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HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince

Amir meets Crown Prince, Premier & 1st Deputy PM

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah.

Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday at Bayan Palace, His

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PM Diwan photo

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives the UAE Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications Omar Al-Olama.

PM receives UAE State Minister

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Sunday the UAE Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications Omar Al-Olama and

the accompanying delegation.

Present at the reception were Minister of State for Communication Affairs Omar Al-Omar, Chief of His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel, and UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Matar Al-Neyadi.



PM Diwan photo

The Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Pham Minh Chinh, and his accompanying delegation arrive in the country Sunday on an official visit.

Vietnam PM arrives in Kuwait on official visit

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): The Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Pham Minh Chinh, and his accompanying delegation arrived in the country Sunday on an official visit.

He was received by Advisor at the Diwan of the Prime Minister and Head of the accompanying delegation of honor, Sheikh

Dr. Basel Hamoud Al-Sabah.

The Vietnamese Premier was also received by Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs, Ambassador Sameeh Hayat, and Ambassador of Kuwait to Vietnam Yousef Al-Sabbagh.



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

President of Syria, borrow a leaf out of Anwar Sadat's leadership

SYRIA desperately needs a pragmatic policy after enduring immense hardship caused by prolonged domestic and regional political adventures. At least a decade of tireless recovery efforts is needed to overcome this.

Incumbent Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa made a brilliant move with his international engagement, particularly his openness to the West and Europe. From the outset, he understood that a stable State is not built on mere slogans, which are nothing more than illusions marketed by the ruling elite as firmly held beliefs.

Over the past decades, Syria has not been different from other Arab countries afflicted by regimes claiming to be revolutionary. Instead of changing the internal reality, they resorted to raising a righteous slogan used for nefarious purposes – 'The liberation of Palestine'. This pattern of deflection started with Nasser's 1952 coup against King Farouk. It involved a process of brainwashing rather than a serious attempt to build a modern State.

Ironically, while Nasserism championed 'Arab unity', the revolution ultimately led to divisions. This was evident in the breakup of the unified monarchy of Egypt and Sudan, and the ideological split between Iraq and Syria later, even though both were governed by the same Ba'ath Party.

We must acknowledge that the Arab states lacked the power to resist the 1947 partition plan for Palestine, and their failure to unite against it constituted an acceptance of Israel. Despite this, they maintained the rhetoric, "Liberating Palestine from the river to the sea." This stance was utterly discredited when they abandoned the West Bank,

Gaza Strip and Golan Heights. The 1967 War was their greatest disgrace, especially for the self-proclaimed revolutionary regimes of that era.

We offer these insights to the current Syrian government with the aim of helping it avoid the traps that other Arab states have fallen into.

Syria is facing an enormous task today, requiring immense work and effort not only for reconstruction but also to repair the damage caused by the Syrian Ba'ath Party's policies and the resulting legacy of bloodshed and sectarian conflict.

This situation echoes that of its Iraqi counterpart, whose actions turned Baghdad—once a global hub for science and culture—into a breeding ground for sectarian strife, subjected to a systematic process of Persianization.

For decades under Ba'athist rule, Damascus, an ancient city and historically a vital trade center, became a haven for terrorist groups, acquiring the reputation of a pariah city. Given this history, the global opposition to the regime and support for the revolution that brought it down are entirely understandable.

Consequently, this first post-independence visit by a Syrian president to Washington is highly consequential. It presents a critical opportunity that must be seized to cultivate global engagement for Syria. Failure to do so, risks the country slipping

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Women mainstay of Gulf journalism



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi exchanges mementos with President of the Gulf Journalists Union and Bahraini Journalists Association Issa Al-Shayji as Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwaiti Journalists Association Adnan Al-Rashed looks on.

Al vital tool to keep pace with globe: minister

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: The Fourth Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) Women Journalists Forum was launched Sunday, with the theme, "The Gulf Narrative of Women in Journalism and Media: Achievements, Challenges and Fu-

ture Plans," under the patronage of Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi.

Present at the event were President of the Gulf Journalists Union and Bahraini Journalists Association Issa Al-Shayji, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwaiti Journalists Association Adnan Al-Rashed,

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'Life balance with fine needles'

Chinese acupuncture wins laurels in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Nov. 16, (Xinhua): For years, Mansour Al-Qallaf, a Kuwaiti lawyer, endured persistent headaches and declining vision. After seeking treatment at the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) unit of Kuwait's Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Hospital, he finally found relief.

Al-Qallaf arrived at the clinic in February, cautiously hopeful after years of sleepless nights. After three sessions of the "brain-awakening acupuncture method," his symptoms eased significantly, and his mobility improved.

Continued treatment brought further gains: his vision improved by 0.3 on the standard eye chart. Overjoyed, he shared his experience on social media, calling acupuncture a therapy that "restores life's balance with fine needles."

"Chinese acupuncture is truly amazing," he said. To express his gratitude, Al-Qallaf presented the visiting Chinese medical team with photo album, inscribed in Arabic: "Compassion knows no borders."

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Kuwait plans more fuel stations to overcome rising traffic chaos

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) is currently carrying out maintenance works in its fuel stations and introducing modifications in accordance with the modern requirements applied by the company, which are consistent with the environmental requirements.

Sources explained that the modernization, modification and maintenance

plan is implemented gradually to avoid disrupting the supply of fuel to the local market.

Sources stated that the company welcomes competition in the field of fuel stations, praising the intention of Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI) to open such stations, as competition is beneficial for the consumers and generates better returns for Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC).

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Kuwait to tighten hold over AI, avert misuse

By Mohammad Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: Chairman of the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) Dr. Khaled Al-Zamil said the Authority is currently updating the regulations governing the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the country, in order to protect users, prevent misuse of data, and establish clear standards for using AI technologies in various sectors.

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KUNA photo

Kuwait Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian visits the Air Defense Force, where he was received by the Force Air Commodore Firas Al-Qattan and senior

Army Chief visits Air Defense Force

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): Kuwait Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian on Sunday paid a visit to the Air Defense Force, where he was received by the Force Air Commodore Firas Al-Qattan and senior

officers. The General Staff said in a press statement that during the visit Al-Shuraian was briefed on the air defense systems, development plans, and training programs.

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8 Al Mulla Automobiles concludes sponsorship of EU-GCC Business Forum 2025



8 Gulf Bank concludes fourth edition of the Datathon competition

9 Burgan Bank launches 'Risk and Cyber Awareness' week

Day by Day

SPEAKING of hopes and wishes is beautiful, but trifles only appear after thunder, lightning, and rain, along with the arrival of the right season.

Still, hopes are beautiful. I pray that we continue to live with hope until despair is wiped away. God Almighty said, "And give good tidings to the patient." How beautiful that is.

In the end, all opponents will stand before the Almighty. How beautiful harmony is, and how hateful injustice.

Yet tomorrow is another day ...

Zahid Matar

Newswatch

11 lose Kuwaiti citizenship

KUWAIT CITY: Decree No. 210/2025 was published in the official gazette "Kuwait Al-Yaum" on Sunday, revoking the Kuwaiti citizenship of 11 individuals, as well as that of those who acquired it through them by dependency, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

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KUWAIT CITY: The Foreign Ministry on Saturday condemned the continuing Israeli occupation's abusive acts against the Palestinian people.

The ministry in a statement alluded to the Israeli occupiers' storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque, the attack on Haja Hamida mosque in Salfit, the West Bank, in a flagrant breach of the international law and relevant resolutions of the international legitimacy.

The State of Kuwait, while affirming its emphatic rejection of such provocative practices and acts, stresses on the necessity that the international community uphold its responsibility of putting an end to these dangerous and recurring breaches and bringing the culprits to account, the statement said.

It renewed the State of Kuwait's historic and unwavering stand in supporting the fraternal Palestinian people, their legitimate right to establish an independent state with the June 4, 1967, borders, and East Jerusalem as its capital. (KUNA)

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:50	Asr	14:32
Sunrise ..	06:12	Maghrib ..	16:53
Zohr	11:33	Isha	18:13

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Rather hot, humid especially over coastal areas and partly cloudy to cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 10-42 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times and a chance for fog forming at night.

Weather			
By Night: Mild to rather cold, humid especially over coastal areas and partly cloudy to cloudy with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 10-35 km/h with a chance for scattered rain and a chance for fog forming over some areas.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	31	23	
Kuwait Airport	31	21	
Abdaly	32	17	
Babyan	28	22	
Jahra	32	21	
Failaka Island	28	20	
Salmiyah	29	25	
Ahmadi	28	20	
Nuwaisib	30	20	



KUNA photos

Health professionals from GCC and Eastern Mediterranean collaborate on implementing reliable electronic health information systems.

MoH and WHO train experts to enhance data-driven decision-making

Kuwait hosts regional workshop on health information systems

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): The Ministry of Health, represented by the National Health Information Center, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), organized a training workshop for health professionals from Kuwait, the GCC countries and the Eastern Mediterranean region.

Participants joined both in person and online, with sessions running until November 19 at the Symphony Hotel.

Director of the Center Dr. Fatemah Al-Asoumi told KUNA that the workshop aligns with the Center's strategic goal of establishing a reliable electronic health information system that supports evidence-based decision-making and enables effective action based on accurate and high-quality data.

She noted that the workshop brings together physicians, WHO specialists and technical teams from the Ministry, with discussions focusing on the im-

portance of standardizing the classification and documentation of all diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.

Al-Asoumi praised the Ministry's continuous efforts to advance the health system, adding that WHO participants commended Kuwait's commitment to adopting the International Classification of Health Interventions.

This, they affirmed, enhances data transparency, facilitates international co-operation in health studies, and improves health planning.

Kuwait urges balance between AI power and human empathy

Technology must serve as a means, not an end: AI-Omar

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): Minister of State for Communications Omar Al-Omar stressed on Sunday the need to balance rapid technological advancements with the human dimension in leadership and decision-making.

In his opening remarks at the third edition of the "Breaking Barriers" conference, themed "Artificial Intelligence vs. Emotional Intelligence," organized by the National Leadership Institute, Al-Omar stated that the world is witnessing unprecedented transformations driven by the digital revolution and artificial intelligence. These transformations impact various aspects of life, from the economy and education to administration, government work, and public services.

He added that with the massive expansion in the use of smart technologies, preserving the human role in this system becomes paramount, as humans are the primary drivers of creativity and innovation. While artificial intelligence provides powerful tools for analysis, prediction, and performance improvement, it still requires emotional intelligence to imbue decisions with a human dimension and ensure that technology serves as a means to achieve development, not an end in itself.

Al-Omar further explained that the one-day conference serves as a platform bringing together leaders, experts, and thinkers to discuss the future of leadership in an era where technology intersects with values, logic with emotions, and reason with a sense of responsibility toward humanity and society.

He affirmed that the State of Kuwait is steadily progressing toward achieving its New Kuwait 2035 vision, which aims to build a diversified, knowledge-based economy and enhance digital transformation



KUNA photo
Minister of State for Communications Omar Al-Omar during the opening ceremony.

across various sectors. He highlighted the Ministry's commitment to supporting this direction by developing digital infrastructure, enabling smart transformation, and fostering an environment of innovation, thereby empowering national talent to lead in this journey.

Al-Omar noted the Ministry's keen interest in keeping pace with the latest global developments in technology and artificial intelligence and its active participation in regional and international initiatives that promote cooperation in this area. This reflects the understanding that the future of development depends on exchanging knowledge and expertise and staying abreast of modern trends in leading digital transformation.

The Minister emphasized the Ministry's full support for national initiatives that strengthen leadership capabilities and open new horizons for constructive dialogue on the relationship between humanity and technology in a rapidly changing world. He expressed gratitude to the National Leadership Institute for its

distinguished efforts in preparing and developing national leaders and its effective role in organizing this conference, which embodies its commitment to promoting conscious leadership and building a generation capable of integrating technology and human values.

For his part, the CEO of the National Leadership Institute, Mohammed Al-Khalifi, stated that artificial intelligence has become an integral part of professional and personal life, rapidly transforming the business world and necessitating reflection on humanity's role amid this technological surge.

Al-Khalifi added that the idea for the conference arose from the need to balance artificial intelligence, representing analysis, precision, and innovation, with emotional intelligence, embodying humanity, understanding, empathy, and inspiration—both vital for effective leadership.

He explained that the conference provides attendees with opportunities to participate in distinguished sessions presented by a select group of local and international speakers who have made significant contributions to technological transformation. It also explores how to formulate a new leadership system that integrates technology with values, logic with emotions, and competence with humanity, giving participants new insights. The event serves as a catalyst for change and a significant achievement in leadership development.

Al-Khalifi emphasized the institute's commitment to supporting the national knowledge economy through this conference and other events that create an interactive environment enhancing self-development, professional growth, leadership capabilities, and essential skills needed to keep pace with rapid global labor market changes.

It is worth noting that the National Leadership Institute is affiliated with the National Technology Projects Company Group, which is owned by the Kuwait Investment Authority.

Kuwait Ambassador lauds deep-seated ties with Italy

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ambassador to Italy Nasser Al-Qahtani commended on Saturday the Kuwait-Italy deep-seated ties, which have witnessed continued development in multiple domains, mainly military.

Delivering a speech during a graduation ceremony of Kuwait's defense delegation participating in a training session in Italy, Al-Qahtani said collaboration between the two countries is based on a well-established partnership supported by a similar vision toward the issues of regional and international stability and security.

Both countries have close relations over years reflected in sharing military expertise, common training and developing logistic and technical support system, the ambassador noted.

He affirmed that the session came within the framework of cooperation in the defense field between Kuwait and Italy, lauding the delegation's outstanding



Kuwait's Ambassador to Italy, Nasser Al-Qahtani, during the graduation ceremony of Kuwait's defense delegation.

performance and constructive interaction in scientific and practical programs.

Military Attaché Brigadier General Khaled Al-Shalal was present in the ceremony.

Other Voices

The folly of colonialism

By Ahmad alsarraf

Colonialism, or the enslavement of peoples, was one of the greatest disasters to affect many nations. Many countries, along with their people and natural resources, were exploited, sometimes for hundreds of years.

The concept of colonialism has now changed from its old form into new and often more dangerous forms.

Traditional invasions involved the occupation and dismantling of colonized states, direct rule, subjugation of the people, confiscation of lands, erasure of cultures, and the imposition of foreign languages, religions, and customs. These acts caused immense suffering and often resulted in genocide, as seen in Namibia under German rule, in China under Japanese occupation, and in Kenya with the systematic torture and repression of the Mau Mau by the British. Similar massacres occurred in South Africa at the hands of white colonizers, and millions died in Bengal during the 1943 famine after the British seized farmland. Britain also played a criminal role in the partition of Pakistan from India, displacing 10 million people and causing the deaths of another million due to sectarian violence.

Colonizers also played a cruel role in the slave trade, forcibly transporting millions of Africans to work on cotton and sugar plantations in America. This left deep scars and lasting psychological effects on hundreds of millions of people, many of which are still visible today.

Claims that colonialism built infrastructure and institutions were largely self-serving, benefiting the colonizers while facilitating the exploitation of local resources. Colonialism created artificial states across Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and the Balkans, with corrupt authorities, weak administrations, collapsed economies, and the deliberate use of "divide and rule" policies.

Colonialism sparked ethnic, religious, and tribal conflicts that continue to this day. For over a century, France sought to make Algeria entirely French, erasing its culture, imposing its language, and killing hundreds of thousands of Algerians who resisted to defend their independence.

Most colonial powers also destroyed the environments of the countries they occupied, destroying biodiversity, polluting soil and water, and carrying out dangerous experiments on local ecosystems.

It is both absurd and offensive for anyone to call for a reconsideration of our negative view of colonialism when even European intellectuals and activists condemn the atrocities of this history.

The governments of several colonial powers have acknowledged and condemned their brutal actions in their former colonies, apologizing for the heinous crimes they committed. Some countries with a colonial past have even pledged reparations to the peoples of their former colonies and the return of looted antiquities and cultural heritage, reflecting their shame for these past actions.

However, some descendants of colonial victims express nostalgia for that era, a view similar to certain attitudes toward Israel's occupation of Palestine.

Regarding the British presence in the Gulf, it is both absurd and naive to claim that the British arrived when the region was poor and left it rich. While Britain did arrive during a difficult period, by the time it withdrew in the 1970s, most countries in the region remained impoverished.

The British did not come to the region out of love for its people, but because of its strategic importance. It was intended to curb Ottoman Turkish influence, secure their route to India, and prevent the spread of communism to the "warm waters of the Gulf."

When the British eventually left, they did so without facing violent resistance. Their departure was voluntary, driven by the realization that the cost of staying outweighed the benefits, while they continued to maintain influence through other means.

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Stronger global co-op

Kuwait pledges ongoing aid to UN development

NEW YORK, Nov 16, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait renewed pledge to continue voluntary contributions to the efforts of the UN aid agencies and the programs aiming to promote social and economic development in vulnerable communities.

Kuwait's development policy considers man the core of development, the country's diplomatic attache Rashed Farhan said at a meeting by the UN General Assembly on Friday.

The meeting debated a report by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and a follow-up on the implementation of the resolutions of the relevant UN-led summit meetings.

"Successive global crises highlighted the need of recommitting to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," the Kuwaiti diplomat said, warning that the gap in financing for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was expanding.

He urged support for the developing and least developed countries to build their capacities in addressing the economic shocks.

The key to stability and development lies in addressing the social challenges such as unemployment and inequalities, and improving the social protection systems, Farhan stressed.

The world's multilateral system, represented by the United Nations and its specialized agencies, continues to be the ideal and most effective framework for addressing the trans-border challenges, he reminded.

Farhan commended the role of ECOSOC in coordinating the international efforts to realize the objectives of sustainable socio-economic development.

He added that Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) plays a key role in supporting vital development projects in developing countries through regional and international partnerships.

He thanked the State of Qatar for hosting the Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD2) from 4 to 6 November, commending the Doha Political Declaration of the gathering.



KFAED participates in inauguration of Bambeto Interchange Project in Guinea.

Kuwait supports Guinea's growth with Bambeto Interchange Project

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) on Saturday participated in the inauguration of the Bambeto Interchange Project in Guinea, attended by President Mamady Doumbouya.

Guinea's Minister of Planning, Ismael Nabe, praised Kuwait's vital role in supporting the country's development across various sectors, reflecting strong bilateral ties.

KFAED's Deputy Director General, Rashid

Al-Bader, highlighted the project's significance in enhancing connectivity and mobility in Conakry, aligning with the city's Urban Development Master Plan for 2040.

Since 1976, KFAED has funded 15 projects in Guinea, totaling approximately USD 219.54 million, as well as grants to improve living conditions.

The inauguration underscores Kuwait's commitment to fostering sustainable development in African nations.

Fate is always creative in settling scores

“A LONG time ago, there was a merchant who bought cattle from Iraq. He and his men would then travel to Syria to sell the animals, and with the proceeds, he would purchase fabrics and other goods to bring back to Iraq. Known for his good character, he faithfully fulfilled his religious duties and generously gave from his wealth to the poor and needy,” columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“On one of his trading journeys, more than a hundred years ago, before World War I, heavy snow fell, blocking the road and destroying vegetation. All but four of his cattle perished. He dismissed his men and continued on alone, eventually reaching a small village between Mosul and Aleppo. He knocked on the door of a house, and when the homeowner answered, he introduced himself as a guest of God wishing to spend the night. At that time, there were no hotels or restaurants; travelers would knock on any door and be welcomed, provided a place to sleep, and shared meals without charge. The homeowner kindly accepted him, brought the surviving cows into the courtyard, and fed them.

“The homeowner was poor; his livestock had died, and his crops had been ruined. He lived with his wife and their only son, who was about twenty years old. Their house had just two rooms, one for the parents and one for the son. The family gathered around the guest, and conversation began. The host soon learned that the guest carried money. Later in the night, the guest and the son went to sleep in the second room. The son usually slept in the right corner, while the guest was to sleep in the left.

“While in the room, the wife whispered to her husband, “How long will we remain in such dire need? This guest is wealthy, and we desperately need his money and cattle. We face famine. We eat one day and go hungry for days. The opportunity is here. Go to the guest, take his money, and seize his cattle. Necessity knows no law.”

“The husband asked her, “How can we, when he is our guest?” She replied, “Kill him, then dispose of him in a nearby pit in the valley. Who will know?” Convinced by his wife, the man entered the second room. In the dark, he struck the sleeping figure in the left corner of the room, thinking it was the guest, and slaughtered him like a sheep. Later, he and his wife discovered they had killed their own son. Shocked and overwhelmed, they fainted. The noise awakened the guest and neighbors, who came to help. When the couple regained consciousness, they wept bitterly. The authorities were notified and took the couple into custody.

“So what had happened in their son’s room earlier?” The guest and the son talked for a long time until the boy fell asleep in the guest’s bed in the left corner. The guest then slept in the boy’s bed. The neighbors later buried the boy, and his father was imprisoned. Injustice has severe consequences, and greed is a destruc-



Ahmad Al-Dawas

tive trait. In daily life, some people harm others through words or gossip, while some managers or supervisors wrong honest and capable employees by denying them deserved promotions.

“I heard a story from a Kuwaiti restaurant owner. An employee occasionally embezzled profits and sent the money to his home country. Later, the employee went to him, and asked for forgiveness. His daughter had been diagnosed with a serious illness that was life threatening. He pleaded for mercy, but the owner demanded the money be returned first.

“There are many similar cases. If someone wrongs you, do not seek revenge. Observe from a distance, and you will see fate at work. Fate is always creative in settling accounts. It gives respite but does not neglect.”

Also:

“During the era of the “Afia” health insurance program for retirees, I had experienced severe pain in my back and knees, to the extent that I almost lost the ability to walk.” Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“I consulted specialists in bone and back pain and underwent extensive examinations and massage therapy, but nothing provided relief. I then decided to visit orthopedic surgeons at Al-Razi Hospital, where I had tests and X-rays. Based on the results, I was referred to the massage department at Amiri Hospital. I thought, “No problem,” and went there. I was welcomed with a warm smile and treated kindly. The employee in charge asked for my phone number so they could call me. I asked why, and she replied, “So they can tell you the date of your massage session.”

“For three weeks, I kept my phone close, waiting for the appointment. But that dream still feels far away. In October 2025, a friend told me he had an appointment scheduled for 2026. Despite repeated complaints, appointments remain far off, leaving patients, especially the elderly, to wait in pain. They suffer from age-related conditions, including back and leg pain, as well as widespread discomfort affecting their eyes, stomach, liver, teeth, intestines, and urinary function.

“I find it hard to believe that the Minister of Health is unaware of the suffering elderly citizens endure from back and knee pain, osteoarthritis, and leg weakness. Why aren’t hospitals, health centers, or specialized massage clinics dedicated to the elderly established in every governorate? The number of elderly citizens alone is around 80,000. These long waiting times make death feel faster than treatment! We live in a wealthy country, blessed with financial surpluses. Is our government truly so reluctant to provide essential services to its citizens, who are most deserving of care and attention?”

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“The Cabinet’s circular on the terms and conditions for utilizing the services of retired citizens in the governorates is a major step that reflects the state’s recognition of the value of retirees’ accumulated national expertise and its confidence in their ability to support the development process and enhance the efficiency of

local work,” columnist Major General **Faisal Musaed Al-Jazzaf** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Organizing this mechanism represents a qualitative leap in investing in the skills of those who have served the nation faithfully and helps strengthen integration between state institutions and the community of experts. However, a future vision calls for expanding this framework from “official utilization” to “community sustainability,” allowing retirees who wish to contribute voluntarily, without financial compensation, to share their expertise out of a sense of belonging and national responsibility.

“The diverse spectrum of retirees includes leaders, administrators, academics, and security personnel, all possessing a wealth of experience that can significantly benefit the governorates if given opportunities for organized volunteer participation in local planning, community development, overseeing initiatives, and transferring expertise to new generations. It is therefore essential for the governorates to create a supportive environment for these volunteers, including offering moral support, providing suitable spaces for interaction, and involving them in advisory committees.

“In addition, various state institutions could collaborate to establish a national platform or database cataloging the expertise of retirees and volunteers, organized by specialization. This platform would register qualified individuals who are willing and able to serve the nation whenever needed, during both times of prosperity and periods of challenge. Retirees are not relics of the past; they are an integral part of the future, provided they are effectively utilized and integrated into the development process. The nation needs every experienced mind, every hand that has served, and every conscience that still beats with the spirit of giving back.

“Kudos to the Police Officers’ Sports Union for organizing the first marathon in cooperation with the Police Officers’ Club, in which military and civilian personnel participated last Saturday. This event highlights the keen interest of His Excellency the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior in sports and athletes, as well as his commitment to health and physical fitness. The event reflects the minister’s vision for police sports in partnership with civil society. The organization was excellent, reflecting the Ministry of Interior’s dedication.

“Our thanks go to those responsible for planning, executing, and following up on this event. We pray that God have mercy on our righteous martyrs, protect our beloved Kuwait, and bless the efforts of all who work for its advancement, under the leadership of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince (May God preserve and protect them).”

— **Compiled by Simi K.Kutty**



Al-Jazzaf



File photo: Private tents set up near a locality.

KD5,000 fine if rules of camping violated

Follow guidelines: KFF

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: Chairman of the Spring Camps Committee at Kuwait Municipality Faisal Al-Otaibi confirmed that the mechanism and requirements applied in the 2024/2025 camping season will be implemented this season as well -- from Nov 15, 2025 to March 15, 2026.

Speaking to the newspaper, Al-Otaibi stressed the necessity of adhering to the conditions of the Municipality for obtaining camping permits in the 11 designated sites. He affirmed that the issuance of camping permits for the government sector is through the specified online platform, while that for private companies has yet to be activated, though he expects it will be announced soon.

He said 12 camping sites were allocated for cooperative societies, indicating that the permit fee for the government sector is KD250 along with KD500 deposit, which will be refunded at the end of the season and once compliance with environmental regulations is verified.

He added the requirements include maintaining safe distances between campsites and vital installations (100 meters between campsites, two kilometers from military installations, 500 meters from nature reserves and oil stations, and 100 meters from high-voltage power lines).

He also stressed the need to provide safety equipment like fire extinguishers and first-aid kits, protect the environment, and refrain from causing harm to wildlife or making alterations to the camping site, such as digging or installing permanent structures.

He said the prohibitions that warrant penalties, license revocation, and the complete removal of the camping site include hunting or killing wildlife, grazing within the campsite boundaries, using fireworks, and renting licensed campsites to others. He warned that the fine could

be as much as KD5,000 in case of violation.

Meanwhile, with the start of the camping season, Director of Public Relations and Media at the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) Brigadier General Mohammed Al-Gharib urged everyone to follow safety guidelines in the desert to prevent potential hazards such as flash floods, fires, electrical accidents, or reptile bites.

In a press statement, Brigadier General Al-Gharib advised campers to pitch tents in elevated areas to avoid being swept away by flash floods during rainfall, stay away from ground fissures that serve as habitats for reptiles, choose locations far from power pylons, high-voltage lines, oil fields, and oil installations, and select areas free of dry vegetation to minimize the risk of fire.

Brigadier General Al-Gharib emphasized the importance of pitching tents upwind to prevent them from being blown away by debris, keeping a distance of at least six meters between tents to reduce the risk of fire spreading, ensuring electrical wiring is safe to avoid short circuits, placing gas cylinders outside the kitchen tent, turning off generators after refueling and keeping them away from heat sources, and cleaning up any spilled fuel before operating the generator.

He also stressed the need to remove and extinguish charcoal bins before sleeping, turn off generators and all electrical appliances, and have a fire extinguisher, first-aid kit, and fire blanket available inside the tents.

Brigadier General Al-Gharib reiterated that all KFF centers are fully prepared to handle reports received through the emergency hotline No. 112, adding that rapid intervention teams will be deployed to areas with high concentrations of campers to respond promptly to any incidents.



Al-Gharib



KFF photo

KFF personnel at the site.

Laborer perishes in fall from Shuwaikh building

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: A laborer died on the spot when he fell from an under construction building in Shuwaikh, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

Officers from the Search and Rescue Center rushed to the location after receiving information on the accident. The worker’s body was referred to the concerned authority.

A case was registered and investigations are underway to determine the circumstances leading to the accident.

‘Guard’ refutes claim its staff involved in brawl

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: In response to a video circulating on social media showing a collision and chase near Al-Tahrir Camp, in which some National Guard members appeared, the National Guard confirmed that none of its personnel were involved in the incident, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The Directorate of Moral Guidance stated that National Guard members intervened to break up the altercation and prevent a clash between the two parties, after which they referred the matter to the Ministry of Interior for legal action against those involved.

It urged the public to exercise caution when sharing news and to obtain information from official sources.

Kuwaiti, Syrian get 7 years in prison for forging citizenship

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

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: The Court of Appeals on Sunday upheld the ruling of the Criminal Court, which sentenced a Kuwaiti and a Syrian to seven years in prison with hard labor after being convicted in one of the most serious cases of forging Kuwaiti citizenship that affected national identity and the foundations of the legal system in the country.

The lower court concluded in its reasoning that the defendants manipulated documents related to their Kuwaiti citizenship

by submitting false information with the intention of obtaining the privileges and benefits that the State grants to its citizens.

The court emphasized that the actions of the defendants are considered a flagrant violation of the rule of law and pose a serious threat due to the security, social and economic repercussions of citizenship forgery.

In its ruling, the Criminal Court stressed that confronting citizenship forgery crimes is a national duty, and that any attempt to tamper with national identity is a serious transgression that should not be tolerated, because it is a direct threat to the structure of society and the rights of citizens.

Fines too high ... PAM urged to review cut from biker’s salary

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: The committee representing owners of consumer delivery companies proposed to the concerned officials at the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) a review of the permissible deduction percentage from drivers’ salaries in this sector, along with an increase in the rate—particularly regarding traffic violations—following the issuance of the new law, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

Committee Chairman Abdulaziz Al-Faleh told the daily that the proposals were presented at a meeting held recently between the committee members, acting Director General of PAM Eng. Rabab Al-Osaimi, her deputies, and several department directors with relevant expertise.

Al-Faleh explained that “the request to deduct traffic fines from drivers’ salaries is in light of the implementation of the new traffic law and the remarkable increase in the value of traffic fines, which now reach thousands of Kuwaiti Dinars for a single driver within a few days. This necessitates a reassessment of the current deduction rate to be fair for both parties.”

He clarified that the number of delivery companies has reached 1,900, and that the submitted proposals aim to develop procedures and enhance the stability of the consumer delivery market. He revealed that one of the most difficult challenges the business owners are facing now is the delay in processing certain transactions, including the issuance of an absence report for a worker who left his job, a procedure that currently takes about two to four months.

He added that the proposals for improving the delivery sector include addressing the status of drivers after the cancellation for final travel. He emphasized the importance of increasing job security in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by strictly enforcing the law on fixed-term employment contracts, specifically when an establishment is committed to paying salaries on time and fulfilling all its obligations toward its employees.

On the other hand, PAM confirmed in a press statement that many proposals aimed at developing work mechanisms and regulating the delivery sector within the SME framework were discussed during the meeting with the committee. It indicated that the discussions covered labor grievances, assessing labor needs, reviewing the timeframe for transferring workers within the current system, and establishing a direct communication channel with specialists at the Authority to follow up technical developments more efficiently and quickly.

PAM affirmed its commitment to strengthen partnerships with various productive sectors and support the work environment for national projects.

KD 50,000 fine for sectarian posts

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

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Abdul Wahab Al-Muaili, has fined Dr. Khalil Al-Awadhi KD 50,000 for posting messages on his X account that were deemed offensive to

the Shiite community and incited sectarian tension. The ruling is based on a case filed by the Ministry of Interior.

The court also ordered the relevant authorities to take technical measures to deactivate Dr. Al-Awadhi’s X account and ensure it cannot be reactivated for a period of one year.

Arab ‘muezzin’ arrested for possession of drugs

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: The Drug Control General Department (DCGD) at the Interior Ministry arrested an Arab who attempted to frame his wife for drug possession, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

A security source stated that investigations confirmed the expatriate put a bag of crystal meth in the car of his wife as an act of revenge. The source indicated that the expatriate will face charges of filing a false report, disturbing public peace and possession of narcotics. The source added that the expatriate admitted that marital disputes prompted him to commit this serious crime. The necessary legal measures were taken against him. He was referred to the Public Prosecution for investigation into all offenses related to his attempt to frame his wife and how he obtained the narcotics he planted in her vehicle.

It is worth noting that the expatriate works as a Muezzin for the Ministry of Awqaf and holds a residency permit under Article 17.

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MEW drives expansion to meet rising power needs

Energy demand tops Kuwait's priorities: Al-Zamil

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Adel Al-Zamil confirmed that meeting the rising demand for energy remains the top priority of the ministry, while affirming the remarkable progress in production projects, fuel-fired power plants and renewable energy, which are proceeding as scheduled.

During the first dialogue session at the CIGRE 2025 Conference held last week, Al-Zamil revealed that in August, a commitment document was signed for the implementation of the North Zour



Dr. Adel Al-Zamil, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy

Power Plant project – Phases Two and Three – through the coordinated efforts of Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) and the ministry with the winning investor. He said the project will have a production capacity of 2,700 megawatts using combined

cycle technology, in addition to 120 million imperial gallons per day of fresh water.

He added that the ministry is moving forward with the first phase of Khairan Power Plant project in cooperation with KAPP.

On the second priority of the ministry, Al-Zamil mentioned increasing energy efficiency and rationalizing consumption, considering their impact on meeting the demand, improving the efficiency of national resource utilization, and protecting the environment.

He pointed out that despite expectations of increased demand, the ministry recorded remarkable stability this year and reduced peak loads, thanks to the effective management of the electrical load system.

About the renewable energy projects, he said the ministry has two major projects in Shagaya Complex. The first, in cooperation with KAPP, includes the first and second phases with a production capacity of 1,600 megawatts. An agreement was signed last March with

the Chinese company SPIC to implement the third and fourth phases, with a capacity of 3,000 megawatts. This brings the total capacity of the Shagaya project to 4,600 megawatts, a promising development.

Furthermore, the ministry included 15 tenders for the maintenance, development and modernization of East Doha Power Station in its budget for the current fiscal year, in preparation for their issuance through the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT). This move is in line with the ongoing efforts of the ministry to develop its nine power and water production plants, including the Shagaya Renewable Energy Plant.

It added that this power station is a key facility, considering its total installed capacity of 1,122 megawatts, consisting of seven 150-megawatt steam turbine units, totaling 1,050 megawatts, and four 18-megawatt gas turbine units, totaling 72 megawatts. The plant also produces 42 million imperial gallons of water per day.

Australia, NZ programs added

NBAQ updates list of accredited universities for Kuwaiti students

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: In confirmation of what the daily reported last week, Director General of the National Bureau for Academic Accreditation and Education Quality Assurance Dr. Jassim Al-Ali announced on Sunday an update to the lists of accredited universities of excellence in several new countries in order to expand scholarship options and provide Kuwaiti students with access to high-quality educational institutions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, Dr. Al-Ali explained that the update is part of the bureau's efforts to enhance the quality of higher education outcomes, in line with the directives of the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr.

Nader Al-Jalal.

The update includes the addition of academic programs at distinguished universities in countries such as New Zealand and Australia, as well as revisions to the lists of academic programs recommended by the bureau. Approximately 150 programs were removed from the lists for failing to meet approved quality standards, following intensive coordination with cultural offices from February to November.

This step is part of efforts to strengthen cooperation between higher education sectors and to expand academic opportunities for students at institutions of high academic standing. Dr. Al-Ali invited those interested in viewing the updated lists to visit the website <https://nbaq.edu.kw/search/>.

PAI sets March 2026 deadline for unpaid industrial plot fees

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: The Public Authority for Industry (PAI) Sunday urged all users of plots in industrial zones to settle their outstanding financial obligations by March 31, 2026, related to the use of setback areas in their industrial plots, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The authority explained that beneficiaries have a one-month grace period from the date of this announcement to comply with the payment requirements; otherwise, administrative and legal action will be taken against those who fail to pay.

Company poised for start as preparations progress

Dhaman reaffirms commitment to healthcare reform

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: The Health Insurance Hospitals Company (Dhaman) held its Ordinary General Assembly for the fiscal year ending Dec 31, 2022, during which it discussed various items on its agenda, report of the Board of Directors, and report of the external auditor on the financial statements for the fiscal year. Chairman of the Board of Directors of the company Mishari Al-Hajri affirmed that the company exerted tremendous efforts

in 2022 to enhance the integrated healthcare system and develop health services in line with the objectives of the company to support and develop the healthcare sector in the country. He said the company remains committed to its mission to provide sustainable and high-quality healthcare services.

Al-Hajri indicated that the company is working at a steady pace to guarantee the readiness of its healthcare facilities, improve its operational and administrative capabilities, and adopt the latest digital solutions to ensure a comprehensive healthcare experience for beneficiaries. He said this move supports the direction of the

State towards transforming the healthcare sector and facilitating access to high-quality healthcare services.

He revealed the company is keen on continuing its role as a supportive partner in developing the healthcare sector and giving added value for the society through the sustainable healthcare services it provides. After the general assembly, he stated that the company will launch its operations in the near future, stressing that communication is underway with the Ministry of Health, in addition to the directive of the Cabinet to launch the company and its health centers.

He considers holding the Ordinary General Assembly meeting for the year ending Dec 31, 2022 a positive step, adding that subsequent general assemblies will be convened to approve the financial statements for the years 2023, 2024 and 2025. Asked if the health insurance hospital project is generating good returns, he pointed out this is one of the important projects if implemented according to the laws established for it, especially since health insurance hospitals in the Gulf countries are strong and have good returns. He hopes that the project will achieve a tremendous leap forward in the future.



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Teachers, parents invited for input

MoE launches survey via Sahel to collect feedback on new curricula

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: On Saturday, the Ministry of Education launched a survey through the "Sahel" app, which enables ministry employees, including teachers, supervisors, department heads, and school principals, as well as parents in public and religious schools to submit their comments and suggestions on the new curricula, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the ministry explained that this step is part of its comprehensive plan to monitor the implementation of the updated curricula and to unify communication with the educational field through a single official platform. This platform will collect feedback and suggestions and consider the opinions of various educational groups and parents, recognizing them as important partners in enhancing the development process.

The initiative aims to support the continuous improvement of educational content to align with modern educational standards.

The survey is currently available to evaluate the first-semester curricula and will

remain open until the end of the 2025-2026 academic year via the "Sahel" app.

Notifications will be sent starting Sunday continuously to all targeted groups, enabling users to submit their comments and suggestions. The proposals will be analyzed and reviewed by specialized educational teams within the ministry, using a rigorous scientific process based on feedback to establish a sustainable approach to curriculum development and improvement.

The ministry expressed its deep appreciation for the efforts of the textbook writing teams, who demonstrated exemplary commitment and dedication, contributing to the development of modern curricula that reflect Kuwait's identity, instill its national values, and align with the latest scientific and educational standards.

It affirmed that this survey represents a practical step that reinforces transparency, allowing wide participation from educators and parents.

The ministry invited all partners in the educational field and parents to actively participate in the survey.

Qualified Kuwaitis invited to apply

PAM opens registration for co-ops sector employment

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) announced the opening of registration for employment in the cooperative sector from November 16 to 30, offering job opportunities for Kuwaiti university graduates and experienced professionals, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

PAM explained that applications must be submitted through the "Our Pride" national employment platform website. Each applicant is allowed to apply for only one position during the application period.

The announcement covers 47 supervisory positions in 18 cooperative societies.

The available positions include General Manager, Deputy General Manager for Commercial and Marketing Affairs, Deputy General Manager for Financial and Administrative Affairs, and Heads of Departments in Procurement, Accounting, Public Relations, Legal Affairs, Investment Branches, and Information Technology.

To qualify for the General Manager role, candidates must have a university degree and a minimum of 15 years of experience. Deputy General Manager

applicants must hold a university degree with at least 10 years of experience. Head of Department candidates must have a university degree and a minimum of 5 years of experience.

The cooperative societies included in this job opportunity are located in Al-Naseem, Jaber Al-Ahmad, Jabriya, Zahraa, Sabah Al-Nasser, Rumaithiya, Abdullah Al-Mubarak, Mishref, Saad Al-Abdullah, Shamiya, Shuwaikh, Adan, Qusour, Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Quraish, Ali Sabah Al-Salem, Sabah Al-Salem, Sulaybiqhat, Doha, Salamiya, Rawda, Hawally, and Jaber Al-Ali.

Acting Deputy Director General for Human Resources and Finance, Abdul Latif Al-Fawzan, confirmed that this step is part of PAM's commitment to enhancing the cooperative sector and improving employee efficiency by attracting qualified national talent and offering them suitable job opportunities.

He encouraged interested candidates to review the terms, requirements, and application process through the "Fakhruna" platform.

PACI rolls out online info requests

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has launched a new online service through the Sahel app called "Request to Access Information," in compliance with the Right to Information Law and to promote transparency in data access, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

PACI explained that the service allows all relevant parties to submit formal re-

quests for specific information, with the option to attach required documents directly through the application. This helps simplify procedures and expedite the data retrieval process. This initiative is part of PACI's ongoing efforts to develop its digital services system and expand its e-transformation pathways, ensuring that individuals can exercise their legal right to access information in accordance with regulations.

48th edition to run Nov 19–29 under HH Prime Minister’s patronage

Kuwait International Book Fair returns with 611 publishers

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) announced Sunday, the launch of the 48th Kuwait International Book Fair, to be held next Wednesday under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, from November 19 to 29, at the Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref and will feature 611 publishing houses from 33 countries.

In a press conference at Mishref fairgrounds, Assistant Secretary-General for Culture at NCCAL Aisha Al-Mahmoud, stated that this year’s 48th edition of the fair coincides with Kuwait’s designation as the Arab Capital of Culture and Media for 2025.

Al-Mahmoud explained that Oman is the guest of honor this year in recognition of its cultural role, Mohammad bin Al-

Zubair, retired advisor to the Sultan for Economic Planning Affairs and founder of Bait Al-Ummal, was chosen as the fair’s cultural figure in appreciation of his distinguished career in promoting Arab culture.

This year’s events and activities are being held across three cultural platforms, the first is the “Cultural Cafe,” an expanded platform for Arab cultural dialogue, the second is the, “Culture Pavilion,” a space reflecting modern cultural diversity, and the third is the “Children’s Culture Pavilion,” offering an interactive educational environment that combines creativity, knowledge, and technology.

She noted that NCCAL has launched for the first time the “Kuwait International Book Fair Award for Unpublished

Works” and the “Best Review Competition for the World Creativity Series”, and that the “Creative Students Award” will also be distributed at the book fair.

Al-Mahmoud added that the full program details will be available on NCCAL’s social media platforms.

For his part, the fair’s director Khalifa Al-Rabah, stated that the 48th edition of the fair is being held under the slogan “Capital of Culture... Homeland of Books.”

He added that three halls (5, 6, and 7) were designated for the exhibition, Hall 5 was allocated to Arab publishing houses, Hall 6 to Kuwaiti, Gulf, and other international publishers, and Hall 7 to government agencies, regional organizations, and public benefit organizations, and that the exhibition lobby was also

dedicated to children’s book publishers.

Al-Rabah stated that the number of registered books reached 287,000 titles, including 35,066 new titles, he also noted the participation of 84 publishing houses in the Arab Publishers Professional Program, which aims to develop and grow the publishing industry, and in the “I Am the Author” project, which supports and encourages children in writing.

Regarding services offered to the public, Al-Rabah said that the exhibition management offers a 25% discount on any book at the exhibition, in addition to automated information centers and interactive screens are available for the public, visitors can also search the exhibition website via their mobile phones or by using the QR codes located at the participating publishers’ booths.

Continued from Page 1

President of

back into the trap of hollow rhetoric and misleading nationalism.

Frankly, Israel’s existence is a permanent reality, strongly supported by western and European nations. This means the current Syrian government must adopt a realistic approach, taking into account the new circumstances.

The late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, may Allah have mercy on him, serves as a key precedent. He recognized early on that aggressive military action would achieve neither territorial gains nor peace for Egypt. Therefore, he persevered through immense challenges to pursue peace, operating on the principle, “If you cannot break it, shake it.”

This is the current reality for Syria. We advise Ahmed Al-Sharaa to disregard the worn-out and clichéd Arabic accusations of treason. Historically, anyone pursuing political realism—starting with Habib Bourguiba—has faced such accusations.

The truth is that the actions taken by Jordan, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain are the epitome of realism.

For Syria to regain its economic strength and alleviate the suffering of its citizens, it must follow the same pragmatic path toward resurgence.

Women mainstay

and a huge number of journalists and media professionals representing various Gulf media institutions.

In his opening remarks, Al-Mutairi pointed out that the forum, with its guests from the GCC countries, embodies unity of word, responsibility over the message, and the role of media in human development, raising awareness and strengthening national identity.

He said the forum is held with the unwavering support of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah for the joint Gulf and Arab media movement and for efforts to empower women and activate their participation in various fields of national work.

He said the event is part of the ongoing cultural and media activities of Kuwait as the Arab Capital of Culture and Media for 2025. He disclosed it is a tribute to the historical role of Kuwait in supporting thought and creativity, preserving freedom of expression, and consolidating the values of communication and cooperation among the Gulf and Arab nations.

He pointed out that the theme of the forum is a reflection of the deep belief in the importance of women’s role in the Gulf media landscape. “They have been and continue to be the cornerstone in shaping the media scene, and an influential element in crafting a humanistic discourse based on credibility and responsibility, reflecting the realities and aspirations of our societies. The continuous distinguished presence of Gulf women in all areas of media work, from print journalism to digital platforms, and from production and editing to leadership and decision-making positions, affirm their competence and capacity for development, innovation and creativity.” He explained that the bright path of women in Gulf media is an extension of national and Gulf policies that believe in their capabilities and granted them the space to actively participate in building awareness and creating meaningful content, which contributes to development and improves the standing of Gulf citizens in the Arab and international media landscape.

He said the sessions and panel discussions held on the sidelines of the forum are important as well, because they are considered a platform for dialogue, allowing the exchange of experiences, showcasing distinguished practices, and exploring ways to develop Gulf journalistic and media work in a manner that improves content quality, raises professional awareness, and keeps pace with the rapid developments in the media industry.

He believes that developing the media system requires integrated work through partnership between State institutions, private sector and civil society in order to build meaningful national content grounded in values, knowledge and creativity, and that contributes to strengthening the position of Gulf media regionally and internationally.

He then expressed his gratitude and appreciation to everyone involved in organizing the forum, hoping that its outcomes will be a qualitative addition to the shared journey of Gulf media. Also, in a statement after the first dialogue session of the forum, which focused on artificial intelligence (AI) and the future of Gulf journalism between empowerment and challenge, Al-Mutairi confirmed that AI technologies are man-made tools for keeping pace with development. He stressed the need for everyone to play their role in monitoring this important development in all fields, especially the media. He pointed out the numerous challenges associated with the human use of these tools, indicating some use them wisely and achieve many benefits, while others use them in negative ways.

He revealed the challenges that media professionals are currently facing include the need to raise awareness among all segments of society about the importance

of keeping pace with technological developments in general, and artificial intelligence in particular, but with specific strategies that achieve the desired benefits.

“Today we can change our own behavior, but we cannot change the behavior of others, except through laws and regulations that govern our actions within a framework of awareness, through which we aim to ensure that future generations benefit from artificial intelligence and its applications to develop all institutional sectors in the country,” he added.

He said the field of artificial intelligence is witnessing rapid developments daily, progressing from one stage to an increasingly advanced and sophisticated one. He wondered how one can keep pace with this rapid progress in the absence of institutional frameworks for AI applications and the crucial regulations and laws governing this development.

He added the forum is an important opportunity to learn from the experiences and approaches adopted at the Gulf level in investing in artificial intelligence to serve societies, institutions and countries, and to maximize the benefits of AI-related technologies that are rapidly evolving globally. He concluded by emphasizing the necessity to keep abreast of these developments through standardized mechanisms and strategies, which ensure the optimal utilization of these important technologies.

Meanwhile, Al-Shayji said the forum is within the framework of the selection of Kuwait as the Capital of Arab Culture and Media, a position the country truly deserves, as it has remained a beacon of thought, culture, media and journalism throughout the years.

He pointed out that the global journalistic landscape is witnessing massive transformations and journalists worldwide are facing unprecedented challenges. “This prompts us to unite our ranks and elevate our media and journalistic work to broader levels through our joint institutions, foremost among them is the Gulf Journalists Union. We are confident that the forum, which Kuwait consistently organized, will be a qualitative addition to the joint Gulf media and journalistic work, especially since Gulf women have proven their ability to be creative and influential, transcending distances and borders and presenting a distinguished image of their capabilities in journalism and media.” He confirmed that “the Gulf Journalists Union is ready to utilize its resources and capabilities to empower Gulf journalists and media professionals and strengthen collective action, so that our positions and voices are unified.”

He expressed his gratitude to all journalists in the GCC countries, commending their commitment to professional work, traditions and journalistic ethics.

On behalf of the union, he expressed his sincere congratulations to the Kingdom of Bahrain on the issuance of the Press and Electronic Media Law, which keeps pace with the major global transformations in media and journalism.

Moreover, Al-Rashed praised the minister for sponsoring the forum, an act he regards as a turning point for future forums in terms of content and execution, especially since it is being held in 2025, the year Kuwait is at the forefront as the Capital of Arab Culture and Media.

He also announced that the fifth forum in 2026 will be held in Kuwait as well, under the patronage of the Minister of Information, and with an even larger number of participants. He added “Kuwait continues its approach as the capital of Gulf love. The forum highlighted the remarkable role of the leaders of the GCC countries in supporting journalism in general, and women working in the field of journalism in particular, emphasizing their commitment to empowering them.”

Lastly, the greetings of Honorary President of Kuwaiti Journalists Association Fatima Hussein Al-Essa were conveyed to those who attended the forum.

Kuwait plans

Sources said the current plan of KNPC is to expand gasoline production in the local market, reaching sales of 15 million barrels of gasoline by 2040. Sources pointed out that in order to achieve this goal, the company launched a massive plan to establish 100 additional fuel stations over the next 14 years.

Sources added that the company’s production in the fiscal year, which ended on March 31, 2025, reached 5.15 million liters of gasoline, compared to 5.016 million liters in the previous year.

Sources confirmed that the company currently operates 69 fuel stations, 64 of which are permanent and five are temporary, indicating the company intends to establish at least 25 additional fuel stations in the next five years.

Sources pointed out that the annual increase in gasoline sales is related to the growth of new residential cities, affirming the company is utilizing all available means to increase its annual profits. Sources said the company is proceeding with its plan to open the largest possible number of gas stations according to its timeline in order to solve the traffic congestion problem in some vital areas.

Sources revealed that the company designs new stations in accordance with environmental requirements, and that its expansion plan also aims to establish more gas stations in new residential areas in coordination with Kuwait Municipality and

a number of other concerned ministries.

Sources went on to say that KNPC is also developing car wash stations to meet the diverse needs of its customers and in order to increase the revenues of car wash stations to reach around KD500,000 annually by 2026, after witnessing a decline of only KD393,000 in fiscal 2024/2025.

It is worth noting that last year, the company succeeded in selling about three million liters of premium gasoline, while sales of regular gasoline exceeded 1.8 million liters, and it sold about 33 million liters of ultra-premium gasoline.

Chinese acupuncture

Since arriving in February 2025, the 17th team of Chinese medical professionals in Kuwait has introduced refined clinical techniques, patient-centered care, and the principles of TCM to local communities, offering many Kuwaitis their first experience with traditional Chinese medicine.

For 70-year-old Abdulaziz, cervical spondylosis had caused seven years of chronic neck pain. Conventional medications and therapies offered little relief.

After a first acupuncture session in September, he felt noticeable improvement, prompting him to follow a full treatment plan. Over weeks, pain in his shoulders, back, and legs lessened, and daily activities became easier. He now encourages friends to explore TCM for both treatment and wellness.

Sophia, another patient, experienced sudden paralysis on the right side of her face while at work. Chinese doctors developed a personalized acupuncture regimen and guided her in daily rehabilitation exercises. After more than a month of treatment, her facial symmetry returned, and she regained full control of her eye.

“It was the Chinese doctors who brought back my smile,” she said.

Today, the TCM unit sees growing numbers of Kuwaitis, drawn by curiosity and returning with trust. Acupuncture, tuina massage, and cupping have quietly become part of everyday health routines for many.

To demystify TCM, the team also holds open days and public lectures. One local newspaper described the clinic as “an oriental garden blooming in the desert.”

“Healing is our duty,” said Xiong Zhuang, leader of the Chinese medical team. “Every consultation, every treatment is also a cultural exchange that transcends borders.”

Kuwait to

In a televised statement, Al-Zamil stated that details of the project will be revealed within a year, indicating CITRA will hold workshops to identify the needs and priorities, followed by consultations to develop specific regulations that will enable the development of tools to regulate the use of AI.

Al-Zamil unveiled another project, the establishment of a new data transmission route passing through Kuwait and connecting to Europe through a landline. He affirmed this will improve the position of Kuwait as a hub for data and internet services in the region.

He disclosed that Kuwait aspires to become a regional hub for AI and advanced technologies, citing two major hyperscale cloud computing projects in collaboration with global companies like Microsoft and Google, which will be hosted in the country. He said these projects will serve Kuwait and the region as a whole, especially since they support the digital infrastructure.

Regarding the risks of AI applications, Al-Zamel stated that some applications operate in a “black box” fashion, warning about the danger of storing or using data in insecure ways. He explained that some applications built on input data may unintentionally generate inappropriate content, making data protection a paramount necessity.

Army Chief

He also toured several sites where he examined workflow as well as operational and maintenance procedures followed within the Air Defense Force.

Al-Shuraian praised the high level of performance, organization, and discipline as well as the efforts of the Air Defense Force personnel in implementing training programs and maintaining combat readiness.

Amir meets

Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness also received at Bayan Palace First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Youssef Al-Saud Al-Sabah.

Amiri Diwan
On behalf of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Al-Sabah Family, the Amiri Diwan thanked all citizens and expats who offered condolences over the demise of Najia Mahmoud Ahmad, the widow of Sheikh Khaled Salman Humoud Mohammad Al-Salman Al-Sabah.

The Amiri Diwan prayed to Allah to bestow his mercy upon Najia’s soul and grant her highest place in paradise.



Jahra Governorate photo

Governor Hamad Al-Habashi chairs the regular session of the Jahra Governorate Council’s Public Services Committee.

Governor calls for open dialogue

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: The Public Services Committee of the Jahra Governorate Council held its regular meeting, chaired by Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi, to discuss several service-related issues affecting the governorate’s residents.

According to a press release issued by Jahra Governorate, the meeting began with observations and demands of several activists representing the Al-Mutlaa City community. They highlighted the most pressing challenges faced by residents. Representatives of government agencies on the committee provided clarifications regarding the issues raised.

It was agreed to organize an open meeting with Al-Mutlaa City residents in the near future, involving the relevant government agencies, to hear and discuss their concerns directly and effectively.

The committee reviewed matters referred by the Security Affairs Committee concerning the reorganization of certain road entrances and exits in several areas.

It discussed the regulatory procedures for relocating cer-

tain activities to improve security and traffic flow in these locations.

Also, the committee examined responses from the Ministry of Public Works regarding treated water in Abdali and discussed proposals to develop the Kuwaiti Farmers Union site and organize parking areas.

It also explored ways to improve roads in the Jahra Industrial Area and surrounding areas. A designated member was tasked with coordinating with relevant government agencies to assess existing entrances and exits and enhance traffic flow.

The committee followed up on previous decisions and recommendations regarding public hygiene in Jahra Governorate, the management of abandoned vehicles, and the creation and development of pedestrian walkways in various areas.

It reviewed achievements from the past period and discussed future measures to elevate cleanliness and improve the quality of public services.

At the end of the meeting, the governor emphasized the importance of continued cooperation and coordination with relevant government agencies to address all issues in a manner that serves residents’ interests and enhances service quality.



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3	TC7967 SS25	PLUGS AND GASKETS (MFR.: VARIOUS MFRS.)	24.00	KWD 24	موانع تسرب	TC7967 SS25	3

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Trump issues new pardons for Jan 6 rioters

MAGA rift grows as US president feuds with Greene before key '26 midterm elections

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., Nov 16, (AP): When US President Donald Trump addressed Congress earlier this year, Rep Marjorie Taylor Greene was there holding an American flag and wearing a red baseball cap that said “Trump was right about everything.”

After the speech, he gave her a kiss and she beamed. Trump was back in power and Greene was positioned to be one of his most ardent political foot soldiers with Republicans controlling all levers of power in Washington.

Their alliance didn’t last the year. Now it has fractured in an explosive feud that could foreshadow more rifts within Trump’s “Make America Great Again” movement before next year’s midterm elections.

In recent weeks, Greene has escalated her criticism of Trump’s focus on foreign policy over what she has said should be an agenda that concentrates on Americans, as well as his reluctance to release more documents involving the Jeffrey Epstein case. On Friday, the Republican president said he would support a primary challenge against the Georgia congresswoman.

“All I see ‘Wacky’ Marjorie do is COMPLAIN, COMPLAIN, COMPLAIN!” Trump wrote on his social media platform as his motorcade whisked him from Air Force One to his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida.

On Saturday, Trump tested out a new nickname for her, calling her “Marjorie Taylor Brown” because “Green grass turns Brown when it begins to ROT!”

Trump has successfully stamped out other challenges to his power over the years, but Greene is not backing down. She even suggested that she, not Trump, may be the true champion of the “America First” agenda.

“I believe in the American people more than I believe in any leader or political party and the American people deserve so much better than how they have been treated by both sides of the aisle,” she wrote in her own post Saturday.

She also said she is worried about her safety because “threats against me are being fueled and egged on by the most powerful man in the world.”

Greene is not the first lawmaker to



US President Donald Trump arrives and walks by Rep Marjorie Taylor Greene, to address a joint session of Congress at the Capitol in Washington on March 4. (AP)

earn Trump’s anger. Their split, however, is the most notable of his second term. She has been closely tied to him since 2020, when she began her politi-

c career in Georgia’s rural northwest.

Backing the QAnon conspiracy theory, appearing with white supremacists and brandishing assault rifles, Greene was opposed by party leaders but supported by Trump. He called her a “future Republican Star” and “a real WINNER!”

Jason Shepherd, a Republican in Georgia who resigned from party office over disagreements with Trump supporters, said 2020 was “a perfect storm of political bizarreness” during upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Georgia was one of the closely contested states where Trump disputed his loss to Democrat Joe Biden, even pressuring Georgia’s secretary of state to “find” enough votes to overturn the results.

Shepherd, a lawyer and political science professor who lives in Greene’s district, said “we never know what position Marjorie Taylor Greene is going to pop up with next.”

Also:

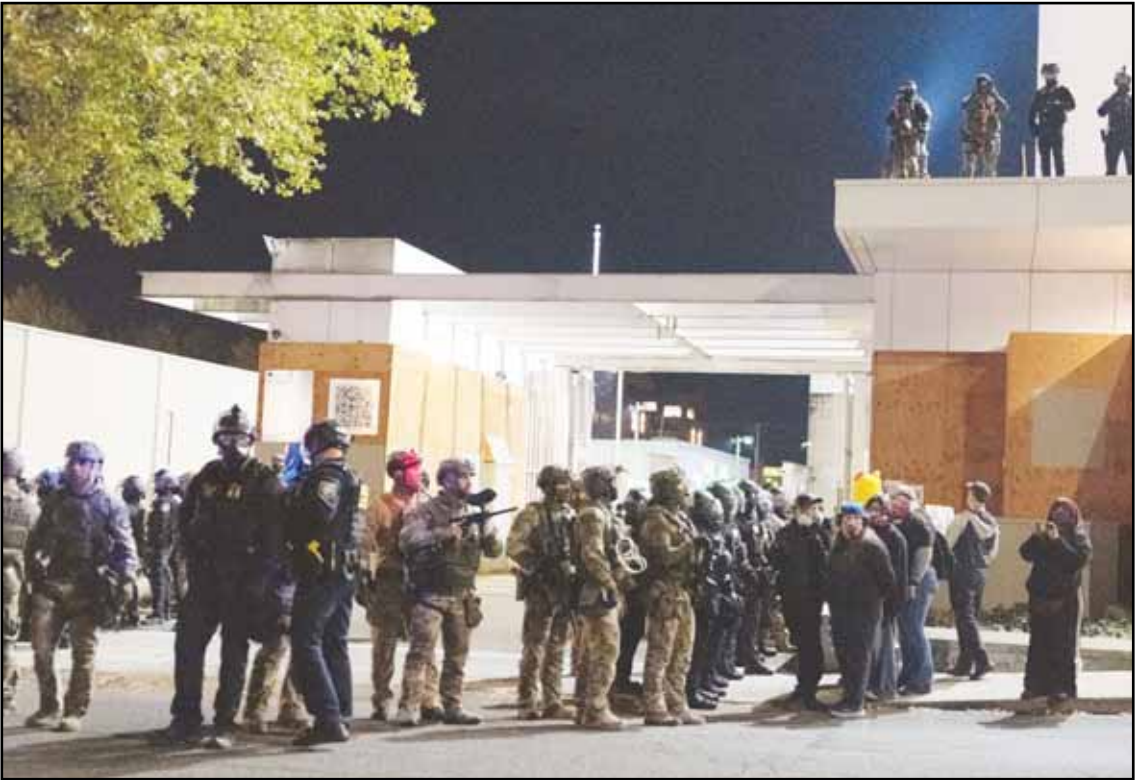
WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has issued two pardons related to the investigation into the Jan. 6, 2021 riot, including for a woman convicted of threatening to shoot FBI agents who were investigating a tip

that she may have been at the Capitol, officials said Saturday.

In a separate case, Trump issued a second pardon for a Jan. 6 defendant who had remained behind bars despite the sweeping grant of clemency for Capitol rioters because of a separate conviction for illegally possessing firearms.

It’s the latest example of Trump’s willingness to use his constitutional authority to help supporters who were scrutinized as part of the Biden administration’s massive Jan. 6 investigation that led to charges against more than 1,500 defendants.

Suzanne Ellen Kaye was released last year after serving an 18-month sentence in her threats case. After FBI contacted her in 2021 about a tip indicating she may have been at the Capitol on Jan. 6, she posted a video on social media citing her Second Amendment right to carry a gun and she threatened to shoot agents if they came to her house. In court papers, prosecutors said her words “were part of the ubiquity of violent political rhetoric that causes serious harm to our communities.”



Federal officers block the street to let vehicles leave a United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facility on Nov 11, in Portland, Ore. (AP)

Europe

France secures release of teacher: France’s government on Sunday announced the release of a French-Chilean national who had been held for four months in Venezuela.

The French foreign minister, Jean-Noël Barrot, posted on X that Camilo Castro was being flown back to France. He credited French diplomacy for having obtained Castro’s release from prison.

In a separate post on X, French President Emmanuel Macron expressed relief that Castro was free.

“France sometimes advances quietly, but always with determination and composure: That is how we protect our own,” Macron wrote. (AP)

Greece bus accident injures 13: A tourist bus carrying about 40 passengers overturned on an old section of the national road network in Magnesia, central Greece, on Saturday, leaving 13 women with minor injuries, local authorities said.

Local media reported that the accident occurred when the driver braked abruptly while navigating a curve to avoid several stray dogs that suddenly entered the road, causing the bus to lose control and overturn.

According to preliminary information, all the injured passengers were transported to a hospital in the nearby city of Volos with minor injuries. (Xinhua)

Investigators probe plane crash: Croatian and Turkish investigators carried out a joint investigation on Saturday and visited the site where the Turkish Air tractor went down in the town of Krivi Put in the western part of the country two days ago.

The Turkish investigators will collect information and provide it to the Croatian side, Croatia’s Chief Air Accident Investigator Danko Petrin said, according to the Croatian Radiotelevision (HRT).

Croatian investigators have found parts of the aircraft that could be key to the investigation, and all information collected will be shared with the Turkish side in the coming days, the HRT reported. (Xinhua)

‘Kyiv working on POW exchange with Russia’

KYIV, Ukraine, Nov 16, (AP): Ukraine is working to resume prisoner exchanges with Russia that could bring home 1,200 Ukrainian prisoners, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Sunday, a day after his national security chief announced progress in negotiations.

“We are ... counting on the resumption of POW exchanges,” Zelenskyy wrote on X. “Many meetings, negotiations and calls are currently taking place to ensure this.”

Rustem Umerov, Secretary of Ukraine’s National Security and Defense Council, said Saturday he held consultations mediated by Turkey and the United Arab Emirates on resuming exchanges.

He said the parties agreed to activate prisoner exchange agreements brokered in Istanbul to release 1,200 Ukrainians. Moscow did not immediately comment on the claim.

The Istanbul agreements refer to prisoner-exchange protocols established with Turkish mediation in 2022 that set rules for large, coordinated swaps. Since then, Russia and Ukraine have traded thousands of prisoners, though exchanges have been sporadic.

Umerov said technical consultations would be held soon to finalize procedural and organizational details, expressing hope that returning Ukrainians could “celebrate the New Year and Christmas holidays at home - at the family table and next to their relatives.”

In other developments, energy infrastructure was damaged by Russian drone strikes overnight into Sunday in Ukraine’s Odesa region, Ukraine’s State Emergency Service said. A solar power plant was among the damaged sites.



Zelenskyy

Immigration enforcement surge begins in Charlotte and N.Carolina, officials confirm

CHARLOTTE, NC, Nov 16, (AP): Federal officials confirmed Saturday that a surge of immigration enforcement in North Carolina’s largest city has begun, as agents were seen making arrests in multiple locations.

“Americans should be able to live without fear of violent criminal illegal aliens hurting them, their families, or their neighbors,” Assistant Homeland Security Secretary Tricia McLaughlin said in a statement. “We are surging DHS law enforcement to Charlotte to ensure Americans are safe and public safety threats are removed.”

Local officials including Mayor Vi Lyles criticized such actions, saying in a statement that they “are causing unnecessary fear and uncertainty.”

“We want people in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County to know we stand with all residents who simply want to go about their lives,” the statement said. It was also signed by Mecklenburg County Commissioner Mark Jerrell and Charlotte-Mecklenburg school board member Stephanie Sneed.

Crime is down in the city this year through August, compared with the same months in 2024. Homicides, rapes, robberies and motor vehicle thefts fell by more than 20%, according to AH Datalytics.

But President Donald Trump’s administration has seized upon the fatal stabbing of Ukrainian refugee Iryna Zarutskaha on a Charlotte light-rail train to argue that Democratic-led cit-

ies fail to protect residents. A man with a lengthy criminal record has been charged with the woman’s murder.

The federal government had not previously announced the push. But County Sheriff Garry McFadden said this week that two federal officials told him Customs agents would be arriving soon.

Charlotte is a racially diverse city of more than 900,000 residents, including more than 150,000 who are foreign-born, according to local officials.

Willy Aceituno, a 46-year-old Honduran-born U.S. citizen, was on his way to work Saturday when he saw “a lot of Latinos running,” chased by “a lot of Border Patrol agents.”

Aceituno said he himself was stopped - twice - by Border Patrol agents. During the second encounter, they forced him from his vehicle after breaking the window and threw him to the ground.

“I told them, ‘I’m an American citizen,’” he told The Associated Press. “They wanted to know where I was born, or they didn’t believe I was an American citizen.”

After being forcibly taken into a Border Patrol vehicle, Aceituno said, he was finally released after showing documents proving his citizenship. He had to walk some distance back to his car and later filed a police report over the broken glass.

Spokesperson Paola Garcia of Camino, a bilingual nonprofit serving fami-



People and relatives of the Kocani club fire victims march peacefully during a protest in Skopje, North Macedonia, on Nov 15, just a few days before the start of the trial for the fire. (AP)

Thousands protest ahead of trial over deadliest fire in N.Macedonia

Thousands of people took to the streets of North Macedonia’s capital on Saturday demanding justice for the victims of a nightclub fire - the deadliest blaze in the country’s history - ahead of the trial next week of the club owner and others.

The March 16 fire and the ensuing stampede killed 63 people, most of them young revelers, and injured more than 200. It was sparked by a pyrotechnic flame that engulfed the roof of the crowded Pulse club in the eastern town of Kocani.

Protesters, including relatives of the victims, dressed in black and marched to the Criminal Court in Skopje, carrying large banners with photos of their loved ones.

Parents blame corruption and greed for the deaths of their children. Authorities said the venue had numerous and serious safety

violations and was operating with the wrong license.

Natalija Gjorgjieska was among the families demanding justice on Saturday. Her husband, musician Andrej Gjorgjieski, was killed in the fire. “We demand the truth. Where did the mistakes occur, who didn’t respond, which institutions were late, who had the responsibility to prevent and did not?” she said. (AP)

Stubb urges Europe to hold its nerve as he warns no ceasefire likely soon in Ukraine

HALVALA, Finland, Nov 16, (AP): A ceasefire in Ukraine is unlikely before the spring and European allies need to keep up support despite a corruption scandal which has engulfed Kyiv, President Alexander Stubb of Finland told The Associated Press.

Europe, meanwhile will require “sisu” - a Finnish word meaning endurance, resilience and grit - to get through the winter months, he said, as Russia continues its hybrid attacks and information war across the continent.

Stubb also needs that quality as one of the key European interlocutors between U.S. President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. As the leader of one of Europe’s smaller countries, but one that shares a 1,340-kilometer (830-mile) border with Russia, he is well aware of what’s at stake.

In the 1940s, after two wars with Russia, Finland lost about 10% of its territory to Moscow and agreed to become militarily neutral, a stance only reversed after Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, when the Finns joined NATO. Stubb leverages his good relationship with Trump - the two men have played golf together and speak regularly - to argue the case for Ukraine.

“I can explain to President Trump what Finland went through or how I see the situation on the battlefield, or how



Finland’s President Alexander Stubb, center, and his wife Suzanne Innes-Stubb pose for a photo with volunteers during a combat rescue exercise organized by the National Defence Training Association of Finland, in Halvala, Finland on Nov 15. (AP)

do you deal with (Russian President Vladimir) Putin? And then, you know, if he accepts one out of 10 ideas, that’s good,” he said.

Stubb spoke to AP Saturday at a military base north of the capital Helsinki where he observed Finnish volunteers take part in defense training. Wearing a jacket with the word “sisu” emblazoned across the back, he watched as volunteers practiced evacuating

wounded soldiers from a conflict zone in freezing temperatures.

Stubb told AP that Zelenskyy must deal quickly with allegations of kickbacks and embezzlement, saying the scandal plays into the hands of Russia. Nonetheless, he urged European leaders to look at boosting financial and military support for Kyiv which is also facing creeping gains by Russia on the battlefield.

Dozens rescued in Wales

Storm floods Monmouth

LONDON, Nov 16, (AP): Dozens of people were rescued or evacuated from homes in Wales after a river overflowed and swamped the town of Monmouth during heavy rains from Storm Claudia that drenched parts of the UK and Ireland.

Aerial footage showed roads under muddy brown water, submerged cars and businesses along its main street flooded after the River Monnow rose to a record level and spilled over its banks.

Nearly 12 centimeters (4.7 inches) of rain fell in south-east Wales overnight and there was also some flooding in England from the storm that brought damaging winds that downed trees. Several rail lines were disrupted by high water or toppled trees.

“I personally haven’t seen it so bad for probably 40 years,” since flood defenses were put in place for Monmouth, said Peter Fox, a Conservative member of the Welsh Parliament.

The center of the town near the border of England is just upstream of where the Monnow joins the River Wye, the fourth-largest river in the U.K.

Some 50 flood warnings were still in place across England on Saturday afternoon as a cold spell was expected to bring subfreezing temperatures to parts of the U.K. in coming days.

Banta Furniture to hold creditors’ meeting on Dec 2

Banta Furniture and Furnishings LLC announces its intention to hold a meeting on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at 12:00 noon at the Millennium Hotel, Salmiya, Abu Dhar Al-Ghafari Street, Fourth Ring Road, for all its creditors to vote on the preventive settlement plan submitted under Preventive Settlement Request No. 3/2024, in accordance with the procedures stipulated by Law No. 71/2020.

The company affirmed that this preventive settlement is intended to reorganize its obligations and strengthen its financial position.

It emphasized that the process will not affect its operations or dealings with clients, and that business activities will continue as usual.

Banta Furniture and Furnishings LLC invites all creditors to attend the meeting and vote on the plan. Attendees must bring documentation proving their legal standing, as required under Law No. 71/2020.

Sakurajima volcano erupts

Japanese protesters demand PM resignation

TOKYO, Nov 16, (Xinhua): Japanese residents held a protest in front of the prime minister’s official residence in Tokyo on Saturday evening, demanding Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi’s resignation.

About 100 people rallied with banners and shouted slogans such as “Takaichi step down” and “Those who cannot conduct diplomacy are unfit to be prime minister,” expressing strong dissatisfaction with Takaichi’s recent erroneous remarks.

At a Diet meeting on Nov 7, Takaichi claimed that a Taiwan emergency involving the use of military vessels and military force from the Chinese mainland could constitute a “survival-threatening situation” for Japan. According to legislation, Japan’s Self-Defense Forces could exercise the right of collective self-defense if such a situation is recognized as “survival-threatening.”

Also:

TOKYO: Japan’s main opposition Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan (CDPJ) leader **Yoshihiko Noda** on Saturday called for the country’s non-nuclear weapons principles to be upheld, local media reported.

Speaking to reporters in Kumamoto Prefecture, the former prime minister said that Japan should “take the



Demonstrators take part in a protest against anti-immigrant policies, in Tokyo on Nov 16. (AP)

lead in spreading the idea (of nuclear abolition) to the world,” Kyodo News reported. Noda’s remarks came after government sources said Friday that Prime Minister **Sanae Takaichi** was considering reviewing the third of The Three Non-Nuclear Principles, which prohibits nuclear weapons from entering Japan’s territory.

TOKYO: A volcano on Sakurajima in Kagoshima Prefecture, southwestern

Japan, erupted early Sunday morning, with plumes rising up to 4,400 meters above the summit crater, the country’s weather agency said.

According to the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA), the eruption occurred at the Minamidake crater at 12:57 a.m. local time, sending a plume of ash and smoke above 4,000 meters for the first time since Oct. 18 last year. There were no immediate reports of injuries and damage to buildings.

Asia

China’s top legislator to visit NZ, Australia: Zhao Leji, chairman of China’s National People’s Congress Standing Committee, will pay official goodwill visits to New Zealand and Australia from Nov. 19 to 25, at the invitation of Speaker of the New Zealand House of Representatives Gerry Brownlee, and Australia’s Speaker of the Senate Sue Lines and Speaker of the House of Representatives Milton Dick, it was announced on Sunday. (Xinhua)



Zhao

China issues blue alert for cold wave: China’s national observatory on Sunday issued a blue alert for a cold wave as freezing air is expected to sweep across vast parts of the country in the coming days.

From Nov. 16 to 18, the cold wave will bring strong winds and sharp temperature drops to central and eastern regions, with daily averages or lows falling by 6 to 10 degrees Celsius, according to the National Meteorological Center. Notably, temperatures in parts of Shaanxi, Chongqing, Henan and Hubei could drop by 12 to 14 degrees Celsius, the center said. It urged relevant departments to step up preparations and called for precautionary measures to protect tropical crops and aquaculture from the cold. China has a four-tier color-coded weather warning system, with red representing the most severe warning, followed by orange, yellow and blue. (Xinhua)

9 injured in Sydney car crash: Nine people have been hospitalized after they were injured when a vehicle crashed through a fence during a race event north of

Sydney on Saturday night.

Police in the state of New South Wales (NSW) said in a statement that the vehicle was competing in a race when it crashed through a fence and hit a grandstand in the small town of Walcha, 320 km north of Sydney, at around 6:15 pm on Saturday. Spectators rendered assistance until ambulance paramedics arrived and transported seven men and two women, all aged between 20 and 75, to a nearby hospital.

Of those nine people, a 54-year-old man was critically injured and three others were seriously injured and were transferred to major hospitals overnight. NSW Police said that officers attending the scene were told that the 27-year-old male driver of the vehicle was involved in an on-track collision immediately before crashing through the fence. Specialist officers from the crash investigation unit were deployed to Walcha to examine the scene. (Xinhua)

Indonesia landslide death toll rises to 11: Indonesian search and rescue teams recovered eight more bodies on Saturday during the third day of operations following a landslide in Cibeunying Village, Cilacap Regency, Central Java Province, bringing the total number of victims found to 11, with 10 people still missing, authorities said.

Head of the Cilacap Search and Rescue Office Muhammad Abdullah said the victims were recovered from several worksites. “A total of eight victims were found on the third day of search operations,” he said.

The search and rescue operation was temporarily halted in the late afternoon due to unfavorable weather. Efforts are expected to resume early Sunday morning with personnel safety prioritized, Abdullah added.

“We ask for the prayers of all Indonesians so that this search and rescue operation proceeds safely and smoothly, and that all victims can be found soon,” he said.

Landslides triggered by heavy rains struck the Cibuyut and Tarukahan hamlets of Cibeunying Village in Cilacap Regency on Thursday evening. (Xinhua)

Top officials deny allegations

Hundreds of thousands rally in Manila against Philippine flood-control corruption scandal

MANILA, Philippines, Nov 16, (AP): Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos gathered Sunday in the capital in the largest rally so far to demand accountability for a flood-control corruption scandal that has implicated powerful members of Congress and top government officials.

Various groups have protested in recent months following the discovery that thousands of flood defense projects across one of the world’s most typhoon-prone countries were substandard, incomplete or simply did not exist.

Government engineers, public works officials and construction company executives have testified under oath in hearings by the Senate and a fact-finding commission that members of Congress and officials at the Department of Public Works and Highways took kickbacks from construction companies to help them win lucrative contracts and avoid accountability. Most denied the allegations.

Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla said about 320,000 members of the Iglesia Ni Cristo, led the start of the three-day rally in Manila’s Rizal Park, many wearing white and carrying anti-corruption placards. Hundreds, including retired generals, held a separate anti-corruption protest late Sunday at the “People Power” monument in suburban Quezon city.

Iglesia is an influential group that votes as a bloc and is courted by political candidates during elections.

The police, backed by the military, went on full alert and deployed thousands of personnel to secure the weekend rallies, although the government expects them to be peaceful, according to a confidential security assessment seen by The Associated Press.

During a Sept. 21 anti-corruption demonstration, a few hundred black-clad protesters threw rocks, bottles and firebombs at police near the presidential palace in Manila, injuring more than 100 officers. Criminal complaints have been filed against 97 protesters.

The presidential palace went on security lockdown over the weekend, with major access roads barricaded by anti-riot police, cargo containers and barbed wires.



Members of the religious sect Iglesia Ni Cristo hold placards during a three-day anti-corruption rally at Manila’s Rizal Park, Philippines on Nov 16. (AP)

National police chief Lt Gen Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr ordered law enforcement to exercise “maximum tolerance” in Sunday’s rallies.

Flood control is an especially sensitive issue in the Philippines, one of Asian countries most prone to deadly typhoons, flooding and extreme weather. Two typhoons left at least 259 dead this month, mostly from flash floods and landslides,

and affected millions of others.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr has been trying to quell public outrage and street protests sparked by the scandal, saying on Thursday that many of the powerful senators, members of Congress and wealthy businesspeople who were implicated would be in jail by Christmas.

Marcos said an independent fact-finding commission he created has already filed criminal complaints for graft and corruption and plunder against 37 suspects. Criminal complaints have also been filed against 86 construction company executives and nine government officials for allegedly evading nearly 9 billion pesos (\$152 million) in taxes.

Among those accused are lawmakers opposed to and allied with Marcos, including former House of Representatives Speaker Martin Romualdez, the president’s cousin and a key ally; and former Senate President Chiz Escudero. Both have denied any wrongdoing.

Sen. Bong Go, a key ally of former President Rodrigo Duterte, has also been accused of involvement in corruption in flood control and other infrastructure projects. He has denied the allegations. Duterte, a harsh Marcos critic, was detained by the International Criminal Court in the Netherlands in March for alleged crimes against humanity over his brutal anti-drugs crackdowns.

His daughter, the current vice president, said Marcos should also be held accountable and jailed for approving the 2025 national budget, which appropriated billions for flood control projects.

There have been isolated calls, including by some pro-Duterte supporters, for the military to withdraw support from Marcos, but Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. has repeatedly rejected those calls.

“With full conviction, I assure the public that the armed forces will not engage in any action that violates the Constitution,” Brawner said. “Not today, not tomorrow and certainly not under my watch.”



Protesters take part in a youth anti-government march in Mexico City on Nov 15. (AP)

‘Gen Z’ protests gain momentum

Thousands protest crime, corruption in Mexico

MEXICO CITY, Nov 16, (AP): Several thousand people took to the streets of Mexico City on Saturday to protest crime, corruption and impunity in a demonstration organized by members of Generation Z, but which ended with strong backing from older supporters of opposition parties.

The demonstration was mostly peaceful but ended with some young people clashing with the police. Protesters attacked police with stones, fireworks, sticks and chains, grabbing police shields and other equipment.

The capital’s security secretary, Pablo Vázquez, said 120 people were injured, 100 of them police officers. Twenty people were arrested.

In several countries this year, members of the demographic group born between the late 1990s and early 2010s have organized protests against inequality, democratic backsliding and corruption.

The largest “Gen Z” protests took place in Nepal in September, following

a ban on social media, and led to the resignation of that nation’s prime minister. In Mexico, many young people say they are frustrated with systemic problems like corruption and impunity for violent crimes.

“We need more security” said Andres Massa, a 29-year-old business consultant who carried the pirate skull flag that has become a global symbol of Gen Z protests.

Arizbeth Garcia, a 43-year-old physician who joined the protests said she was marching for more funding for the public health system, and for better security because doctors “are also exposed to the insecurity gripping the country, where you can be murdered and nothing happens.”

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum still has high approval ratings despite a recent spate of high profile murders that includes the assassination of a popular mayor in the western state of Michoacan.

In the days leading up to Saturday’s

protest, Sheinbaum accused right-wing parties of trying to infiltrate the Gen Z movement, and of using bots on social media to try to increase attendance.

This week some “Gen Z” social media influencers said they no longer backed Saturday’s protests. While elderly figures like former President Vicente Fox, and Mexican billionaire Ricardo Salinas Pliego published messages in support of the protests.

Saturday’s march was attended by people from several age groups, with supporters of the recently killed Michoacan Mayor Carlos Manzo, attending the protest wearing the straw hats that symbolize his political movement.

“The state is dying,” said Rosa Maria Avila, a 65-year-old real estate agent who traveled from the town of Patzcuaro in Michoacan state.

“He was killed because he was a man who was sending officers into the mountains to fight delinquents. He had the guts to confront them,” she said of Manzo.

IS-backed rebels kill at least 17 in Congo hospital attack

GOMA, Congo, Nov 16, (AP): An Islamic State-backed rebel group killed at least 17 people in an attack on a hospital in eastern Congo, authorities said Saturday.

The attack by the Allied Democratic Forces, or ADF, took place in the village of Byambwe, in the Lubero territory of North Kivu province on Friday night, Col Alain Kiwewa, the local administrator, told The Associated Press.

“Women who were breastfeeding were brutally slaughtered and found with their throats slit in their hospital beds,” Kiwewa said, adding that 11 women and six men were killed.

The rebels also attacked other villages, said Samuel Kakule Kagheni, a civil society leader in the Manzya area, which includes Byambwe, but could not confirm the number of casualties there.

Armed groups have carried out several deadly attacks in eastern Congo, including the ADF and Rwanda-backed M23 rebels. The ADF, which pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group in 2019, operates along the border with Uganda and often targets civilians.

In August, ADF fighters killed at least 52 people during several attacks in the same week, according to the UN peacekeeping mission in Congo.

The group also killed nearly 40 people in Ituri province in July, when

it stormed a Catholic church during a vigil and opened fire on worshippers, including many women and children.

The ADF was formed by disparate small groups in Uganda in the late 1990s following discontent with President Yoweri Museveni. In 2002, following Ugandan military strikes, the group moved to neighboring Congo and has been blamed for the killings of thousands of civilians.

Also:

KINSHASA, Congo: Ex-Congolese rebel leader **Roger Lumbala** began a hunger strike on Friday to protest his trial, which began this week over atrocities committed two decades ago during the Second Congo War.

Lumbala, who dismissed his lawyers and refused to appear in court after the first day of the trial on Wednesday claiming the French court has no legitimacy to try him, announced his hunger strike in a statement read by the head of the Paris criminal court, Marc Sommerer.

The ex-rebel leader has been charged with “criminal conspiracy to prepare crimes against humanity” and “complicity of crimes against humanity” during the conflict from 1998 to 2003. He faces a possible sentence of life in prison. A verdict is expected Dec. 19 following the trial at the Paris criminal court.

Chile votes for new president

SANTIAGO, Chile, Nov 16, (AP): Chileans voted for a new president and parliament on Sunday in a contest expected to favor the hard right as candidates play on popular fears over organized crime and immigration.

It’s the first of what’s likely to be two rounds of presidential elections in the South American country, as polls show none of the candidates clearing the 50% threshold needed to avoid a runoff scheduled for Dec 14.

On the surface, Sunday’s election offers Chileans a dramatic choice between two extremes: Jeannette Jara, 51, a card-carrying communist and former labor minister in the left-wing government, and, among other right-wing contenders, **José Antonio Kast**, 59, an ultraconservative lawyer and former lawmaker who opposes abortion and vows to shrink the state.



Kast

Suspected Haiti gang members exchange fire with Marines protecting US Embassy

PORT AU PRINCE, Haiti, Nov 16, (AP): A group of suspected Haitian gang members fired this week on American forces protecting the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince, a spokesman said Saturday, in an incident that highlighted the tense security situation in the Caribbean nation.

Capt. Steven J. Keenan, a spokesman for the US Marines, wrote in an email that the shooting, which came to light this weekend, happened Thursday, adding that the Marines returned fire. No Marines were hurt in the attack.

Haitian police were not immediately available to comment on the exchange of fire. Gangs control 90% of Haiti’s capital, where they extort businesses and fight for territory, using heavy weaponry. The United States continues to operate an embassy in Haiti, but in recent years the State Department has issued numerous warnings telling Americans not to travel there, due to the risk of kidnappings, crimes, terrorist activity and civil unrest.

According to the United Nations, gang violence has displaced more than 1.3 million Haitians from their homes



People walk past the National Palace in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on March 25, 2024. (AP)

in recent years.

Security in the nation of nearly 12 million people has deteriorated rapidly since 2021, when President Jovenel Moise was a ssassinated in his home by mercenaries.

The president’s murder has generated a power vacuum that politicians

in the nation have struggled to fill, and no elections have been held to replace Moise. In late September, the United Nations Security Council voted to create a gang suppression force of about 5,500 troops that will be deployed to Haiti to fight the nation’s heavily armed criminal groups.

Subcontinent

Pakistan firecracker factory blast kills 7: At least seven people were killed and seven others injured in a powerful explosion at a firecracker factory in southern Sindh province, officials said on Sunday.

The blast occurred in Laghari Goth in Hyderabad district on Saturday evening, Hassan Ul Haseeb, spokesperson for Rescue 1122 Sindh, told Xinhua. Rescue teams recovered the bodies from the debris and shifted the injured to a local hospital. Three of the wounded were in critical condition. (Xinhua)

1 dead, 15 trapped in India mine collapse: At least one person died and around 15 were trapped under the de-

bris when a portion of a stone mine collapsed in India’s northern state of Uttar Pradesh, confirmed the local police on Sunday. The incident occurred late on Saturday evening in the state’s Sonbhadra district. Rescue work was on to bring out those trapped, added the police. (Xinhua)

Afghanistan highway mishap kills 6: Six commuters lost their lives and three others were injured in a road accident in Qarghayi district, eastern Afghanistan’s Laghman province on Sunday morning, the provincial police office said in a statement.

The accident took place along the highway linking the capital of Kabul to eastern provinces, when a passenger vehicle veered off the road and caught fire, leaving six dead on the spot and three injured, according to the statement. (Xinhua)

Boursa Kuwait closes lower

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Sunday's trading session lower, as the general index slipped by 55.40 points, or 0.62 percent, closing at 8,838.35 points. The total trading volume stood at 453.5 million

shares, conducted through 24,123 cash transactions, with a total turnover of KD 96.5 million (about USD 294.3 million). The main market index also recorded a decline of 46.57 points, or 0.55 percent, to settle at 8,407.78 points.

Business

Luxury and innovation shine at GCC–EU Forum in Kuwait

Al Mulla Automobiles concludes sponsorship of EU–GCC Business Forum 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: Al Mulla Automobiles Co., the exclusive authorized distributor of Mercedes-Benz in the State of Kuwait, proudly announces the conclusion of its sponsorship of the EU–GCC Business Forum 2025, held in Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre in Kuwait City on November 5–6 under the theme “Together for Shared Prosperity.”

The prestigious forum served as a strategic platform for enhancing co-operation and integration between the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council, bringing together senior government officials, industry leaders, investors, and entrepreneurs from both regions.

The official opening ceremony featured remarks by His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait, along with H.E. Jassem Mohamed Al-Budaiwi, Secretary-General of the GCC, and H.E. Maroš Šefčovič, European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security. The session was moderated by H.E. Anne Koistinen, EU Ambassador to the State of Ku-



Mercedes-Benz Kuwait showcases innovation at GCC–EU Forum.



wait, in collaboration with the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) and the European External Action Service (EEAS).

As one of the forum's principal partners, Mercedes-Benz Kuwait delivered

an exceptional brand experience, welcoming high-level guests, government officials, and representatives from various sectors. During the event, the company showcased its latest vehicles — including the all-electric G 580

and the flagship S-Class — offering attendees an exclusive opportunity to experience Mercedes-Benz excellence up close.

Over the course of the two-days, the forum explored four core themes that

underscored the depth of cooperation between the Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Union. Discussions focused on strengthening GCC–EU economic relations through trade and investment, advancing innovation

and competitiveness via digital transformation and artificial intelligence, empowering youth and entrepreneurs through the development of SMEs and skills, and identifying new avenues for collaboration across sectors such as tourism, healthcare, education, and sustainability.

Through this sponsorship, Al Mulla Automobiles demonstrated its commitment to the core values of innovation, excellence, and sustainability, in line with the forum's vision of promoting investment opportunities, digital transformation, and sustainable economic growth. The company continues to support Kuwait's position as a regional hub for economic and technological collaboration between Europe and the GCC.

For the latest updates on Mercedes-Benz Kuwait, please visit the Mercedes-Benz showroom in Al Rai or the Mercedes-Benz Boutique in The Avenues, or contact the Customer Service Center at 1887888. For more information, follow @MercedesBenzKuwait on Instagram or visit: <https://www.mercedes-benz-mena.com/kuwait/en>

Announces the top three winners in each category and awards valuable prizes

Gulf Bank concludes fourth edition of the Datathon competition

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: With the participation of more than 500 young contestants and Kuwaiti talents, Gulf Bank announced the winning teams at the conclusion of the fourth edition of the “Datathon” competition—the first platform of its kind in Kuwait aimed at empowering data specialists, school and university students, and those interested in working in data and analytics fields.

The fourth edition, held at the American University in collaboration with Coded Academy, witnessed strong participation from young talents across the competition's three tracks:

- Data Science: Focused on uncovering analytical insights and developing innovative solutions through analytical forecasting and data visualization.
- Generative Artificial Intelligence: Enabling participants to explore AI-powered creativity and build systems capable of generating text, images, and ideas.
- Data Engineering: Centered on designing robust data pipelines and structures that support real-time analytics and digital innovation.

Participants attended free educational workshops delivered by experts and specialists from Gulf Bank, providing them with practical skills in analytics tools and data science techniques. A full-day preparatory workshop was also held at the American University campus from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

After reviewing the projects submitted across all tracks, the judging panel announced the top three winners in each category. The first-place prize for the Data Science track was KD 1,200, with KD 750 for second place and KD 500 for third. The first-place prize in both the Generative AI and Data Engineering tracks was KD 1,000 each, followed by KD 500 for second place and KD 250 for third.

On this occasion, Dr. Haidar Al-Mahri, Gulf Bank's Head of Data and Innovation, said:

“We congratulate the winning teams and all the participants who engaged in workshops led by specialists in data science, artificial intelligence, and data engineering to help them pursue their ambitions and advance their careers in these distinguished fields.”

He added:

“The unprecedented turnout for the fourth edition reflects the competition's success in attracting those



Dr. Aseel Al-Awadhi, Dr. Haidar Al-Mahri, Hashem Behbehani, and Fadi Chalouhi present the award to one of the winning teams.



Dr. Haidar Al-Mahri delivers his speech.



A glimpse of the competition's activities.

interested in various data science fields. It demonstrates Gulf Bank's commitment to leveraging all its capabilities to spread a culture of data science in society and encourage young people to build their skills in this area—supporting Kuwait's future needs, in line with Kuwait's vision to develop creative human capital and Gulf Bank's strategy to strengthen its position as the Bank of the Future.”

He noted that this annual event enhances Gulf

Bank's status as a leader in data and digital services, and helps promote data culture throughout society—especially among youth. The competition also provided exceptional opportunities for university students and recent graduates seeking high-level training in data analysis and programming, as well as high-school students over the age of 16, experienced data enthusiasts, and anyone with an interest in data science.

Silver reaches KD 571 per kilogram

Gold prices drop 3% as Fed rate cut hopes fade

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16, (KUNA): Gold prices declined by 3 percent at the end of last week's trading, closing at USD 4,081 per ounce, as the sell-off in precious metals continued and expectations for an interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve diminished.

According to a report issued Sunday by the Kuwaiti company Dar Al-Sabaik, the drop followed the conclusion of the US government shutdown, which had delayed key economic data releases and left investors and the Federal Reserve uncertain ahead of its December meeting. The likelihood of a rate cut fell sharply to 46 percent, down from 94 percent a month earlier, while the probability of keeping rates unchanged rose to 54 percent.

The report explained that the Fed's continued hawkish tone reduced hopes for imminent monetary easing, pushing gold down to USD 4,032 before it rebounded to close at USD 4,081 per ounce. Meanwhile, the US dollar index rose slightly against major currencies, and Treasury yields continued climbing, with the 10-year yield reaching 4.10 percent and real yields 1.8 percent. These movements added pressure on gold, triggering broad selling after prices failed to surpass the

USD 4,200 resistance level.

Analysts view the recent decline in two ways: some see it as a natural profit-taking phase following a strong rally, while others believe weaker US economic data could eventually steer the Fed toward easing its policy stance, even if rates remain unchanged in December.

Looking ahead, markets are expected to focus on the resumption of US economic data after the shutdown, particularly reports on the purchasing managers' index (PMI), housing activity, and employment, to assess the strength of domestic demand. In addition, investors will be watching minutes from the Federal Reserve's meetings and GDP data from major global economies for further signs of growth momentum.

In the local market, Dar Al-Sabaik reported that the price of 24-karat gold stood at around 40.34 Kuwaiti dinars (about USD 132) per gram, while 22-karat gold reached 36.97 dinars (about USD 112). A kilogram of silver was priced at approximately 571 dinars (around USD 1,875).

For reference, the ounce—commonly used to measure precious metals—is known as the troy ounce and equals 31.103 grams, slightly heavier than the standard ounce of 28.349 grams.

Company sponsors third Breaking Barriers conference in cooperation with NLI

Zain: Investing in people is the most powerful driver of digital transformation

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: Zain Kuwait sponsored the third Breaking Barriers conference, organized by the National Leadership Institute (NLI) at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center (JACC), titled The Human Side of AI. The event was held under the patronage and attendance of H.E. Minister of State for Communication Affairs Omar Al-Omar.

Zain took part in the opening ceremony, attended by H.E. Omar Sultan Al-Olama, UAE Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications, Zain Kuwait Chief Executive Officer Nawaf Al-Gharabally, Chief Enterprise Business Officer Hamad Al-Marzouq, Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al-Khashti, NLI CEO Mohammed Al-Khulaifi, along with a group of leaders from the public and private sectors, and a number of local, regional and international experts and specialists.

In his opening address on behalf of Zain, Waleed Al Khashti said: “Today, the Breaking Barriers conference has become an annual platform for leaders from the public and private sectors in Kuwait and the region. This year, it raises a fundamental question: how can we develop AI and harness its unprecedented capabilities without losing our human essence and what we possess in terms of empathy, values and responsibility?”

He added: “The conference topics on AI governance and legislation, its ethics, innovation, and the relationship between artificial intelligence and emotional intelligence lie at the heart of this question, and place the



Minister Omar Al-Omar honoring Nawaf Al-Gharabally in recognition of Zain's continued support for the conference.



Hamad Al-Marzouq and Waleed Al-Khashti with Zain's team at the company's booth.

‘human side of technology’ at the center of the discussion.”

Al-Khashti continued: “At Zain, we believe that AI is a key catalyst for innovation and a central pillar in implementing the Group's 4WARD strategy. This vision is built on accelerating Zain's transformation into an integrated provider of digital innovation, fintech solutions, smart city solutions and more. We see AI as a fundamental enabler that supports these transformations.”

He added: “At Zain, we're proud to have been part of this journey since the launch of the Breaking Barriers series. Our partnership with NLI has continued since the very first edition, driven by our belief that investing in people is the most important investment in any digi-

tal or technological transformation journey.”

He concluded: “While we invest in advanced digital infrastructure, smart networks and AI applications in customer experience and digital services, we also believe that technology is never complete without a human being capable of steering it, guiding decision making and anchoring it in our values. Artificial intelligence gives us speed and accuracy, while emotional intelligence gives us insight and sound judgment.”

The conference featured a series of rich sessions and panel discussions that explored the intersection of artificial intelligence with human values, emotional intelligence and leadership. Topics covered in-

cluded the regulatory and legislative frameworks for AI, its ethics, innovation, and the relationship between algorithms and human empathy in the workplace.

The opening session hosted a select group of leaders and officials from the public and private sectors, alongside a number of regional and international experts and speakers in the fields of artificial intelligence, leadership and the digital economy. Among them were Omar Sultan Al-Olama, UAE Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications, Dr. Mohammad Shaaban, Global Director of AI Products at Scale AI, and world-renowned relationships and emotional intelligence expert Dr John Gray.

Zain's support of this event comes as an extension of its ongoing partnership with the National Leadership Institute, where the company has served as a strategic partner in previous editions of the Breaking Barriers series. Those editions addressed topics such as digital transformation, mental health and leadership, during which Zain highlighted its programs for developing leaders, investing in human capital and promoting employees' mental health, among other corporate initiatives.

Zain's support for this conference reflects its role as a national partner in empowering leaders and national talents to keep pace with global trends in technology and AI. It also underlines the company's contribution to creating platforms for dia-

logue and the exchange of expertise between international experts and decision makers in Kuwait, in line with the objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035 to build a diversified economy based on knowledge and innovation.

The National Leadership Institute (NLI) is operated by the National Company for Educational Services and Training (NEST), one of the companies of National Technology Enterprises Company (NTEC), which is owned by the Kuwait Investment Authority. The institute aims to transfer knowledge and technology to Kuwait and the region through training programs and specialized conferences delivered in cooperation with a select group of leading international academic institutions.

Reinforcing the bank’s role in the ‘Let’s Be Aware’ campaign

Burgan Bank launches ‘Risk and Cyber Awareness’ Week

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: In line with its leadership role in digital transformation and its commitment to fostering a culture of adeptness and awareness among its employees, Burgan Bank launched its Risk and Cyber Awareness Week under the theme “Awareness is Our First Defense”. The initiative aligns with the Bank’s ongoing support for the “Let’s Be Aware” (Diraya) financial literacy and banking awareness campaign, launched and supervised by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) with the support of Kuwaiti banks. It also emphasizes Burgan Bank’s commitment to developing Kuwait’s national calibers through yearlong learning opportunities that equip them with professional knowledge and skills that keep pace with the ongoing development of the global banking industry.

The five-day event, led by the Risk Management department, with the presence of Burgan Bank employees, senior management, and notable guest speakers. The educational and engaging event covered numerous facets of risk aversion and management in the digital-first banking industry, as well as advanced thinking approaches that reinforce productivity and sound decision-making in the fast-paced workplace. “Burgan Bank’s market-leading digital transformation program rests on many pillars including continuous learning and comprehensive awareness of the ever-evolving technologies, which introduce novel opportunities as well as risks,” commented Mr. Talal Al-Zamel, Executive Manager – Risk Management at Burgan Bank. “As committed champions of investing in Kuwait’s talents and developing its human capital, we seize every possible opportunity to expand our employees’ professional horizons and engage with them in hands-on learning experiences that guarantee they are equipped with future-ready mindset and skills.”

The event’s comprehensive agenda featured interactive workshops and engaging sessions covering various risk-related topics, including credit risk, market risk, emerging risks, operational risk, cybersecurity, business continuity, and fraud



Talal Al-Zamel, Executive Manager – Risk Management at Burgan Bank



Group CEO of Burgan Bank, Mr. Tony Daher, honoring Ms. Mai Al-Owaish, Chief Executive Officer of Cinet.



One of the interactive workshops held during the initiative.



A glimpse of the Bank’s employees participating in the event.

risk. The discussions were introduced through real-life examples and practical applications, ensuring the learning experience is more engaging and relatable, and the learning outcome is easier to apply. Burgan Bank had the pleasure of hosting Mrs. Mai Al-Owaish, Chief Executive Officer of CINET, who delivered a session titled “Building a Data-Driven Mindset for Smarter Decision Making”. Her talk emphasized the importance of integrating data analytics and informed insights into daily business practices, empowering Burgan Bank employees to make smarter, more strategic decisions aligned with the Bank’s vision.

Another highlight of the week was the Internal Audit engagement session, which featured an educational and entertaining “Spin the Wheel” activity, giving employees the opportunity to test their knowledge on risk and cybersecurity topics

while winning instant prizes. The week concluded with a recognition ceremony honoring both internal and external speakers for their valuable contributions to the campaign’s success.

It serves to note that this initiative is an extension of Burgan Bank’s continuous efforts to embed transparency, accountability, and sound governance practices across all levels, in line with CBK’s directives and national awareness goals, as well as its commitment to environment, social, and governance (ESG) standards. Through this campaign, the Bank continues to demonstrate its vision of becoming Kuwait’s most progressive financial institution, driven by empowered and well-informed employees who recognize the importance of awareness and responsibility in building a future of sustainable and inclusive success.

Longest US government shutdown in history ends

By National Bank of Kuwait

GLOBAL sentiment was cautious as mixed data guided market expectations. In the United States, the end of the record-long government shutdown offered some relief, though the absence of October CPI and labor-market releases leaves the Fed approaching the December meeting with constrained visibility. Data from the United Kingdom remained soft, with cooling retail activity, a rise in unemployment, and Q3 GDP slowing to 0.1%, weighed by a sharp manufacturing decline linked to the Jaguar Land Rover cyber incident. The Eurozone delivered modest improvement, with Q3 GDP rising 0.2% q/q, supported by gains in Spain, France, and the Netherlands, while Germany stagnated and Italy’s industrial sector stalled. Annual growth of 1.4% underscored regional resilience despite ongoing geopolitical and trade pressures. In Australia, unemployment edged down to 4.3% on strong full-time hiring, reinforcing the RBA’s decision to maintain its policy stance. China saw industrial production rise 4.9% y/y in October, the slowest pace since August 2024, reflecting softer manufacturing and mining activity during the Golden Week period, though output remained broad-based with 29 of 41 industries recording growth. Overall, markets balanced selective pockets of strength with persistent policy uncertainty across major economies.

United States
U.S. Government Reopens
The U.S. government has reopened after the House and Senate passed a funding bill, supported by several Democratic defections, ending the longest shutdown in history. The deal, which lasts through January 30, restores operations without the enhanced healthcare subsidies Democrats had sought and includes reinstatement of furloughed federal workers, along with a controversial measure allowing certain Republican senators to sue over Jan. 6 investigations. Around 800,000 federal employees will resume receiving pay, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are fully funded through next September, with distributions resuming quickly. However, the shutdown created major data gaps: October inflation and jobs reports may never be released, leaving the Federal Reserve with limited information ahead of its December rate-cut decision.

The U.S. dollar index was last seen trading at 99.299.

United Kingdom Retail Sales
UK retail sales rose 1.5% year-on-year in October 2025, slowing from 2% in September to the weakest growth in five months as shoppers delayed spending ahead of Black Friday and possible tax hikes. Food sales growth eased to 3.5%, while non-food sales barely rose 0.1%, weighed by mild weather and anticipation of discounts. The British Retail Consortium’s (BRC) Helen Dickinson said retailers are counting on Black Friday for a rebound, cautioning that upcoming fiscal measures may hurt consumer confidence. She added that many consumers deferred purchases of toys, electronics, and clothing, though furniture and homeware sales benefited from holiday preparations.

Labor Market
New official figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) indicate a weakening UK labor market, with the unemployment rate rising to 5% in the three months to September, a post-pandemic high and its highest level since August 2016. This increase, which exceeded analyst expectations, has fueled speculation that the Bank of England’s Monetary Policy Committee may approve an interest rate cut when it meets in December. Average wage growth slowed to 4.6% in the third quarter, and the estimated number of people on company payrolls fell sharply by 180,000 in the year to October. While the ONS noted the figure should be treated with caution, various political figures blamed the government’s policies for the weakening jobs market.

UK GDP Misses Growth Expectations for Q3

The UK economy grew by just 0.1% in Q3 2025, slowing from Q2 and missing expectations as a 0.5% contraction in the production sector, including sharp declines in manufacturing (-0.8%) and mining (-1.5%), weighed on overall activity. Manufacturing was hit particularly hard

by a 10.3% drop in motor vehicle output following a major cyberattack at Jaguar Land Rover. The services sector grew 0.2%, supported by arts, entertainment, recreation, and real estate, though professional and technical services weakened. Construction rose only 0.1%, with gains in repair and maintenance offset by falling new work. On the expenditure side, investment, consumer spending, and net trade improved, but declines in valuables and inventories limited overall growth. Annually, GDP rose 1.3%, just below expectations.

The GBP/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.3168

Eurozone Spain Leads GDP Growth in the Eurozone, While German Growth Stagnates

The Eurozone economy grew modestly in Q3 2025, with GDP rising 0.2% quarter-on-quarter, slightly improving from 0.1% in Q2. Spain led the bloc with a solid 0.6% gain driven by strong consumer spending and investment, while France grew 0.5% due to a sharp rebound in exports, and the Netherlands expanded 0.4%. In contrast, Germany showed no growth amid weaker external demand, and Italy also stalled as industrial activity contracted and services remained flat. Annually, GDP increased by 1.4%, a touch above the earlier estimate but slower than Q2’s 1.5%. Overall, the data highlights the region’s resilience despite geopolitical and trade uncertainty, easing immediate pressure on the ECB for further rate cuts.

The EUR/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.1620.

Asia-Pacific Australia Unemployment

New data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics on Thursday showed the unemployment rate slipping to 4.3 percent, helped by 42,000 people joining the workforce. Full-time employment increased by 55,300 positions, while part-time roles declined by 13,100, keeping the participation rate near its historic high of 67 percent. The result was stronger than the Reserve Bank of Australia’s earlier forecast of 4.4 percent. The RBA left the cash rate at 3.6 percent in November, noting higher than expected inflation and a labor market that remains a little tight. Markets now expect the central bank to keep rates unchanged throughout 2026.

The AUD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.6336

China Inflation

In China, headline CPI rose 0.2% year-on-year in October 2025, surprising to the upside versus expectations for a flat reading and rebounding from a 0.3% decline in September. This marks the first return to positive consumer inflation since June and the fastest pace since January. Non-food prices accelerated to 0.9% from 0.7%, supported by trade-in schemes and stronger Golden Week holiday spending, which together shored up domestic demand. Housing, clothing, healthcare, and education all saw continued price gains, while transportation costs still fell but at a slower rate. Food prices remained a drag but recorded their smallest decline in three months. Core inflation, excluding food and energy, climbed to 1.2% year-on-year, the highest in 20 months after 1.0% in September. On a month-on-month basis, CPI also rose 0.2%, building on a 0.1% increase previously and hitting a three-month high.

China Industrial Production

China’s industrial production rose 4.9% year-on-year in October 2025, easing from 6.5% in September and falling short of expectations, marking the slowest pace since August 2024. The slowdown was driven by softer manufacturing and mining activity, partly influenced by the Golden Week holiday, though utilities output accelerated notably. Despite the moderation, 29 of 41 major manufacturing industries still posted growth, with strong gains in autos, electronics, shipbuilding, chemicals, and energy-related sectors. Over the first ten months of the year, industrial production increased 6.1%, while output edged up 0.17% month-on-month, reflecting steady but cooling momentum.

The USD/CNY currency pair was last seen trading at 7.0992.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar
USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30585.

Supporting national efforts that accelerate digital transformation & innovation

stc announces Platinum Sponsorship at the 4th Digital Transformation Kuwait Conference 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced its Platinum Sponsorship of the upcoming 4th Digital Transformation Conference 2025 with the theme this year being ‘Turning Vision into Impact: Kuwait’s Next Digital Chapter’. stc’s sponsorship of the conference aligns with stc’s extensive corporate social responsibility program and its strategic approach to enabling digital transformation in Kuwait, and the Company’s ongoing commitment to supporting platforms that strengthen the technology sector and educate the community.

The conference is organized in collaboration with the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT), the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), and the National Cyber Security Council, as the conference serves as Kuwait’s leading national platform dedicated to advancing the country’s digital journey in line with Kuwait Vision 2035. The two-day



event will take place from November 17th till the 18th at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel, and brings together government officials, industry leaders, and global technology experts. The conference will cover the latest developments driving Kuwait’s digital future. Topics include artificial

intelligence, cybersecurity, cloud infrastructure, smart city development, and digital upskilling, all of which play a key role in shaping a resilient and future-ready economy.

As Platinum Sponsor, stc representatives will be participating in panel discussions on various topics related

to Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation. stc will also have an interactive booth showcasing its latest digital and enterprise solutions designed to support public and private sector organizations in achieving their digital transformation objectives.

stc indicated in a statement that its participation in the 4th Digital Transformation Kuwait Conference aligns with its ongoing commitment to supporting national efforts that accelerate digital transformation and innovation across all sectors. The Company emphasized that such initiatives align with its strategic sustainability framework, which focuses on enabling economic growth, empowering communities through digital inclusion, and advancing Kuwait’s transition toward a smart and sustainable economy.

Through continuous investment in next-generation technologies, advanced infrastructure, and innovative business solutions, stc aims to enable a secure, connected, and inclusive digital environment that supports government entities, businesses, and individuals alike, while contributing to the achievement of Kuwait Vision 2035.

Private investment drives Saudi Vision 2030 logistics growth

Saudi Transport Minister inaugurates SAR 611 million Agility Logistics Park

JEDDAH, Nov 16: H.E. Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser, Minister of Transport and Logistic Services, today inaugurated the Agility Logistics Park - Jeddah, a SAR 611 million private-sector investment by Agility Logistics Parks (ALP). Developed on a 576,760 sqm site with more than 338,000 sqm of built-up area, the world-class logistics complex features six Grade-A warehouses, designed and constructed to the highest international standards. The park is purpose-built to serve the needs of strategic sectors including retail, consumer goods, technology, automotive, energy, and e-commerce.

H.E. Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser, the Minister of Transport and Logistic Services, stated that continuous investments from local and global private-sector players in Saudi Arabia’s logistics and supply chain sector underscore the sector’s attractiveness and growth. He noted that the Kingdom has witnessed substantial and sustained investments by leading international logistics companies, driven by major structural reforms, operational expansion, performance improvement, and the unprecedented development of logistics infrastructure projects, under the support and guidance of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and His Royal Highness the Crown Prince. “may Allah preserve them.”

H.E. Al-Jasser also emphasized the strategic partnership with the private sector and the vast economic and developmental opportunities within the Kingdom’s transport and logistics sector, adding: “These investments reflect a shared and enduring commitment with private sector to advance modern, high-quality logistics infrastructure that enables supply chains, supports data centers, and leverages artificial intelligence to drive business growth and investment. These projects help create direct and indirect job opportunities, and stimulate economic development. These efforts will strengthen the Kingdom’s position as a global logistics hub and realize the ambitious objectives of the National Transport and Logistics Strategy under Vision 2030.”

Tarek Sultan, Chairman of Agility Global, said: “The inauguration of Agility Logistics Park Jeddah is part of our long-term commitment to invest in Saudi Arabia and advance Saudi Arabia’s logistics ecosystem under Vision



Saudi Minister inaugurates Agility Logistics Park in Jeddah.



2030. By adding Grade-A logistics Park in Jeddah, connected to national trade corridors anchored by the expanded Jeddah Islamic Port and the future Saudi Landbridge, we’re participating in the Kingdom’s efforts to power global supply chains, enhance efficiency, and build resilience. Agility’s Logistics Park in Jeddah delivers speed, reliability, and sustainability for businesses operating in one of the region’s most dynamic gateways.”

Sultan added: “Across Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE and Qatar, our projects and investments embody our ongoing commitment to strengthen Gulf economic integration and support the shared aspirations of GCC nations to build a unified logistics ecosystem that connects regional markets with the world.”

Sultan also extended his gratitude to the Ministry of Transport and Logistics Services, the Ministry of Investment, the State Properties General Authority, and Jeddah Municipality for their support and collaboration in turning this project into a reality; creating a facility that enhances the Kingdom’s position as one of the world’s most promising logistics markets and creates attractive opportunities for investment.

Strategically located in Al Mahjar, just 11 km from Jeddah Islamic Port and 15 km from downtown, the ALP Jeddah Logistics Park serves fast-growing demand across the Kingdom’s western trade corridor.

The project was developed in part-



Agility Logistics Park in Jeddah.

nership with the State Properties General Administration (SPGA), which facilitated land allocation for the park.

Michel Saab, CEO of Agility Logistics Parks, said: “Saudi Arabia’s logistics sector is entering a new era of growth, fueled by industrial transformation and the rapid expansion of e-commerce under Vision 2030. The Jeddah Logistics Park was designed to meet this momentum, offering modern and sustainable facilities that enable manufacturers, distributors, and digital businesses to scale efficiently. The site is also data-center-ready, aligning with the Kingdom’s vision to develop cutting-edge digital infrastructure.”

These investments reinforce ALP’s commitment to developing high-quality logistics infrastructure that enables lo-

cal and global businesses to thrive, strengthens Saudi Arabia’s position as a global and regional logistics hub, creates high-quality jobs directly and indirectly, develops Saudi talent, and supports long-term economic growth and competitiveness.

In addition to Jeddah, Agility Logistics Parks operates one of the Middle East’s most advanced logistics parks in Riyadh (871,000 sqm) and another in Dammam (200,000 sqm). In Riyadh, the company is currently delivering a SAR 250 million expansion that will add 100,000 sqm of Grade-A warehousing, bringing the total site area to more than 550,000 sqm. This expansion supports the Kingdom’s logistics operations and economic activity while generating new employment opportunities.

Former Fed governor’s stock trades violated the central bank’s ethics rules

WASHINGTON, Nov 16, (AP): A former Federal Reserve governor who retired in August listed several stock trades in her financial disclosure documents for 2024 that violated the central bank’s ethics rules.

The transactions are outlined in a report released Saturday by the U.S. Office of Government Ethics, which reviewed Adriana Kugler’s financial disclosures after the Fed referred them to its inspector general earlier this year.

Kugler, who unexpectedly stepped down from the Fed board Aug. 8, disclosed more than a dozen individual stock trades, including several made during financial trading “blackout periods” around the time the Federal Reserve’s policymaking committee meets to set interest rates and other monetary policy.

Southwest Airlines, Apple, Caterpillar and Fortinet were among the companies listed as individual stock transactions in 2024 by Kugler. The largest was a purchase of Apple stock in April 2024 ranging between \$100,000-\$250,000.

The central bank’s decisions on interest rates and bank regulations can cause significant swings in the prices of stocks, bonds and other securities.

As such, Fed officials are barred from investing in individual stocks, bonds or cryptocurrencies, although they are allowed to invest via diversified investments such as mutual funds. They must provide 45 days’ notice of any trade and secure approval of such trades. And they must provide public notice of any trades made in the previous 30 days.

It’s also forbidden for Fed officials to engage in financial transactions during the blackout period around the eight times during the year when the Fed’s policymaking committee meets. That blackout period is roughly 10 days before a Fed meeting and one day after the meeting



Adriana Kugler speaks during a Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee hearing to examine her nomination to be a member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, June 21, 2023, on Capitol Hill in Washington. (AP)

ers.

Kugler also disclosed another Cava Group stock purchase in April of between \$1,000-\$15,000 and the sale of between \$15,000-\$50,000 in Southwest Airlines stock during the blackout period before the Fed meeting that started April 30, 2024.

The report notes that “certain trading activity was carried out by Dr. Kugler’s spouse, without Dr. Kugler’s knowledge and she affirms that her spouse did not intend to violate any rules or policies.”

In 2022, the Fed formally adopted sweeping new rules aimed at limiting the ability of its top officials to invest in financial markets, a change intended to prevent conflicts of interest involving investments affected by Fed policies. The move followed an outcry over questionable trades that were made by several top Fed policymakers.

That year, Raphael Bostic, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, acknowledged that many of his financial investments and trades in previous years had violated Fed ethics rules and revised all his financial statements dating back to 2017. At the time, he said the trades were made by investment managers that he did not directly oversee and that he was unaware of the transactions.

Kugler, who did not provide a reason for stepping down in her resignation letter, was appointed to the Fed’s seven-member board of governors by former President Joe Biden in September 2023. She was the first Hispanic Fed governor. Prior to joining the Fed, she was a professor at Georgetown University and was the U.S. representative to the World Bank. Kugler returned to the Georgetown faculty in the fall.

In September, Stephen Miran, one of President Donald Trump’s top economic advisers, was confirmed by the Senate to take the seat on the Federal Reserve’s governing board vacated by Kugler.

Brazilian VP: 40% tariffs remain on coffee, beef and tropical fruits in US

26% of Brazilian exports now enter US tariff-free, up from 23%

RIO DE JANEIRO, Nov 16, (AP): Brazilian Vice President Geraldo Alckmin said Saturday that Brazilian exported goods to the U.S. including coffee, beef and tropical fruits would still be tarified 40%, despite President Donald Trump’s decision to remove some import taxes.

In a dramatic move on Friday, Trump scrapped levies announced in April on what he called ‘Liberation Day’ in hopes of encouraging domestic production and lifting the U.S. economy. Brazil at the time was hit with a 10% tariff.

But in July, Trump imposed a further 40% tariff, citing - among other reasons - the trial of his ally, former President Jair Bolsonaro, which he called a “witch hunt.” Proceedings went ahead regardless and in September Bolsonaro was sentenced to 27 years and three months in prison for attempting a coup.

Alckmin said some products, such as orange

juice, would now have a zero tariff as they were not targeted by the additional 40%. But that extra tariff remains in place on products including coffee, beef and tropical fruits, such as mangos and pineapples.

While Brazil’s vice president welcomed Trump’s latest decision, which he called “positive” and a “step in the right direction,” he said there remained a “distortion that needs to be corrected.”

“Everyone got 10% less, but in Brazil’s case, which had 50%, we ended up with 40%, which is very high,” Alckmin told journalists in the capital Brasilia.

Alckmin said that Friday’s decision means that 26% of Brazilian goods are now entering the U.S. without additional tariffs. That’s up from 23%.

Trump’s July decision, which was overtly political as Brazil has a trade deficit with the United States, led to the worst U.S.-Brazil relations in history.

Those relations have since improved, and in October Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Trump met in Malaysia.

“President Lula’s conversation with President Donald Trump was important in terms of dialogue

and negotiation,” Alckmin said on Saturday.

After that encounter, Lula said he was confident the two countries would soon reach a trade deal.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Brazil’s Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira met for 50 minutes this week to further the conversation.

The Trump administration has insisted that its tariffs helped fill government coffers and weren’t a major factor in higher prices at grocery stores around the country. But Democrats were quick to paint Friday’s move as an acknowledgment that Trump’s policies were hurting American pocket-books.

Record-high beef prices have been a particular concern, and Trump had said he intended to take action to try and lower them. Trump’s tariffs on Brazil, a major beef exporter, had been a factor.

Back in Brazil, the Brazilian Association of the Coffee Industry said it would continue to monitor the situation.

“(We) will keep working to ensure legal certainty, competitiveness, and predictability for the Brazilian coffee industry,” the group’s president, Pavel Cardoso, said in a statement.

Russia plans VAT rise to 22% in 2026 amid budget deficit

MOSCOW, Nov 16, (AP): After two years of robust growth fueled by military spending on the war in Ukraine, Russia’s economy is slowing. Oil revenues are down, the budget deficit is up and defense spending has leveled off.

The Kremlin needs money to keep its finances steady - and it’s clear where President Vladimir Putin intends to get it: at the cash register, from ordinary people and small businesses.

An increase in value-added tax to 22% from 20% is expected to add as much as 1 trillion rubles, or about \$12.3 billion, to the state budget. The increase is contained in legislation already making its way through Russia’s compliant parliament and would take effect from Jan. 1.

On top of the rate increase, the legislation lowers the threshold for requiring businesses to collect VAT to a mere 10 million rubles (about \$123,000) in annual sales revenue, in stages by 2028. That’s down from 60 million rubles, or \$739,000. That change is aimed in part at tax avoidance schemes in which companies split their operations to skirt the threshold.

But it also will hit previously exempt businesses like corner convenience stores and beauty salons.

The government also has proposed increasing taxes on spirits, wine, beer, cigarettes and vapes. For instance, the tax on stronger spirits such as vodka would go up by 84 rubles per liter of pure alcohol, which works out to 17 rubles or about 20 U.S. cents for a half-liter bottle, or about 5% of the minimum price of 349 rubles (\$4.31). Fees for renewing driver’s licenses or getting an international license also are going up, and a key tax break on imported cars is being axed. The government is weighing a tech tax on digital equipment including smartphones and notebooks of up to 5,000 rubles (\$61.50) for the highest priced items, the Kommersant news site reported.

The economic slowdown and tax increases are signs that Putin and ordinary Russians will face harder choices in the months ahead between guns and butter - that is, between military spending and consumer welfare after 3 1/2 years of war against Ukraine.

Muscovites interviewed on a main street in the Russian capital by The Associated Press expressed dismay mingled with resignation, saying the higher food prices would be widely felt, especially in poorer regions and among those with low incomes.

Pensioner Svetlana Martynova said making small businesses collect VAT would backfire.

“I think that small and medium businesses will fold,” she said. “The budget will get less, not more.”

The VAT increase comes on top of changes in the recycling fee paid for registering cars, a step that mostly hits high-priced imports. From Dec. 1 individuals can no longer get a concessionary rate of 3,400 rubles (\$42) on cars with more than 160 horsepower, but must pay the commercial rate, which can be hundreds of thousands of rubles, or thousands of dollars, per car.

The step, however, was unlikely to boost investment in domestic manufacturing, given high central bank interest rates and the smaller size of the Russian market compared with neighboring China, now the source of most imported cars. That’s according to Andrei Olkhovsky, general director of Avtodom, a major auto dealer group.

As for customers, sales “will decline in the short term, but will recover to current levels within six months,” he said in an answer to emailed questions.

“Increased taxes and fees will influence prices for the end consumer,” he said. “Consumers in turn will factor this into their lifestyle and demand higher wages from their employers. This will increase the cost of everything around us.”

Russia’s economy shrank at the start of 2025 and is on course for growth this year of only around 1%, according to government estimates, after growing more than 4% in 2023 and 2024. Growth has suffered from high central bank interest rates, currently at 16.5%, aimed at controlling inflation of 8% fueled by massive military spending. Oil revenues are down about 20% this year mainly due to lower global prices, according to the Kyiv School of Economics Institute. Western sanctions imposed over the war against Ukraine have been an ongoing drag on growth by increasing costs and detering investment that could expand the economy’s productive capacity.

As a result, this year’s budget deficit has been revised upward from 0.5% to 2.6%, up from 1.7% last year. That doesn’t seem huge in comparison with other countries - but unlike them, Russia can’t borrow on international bond markets and must rely on domestic banks for credit.

Finance Minister Anton Siluanov said raising revenue was preferable to increasing borrowing, saying excessive borrowing “would lead to a speeding up of inflation, and as a result, to an increase in the key rate” from the central bank that would hurt investment and growth. The VAT increase could boost inflation at first as merchants change their price lists. But over the longer term, it could lower price pressures by dampening demand for goods - and help the central bank in its battle to keep inflation in check.

President Lee urges firms to prioritize domestic investments post-US deal

Samsung to invest \$310 bln in domestic expansion over 5 years

SEOUL, Nov 16, (AP): Samsung Electronics and other major South Korean companies on Sunday announced fresh domestic investment plans at a meeting with President Lee Jae Myung, who hopes the moves will counter concerns that the firms would prioritize U.S. investments under a trade deal.

Lee’s meeting with business leaders came days after his government finalized a trade deal with the United States, in which Seoul pledged to invest \$350 billion in U.S. industries in exchange for averting the Trump administration’s highest tariffs.

Samsung, a global leader in computer chips, said it will invest 450 trillion won (\$310 billion) over the next five years to expand its domestic operations, including building another production line at its Pyeongtaek manufacturing hub to meet surging global semiconductor demands fueled by artificial intelligence.

Samsung said the new line, set to begin operations in 2028, is part of its broader effort to secure additional production capacity in anticipation of rising mid- to long-term demands for memory

chips. The company also plans to build AI data centers in the country’s southwest South Jeolla Province and the southeastern city of Gumi to support government efforts to reduce the development gap between the greater Seoul metropolitan area and other regions.

Hyundai Motor Group, South Korea’s largest automaker, said it plans to invest 125 trillion won (\$86.3 billion) from 2026 to 2030 to expand domestic research and development and advance new technologies such as AI, robotics and self-driving cars.

SK Group, another semiconductor powerhouse, and shipbuilders Hanwha Ocean and HD Hyundai also announced plans to increase their domestic investments. Both are central to South Korean commitments to boost the U.S. shipbuilding industry, a sector highlighted by President Donald Trump in negotiations with Seoul.

In his meeting with the companies’ chiefs, Lee credited the business sector for helping his government negotiate the trade deal with Washington but urged the companies to maintain strong domestic investments to ease concerns they might

cut spending at home to invest more in America. He said his government is exploring various policy steps, including easing regulations, to help create a more favorable business environment for the companies.

SK Chair Chey Tae-won, whose group plans to invest at least 128 trillion won (\$88.3 billion) domestically through 2028 with a focus on AI, said the finalization of trade talks with the United States eases uncertainties and paves way for bolder domestic investment.

The two governments on Friday released the details of the trade agreement, including \$150 billion in South Korean investments in the U.S. shipbuilding sector and an additional \$200 billion in other American industries, which Seoul says will be capped at \$20 billion per year to prevent financial instability.

The United States agreed to reduce tariffs on South Korean cars and auto parts from 25% to 15%, and to apply tariffs on South Korean semiconductors on terms “no less favorable” than those granted to comparable competitors in the future.

Government to own 80% of new Dukovany nuclear units

Czech Republic advances \$19 bln Dukovany nuclear expansion

DUKOVANY, Nov 16, (AP): The eight huge cooling towers of the Dukovany power plant overlook a construction site for two more reactors as the Czech Republic pushes ahead with plans to expand its reliance on nuclear energy.

Mobile drilling rigs have been extracting samples 140 meters below ground for a geological survey to make sure the site is suitable for a \$19 billion project as part of the expansion that should eventually at least double the country’s nuclear output and cement its place among Europe’s most nuclear-dependent nations.

South Korea’s KHNP beat France’s EDF in a tender to construct a new plant whose two reactors will have an output of over 1,000 megawatts each. After becoming operational in the second half 2030s, they will complement Dukovany’s four 512-MW reactors that date from the 1980s.

The KHNP deal gives the Czechs an option to have two more units built at the other nuclear plant in Temelin, which currently has two 1,000-megawatt reactors.

Then, they are set to follow up with small modular nuclear reactors.

“Nuclear will generate between 50% and 60% around 2050 in the Czech Republic, or maybe slightly more,” Petr Závodský, chief executive of the Dukovany project, told The Associated Press in an interview.

The nuclear expansion is needed to help the country wean itself off fossil fuels, secure steady and reliable supplies at a reasonable price, meet low emission requirements and enable robust demand for electricity expected in the coming years to power data centers and electric cars, Závodský said.

The Czech expansion comes at a time when surging energy demand and looming deadlines by countries and companies to sharply cut carbon pollution are helping to revive interest in nuclear technology. While nuclear power does produce waste, it does not produce greenhouse gas emissions, like carbon dioxide, the main driver of climate change.

The European Union has accepted nuclear by including it in the classification system for environmentally sustainable



Workers walk past cooling towers of the Dukovany nuclear power plant in Dukovany, Czech Republic, Oct. 21, 2025. (AP)

economic activities, opening the door to financing. That has been a boost for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and France - the continent’s nuclear leader - that have heavily relied on nuclear.

Belgium and Sweden recently scrapped plans to phase out nuclear power. Denmark and Italy are reconsidering its use, while Poland is set to join a club of 12 nuclear-friendly nations in the European Union after signing a deal with U.S.-based Westinghouse to build three nuclear units.

The EU generated 24% of nuclear electricity in 2024. Britain signed a cooperation deal with the United States in September that Energy Secretary Ed Miliband said would lead to “a golden age of nuclear in this country.” It will also invest 14.2 billion pounds (\$19 billion) to build the Sizewell C nuclear power plant, the first in the U.K. since 1995.

CEZ, the dominant Czech power company in which the government holds a 70% stake, and Britain’s Rolls-Royce SMR have agreed on a strategic partnership to develop and

deploy small modular nuclear reactors.

The cost of the Dukovany project is estimated at over \$19 billion, with the government agreeing to acquire an 80% majority in the new plant. The government will secure a loan for the new units that CEZ will repay over 30 years. The state will also guarantee a stable income from the electricity production for CEZ for 40 years. Approval is expected to be granted by the EU, which aims to become “climate-neutral” by 2050.

“We’re in a good position to argue that we won’t be able to do without new nuclear units,” Závodský said. “Today, we get some 40% electricity from nuclear, but we also currently get another 40% from coal. It’s clear we have to replace the coal.”

Uncertainty over financing has caused a significant delay in the nuclear expansion. In 2014, CEZ canceled a tender to build two reactors at the existing Temelin nuclear plant after the government refused to provide financial guarantees.

Russia’s energy giant Rosatom and China’s CNG were excluded from the Dukovany tender on security grounds following the Kremlin’s invasion of Ukraine.

CEZ signed a deal with Westinghouse and France’s Framatome to supply nuclear fuel for its two nuclear plants, eliminating the country’s dependence on Russia. The contract with KHNP secures fuel supplies for 10 years.

While atomic energy enjoys public support, skeptical voices can be heard at home and abroad.

The Friends of the Earth say it is too costly and the money could be better used for improving the industry. The country also still does not have a permanent storage for spent fuel.

The Dukovany and Temelin plants are located near the border with Austria, which abandoned nuclear energy after the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear explosion. In 2000, a dispute over the Temelin plant resulted in a political crisis and blocked border crossings for weeks. Austria remains the most nuclear-skeptical EU country and its lower house of Parliament has already rejected the Czech small modular reactors plan.

Vatican hosts Hollywood luminaries

Pope Leo celebrates cinema, urges inclusion of marginal voices

VATICAN CITY, Nov. 16, (AP) — Pope Leo XIV welcomed Spike Lee, Cate Blanchett, Greta Gerwig and dozens of other Hollywood luminaries to a special Vatican audience Saturday celebrating cinema and its ability to inspire and unite.

Leo encouraged the filmmakers and celebrities gathered in a frescoed Vatican audience hall to use their art to include marginal voices, calling film “a popular art in the noblest sense, intended for and accessible to all.”

“When cinema is authentic, it does not merely console, but challenges,” he told the stars. “It articulates the questions that dwell within us, and sometimes, even provokes tears that we didn’t know we needed to shed.”

The encounter, organized by the Vatican’s culture ministry, followed similar audiences Pope Francis had in recent years with famous artists and comedians. It’s part of the Vatican’s efforts to reach out beyond the Catholic Church to engage with the secular world.

But the gathering also seemed to have particular meaning for history’s first American pope, who grew up in the heyday of Hollywood. The 70-year-old, Chicago-born Leo just this week identified his four favorite films: “It’s a Wonderful Life,” “The Sound of Music,” “Ordinary People,” and “Life Is Beautiful.”

In a sign of how seemingly star-struck he was, Leo spent nearly an hour after the audience greeting and chatting amiably with each of the participants, something he rarely does for large audiences.

Drawing applause from the celebrities, Leo acknowledged that the film industry and cinemas around the world were experiencing a decline, with theaters that had once been important social and cultural meeting points disappearing from neighborhoods.

“I urge institutions not to give up, but to cooperate in affirming the social and cultural value” of movie theaters, he said.

Many celebrities said they found Leo’s words inspiring, and expressed awe as they walked through the halls of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, where a light luncheon reception awaited them after the audience.



Pope Leo XIV meets with Spike Lee during an audience with stars and directors from the cinema at the Vatican, Saturday, Nov. 15. (AP)

“It was a surprise to me that I even got invited,” Spike Lee told reporters along the red carpet gauntlet in the palace.

During the audience, Lee had presented Leo with a jersey from his beloved Knicks basketball team, featuring the number 14 and Leo’s name on the back. Leo is a known Chicago Bulls fan, but Lee said he told the pope that the Knicks now

boast three players from the pope’s alma mater, Villanova University.

Blanchett, for her part, said the pope’s comments were inspiring because he understood the crucial role cinema can play in transcending borders and exploring sometimes difficult subjects in ways that aren’t divisive.

“Filmmaking is about entertainment, but it’s about including voices that are often marginalized and not shy away from the pain and complexity that we’re all living through right now,” she said.

She said Leo, in his comments about the experience of watching a film in a dark theatre, clearly understood the culturally important role cinemas can play.

“Sitting in the dark with strangers is a way in which we can reconnect to what unites us rather than what divides us,” she said.

The gathering drew a diverse group of filmmakers and actors, including many from Italy, like Monica Bellucci and Alba Rohrwacher. American actors included Chris O’Donnell, Judd Apatow and Leslie Mann, his wife.

Director Sally Potter said she was impressed that Leo took the time to speak with each one of them. And she said she loved his comments about the value of silence and slowness in film.

“It was a good model of how to be and how to think about cinema,” she said, noting especially Leo’s defense of “slow cinema” and to not see the moving image just in terms of algorithms.

Director Gus Van Sant said he liked Leo’s vibe.

“He was very laid back, you know, he had a fantastic message of beauty in cinema,” he said.

Archbishop Paul Tighe, the No. 2 in the Vatican culture ministry, said the guest list was pulled together just in the last three months, with the help of the handful of contacts Vatican officials had in Hollywood, including Martin Scorsese. The biggest hurdle, Tighe said, was convincing Hollywood agents that the invitation to come meet Leo wasn’t a hoax. In the end, as word spread, some figures approached the Vatican and asked to be invited.

Obits

Author Wong dies

Singer Todd Snider passes away at 59

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Nov. 16, (AP) — Todd Snider, a singer whose thoughtfully freewheeling tunes and cosmic-stoner songwriting made him a beloved figure in American roots music, has died. He was 59.

His record label said Saturday in a statement posted to his social media accounts that Snider died Friday.

“Where do we find the words for the one who always had the right words, who knew how to distill everything down to its essence with words and song while delivering the most devastating, hilarious, and impactful turn of phrases?” the statement read. “Always creating rhyme and meter that immediately felt like an old friend or a favorite blanket. Someone who could almost always find the humor in this crazy ride on Planet Earth.”

Snider’s family and friends had said in a Friday statement that he had been diagnosed with pneumonia at a hospital in Hendersonville, Tennessee, and that his situation had since grown more complicated and he was transferred elsewhere. The diagnosis came on the heels of the cancellation of a tour after Snider had been the victim of a violent assault in the Salt Lake City area, according to a Nov. 3 statement from his management team.

But Salt Lake City police later arrested Snider himself when he at first refused to leave a hospital and later returned and threatened staffers, the Salt Lake Tribune reported.

The scrapped tour was in support of his most recent album, “High, Lonesome and Then Some,” which released in October. Snider combined elements of folk, rock and country in a three-decade career. In reviews of his recent albums, The Associated Press called him a “singer-songwriter with the persona of a fried folkie” and a “stoner troubadour and cosmic comic.”

He modeled himself on — and at times met and was mentored by — artists like Kris Kristofferson, Guy Clark and John Prine. His songs were recorded by artists including Jerry Jeff Walker, Billy Joe Shaver and Tom Jones. And he co-wrote a song with Loretta Lynn that appeared on her 2016 album, “Full Circle.”

“He relayed so much tenderness and sensitivity through his songs, and showed many of us how to look at the world through a different lens,” the Saturday statement from his label read. “He got up every morning and started writing, always working towards finding his place among the songwriting giants that sat on his record shelves, those same giants who let him into their lives and took him under their wings, who he studied relentlessly.”

Snider would do his best-known and most acclaimed work for Prine’s independent label Oh Boy in the early 2000s. It included the albums “New Connection,” “Near Truths and Hotel Rooms” and “East Nashville Skyline,” a 2004 collection that’s considered by many to be his best.

□ □ □

Alice Wong, a disability rights activist and author whose independence and writing inspired others, has died. She was 51.

Wong died of an infection Friday at a hospital in San Francisco, said Sandy Ho, a close friend who has been in touch with Wong’s family.

Ho called her friend a “luminary of the disability justice movement” who wanted a world in which people with disabilities, especially ones of marginalized demographics who were people of color, and immigrants, could live freely and have full autonomy over their lives and decisions.

The daughter of Hong Kong immigrants, Wong was born with muscular dystrophy. She used a powered wheelchair and an assistive breathing device.

Ho shared a statement on social media that Wong wrote before her death in which she said she never imagined her trajectory would turn out as it did, to writing, activism and more.

“It was thanks to friendships and some great teachers who believed in me that I was able to fight my way out of miserable situations into a place where I finally felt comfortable in my skin. We need more stories about us and our culture,” Wong wrote.

She advocated for “getting people out of institutions and remaining in the community.” Ho said and her works — including books she wrote and edited and the Disability Visibility Project blog, which she started — shared her writing and voices and the perspectives of others.

Ho said Wong was a funny person and a hilarious writer, not an easy skill. Her memoir “Year of the Tiger: An Activist’s Life” is filled with humorous snippets but also humanizes disability, she added.

The legacy of Wong’s work is that people with disabilities “speak for themselves and that nobody speaks for us,” Ho said.

Film



Tollywood superstar Mahesh Babu rides a mechanical bull at the unveiling of first look of film ‘Varanasi’ in Hyderabad, India, Saturday, Nov. 15. (AP)

Time-travel adventure draws from Hindu mythology

Rajamouli unveils epic new film ‘Varanasi’

HYDERABAD, India, Nov. 16, (AP) — Filmmaker S.S. Rajamouli, the blockbuster movie director behind global hits like “RRR” and “Baahubali” that redefined Indian cinema’s scale and caught Hollywood’s attention, has unveiled his most ambitious film yet.

Known for blending mythic storytelling with grand action and imaginative choreography, Rajamouli announced his latest film — and its title — at an event Saturday in the southern Indian city of Hyderabad, where thousands of his cheering fans thronged to catch a first glimpse.

While details about the plot of the film “Varanasi” — previously code-named “Globe Trotter” — remain under wraps, the nearly four-minute video showed a visually rich time-travel adventure that draws parts of its storyline from Hindu mythology. The film borrows its title from the Indian city considered Hinduism’s spiritual heart.

Rajamouli said the film will be projected in cinemas in IMAX format and is expected to release in 2027.

“Here you go... Varanasi to the World...” Rajamouli wrote on X.

At the event, he alluded that one of the film’s sequences draws from “an important episode” from the Ramayana, a Hindu religious epic based on Lord Rama’s life.

For “Varanasi,” Rajamouli has assembled a star-studded cast, headlined by Telugu superstar Mahesh Babu, Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Prithviraj Sukumaran. Having attained fame as a Bollywood superstar, Chopra Jonas returns to Indian cinema with this film after several Hollywood projects. A film poster shows her as the character Mandakini, in a mustard sari with a pistol in hand as she balances on the edge of a cliff.



Filmmaker S.S. Rajamouli, (third from left), with Telugu superstar Mahesh Babu, actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas and actor Prithviraj Sukumaran, (extreme right), pose for photograph after unveiling of first look of film ‘Varanasi’ in Hyderabad, India, Saturday, Nov. 15. (AP)

“Varanasi” is Babu’s first collaboration with Rajamouli. The first look shows him as a fierce warrior covered in blood and riding a white bull with a trident in hand. Babu indeed made his entry onstage Saturday atop a mechanical white bull.

“It is a once-in-a-lifetime project,” Babu said after unveiling the teaser in Hyderabad’s Ramoji Film City, the throbbing heart of Telugu cinema, also known as Tollywood. “I will make everyone proud. The whole of India will be proud of us.”

Thousands of frenzied fans watched the film’s first glimpse on a mammoth 110-by-130-foot (33.5-by-39.5-meter) screen flanked by replicas of Varanasi city. A display of colorful lights and dazzling fireworks lit up the venue as crowds danced to the foot-tapping tunes of Telugu music — a mix of new songs and classics — turning the event into a vibrant festival.

The Telugu-language film industry has carved out its own identity separate from Hindi-language Bollywood with its high-octane and sometimes logic-defying action, mythic storylines and grand visual style. And much of Tollywood’s recent success — critical and box office — has been credited to Rajamouli, whose larger-than-life heroes and ambitious filmmaking with imaginative visual effects have catapulted the film industry onto the global stage.

Rajamouli became an international name after “RRR,” or “Rise, Roar, Revolt,” his 2022 three-hour, Telugu-language epic set in British India. The sprawling anti-colonial tale became one of India’s biggest hits, turned into a global streaming phenomenon, and won an Oscar for best original song. His two-part “Baahubali” series, released in 2015 and 2017, broke box-office records in India and introduced Western audiences to the visual grandeur of Telugu cinema. A reedited version combining the two parts, “Baahubali: The Epic,” released in cinemas worldwide just last month.

Many Tollywood film fans traveled from faraway towns and villages to watch Babu, who commands a near-godlike following among them.

“It’s not actually Tollywood now, it’s global now,” said Manideep Rayudu, a fan. “Our superstar Mahesh Babu is not a regional star anymore. He is a global star.”

Variety

The first lady added: “Rise above the ease of inaction.” (AP)

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WASHINGTON: First lady Melania Trump is spearheading a new initiative aimed at improving career and education opportunities for children raised in foster care.

Her husband, President Donald Trump, signed an executive order Thursday that creates a “Fostering the Future” program that brings together federal entities, nonprofits, educational institutions and the private sector to develop those opportunities for foster youth.

The order also creates an online hub that would help foster youth connect with key career and educational resources, while increasing access to vouchers and grants to support them in those efforts.

Saying the initiatives in the executive order “gives me tremendous pride,” Melania Trump said the effort is “both empathetic and strategic.”

“I call on leadership from these various organizations, including the private sector, to join my effort,” Melania Trump said from the East Room before an audience that included lawmakers, Cabinet officials and members of the foster-care community.

BEIJING: Chinese cyberspace authorities are cracking down on the use of artificial intelligence (AI)-generated deepfakes to impersonate public figures in livestreaming e-commerce, as the country grapples with a surge of AI-fueled fraud.

The Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) said Friday that authorities had recently “severely dealt with” a batch of online accounts that used AI to mimic celebrities to promote products in live-streams and short videos, misleading users. Online platforms launched a cleanup, which has so far removed over 8,700 pieces of non-compliant content and dealt with more than 11,000 accounts that impersonated public figures.

The campaign follows a series of high-profile cases, including one involving actress Wen Zhengrong, who discovered multiple AI-generated clones of herself promoting products across different live streams. In an attempt to stop the impersonation, Wen confronted one impersonator in a live chat, only to be blocked after asking, “If you are Wen Zhengrong, then who am I?” (Xinhua)

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CAPE TOWN: South Africa announced a new visa scheme on Thursday, aiming to attract international film and creative production companies to shoot and invest in the country through a streamlined digital process.

The Department of Home Affairs unveiled the Screen Talent and Global Entertainment Scheme (STAGES) in a statement, describing it as a “catalytic visa reform to boost South Africa’s standing as a leading global destination for film and other creative productions.”

“For the very first time, STAGES introduces a digital platform to process visa applications for international film and creative production companies,” the department said, adding that the reform cuts red tape and accelerates secure visa processing through technological reform.

The initiative follows years of complaints from the film industry about cumbersome visa procedures that have cost South Africa lucrative projects. The department cited one case in which the country lost a 400 million rand (about 23.5 million U.S. dollars) Netflix production to Mexico due to visa inefficiencies.

STAGES, modeled on the existing Trusted Employer Scheme and the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme, allows qualified companies to apply online and receive visa approvals in “as little as 24 hours.” (Xinhua)

Filmmaker reflects on career, nepotism criticism

Hollywood stars celebrate Sofia Coppola at MoMA benefit

NEW YORK, Nov 16, (AP): When Sofia Coppola was 20 years old and figuring out who she wanted to be in the world, Angelica Huston offered some advice: “Not everyone’s going to love you. Don’t waste your time on the people who don’t.” Coppola recalled Wednesday night in New York at the Museum of Modern Art Film Benefit, where she was being honored for her films.

Coppola was surrounded by family, friends and collaborators like Bill Murray, Josh Hartnett and Elle Fanning for the Chanel-presented event, which helps raise funds for the museum’s film collection and preservation efforts.

“She’s not just the daughter of a great filmmaker,” Murray said. “She’s a great filmmaker.”

But it’s a distinction that was hard earned. Just over 27 years after her father Francis Ford Coppola encouraged her to make her first short film, Coppola reflected on starting a film-making career at a time when she was thought of as “a nepo baby before they were charming” and “the amateur actress who had single-handedly ruined ‘The Godfather’ films.”

“Most people didn’t think I had something to say that mattered,” she said. “But I found a few who did.”

Since making her feature debut with “The Virgin Suicides,” Coppola has written and directed seven narrative features and one documentary, about Marc Jacobs, that A24 plans to release next year. She’s been both celebrated, winning an Oscar for writing “Lost in Translation,” which also earned her a best director nomination, and dismissed. “Marie

Antoinette” was infamously booed at Cannes, but over the next 20 years would become beloved and celebrated.

Fanning remembered meticulously planning her outfit to meet Coppola for the first time at age 11, where she would go on to be cast as the daughter of a famous movie star in “Somewhere.” A few years prior she had convinced her grandmother to take her to see “Marie Antoinette” and she immediately became a fan.

“Living in that cinema, in Sofia’s world for a few hours, it would change my girlhood forever,” Fanning said. “It was the place that I felt safe and seen, and I wanted to live in it a hundred times over.”

On “Somewhere,” Coppola made Fanning feel like an equal on set and saw beauty in things like her glasses and retainer and made them “cool” through her approval. At 18, she’d reunite with Coppola to play the “bad girl” in the Civil War era film “The Beguiled.”

Hartnett also thanked Coppola for giving him one of his first big roles as a teenage heartthrob in “The Virgin Suicides.” He recalled being in awe of her, the mixtapes she made for the cast and her “incredible chill” under the immense pressure of directing her first feature at only 26.

“Sofia showed me at a young age what it is to be an artist,” Hartnett said.

Those who couldn’t be at the event in person, including her father and Kirsten Dunst, recorded video messages of support. Dunst called her a creative sister for over 20 years.

Coppola, a longtime Chanel ambassador and collaborator going back to her days as an intern, attended the event with her husband, Thomas Mars, and daughters Romy Mars and Cosima Mars. She had many champions to thank as well: Her father for being a great film teacher and always wanting his kids on set; Her late mother Eleanor Coppola who loved contemporary art and was the one who told her she could have a family and a career; Her husband for helping to make that work and for his musical contributions to her films; Her brother Roman Coppola who told her to make the film she wanted when the studio was pressuring her to change the ending to “Lost in Translation.”

Things have changed for female directors since Coppola began, when an executive told her that you can’t have movies focused on women because boys won’t go to see films about girls. Yet there are still roadblocks.

“I hope we now recognize how much we need more women in positions of power and finance to support these filmmakers,” Coppola said. Chanel, which not only sponsored the evening but MoMA Film as well - a collection that includes more than 30,000 films - has a long history of supporting women in filmmaking, including just last week at a luncheon with the film academy.

The program ended with a performance from Elvis Costello, which she said was her childhood dream.

Earlier in the evening Murray quipped that when he heard Coppola, who is only 54, was getting this kind of honor, “all I could think was, ‘was she OK?’”



Honoree Sofia Coppola attends The Museum of Modern Art Film Benefit presented by Chanel on Wednesday, Nov. 12, in New York. (AP)

Stage

Disney star debuts on Broadway in ‘Moulin Rouge!’

Meg Donnelly realizes theater kid dream

NEW YORK, Nov 16, (AP): When she was still just a child, Meg Donnelly gave off a serious theater kid vibe. At 5, her favorite musical role wasn’t the sunny “Annie.” It was Mimi from “Rent,” the struggling erotic dancer who is also a heroin addict.

Donnelly grew up to become a film and TV star through her breakout role in Disney’s music-filled “Zombies” franchise and the ABC sitcom “American Housewife.” She’s also appeared on “The Masked Singer” and has a new EP, “dying art.”

Last week, the New Jersey-raised actor returned to her first love - theater. Donnelly made her Broadway debut Tuesday in “Moulin Rouge! The Musical,” playing cabaret star Santine. She’ll be aboard the jukebox hit until March.

The show is about the goings-on in a turn-of-the-century Parisian nightclub, updated with tunes like “Single Ladies” and “Firework” alongside the big hit “Lady Marmalade.”

The Associated Press got a chance to ask Donnelly about her big night and how it fits into her blossoming career. Answers have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: What was your debut like?

Donnelly: It was really surreal. I feel like I’ve been working towards this since I was a little girl. When I was younger, Broadway was the only option. I was a full theater kid - that’s all I wanted to do. And, you know, life just took me in different directions. But this is something that I feel I was born to do and just being on stage last night, it kind of all just makes sense.

AP: You’re in the Al Hirschfeld Theatre. Do you think you ever saw a show there before?

Donnelly: I definitely do. I saw “Kinky Boots” twice. I love “Kinky Boots.” And I think I saw “Kiss Me Kate” there, too.

AP: What’s your favorite musical?

Donnelly: My favorite musical of all time is “Rent.” I saw it a lot when I was younger - maybe when I was too young - and my dream role has always been Mimi, which is really funny. So when I was like 5 or 6 auditioning for theater, they would be like, “What’s your dream role?” And everyone would be like, “Annie” or “Matilda” and I’d be like, “Mimi!” They’d be like, “Oh my God, this kid!” So, it is very full circle because “Moulin Rouge” is based on the same opera as “Rent.” Satine is kind of Mimi.

AP: So much of your career makes this a natural step. You played a young woman who sang in a school production of “Little Shop of Horrors” on “American Housewife” and everything about the “Zombie” franchise



This image released by Boneau/Bryan-Brown shows Meg Donnelly during the curtain call after making her Broadway debut in ‘Moulin Rouge! The Musical’ in New York on Tuesday, Nov. 11. (AP)

screams musical theater. How do you describe your path here?

Donnelly: There’s not a right or wrong path. You know, there’s so many things in my career where I’m like, “Oh, I wish I’d done that” or “Maybe I should have gone that way.” I’m a very chronic over-thinker. But it really doesn’t matter. I will say, being a part of Disney definitely changed my life.

AP: Another Broadway-adjacent step was when you were in the cast of NBC’s live telecast of “The Sound of Music” in 2013. You were the understudy for Louisa von Trapp, right?

Donnelly: Yes, I understudied Louisa and Ella Watts-Gorman, who played Louisa, was so talented and amazing. I was praying that nothing happened to her. We weren’t really taught much. We knew the music, but that was pretty much it, so I was like, “Dear God, please, let everything go OK.”

AP: Audra McDonald starred in that, right?

Donnelly: Oh my god. Listening to her sing on set was one of the best gifts I’ve ever been given.

AP: What about your own music?

Donnelly: That is something that I really want to pursue. I feel like writing my own music is just so therapeutic for me, and I love performing on

stage. Having to do a new show every single night and making everything different and feeding off the energy of the different crowd - that’s what I want to do with my own music as well.

AP: You did theater growing up alongside Helen J. Shen, who created her part in “Maybe Happy Ending,” right? Would you also like to originate a role one day?

Donnelly: That was such a cool thing to watch her go through and it’s so personal, something that she built with them. That would be really, really cool. Just to have that connection to it as well. So, yeah, originating would be really like that would great.



Ceiling of the Palace of Dey Hussein.



Photo of the front facade of the palace.



One of the entrances of the Palace of Dey Hussein.

Palace of Dey Hussein: Historic gem of Algeria’s Ottoman era

THE Palace of Dey Hussein, located in the Hussein Dey district east of Algiers, stands as one of the capital’s most remarkable landmarks.

Built in 1821 as Dey’s summer residence, the palace overlooks the eastern shoreline, a location that made it his preferred retreat.

The site witnessed several transformations and additions as it stood through Ottoman rule, French occupation and Algeria’s

independence.

In 1982, it was listed as a national cultural property and subsequently restored by the Algiers authorities.

Dey Hussein, the last Ottoman ruler of Algiers, was born in Izmir in 1773. Trained in Istanbul’s military schools, he later rose through the ranks in Algeria, earning wide respect for his piety before being appointed governor in 1818. (KUNA)

‘Friendships paused, not forgotten’

Reconnecting with an old friend is a story of loss, rediscovery

NEW YORK, Nov 16, (AP): When Jennifer Austin met Molly in second grade, they quickly became best friends. They giggled through classes until the teacher separated them, inspiring them to come up with their own language. They shared sleepovers and went on each other’s family vacations.

But they gradually drifted apart after Austin’s family moved to Germany before the girls started high school. Decades passed before they recently reconnected as grown women.

“Strong friendships really do stay for the long haul,” Austin, 51, said. “Even if there are pauses in between and they fade, that doesn’t mean they completely dissolve or they go forgotten. They’re always there kind of lingering like a little light in the back.”

Early friendships are some of the deepest: the schoolmates who shared bike rides and their favorite candy. The roommates who offered comfort after breakups. The ones who know us, sometimes better than we know ourselves.

But as adults take on jobs and the responsibilities of homes and families, it can be challenging to stay connected with everyone we’ve loved.

Technology plays a role, too. Loneliness has increased since the television was invented and intensified with the introduction of smartphones, according to psychologist Marisa Franco, a University of Maryland assistant clinical professor and author of “Platonic,” a book about the science of attachment.

Once they’ve lost touch with friends, some people are reluctant to reach out, fearing rejection. But most of those on the receiving end appreciate the effort more than we expect, Franco said.

“People are delighted to hear from their old friends and



Heather Robb, (left), and Laine DePasquantonio, (right), pose for a selfie in Denver, Colorado, when they reconnected in April 2025. (AP)

open to connections,” she said.

Franco suggests reminiscing about a shared memory to span the time and distance. It can be something as simple as, “This pic came up and I just realized I wanted to check in on you,” she said. Propose a meetup. If the friend lives far away, try scheduling a phone date to catch up.

Below, six people who tried to rekindle lost friendships reflect on distance, loss and reconnection.

Heather Robb and Laine DiPasquantonio were nearly inseparable in their 20s, when they both lived in Boston. They

went to concerts and vacationed together. DiPasquantonio was there when Robb met her future husband and attended their wedding as a bridesmaid.

But sometime after Robb married and DiPasquantonio moved to Colorado, their circle of friends scattered. They became busy raising children, juggling jobs and caring for aging parents.

“It’s terrible because you don’t know it’s happening,” Robb, 60, said in a joint interview. “I think it was simply space and time. We were all in different cities, we were all in that busy time of toddlers.”

Years passed with occasional holiday cards and texts but few meaningful interactions. DiPasquantonio saw photos on social media of Robb skiing and traveling with other friends. “I wasn’t sure there was so much room for me, from a distance,” she said.

“Aww, I feel badly about that,” Robb replied. “I would argue that’s the bad side of social media.”

The women found their way back to each other when Robb, president of Heather Robb Communications, had a business trip to Denver in April. She called to see if DiPasquantonio wanted to get dinner. “I didn’t know if she was going to be that happy to hear from me. I actually had some trepidation in reaching out,” Robb said.

When she did, Robb learned her friend was about to undergo surgery for breast cancer. Instead of meeting for dinner, DiPasquantonio, a placement specialist at Harmony Senior Referrals, invited Robb to stay for the weekend. A mutual friend flew out to join them.

“I was so tickled that you called and wanted to get together. It was awesome,” DiPasquantonio, 63, said during their interview. “What took us so long, right?”

They’ve remained close since.

“It just feels so good. It feels like there was a missing piece,” Robb said.

Reyna Dominguez, 18, had the same best friend since first grade. But when Dominguez moved from Long Island to Brooklyn, her friend began college. Dominguez started working in a salon and their schedules didn’t align. About six months passed without communication.

After graduating cosmetology school, Dominguez texted her friend to share the news.

“I was a bit anxious that she was not going to respond. But she did, and I was so relieved and happy,” Dominguez said. “Now they’re in touch about once a month and planning to get together.”

“It’s important to stay in touch because sometimes I do get lonely, like I have no one to really talk to,” Dominguez said. “But with her, she knows all about my life.”

Dominguez encourages anyone considering reaching out to an old friend to go ahead. “I say just do it. You have nothing to lose,” she said. “I guess the worst they could do is not respond to you, but I feel like you’ll still be happy with the thought, ‘I tried.’”

Andrew Snyder’s best friend since 5th grade lives a plane ride away, but that hasn’t stopped them from keeping in touch. They call or email each other at least once a month and see each other several times per year.

At key points in their lives, they’ve visited each others’ homes “so when we talk about things, we actually can understand,” said Snyder, 50, who teaches philosophy and economics in New York City.

Living in different cities means it requires work to stay connected, but it’s important to Snyder, who feels that friendships are thinning out as people spend more time looking at cellphone screens.

HEALTH/SCIENCE

Lifestyle changes, diet and exercise may ease symptoms

Can't use hormone therapy for menopause? Alternatives exist

NEW YORK, Nov 16, (AP): Shilpa Gajarawala struggled with hot flashes, night sweats, sleep problems and brain fog. But given her history of breast cancer, treating these menopausal symptoms with hormone therapy wasn't an option.

"For two years, I tried to kind of power through," said the 58-year-old physician assistant from Jacksonville, Florida.

But doctors say women like Gajarawala don't need to suffer.

Though many women take hormone therapy medications to ease menopause symptoms, recently announced label changes may encourage even more to start. But others choose not to use these medications that circulate throughout the body. And doctors advise some to avoid them because they have medical problems such as severe liver disease or a history of heart attack, stroke, blood clots or a type of breast cancer that grows in response to hormones such as estrogen.

For those people, there are lifestyle changes, medications without hormones and other strategies that can help.

"The key here is that there's something for everybody," said Dr. Stephanie Faubion, medical director at the Menopause Society. "There's always a solution. We have lots of other options available."

Boosting physical activity can make a difference. While exercise hasn't been shown to alleviate menopausal symptoms directly, it can help to shed pounds, which is associated with reductions in hot flashes and night sweats.

Doctors suggest a mix of aerobic exercise, such as running or walking, and strength training, which slows the loss of bone density.

Along with exercise, doctors advise watching what you eat.

Emerging science shows that a "plant-forward diet," rich in produce and soy and low in oil, may help with managing hot flashes in particular, said Faubion of the Mayo Clinic Center for Women's Health. Experts aren't sure why this is true, but some suggest it may be because it also helps with weight loss.

Another key, doctors said, is to avoid things in the diet that may trigger hot flashes, like caffeine or alcohol.

Eating well and exercising also help with other midlife health issues, like rising heart and diabetes risks.

During menopause, the body's production of the hormones estrogen and progesterone declines greatly. The drop in estrogen levels can lead to higher blood pressure and cholesterol.

"It's important that we focus on maintaining cardiovascular health" such as stopping smoking, getting enough sleep and watching stress levels, Faubion said.

Beyond lifestyle changes, some nonhormonal prescription medicines have been shown to ease menopausal symptoms.

Antidepressants can help with hot flashes and mood issues. Recent data suggest that a drug for an overactive bladder called oxybutynin may reduce hot flashes while also treating frequent urination that's common during menopause.

And doctors pointed to a new drug on the market - Veozah, a brand name for fezolinetant - which works in the area of the brain that controls body temperature and blocks a source of hot flashes and night sweats. Another nonhor-



A woman walks down a trail as fog looms at Montie Beach Park in Houston, on Monday, Oct. 17, 2011. (AP)

monal drug called elinzanetant - marketed as Lynkuet - was recently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. It works similarly, except it blocks two molecules in the nervous system instead of one.

One downside of such medications? Possible side effects.

Veozah's label includes a federally required warning about the risk of a rare but serious liver injury. Lynkuet's possible side effects include difficulty staying awake, fatigue and others. Some antidepressants can cause weight gain, although generally in doses higher than those used for meno-

pause symptoms. And oxybutynin can cause dry mouth and, in some people, a condition in which they can't completely empty the bladder.

"There's no medication out there that's entirely free of risk," said Dr. JoAnn Manson at Harvard Medical School.

Over-the-counter products can also treat some menopausal symptoms. Lubricants available at drugstores can help women struggling with vaginal dryness.

Cognitive behavioral therapy, which focuses on changing unhealthy thought patterns and behaviors, has been shown to help women cope with hot flashes.

"It's not like it's going to make you not have a hot flash," Faubion said. "But it makes them less significant for you and less burdensome."

Manson said there's "moderate evidence" that clinical hypnosis might also help, with some studies showing reductions in the frequency and severity of hot flashes.

"That seems a promising option," she said. "But more research is needed."

The bottom line is that women don't have to simply "get through" menopause, said Dr. Juliana Kling, a women's health expert at Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine in Arizona. "I would implore women to have that conversation ... about what treatment might be beneficial for them."

Gajarawala did that. She now skips red wine, walks at least 10,000 steps a day, practices tai chi and takes an extended-release antidepressant to address her symptoms.

"It's been a significant improvement," she said.

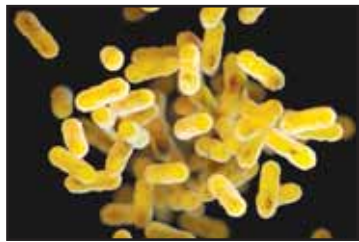
WHO estimates 160,700 child deaths each year

Whooping cough is back, but the vaccine still offers strong protection

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



By Annette Regan
University of California, Los Angeles



This 2016 illustration provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, based on electron microscope imagery, depicts Bordetella pertussis bacteria, which causes whooping cough. (AP)

of people who have not been previously exposed to the bacterium or vaccinated against the disease will develop an infection.

Fortunately, the disease is largely preventable with a safe and effective vaccine, which was first licensed in the U.S. in 1914.

During the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2022, pertussis cases were lower than usual. This may have been a result of limited social contact due to social distancing, masking, school closures and lockdown measures, which reduced the spread of disease overall.

Pandemic

In the past two years, however, pertussis cases have surpassed figures from before the pandemic. In 2024, local and state public health agencies reported 35,435 pertussis cases to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - a rate five times higher than the 7,063 cases reported in 2023 and nearly double the 18,617 cases reported in 2019 prior to the pandemic.

Between October 2024 and April 2025, at least four people in the U.S. have died of pertussis: two infants, one school-age child and one adult.

Although vaccines have resulted in a dramatic decline in pertussis infections in the U.S., incidence of the disease has been rising since the 1990s, except for a brief dip during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before the start of routine childhood vaccination for pertussis in 1947, its rates hovered between 100,000 and 200,000 cases per year. With vaccines, rates plunged under 50,000 annually by the late 1950s and under 10,000 per year in the late 1960s. They reached a low of 1,010 cases in 1976.

Starting in the 1980s and 1990s, however, the U.S. and several other

countries have been seeing a steady resurgence of pertussis cases, which have exceeded 10,000 cases in the U.S. every year from 2003 to 2019. They dropped again during the pandemic until last year's resurgence.

There is no single explanation for why cases have been rising recently, but several factors probably contribute. First, pertussis naturally occurs in cyclic epidemics, peaking every two to five years. It is possible that the U.S. is headed into one of these peaks after a period of low activity between 2020 and 2022. However, some scientists have noted that the increase in cases is larger than what would be expected during a usual peak.

Some scientists have noted that this apparent resurgence correlates with a change in the type of vaccine used in children. Until the 1990s, the pertussis vaccine contained whole, killed B. pertussis bacteria cells. Whole-cell vaccine can stimulate a long-lasting immune response, but it is also more likely to cause fever and other vaccine reactions in children.

In the 1990s, national vaccine programs began to transition to a vaccine that contains purified components of the bacterial cell but not the whole cell. Some scientists now believe that although this partial-cell vaccine is less likely to cause high fevers in children, it provides protection for a shorter time. Immunity after whole-cell vaccination is thought to last 10-12 years compared with three to five years after the partial-cell vaccine. This means people may become susceptible to infection more quickly after vaccination.

Vaccination rates are also not as high as they should be and have started falling in children since 2020. In the U.S., the percent of kindergartners who are up to date with recommended pertussis vaccines has declined from 95% during the 2019-20 school year to 92% in the 2023-24 school year. Even fewer adolescents receive a booster dose.

Routine vaccination for children starting in infancy followed by booster doses in adolescents and adults can help keep immunity high.

Public health experts recommend that children receive five doses of the pertussis vaccine. According to the recommendations, they should receive the first three doses at 2, 4 and 6 months of age, then two additional doses at 15 months and 4 years of age, with the aim of providing protection through early adolescence. (AP)

Fossil fuel phase-out back in focus

As nations push for more ambition at climate talks, chair says it's possible

BELEM, Brazil, Nov 16, (AP): Going into United Nations climate negotiations, the Brazilian hosts weren't looking for big end-of-session pronouncements on lofty goals. This conference was supposed to hyperfocus on "implementation" of past promises not yet kept.

Throw that out the window.

The urgency of climate change is causing some negotiators to push for more big-picture action - on weak plans to cut emissions of heat-trapping gases, on too little money to help nations wracked by climate change, on putting teeth into phasing out coal, oil and gas. Because of that pressure to do more - including from Brazil President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva - the diplomat chairing the talks said Saturday he'll consider a big-picture, end-of-negotiations communiqué, sometimes known as a decision or cover text.

"I think things have changed, which is a very good thing," said veteran observer Jean Su of the Center for Biological Diversity. "So I think there's momentum that we will get some type of decision text, and our hope is that in particular there's going to be some commitment on phasing out fossil fuels."

Expectation

"I would say that what's at stake now is probably higher than the last several COPs because you're looking at an ambition gap," said former Philippine negotiator Jasper Inventor, international program director at Greenpeace International. "There's a lot of expectation, there's a lot of excitement here, but there's also a lot of political signals that's been sent by President Lula."

"We're at the middle of the COP, and at the middle of COP is usually where the negotiators stare each other eye-to-eye. It's almost like a staring contest," Inventor said. "But next week, this is where the negotiations need to happen, where political decisions are made by the ministers."

Because this process stems from the Paris climate Agreement, which is mostly voluntary, these end statements grab headlines and set global tone but have limited power. The last few COP end statements have made still-unfulfilled pledges for rich countries to give money to poor nations to cope with climate change and the world to phase out fossil fuels.



Ana Toni, COP30 CEO, (left), sits next to André Corrêa do Lago, COP30 president, as he speaks at a news conference during the COP30 UN Climate Summit, Saturday, Nov. 15, in Belem, Brazil. (AP)

Key among those issues is the idea of telling nations to go back to the drawing board on what experts consider inadequate climate-fighting plans submitted this year.

In the 2015 Paris agreement, which is being celebrated here on its 10th anniversary, nations are supposed to have submitted climate-fighting, emissions-cutting plans every five years. So far 116 of 193 countries have filed theirs this year, but what they promised isn't much. United Nations and Climate Action Tracker, a group of scientists, calculates that these new pledges barely reduced future projections for Earth's warming.

Promises

Even if the world does all it promises, Earth would be about seven-tenths of a degree Celsius (1.3 degrees Fahrenheit) above the Paris goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times, the groups estimated.

So small island nations, led by Palau, asked that this conference confront the gap between what's planned in national pledges and what's needed to keep the world from hitting the temperature danger zone.

That's not on the agenda for these talks. Nor are specific details on how to fulfill last year's pledge by rich nations to provide \$300 billion annually in climate financial aid.

So when nations early on wanted

to address these issues, COP President André Corrêa do Lago, a veteran Brazilian diplomat, set up special small confabs to try to decide if the controversial topics should be discussed.

On Saturday, the conference punted the issue to the incoming ministers.

"The parties will decide how they want to proceed," do Lago said at a Saturday evening news conference. Given what countries are saying and past history that usually means a final end-of-COP message to the world, several experts said.

In a casual exchange with a reporter about how the conference is going, COP President do Lago said: "Eh, could be better but not as bad it could be."

U.N. General Assembly President Annalena Baerbock, the former German foreign minister who has been to 10 of these sessions, told The Associated Press Saturday morning before the evening's session that she saw "new momentum" in Belem.

"We can fight the climate crisis only together if we commit to a strong mitigation target," she said. "This means also transitioning away from fossil fuels, investing into renewable energy."

Two years ago in Dubai, the world agreed to "transition away from fossil fuels," but last year no mention of that was made and there've been no details on how or when to do this.

Aussie deaths

Dementia top killer in 2024

CANBERRA, Nov. 16, (Xinhua): Dementia was the leading cause of death in Australia in 2024, becoming the country's top killer disease for the first time on record, according to official data released on Friday.

The data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) revealed that dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, overtook ischaemic heart diseases as the country's leading cause of death last year.

Of the 187,268 deaths registered in Australia in 2024, the ABS said that 17,549 were attributed to dementia.

The number of deaths caused by dementia has increased by over 160 percent from 6,550 in 2006, while the number of deaths caused by heart diseases has fallen by 29.6 percent over the same period from 23,132 to 16,275 in 2024. The ABS attributed the rise of dementia as a cause of death to Australia's ageing population.

It said that 68.2 percent of all deaths in 2024 were people aged over 75 years, up from 63.3 percent in 2004.

"People are now more likely to live to an age where they have a higher risk of developing dementia. This is especially true for women who have longer life expectancies. Today's data shows that 62.4 percent of people who died from dementia were women," said ABS head of mortality statistics Lauren Moran.

Dementia has been the leading cause of death for women in Australia since 2016. Coronary heart disease remains the leading cause of death for men, causing 10,153 deaths in 2024.



This China National Space Administration (CNSA) handout image released by Xinhua News Agency, shows the lander-ascender combination of Chang'e-6 probe taken by a mini rover after it landed on the moon surface, June 4, 2024. (AP)

Study of Chang'e-6 samples finds lunar oxidation clues

BEIJING, Nov. 16, (Xinhua): Chinese scientists have made a major breakthrough in lunar science by analyzing lunar samples brought back by the Chang'e-6 mission, providing a crucial scientific basis for lunar research, according to the China National Space Administration.

Researchers from Shandong University, the Institute of Geochemistry of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and Yunnan University have, for the first time, discovered micron-sized hematite (y-Fe2O3) and maghemite (y-Fe2O3) crystals formed by large impact events.

This discovery reveals a previously unknown oxidation reaction mecha-

nism on the moon. It provides direct sample evidence supporting the origin of magnetic anomalies around the South Pole-Aitken (SPA) Basin.

Researchers identified hematite and maghemite in the lunar samples and confirmed the lattice structures and unique characteristics of primary lunar hematite grains using multiple techniques. These findings were published in the journal Science Advances.

Since the beginning of human lunar exploration, the moon has been considered a generally reduced body, with critical evidence of oxidation processes, particularly high-valence iron oxides like hematite, extremely scarce or absent.

Man dies of H5N1 bird flu in Cambodia

Ethiopia confirms first Marburg outbreak

NAIROBI, Kenya, Nov 16, (AP): Ethiopia on Friday confirmed its first Marburg outbreak after nine cases were identified in a southern region of the country that borders South Sudan.

The World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus praised the Ethiopian government's fast action, saying it showed a "commitment to bringing the outbreak under control quickly."

Ethiopia's government had reported on Thursday that it was investigating a possible outbreak of an unidentified viral hemorrhagic fever and was lauded by the continental health emergency body, Africa CDC, for its transparency.

The WHO sent a technical team on Thursday to support the East African country in testing and outbreak response.

"WHO is also providing essential supplies, including personal protective equipment for health workers and infection-prevention supplies, as well as a rapidly deployable isolation tent to bolster clinical care and management capacity," the U.N. agency said in a statement.

The outbreak was reported in the southern region of Omo, which borders South Sudan. Africa CDC Director-General Jean Kaseya said Thursday that the outbreak was a concern because "South Sudan isn't far and has a fragile health system."

No other African country has reported Marburg virus cases in recent weeks. Like Ebola, the Marburg virus originates in fruit bats and spreads between people through close contact



A medical worker carries a meal to an isolation tent housing a man being quarantined after coming into contact with a carrier of the Marburg Virus, at the Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya, Oct. 8, 2014. (AP)

with the bodily fluids of infected individuals or with surfaces, such as contaminated bedsheets.

Symptoms include fever, muscle pains, diarrhea, vomiting and in some cases death from extreme blood loss. There is no authorized vaccine or treatment for Marburg.



Dengue: Three more people died of dengue fever in Pakistan's southern Sindh province, bringing the total fatalities this year to 36, the provincial health department said Saturday.

A 50-year-old man and an 80-year-old woman died in Hyderabad district, while a 55-year-old woman passed away in Karachi, it said.

A total of 5,229 tests were conducted during the period, with 774 returning positive, the department said. Over 180 patients were also admitted to hospitals across Sindh during the

same period, while 191 patients were discharged after recovery.

Health officials urged residents to eliminate mosquito breeding sites and seek prompt medical attention in case of symptoms.



Bird flu: A 22-year-old Cambodian man had died of H5N1 human avian influenza, said a Ministry of Health's statement released on Sunday.

"A laboratory result from the National Institute of Public Health showed on Nov. 15, 2025 that the man was positive for H5N1 virus," the statement said.

The ill-fated man lived in Kien Khleang village of Chroy Changvar district in the capital Phnom Penh.

Health authorities are looking into the source of the infection and are examining any suspected cases or people who have been in contact with the victim in order to prevent an outbreak in the community, the statement said.

Tamiflu (oseltamivir), an antiviral drug to prevent the bird flu from spreading, was also distributed to people who had direct contact with the victim, it added.

H5N1 influenza is a flu that normally spreads between sick poultry, but it can sometimes spread from poultry to humans, and its symptoms include fever, cough, runny nose, and severe respiratory illness.

The Ministry of Health called on people to be extra vigilant and not to eat ill or dead poultry, saying that bird flu still poses a threat to people's health.

SPORTS

Doncic and Reaves combine for 66 as Lakers roll past Bucks

Cavaliers rally over Grizzlies

MILWAUKEE, Nov 16, (AP): Milwaukee, Luka Doncic had 41 points and nine rebounds, Austin Reaves added 25 points and eight assists, and Los Angeles beat Milwaukee 119-95.

Deandre Ayton had 20 points and 10 rebounds for the Lakers. Both teams were playing the second game of a back-to-back, with each notching wins in NBA Cup games on Friday night. The Lakers played without Rui Hachimura (calf tightness) and Marcus Smart (illness). LeBron James also remained out with sciatica and has missed all 14 games this season. Giannis Antetokounmpo had 32 points and 10 rebounds, AJ Green scored 15 points and Gary Trent Jr. added 13 for the Bucks (8-6), who couldn't overcome ice-cold first-half shooting and ended with a season-low point total.

Cavaliers 108, Grizzlies 100

In Cleveland, Donovan Mitchell scored 30 points, including 14 in the fourth quarter over four minutes, to rally the Cleveland Cavaliers to a 108-100 victory over the Memphis Grizzlies on Saturday. Evan Mobley had 22 points and 13 rebounds for Cleveland, which used a 17-2 run to seize a 103-92 lead with 3:36 remaining. The Cavaliers outscored Memphis 32-16 in the fourth after trailing by double digits for much of the middle periods. Jaren Jackson Jr. scored 26 points and tied his career high with 12 free throws made, but shot just 6 of 23 from the field for the Grizzlies. Zach Edey had 13 points and seven rebounds in his season debut following left ankle surgery on June 7. Memphis point guard Ja Morant scored seven points in six minutes before exiting with right calf soreness. He missed the previous game Wednesday in Boston with a sore right ankle.

Thunder 109, Hornets 96

In Charlotte, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 33 points and Chet Holmgren added 25 as the defending champion Oklahoma City used a big third quarter to beat Charlotte Hornets for their fifth straight win. Ajay Mitchell scored 14 points for the Thunder, who have won 23 consecutive games against Eastern Conference opponents and are 22-2 in their last 24 road contests. Isaiah Hartenstein had 12 points and 11 rebounds, and Cason Wallace Chipped scored 10 points. Miles Bridges scored 15 points and Ryan Kalkbrenner, Collin Sexton and Moussa Diabate had 13 points apiece for the Hornets who played without Brandon Miller (shoulder subluxation) and LaMelo Ball, who sat out the second game of a back-to-back after returning from a ankle impingement Friday night in Milwaukee.

Nuggets 123, Timberwolves 112

In Minneapolis, Tim Hardaway Jr. and Nikola Jokic led Denver over Minnesota for their seventh straight victory Saturday night. The Nuggets were missing both of their starting forwards, Christian Braun (left ankle sprain) and Cam Johnson (right biceps strain), who were both injured during Denver's win over the Los Angeles Clippers on Wednesday. Braun is expected to



Milwaukee Bucks' Bobby Portis and Los Angeles Lakers' Luka Doncic battle for a loose ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Milwaukee. (AP)

be sidelined at least six weeks. The Northwest Division rivals have met in the playoffs twice in the last three years. The Timberwolves swept the regular-season series last year, but Denver has won both meetings this season.

Raptors 129, Pacers 111

In Indianapolis, RJ Barrett and Jakob Poeltl each scored 22 points and Toronto wrapped up a successful five-game road trip with a victory over Indiana. Barrett made 9 of 17 shots with three 3-pointers for the Raptors, who won four

games on the trip and improved to 6-3 on the road, 8-5 overall. Poeltl made eight of nine shots and had nine rebounds, but was just 6 of 14 at the line. Toronto had seven double-digit scorers. Brandon Ingram added 19. Scottie Barnes had 14 points, 11 rebounds and six assists. The Raptors built a nine-point halftime lead and gradually pulled away, the margin reaching 26. Pascal Siakam scored 30 points with five 3-pointers for the Pacers, who had just two regular starters in the lineup due to injuries. The other healthy regular, point guard Andrew Nembhard, had 22 points and five assists.

Shevchenko defends 125-pound championship

Makhachev wins 170-pound title, ties UFC record with 16th straight victory

NEW YORK, Nov 16, (AP): Islam Makhachev needed a unanimous decision to defeat Jack Della Maddalena to win the 170-pound championship and tie the UFC record of 16 straight victories to cap a pair of lackluster title fights on Saturday night at UFC 322 at Madison Square Garden. Makhachev - never seriously tested in the lopsided bout - proved to be the better grappler and used repeated take-downs to neutralize Della Maddalena's offense and go on to win 50-45 on all three cards. Makhachev (28-1) surrendered his lightweight title earlier this year after four straight title defenses so he could move up and go for gold in another weight class. He's matched UFC Hall of Fame fighter Anderson Silva for the record of 16 straight wins.



Russia's Islam Makhachev celebrates after defeating Australia's Jack Della Maddalena during a welterweight title bout at the UFC 322 mixed martial arts event in New York. (AP)

Makhachev joined a short list in UFC history - the company just celebrated the Nov. 12, 1993, anniversary date of its first card - of male fighters who won championships in two weight classes. The others: Henry Cejudo, Daniel Cormier, Randy Couture, Georges St-Pierre, B.J. Penn, Conor McGregor, Jon Jones, Alex Pereira and Ilia Topuria. Della Maddalena - who ended an 18-fight career win streak, that featured 14 finishes - walked out of the cage without conducting the traditional post-fight interview and lost his first title defense since he beat Belal Muhammad via unanimous decision in May to wrest away the welterweight championship. Valentina Shevchenko successfully defended her 125-pound championship via unanimous decision in a me-

thodical five-round bout against Zhang Weili. In a matchup between who are widely considered the two best pound-for-pound fighters in the women's division, the action never got going and both fighters spent more time clutching each other on the canvas than putting a serious scare into the other. Zhang, a former two-time straw-weight champion and the first Chinese

champion in UFC history, vacated her 115-pound title last month so she could get her shot at Shevchenko. The fighters were booed between rounds, and the end of the fifth round was met with a muted reaction - a packed crowd that included acting U.S. Attorney Alina Habba and actor Ice-T - for a dud championship bout positioned as the co-main event. Zhang (26-4) failed to join Amanda Nunes as the only UFC women to become champions in two weight classes. She also declined to say if she would return to 115 pounds. The 37-year-old Shevchenko (26-4-1) won her 11th overall title fight once she swept the scorecards 50-45 against Zhang. She also became the first female UFC fighter to record 60 career takedowns - and the fight indeed ended with Zhang on her back. The show went on without an appearance from President Donald Trump, a close friend of UFC CEO Dana White, who normally has a cage-side seat for the tri-state area's biggest events. UFC fans at the Garden, though, did get a big fight well ahead of the main event when a massive brawl broke out near one of the tunnels used for fight entrances and spilled through the stands and near press row. The stir - which involved MMA fighter Dillon Danis - had the crowd howling and caused a short delay to the start of the pay-per-view card as police and security tried to bust up the melee. Fists continued to fly at a furious pace once UFC 322 truly got underway. Beneil Dariush (in 16 seconds of the first round), Carlos Prates (at 1:28 of the second round), and Michael Morales (at 3:27 of the first round) each won with devastating knockouts to open the card. "I am regretting not going to ufc at msg now," New York Knicks star Jalen Brunson posted on social media. Ethyn Ewing needed only two days' notice - and short rest - to win his first fight for UFC. Ewing won his UFC debut - just eight days after his last professional fight - via unanimous decision over Malcolm Wellmaker on an undercard bout Saturday night at UFC 322. Ewing got the call on Thursday morning after Cody Haddon dropped out of the fight with an injury that he was needed in a pinch. One problem, Ewing missed that call - and many, many more trying to wake the MMA fighter. He joked he slept through about 40 missed calls before finally getting around to answering the phone - and he answered the bell at the Garden, where former New York Knicks' great Patrick Ewing's No. 33 banner hangs in the rafters. The 27-year-old Ewing won a Nov. 7 fight as part of the A1 Combat 32 promotion and has won nine straight MMA fights overall. He wouldn't mind sticking around the big time - and called out White to try and make it happen. "I have to say, that was an amazing performance," Ewing said inside the cage. "Mr. White?" Ewing swept the scorecards in the 145-pound bout, 30-27, 29-28, 29-28.

Marciello, Heinrich complete the podium

Fuoco claims first FIA GT World Cup win for Ferrari

MACAO, Nov 16, (Xinhua): Antonio Fuoco delivered Ferrari's first FIA GT World Cup title on Sunday with a calm, controlled drive from pole position, completing a perfect weekend on Macao's Guia Circuit. Starting from pole after having won Saturday's qualification race, Fuoco led all 16 laps of the main race in his 296 GT3 for AF Corse SRL. The Italian crossed the line 3.96 seconds ahead of BMW's Raffaele Marciello, with Porsche driver Laurin Heinrich finishing third to complete a three-manufacturer podium. "It's really special to win Macao, especially after last year," said Fuoco. "We came back this year with one goal, and we delivered across the whole weekend. We got the qualifying, pole, and then a clean race yesterday and today. I think we managed everything really well." Fuoco's victory served as redemption of sorts after the 2024 race, when he and Marciello ran wide while fighting for the lead at Lisboa Bend and fell down the order. This year, Fuoco avoided trouble and became the first driver to win the event for a non-German marque. The race began with immediate drama. At Reservoir Bend, Alessio Picariello spun his Porsche into the barrier after light contact with Marciello, putting the Belgian out on the spot with damaged rear suspension. Moments later, Ayhan Can Guven was pushed into the tyre barrier at Lisboa by Heinrich after the Porsche driver had passed China's Ye Yifei for third. Unable to avoid Guven's stranded car, Luca Engstler crashed heavily into the back of the Porsche, and Dorian Bocolacci collided with Engstler's Lamborghini, triggering an early safety car, while the stricken trio were removed from the circuit. Racing resumed on lap four, and Fuoco immediately accelerated to neutralize BMW's straight-line speed advantage. Behind him, Marciello held off sustained pressure from Heinrich and Audi driver Joel Eriksson, who finished fourth. Despite strong pace in the middle sector, the tight confines of the Guia Circuit meant neither Heinrich nor Eriksson had opportunities to pass Marciello, who repeatedly reset the gap on the track's long straights after the pits. Ye finished fifth after losing places early, while Sheldon van der Linde climbed from 12th to sixth with one of the few clean overtakes of the day. Further down the order, Christopher Haase and Laurens Vanthoor made steady progress, with Vanthoor recovering to ninth after a lock-up at Lisboa, while Benjamin Goethe rounded out the top 10. Multiple Macao winner Edoardo Mortara was another who failed to see the chequered flag, after his Lamborghini slid into the tyres at the tight Melco hairpin following an apparent electrical shutdown.

Stolz registers another triumph

Gao wins men's 500m bronze

WASHINGTON, Nov 16, (Xinhua): China collected two medals in the men's sprint events at the ISU Speed Skating World Cup in Salt Lake City, with Olympic champion Gao Tingyu taking bronze in the men's 500m and Ning Zhongyan finishing runner-up in the men's 1,500m as the season opened on one of the world's fastest rinks. In a disrupted men's 500m marked by crashes and a brief ice repair, American sensation Jordan Stolz, fresh from 1,000m gold on Friday, registered another triumph in 33.88 seconds. Poland's Damian Zurek, runner-up in Friday's 1,000m, again finished second, 0.02 seconds behind. Gao clocked 33.93 to secure China's first podium of the weekend, as five skaters broke the 34-second mark. Zurek, who overcame a false start, said: "I'm super happy that it's silver again, and I'm starting the season in a good position." In the men's 1,500m, China's Ning refreshed his own national record, taking silver in 1:41.02, 0.54 seconds behind Stolz, who completed a sweep of the men's 500m, 1,000m and 1,500m over two days at the Utah Olympic Oval. "I thought about it before the race," Stolz said about Kjeld Nuis' 1:40.17 world record. "I think if I were a little bit more rested going into it, not having done the 1,000m and then a 500m before, even if it wasn't just the 500m, maybe I could have gotten it." Germany's 18-year-old Finn Sonnekalb placed third in 1:41.33, breaking the junior world record previously held by Stolz. The American acknowledged the challenge from his young rival, saying: "He just did really good. I think he's going to do good at senior level too, he's on the podium today." Elsewhere on Saturday, Dutch sprinter Femke Kok skated 36.48 seconds to win women's 500m. Kok acknowledged she felt the pressure seeing Japan's Yukino Yoshida open with 36.88: "When I saw 36.88s, I knew I almost had to skate a personal best to beat it." Kok's time also prompted her to reflect on Lee Sang-hwa's 2013 world mark of 36.36: "Crossing the line, that was the first thing I thought: it's getting really close now, only 0.12s... The world record is super sharp, but I hope to be able to continue improving." American Erin Jackson finished second in 36.87, and Yoshida claimed a bronze. In women's middle distance, Joy Beune of the Netherlands added the 1,500m title to her 3,000m victory from Friday, crossing the line in 1:51.05. Her teammate Antoinette Rijpma-De Jong took silver in 1:51.71 and Norway's Ragne Wiklund claimed bronze in 1:51.96. This season's Salt Lake City stop is one of four World Cups that double as qualification events for the 2026 Milan-Cortina Olympic Winter Games. Competition continues Sunday with the second 500m, mass start and team events.

Friendly marred by bench-clearing fight

Reyna breaks father's record in US win over Paraguay

CHESTER, Pa., Nov 16, (AP): Gio Reyna scored in his first international start in 16 months to surpass his father in career goals and then set up Folarin Balogun's tiebreaking goal in the 71st minute to lead the United States over Paraguay 2-1 on Saturday night in a friendly between World Cup-bound teams that sparked a late brawl. American defender Alex Freeman and Paraguay captain Diego Gomez both tried to pick up a ball that rolled out during second-half stoppage time, and they started scrapping as both benches joined in. Paraguay's Omar Alderete, who was not in the game, was given a red card, and American midfielder Cristian Roldan a yellow card. "That type of situation is very, very, very dangerous," U.S. coach Mauricio Pochettino. "I don't like this type of situation." Playing two days after his 23rd birthday, the oft-injured Reyna scored in the fourth minute of his first start for club or country since Sept. 14 and just his second since March 1. Alex Arce took advantage of a defensive lapse to equalize in the 10th minute. Diego Luna and Roldan forced a turn-over four minutes after entering, leading to the go-ahead goal. Juan Cáceres tried to regain possession and knocked the ball away to Balogun, who dished to Reyna. The midfielder took a touch and centered the ball, which deflected off

Damián Bobadilla, and Balogun scored from seven yards for the eighth goal, his third in four matches. Max Arsten got his team-high fifth assist of 2025 as the U.S. extended its unbeaten streak to four - all against

World Cup teams. Time is dwindling for U.S. players to make an impression on Pochettino. After the 16th-ranked Americans play No., 15 Uruguay on Tuesday, the U.S. will have two more friendlies in March

before Pochettino announces his World Cup roster. "That is the way that we want to compete," Pochettino said. "The most important is what we saw during more than 90 minutes: the spirit, the fight."



United States' Tanner Tessmann (8) and Paraguay's Alex Arce, right, challenge for the ball during the first half of an international friendly soccer match in Chester, Pa. (AP)

A promising start to the season

Channing, Al-Hajri, & Al-Anaz shine in Kuwait Equestrian League round

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: British rider Nick Channing delivered a commanding performance to close out the second round of the local equestrian league, clinching first place in the Grand Prix (140 cm) with a flawless jump-off round of 40.24 seconds. He was followed by riders Hussein Al-Kharafi, Yara Al-Henedy, Steven Daniels, Anaz Al-Anaz, Fawaz Al-Subaie, and Khaled Al-Khubaizi. The winners were honored by Sheikh Sabah Ali Al-Sabah, Director of Sahara Equestrian Resort.

In the Medium Tour (130 cm), Latifa Al-Hajri claimed top spot, while Dalal Safar secured victory in another 130 cm class. Mohammed Al-Otaibi continued his strong form by winning the 120 cm event. The opening day of the championship also featured standout performances. Anaz Al-Anaz took the 135 cm Grand Prix title, Mohammed Al-Melifi topped the 125 cm class, and Sojo Babi won the 115 cm event. Mohammed Al-Otaibi added another success by finishing first in the 105 cm class.

Sufian Ahmad Buqmaz, Administrative Director of the Kuwait Equestrian Federation, said: "It's a promising start to the 2025–2026 season, which is expected to be exceptional in every aspect thanks to the support of the Public Authority for Sports and private-sector partners. We've already seen significant improvement in both rider and horse performance, and the many international tournaments scheduled this season will play a key role in raising the overall competitive level."



Sheikh Sabah Al-Sabah poses with the Grand Prix champions.

Kazma seeks win over Shabab Al-Ahli to keep WASL qualification hopes alive

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 16: Kazma Basketball will welcome Shabab Al-Ahli Dubai tonight at 7 p.m. at the Basketball Federation Hall, in the third round of Group A of the West Asia Super League (Gulf Zone) "WASL."

Al-Ittihad of Saudi Arabia leads the group with 5 points from two wins and one loss, despite a narrow 79–84 defeat to Bahrain's Al-Muharraq last week in the opening match of the third round. The victory moved Al-Muharraq into second place with 4 points from one win and two losses, while Kazma sit third with 3 points—equal with Shabab Al-Ahli in fourth.

Kazma, under Slovenian coach Bojan Lazic, aim to bounce back after their last loss to Al-Ittihad. The "Orange" opened the tournament with a win over Al-Muharraq and are eager to challenge Al-Ittihad for the top spot by securing a win tonight, keeping their hopes for direct qualification



Kazma players react with excitement after scoring.

alive. The group remains highly competitive, with all four teams closely matched, making it difficult to predict which sides will advance.

Kazma will lean on the experience of captain Ahmed Al-Balushi, along

with Abdulrahman Al-Sahou, Hussein Al-Khabbaz, Abdullah Ibrahim, and Abdulaziz Al-Fadhli, complemented by American players Phil Greene and JaJuan Johnson, as well as Serbian talent Strahinja Miković.

Bilbao lights up in red, green and white

Palestinian team draws 50,000 fans in friendly

BILBAO, Spain, Nov 16, (AP): A selection of Palestinian footballers took on a group of Spanish players from the Basque Country on Saturday in a friendly match with political overtones relating to Israel's military actions in Gaza.

Organizers said some 50,000 spectators had tickets for the match at San Mames Stadium, the home of Athletic Bilbao.

Many fans waved Palestinian flags, and flags of the northern Basque Country region. Several thousand people also marched with flags before the game.

Spain has seen major protests against Israel's military response to the Oct. 2023 Hamas attack.

Bilbao was the site of the first of a series of large protests against an Israeli-owned cycling team at the Spanish Vuelta in September.

The Basque team included players from Athletic and Real Sociedad, along with other professional sides. None of Spain's footballers



Fans wave Palestinian flags during a friendly match between a selection of Palestinian players and a group of Spanish players from the Basque Country, held to protest Israel's military actions in Gaza, in Bilbao, Spain. (AP)

were available because they were playing a World Cup qualifier. The Palestinian team will also take on a selection of players from Spain's northeastern Catalonia region in Barcelona on Tuesday.

South Africa ends 15-year wait for test win in India

Proteas take series lead

KOLKATA, India, Nov 16, (AP): South Africa beat India by 30 runs to win the first cricket test and take a 1-0 lead in the two-match series on Sunday.

It was the Proteas' first test win on Indian soil in 15 years, as the hosts collapsed to 93 all out in the second innings and failed to chase down the 124-run target at Eden Gardens.

Off-spinner Simon Harmer took 4-21 in 14 overs, while left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj picked up 2-37. All-rounder Marco Jansen also took 2-15 as the world test champions completed a remarkable win in less than three days.

It was the second-lowest fourth-innings' target India failed to chase down in tests - after 120 against West Indies in 1997 (Barbados). It was also the second-lowest total defended by South Africa in tests - after 117 against Australia in 1994 (Sydney).

Overall, it was the second-lowest total defended on Indian soil in tests. India had previously defended 107 against Australia in Mumbai (2004).

India was a batter short as skipper Shubman Gill, who suffered a neck spasm whilst batting on day two, was subsequently hospitalized for observation and care on Saturday evening. On Sunday, the BCCI said that Gill would take no further part in the test. There is no word yet on his availability for the second test.

At lunch, India was down to 10-2 and effectively 10-3 in Gill's absence.

Jansen struck twice in the brief seven-over session before lunch, removing both openers. Yashasvi Jaiswal was caught behind for a four-ball duck. Then Lokesh Rahul was caught behind for one.

Post lunch, Dhruv Jurel and Washington Sundar notched up 32 off 77 balls for the third wicket.

Jurel scored 13 off 34 balls, hitting three fours. He looked to attack but holed out in the deep off Harmer in the 15th over.

Harmer then delivered the biggest blow five overs later - Rishabh Pant, struggling for rhythm, offered a simple return catch and was dismissed for two runs.

Ravindra Jadeja scored 18 and put on 26 off 45



South Africa's captain Temba Bavuma, right, bats on the third day of the first cricket test match between India and South Africa in Kolkata, India. (AP)

balls, before he was out lbw to Harmer once again. It was Harmer's fourth four-wicket haul in tests in India.

Sundar battled for 92 deliveries and scored 31 runs, with only two fours, and his dismissal was the turning point. South Africa gambled with Aiden Markram's part-time spin as Sundar was caught at slip in the 31st over.

Axar Patel hit two sixes as he raced to 26 off 17 balls, but Maharaj struck twice in the 35th over to seal a famous win for South Africa.

Patel holed out to a brilliant running catch from Temba Bavuma, and then Mohammed Siraj was caught first ball at slip, as India succumbed at home to spin once again.

Harmer was named player of the match for his match haul of 8-51.

"Today the pitch was a little flatter and the ball went softer quickly. We were behind the eight

ball, but for the team to fight back the way it did, shows where this group of players is at. It shows what we are capable of and the belief that we have. There is still another test to go, but we are going to enjoy this win as it doesn't come very often," he said.

Earlier, South Africa was bowled out for 153 runs in its second innings. It added 60 vital runs to its overnight score of 93-7.

Bavuma scored 55 not out off 136 balls - the only half-century of the test across both sides - as he marshalled the Proteas to a challenging fourth innings' score.

The skipper added 44 off 79 balls with Corbin Bosch for the eighth wicket.

This partnership frustrated India as it missed a trick in not deploying its pacers first up. Bosch scored 25 off 37 balls, with two fours and one six, adding 24 more runs Sunday.

47th World Military Parachuting Championship kicks off in Doha

DOHA, Nov 16, (KUNA): The 47th World Military Parachuting Championship (CISM 2025) officially opened on Saturday at Umm Al-Shokhot Airfield in Doha under the patronage of Qatari Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defense Affairs, Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman Al Thani.

The opening ceremony was attended by Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, President of the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC); Air Marshal Staff Jasem bin Mohammad Al Mannai, Chief of Staff of the Qatari Armed Forces; and Col. Nilton Gomes Rolim Filho, President of the International Military Sports Council (CISM).

The championship runs until November 23 and features 320 military skydivers from 30 countries.

On the sidelines of the event, Sheikh Saud and Sheikh Joaan inaugurated the Air Sports Museum, further highlighting Qatar's growing reputation in hosting major international sports events.

Additionally, Sheikh Saud received a Guinness World Records certificate recognizing Qatar's achievement in organizing the largest military parachute air display. The certificate was presented by Guinness World Records representative Emma Brain following the opening ceremony.

Best of the Rest

Xu Jiayu breaks national record: Xu Jiayu of Zhejiang broke his own national record in the men's 50m backstroke at China's 15th National Games here on Sunday, clocking 24.36 seconds in the semifinals.

"It's only 0.02 seconds faster than my previous record, but it's a real confidence boost and will help me in the races ahead," Xu said.

In the women's 50m butterfly final, Zhang Yufei of Jiangsu claimed her second gold of the meet, touching in 25.61 seconds. Zhejiang's Wu Qingfeng and Yu Yiting took silver and bronze respectively. Competing almost daily since the start of the swimming program, Zhang said she felt strong despite the heavy schedule.

□ □ □

Braathen wins slalom: Lucas Pinheiro Braathen won a men's World Cup slalom Sunday to give Brazil its first-ever victory in a top-level ski race less than three months before the Milan Cortina Winter Olympics.

Pinheiro Braathen held on to his commanding first-run lead to beat 2022 Olympic champion Clement Noel of France by 0.31 seconds. Finnish racer Eduard Hallberg was 0.57 back in third for his first career World Cup podium.

After finishing, Pinheiro Braathen clicked out of his skis, fell to his knees and screamed "yeah" with both arms in the air. (AP)

Kuwaiti jet ski champions dominate GP4 & GP1 in UAE

ABU DHABI, Nov 16 (KUNA): Kuwaiti racers Fahad Al-Yaqoub and Youssef Al-Shareeda achieved a new milestone in the Spark GP4 sitting category at the UAE International Jet Ski Championship after securing first and second places respectively.

The event also marked the strong return of world champion Youssef Al-Abdulrazzaq, who finished second in the GP1 sitting category for professional riders following a full season away due to injury.

Al-Yaqoub and Al-Shareeda excelled amid fierce competition in Abu Dhabi, with Al-Yaqoub's consistent performance earning him the lead in the overall points standings for the 2025 season, reinforcing Kuwait's presence in the sport.

Director of the Marine Sports Club's Motors Committee Ibrahim Ramadan told KUNA on Sunday



Kuwaiti athletes Fahad Al-Yaqoub and Youssef Al-Shareeda rejoice in their achievement.

that the top two finish by Al-Yaqoub and Al-Shareeda in the Spark GP4 category reflects the strong performances delivered by Kuwaiti racers



Kuwaiti champion Youssef Al-Abdulrazzaq during the award ceremony

throughout the season.

Ramadan noted that the Spark GP4 category featured six racers from Kuwait, Bahrain, and the

UAE, with Al-Yaqoub and Al-Shareeda asserting their dominance to claim first and second place deservedly.

He also expressed satisfaction with Al-Abdulrazzaq's successful comeback, saying his runner-up finish in the GP1 professional category affirms his experience and ability to compete despite his season-long absence.

The 2025 UAE International Jet Ski Championship began in January and concluded this November, with the final round held from the 14th until Sunday and featuring strong participation from elite riders.

Ramadan affirmed that the Marine Sports Club will continue supporting its athletes and providing the environment needed for regional and international competition, praising the commitment and discipline shown by the Kuwaiti racers.

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NEWS



Spain's Mikel Oyarzabal celebrates after scoring his side's fourth goal during a World Cup 2026 group E qualifying soccer match between Georgia and Spain in Tbilisi, Georgia. (AP)



A Kuwaiti player goes for a shot as Iraqis defend.

KUNA photo

Kuwait bounces back against Iraq as track, fencing teams arrive in Riyadh

RIYADH, Nov 16: Kuwait's handball team recovered from its opening defeat at the 6th Islamic Solidarity Games in Saudi Arabia by securing a commanding 33-22 victory over Iraq in the second round. The win in Group B, which also features Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, revived Kuwait's hopes of reaching the semifinals. The team decisive clash against Saudi Arabia tomorrow will determine advancement to the next stage.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's national track and field team has arrived in Riyadh to compete in the Games. The delegation includes:

Men: Yaqub Al-Youha (110m hurdles), Ibra-

him Al-Dhafiri (800m & 1500m), Isa Al-Zankawi (discus throw), Abdulrahman Al-Azmi (javelin), Bader Al-Suwaid (800m), Abdullah Al-Zankawi (discus throw)

Women: Mudawi Al-Shammari (100m & 200m), Amal Al-Roumi (800m & 1500m), Aisha Al-Khader (long jump)

Coaches: Bader Ali, Hamo Boukili, Mohammed Al-Zankawi, Umit Tan, Naik Kashinata

Track and field competitions will begin Monday morning and run through Thursday at Prince Faisal bin Fahd Stadium.

Kuwait's fencing squad has also arrived in

Riyadh, with events starting today. Abdulrahman Al-Manea and Ali Al-Nakkas will compete in the individual épée qualifying rounds. The full team includes Abdulrahman Al-Manea, Abdulwahab Mohammed, Ali Al-Nakkas, Ali Al-Nassar, Ammar Al-Omari, Rakan Al-Harban, and Mohammed Abdulkarim, coached by Saud Al-Zamel, Arnok Chouffai, and Luigi Taranino.

In equestrian action, riders Ali Al-Kharafi and Hamad Al-Hajri concluded their league participation, finishing first and twelfth respectively in the show jumping competitions.

Spain surges toward World Cup berth

Kazakhstan holds Belgium

BARCELONA, Spain, Nov 16, (AP): Mikel Oyarzabal scored twice as Spain maintained its perfect form in World Cup qualifying with a 4-0 win in Georgia as it closed in on a berth at next year's showpiece tournament.

Luis de la Fuente's side has scored 19 times while conceding zero goals in five group victories.

The European champion is poised to wrap up a spot in the finals when it meets Turkey on Tuesday in its last qualifier.

Spain leads Group E by three points over Turkey, which beat Bulgaria 2-0 on Saturday.

The only way the Turks could pip Spain for the top spot and grab a direct ticket to the World Cup would be by winning in Seville by a huge margin.

A tiebreaker would be decided by overall goal difference. Spain is on +19, while Turkey is on +5.

Even so, De la Fuente said it was too early to celebrate.

"We have maximum respect for all our rivals, including Turkey," De la Fuente said. "We have to keep our feet on the ground and maintain this attitude until we are mathematically qualified."

The home side didn't miss injured stars Lamine Yamal, Pedri González or Rodri against the overmatched Georgia.

The Real Sociedad striker Oyarzabal led Spain with his two goals and an assist. Martín Zubimendi and Ferran Torres also scored as their team was up 3-0 by halftime.

Oyarzabal opened the scoring with a penalty in the 11th minute and headed in the fourth goal in the 63rd.

Those were goals 20 and 21 for him on his 50th appearance for Spain. His most important goal for his country was the winner in the 2024 European Championship final, a 2-1 victory over England.

Turkey locked up a top-two finish and assured a playoff spot after Hakan Çalhanoğlu scored a penalty and Bulgaria defender Atanas Chernev added an own goal.

The 12 group winners from European qualification go directly to the World Cup. France, England and Croatia have won their groups. The continent's remaining four berths are decided by a playoff of the dozen runners-up.

Belgium was held to a 1-1 draw in Kazakhstan and missed a chance to qualify for the tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Belgium leads Group J with two points more than North Macedonia. Rudi García's side can still advance with a win over Liechtenstein on Tuesday in their final qualifier.

Kazakhstan took a ninth-minute lead through 17-year-old Dastan Satpayev. Hans Vanaken leveled for Belgium in the 48th when the Club Brugge midfielder headed in a cross by Timothy Castagne.

But Belgium, which had routed Kazakhstan 6-0 in September, was unable to take advantage of playing with an extra man from the 79th minute after Islam Chesnokov was red carded for a hard challenge on Jeremy Doku.



Austria's Kevin Danso, left, and Cyprus' Pieros Sotiriou jump for the ball during the World Cup 2026 group H qualifying soccer match between Cyprus and Austria, in Limassol, Cyprus. (AP)

Also in Group J, Jordan James scored as Wales won 1-0 at Liechtenstein. Wales and North Macedonia are tied on 13 points in joint second place before they face-off on Tuesday.

Austria forward Marko Arnautovic scored twice to spark a 2-0 win in Cyprus, but Edin Dzeko helped Bosnia and Herzegovina keep in contention for the top spot in Group H after beating Romania 3-1.

Austria leads Bosnia by two points before they play in Vienna on Tuesday.

They are both guaranteed a top-two finish.

Greece beat Scotland 3-2 in Group C, while Denmark drew 2-2 with Belarus. That means the Danes will have a one-point lead over the Scots when they meet in Glasgow on Tuesday.

Switzerland remained in charge of Group B after downing Sweden 4-1, while Kosovo remained three points behind following a 2-0 win in Slovenia. Kosovo hosts the Swiss next week in Pristina.

Technical staff analyzes Mauritania's recent friendlies

Comeback win boosts Kuwait ahead of playoff

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

CAIRO, Nov 16: Kuwait's national football team will complete its final training session this evening ahead of its match against The Gambia tomorrow at Al-Salam Stadium in Cairo, part of the ongoing camp preparing the squad for the Arab Cup playoff against Mauritania on November 25.

Head coach Helio Souza met with the players before yesterday's session, highlighting the defensive errors that emerged during the first half of the recent friendly against Tanzania—mistakes that led to conceding two early goals. He emphasized the importance of minimizing such lapses and maintaining higher concentration levels to secure a positive outcome.

Despite a shaky start and trailing 0-2 at halftime, Al-Azraq produced an impressive comeback to defeat Tanzania 4-3.



Hassan Hamdan celebrates scoring the fourth goal against Tanzania.

Alphonse Mombwa in the 7th minute and Alarakhia in the 35th, during a

half in which Kuwait struggled and allowed multiple threats on goalkeeper Khaled Al-Rashidi.

Kuwait responded strongly after the break, dominating possession and overturning the scoreline. Mohammed Daham scored twice in the 46th and 53rd minutes, followed by a goal from Yousef Nasser in the 64th minute. Hassan Hamdan added the fourth in the 69th, before Tanzania narrowed the margin with a late goal from Mombwa two minutes before the final whistle.

Yesterday's training also included recovery sessions for several players due to the high workload from the match, while others received treatment for minor knocks.

Souza and his coaching staff have also been reviewing Mauritania's recent performances as part of their preparation for the upcoming playoff. Mauritania drew 1-1 with Tunisia last week, and then suffered a 0-1 defeat to Libya in Tripoli two days ago.

Kuwait wins 2 bronze medals at Qatar Taekwondo Championship

DOHA, Nov 16, (KUNA): Kuwait celebrated two bronze medal wins at the 5th Qatar International Taekwondo Championship, organized by the Qatar Taekwondo, Judo, and Karate Federation, which continues through today.

The first medal was claimed by national team athlete Ghala Al-Assaf in the junior's over-59 kg category. The second came at the club level, with Ahmed Al-Mutairi of Al-Nasr Club earning bronze in the junior's under-57 kg division.

The championship is taking place at Lusail Hall, featuring 1,021 athletes alongside 289 technical and administrative officials, representing 175 clubs and national federations



KUNA photo

One of the medalists pose with an official.

from 48 countries. Competitions are held across four age categories: cadets, juniors, youth, and seniors.

McIlroy loses playoff to Fitzpatrick in wild end to World Tour Championship but wins Race to Dubai

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Nov 16, (AP): Rory McIlroy's banner year in golf ended with more drama Sunday when he eagled the last hole in regulation to force a playoff but lost out to Matt Fitzpatrick, who won the season-closing World Tour Championship for a third time.

The consolation for McIlroy? A fourth straight Race to Dubai title - crowning him as the top European player of the year - to add to his wins at the Masters to complete the career Grand Slam, The Players Championship and his home Irish Open. McIlroy also helped Team Europe win an away Ryder Cup.

All of his big individual victories came in playoffs but a final one proved just beyond the Northern Irishman, though, after he hit his drive into a creek on the first playoff hole - No. 18 - and made bogey. Fitzpatrick chipped to 3 feet and rolled in a par putt to win the title again at Jumeirah Golf Estates, after 2016 and 2020.

"Obviously you never like to see the way it ends, but obvi-

ously delighted," Fitzpatrick said after sealing his first win in two years.

McIlroy generated the biggest roar of the day when he poured in a 15-footer for eagle on No. 18 to complete a round of 5-under 67 and join Fitzpatrick (66) on 18-under par for the week. He also eagled the last at the Irish Open in September to force a playoff before going on to beat Sweden's Joakim Lagergren at The K Club.

"In typical Rory fashion, he did it again," said Fitzpatrick, who watched it unfold while sitting in the scorer's hut. He met McIlroy outside, shaking his hand and giving his Ryder Cup teammate a hug.

They did so again after the playoff - which finished with both of them as winners.

For McIlroy, it's a seventh Race to Dubai title, putting him one clear of the late Seve Ballesteros and one behind Colin Montgomerie's record haul.

"I didn't get this far in my dreams, so it's very cool," said

McIlroy, who revealed that he spoke to Ballesteros' wife, Carmen, before his round on Sunday.

"It seems within touching distance now," he added about catching Montgomerie. "I'd love to be the winningest European in terms of Order of Merits and season-long races. You know, I've probably got a few more good years left in me, and hopefully I can catch him and surpass him."

Nine players either led or held a share of the lead across a wild few hours at the Earth course that culminated in Fitzpatrick making three birdies in his final five holes to overtake McIlroy and overhaul a slew of Europe's other stars, including Tommy Fleetwood and Ludvig Åberg.

A birdie putt from 6 feet at No. 18 took Fitzpatrick a stroke clear of Fleetwood (67), Åberg (66) and Laurie Canter (67) and two ahead of McIlroy, who was waiting in the 18th fairway knowing he now needed to make eagle.

He hit a fairway wood from around 230 yards to the right

of the pin, got a good read from playing partner Rasmus Neergaard-Petersen, who was a few feet further away, and drained the putt.

Neergaard-Petersen (68) made birdie to join the group on 17 under, in a tie for third.

Fitzpatrick, the U.S. Open champion in 2022, started the season slowly but finished it strong, getting into the Ryder Cup team on the back of top-10 finishes at the British Masters in August and the European Masters and BMW PGA Championship in September. He then won 2 1/2 points from his four matches at Bethpage Black.

"To turn it around in the summer like I did and have a Ryder Cup like I did, feel like it's hard to top given everything," Fitzpatrick said.

"But the way that I played today, I feel like I really didn't hit one bad shot all day. I'm so proud of myself, the effort that everyone puts in behind the scenes. Yeah, what a feeling."