained here, the ones who stole billions and billions in my view should be similarly locked up here.”

The jail comprises 80 cells, each capable of holding up to 10 inmates.

Facilities include bunk beds, a shared bathroom, toilet, shower and purified drinking water. As in other detention centers, cellphones, computers and other communication gadgets are prohibited. Detainees will have access to their lawyers and an infirmary, he said.

“The same rules of the jail will apply to the rich and poor,” Remulla said. Prisons in the Philippines are notorious for overcrowding and inadequate facilities.

Federal workers set to miss additional paychecks

Senate Republicans gather at WH as shutdown effects worsen

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): As the government shutdown enters its fourth week, Senate Republicans are gathering at White House - not for urgent talks on how to end it, but for a display of unity with President Donald Trump as they refuse to negotiate on any Democratic demands.

Senate Democrats, too, are confident in their strategy to keep voting against a House-passed bill that would reopen the government until Republicans, including Trump, engage them on extending health care subsidies that expire at the end of the year.

With both sides showing no signs of movement, it’s unclear how long the stalemate will last - even as hundreds of thousands of federal workers will miss another paycheck in the coming days and states are sounding warnings that key federal programs will soon lapse completely. And the meeting at the White House appears unlikely, for now, to lead to a bipartisan resolution as Senate Republicans are dug in and Trump has followed their lead.

“I think the president’s ready to get involved on having the discussion” about extending the subsidies, said Senate Republican leader John Thune, R-S.D., on Monday. “But I don’t think they are prepared to do that until (Democrats) open up the government.”

While Capitol Hill remains at a standstill, the effects of the shutdown are worsening. Federal workers are set to miss additional paychecks amid total uncertainty about when they might even-



US Senate Majority Leader John Thune pauses in his office doorway to speak to reporters on day 20 of the government shutdown, at the Capitol in Washington, Oct 20. (AP)

tually get paid. Government services like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, known as WIC, and Head Start preschool programs that serve needy families are facing potential cutoffs in funding. On Monday, Energy Secretary Chris Wright said the National Nuclear Security Administration is furloughing 1,400 federal workers. The Federal Aviation Administration has reported air controller shortages and flight delays in cities across the United States.

Still, there has been little urgency in

Washington as each side believes the other will eventually cave.

“Our position remains the same, we want to end the shutdown as soon as we can and fix the ACA premium crisis that looms over 20 million hardworking Americans,” said Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., on Monday, referring to the expanded Affordable Care Act subsidies that expire in December. Schumer called the White House meeting a “pep rally” and said it was “shameful” that House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., has kept the

House out of town during the shutdown.

Members of both parties acknowledge that as the shutdown drags on, it is becoming less likely every day that Congress will be able to either extend the subsidies or fund the government through the regular appropriations process. The House GOP bill that Senate Democrats have now rejected 11 times would only keep the government open through Nov. 21.

Thune on Monday hinted that Republicans may propose a longer extension of current funding instead of passing individual spending bills if the shutdown doesn’t end soon. Congress would need to pass an extension beyond Nov. 21, he said, “if not something on a much longer-term basis.”

Democrats are focused on Nov. 1, when next year’s enrollment period for the ACA coverage begins and millions of people will sign up for their coverage without the expanded subsidy help that began during the COVID-19 pandemic. Once those sign-ups begin, they say, it would be much harder to restore the subsidies even if they did have a bipartisan compromise.

“Very soon Americans are going to have to make some really difficult choices about which health care plan they choose for next year,” Schumer said. Tuesday’s White House meeting will be a chance for Republican senators to engage with the president on the shutdown after he has been more involved in foreign policy and other issues.

Trump is going to Asia – what happens next is anyone’s guess

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): US President **Donald Trump** is expected to leave for Asia at the end of the week, betting that an around-the-world journey will help him untangle big issues that he can’t afford to get wrong.

At stake is nothing less than the future of the global economy, which could hinge on whether he’s able to calm trade tensions during an expected meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping. A misstep could send shock waves through American industries that have already been rattled by Trump’s aggressive tariffs, government layoffs and political brinkmanship.

Trump’s strategy of improvisation has had both hits and misses since he returned to office in January. Hamas returned hostages to Israel but the ceasefire in the Middle East remains fragile; a trade war with China has ebbed and flowed this year; and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine hasn’t slowed down despite Trump’s efforts to resolve the conflict.



Trump

There’s been some mystery around Trump’s trip, with no official announcements from the White House about much of his itinerary. The president said Monday that he plans to go to Malaysia, which is hosting a regional summit, then Japan, where he’s trying to nail down foreign investment.

He’ll also visit South Korea, where he’s working on more trade issues and expects to sit down with Xi. Beijing has yet to confirm that they’ll meet, and the two leaders have recently exchanged threats of tariffs and export restrictions.

“I have a very good relationship with President Xi of China,” Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One on Sunday. He offered to lower tariffs but “they have to give us some things too,” including buying U.S. soybeans, reducing the flow of fentanyl ingredients and ending limits on rare earth minerals that are critical for high-tech manufacturing.

Trump expressed even more confidence on Monday, saying, “I think we’re going to end up having a fantastic deal with China” and “it’s going to be fantastic for the entire world.”

With just days to go before Trump leaves, there’s an unusual level of ambiguity even for a president who loves to keep people guessing about his next move.

“The whole trip has seemed so uncertain from the beginning,” said Bonnie Glaser, a managing director at the German Marshall Fund, a Washington-based think tank.

It’s Trump’s first trip to Asia since returning to office. Although he’s hosted leaders from the region at the White House, he hasn’t forged the kind of foundational relationships that he has on other continents.

Biden completes round of radiation therapy as part of cancer treatment

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): Former US president Joe Biden on Monday completed a round of radiation therapy treatment for the aggressive form of prostate cancer he was diagnosed with after leaving office, a spokesperson said.

Biden had been receiving treatment at Penn Medicine Radiation Oncology in Philadelphia, said aide Kelly Scully.

The 82-year-old Democrat left office in January, six months after he dropped his bid for reelection following a disastrous debate against Republican Donald Trump amid concerns about Biden’s age, health and mental fitness. Trump defeated Democrat Kamala Harris, who was Biden’s vice president. In May, Biden’s postpresidential office announced that he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer and that it had spread to his bones. The discovery came after he reported urinary symptoms.

Prostate cancers are graded for aggressiveness using what is known as a Gleason score. The scores range from 6 to 10, with 8, 9 and 10 prostate cancers behaving more aggressively. Biden’s office said his score was 9, suggesting his cancer is among the most aggressive.



Former US president Joe Biden speaks during the National Bar Association’s 100th Annual Awards Gala in Chicago on July 31. (AP)

Last month, Biden had surgery to remove skin cancer lesions from his forehead.

Also:
WASHINGTON: House Republicans are preparing to release a report on the findings of their investigation into former President **Joe Biden** and what

they allege is potential misuse of the presidential autopen during his term.

The report, which is likely to be released in the coming weeks, centers on contested and thus far unsubstantiated claims that Biden not only visibly aged while in office, but that his mental state declined to a degree that allowed White House officials to enact policies without his knowledge.

“The House Oversight Committee has uncovered how the Biden Autopen Presidency ranks among the greatest scandals in U.S. history,” Oversight Committee Chairman **James Comer**, R-Ky., said in a statement. “As President Biden declined, his staff abused the autopen to carry out unauthorized executive actions. We have concluded interviews with key Biden aides and will soon report our findings to the American people.”

The Republican-led committee declined to offer instances where investigators may have heard testimony or otherwise found instances when the autopen - a mechanical device that is used to replicate a person’s authentic signature - was abused. A spokesperson for the Republican majority on the committee said the cases would be detailed in the report but offered no further details.



A person rides a bike along a dark residential street during a rolling blackout on Oct 16 in Shostka, Ukraine. (AP)

Ukraine and EU leaders accuse Putin of stalling, reject land concessions for peace

KYIV, Oct 21, (AP): Ukraine’s president and European leaders on Tuesday accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of stalling for time in diplomatic efforts to bring his invasion of Ukraine to an end and opposed any move to make Kyiv surrender land captured by Russian forces in return for peace, as US President Donald Trump has on occasion suggested.

Eight European leaders as well as senior European Union officials said in a joint statement they intend to go ahead with plans to use Moscow’s billions of dollars (euros) of frozen assets abroad to help Kyiv win the war, despite some misgivings about the legality and consequences of such a step.

The statement expressed support for Trump’s peace efforts in Ukraine as he prepares to meet with Putin in Budapest, Hungary in coming weeks. But it also laid down a marker by saying the leaders “remain committed to the principle that international borders must not be changed by force.”

Trump last month reversed his long-held position that Ukraine would have to concede land and suggested it could win back all the territory it has lost to Russia. However, after a phone call with Putin last week and a subsequent meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Friday, Trump shifted his position again and called on Kyiv and Moscow to “stop where they are” in the more than three-year war.

Ukrainian and European leaders are trying hard to keep Trump on their side.

Also:
SHOSTKA, Ukraine: As the lights went out in her hometown, 40-year-old **Zinaida Kot** could not help but think about her next dialysis treatment for kidney disease. Without electricity, the machine that keeps her alive stops working.

Kot is among millions of Ukrainians who are bracing for another winter of power cuts and possibly blackouts as **Russia** renewed its campaign of attacks on the country’s energy grid. Analysts and officials say that this year **Moscow** has shifted tactics, targeting specific regions and gas infrastructure.

In some regions - mostly those closer to the front line in the east - the season of buzzing generators has started, as well as long hours of darkness with no power or water. People are once again pulling out small power stations, charging numerous power banks, and storing bottles of water in their bathrooms.

The attacks have grown more effective as Russia launches hundreds of drones, some equipped with cameras that improve targeting, overwhelming air defenses - especially in regions where protection is weaker.

Ex-French prez Sarkozy begins 5-year jail sentence for campaign finance conspiracy

PARIS, Oct 21, (AP): Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy arrived at a prison in Paris on Tuesday to begin serving a 5-year sentence for a criminal conspiracy to finance his 2007 election campaign with funds from Libya - a historic moment that makes him the first ex-leader of modern France to be imprisoned.

Sarkozy, 70, was greeted by hundreds of supporters when he walked out of his Paris home hand-in-hand with his wife Carla Bruni-Sarkozy. He embraced her before getting into a police car.

On his way to prison, Sarkozy released a statement on social media declaring that “an innocent man” was being locked up.

Minutes later, the vehicle passed through the gates of the notorious La Santé prison - where Sarkozy will now serve his sentence in solitary confinement.

Sarkozy was convicted last month



Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy and his wife Carla Bruni-Sarkozy leave their home on Oct 21 in Paris as Sarkozy heads to prison to serve time for a criminal conspiracy to finance his 2007 election campaign with funds from Libya. (AP)

for criminal conspiracy in a scheme to finance his 2007 election campaign with funds from Libya.

He contests both the conviction and

a judge’s unusual decision to incarcerate him pending appeal. His lawyers said Tuesday that they filed an immediate request for his release.

Europe

‘8 detained in suspected sabotage plot’: Polish authorities detained eight people in recent days on suspicion of preparing acts of sabotage in various locations across the country, Prime Minister Donald Tusk said Tuesday on X.

Tomasz Siemoniak, Poland’s minister coordinating special services, wrote on X that the actions Tusk referred to involved “conducting reconnaissance of military facilities and critical infrastructure, preparing resources for sabotage,

and directly carrying out attacks.” (AP)

□ □ □

Firefighters contain blaze in Hungary: Firefighters in Hungary have contained a blaze that broke out overnight at the country’s main oil refinery, authorities and Hungarian energy company MOL said Tuesday. No injuries have been reported.

The fire erupted Monday night in a processing unit of the Danube Refinery in Százhalombatta, south of the capital Budapest. MOL said in a statement posted to the Budapest Stock Exchange website Tuesday. (AP)

Reflecting a year-on-year growth of 2.3%

NBK reports KD 467.4 million in net profit for 9M2025

Profit before tax rose by 11.3% year-on-year, reaching KD 592.5 million

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has announced its financial results for the nine-month period ended 30 September 2025, reporting a net profit of KD 467.4 million (USD 1.53 billion), compared to KD 457.0million (USD 1.50 billion) for the corresponding period in 2024, marking a year-on-year growth of 2.3%.

The Bank reported KD 592.5 million (USD 1.9 billion) in profit before tax for the first nine-months of 2025, marking a 11.3% increase compared to KD 532.2 million (USD 1.7 billion) in the corresponding period of 2024.

As of the end of September 2025, total assets rose by 14.7% year-on-year to KD 44.9 billion (USD 147.2billion), while customer loans and advances grew by 12.5% year-on-year, reaching KD 26.1billion (USD 85.4billion).

Customer deposits grew by 9.7%, totaling KD 24.6billion (USD 80.6 billion) by the end of September 2025. Meanwhile, shareholders' equity reached KD 4.4 billion (USD 14.5 billion), reflecting a growth of 11.0% year-on-year.

Balanced Growth

Commenting on the Bank's 9M2025 financial results, **Mr. Hamad Al-Bahar**, NBK Group Chairman stated: "Amid a challenging global economic environment, NBK continues to strengthen its position as a leading financial institution, delivering solid performance, driven by balanced growth across its key business segments and supported by a resilient operating strategy."

Al-Bahar stated that NBK's financial indicators for the first nine-months of 2025 reflect the Bank's robust financial position, supported by a strong balance sheet, solid capitalization, ample liquidity, and high asset quality.

He highlighted that the recent opening of the Shuwaikh Beach Development and Beautification Project, funded by NBK, further reinforces the Bank's leadership as the largest contributor to social responsibility in Kuwait. The project also underscores NBK's enduring commitment to supporting national initiatives that drive sustainable development, contributing to the advancement of Kuwait Vision 2035.

Al-Bahar stated that, as part of NBK's unwavering commitment to a sustainable financial future, the Bank launched several sustainability initiatives in 2025 while continuing to align operations with ESG standards;thereby strengthening NBK's position as a responsible and sustainable financial institution.

Growth Trajectory

Meanwhile, **Mr. Isam J. Al-Sager**, Vice Chairman and Group CEO of the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), said: "NBK's financial results for the first nine-months of 2025 underscore its strong resilience and ability to navigate shifting economic cycles amid global volatility, trade tensions, escalating tariffs, and a downward trend in interest rates. The Bank has maintained its solid growth momentum, supported by a resilient business model, a well-diversified portfolio, strategic investments, and prudent risk management practices."

Al-Sager stated that NBK delivered an outstanding operational performance during the nine-month period ended 30 September 2025, guided by a clear strategic vision; noting that net operating income during the period rose by 4.1% year-on-year to reach KWD 969.0 million (USD 3.2 billion).

He emphasized that the International Banking Group (IBG) remains a cornerstone of the Bank's operational excellence, consistently driving strong performance across regional and international markets, supported by an integrated network and sophisticated banking services that are tailoredto meet the evolving needs of clients across its diverse geographies.

Al-Sager stressed that Boubyan Bank, the Islamic arm of NBK Group, continues to contribute significantly to the Group's revenues and net profits. He also noted that NBK Wealth endorsed its position as the leading wealth management firm in Kuwait and one of the key players in the region, offering a comprehensive suite of private banking, investment management, and advisory services through a globally integrated operational network.

Furthermore, Al-Sager emphasized that investment in technology and innovation remains the cornerstone of NBK's future growth strategy, highlighting the Bank's commitment to further developing its digital infrastructure and expanding the range of smart services to deliver a seamless and secure banking experience.

He explained that, as part of the Group's commitment to digital transformation, NBK continued to deliver an advanced digital banking experience during the first nine-months of 2025, underpinned by innovative solutions that align with customers' aspirations and tailored to the evolving market dynamics. He highlighted that the Bank recently launched a suite of carefully designed digital products and services, further enhancing its competitiveness domestically and across the region.



Hamad Al-Bahar, NBK Group Chairman



Isam J. Al-Sager, Vice Chairman and Group CEO



NBK Headquarters

Al-Bahar:

- We have maintained balanced growth across our banking segments, driven by a resilient operating strategy
- NBK continues to reinforce its leadership amid a challenging global economic landscape
- The Shuwaikh Beach Project further strengthens the Bank's standing as a leading force in social responsibility

Al-Sager:

- Our financial results reflect our ability to adapt seamlessly to different economic cycles
- We have sustained our growth trajectory through the resilience of our business model, a prudent diversification policy, and thoughtful investments
- Investing in technology and innovation remains a cornerstone of NBK's future growth strategy
- NBK continues to deliver innovative banking solutions that meet customers' expectations and align with evolving market dynamics
- The accelerated pace of project awards and robust credit growth signals an improved operating environment domestically
- We remain optimistic that the government's legislative agenda will further strengthen the private sector's role in alignment with Kuwait's Vision 2035

The Operating Environment

Regarding the operational environment in Kuwait, Al-Sager stated: "The economic landscape domestically witnessed remarkable developments in recent months. Capital spending on development projects tripled in the first half of fiscal year 2025–2026 compared to the same period last year. This reflects the government's accelerated efforts to execute and advance against its development agenda;reinforcing confidence in the local economy and opening broader opportunities for the private sector to engage in new development partnerships."

Al-Sager highlighted indicators pointing to an improved local operating environment, including an accelerated pace of project activity in Kuwait, with anticipated contract awards for strategic projectssuch as the third phase of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port and the fourth phase of the Al-Sabiya Power and Water Distillation Plant in the upcoming period. He also noted robust annual growth in local credit, which reached 7.7% during the first eight months of the year.

Al-Sager also emphasized that the recently approved economic legislation, including the Finance and Liquidity Law (Public Debt) and the Real Estate Developer Law, along with the forthcoming approval of the Real Estate Finance (Mortgage) Law, constitutes a key driver for ensuring the smooth and swift functioning of Kuwait's economy.

Al-Sager praised the plan announced by the Council of Ministers to update ap-

proximately 250 laws across various sectors by December 2026, expressing hope that this legislative initiative will contribute to improving the overall business sentiment and strengthening the role of the private sector in line with Kuwait's Vision 2035.

Accolades for Excellence

In the third quarter of 2025, NBK received several prestigious awards, underscoring its leadership in the banking sector. Global Finance honored NBK with the titles of Best Digital Payment Solutions and Best Online Product Offerings in Kuwait, recognizing the bank's innovative digital solutions that cater to customer needs and adapt to technological advancements. Additionally, Euromoney awarded NBK the Best Bank for Large Corporates in Kuwait and the Best Bank for Diversity & Inclusion in Kuwait, affirming its commitment to corporate excellence and inclusive practices. Furthermore, Weyay Bank, NBK's fully digital banking arm, was named Best Digital-Only Bank in Kuwait by Global Finance, highlighting its pioneering role in the digital banking landscape.

Moreover, the GCC Ministerial Committee for Labor and Social Affairs honored NBK for winning the Best Private Sector Project Award across the GCC for its nominated "Bankee: Financial Literacy Program, recognizing it as an innovative educational initiative and one of the region's foremost efforts to promote financial awareness and literacy among school students in Kuwait.

NBK was also honored with the Silver Award for Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion for its "NBK RISE" program by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) during the SHRM MENA STAR Awards 2025, held at the SHRM MENA Annual Conference in Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai. Likewise, the Bank's steadfast efforts and commitment to environmental responsibility, social impact and corporate governance was recently recognized by the revision of NBK's ESG Rating from "medium" to "low" risk by Sustainalytics; while MSCI upgraded NBK's ESG rating to "A".

Key financial indicators for 9M2025

■ Net operating income stood at KD 969.0 million (USD 3.2 billion), up 4.1% year-on-year

■ Total assets grew by 14.7% year-on-year, at KD 44.9 billion (USD 147.2 billion)

■ Total loans and advances increased by 12.5% year-on-year to KD 26.1 billion (USD 85.4 billion)

■ Customer deposits grew by 9.7% year-on-year to KD 24.6 billion (USD 80.6 billion)

■ Shareholders' equity amounted to KD 4.4billion (USD 14.5 billion), registering an annual growth of 11.0%.

■ Strong asset quality metrics, with NPL/gross loans ratio at 1.37% and an NPL coverage ratio of 241%

■ Robust Capital Adequacy Ratio of 16.4%, comfortably exceeding regulatory requirements.

Financial Highlights 9 Months 2025



Awareness sessions empower employees and customers under the slogan ‘Cybersecurity Starts with You.’

Gulf Bank highlights the evolving nature of fraud and cyber-attacks in the age of AI, in support of Cybersecurity Awareness Month and the ‘Diraya’ campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: In recognition of Cybersecurity Awareness Month and in alignment with the nationwide Diraya campaign led by the Central Bank of Kuwait, Gulf Bank hosted a comprehensive cyber-security awareness event at the Four Seasons Hotel, Under the slogan “Cybersecurity Starts with You” reaffirming its commitment to safeguarding both customers and employees in an era of rapidly evolving digital threats.

Organized by Gulf Bank’s Cybersecurity Team, the event gathered remarkable crowd of enthusiastic employees, including members of the Leadership Team, in the presence of Acting Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Sami Mahfouz. The two-and-a-half-hour session underscored the Bank’s ongoing efforts to foster a security-conscious culture and strengthen resilience across all levels of the organization.

The event commenced with opening remarks from Mr. Ross McNaughton, Chief Information Security Officer at Gulf Bank, who emphasized the Bank’s unwavering commitment to protecting customer information and maintaining trust in an increasingly digital banking environment.

“Cybersecurity is not merely an IT function. It is an organizational mindset,” said Mr. McNaughton. “As fraud and phishing techniques evolve at an unprecedented pace, particularly with the advent of artificial intelligence, our collective awareness becomes the most powerful tool of defense.”

Head of Gulf Bank Information Security Governance and Awareness, Ms. Fatemah AlHazeem moderated six expert-led sessions delivered by internationally recognized cybersecurity specialists, each addressing a critical aspect of the evolving threat landscape and innovative approaches to defense.

Ms. Marwa Gharbi from YesWeHack discussed how bug bounty programs enhance cyber resilience, while Mr. Jona Kulenovic of Axon Digital Cyber Fraud explored current regional threats and trends in cyber fraud. Mr. Russ Dickerson and Mr. Jamie Gee from ACE Gallagher Insurance shared valuable insights on how cyber insurers are assessing and responding to regional cyber risks. Mr. Gergő Oswald of Quadron Cybersecurity shed light on advancements in security testing and the detection of regional vulnerabilities.

The event concluded with an insightful fire side discussion featuring Dr. Reem AlShammari, Global Thought Leader in Cybersecurity and Digital Trans-



Dr. Reem AlShammari speaking in one of the sessions. Ross McNaughton speaking in his opening remarks



Group photo of the seminar participants.

formation within the Energy Sector, and Chairperson and Co-Founder of Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME). Dr. AlShammari emphasized the importance of continuous education, cross-sector collaboration, and heightened vigilance to effectively mitigate emerging cyber risks.

A central theme throughout the sessions was the advancement of AI-driven phishing and fraud attacks, where criminals leverage deepfake technology, synthetic voices, and manipulated visuals to deceive individuals and organizations. Presenters showcased real-world examples of these sophisticated techniques and provided actionable strategies for detecting and preventing such threats.

The discussions also highlighted the dual nature of artificial intelligence—as both a source of risk and a powerful ally. While AI is being exploited to enhance fraudulent activity, it is also enabling financial institutions to detect anomalies, predict vulnerabilities, and respond to threats with greater speed and accuracy. Experts noted it is no longer an aspirational goal to use AI, but key to maintaining a baseline of Operational and Cyber resilience in the modern financial industry.

“Our objective extends beyond technical preparedness,” added Mr. McNaughton. “Through events like this, we aim to raise awareness among both employees and customers, ensuring that cybersecurity becomes a shared responsibility across the entire Gulf Bank ecosystem.”

This initiative reinforces Gulf Bank’s active participation in the Diraya campaign, which seeks to enhance financial and cybersecurity literacy among individuals and organizations in Kuwait. By aligning with this national effort, Gulf Bank continues to play a leading role in promoting responsible digital behavior and protecting the community from emerging cyber risks.

The event concluded with a strong call to action for all employees to remain vigilant, think critically, and continue raising awareness among customers and peers, ensuring that Gulf Bank remains a model of excellence in cybersecurity readiness and digital safety.



Senior officials visit the ALSAYER booth during the Watheefti Career Fair 2025.



ALSAYER Group showcased its diverse opportunities and commitment to empowering national talent.

ALSAYER Group showcases diverse career paths at Watheefti

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: ALSAYER Group, proudly announced the successful conclusion of its strategic participation in the Watheefti Career Fair 2025.

The mega event was held from October 16th to 18th at The Arena 360 Mall under the patronage and presence of His Excellency Abdul Rahman Badah Abdul Rahman Al-Mutairi - Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs.

The Group leveraged the fair as a key platform to actively champion the integration of national talent into the private sector, aligning its recruitment drive directly with the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035.

Empowering the Next Generation of Kuwaiti Leaders

The ALSAYER booth was a major attraction, drawing ambitious Kuwaiti university students and experienced professionals eager to explore oppor-



ALSAYER Group's booth draws strong engagement at the Watheefti Career Fair 2025.

tunities within a stable and diversified market leader. The Group emphasized its long-standing corporate commitment to Heritage, Leadership, and Growth, which forms the basis of its

talent development strategy.

According to Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer, CEO “Our presence at Watheefti is a vital reflection of our commitment to the nation’s future. We are not just showcasing our diverse career paths; we are empowering Kuwaiti youth. ALSAYER Group offers unparalleled career depth across competitive sectors, ensuring that every talent finds a path to meaningful long-term success, guided by our core values of honesty, trust and integrity.”

Strategic Impact on the Private Sector

While historically renowned for its automotive excellence, the Group highlighted the breadth of career possibilities in its rapidly growing divisions. The HR team conducted numerous high-level preliminary interviews on-site, effectively streamlining the hiring process for immediate impact.

The Group remains dedicated to supporting professional growth through continuous training and a collaborative work environment, solidifying its position as an employer of choice for national talent.

Mazhar steps down as CEO

Board of TASC Towers appoints Hilali as CEO

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Zain Group announces the appointment by the Board of TASC Towers Holding (“TASC”) of **Kamil Hilali** as Chief Executive Officer to lead the next phase of TASC’s journey, taking over from the founder of TASC and Digital Infrastructure Assets LLP (“DIA”), Iyad Mazhar, who will continue being a shareholder and a board member, supporting the strategic growth of TASC.

Kamil has been the Chief Strategy Officer of Zain Group since March 2018, where he initiated and led Zain Group’s ‘4SIGHT’ strategy that transformed Zain from being a mobile-centric company into a digital service provider, and now ‘4WARD-Progress with Purpose’ corporate strategy to accelerate the evolution into a leading Tech Co and Investment conglomerate.

Zain Vice-Chairman & Group CEO, and TASC Chairman, Bader Al Kharafi commented, “As a key member of the Zain Group executive team since 2018 involved in many significant milestones, we are confident of Kamil’s ability to build on TASC Towers’ legacy and scale it to new heights. He joins TASC at an important stage of the entity’s evolution, building upon the many achievements accomplished by the Tower Counder under the leadership of Iyad Mazhar.”

“Upon closing of the Ooredoo transaction that is imminent, TASC will comprise approximately 30,000 towers with a combined estimated current enterprise value of USD 2.2 billion and an annual run-rate revenue of ~ USD 500 million, covering tower infrastructure across Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, Iraq, Algeria, and Tunisia.”

“I would like to express my profound gratitude to Iyad for his leadership in overseeing the transaction through, which Zain Group, Ooredoo Group, and DIA entered into definitive agreements to create the largest independent tower company in the MENA region.”

Mr. Al-Kharafi continued, “Over the last five years, TASC has operated as an independent digital infrastructure company initially acquiring and managing the physical tower infrastructure of Zain Jordan and Zain Iraq on a sale-and-leaseback basis, creating substantial value.”

Concluding, Mr. Al Kharafi noted “As a fellow Board member of TASC, I look forward to working closely with all board members in providing Kamil the support and resources to manage TASC’s existing assets and finalize the integration of tower assets with Ooredoo Group, that will place the region on the world telecom tower map, reduce the region’s carbon footprint and drive growth and value for all shareholders.”

Reflecting its neutral-host business model, TASC Towers will continue to operate as an independent entity, providing shared telecom infrastructure services to multiple mobile network operators across the region.

Kamil Hilali brings over 20 years



Kamil Hilali, CEO of TASC

- Zain Vice-Chairman & Group CEO, and TASC Chairman, Bader Al Kharafi, “I am confident of Kamil Hilali’s abilities to build on TASC Towers’ legacy and scale it to new heights”
- Iyad Mazhar will continue serving as a key Board member supporting the strategic growth of TASC
- Kamil’s role is to oversee the USD 2.2 billion merger of Zain and Ooredoo’s 30,000 tower assets expected to achieve an annual run-rate revenue of USD 500 million

To strengthen future cooperation

KIB hosts dinner for International Valuation Standards Council representatives on the sidelines of its Third Real Estate Forum

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: On the sidelines of its Third Real Estate Forum, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) hosted a dinner for members of the Kuwait Real Estate Valuers Association and representatives of the International Valuation Standards Council (IVSC), marking the latter’s first official visit to Kuwait. Held at the Four Seasons Hotel, the event was part of the Bank’s ongoing efforts to promote transparency and efficiency in the real estate sector, a key pillar of the state’s national economy.

The high-profile gathering reaffirmed KIB’s position as a key partner in the development of the real estate sector, particularly in the field of property valuation. It also highlighted the Bank’s active role in supporting investors and fostering a stable and reliable business environment reflecting its ongoing commitment to innovation and the adoption of international best practices across all its initiatives.

The dinner brought together representatives from KIB’s Real Estate Department; Vice Chairman of the Kuwait Real Estate Valuers Association Emad Al Faraj; Regional Director of IVSC for the Middle East and Africa Mostafa Elkaliouby; as well as members of both the Kuwait Real Estate Valuers Association and IVSC. The event served as an opportunity to exchange expertise and strengthen collaboration.

The dinner was part of KIB’s broader efforts to strengthen its relationship with the IVSC and to foster future collaboration aimed at exchanging international expertise and implementing global best practices in Kuwait’s real estate valuation sector. This commitment reflects the Bank’s dedication



Group photo during the event.

to supporting the development of an advanced and reliable valuation environment, enhancing efficiency and transparency across all real estate operations, and ultimately serving investors while reinforcing the stability of the local market.

The IVSC is an independent, non-profit global organization headquartered in London and serves as the leading authority for establishing and developing international valuation standards. The Council works to enhance the quality of the valuation profession by issuing comprehensive professional standards and providing guidelines that promote transparency, trust, and credibility in valuation practices worldwide. It also serves as a global platform that brings together practitioners, experts, and regulatory and professional bodies to foster a fairer and more reliable valuation environment.

of track record in strategy and corporate development to the new role at TASC, encompassing excellent leadership capabilities, solid technical skills, and business acumen. In recent years, as CSO, Kamil has been heavily involved with the Group CEO and fellow executive management team in Zain’s overall transformation, as well as leading the incubation and launch of new businesses in ICT, wholesale, and digital infrastructure. He also played a vital role in business development, major IPOs, capital restructuring, tower and asset divestments, and mergers & acquisitions. Kamil joined Zain Group in 2011 as corporate finance and business planning Director.

Kamil graduated with a Bachelor of Science in industrial engineering at the National School of Mineral Industry, Morocco (2001), attained a Master of Business Administration from Suffolk university in MA, USA (2005), Masters in Finance from London Business School, UK (2008) and professional Venture Capital training at Stamford university in CA, USA (2017). Fluent in English, French, and Arabic, Kamil currently serves as a Board member of Zain KSA and the Swiss based e-commerce platform Zoodmall.

Net operating income increased by 12.8 %

KFH reports net profit to the shareholders of the bank of KD 492.7 million up to the end of Q3 of 2025, an increase of 2% compared to same period last year

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Chairman of Kuwait Finance House (KFH), Hamad Abdulmohsen Al Marzouq announced that KFH has, by the grace of Allah, achieved a net profit for shareholders of KD 492.7 million up to the end of the third quarter of 2025, an increase of 2.0% compared to the same period last year. These profits are the highest in the Kuwait banking sector and the local market.

Earnings per share up to the end of Q3 2025 reached 27.98 fils; an increase of 2.0 % compared to the same period last year.

Net financing income up to the end of Q3 2025 reached KD 944.3 million; an increase of 13.1 % compared to the same period last year.

Total operating income up to the end of Q3 2025 increased, supported by an increase in all core activities to reach KD 1.3 billion; an increase of 10.0 % compared to the same period last year.

Net operating income up to the end of Q3 2025 increased to reach KD 850.2 million; an increase of 12.8 % compared to the same period last year.

Financing receivables as of the end of Q3 2025 reached about KD 21.2 billion, an increase of 11.3% compared to the end of last year.

As of the end of Q3 2025, total assets amounted to KD 40.8 billion, an increase of 11.0% compared to the end of last year. Shareholders' equity amounted to KD 5.6 billion, an increase of 1.5% compared to the end of last year.

Depositors' accounts amounted to KD 20.1 billion as of the end of Q3 2025, an increase of 4.7% compared to the end of last year.

The capital adequacy ratio reached 17.68% which is above the limit required by regulators. This ratio confirms the solid capital base of KFH.

Solid performance

Al Marzouq said that the record financial results KFH reported at the end of the third quarter of 2025 were characterized by growth in all key indicators. He asserted that this performance underscores the bank's strength and adaptability against the backdrop of current economic instability and geopolitical developments.

He attributed the sustainability of profits and the bank's solid capital base, financial strength, and creditworthiness to the Group's success in boosting efficiency, growing operating income, diversifying its financing portfolio, managing risk effectively, and establishing multiple income streams.

Interim dividends

Al Marzouq added: "The strong Q3 results achieved by KFH confirm our ongoing commitment to shareholders and customers. This performance has created new opportunities for sustaining and increasing record profits. Furthermore, the bank maintains its commitment to shareholders by distributing interim cash dividends. These include semi-annual cash dividends of 10% of the share's nominal value for two consecutive years, supplemented by an equal or greater percentage at the end of the year."

Al Marzouq stressed that KFH will continue to work tirelessly to maintain its market leadership as the largest company on Bursa Kuwait, the most profitable and best-performing bank, and the bank with the highest dividend distribution. This commitment is underscored by KFH's recent recognition as the top-performing bank in Kuwait in The Banker's 2025 Top 1000 World Banks ranking.

Al Marzouq pointed out that the digital and substantial achievements of recent years provide a solid foundation for future growth. These successes confirm KFH's ability to meet its strategic goals, particularly sustainable growth and industry leadership, and pave the way for its ambition to join the world's top 100 banks in the coming years.

Corporate and projects financing

Al Marzouq said: "Aligned with our goal of promoting prosperity and sustainable growth in our operating markets and contributing to a positive macroeconomic environment, KFH continues to finance various economic sectors and development projects."

He pointed out that KFH will continue to provide the necessary financing to Kuwaiti corporates to enhance their businesses and support their expansion. In addition, KFH will participate in financing major development projects in a way that serves the state's development plan and stimulates the national economy.

He also underscored the Bank's dedication to supporting and financing Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), recognizing their vital role as a pillar of economic growth and job creation. Furthermore, he highlighted the successful rollout of the first-of-its-kind Sustainable Business Program for SMEs. This initiative aims to give them a competitive advantage while demonstrating KFH's commitment to sustainable development and its leadership in fostering the entrepreneurial environment.

An influential banking entity

Al Marzouq stated that the launch of AUB - Bahrain's new visual identity, re-

- Earnings per share reached 27.98 Fils
- Total operating income increased by 10%
- Net financing income increased by 13.1%
- An 11% increase in total assets, reaching KD 40.8 billion
- Growth in the financing portfolio by 11.3%



Hamad Al Marzouq, KFH Chairman

Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, KFH Group CEO

Al Marzouq: KFH recorded sustainable profits and enhanced capital base and financial strength

- KFH continues to record the highest profits in the Kuwaiti banking sector and the local market
- KFH reports sustained record profit growth and commits to interim cash dividend distribution
- KFH is contributing to a positive macroeconomic environment and continues to finance economic sectors and development projects

AlShamlan: The record financial results reflect KFH's efficient operational performance and flexible policies

- Structured digital adoption across all business lines
- Streamlining group-wide service and product integration

branding it as KFH - Bahrain under the umbrella of KFH Group, represents a strategic shift. This change strengthens the bank's position as an influential banking group with a geographic presence in 10 countries worldwide, most notably Kuwait, Bahrain, Turkey, Egypt, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The Group offers innovative services and products that keep pace with customer aspirations and global developments in the financial and banking sectors.

Sustainability and social responsibility

Al Marzouq emphasized that KFH's vision and approach focus on sustainability, innovation, and digital excellence. This involves aligning strategic objectives with short- and long-term plans and continuously developing policies and procedures. This strategy helps balance financial growth with environmental and social responsibility, thereby building a sustainable banking model that can be emulated in social responsibility.

Record financial results

KFH Group CEO, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, explained that the record financial results KFH achieved in the third quarter of 2025 reflect its efficient performance and flexible policies, which allow it to develop its operations despite challenges. He further emphasized that KFH succeeded in managing risks, supported by solid capital and high-quality assets. This success will help it execute its corporate strategy, ensuring sustainable profits for shareholders and providing better service for customers.

AlShamlan emphasized that KFH's ability to thrive in a highly competitive market stems from its focus on increasing operating income and maintaining a strong credit portfolio. He highlighted KFH's key strengths, including significant growth in diverse income streams across sectors and markets, disciplined cost and risk management, a broad market presence, advanced technology, long-standing

Islamic finance expertise, and talented human capital.

Group services

AlShamlan highlighted the importance of unifying services and products across the KFH Group's global network (over 600 branches). This unification strategy allows the bank to capitalize on the advantages of individual markets, strengthening KFH's leadership as the most valuable and trusted Islamic banking brand globally.

AlShamlan added: "To achieve comprehensive performance and strengthen the unified vision across the group's banks, KFH launched the KFH Group Service Center. This center serves both KFH-Turkey and KFH-Egypt, aiming to better meet customer needs and deliver an integrated banking experience."

KFH also launched a free, express call service via a toll-free number in Kuwait, allowing customers to connect directly with its banks in Egypt, Bahrain, the United Kingdom, and Turkey. This move is intended to increase communication within the Group's network.

Digital Transformation and AI

AlShamlan emphasized that the digital transformation strategy focuses on enhancing operational efficiency. This is achieved by employing digital technologies in its operations, supporting a structured transformation program across all business sectors.

He also stated that an innovative service has been launched for customers involved in trade finance transactions, including Letters of Credit (LCs) and Letters of Guarantee (LGs). This service involves adding a QR code to the transaction documents issued by the Trade Finance Department.

KFH also launched a comprehensive update to its KFHOnline app, introducing a modern design and smart banking features. Simultaneously, KFH Go smart branches and other e-channels provide innovative solutions that collectively showcase KFH's readiness to deliver unlimited, high-efficiency digital services with exceptional flexibility.

He highlighted the launch of intelligent data analysis and intelligent automation for internal processes, along with providing employees with digital business assistants (AI Copilot). In the call center, KFH implemented a Speech Analytics system and an automated service quality assessment system. Additionally, the bank introduced "Fahad", Kuwait's first AI-powered virtual employee.

Awards and recognitions

AlShamlan added: "KFH's financing efforts have been recognized by major international institutions. The bank received the "Worlds' s Best Islamic Financial Institution" award for 2025 from Global Finance magazine, along with the "Best Islamic Private Bank - Digital Innovation" award from Global Private Banker magazine. Furthermore, KFH was honored with the "Kuwait's Best Bank for SMEs" award from Euromoney, the "Most Sustainable Projects in the Middle East" award from Forbes magazine, and the "World's Best Islamic Retail Bank" award, also from Global Finance."

He added that KFH maintained its position as the largest listed company in Kuwait on Forbes' 2025 Global 2000 list.

Talent development

AlShamlan emphasized KFH's outstanding success in implementing localization and training programs across the Kuwaiti private sector. The bank focuses on developing Kuwaiti human capital, encompassing new graduates and experienced staff. This is achieved by fostering creative talent and empowering women and youth within a vibrant work culture.

KFH inaugurated the fourth edition of the Leadership Academy, a program run in partnership with Headspring (the joint venture between IE Business School and Financial Times). The Bank also introduced professional banking experience for students and recent graduates, facilitated by KFH Academy.

He highlighted that the KFH Group has been honored with nine global human resources awards for 2025 from the Brandon Hall Group. This achievement marks the fourth consecutive year KFH has received this distinction, underscoring its leadership in adopting global best practices for attracting, developing, and qualifying human capital.

Thanks and appreciation

Expressing his appreciation for the Board's support, AlShamlan commended the essential role played by regulatory bodies in supporting the banking sector. He further lauded the executive team, employees, partners, and stakeholders for their crucial efforts in fulfilling customer and shareholder expectations, thereby maintaining KFH's leadership and reinforcing its standing locally, regionally, and globally.

Highest in Kuwait Banking Sector Praise be to Allah 492.7 KD Million Net Profit for Shareholders up to the end of Q3 2025			
			
	30/09/2025	30/09/2024	%
Net Profit for Shareholders "KD Million"	492.7	482.9	2.0
Earnings per Share "Fils"	27.98	27.43	2.0
Net Financing Income "KD Million"	944.3	835.1	13.1
Total Operating Income "KD Million"	1,311.7	1,192.6	10.0
Net Operating Income "KD Million"	850.2	754.0	12.8
	30/09/2025	31/12/2024	%
Financing Receivables "KD Million"	21,221	19,070	11.3
Total Assets "KD Million"	40,752	36,703	11.0
Depositors' Accounts "KD Million"	20,120	19,220	4.7
Shareholders' Equity "KD Million"	5,604	5,519	1.5

Bank engages with students, highlighting exclusive account benefits and offers

ABK promotes A+ Student Account at Australian University in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Continuing its commitment to connect with the student community, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) showcased its A+ Student Account at the Australian University in Kuwait providing students an overview of the account's exclusive features and special offers.

Designed specifically for customers aged 16 to 25, the account provides a host of privileges, including free cinema tickets, special discounts, a free prepaid card, and a range of other exceptional benefits.

This initiative reflects ABK's commitment to supporting students and youth by providing them with a comprehensive banking experience that aligns with their aspirations across all aspects of life.

The Bank's participation in the university event also underscores its ongoing engagement within Kuwait's educational institutions, reaffirming its competitive position and commitment to offering innovative services that keep pace with the rapid developments in the banking industry.

On this occasion, Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, said, "We are keen to support students throughout their academic journey. Each academic year,



Johair Marafi, General Manager – Retail Banking

we make it a priority to participate in university events across Kuwait, including the Australian University, to introduce our tailored financial solutions, present exclusive offers, and showcase the latest innovations and enhancements to our banking products and services. Our goal is to ensure that students have access to the best tools to seamlessly manage their financial and banking needs."

Marafi emphasized that the Bank continues to focus on engaging the youth segment and plans to participate in various events in collaboration with partners across different sectors, reaffirming ABK's role as a customer-centric financial institu-



ABK booth at the Australian University.

tion that strives to meet the needs of all segments of the community.

She concluded by inviting everyone to visit ABK's website and social media pages to learn more about the Bank's wide range of

products, services, and exclusive offers available throughout the year.

Since its establishment in 1967, ABK has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the

region that offers a wide array of personal, corporate, and private banking products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK

Capital.

Across the region, the Bank offers individuals and corporates the convenience of comprehensive banking and financial services in the Egyptian market through ABK-Egypt's network of 46 branches. This is in addition to ABK's three branches located in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) in the United Arab Emirates, servicing both Kuwaiti and Emirati individual and corporate clients.

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

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

Enhanced platform speeds up online trade finance processing

Burgan Bank advances corporate banking with new digital trade finance milestone

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Further strengthening its corporate banking offering and suite of smart banking solutions, Burgan Bank has announced the launch of enhanced digital trade finance services on its TBS Online platform. The new solution allows corporate clients to issue and amend Letters of Credit (LCs) and Letters of Guarantee (LGs) entirely online, eliminating paperwork and accelerating transaction turnaround times.

This advanced offering represents a significant step in the Bank's digital transformation journey, reinforcing its commitment to innovation, operational efficiency, and client-centric banking. By streamlining trade finance processes, Burgan Bank is enabling businesses across Kuwait and the wider region to operate with greater speed, flexibility, security, and confidence.

"This milestone reflects Burgan Bank's commitment to digital innovation while continuing to play a pivotal role in financing projects that drive Kuwait's economic growth," said Mr. **Mohammad Najeeb Al-Zanki**, General Manager – Corporate Banking at Burgan Bank. "By combining digital transformation with strategic financing, we reaffirm our position as a trusted partner for businesses



Mr. Mohammad Najeeb Al-Zanki, General Manager – Corporate Banking at Burgan Bank.

in Kuwait and neighboring markets."

In parallel with its digital achievements, Burgan Bank remains actively involved in financing stra-

tegic projects that contribute to national development.

The Bank has supported major housing, healthcare, and infrastructure initiatives, extended financing to leading companies in the oil, energy, and utility sectors, and actively participated in landmark syndication deals. Its portfolio also includes financing for residential development projects aimed at expanding affordable housing, as well as select regional initiatives.

Looking ahead, Burgan Bank remains committed to introducing further enhancements that will transform the way corporate clients engage with their banking services.

Upcoming developments will focus on expanding the Bank's suite of innovative digital solutions with an emphasis on efficiency, security, and convenience. By integrating advanced digital solutions with strong financing capabilities, Burgan Bank seeks to enable corporate clients to expand operations and enhance efficiency, while contributing to the national development goals of Kuwait Vision 2035.

Housing 10,000 employees

JPMorgan opens new 60-story NYC headquarters

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): JPMorgan Chase unveiled its new 60-story headquarters to the public on Monday, one of the first major office buildings to be constructed after the COVID-19 pandemic and one that will remake the New York City skyline for decades.

The bronze and steel tower at 270 Park, which reportedly cost \$3 billion, replaced the Union Carbide Building, which sat on a full city block at 48th Street and Park Avenue for nearly 60 years. JPMorgan expects to house roughly 10,000 of its 24,000 New York-based employees in the new building, with employees starting their first workday at the tower at the same time as the company holds its ribbon cutting ceremony.

"For 225 years, JPMorgan Chase has always been deeply rooted in New York City. The opening of our new global headquarters is not only a significant investment in New York, but also testament to our commitment to our clients and employees worldwide," said Jamie Dimon, CEO and chairman of JPMorgan, in a statement.

The building contains 2.5 million square feet and a block's worth of public space. The bank also commissioned five new artworks for the building, adding to the bank's already substantial art collection. The bank will house its trading operations in the building across eight floors.

At 1,388 feet, the new building is taller than the Empire State Building's roofline and is now the fourth-largest building in Manhattan.

The building was a major engineering and architectural undertaking by Norman Foster, the building's lead architect and Tishman Speyer. Engineers had to systematically demolish the old Union Carbide building over a period of two years - the site sits above the rails of the Metro North Railroad and the Long Island Rail Road that run underneath Park Avenue.

For years, JPMorgan has worked out of several buildings around Grand Central Station, a result of the bank's growth and acquisitions over the years. Corporate execs and investment bankers still use 383 Madison Ave, the former headquarters of Bear Stearns, and 277 Park, which housed Chemical Bank, also a predecessor of the current JPMorgan Chase. Parts of JPMorgan started using 270 Park in the mid-1990s, but the bank always struggled to fit all its operations in the building. With 270 Park finished, the bank says it will now start a renovation of 383 Madison.

The completion of 270 Park is a major accomplishment for Dimon, who has been one of loudest voices about the need for employees to report to an office for work. The building was designed before the COVID-19 pandemic and was completed after the pandemic, when remote work became more common.

Rare earths clash fuels new phase of US-China trade talks

Trump vows to reach a ‘fantastic deal’ with China after future meeting with Xi

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): President Donald Trump said Monday that the U.S. commands "great respect" from Beijing and that he will reach a "fantastic deal" with Chinese President Xi Jinping when the two leaders meet soon.

Trump's remarks come after Beijing infuriated him by expanding export controls on rare earth products that are used in smartphones, fighter jets, electric vehicles and more. Trump spoke as he hosted Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese at the White House, celebrating an agreement with the U.S. ally as a potential counterpoint to China's near-monopoly in processing those critical minerals.

"I think we're going to end up having a fantastic deal with China," Trump said. "It's going to be a great trade deal. It's going to be fantastic for both countries, and it's going to be fantastic for the entire world."

When asked about China's leverage, Trump said Beijing "threatened us with rare earths, and I threatened them with tariffs." But he insisted his good relationship with Xi means they would work out "a very fair deal."

All eyes are on a potential meeting between Trump and Xi because any failure to reach some agreement raises the risk of destabilizing not only relations between the two superpowers but also the global economy.

Trump affirmed that he would meet with Xi this month on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, a grouping of 21 economies. Beijing has not announced plans for Xi to make the trip to South Korea, but it's not unusual for such details to emerge closer to the travel date.

The president has threatened to impose a new 100% tariff on China in response to Beijing's expanded rules on rare earth products. And he said Monday that it has already had results.

"Now, they're treating us with great respect," Trump said. "Now, we'll see what happens. I said, if we don't make a deal, I'm putting on an additional 100% on November 1. I think we'll make a deal."

Since returning to the White House, Trump has levied additional 30% across-the-board tariffs on China. Trump said the total rate on Chinese goods is about 55% to 57% and the country has paid the U.S. "hundreds of billions of dollars worth of money for tariffs."

Beijing, however, has indicated it would play hardball.

"Threatening high tariffs is not the right way to deal with China," Lin Jian, a spokesperson for the Chinese foreign ministry, said last week in response to Trump's new tariffs threat.

When asked if the 100% tariff could stand and how it could affect the economy, Trump told Fox Business' Maria Bartiromo last week that "it's not sustainable."

At the meeting with Albanese, Trump said he has other options to use against China: "They can't get parts for their airplanes. We build their airplanes."

Still, he said he prefers reaching a deal. "I want to be good to China. I love my relationship with President Xi," Trump said.

Trump also dismissed concerns that Beijing could soon attack the self-governed island of Taiwan. That is because, he said, the U.S. is far superior in military power.

"It's not even close," Trump said. "We have the best equipment. We have the best of everything, and nobody's going to mess with that."

The United States is obligated by its own laws to give military support to Taiwan, which split from China in 1949 during a civil war. Beijing claims sovereignty over the island and vows to seize it by force if necessary to achieve what it says to be "the unifica-

tion of the motherland."

Trump acknowledged that Taiwan is "the apple of his eye" for Xi but said: "I don't see anything happening. We have a very good trade relationship."

When asked if he could yield to Beijing's pressure not to support Taiwan independence in exchange for a deal, Trump said, "Well, I'm not going to talk about that."

Meanwhile, Li Chenggang has been ousted as China's top trade negotiator after co-leading the last four rounds of talks with the U.S. In a routine, bullet-style announcement of removals and appointments, Beijing said Monday that Li was removed from his post as China's permanent representative to the World Trade Organization. No reason was given.

He was replaced by Li Yongjie, deputy international trade representative, who recently held trade talks with Ecuador.

The announcement coincided with Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent's recent criticisms of Li Chenggang. At a press conference last week, Bessent made a rare public airing of displeasure, saying Li "showed up here with very incendiary language on August 28," has "gone rogue" and was "very disrespectful."

"He showed up uninvited in Washington and said, quote, China will cause global chaos if the port shipping fees go through," Bessent said, referring to the U.S. plan to charge port fees on China-linked vessels. Late last week, Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng had a video call with Bessent and U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer. The sides held a "candid, in-depth and constructive exchange" and agreed to hold a new round of trade talks as soon as possible, according to China's official Xinhua news agency.

Bessent said last week that he and his Chinese counterpart would likely meet in Malaysia soon to prepare for a leaders summit.

\$8.5 bln minerals deal takes aim at China

US and Australia join forces on rare earths

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): President Donald Trump and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese signed a critical-minerals deal at the White House on Monday as the U.S. eyes the continent's rich rare-earth resources at a time when China is imposing tougher rules on exporting its own critical minerals abroad.

The two leaders described the agreement as an \$8.5 billion deal between the allies. Trump said it had been negotiated over several months.

"In about a year from now we'll have so much critical mineral and rare earth that you won't know what to do with them," said Trump, a Republican, boasting about the deal. "They'll be worth \$2."

Albanese added that the agreement takes the U.S.-Australia relationship "to the next level."

Earlier this month, Beijing announced that it will require foreign companies to get approval from the Chinese government to export magnets containing even trace amounts of rare-earth materials that originated from China or were produced with Chinese technology. The Trump administration says this gives China broad power over the global economy by controlling the tech supply chain.

"Australia is really, really going to be helpful in the effort to take the global economy and make it less risky, less exposed to the kind of rare earth extortion that we're seeing from the Chinese," Kevin Hassett, the director of the White House's National Economic Council, told reporters Monday morning ahead of Trump's meeting with Albanese.

Hassett noted that Australia has one of the best mining economies in the world, while praising its refiners and its abundance of rare earth resources.



Jazeera Airways A320 neo

‘Not a masterpiece, but full of soul’

Del Toro crafts a grand ‘Frankenstein’ that is all his own

LOS ANGELES, Oct 21, (AP): Guillermo del Toro has been telling monster stories for as long as he’s been making films. A romantic with keen appreciation for the macabre, his creations are things of strange beauty, haunting, poetic and unforgettable. It’s no wonder his earliest love was “Frankenstein,” first the Boris Karloff film, then the novel, which set him on a path to becoming a filmmaker.

Don’t expect a by-the-letter adaptation of Mary Shelley’s immortal story, however. This “Frankenstein,” in theaters and streaming on Netflix on Nov. 7, is an interpretation, a reading of that tale of the brilliant scientist and his creation, from one of our most visionary filmmakers who has made it very much his own. Is it his best? No, but it overcomes the handicap of the dreaded passion project that has befuddled more than a few greats before him.

It is a story about stories, about fathers and sons, innocents and monsters, and the madness of creation. And while del Toro lets both Victor Frankenstein (Oscar Isaac) and the creation (Jacob Elordi) tell their sides of the tale, this is not exactly neutral. Del Toro has always loved the “monster” and, perhaps because of that love, has stripped him of the complexities that made Shelley’s character so fascinating. Here, the creation is an innocent, subject to the same impulses of rage as a toddler. But, thankfully for parents everywhere, toddlers can, generally, be contained. This creature’s strength is superhuman, which is unfortunate for anyone who happens to provoke him.

He doesn’t just kill - he skins, he tears jaws off, he tosses grown men with a velocity that suggests they weigh little more than a baseball. It’s all quite grisly.

But neither he nor Victor is without reason — all men are products and victims of their own fathers, whose mothers and mother figures (in both cases, Mia Goth, a metaphor that is perhaps a little too on the nose) cannot protect them, del Toro tells us, and these two are particularly doomed.

Isaac is delightful as Victor, brilliant, egotistical and with a flair for the theatrical, a defiant outsider consumed with the idea of making life from death. He’s obsessed with surpassing his father (a menacing Charles Dance), intellectually and scientifically, and the idea that he might have



This image released by Netflix shows Oscar Isaac as Victor Frankenstein in a scene from ‘Frankenstein.’ (AP)

been able to save his late mother. He’s relegated himself to being a mad loner, a proud exile who has softness only for his brother William (Felix Kammerer) and William’s fiancée, Elizabeth (Goth), an excellent foil for Victor’s hubris.

While Elizabeth might embody something of a feminine cliché whose instinct is to nurture and protect the creation, rather than mold and control him, Goth imbues her with sharp wit and wisdom. She’s the kind who might even be able to save Victor from himself (or at least that’s what he

thinks), if only she weren’t marrying his brother.

And then, of course, there is the creature. There are no bolts in this head: Victor’s design is that of an artist attempting to make a marble Adonis, but whose stitches never quite disappear and whose scraggly hair suggests the eerie undead. In Elordi’s hands, the creature is a sensitive soul tortured by his own existence. His default is gentleness, but his survival instincts are very real, and very violent. Victor quickly comes to hate his creation because he believes it dumb and he leaves it to fend for itself.

If the first half the film is a symphony of crazed creation, the second is one of discovery, a coming-of-age story for a monster who just wants a companion but who is only met with hatred, disgust and violence - save for an old, blind man (David Bradley) who, like Elizabeth, sees a gentle soul. The creature is also quick to learn under a kinder tutor, which proves to be a double-edged sword as he comes to understand the nature of his being and the curse of eternal life. It’s all very spelled out on our behalf.

The gothic grandeur on display is familiar territory for del Toro, though he’s often had to stay within certain confines. Working with many of his regular collaborators on “Frankenstein,” it seems no expense was spared in this elaborate, maximalist world-building (production designer Tamara Deverell), from Victor’s lavish childhood estate to the abandoned irrigation plant that will become his laboratory. The romantic, beautiful, utterly impractical costumes, too, (overseen by Kate Hawley) could fill a museum, not to mention all the severed limbs. It all comes to electrifying life with Alexandre Desplat’s appropriately epic score.

Everything about “Frankenstein” is larger than life, from the runtime to the emotions on display: The empathy, the anguish, the rage, the regret. And it can be a bit exhausting, too, a lifetime of dreaming jam packed into 149 minutes. Hopefully del Toro is at peace with his creation: It might not be masterpiece material, but it has a soul and is an undeniably beautiful, worthwhile addition to the canon.

“Frankenstein,” a Netflix released in select theaters and streaming on Nov. 7, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for “bloody violence, grisly images.” Running time: 149 minutes. Three and a half stars out of four.

Film

Actor opens up on Jarmusch and ‘Star Wars’

Why Driver puts filmmakers first

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): Props, mementos and photographs adorn Adam Driver’s Brooklyn office. There’s an artwork Jim Jarmusch gave him for his 40th birthday, the doll from Leos Carax’s “Annette” and dozens of on-set photographs, including one of Driver and his son in the Millennium Falcon.

“A friend who saw all this said: ‘Oh, so you care,’” Driver says, chuckling.

Driver, 41, can come off as stoic but his passion for movies and, in particular, the filmmakers who make them, runs deep. In a relatively short amount of time, he’s worked with a litany of one-name directors: Scorsese. Coppola. Spike. Mann. Spielberg. Jarmusch. Soderbergh.

In a movie age where franchises, not filmmakers, have ruled the industry, Driver has stayed remarkably loyal to directors compelled to make personal films. He gamely followed Francis Ford Coppola into “Megalopolis” and helped Michael Mann realize his decades-long passion project, “Ferrari.”

This fall, he co-stars in his third Jarmusch movie, the Venice prize-winner “Father Mother Sister Brother.” All Jarmusch needed to do was ask, Driver says, and he was in, no matter the role.

While “Father Mother Sister Brother” was playing at the New York Film Festival, Driver met a reporter shortly before leaving to Budapest to shoot “Alone at Dawn” with Ron Howard. It’s a meaningful film for Driver, a former Marine. In it, he plays John Chapman, an Air Force combat controller who was killed fighting in Afghanistan in 2002.

Character

“It deals with character and story and - just tying it with ‘Father Mother Sister Brother’ - that’s why I like these filmmakers so much,” Driver says. “They’re seemingly few and far between and are making films that feel like they were directed by a person.”

But Driver’s faith in filmmakers isn’t always shared by the powers that be in the industry. In a lengthy conversation that often touched on Driver’s concerns about current Hollywood trends, he revealed that he and Steven Soderbergh spent two years developing a “Star Wars” film that was ultimately nixed by the Walt Disney Co.

“I always was interested in doing another ‘Star Wars,’” says Driver, who starred as Kylo Ren in the trilogy kicked off by “The Force Awakens.” “I had been talking about doing another one since 2021. Kathleen (Kennedy) had reached out. I always said: With a great director and a great story, I’d be there in a second. I loved that character and loved playing him.”

Driver says he took a concept to Soderbergh for a film that would take place after 2019’s “The Rise of Skywalker.” That movie culminated in Ren’s redemption and apparent death. Driver had undertaken the trilogy with an arc in mind for Ren that inverted the journey of Darth Vader. As the trilogy evolved, it didn’t play out that way. Driver felt there was unfinished business for Kylo Ren, or as he was known before turning to the Dark Side, Ben Solo.

Soderbergh and Rebecca Blunt outlined a story that the group then pitched to Kennedy, Lucasfilm vice president Cary Beck and Lucasfilm chief creative officer Dave Filoni. They were interested, so the filmmakers then pulled in Scott Z. Burns to



Actor Adam Driver appears at the premiere of the film ‘A Marriage Story’ at the 76th edition of the Venice Film Festival on Aug. 29, 2019. (AP)

write a script. Driver calls the result “one of the coolest (expletive) scripts I had ever been a part of.”

“We presented the script to Lucasfilm. They loved the idea. They totally understood our angle and why we were doing it,” Driver says. “We took it to Bob Iger and Alan Bergman and they said no. They didn’t see how Ben Solo was alive. And that was that.” “It was called ‘The Hunt for Ben Solo’ and it was really cool,” adds Driver. “But it is no more, so I can finally talk about it.”

Soderbergh, in a statement, said: “I really enjoyed making the movie in my head. I’m just sorry the fans won’t get to see it.”

Representatives for Disney and Lucasfilm declined comment.

It’s been a period of transition for the feature-film operations of “Star Wars.” Kennedy, the longtime Lucasfilm president, is expected to step down by the end of the year. After a feature-film lull, numerous projects are in various stages of development or production including Jon Favreau’s “The Mandalorian and Grogu,” Shawn Levy’s “Starfighter” with Ryan Gosling, a film directed by Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy featuring Daisy Ridley returning as Rey, a James Mangold-directed movie and a new saga helmed by Simon Kinberg.

For Driver, who starred in Soderbergh’s 2017 heist comedy “Logan Lucky,” the decision was mystifying. Who wouldn’t want to see a Soderbergh-directed “Star Wars” film?

“We wanted to be judicial about how to spend money and be economical with it, and do it for less than most but in the same spirit of what those movies are, which is handmade and character-driven,” Driver says.

“‘Empire Strikes Back’ being, in my opinion, the standard of what those movies were. But he is, to me, one of my favorite directors of all time. He lives his code, lives his ethics, doesn’t compromise.”

Driver is reportedly attached to a pair of films that would reunite him with filmmakers he feels similarly about: Carax (“Annette”) and Mann. Mann’s “Heat 2” recently moved from Warner Bros. to Amazon MGM’s United Artists after Warner Bros. balked at the film’s cost.

“Watching filmmakers not get the money they need is frustrating,” Driver says. “I don’t think I’m a value add. But I’m always down for the cause because I love those filmmakers and their films. I’d rather do a Michael Mann anything.”

Feature

“Ferrari,” which starred Driver as Enzo Ferrari, was Mann’s first feature in eight years. It cost \$95 million to make, but struggled at the box office, grossing \$43.6 million worldwide. Coppola’s “Megalopolis” was even pricier, at \$120 million, but Coppola paid for it himself. To Driver, Coppola’s audacious sense of experimentation is what moviemaking is all about, and what’s missing from most filmmakers half Coppola’s age.

“The gesture of paying that much money for a film and him having the trust that an audience would go with him - or that he didn’t care, that this is how he wanted to do it - that to me is moving,” Driver says. “Maybe people don’t like them or they’re not ready for them. Maybe it’s boring to some, but it wasn’t boring making it.”

Regardless of its reception, “Megalopolis” has had a long-lasting effect on Driver.

“It felt like, in a way, you couldn’t go wrong with character because there was nothing that you could do that was a mistake,” he says. “That feeling, I’m like: How do I apply this to everything else? How do I take that feeling of what it felt like, that I can go anywhere and it’s not wrong, and apply it to something that’s a Jim Jarmusch movie.”

“Father Mother Sister Brother,” which Mubi will release Dec. 24 in theaters, is a triptych about adult children and their parents. The film’s first chapter features Driver and Mayim Bialik as siblings visiting their hermetic father (Tom Waits). It’s Driver’s third film with Jarmusch, following “Patterson” (2016) and “The Dead Don’t Die” (2019).

Driver is notoriously against watching the films he’s in, so he hasn’t watched Jarmusch’s film. But Driver has made some exceptions lately. He watched “Ferrari.” He watched 2023’s “65.” He watched “Megalopolis” numerous times. “I was trying to get over it, and I can’t,” Driver says, laughing. “We just did ‘Paper Tiger,’ this James Gray film, and he seems to be close to having a cut of it. And I just don’t want to watch it.

“I don’t want to look at my face,” he continues. “I don’t want to live with the regret of making a mistake.”

It’s easy to chalk this up to the kind of thing actors - a strange breed - do. But it hints at what makes Driver a singularly intense, unrestrained screen presence (even on “SNL”) and a staunch advocate for boundary-pushing filmmakers. Think too much about the audience, and you can lose sight of the things - character, filmmakers with vision - that drive movies.



Jennifer Lawrence poses for photos on the red carpet for the movie ‘Die My Love’ at the Rome’s Film Fest in Rome, Monday, Oct. 20. (AP)

Variety

NEW YORK: The union representing thousands of Broadway actors reached a tentative new labor agreement over the weekend with commercial producers, leaving just the musicians’ union still negotiating.

Actors’ Equity Association - which represents over 51,000 members, including singers, actors, dancers and stage managers - announced a new three-year agreement on such issues as health care, scheduling and physical therapy. The tentative agreement next goes to members for ratification.

“We’re pleased to have a reached a tentative agreement on terms both parties are comfortable with,” said Jason Laks, president of The Broadway League, which represents producers. “Our focus has been negotiating in good faith at the bargaining table to reach a fair contract and we thank our mediators for their diligent work bringing us together.”

The League and American Federation of Musicians Local 802 - which represents 1,200 musicians - haven’t reached a deal yet. They have voted in favor of a strike authorization as they bargain.

Members of both unions have been working under expired contracts. The musicians’ contract expired on Aug. 31, and the Equity contract expired Sept. 28.

The tentative breakthrough between the producers and Actors’ Equity Association came as a relief since a strike could have crippled Broadway just as it seems to have recovered from the pandemic shutdown.

Now the focus is on the musicians. Al Vincent Jr., Actors’ Equity’s executive director and lead negotiator, said in a statement that “we are putting our full support behind AFM Local 802 as they work with the League to reach a deal that averts a strike.”

In a statement, the Musicians’ union said, “We look forward to returning to the table to reach a deal that will allow us to avoid a strike. Until that happens, we will continue our strike preparations in earnest, and we thank Actors’ Equity for their continued support and solidarity.”

The most recent major strike on Broadway was in late 2007, when a 19-day walkout dimmed the lights on more than two dozen shows and cost producers and the city millions of dollars in lost revenue. (AP)



NEW YORK: Disney+ and Hulu subscription cancellations rose during the month that ABC briefly cancelled “Jimmy Kimmel Live!,” according to data from subscription analytics company Antenna.

Walt Disney Co. owns the streaming platforms and ABC. ABC pulled the show off the air for less than a week in September in the wake of criticism over his comments related the killing of conservative activist Charlie Kirk.

Antenna estimates total cancellations in September were 4.1 million for Hulu and 3 million for Disney+. The “churn rate,” or the percentage of customers that cancel their subscriptions in a specific month, jumped from 5% in August to 10% in September for Hulu. That figure jumped 4% in August to 8% in September for Disney+.

However, signups were higher in September for both Hulu and Disney+ than the prior five months.

Antenna is a subscription analytics company that tracks US consumer data. The data excludes subscribers in bundle deals.

In its most recent earnings report for the quarter ended June 28, Disney reported 183 million Disney+ and Hulu subscriptions. (AP)

‘Avoid putting all your digital eggs in one cloud basket’

How to prepare for outages that impact our online lives

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): A major Amazon Web Services outage disrupted scores of online platforms on Monday - leaving people around the world unable to access some banks, chatting apps, online food ordering and more.

History shows these kinds of system outages can be short-lived, and are often minor inconveniences - such as placing a lunch order in person or waiting a few hours for a gaming platform to come back online - than long-term problems, but recovery can be a bumpy road. And for people trying to move money, communicate with loved ones or work using impacted services, disruptions are especially stressful.

Consumers may not realize how many platforms they use rely on the same back-end technology. AWS is one of only a handful of major cloud service providers that businesses, governments, universities and other organizations rely on. Monday's outage is an important reminder of that - and experts stress it's important to diversify our online lives where we can, or even have some "old school" alternatives to turn to as a backup plan.

"Don't put all your eggs in one digital basket," said Lee McKnight, an associate professor at Syracuse University's School of Information Studies, noting these kinds of outages aren't going away anytime soon.

So what, if anything, can you do to prepare for disruptions? Here are a few tips.

During Monday's AWS disruptions, users on outage tracker Downdetector reported problems with platforms like Venmo and online broker Robinhood. Banks such as Halifax and Lloyds also said some of their services were temporarily affected, although some customers continued to report lingering issues.



A Hulu mobile app shows it is not available during the Amazon Web Services outage, Monday, Oct. 20, in Chicago. (AP)

Even if short-lived, outages that impact online banking and other financial services can be among the most stressful, particularly if a consumer is waiting on a paycheck, trying to pay rent, checking on investment funds or making purchases. While much of your stress will depend on the scope and length of disruptions, experts say a good rule of thumb is to park your money in multiple places.

"I'm a big fan of holding multiple accounts that can give us access, to some degree, of funds at any given time," said Mark Hamrick, senior economic analyst at Bankrate. This underlines the importance of having an emergency savings account, he explains, or other accounts separate from something like day-to-day checking

account, for example.

Keeping some cash in a safe place is also a good idea, he adds - and emergency preparedness agencies similarly recommend having physical money on hand in case of a natural disaster or power failures. Still, it's important to keep hoarding in moderation.

"We shouldn't go overboard, because we can lose cash - it can be stolen or misplaced," Hamrick said. And in terms of prudent financial practices overall, he explains, you also don't want to have lots of money "stored under a mattress" if it could instead be earning interest in a bank.

Depending on the scope of the outage, some other options could still be available.

If digital banking apps are offline, for example, consumers may still be able to visit a branch in person, or call a representative over the phone - although wait times during widespread disruptions are often longer. And if the disruptions are tied to a third-party cloud services provider, as seen with AWS on Monday, it's not always something a bank or other impacted business can fix on its own.

Monday's AWS outage also impacted some communications platforms, including social media site Snapchat and messaging app Signal.

In our ever-digitized world, people have become all the more reliant on online channels to call or chat with loved ones, communicate in the workplace and more. And while it can be easy to become accustomed to certain apps or platforms, experts note that outages serve as an important reminder to have backup plans in place.

That could take the form of simply making sure you can reach those who you speak to regularly across different apps, again depending on the scope of disruption. If

broader internet and cloud services that smartphones rely on are impacted, you may need to turn to more traditional phone calls and SMS text messages.

SMS texting relies on "an older telecom infrastructure," McKnight explains. For that reason, he notes that it's important to have contacts for SMS texting up to date, "and not just the fancier and more fun services that we use day to day" in case of an emergency.

Meanwhile, there can also be outages that specifically impact phone services. For non-cloud service outages in the past, impacted carriers have suggested users try Wi-Fi calling on both iPhones and Android devices.

Overall, McKnight suggests "building out your own personal, multi-cloud strategy."

For online work or projects, that could look like storing documents across multiple platforms - such as Google Drive, Dropbox and iCloud, McKnight explains. It's important to recognize potential security risks and make sure all of your accounts are secure, he adds, but "having some diversity in how you store information" could also reduce headaches when and if certain services are disrupted.

Many businesses may also have their own workarounds or contingency plans in case the technology they use goes offline. While a wider recovery from Monday's outage is still largely reliant on Amazon's wider mitigation efforts, individual platforms' social media or online status pages may have updates or details about alternative operations.

You can also check outage trackers like Downdetector to see if others are experiencing similar problems.

Even after recovery, experts also suggest checking payments, online orders and messages you may have sent during or close to the outage - in case something didn't go through.

Media

‘136 closed’

News deserts growing in US

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): Some 136 newspapers in the United States have closed in the past year, news deserts are expanding and web traffic to the nation's top newspapers has dropped markedly this decade, according to a report issued Monday that struggles to find hope for the beleaguered news industry.

While entrepreneurs are launching digital news sites, often backed by philanthropies, they haven't sprouted at a rate that makes up for the losses, the report from Northwestern University said.

Taking a step back for an even broader look at the industry is even more troubling. Since 2005, the numbers of newspapers published in the United States has dropped from 7,325 in 2005 to 4,490 now, said the Medill State of Local News report. Daily newspaper circulation that averaged between 50 and 60 million people at the turn of the century now stands at just over 15 million.

An estimated 365,460 people worked at newspapers in 2005, and now that number is down to 91,550, the report said. Two decades ago, 71% of journalists worked at newspapers and now just 29% of the nearly 42,000 working journalists are at newspapers.

The number of newspapers that have closed in the past year is on par with what it has been recently. The difference is that the majority of the shuttered newspapers last year was not the result of consolidations by big chains, but longtime independent owners who have given up - at places like the Wasatch Wave in Utah or the Aurelia Star in Iowa, the report said.

Digital

"It's very disheartening," said Tim Franklin, chairman of local news at Northwestern's Medill School. "The disheartening part of it is that these are the kind of owners we want to keep."

While there has been an increase in new digital sites, the vast majority have been in urban or suburban areas, deepening the news crisis in rural areas. An estimated 50 million Americans live in counties with either no local news source or just one, the report said.

Maryland, New Jersey, Maine, Hawaii and Ohio have seen the largest percentage of newspaper closures.

Of the 100 largest newspapers in the United States, only 61 print editions seven days a week, Northwestern said. Eighteen publish four days a week or less; the New Jersey Star-Ledger is digital only, and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution said it is cutting out print at the end of the year.

Traffic to the online sites of those 100 top newspapers has dropped by 45% during the past four years. Partly that's due to inflated numbers caused by people seeking information during the pandemic. But Facebook's deemphasis of local news and the rise of generative AI on search engines has also driven people away from the news sites, said Zach Metzger, director of the Local News Project.

Philanthropists like the group Press Forward have tried to support newsrooms. But Franklin said there needs to be more momentum behind once-unthinkable public measures, like tax credits or loans.

Even more frightening for journalists is the idea that generations are growing up without the habit of following news, particularly for their own communities. But there's some evidence that's not the case, Franklin said.

Stage

Singer may surprise fans on national tour

Alicia Keys’ ‘Hell’s Kitchen’ hits the road

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): Alicia Keys' semi-autobiographical, coming-of-age Broadway musical is all grown up and leaving the nest. And, like any happy parent, Keys may visit it every once in a while.

A new "Hell's Kitchen" cast has assembled in Cleveland for a national tour that will take them to the South, Midwest and West on a 28-city parade through 2026.

"It feels so good to know that it's going to go across the country and this cast, let me tell you, is out of control. They're so good," Keys says. "Obviously, everybody can't get to New York City. Everybody can't go to Broadway."

Those who catch the musical on the road may also get an extra treat. Keys says she's liable to show up on some stops as a fairy godmother as it crosses the nation.

"I love, as an artist, bringing my energy to other artists. That's really a fulfilling feeling. So, I'll be fairy godmothering. You never know where you'll see me."

"Hell's Kitchen" is about 17-year-old New York piano prodigy fueled by Keys songs like "Fallin'," "No One," "Girl on Fire," "If I Ain't Got You," as well as several new songs, including "Kaleidoscope."

It centers on a young woman named Ali, who like Keys, is the daughter of a white mother and a Black father and is growing up in a subsidized housing development just outside Times Square in the once-rough neighborhood called Hell's Kitchen. She learns to hone her music skills, falls in love and reconciles with her sometimes overbearing mom.

Keys hopes audiences will come for her music, the story and the diverse cast: "It's really exciting to be able to go somewhere and see your-



Singer Alicia Keys appears at the curtain call on the opening night of her Broadway musical 'Hell's Kitchen' at the Shubert Theatre in New York on April 20, 2024. (AP)



Kennedy Caughell and Maya Drake appear during a performance of the North American Tour of 'Hell's Kitchen,' a musical from Alicia Keys. (AP)

self on the stage or to see your experience played out."

The Ali on tour is 18-year-old Maya Drake, a recent high school graduate from San Jose, California, who endured a long, rigorous audition process. She was a fan of Keys before the musical popped up on her radar.

"The fact that I get to be in a show with somebody else's music and, of all the people, it gets to be her - I got so lucky with that," says Drake. "Just to have that connection is so special, and it makes the show feel 10 times more enjoyable."

As part of her audition process, Drake came to New York to watch "Hell's Kitchen" on Broadway, starring Jade Milan as Ali. "It's a lot seeing it for the first time and she never leaves the stage," says Drake, who remembers thinking: "To be a part of something that big would just be crazy."

After the tour cast was announced, the actors were invited onstage at the

Shubert Theatre to cheers after a performance, and Drake got to meet and speak to veterans like Jessica Vosk and Kecia Lewis, who won a Tony Award in the show.

"That was a really special moment," she says. "Sharing advice and getting insight from the people that are currently doing the show helped us understand what you're about to get into and some things that can help."

The tour coincides with the publication of "Hell's Kitchen: Behind the Dream," a photo-heavy book that charts the show's 13-year evolution - from crafting the show with book writer Kristoffer Diaz and director Michael Greif to how it would end up with costumes, casting, choreography and staging.

After Cleveland, the tour goes to Pittsburgh, Chicago, Detroit, New Orleans, Atlanta, Cincinnati, Denver, Oklahoma City, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, San Diego and other cities.

Drake is, naturally, looking forward

to the show going to California, especially the stop in San Francisco, the closest stop for friends and family from San Jose. She's also excited to be on the road.

"I really have not traveled a bunch of my life, which is kind of ironic because I'm about to do a lot of traveling," says Drake, who trained at the Children's Musical Theater San Jose. "I'm definitely excited to go everywhere."

Keys, who watched the show win two Tony Awards and the 2025 Grammy for best musical theater album, thinks the musical about her old New York neighborhood can thrive away from the Big Apple.

"This is a story inspired by my experiences growing up in New York City, for sure. And, yes, it is a New York story, 1,000%. The thing is, though, the story truly is timeless," she says. "It's such an emotional, honest, raw, authentic story that it doesn't matter if it's in Cleveland, or if it's in Detroit, or if it's in Manhattan or Atlanta."

Variety

NEW YORK: Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro has a book coming out in January, touching upon everything from his swift political rise to the trauma of his home being set on fire.

Harper, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, announced Tuesday that "Where We Keep the Light: Stories From a Life of Service," will be released Jan. 27. Shapiro, 52, has become a prominent national Democrat since he was elected governor in 2022. He was on Kamala Harris' shortlist as a running mate in last year's presidential election and he has often been cited as a potential candidate for 2028.

According to Harper, Shapiro "shares powerful stories about his family, his faith, and his career in public service."

"Gov. Shapiro reflects on what he has learned along his journey," Tuesday's announcement reads in part, "knocking on doors, serving his community, and bringing people together to tackle the tough problems we face." (AP)

LONDON: The British royal family is once again under intense scrutiny as a memoir by Virginia Giuffre, one of the most outspoken accusers of Prince Andrew and Jeffery Epstein, hits bookstores Tuesday.

"Nobody's Girl" is being published posthumously six months after Giuffre died by suicide in April.

Giuffre had for years accused Andrew of sexually abusing her on multiple occasions when she was under 18 years old and a victim of sexual trafficking by convicted sex offender Epstein and his former girlfriend Ghislaine Maxwell.

While her book didn't break new ground, it has thrown fuel on a series of new accusations against Andrew, who is trying to control the damage to the monarchy from the long-running scandal over his friendship with Epstein. (AP)

NEW YORK: Diana Taurasi's biggest concerns these days revolve around what costumes her kids will wear for Halloween and taking advantage of their free time to go on vacation.

The WNBA's all-time leading scorer, who retired in February, missed watching the Phoenix Mercury's WNBA Finals run because she was in Hawaii on vacation with her kids.

"That was their fall break and we needed to get away for a few days," she said in an interview with The Associated Press. "These days you got to figure out when they are free and take advantage of it."

Taurasi has made the most of her free time in the summer too as she and the family went to Australia for a few months to see her wife Penny Taylor's family.

As for Halloween at the end of the month, Taurasi said that her two kids will go as K-Pop Demon Hunters. (AP)

Museum visitors with tickets to be refunded

Louvre remains closed after daring theft of Napoleonic jewels

PARIS, Oct 21, (AP): The Louvre remained closed Monday, a day after historic jewels were stolen from the world's most-visited museum in a daring daylight heist that prompted authorities to reassess security measures at cultural sites across France.

The museum's staff asked dozens of visitors who were queuing in front of the glass pyramid entrance to leave. In a message posted on social media, the Louvre said visitors who have booked tickets will be refunded. It did not provide additional details. The Louvre will also be closed on Tuesday, its weekly closing day.

On Sunday, thieves rode a basket lift up the Louvre's facade, forced a window, smashed display cases and fled with priceless Napoleonic jewels, officials said. The theft occurred about 30 minutes after the museum opened,



Soldiers patrol as people queue to enter the Louvre museum that remains closed for the day after Sunday's jewels robbery, Oct. 20, in Paris. (AP)

with visitors already inside, and was among the highest-profile museum thefts in living memory.

It unfolded just 250 meters (270 yards) from the Mona Lisa, in what Culture Minister Rachida Dati described as a professional operation that lasted just a few minutes.

French Justice Minister Gerald Darmanin acknowledged security failures on Monday.

"One can wonder about the fact that, for example, the windows hadn't been secured, about the fact that a basket lift was on a public road," he said on France Inter radio. "Having (previously) been interior minister, I know that we cannot completely secure all places, but what is certain is that we have failed."

Interior Minister Laurent Nunez ordered prefects across France to immediately reassess security measures protecting museums and other cultural sites and enhance them if needed.

Culture Minister Rachida Dati said investigators are working on evidence found at the scene.

"We did find motorcycles and they have a license plate," Dati said on news broadcaster CNews. "I also want to pay tribute to the security officers who prevented the basket lift from being set on fire. One of the criminals tried to set it on fire, but they forced him to flee. This allowed us to recover evidence at the scene."

Officials said the heist lasted less than eight minutes in total, including less than four minutes inside the Louvre. "They went straight to the display windows, they knew exactly what they wanted. They were very efficient," Dati said.

Up to 1 in 5 lung cancer patients non-smokers: study

Breastfeeding reshapes immune system to prevent breast cancer

MELBOURNE, Oct 21, (Xinhua): Researchers in Australia have discovered how breastfeeding reshapes the immune system to provide long-term protection against breast cancer, particularly aggressive triple-negative types.

Published in Nature, the study provides a biological explanation for the protective effect of childbearing and shows how this has a lasting impact on a woman's immune system, according to a statement released Tuesday by Australia's Peter MacCallum Cancer Center (Peter Mac), which led the study.

"We found that women who have breastfed have more specialized immune cells, called CD8⁺ T cells, that 'live' in the breast tissue for decades after childbirth," said study lead author Professor Sherene Loi at Peter Mac.

"These cells act like local guards, ready to attack abnormal cells that might turn into cancer," she said, adding that this protection likely evolved to defend mothers dur-

ing the vulnerable post-pregnancy period, and now also lowers breast cancer risk, especially aggressive triple-negative breast cancer.

Completing a full cycle of pregnancy, breastfeeding, and breast recovery caused these T cells to accumulate in the breast, Loi said, adding their protective effect was confirmed in preclinical experiments.

"When breast cancer cells were introduced, the models with this reproductive history were far better at slowing or stopping tumor growth but only if T cells were present," she said.

Data from over 1,000 breast cancer patients also indicated that women who breastfed had tumors with higher numbers of these protective T cells and better survival rates after diagnosis, researchers said.

Although it was once thought that pregnancy-related hormonal changes were a major factor childbearing lowers breast cancer risk, this research points instead to im-

mune changes within the breast tissue as the key factor and suggests this could lead to entirely new breast cancer prevention and treatment, they said.

As the second most diagnosed cancer in Australia, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women, with around 58 diagnoses daily in the country, and a rising incidence in younger women, said the Peter Mac statement.

□ □ □

Up to one in five people diagnosed with lung cancer globally aren't smokers, a study involving Australian researchers found.

Lung cancer in nonsmokers, defined as having smoked fewer than 100 cigarettes in their lifetime, accounts for 15 to 20 percent of all lung cancer cases worldwide, said a review published by Australian and British researchers in JAMA, the Journal of the American Medical Associa-

tion.

Non-smokers with lung cancer have higher rates of cancer-related gene mutations, which appears to influence the effectiveness of different treatments for those patients, according to a summary of the study on the Australian Science Media Center website on Tuesday.

After reviewing 92 previous international studies on lung cancer in non-smokers, the team, including Benjamin J. Solomon, researcher at Australia's Peter MacCallum Cancer Center and University of Melbourne, found that most cancers in this group are adenocarcinomas, cancers that start in glandular cells.

From the previous research, the authors said non-smokers at the highest risk of lung cancer are mostly those who are exposed to passive smoking, radioactive material, air pollution and asbestos, and history of lung cancer in a first-degree family member, including parents and full siblings, according to the summary.

Garbage emits as much as 42 coal plants

Food waste hurts your budget and the earth, here's how to reduce it

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): Wasted food is a financial and environmental bummer.

It costs US consumers \$728 every year, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, and emits the annual equivalent planet-warming greenhouse gases of 42 coal-fired power plants.

Carleigh Bodrug, a cookbook author who emphasizes cooking with plants and low-waste recipes, said she was surprised to learn that homes, rather than restaurants and grocery stores, account for the largest share of food that goes in the garbage - about 35% in 2023, according to ReFed, a nonprofit that seeks to reduce food waste.

"And it's just because we're so busy, we're not utilizing the food that we actually buy," she said.

The environmental impact is compounded because the food goes in the trash only after a long journey in which it's grown, treated, packed, shipped, prepared and stored.

The good news is that cutting waste is good both for the planet and for every household's bottom line. We've collected the expert wisdom on how to do it - from smarter shopping to creative recipes.

Bodrug wasn't always keen on reducing food waste. She recalls going to the grocery store each week, buying a bag of oats and then discovering when she got home that she already had three half-eaten bags in the pantry. When she learned about the "huge issue" of the waste nationally, she said, she wanted to do something about it.

Her first solution: Make a list. Write down the plan for the week, then check the fridge and the pantry to see what's already there before heading to the store. The list prevents duplicates - and it can also cut down on impulse buys.

"The worst thing any of us can do - and I know everybody's been there - is heading to the grocery store when you're hungry and you're just like, 'Oh my gosh, I need everything.' If you head to the grocery store with a list, you're buying items with intention," she said.

A list doesn't solve everything. For example, don't buy a bag of seven lemons if you only need one and will have no plan for the rest, said Adam Kaye, co-founder and chief



Shredded organic materials are piled up at a Green-Waste Renewable Energy Digestion Facility in San Jose, Calif., Oct. 27, 2023. (AP)

culinary officer at Spare Food Co., a company that rescues surplus or unsold produce from farms and turns it into products sold to chefs and companies.

Kaye also said people can also choose to buy foods using ingredients that would otherwise be wasted. That could be vegetable broth made from surplus produce, or a trail mix that uses cacao fruit - which is often thrown away when cocoa powder is harvested.

If your food lasts longer in the fridge, it's got a better shot at getting eaten.

Bodrug said leafy greens stored with a paper towel or cloth that absorbs moisture will stay dry and wilt less quickly. Herbs and things with stems can be set in a jar of water, like a bouquet, to stay fresh longer.

Kaye's solution is to use the freezer liberally - and then commit to emptying it.

"At least one night a week we have a clean-out-the-fridge-and-freezer meal where it might end up being two or three different dishes are being prepared," he said. "But, you know, let's do it."



Commuters drive to work amidst morning smog a day after Diwali festival in New Delhi, India, Tuesday, Oct. 21. (AP)

Hazardous smog chokes New Delhi after Diwali

Thick smog blanketed India's capital Tuesday, a day after millions celebrated the Hindu festival of Diwali with fireworks that sent air pollution soaring to hazardous levels.

Revelers in New Delhi burst firecrackers late into Monday night, filling the air with smoke and fine particles that mixed with seasonal pollution and stagnant weather conditions. By Tuesday morning, the city's Air Quality Index had climbed above 350 in several neighborhoods, a level considered "severe" and dangerous to breathe, according to the World Health Organization's daily recommended maximum exposure.

Visibility also dropped in some parts of the city as a gray haze enveloped streets, high-rises and historical monuments.

"I have never seen anything like this before. We can't

see anything here because of pollution," said Vedant Pachkande, a tourist visiting New Delhi.

India's top court last week eased a blanket ban on firecrackers in New Delhi during Diwali, allowing limited use of "green firecrackers" that emit fewer pollutants. Developed by federal research institutes, they are designed to cut particulate and gas emissions by about 30%. The court had said they could be used during specific hours from Saturday to Tuesday, but like past years the rule was mostly flouted.

New Delhi and its metropolitan region - home to more than 30 million people - routinely ranks among the world's most polluted cities during the winter when widespread Diwali fireworks coincide with cooler weather and smoke from crop residue fires set by farmers in nearby states. (AP)

Test matches 'gold standard' accuracy

New simple blood test for Alzheimer's

CANBERRA, Oct. 21, (Xinhua): Scientists in Australia have developed simpler, less invasive ways to detect Alzheimer's, potentially helping more patients access emerging treatments, Australia's national science agency said on Tuesday.

Scientists at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) found that combining two blood tests, the Lumipulse plasma pTau217 test and the A4240 ratio test, could match the accuracy of the existing "gold standard" methods, according to a CSIRO statement.

New treatments like Donanemab, recently approved by Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration for adults with early symptomatic Alzheimer's, require confirmation of

amyloid plaque in the brain, it said, adding that currently, the gold standard for detecting amyloid plaque involves costly PET scans or an invasive lumbar puncture to analyze cerebrospinal fluid.

"With treatments for Alzheimer's disease biology becoming available, it's critical we have accurate, scalable and less invasive tests to identify eligible patients," said James Doecke, lead author of the study published in journal Alzheimer's and Dementia in the United States.

Blood tests are vital to the triage process to develop appropriate treatment strategies and help understand where a person is on the disease trajectory, said Doecke, also research scientist at CSIRO's Australian e-Health Research Center.

The study, which analyzed blood samples from nearly 400 participants, showed that the combined pTau217/A42 ratio achieved over 93 percent accuracy, similar to the current gold-standard cerebrospinal fluid tests, and correctly identified nearly all cases among patients eligible for new Alzheimer's drugs such as Donanemab.

Using the tests combined provided clinicians with highly reliable results, reducing the number of uncertain cases by nearly half, the statement said.

The study highlights the potential for blood-based biomarkers to reduce reliance on costly and invasive PET scans and lumbar punctures, making diagnosis more accessible to patients and healthcare systems worldwide, it added.

US health officials urge vaccination

US gov't shutdown forces CDC to skip key infectious disease meeting

ATLANTA, Oct 21, (AP): CDC researchers are being forced to skip a pivotal conference on infectious disease this week due to the government shutdown, missing out on high-level discussions not long after surges in measles and whooping cough hit the US.

IDWeek, the largest annual meeting of infectious disease experts in the nation, is the leading venue for experts to trade information about diagnosing, treating and preventing threats including bird flu, superbugs and HIV, among many other topics.

The CDC typically sends scores of researchers and outbreak investigators. But of the hundreds of speakers listed in the printed program for the four-day conference, about 10 were identified as CDC scientists. And even that small number didn't show up.

The main reason is the government shutdown that started Oct. 1. Federal scientists aren't being paid and conference appearances are postponed unless they are funded outside of annual government budgets.

The Infectious Disease Society of America and its conference partners selected Atlanta, where the CDC is based, as its host more than a year ago.

Organizers were excited to have the meeting in "the heart of public health," and CDC officials agreed to be heavily involved in planning, said Dr. Yohei Doi, a University of Pittsburgh researcher who helped organize the meeting.

But soon after President Donald Trump's inauguration, there was an immediate, if temporary, freeze on CDC communications and participation at medical meetings. That was followed by layoffs and research funding cuts.

"As things started to evolve, they said they no longer would be able to attend," Doi said of CDC speakers.

The CDC's absence comes as infectious disease specialists should be in high demand, in part because the worst pandemic in a century hit only a few years ago. Measles and whooping cough have been surging. And new threats are constantly emerging.

US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has said he wants the CDC to primarily focus on infectious diseases, though he was a leading voice in the antivaccine movement before Trump appointed him to lead the federal government's health agencies.

The CDC has already lost a quarter



A sign marks the entrance of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention headquarters, Aug 27, 2025 in Atlanta. (AP)

of its workforce through layoffs, buy-outs, resignations and other actions. And the Trump administration is trying to lay off hundreds more, an effort temporarily blocked by a federal judge.

"It's the most painful irony of all" to see these actions by the administration amid serious threats, said Michael Osterholm, a University of Minnesota infectious disease researcher.

Osterholm, who spoke at the conference Sunday, said he is working with others to take on work that the CDC has curtailed.

He announced a new open-access publication called Public Health Alerts to put out the kind of reports that were the staple of the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

Separately, a collaboration involving dozens of foundations would pool resources to fund some of the disease research work that the government has stopped doing, Osterholm said.

HHS has discouraged federal collaborations with some medical organizations, including IDSA, and that likely had a chilling effect, said Dr. Debra Houry, who was the CDC's chief medical officer until she resigned in August to protest agency changes.

A HHS spokeswoman, Emily Hilliard, said the administration believes federal scientists should share their research and expertise with peers and the public, and that conferences are vetted "to ensure compliance with eth-

ics rules and the responsible use of taxpayer funds."

Dr. Anna Younsaf, a CDC infectious disease doctor, told The Associated Press she was invited to present findings about long-term outcomes of COVID-19-infected children who develop a rare inflammatory condition. She wasn't allowed to attend this week's conference, though a collaborator at another organization was planning to share the research, she said.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Health officials across the United States signed a statement on Monday, criticizing false vaccine information from federal officials and urging Americans to get vaccinated as the respiratory virus season approaches.

"As leaders of the nation's largest local health departments, collectively serving nearly 50 million people across America's cities, we are committed to providing our communities with every opportunity to support and improve health," said the statement of the Big Cities Health Coalition, a forum for the leaders of the largest US metropolitan health departments.

"We are united behind a simple message: get vaccinated," it noted.

It said vaccines have eradicated devastating diseases and saved millions of lives, and vaccination helps keep classrooms safe and schools open, allowing children to spend time with friends, and parents and caregivers to work to support their families.

Rare whale in Atlantic makes comeback

PORTLAND, Maine, Oct 21, (AP): One of the rarest whales on the planet has continued an encouraging trend of population growth in the wake of new efforts to protect the giants animals, according to scientists who study them.

The North Atlantic right whale now numbers an estimated 384 animals, up eight whales from the previous year, according to a report by the North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium released Tuesday. The whales have shown a trend of slow population growth over the past four years.

It's a welcome development in the wake of a troubling decline in the previous decade. The population of the whales, which are vulnerable to collisions with ships and entanglement in fishing gear, fell about 25% from 2010 to 2020.

The whale's trend toward recovery is a testament to the importance of conservation measures, said Philip Hamilton, a senior scientist with the New England Aquarium's Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life. The center and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration collaborate to calculate



A pair of North Atlantic right whales interact at the surface of Cape Cod Bay on March 27, 2023, in Massachusetts. (AP)

the population estimate.

New management measures in Canada that attempt to keep the whales safe amid their increased presence in the Gulf of St. Lawrence have been especially important, Hamilton said.

"We know that a modest increase every year, if we can sustain it, will lead to population growth," Hamilton said. "It's just whether or not we can sustain it."

Scientists have cautioned in recent years that the whale's slow recovery is happening at a time when the giant

animals still face threats from accidental deaths, and that stronger conservation measures are needed. But there are also reasons to believe the whales are turning a corner in terms of low reproduction numbers, Hamilton said.

The whales are less likely to reproduce when they have suffered injuries or are underfed, scientists have said. That has emerged as a problem for the whale because they aren't producing enough babies to sustain their population, they've said.

However, this year four mother whales had calves for the first time, Hamilton said. And some other, established mother whales had shorter intervals between calves, he said.

In total, 11 calves were born, which is less than researchers had hoped for, but the entry of new females into the reproductive pool is encouraging, Hamilton said.

And any number of calves is helpful in a year of no mortalities, said Heather Pettis, who leads the right whale research program at Cabot Center and chairs the North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium

Pakistan confirms new polio case as tally hits 30

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 21, (Xinhua): Pakistan confirmed one new case of polio in the country's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, bringing the total number of cases to 30 since the beginning of this year, the health ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

According to the Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health (NIH) under the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination, the poliovirus was detected in a 12-month-old boy from Torghar district of the province.

This is the second case from Torghar district this year, the NIH said, adding that with this detection, the total number of polio cases in Pakistan in 2025 has reached 30, including 19 from KP, nine from southern Sindh province,

and one each from eastern Punjab and northern Gilgit-Baltistan region.

The country has been intensifying efforts to sustain comprehensive vaccination coverage and ensure the highest quality campaigns in vulnerable areas. Over 44 million children have been vaccinated through the fourth national polio vaccination campaign of 2025 conducted last week.

Moreover, in September this year, the authorities collected 127 sewage samples from 87 districts across the country through its environmental surveillance network.

"Of these, 81 were found negative with no poliovirus detected, while 44 samples tested positive, and two samples are currently under process in the laboratory," said the NIH, underlining that the overall trend indicates a

decline in positive detections owing to the country's high-quality vaccination campaigns.

Meanwhile, Pakistan has successfully concluded its fourth nationwide anti-polio campaign of 2025, vaccinating more than 43.9 million children under the age of five, the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) said on Monday.

The immunization drive was conducted from Oct. 13 to 19, covering all provinces and regions of the country, the NEOC said in a statement.

According to the statement, over 23.1 million children were vaccinated in eastern Punjab province, 10.5 million in southern Sindh, 6.18 million in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 2.6 million in southwestern Balochistan.

Athapaththu first Lankan woman to reach 4,000 ODI runs

Sri Lanka stuns Bangladesh in dramatic last-over win

NAVI MUMBAI, India, Oct 21, (AP): Bangladesh lost four wickets off the final six balls in a stunning collapse as it slipped to a seven-run defeat to Sri Lanka at the Women’s Cricket World Cup .

With nine runs needed off six balls, Sri Lanka skipper Chamari Athapaththu took three wickets in four balls as Bangladesh went from 194-6 to 194-9, also including a run-out, to spoil its hopes of recording a first win against Sri Lanka.

Athapaththu’s burst - 4-42 in 10 overs overall - restricted Bangladesh to 195-9 in 50 overs. It became the first team to be eliminated from the tournament after a fifth loss in six games.

Sri Lanka earned its first win to stay alive on four points, including two from no-results against Australia and South Africa. The co-hosts will take on Pakistan in their final league game in Colombo on Friday.

Sri Lanka opted to bat and was bowled out for 202 runs, with Hasini Perera

scoring 85 off 99 balls and Athapaththu adding 46 off 43 balls.

“We knew we had to keep fighting till the end and we handled the pressure until the last over,” Perera said. “We made many mistakes as a batting unit and it wasn’t our best game. But we were lucky enough to win.”

Bangladesh was down to 44-3 after in-form Shobana Mistry was out for eight runs - caught off left-arm spinner Sugandika Kumari after the openers were dismissed cheaply.

Sharmin Akhter and skipper Nigar Sultana then put on 82 off 121 balls for the fourth wicket to rebuild the innings.

Sharmin scored 50 off 81 balls before going off in the 36th over owing to cramps on a hot Mumbai evening. It didn’t impact Bangladesh’s momentum, though, as Sultana added another 50 off 58 balls with Shorna Akhter, who scored 19.

Athapaththu picked up her first wicket in the 46th over when Shorna was out caught, yet Bangladesh was still ahead in the game.

With Sultana at the crease, 12 runs off the last 12 deliveries seemed viable. But Sugandika gave away only three runs in the penultimate over to build the pressure.

Athapaththu then got to work, getting Sultana’s wicket off the third ball after Nahida Akhter was run out trying to give strike. Sharmin Akhter came out again to bat, but the damage was already done for Bangladesh.

Earlier, Athapaththu became the first Sri Lankan woman to score 4,000 ODI runs. Despite losing Vishmi Gunaratne for a golden duck, she provided an early flourish to set her side up.

Hasini Perera scored 50 off 65 balls for her first half-century of the tournament. She added 72 off 75 balls with Athapaththu for the second wicket.

World mourns Naroditsky

US chess grandmaster dies

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): Daniel Naroditsky, a chess grandmaster who started as a child prodigy and quickly became one of the most influential American voices in the sport, died Monday. He was 29.

The Charlotte Chess Center in North Carolina, where Naroditsky trained and worked as a coach, announced his death on social media, calling him “a talented chess player, educator, and beloved member of the chess community.”

“Let us remember Daniel for his passion and love for the game of chess, and for the joy and inspiration he brought to us all every day,” his family said in a statement shared by the center.

The cause of death was not immediately known.

Naroditsky became a grandmaster, the highest title in chess aside from World Chess Champion, at the age of 18.

Years earlier, the California-born player won the Under 12 world championship and spent his teenage years writing chess strategy books as he climbed the world rankings.

He was consistently ranked in the top 200 worldwide for traditional chess and also excelled at a fast-paced style called blitz chess, maintaining a top 25 ranking throughout his adult career. Most recently Naroditsky, known to many as Danya, won the U.S. National Blitz Championship in August.

Fellow grandmasters credited Naroditsky with introducing the sport to a wider audience by livestreaming many of his matches and sharing live commentary on others.

Thousands of people regularly tuned in on YouTube and the interactive streaming platform Twitch to watch Naroditsky play.

“He loved streaming, and he loved trying to be educational. The chess world is very grateful,” Hikaru Nakamura, an American grandmaster, said on a livestream Monday.

In a final video posted to his YouTube channel on Friday titled “You Thought I Was Gone!?” Naroditsky tells viewers he’s “back, better than ever” after taking a creative break from streaming. He talks viewers through his moves as he plays live chess matches on the computer from a cozy home studio.

Other elite chess players from around the globe took to social media to express their shock and sadness.

Dutch chess grandmaster Benjamin Bok reflected on his lifelong friendship with Naroditsky, who he said he’s known since the Under 12 world championship that Naroditsky won in 2007.

“I still can’t believe it and don’t want to believe it,” Bok said on X. “It was always a privilege to play, train, and commentate with Danya, but above all, to call him my friend.”

Naroditsky was the son of Jewish immigrants to the U.S. from Ukraine and Azerbaijan. He was born and raised in San Mateo County, California, and was described by his parents as a very serious kid with an impressive attention span and memory. He went on to study history at Stanford University, earning a bachelor’s degree in 2019 after taking a year off to play in chess tournaments.

LONDON, Oct 21, (AP): West Ham lost for the fourth home match in a row in the Premier League on Monday, with late goals in both halves giving Brentford a 2-0 win that could have been much bigger had the visitors taken more of their chances.

Going into the game, West Ham had lost all three of its home games this season while Brentford had lost all three of its away games in the league, but the visitors dominated from the start at the London Stadium.

Igor Thiago and Kevin Schade both missed good opportunities to score before Thiago finally broke the deadlock two minutes before halftime. The Hammers defense failed to deal with long ball and Schade squared to Thiago to score. Goalkeeper Alphonse Areola got a hand to his shot but could not stop it going over the line.

Some West Ham fans boycotted the game in protest at what they say is mismanagement by the club’s owners and there were more empty seats than usual at the former Olympic stadium, which became the club’s home in 2016 after moving from Upton Park.

They missed little as the home side was second best throughout against a team that had 22 shots on goal to West Ham’s seven.

Nevertheless, it took Brentford until the 94th minute to get a second goal. Another long ball flummoxed the West Ham defense and Keane Lewis-Potter cut back for Mathias Jensen to slam home.

“It probably could’ve been more,” Brentford midfielder Mikkel Damsgaard said. “We created a lot of chances and had a lot of set pieces, but we’re happy to get the three points.”

The result leaves Nuno Espirito Santos’ team in 19th place with four points from eight games and the worst goal difference in the league.



West Ham United’s Crysencio Summerville, left, and Brentford’s Yehor Yarmolyuk battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between West Ham United and Brentford at the London Stadium, London. (AP)

Brentford moved into 13th place with 10 points after eight games.

Cremonese couldn’t hold on to an early lead as it was held 1-1 at home against Udinese on Monday for its fourth draw in five Italian league games.

Former Leicester striker Jamie Vardy made his first start for Cremonese after two substitute appearances but it was defender Filippo Terracciano who put the home side ahead after four minutes, glancing in a header from a free kick on the left.

Federico Bonazzoli and Franco Vazquez both hit the woodwork as Cremonese pushed for a second

but Nicolò Zaniolo headed home an equalizer for Udinese early in the second half.

Vardy, who signed for the Italian team in the offseason after a 13-year career at Leicester, played the full 90 minutes and came close to scoring on two occasions as well as picking up a late yellow card.

The result leaves both teams in mid-table, with Cremonese in 10th spot, one point and one place above Udinese. Cremonese is now unbeaten at home in 10 games.

Valencia went a fourth straight game without a win as it was held to a 0-0 draw at Alaves in the Spanish

league on Monday.

Arnaut Danjuma missed Valencia’s best chance early on as his shot was off target from a tight angle after being picked out by Javi Guerra at the far post on a counter-attack.

Alaves then had a majority of the possession and Valencia goalkeeper Julen Agirretxabala had to palm away a header from Toni Martinez in the 54th to preserve the stalemate.

The home side was seeking to record successive home league wins for the first time in a year.

The point lifts Alaves into 10th place in La Liga with 12 points from nine games. Valencia is 14th with nine points.



This undated photo released by Charlotte Chess Center shows Daniel Naroditsky playing chess on the board. (AP)

‘This World Cup will be equal in every sense’

US, Mexico, Costa Rica and Jamaica team up to host ‘2031’ Women’s WC

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): The United States plans to co-host the 2031 World Cup with regional neighbors, the same structure being used for the men’s championship next year.

Mexico, Costa Rica and Jamaica were added Monday to the U.S. Soccer Federation proposal as co-hosts, the only bid to be considered when FIFA members meet April 30 to formally decide where the expanded 48-nation tournament will be played.

“This Women’s World Cup will be equal in every sense of the word to a men’s World Cup,” U.S. Soccer Federation president Cindy Parlow Cone said during a news conference, “not just in the number of teams and matches, but equal in the quality of the facilities, with the same type of travel, accommodations and support.”

She said more than 30 U.S. cities have expressed interest in hosting in 2031, when 104 games will be played. Decisions on stadiums likely won’t be made until 2027 at the earliest.

Next year’s men’s tournament will be played at 11 NFL stadiums, three in Mexico and two in Canada, with all games in the U.S. from the quarterfinals on.

FIFA, running the World Cup rather than a local organizing committee, is asking up to \$6,730 list price for regular tickets and as much as \$73,200 for an eight-game hospitality plan at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, site of the 2026 men’s final on July 19.

“The demand for the Women’s World Cup here is going to be incredible,” USSF CEO JT Batson said. “We see from our own pricing data of selling tickets for our men’s and women’s national team games that ticket prices are very similar.”

Batson said the USSF, FIFA, host federations and host cities will reflect



From left to right, Mexican Football Federation president Mikel Arriola, Jamaica Football Federation president Michael Ricketts, Costa Rican Football Federation president Osael Maroto Martínez and U.S. Soccer president Cindy Parlow Cone pose with jerseys at a news conference in New York, Monday, Oct. 20, 2025, to announce the four nations had joined a proposal to co-host the 2031 Women’s World Cup, the only bid being considered by FIFA. (AP)

on next summer’s tournament as part of planning for 2031.

The U.S. hosted the 1999 Women’s World Cup, which was expanded from 12 teams to 16, and 1.2 million fans attended the 32 matches.

“Women in general as they walk through the world is a political act. Women on a soccer field is more of a political act, saying to the world: I deserve to be here,” said Abby Wambach, the 2012 world player of the year. “In 1999, FIFA didn’t believe that the team could play in big football stadiums. And the organizing committee and the players said: No, we can do this. We will figure out how to sell this thing out.”

The U.S. is a four-time women’s champion. Canada was not included in the bid because it hosted the 2015

AUSTIN, Texas, Oct 21, (AP): Max Verstappen is chasing perfection as he pursues a fifth Formula 1 championship.

After his dominant weekend at the United States Grand Prix, the Red Bull driver says anything is possible.

“The chance is there. I think it is exciting, and I’m really just very excited for the end,” Verstappen said after his third win in four races. “I think we need to be perfect until the end.”

In a season he once figured was all but lost, Verstappen now is hunting down the McLaren duo of Oscar Piastri and Lando Norris. And when he lifted the victor’s trophy on the podium Sunday, it was clear that Verstappen has grabbed this title chase by the horns and may not let go.

Verstappen’s dominant run of late has trimmed his gap with front-runner Piastri from 104 points to 40 in a span of just four races. He trails Norris by 26.

There are five races and two sprints left on the season, starting this week at the Autódromo Hermanos Rodríguez in Mexico City, where Verstappen has five career victories.

Verstappen would be just the fourth driver to win five titles. And he would join Michael Schumacher as the only drivers to win five in a row.

After the race in Texas, Verstappen told the BBC: “We’re just going flat out.”

That should unsettle McLaren.

McLaren already has won the constructors’ championship thanks to its cars’ dominance early on and over the summer. The pendulum has clearly swung toward Red Bull now, but McLaren can still bring it back.

Verstappen knows the McLaren drivers still lead the championship and still have very fast cars.

“We caught up a lot,” Verstappen said. “But at the same time, you know,



Winner Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands, second left, poses on the podium with second placed McLaren driver Lando Norris of Britain, left, third placed Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc of Monaco, right, and Red Bull team mechanic Chris Gent, second right, after the Formula One U.S. Grand Prix auto race in Austin, Texas. (AP)

the gaps (between cars) are very small.”

McLaren doesn’t want to show any cracks in confidence that one of its drivers can hold him off. Piastri, despite a miserable weekend in Texas with a crash in the sprint race and a fifth-place finish in the main event, noted he’s still leading the championship, even as the gap is shrinking.

“I’d still rather be where I am than the other two,” Piastri said. “My mentality hasn’t changed, and it certainly won’t now. I’m just trying to do the best job I can every weekend and naturally, the results will take care of themselves.”

Piastri’s own mistakes have gifted Verstappen big chances to rally. He crashed out on the first lap in Azerbaijan, where Verstappen won. His crash into Norris in the Texas sprint race allowed Verstappen to take maximum points on the day.

Over the five races since the season’s summer break, Verstappen’s 119 total points have matched the two McLaren cars combined.

Norris could spoil Verstappen’s title run even if Piastri’s hopes collapse. His second-place finish in Texas pulled him with 14 points of his teammate.

“It’s quite simple: Just try and beat both drivers and life’s easy,” Norris said.

McLaren team principal Andrea Stella had warned a month ago that Verstappen would be a title threat. Few took him seriously then.

“When I say something, I mean it,” Stella said. “For me, there’s no mystery. We know that when Max has the material to win, he becomes a very serious candidate to win.”

Kazma outplays Muharraq to open West Asia Super League campaign



Kazma players take time out during the opening match between Kazma and Muharraq.

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Kazma Club made a strong start to its West Asia Super League (WASL) Gulf Zone journey, securing a convincing 95-81 victory over Bahrain's Muharraq. The match took place at the Kuwait Basketball Association Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex, as part of Group A, which also features Shabab Al-Ahli (UAE) and Al-Ittihad Jeddah (Saudi Arabia).

The win placed Kazma at the top of Group A on point difference ahead of Al-Ittihad, while Muharraq settled in fourth place with a single point, trailing Sharjah, who lost to Al-Ittihad in their opening match.

Head coach Bojan Lasic of Slo-

venia praised his players' performance and composure, saying: "It was a great and important victory — an ideal start to a significant tournament. We can build on this positive momentum throughout the season. There were many positives and only a few negatives, which we'll work to improve moving forward."

The Gulf Zone of the WASL includes eight teams divided into two groups. Group A features Kazma, Muharraq, Shabab Al-Ahli, and Al-Ittihad Jeddah, while Group B consists of Kuwait Club, Sharjah (UAE), Al-Arabi (Qatar), and Al-Ula (Saudi Arabia). The top team from each group will advance directly to the semifinals, while the second- and third-placed sides will compete in playoff qualifiers for the same stage.

Al-Ittihad ends losing streak



Players vie for the ball during the Asian Champions League match between Al-Ahli and Al-Gharafa.

Al-Ahli thrashes Al-Gharafa in Asian Champions League

RIYADH, Oct 21, (AP): Former AC Milan coach Sergio Conceição earned his first win in charge of Saudi club Al-Ittihad with a 4-1 victory over Al-Shorta of Iraq in the Asian Champions League.

Al-Ittihad lost its first two group games in the continental competition this season, and the two-time champion went behind early in Baghdad as Bassam Shakir opened the scoring for

Al-Shorta in the fifth minute.

Moussa Diaby equalized in the 17th, converting a cross from Mahamadou Dombia after a turnover in midfield, and former Liverpool star Fabinho put Al-Ittihad ahead in the 28th with a free kick from about 25 meters.

Al-Ittihad went down to 10 men early in the second half when Danilo Pereira received a second yellow card, but Algeria international Houssein Aouar extended the lead on the hour with a close-range finish following a run by Diaby. The two combined again as Diaby set up Aouar in the 76th to complete the scoring.

The win moves Al-Ittihad off the bottom of the 12-team western group.

The top eight from each of the two groups, divided geographically, advance to the knockout stage.

Jeddah rival Al-Ahli is on top after the defending champion thrashed Al-Gharafa of Qatar 4-0 with two goals from former Milan and Barcelona midfielder Franck Kessie, along with strikes from Enzo Millot and Waheb Saleh.

Also, Al-Wahda of the United Arab Emirates defeated Qatar's Al-Duhail 3-1, and Iranian champion Tractor thrashed Sharjah 5-0.

'A respected and experienced Premier League manager'

Forest hires Dyche as third manager this season

LONDON, Oct 21, (AP): Sean Dyche became Nottingham Forest's third manager of the season when he was hired on Tuesday, marking his return to the Premier League after nearly a year away.

The former Burnley and Everton coach replaces Ange Postecoglou, who was fired in ruthless fashion on Saturday around 20 minutes after Forest's 3-0 home loss to Chelsea that left the team in the relegation zone.

Postecoglou had only been in the job for 39 days, having taken over from the fired Nuno Espirito Santo in what turned out to be a misguided appointment by Forest owner Evangelos Marinakis.

Forest - a back-to-back European champion in 1979 and 1980 - enjoyed its best campaign in a generation last season, challenging for Champions League qualification until a late collapse but still making it back into European competition via a seventh-place finish in the Premier League.

The feelgood factor at Forest has disappeared after just two months of this season, with the team in third-to-last place on five points from eight games. Forest has only won one of its 11 games in all competitions - its season opener against Brentford - and has lost its last four.

Dyche, whose first game in charge is against Porto in the Europa League on Thursday, takes over a squad that



In this file photo, Everton's head coach Sean Dyche gestures during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and Everton at the Etihad stadium in Manchester. (AP)

might be disorientated having already played under two different tactical approaches so far this season. Initially it was Nuno's more pragmatic and direct style, before Postecoglou brought along his attacking mindset that didn't fit the players in Forest's squad.

Dyche is more like Nuno in the way he sets up his teams, as shown in his long spell at Burnley from 2012-22

and again in his two years at Everton before he was fired in January. He should bring more stability and organization back to Forest, especially at defending set pieces - a big weakness in the team under Postecoglou.

"A respected and experienced Premier League manager, Dyche brings the perfect blend of character, tactical acumen and proven achievement to

guide the club through its next chapter," Forest said in a statement.

"Having managed more than 330 Premier League matches in his career to date, Dyche has built teams defined by defensive organisation, resilience, and strength from set pieces - qualities that align closely with the current squad's attributes and the club's footballing identity."

The 54-year-old Dyche, who has signed a contract until the summer of 2027, was a youth-team player at Forest but never made a senior appearance for the club. He still lives near Nottingham and two of his long-time backroom staff - Ian Woan and Steve Stone - are former Forest players.

Dyche is one of the more charismatic Premier League managers with his gravelly voice and turn of phrase.

He recently announced the launch of a podcast - "Utter Nonsense!" - that may have to be put on hold now that he's back in management.

"As a former Forest youth player who lives locally, Dyche also has a deep understanding of the values and pride of Forest and its supporters," Forest said. "With his character, tactical acumen and man-management skills, his appointment represents the best opportunity for a successful and competitive season across both domestic and European competitions."

Yarmouk tops First Division after narrow win over Al-Sulaibikhat

By Hasan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Yarmouk seized the top spot in the Zain First Division League with a 1-0 victory over Al-Sulaibikhat at Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium in the fifth round of the competition.

The win lifted Yarmouk's points total to 12, edging Al-Sulaibikhat on goal difference.

Al-Sahel moved into third place with 11 points following a 4-1 triumph over Al-Jazeera at Al-Shabab Stadium, while Al-Jazeera dropped to fourth with 10 points. Khaitan earned their first victory of the season, beating Burgan 2-0, leaving Burgan at 5 points. Meanwhile, Al-Shamiya celebrated a historic debut win, defeating Sporty 2-1 at Al-Sahel Stadium.

Yarmouk coach Zaher Al-Adwani praised his team's performance, highlighting their resilience in overcoming Al-Sulaibikhat and regaining the league lead.

Al-Adwani described the match



Zaher Al-Adwani

as "crucial and decisive, especially after our previous round defeat," commending his players for their discipline and commitment despite being a man down, which helped secure the three points.

He added that the victory would give the team a significant confidence boost ahead of its sixth-round clash with Al-Jazeera, noting that players would receive a day's rest following their intense effort against Al-Sulaibikhat.

Gymnastics Federations of Kuwait and UAE strengthen co-operation



Al-Sanea meets with Al-Matrooshi and Al-Zaabli.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: A delegation from the UAE Sports for All Federation visited the Kuwait Gymnastics Federation headquarters at the Kuwait Olympic Committee building recently, aiming to exchange expertise and explore new avenues of cooperation between the two sides.

The Emirati delegation was led by Federation President Saeed Al-Ajeel, along with Dr. Maryam Al-Matrooshi, Chairwoman of the Gymnastics Committee, and Lamya Al-Zaabli, Head of Strategy, Institutional Excellence, and Government Communication.

They were welcomed by Abdulatif Murad, Secretary-General of the Kuwait Gymnastics Federation; board member Hessa

Al-Sane; and gymnastics technical director Mohammed Behbehani.

During the cordial meeting, both parties discussed ways to further develop gymnastics—particularly women's participation—amid the growing interest among female athletes in both Kuwait and the UAE.

Kuwaiti officials extended a warm welcome to their Emirati counterparts, wishing them a pleasant stay in Kuwait and reaffirming their commitment to sharing successful experiences that contribute to advancing gymnastics across the Gulf region.

At the end of the visit, the UAE delegation expressed sincere appreciation for the warm reception and generous hospitality.

Best of the Rest

Kompany signs contract extension: Bayern Munich coach Vincent Kompany signed a two-year contract extension on Tuesday, tying him to the German champions until 2029.

The former Manchester City and Belgium defender joined Bayern ahead of the 2024-25 season and won the Bundesliga in his first year in charge.

Bayern has won its first seven games of the current league season and is five points clear.

"I'm grateful, honored and would like to thank Bayern for the trust and the working environment they've given me from day one," the 39-year-old Kompany said.

"It feels like I've been here a lot longer and that I know the club well. It's been a great experience so far. We've started on a wonderful journey."

Bayern CEO Jan-Christian Dreesen said Kompany has "brought the fun back to Bayern - and the spark has really caught on."

"Under his leadership, a real team has grown that plays dominant and attractive football," Dreesen said. "The (contract) extension is also a signal to our players."

Kompany was previously the manager at Burnley, which he couldn't prevent getting relegated from the Premier League at the end of the 2023-24 season. (AP)



Rangers hires Rohl as manager: Scottish club Rangers hired former Sheffield Wednesday manager Danny Rohl as its coach on Monday on a 1 1/2-year contract as the replacement for Russell Martin.

Following Martin's departure on Oct. 5, Rangers held talks with Steven Gerrard - its former title-winning manager - and Kevin Muscat, one of its former players.

Now the Glasgow club has turned to Rohl, a 36-year-old German who coached Sheffield Wednesday in England's second-tier Championship for nearly two years before leaving in July. He previously had coaching roles with Leipzig, Southampton, Bayern Munich and Germany's national team.

His first game in charge will be on Thursday in a Europa League meeting with Brann in Norway.

"It is a huge privilege to be taking on the role of head coach at such an incredible club, recognized around the world," Rohl said.

Rangers is languishing in sixth place in the Scottish league, on just nine points from eight games and 13 points behind first-place Hearts. (AP)

ARAB TIMES

Kuwait's No.1 English Newspaper

For Subscriptions and Complaints

Please Call

51508991

51526559

NEWS



From left, Chelsea's Alejandro Garnacho, Marc Guiu, Enzo Fernandez and Marc Cucurella during a training session at Cobham training ground, in London ahead of their Champions League soccer match against Ajax. (AP)

Sports

Al-Qadsia targets crucial win against Al-Ain



Qadsia players pose for a group photo.

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Al-Qadsia will look to secure a vital victory when it hosts UAE's Al-Ain at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium today at 8:00 PM in the second round of Group A of the Gulf Clubs Champions League.
In the same group, Bahrain's Sitra will face Iraq's Zakho in Manama.
The "Yellow" team is aiming to achieve several objectives: to bounce back from their 3-1 opening defeat to Zakho, to restore confidence after consecutive losses to Kuwait (2-1) and Kazma (1-0) in the Zain Premier League, and

to gain momentum ahead of Sunday's domestic clash against Al-Salmiya. A win tonight will also strengthen their chances of advancing from the group, while a loss or draw could seriously reduce their prospects.
The challenge will be significant, as Al-Ain dominated Sitra 4-1 in the first round and currently leads the UAE league standings. Al-Ain has announced that it will field mostly reserve and youth players, supplemented by a few first-team substitutes, to focus on domestic league and cup competitions.
The Gulf Cup Referees Committee appointed a Qatari officiating team for the match: Salman Flahi as the main referee, Yusuf Aref and Zahi Al-Shammari as assistants, and Mishari Al-Shammari and Faisal Eid as VAR officials.
Al-Qadsia coach Nabil Maaloul described the encounter as "extremely important," emphasizing the team's determination to win despite missing key players. Injured players Mubarak Al-Fanani, Jassem Matar, and Eid Al-Rashidi will be absent, while goalkeeper Hameed Al-Qallaf is set to start.
Al-Ain coach Matteo Lambardo stated: "We respect Al-Qadsia and know a lot about them. Our goal is to play for the win," adding that using the reserve team in the Gulf Champions League is intended to give new experience to the first team.

Kuwait loses tight battle to Qatar 1st at Asian Padel Championship

DOHA, Oct 21, (KUNA): The Kuwait men's national padel team suffered a narrow 2-1 defeat to Qatar in the group stage of the inaugural Asian Padel Championship Qatar 2025, currently underway in Doha and running until October 24.
Representing Kuwait are players Abdulaziz Mayouf, Abdulrahman Al-Awadhi, Fouad Behbehani, Hamoud Al-Junaidel, Hussein Shams, Abdullah Al-Roudhan, Youssef Nizar, and Mohammed Al-Qattan.
The tournament is being held in two phases. The first took place from October 17 to 19, featuring 17 teams ranked between fifth and twenty-first across Asia and Oceania, divided into four groups. The final phase is set to conclude between October 20 and 24.



A Kuwaiti player returns a shot during the match.

Extra time scrapped for Arab Cup playoffs

DOHA, Oct 21: The organizing committee of the Arab Cup, set to be held in Qatar from December 1 to 18, has decided to cancel extra time in the playoff matches. If a match ends in a draw during regular time, the outcome will be determined directly by a penalty shootout.
The playoff matches are scheduled for November 25 and 26 in Doha and will feature the following encounters: Kuwait vs Mauritania, Oman vs Somalia, Bahrain vs Djibouti, Syria vs South Sudan, Palestine vs Libya, Lebanon vs Sudan, and Yemen vs Comoros.
The winners of these single-elimination playoff matches will advance to the group stage of the Arab Cup.



Arab Cup trophy

advance to the group stage of the Arab Cup.

'Think it over again' Sinner's decision to sit out Davis Cup criticized at home



In this file photo, Jannik Sinner returns a shot to Learner Tien in the men's singles match at the China Open. (AP)

ROME, Oct 21, (AP): Jannik Sinner's decision not to play for host Italy in the Davis Cup Final 8 is being met with a sense of abandonment in his home country - where he was fiercely defended during his doping case earlier this year.
The second-ranked Sinner, who led Italy to tennis' biggest team trophy the past two years, said that he prefers to prepare for next season instead of helping the Azzurri aim for another title in Bologna next month.
"It wasn't an easy decision, but after Turin (where the ATP Finals are played the week before the Davis Cup), the goal is to start off on the right foot in Australia," Sinner said, referring to the Australian Open, where he is the two-time defending champion.
"It doesn't seem like it, but a week of preparation in that period can make a difference," Sinner told Sky Italia on Monday from Vienna, where he is playing this week. "We already won the Davis Cup in 2023 and 2024 and this time we decided like this with my team."
The front-page headline in Tuesday's Gazzetta dello Sport translated to: "Sinner, think it over again."
An accompanying editorial in the Gazzetta took Sinner to task for saying he already won the Davis Cup twice, pointing out how he also defended his title over the weekend in a lucrative exhibition in Saudi Arabia.
"So you're not going to return to Riyadh for another \$6 million? If you win another Wimbledon, you won't go to London anymore? Pasta, coffee ... Every five minutes you promote an Italian product. Do it with tennis, too," the Gazzetta editorial said, referring to the multiple Italian brands that Sinner represents in TV and other advertisements.
Added 92-year-old Nicola Pietrangeli, a two-time French Open winner who was Italy's most successful player until Sinner came along: "It's a big slap in the face to the Italian sports world."
Italians widely defended Sinner when he was hit with a three-month doping ban in February, while other top players insinuated that he received preferential treatment because of his high status and the time frame of the ban meant that he didn't miss any Grand Slam tournaments.
It's not the first time that Sinner has been criticized for not representing Italy. It happened when he didn't play Davis Cup in 2023 and it happened when he didn't play in the Paris Olympics a year later.
Sinner grew up in the German-speaking autonomous region of Alto Adige in northern Italy and has also faced an underlying sentiment that he's not fully Italian.
Just last month, an Italian rapper was accused of inciting racial hatred for publishing musical lyrics saying that Sinner speaks with "Adolf Hitler's accent." Fe-dez, the rapper, later apologized.
Adriano Panatta, who led Italy to its only other Davis Cup triumph in 1976, defended Sinner's choice, noting how the team competition is not considered as important as it was in his playing days.

Pakistan seizes 'upper hand' as debutant Afridi claims 2 wickets

South Africa trails by 148 runs

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan, Oct 21, (AP): Two late wickets by a 38-year-old debutant spinner, Asif Afridi, checked world champion South Africa's progress in the second and final test against Pakistan on Tuesday. Left-armner Afridi picked up the wickets of half-century-maker Tony de Zorzi (55), and Dewald Brevis got dismissed for his second duck of the series as South Africa slipped to 185-4 at stumps on Day 2.

The Proteas still trails Pakistan by 148 runs on an abrasive wicket where left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj earlier took 7-102 to dismiss the home team for 333 in the first session. Tristan Stubbs and de Zorzi had thwarted Pakistan spin challenge of Noman Ali, Sajid Khan, and Afridi for well over two hours with patient half-centuries before Afridi got his first test wicket when he trapped de Zorzi leg before wicket on the backfoot. Bangladesh on-field umpire Sharfuddoula Saikat ruled in favor of de Zorzi, but Pakistan, which had already used two of its three television referrals, successfully went for the review. Afridi then found the shoulder of Brevis' bat, and Salman Ali Agha took a smart catch as South Africa slipped to 171-4 and lost two wickets in the space of four runs.
Stubbs, playing in only his 12th test match, showed plenty of patience against the spinners and was unbeaten on 68 off 184 balls as he raised South Africa's hopes with a 113-run stand with de Zorzi before Afridi's twin strike jolted the Proteas. Wicketkeeper-batter Kyle Ver-



Pakistan's Sajid Khan bowls during the second day of the second test cricket match between Pakistan and South Africa, at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. (AP)

reynne will resume on 10. Pakistan twice got chances to dismiss de Zorzi and Stubbs, who used their feet well against the spinners. However, Pakistan didn't go for an LBW review before tea when de Zorzi was on 5, and then Khan couldn't hold onto a hard return catch when Stubbs came down the wicket and drove back to the off-spinner.
De Zorzi was the more aggressive of the two and followed his century in the first test with a fighting half-century off 86 balls, and Stubbs reached his fifty in style by lofting Khan for a straight six. Shaheen Shah Afridi bowled an electrifying opening spell with the new ball and had Ryan Rickelton caught behind for 14.
Captain Aiden Markram (32) survived two close lbws appeals against the left-arm fast bowler, but he holed

out to long-on when Khan was introduced in the 21st over before de Zorzi and Stubbs thwarted Pakistan with a century stand. Maharaj, who missed South Africa's series-opening loss at Lahore last week due to a groin injury, snared the last five Pakistan wickets for 15 runs in a dramatic Pakistan batting collapse before lunch. Off-spinner Simon Harmer had figures of 2-75 and pace bowler Kagiso Rabada returned 1-60.
Resuming Tuesday at 259-5, Saud Shakeel (66) and Agha (45) extended their sixth-wicket stand to 70 runs before Pakistan's lower-order crumbled against Maharaj on a dry wicket. South Africa made amends for lackluster fielding on Day 1, when they dropped several catches, and held onto all their chances on Day 2. Pakistan's sixth-wicket pair combined well

in the first hour, with left-hander Shakeel completing his half century off 118 balls when he pushed Maharaj to square leg for two runs. Marco Jansen and Rabada bowled to tight lengths and also missed the outside edge of Shakeel's bat, but couldn't get the breakthrough before Maharaj struck just before the drinks break.
Maharaj's sliding delivery hit Agha on the shin as he went to play for the turn, but missed the straight ball. In his next over, Maharaj found the outside edge of Shakeel's bat, and Markram, who had dropped Abdullah Shafique in the slip on Day 1, didn't miss out. Shaheen Shah Afridi, who was unveiled as Pakistan's new ODI captain on Monday, was out without scoring when he played Maharaj across the line and was clean bowled