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U.N. WARNS OF WIDER WAR; U.S. VOWS TO BLOCK NUCLEAR IRAN

Kuwait claims right to defend as Iran attack cycle continues

Iranian forces have lost control over strategic waterway: Rubio

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Thursday strongly condemned the latest in a series of Iranian attacks on the country, the most recent launched early Thursday.

In a statement, the ministry described the ongoing attacks as a grave breach of Kuwait's sovereignty and a direct threat to the safety and stability of its citizens and residents. It called the escalation a flagrant violation of in-

ternational law, the UN Charter, and UN Security Council Resolution 2817. These attacks reflect an aggressive posture that jeopardizes regional security and systematically undermines diplomatic de-escalation efforts, the ministry added. Kuwait reiterated its full right under Article 51 of the UN Charter and international law to take all necessary measures to safeguard its sovereignty, protect its security, and defend its territory and vital facilities against any aggression or threat.

The General Staff of the Kuwaiti Armed Forces announced early Thursday

that its air defenses were actively intercepting missile and drone attacks amid the ongoing Iranian aggression.

In a press statement, it said any blasts heard by the public were the result of ongoing interception operations against hostile missiles and drones. It urged residents to remain calm and follow safety instructions issued by the relevant authorities.

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Marzouq Al-Ghanim with his father, Ali Al-Ghanim.

'Fatherhood is a blessing', says Al-Ghanim in touching message

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: Marzouq Al-Ghanim posted a photo of himself with his father, Ali Al-Ghanim, on his account on X. Al-Ghanim wrote, "A father in his children's lives is a blessing that cannot match the entire world."

He added, "I thank God for my father's presence. I ask Him to protect my father, grant him health, well-being and a long life. I ask God Almighty to make me dutiful and loyal to him for as long as I am alive."

He also implored God to protect all fathers and mothers, grant them long and healthy lives, and have mercy on those who passed away.

Eight paths, one new high school roadmap

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei approved Thursday new courses (Masarat) system for high school education, to be implemented on a pilot basis starting in the 2026-27 academic year at 12 schools distributed across all educational districts.

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KFAED photo

Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development Acting Director General Rashed Al-Bader shakes hands with GCCIA Chief Executive Officer Ahmad Al-Ibrahim following the signing of the agreement.

KFAED backs wider power grid, rebuilds Syrian school

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed Thursday a KD 200,000 (about USD 647,100) grant agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA) to finance the preparation of a feasibility study for electrical interconnection with power grids outside the GCC system.

In a statement for KUNA, the KFAED said the study aims to explore opportunities to expand the Gulf electrical interconnection network to include power grids in neighboring countries, contributing to enhanced electricity exchange and supporting regional cooperation in the energy sector.

The study will examine the electricity needs of neighboring countries

and assess the technical and economic feasibility of interconnecting with their power grids, the statement added.

It will also identify stages for future expansion of the interconnection network, select the priority stage, examine available alternatives and choose the most suitable option based on technical and economic criteria.

The Fund explained that the study will include a technical, economic and environmental assessment of the proposed project, covering its main components, costs, implementation methods and expected timeline, as well as an assessment of the economic and social benefits it could generate for member states and countries connected to the Gulf system.

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Bahrain Crown Prince backs greater GCC cooperation

Kuwait eyes Gulf shield against food shocks

MANAMA, Sept 3, (KUNA): Minister of State for Development and Sustainability Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij affirmed on Thursday that the State of Kuwait attaches great importance to food security and supports efforts aimed at strengthening Gulf integration in this field.

This came in a statement to KUNA following her participation in the 38th meeting of the specialized committee, which was attended by GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi, and heads of participating delegations.

Minister Al-Fulaij noted that the meet-

ing was held within the framework of ongoing Gulf efforts to support the achievement of food security and the sustainability of resources in the GCC countries.

She emphasized the importance of continuing to work towards expanding cooperation to broader levels of integra-

tion and coordination, thereby enhancing the GCC countries' ability to address regional and international crises and challenges and establishing a sustainable Gulf food security system.

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GCC General Secretariat photo

The 38th Meeting of the Committee for Agricultural Cooperation and Food Security convenes, with GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi and heads of participating delegations in attendance.

Unwanted 'approve' could cost you, PACI warns

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) urged citizens and residents using the "Kuwait Mobile ID" application not

to approve authentication requests unless they result from an actual action initiated by the user, reports Al-Seyassah daily. PACI emphasized the importance

of verifying the service provider's information and the purpose of the authentication request to ensure information security and safe use.

Heatwave gets a humid twist

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): Kuwait is expected to see hot weather during the day and relatively warm conditions at night over the weekend, with rising humidity and chances of light fog, the Meteorology Department said Thursday.

Acting Director of the Meteorology Department Dhirar Al-Ali told KUNA that the country was affected by the extension of the Indian monsoon low, bringing a hot and relatively humid air mass,

particularly over coastal areas.

Northwesterly winds could occasionally raise dust over exposed areas Thursday, while humidity is expected to increase from the evening and continue through the weekend, with chances of light fog in some areas.

Temperatures are forecast to reach 43-45 degrees Celsius Thursday, 41-43 degrees Friday and 39-41 degrees Saturday, while nighttime lows will range between 25 and 29 degrees.

Friendship in print

Al-Hajeri's landmark book traces Kuwait-Holy See ties

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: Apostolic Nuncio to Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain Eugene Martin Nugent said the relationship between the Holy See and Kuwait are based on solid foundations of friendship, trust, mutual respect and continuous communication.

The Apostolic Nuncio made the statement at the Papal Embassy in

Kuwait on the occasion of launching the book, "The History of Relations between the Holy See and the State of Kuwait", by researcher Nasser Al-Hajeri, with a number of ambassadors, dignitaries and other guests in attendance. He stressed that the book is an important addition to documenting the history of the relationship between the Holy See and Kuwait.

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Apostolic Nuncio to Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain Eugene Martin Nugent poses for a group photo with researcher Nasser Al-Hajeri, ambassadors, dignitaries and guests following the launch of Al-Hajeri's landmark book, "History of Relations between the Holy See and the State of Kuwait," at the Papal Embassy in Kuwait.

Newswatch



2 China's Middle East security proposal: credibility vs. capability

3 Kuwait, Pakistan to share expertise in customs field

MUSCAT: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan discussed on Thursday in Oman ways to enhance Kuwaiti-Omani cooperation in the fields of transportation and logistics services, particularly at Duqm Port.

In a statement, the ministry said Al-Mashaan visited Duqm Port, where she was received by Omani Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology Said Al-Maawali, in the presence of Kuwait's Ambassador to Oman Dr. Mohammad Al-Hajeri and Omani Undersecretary for Transport Khamis Al-Shamakhly.

The minister and her accompanying delegation were briefed on the capabilities and integrated infrastructure provided by Duqm Port to support trade and supply chains. (KUNA)



HH Amir congrats San Marino on 'Nat'l Day'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a cable to San Marino Captains Regent Alice Mina and Vladimiro Selva on the occasion of their country's national day.

His Highness the Amir wished them good health, their country and people further progress and prosperity.

Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable on Thursday to San Marino's Captains Regent Alice Mina and Vladimiro Selva on the occasion of their country's



HH the Amir

national day, wishing them good health and further progress and prosperity.

Prime Minister

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent Thursday a cable to San Marino's Captains Regent Alice Mina and Vladimiro Selva on the occasion of their country's national day.

Other Voices

China's Middle East security proposal: credibility vs. capability

By Abdulaziz Al-Anjeri

Chinese President Xi Jinping's four-point proposal for a new Middle East security architecture deserves more attention.

Unveiled during his talks in Cairo, the proposal rests on what Beijing calls "common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security." It argues that regional security arrangements should be shaped from within the Middle East, that the region's conflicts must be addressed as interconnected rather than isolated crises, and that the Palestinian issue cannot be pushed aside. It also links long-term stability to economic development and secure maritime routes, while calling for respect for the UN Charter, national sovereignty and an end to foreign interference and double standards.

This is not a proposal for a China-led military alliance, nor is Beijing offering to replace the American security umbrella. It is making a more fundamental argument: the rules governing Middle Eastern security should not be written by outside powers alone.

That argument merits a serious hearing. The US-led order has provided sev-

eral countries in the region with deterrence and security guarantees that China is not currently capable of matching. At the same time, it has failed to prevent repeated wars or produce a regional order broadly accepted by the parties expected to live under it.



Al-Anjeri

Washington also enjoys an advantage that is often overlooked. Decades of political engagement and extensive media relationships have given the United States far greater ability to explain, defend and promote its policies across the Arab world. China's economic footprint may be expanding, but its engagement with the region's societies remains comparatively limited. That distance often makes Beijing's intentions appear more opaque than its record alone would suggest.

The numbers complicate the conventional picture. Since the People's Republic of China took its seat on the UN Secu-

rity Council in 1971, Beijing has used its veto roughly 20 times. The United States has used it approximately 89 times, with more than half of those vetoes linked to shielding Israel or blocking measures concerning its conduct.

The contrast extends beyond the Security Council. The United States has used military force without explicit UN authorization in Grenada, Panama, Kosovo and Iraq. More recently, a US military operation captured Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and transferred him to the United States, while American and Israeli forces jointly launched strikes against Iran.

China's record is not beyond criticism. Beijing has repeatedly joined Moscow in vetoing draft Security Council resolutions. It should therefore not be presented as an impartial guardian of international law.

Still, China's relative restraint gives its criticism of foreign intervention a measure of credibility. The widening gap between America's stated principles and some of its actions has made sections of Arab public opinion and the region's policy community more willing to consider what Beijing has to offer.

Credibility, however, is not the same as

capability. Avoiding military intervention does not by itself create a viable security order. Conversely, military superiority does not guarantee lasting political legitimacy.

The Middle East should not be forced to choose between Washington and Beijing. The more useful question is what China can add to the existing security landscape and whether its proposal can complement current guarantees without turning the region into another arena for great-power rivalry.

Regional ownership and common security are not new ideas. What is new is the possibility that a major power may invest sufficient political and economic weight to move them from theory into serious diplomacy. China maintains relationships with governments and movements that often refuse to speak to one another. That gives Beijing an opportunity few others possess.

President Xi's proposal should therefore be welcomed as a starting point, not treated as a finished blueprint or an invitation to align against the United States. If China is prepared to support it with practical mechanisms, sustained diplomacy and credible assurances for smaller states, it could become a serious contribution to a more stable Middle East.



KUNA photo

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and his delegation meet Lesotho's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations Limpho Tau and his team.

FM, Lesotho counterpart discuss bilateral relations

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met on Thursday with Lesotho's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations Limpho Tau on the occasion of his official visit to Kuwait and that of his accompanying delegation.

The meeting discussed bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and ways to enhance and develop them in

various fields.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that the meeting also addressed a number of issues of mutual interest, in addition to reviewing the latest regional and international developments and exchanging views on them.

Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah hosted a luncheon in honor of Limpho Tau and his accompanying delegation.

Kuwait & Italy discuss latest regional , int'l developments

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan headed on Thursday the Kuwaiti delegation in fifth session of political consultations with his Italian counterpart Edmondo Cirielli in Rome.

A ministry statement noted that during the meeting, both sides explored ways to strengthen bilateral relations, and discussed latest regional and international developments, as well as issues of mutual concern.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): The Scientific Center (TSCK) on Thursday organized Eco Talks 2026 in cooperation with the Environment Public Authority (EPA), with participation from government, academic and research bodies and organizations concerned with environmental affairs.

TSCK General Manager Musaed Al-Yaseen said in a statement that the event reflects the center's role in promoting scientific and environmental awareness and providing a platform bringing together specialists, experts and relevant bodies to exchange knowledge and expertise to exchange knowledge and challenges facing Kuwait's environment.

Al-Yaseen said the event focuses on three main themes reflecting Kuwait's natural environment -- desert, coastal and marine -- and related issues including climate change, conservation of natural habitats, biodiversity, pollution and sustainability.

He added that the event highlights the importance of integrating the roles of government, scientific, academic and research institutions and strengthening partnerships that help turn scientific knowledge into prac-



KUNA photo

A group photo of participants and speakers at the Eco Talks '26.

tical initiatives supporting national environmental protection efforts.

Preserving Kuwait's desert, coastal and marine environments is a shared responsibility requiring knowledge, awareness and coordinated efforts, he said, adding that Eco Talks 2026 seeks to bring scientific knowledge closer to society and provide a platform for dialogue among experts, specialists and relevant bodies.

Al-Yaseen noted that the event is part of TSCK's continuing efforts to strengthen cooperation with national environmental bodies, stressing the

importance of scientific dialogue and exchange of expertise in raising awareness of environmental issues and supporting initiatives aimed at protecting Kuwait's environment and natural resources.

For her part, EPA Acting General Manager Nouf Behbehani said in a similar statement that strengthening environmental action requires a clear vision based on science and effective dialogue that keeps pace with future developments and challenges and supports a shift toward more sustainable solutions.

Behbehani added that this would

bolster Kuwait's efforts to protect the environment and preserve its resources while helping achieve its aspirations for a sustainable future for coming generations.

Meanwhile, EPA Head of Seawater Quality Monitoring Section Dr. Lujain J. A-Sayegh told KUNA that she delivered a lecture during the event entitled "From Monitoring to Response," addressing how the authority monitors the marine environment and the role of environmental monitoring in protecting and sustaining Kuwait's marine environment.

Al-Sayegh said the lecture discussed the importance and diversity of Kuwait's marine environment, the main natural and human pressures affecting it and the importance of regular monitoring in the early detection of changes and pollution and in supporting decision-making.

She added that the lecture reviewed the EPA's seawater monitoring system, its main periodic and specialized monitoring programs and methods for measuring water quality indicators in the field and laboratories, as well as procedures for handling and responding to marine pollution reports and incidents in coordination with relevant state bodies.

The lecture also presented actual cases of marine pollution recorded in Kuwait to demonstrate how monitoring data and reports are transformed from indicators and measurements into measures contributing to the protection of the marine environment, she said.

Other Voices

By Ahmad alsarraf

Humanity has never known an empire that did not eventually meet its end. The strange thing is that the beginnings of most empires, their rise to power, and their subsequent collapse are almost the same. The sociologist Ibn Khaldun recognized this pattern, summarizing the rise and fall of empires in four stages:

First is the emergence when a simple, poor, but cohesive group conquers a more civilized group, seizes power, builds a state, and experiences flourishing civilization, urban development, and increased wealth. This is followed by a stage of decadence, when seriousness weakens, sons and grandsons compete for power, and corruption, unemployment, and laziness spread. The next stage witnesses collapse, when the state becomes incapable of defending itself. At that point, a new group with stronger solidarity rises and overthrows it, and the cycle begins anew.

Others, after Ibn Khaldun, added one more stage.

What was the fate of the various empires over the past two thousand years?

The Roman Empire reached its geographical zenith under Emperor Trajan, specifically in 117 AD, the year of his death. It was the greatest and unmatched empire in the world.

The end began when it decided to defend all its conquered territories at once with its armies.

This excessive expansion ultimately contributed to the collapse of the Roman Empire.

Next came the Ottoman Empire, which dominated many countries for 600 years. The Ottoman Empire faced a similar predicament, as its armies fought on three fronts simultaneously, eventually leading to its bankruptcy.

Then came the British Empire, which controlled 24 percent of the globe at its peak and possessed the most powerful navy. The pound sterling was the world's reserve currency, and London was the center of trade, finance, and law. However, its expansion drained its resources and led to its demise.

Then came the Soviet Union, which had passed the fourth stage by 1985, with the Soviet army excessively deployed across various countries. Instead of halting, reducing military funding, and withdrawing from the arms race, the Soviet Union continued on the same path, while Gaza and Afghanistan were also targeted. The cost was catastrophic, ultimately leading to the end of the empire.

Now that the four stages are clear, we see that America, in the opinion of many analysts, has

been exhausted by wars over the past twenty years, at an unprecedented cost.

Every historian who has studied the collapse of empires agrees that the fifth stage is neither a battle nor an invasion, nor an event that can be precisely predicted. It is much more subtle.

It is the morning of the day when the leadership of that empire wakes up to find that its money has evaporated, its ammunition has run out, and its debts have ballooned.

Rome did not fall in a single day, the Ottomans did not collapse in a single battle, Britain did not lose its empire in a single war, and the Soviet Union did not end with a single defeat. They all reached the fifth stage in the same way - gradually, and then suddenly, the collapse occurred. The reason was excessive colonial expansion.

This phase was described by historian Professor Paul Kennedy of Yale University in his 1987 book, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers.

The book served as a warning to America that this fifth phase had never failed to bring down empires over the course of 2,000 years.

Perhaps the quiet American withdrawal from some of its bases in the Arabian Gulf region is a way to delay or avert the collapse that many have predicted.

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GCC must enhance cooperation in youth, sports sectors: Kuwait

MANAMA, Sept 3, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Dr. Tariq Al-Jalahma said on Wednesday it is essential to bolster cooperation and coordination among Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states in the youth and sports sectors.

The minister made the remarks to KUNA on the sidelines of the 39th meeting of the GCC Committee of Youth and Sports Ministers, held in Bahrain under the chairman-

ship of Sheikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, Chairman of the General Sports Authority, and President of the Bahrain Olympic Committee and was attended by GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi.

The minister said such GCC efforts contribute to developing youth capabilities and enhancing their participation in the development process.

Nearly KD4.5 mln court fees collected in month of June

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: Statistics issued by the Statistics and Research Department at the Ministry of Justice confirmed the intensive steps taken by the Court Fees Department in June 2026, such as examining, auditing and assessing cases, as well as monitoring the execution of court orders.

The total revenue collected within the above-mentioned month reached KD4,456,216, while the total number of cases received by the Cases Examination Section reached 7,546 and 7,763 cases were scrutinized.

The Capital Governorate Court recorded the highest number of cases received for scrutiny with 4,720, followed by Hawally with 1,100, Farwaniya with 1,028, Jahra with 513, and Ahmadi and Mubarak Al-Kabeer with 185 each.

In the Auditing and Review Section, the total number of cases received from the Cases Examination Section was 5,758 and 6,518 cases were reviewed.

The Capital Governorate Court handled the largest number of review cases with 2,545, followed by Farwaniya with

1,659, Ahmadi and Mubarak Al-Kabeer with 993 each, Hawally with 800 and Jahra with 521.

Data showed that the Claims Department issued 1,825 fee assessment orders. Farwaniya Governorate Court recorded the highest with 695, followed by the Capital with 649, Hawally with 320, Ahmadi and Mubarak Al-Kabeer with 123 each, and Jahra with 38.

The Follow Up and Execution of Orders Department recorded 2,702 procedures for submitting requests to seize a debtor's assets, 883 procedures for receiving orders from the Claims Department, 531 procedures for assessing notification requests, 183 requests to seize vehicles, 134 requests to impose travel ban, 86 requests to lift the seizure of a debtor's assets held by a third party and 73 appeals.

In the Fee Assessment Department, the total number of requests received reached 16,233. Farwaniya Governorate recorded the highest at 37.2 percent, followed by the Capital at 26.5 percent, Ahmadi and Mubarak Al-Kabeer at 12.3 percent each, Jahra at 10.9 percent, Hawally at 9.7 percent, and Kuwait Lawyers Association at 3.5 percent.

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: A total of 10 contracts for the Ministry of Health are currently at the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT), awaiting the opening of bids.

These contracts are for the modernization of the integrated healthcare system in order to provide high-quality medical care and solidify the concept of sustainable healthcare.

One of these contracts is for preparing studies, designs and supervising the implementation of the service center buildings at Mutlaa Health City, another for the construction, completion, equipping, furnishing and maintenance of the automated laboratories and central sterilization departments, one contract for completing the design, construction and maintenance work for areas requiring future development at Kuwait Cancer Center, and two contracts for the construction, equipping, furnishing and main-

tenance of the central kitchen at Farwaniya Hospital.

Meanwhile, CAPT opened the bid envelopes for the tender to supply 20 refrigerated medicine trucks for the Medical Warehouses Department. Five bids, which were accepted and will compete for the tender, have been forwarded to the ministry. After this, the bids will be referred back to CAPT to take a decision on awarding the contract to the bidder that meets the specifications and technical requirements.

Free trade zone, customs union top session agenda

Joint Arab economic action pillar of solidarity: expert

CAIRO, Sept 3, (KUNA): The 118th ministerial session of the Economic and Social Council of the Arab League began on Thursday under the chairmanship of Saudi Arabia, with the participation of Kuwait.

Kuwait's delegation to the meeting is headed by Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Affairs at the Ministry of Finance Saad Al-Alaty, representing Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Refai.

The session aims to discuss a number of economic and social issues, foremost the completion of requirements for the Greater Arab Free Trade Area and developments related to the Arab Customs Union.

In an address at the opening of the session, Saudi Assistant Minister of Finance for Macroeconomic Fiscal Policies Abdullah bin Zar'ah called for moving from coordination and exchange of views in joint Arab economic action to effective implementation through an efficient mechanism for implementing and following up on initiatives and decisions based on clear objectives and indicators.

Bin Zar'ah affirmed that joint Arab economic action represents a key pillar in strengthening the collective capacity of Arab countries, stressing the importance of developing implementation and follow-up mechanisms to ensure that initiatives and decisions are translated into tangible results.

He reiterated Saudi Arabia's supportive position toward the Palestinian cause and its continued support for the Palestinian people, based on its historic role and responsibility and the Palestinian people's legitimate right to establish an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

He highlighted the achievements made by Saudi Arabia, noting that the World Bank's 2026 World Development Report showed an improvement in the Kingdom's position on the global stage, placing it among the world's top 10 countries in private investment in artificial intel-

ligence.

He explained that Saudi Arabia is pursuing an integrated approach to artificial intelligence that combines investment in infrastructure and data, capacity development, and the establishment of regulatory, economic and services environments, strengthening its position as a global AI hub. He also pointed to the launch of the world's first virtual hospital.



Dr. Al-Refai

Bin Zar'ah said Saudi Arabia is among the largest contributors to humanitarian assistance through the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center and other institutions providing aid to numerous countries facing humanitarian crises.

For his part, Algerian Minister of Foreign Trade Kamel Rezig, in an address delivered on his behalf by Algeria's Ambassador to Egypt and Permanent Representative to the Arab League Mohamed Sofiane, said the economic and social challenges facing the Arab region amid current international transformations and challenges require strengthening Arab solidarity, intensifying coordination and unifying efforts to develop practical solutions that meet the aspirations of Arab peoples and support stability and sustainable development.

Sofiane, in an address ahead of handing over the council's presidency, wished Saudi Arabia success in managing the 118th session's proceedings and congratulated Arab League Secretary-General Nabil Fahmy on assuming his duties, wishing him success in carrying out his responsibilities.

He expressed confidence that the secretary-general's experience and competence would contribute to advancing joint Arab action and achieving further accomplishments that meet the aspirations of member states while strengthening common interests and bonds of cooperation and integration among Arab countries.

Rezig noted Algeria's keenness, during its presidency of the 117th session of the Economic and Social Council, to strengthen coordination and consultation mechanisms toward reaching consensual decisions reflecting the collective will of member states.

He pointed out that the previous session addressed a number of vital issues, including confronting climate change, protecting the environment, the impact of artificial intelligence on the labor market, the responsible use of AI, as well as issues aimed at strengthening Arab solidarity with Palestine, developing the Greater Arab Free Trade Area and promoting intra-Arab trade.

The previous session also addressed a number of economic and social issues scheduled to be submitted to the 35th Arab Summit, hosted by Saudi Arabia, he added.

Rezig said the Arab region is facing a number of challenges amid international developments that directly and indirectly affect the economic and social conditions of Arab peoples, calling for intensified efforts and unified visions at the Economic and Social Council level to mitigate the repercussions of these challenges and contribute to strengthening stability and advancing sustainable economic and social development.

He affirmed Algeria's full support for the new presidency, expressing confidence in Saudi Arabia's ability to lead the council's work efficiently and effectively and build on the achievements made, ensuring continuity of joint Arab action and achieving further positive results.

He stressed the importance of continuing efforts to serve joint Arab action and strengthen Arab economic integration, affirming Algeria's renewed commitment to supporting all initiatives aimed at developing the Arab economy, activating joint Arab action mechanisms and continuing to support Arab cooperation in trade, investment and sustainable development.

Kuwait's delegation to the meeting is headed by Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Affairs at the Ministry of Finance Saad Al-Alaty, representing Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Refai.



KUNA photo

Al-Salam Association for Humanitarian and Charitable Work launches an exhibition for school bags, uniforms.

Charity organizes school bag, uniforms exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): In an endeavor that signals Kuwaiti charitable efforts to localize operations and spur solidarity and togetherness within the community, Al-Salam Association for Humanitarian and Charitable Work is launching a four-day charitable exhibition Wednesday.

Held in coordination with the Ministry

of Social Affairs at the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) headquarters in Jahra, the exhibition is meant to distribute school bags and uniforms to students from underprivileged families.

It is also intended to ensure that these initiatives and aid reach the intended beneficiaries, reflecting the spirit of social solidarity.

Arab media plays vital role in shaping info amid fake news

AMMAN, Sept 3, (KUNA): Jordanian Minister of Government Communication Dr. Mohammad Al-Momani said on Wednesday that Arab and national media outlets are an essential part of the national security and stability system in Arab countries.

Al-Momani made the remarks during a meeting with a delegation from the Secretariat-General of the Federation of Arab News Agencies (FANA), attended by Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Acting Director General Mohammad Al-Mannai, in the Jordanian capital, Amman.

Al-Momani affirmed that Arab media outlets play a pivotal role in shaping awareness and public opinion and defending the Arab causes amid the information chaos and the flow of fake news witnessed around the world.

He stressed the depth of fraternal relations and longstanding cooperation at all

levels with brotherly countries, praising the efforts of the federation's Secretariat-General and Arab news agencies in professionally presenting the truth.

The Secretariat-General of the Federation of Arab News Agencies is tasked with developing the efforts of official news agencies to provide advanced content for Arab citizens, he added.

Regarding modern technological developments, including artificial intelligence, Al-Momani explained that Jordan is dealing seriously and consciously with the AI revolution.

For their part, the members of the Arab media delegation expressed their deep appreciation for Jordan and its hospitality, praising the leading role of Jordanian media and the Jordan News Agency (PETRA) in strengthening joint Arab action and conveying a reliable picture of events.

News in Brief

First governor of Central Bank of Kuwait dies at 92

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: Hamza Abbas Mirza Hussain, the first Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait and one of Kuwait's most prominent banking and economic figures, has passed away after a distinguished career in the financial and monetary sectors, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Born in Kuwait's Sharq district in 1934, he received his primary education at Al-Mubarakiya School. He enrolled at the American University of Beirut and graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Economics in 1958.

Hussain pursued postgraduate studies at St Antony's College, Oxford University, from 1960 to 1962.

He received training at the Bank of England before embarking on a decades-long career in banking and economics.

He served as Secretary of the Kuwait Currency Board from 1963 to 1968. Hussain also served as Kuwait's Deputy Governor to the International Monetary Fund.

He was appointed Deputy Governor of the CBK in 1968, while also serving as Acting Governor. In 1983, he was officially appointed Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait.

The daily extends its sincere condolences to the family and relatives of the deceased, and asks God Almighty to have mercy on him, grant him a place in Paradise, and inspire his family and loved ones with patience and solace.

KPA image gets boost: The Kuwait Pharmaceutical Association (KPA) said Wednesday that its participation in the 84th International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) World Congress in Montreal, Canada, bolstered Kuwait's professional and research profile.

This was achieved through its participation in the FIP Council, a scientific lecture and two Kuwaiti research papers, and the signing of the Montreal Declaration on Non-Communicable Diseases.

Speaking to KUNA, KPA's Chairman and Delegation Head Dr. Ahmad Taqi said that Dr. Bader Al-Khurainji, a board member and the KPA's representative on the FIP Council, participated in the discussion and voting on professional resolutions and statements related to patient safety, therapeutic substitution, professional ethics, professional recognition, non-communicable diseases and FIP governance.



Hamza A. Mirza Hussain

Taqi added that the KPA's signing of the Montreal Declaration reflects its commitment to supporting the prevention, early detection and improved treatment of non-communicable diseases, enhancing the pharmacist's role in raising awareness, conducting screenings, supporting treatment adherence, optimizing medication use, and facilitating referrals.

He noted that he delivered a lecture titled "Updating National Legislation: A Comprehensive Draft Law to Advance Pharmacy Practice and Protect Professional Interests in Kuwait."

During the lecture, he underlined the need to update the 1996 Pharmacy Law and its limited 2006 amendments in a manner that supports patient safety, expands the scope of pharmacy practice, and regulates digital pharmacy and modern therapeutic advancements. (KUNA)

Kuwait, Poland in talks: The fifth round of political consultations between the Kuwaiti and Polish foreign ministries was held in the Polish capital, Warsaw, recently.

The talks were co-chaired by Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan and Polish Deputy Foreign Minister for Middle East, North Africa and South America Ambassador Wojciech Zajackowski, said the Foreign Ministry in a press release.

They discussed bilateral relations between both friendly countries and means to promote and develop them across fields, in addition to the latest regional and international developments. (KUNA)



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Continued from Page 1

Kuwait claims

Arab League session
Meanwhile, Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Affairs at the Ministry of Finance Saad Al-Alaty on Thursday described the Iranian attacks on Kuwait and other Gulf states as a threat to security and stability.

Al-Alaty, delivering Kuwait's statement on behalf of Finance Minister Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifai at the 118th ministerial session of the Arab League's Economic and Social Council in Cairo, called for joint Arab action to strengthen solidarity and unify positions in the face of current and future challenges.

He noted that rapid developments have demonstrated that security is no longer limited to its traditional dimensions, but has become comprehensive — encompassing economic and food security, energy security, the sustainability of supply chains and trade routes, and the stability of financial markets.

Regional condemnation
Bahrain on Thursday expressed its strong condemnation of the repeated Iranian missile and drone attacks on Kuwait.

The Bahraini Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the attacks constitute a blatant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty and security, a grave breach of international law and the UN Charter, and a violation of the principles of good-neighborliness, as well as UN Security Council Resolution 2817.

Bahrain stressed its full solidarity with Kuwait and its complete support for all measures taken to defend its sovereignty, security, and stability, in accordance with international law and Article 51 of the UN Charter.

The ministry noted that Kuwait's security is an integral part of Bahrain's national security, praising the efficiency and high readiness of Kuwait's armed forces and air defenses in confronting the hostile attacks.

Bahrain renewed its call on the UN Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities and take firm, deterrent measures to compel Iran to comply with its international obligations, halt its attacks on the countries and peoples of the region, and ensure the safety of maritime navigation in the Strait of Hormuz and other vital waterways.

Malaysia urges de-escalation
Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim on Thursday urged the US and Iran to halt the escalation and immediately return to diplomacy and

the understandings reached last June.

In a statement, Ibrahim expressed deep concern over the renewed escalation between the US and Iran, warning that continued escalation could drag the wider Middle East into a more destructive conflict.

He stressed that the conflict could ultimately only be resolved through political and diplomatic means, warning that the world must not pay the price of a broader regional war.

Elsewhere, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has expressed grave concern over a renewed exchange of fire between the US and Iran, waring of the consequences of further escalation for civilians and the wider region and beyond.

In a press release early Thursday, Guterres renewed his call for all parties to immediately cease military operations and exercise the utmost self-restraint as well as refrain from any measures and rhetoric that could further escalate already high tensions.

There are reports of civilian casualties, he stated, stressing the importance for all parties to respect and commit to international humanitarian law, including the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution, it noted.

In addition, Guterres urged an immediate return to the diplomatic path and confirmed that reaching a sustainable and comprehensive settlement could be only achieved through dialogue and negotiations.

Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio affirmed Wednesday that Washington will never permit Iran to possess a nuclear weapon, emphasizing that economic sanctions and targeted military defense will continue to safeguard international maritime navigation and protect regional stability.

In official remarks regarding regional security, Rubio stated that preventing nuclear proliferation in Iran remains the core objective of US foreign policy under President Donald Trump.

Addressing persistent naval tensions along the Strait of Hormuz, Rubio reported that American forces successfully neutralized Iranian naval mines laid within the strategic passage, broadening safe navigation channels for commercial traffic.

Rubio asserted that Iranian forces have lost control over the strategic waterway despite repeated attempts to target commercial shipping, reiterating that US forces will continue targeting threats that pose immediate dangers to international maritime transit.

The US Secretary of State highlighted the severe economic vulnerabilities facing the Iranian regime, accusing Tehran of misallocating state revenues toward regional armed groups and proxy organizations—including Hezbollah, Hamas, and Iraqi militias—rather than addressing domestic economic needs.

Rubio concluded that economic pressure against Tehran will persist to cut off financing for regional destabilization and prevent the regime from securing resources required to build a nuclear capability.

Al-Hajeri's landmark
He said that the book is the first comprehensive work dedicated to tracing the history of relations between the Holy See and the State of Kuwait. He congratulated Al-Hajeri on writing such as valuable book.

He pointed out that the Holy See always gives importance to its relations with Kuwait, explaining that these relations have been strengthened over the years through dialogue, meetings, cooperation, goodwill, and a shared desire to promote peace, fraternity, religious freedom and understanding.

He added that he is preparing to end his mission in Kuwait, and therefore feels very happy that one of the last events he hosted at the Papal Embassy is a celebration of the friendship between the Holy See and the State of Kuwait.

Kuwait eyes
She explained that the meeting discussed a number of priority issues, most notably establishing strategic food and medicine storage zones, the food security strategy, and the plant genetic resources bank, all of which will enhance the GCC countries' preparedness and ability to confront challenges and changes related to food security and supply chains.

Separately, Bahraini Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa met on Thursday with GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi along with heads of GCC delegations participating in the 38th Meeting of the Committee for Agricultural Cooperation and Food Security, at Gudai-biya Palace.

The Crown Prince and Premier reiterated Bahrain's continued commitment to supporting greater GCC cooperation across all sectors.

According to Bahrain News Agency (BNA), the meeting highlighted the importance of strengthening integrated partnerships among GCC states to advance interstate development, in line with the visions of the leaders of the GCC member states.

During the meeting, the heads of delegations, including Kuwait's Minister of State for Development and Sustainability Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij, conveyed the greetings of Their Majesties and Highnesses, the leaders of the GCC states, to the King and the Crown Prince.

During the meeting, Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa highlighted the importance of continuing to improve and strengthen food security by developing the efficiency of supply chains to ensure the sustainable flow of goods and products, noting the importance of Gulf integration and enhanced international partnerships towards these efforts and developing their readiness to address developments and challenges.

The Kingdom of Bahrain hosted the meeting as part of its presidency of the 46th Session of the GCC Supreme Council.

Eight paths,
The Ministry of Education said in a statement that Minister Al-Tabtabaei issued a decision stipulating that the Ministry's Undersecretary oversee preparations for implementing the courses (Masarat) system, take the necessary executive measures and submit matters requiring the minister's approval, through coordination among the ministry's sectors, educational districts and relevant authorities to ensure the educational and administrative system is ready for implementation according to clear and well-studied foundations.

The decision stipulates that its provisions apply only to students wishing to enroll in the courses (pathways) system, while the existing high school education system will continue to apply to students not covered by the new system, with no changes to their studies as a result of the decision.

The ministry explained that the new system is part of its efforts to develop high school education and establish a more flexible model that places students at the center of the educational process and gives them a genuine opportunity to discover their abilities and interests at an early stage before choosing the academic pathway that best suits their capabilities and future ambitions.

The ministry said the courses (Masarat) system extends over three academic years divided into six semesters, with a total of 54 academic units. Grade 10 represents a common foundation year for all students, during which students take a range of general courses in addition to completing the "Exploration 1" and "Exploration 2" experiences, helping them gain a deeper understanding of their academic interests, abilities and areas of interest.

The system offers students eight educational pathways: Languages, Law, Social Sciences, Business, Mathematics, Sciences, Industrial, and Technology and Artificial Intelligence, providing diverse educational options that take into account students' varying abilities and interests and support their future aspirations.

The ministry stressed that pathway selection will not depend solely on academic grades, but will be based on an integrated set of criteria including academic achievement, abilities, interests and results of the exploration courses, enhancing the accuracy of selection and giving students an opportunity to join the pathway most suited to their capabilities and aspirations.

The ministry noted that the "Masar" platform will provide students with integrated electronic services, including registration, academic follow-up and documentation of academic records, supporting the digital transformation in managing educational pathways and providing students and educational authorities with more effective tools to monitor their academic progress.

The ministry stressed that Minister Al-Tabtabaei's directives emphasize the importance of developing education on scientific and well-studied foundations, with every development process focusing on students' interests, strengthening their capabilities and better preparing them for subsequent stages of education and working life, while ensuring that the impact of every educational project is measured and its results continuously evaluated.

KFAED backs
The study will also include an operational assessment of the Gulf system with national grids in neighboring countries, along with a preliminary assessment of the project's environmental and social impacts and the identification of appropriate measures to mitigate any potential

adverse effects.

The Fund noted that it had previously provided three loans totaling KD 78 million (about USD 252.3 million) to the GCCIA to help finance projects to strengthen the Gulf electrical interconnection system and connect it with the Southern Iraq grid.

It said the key components of these projects include the Al-Wafra substation in Kuwait, which represents one of the main components of the Gulf electrical interconnection system. The substation is particularly important for enhancing the reliability of Kuwait's electricity grid and strengthening its capacity to cope with peak loads by enabling electricity exchange and benefiting from available surpluses in countries within the interconnection system.

The grant agreement was signed by Acting Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development Rashed Al-Bader and GCCIA Chief Executive Officer Ahmad Al-Ibrahim.

Separately, KFAED on Thursday signed a USD 2.5 million grant agreement with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to contribute to the reconstruction of Biria School in Khan Al-Sheih camp in Syria.

Speaking to KUNA after signing the agreement remotely, KFAED Acting Director General Rashed Al-Bader said the Fund's contribution involves reconstructing the school, equipping its facilities and related infrastructure, as well as supporting the continuity of educational services provided to Palestinian refugees.

Al-Bader said the agreement reflects Kuwait's steadfast commitment to supporting the Palestinian people and its belief that education is a fundamental human right and a key pillar for building a sustainable future.

He pointed out that the Biria School reconstruction project goes beyond rehabilitating infrastructure and educational facilities, representing a humanitarian and developmental dimension aimed at supporting students' right to education and providing a safe and suitable learning environment that enables them to continue their education.

The project includes demolishing and rebuilding Biria School, which sustained extensive damage during the crisis in Syria, as well as rehabilitating its facilities and infrastructure, he said.

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US federal judge blocks Trump’s latest bid to curb birthright citizenship

WASHINGTON, Sept 3, (AP): A federal judge has blocked US President Donald Trump’s latest attempt to limit birthright citizenship, granting a preliminary injunction against an executive order that the administration said would target “birth tourism.”

US District Judge Deborah L. Boardman in Maryland on Wednesday issued the injunction until a class-action lawsuit brought by immigrant families and advocacy groups is resolved.

“The Supreme Court has spoken: Children in the certified class are ‘citizens at birth,’” Boardman, appointed by President Joe Biden, wrote in Wednesday’s ruling.

Birthright citizenship is guaranteed under current law for anyone who is born on U.S. soil, with a few exceptions. The law stretches back to 1868, when the 14th Amendment was ratified in the aftermath of the Civil War.

But Trump has long wanted to end birthright citizenship, issuing a previous executive order declaring that children born to people who are in the United States illegally or temporarily are not American citizens. The Supreme Court



Activists celebrate the Supreme Court’s birthright citizenship ruling outside of the Supreme Court on Capitol Hill on June 30, in Washington. (AP)

struck down that attempt in June.

In August, the president tried again with a narrower executive order that appeared to restrict automatic citizenship for specific categories of people, including children born to adults with connections to foreign embassies or organizations or to anyone considered an “alien enemy” of

the United States.

The order defined birth tourism as someone who enters the United States on a “nonimmigrant visa for the purpose of giving birth on American soil.” Birth tourism is already considered fraud and grounds to restrict a visa if someone seeks one specifically to obtain US citizenship for a child.

America

3 dead in Minneapolis shooting: Gunfire could be heard throughout a downtown Minneapolis apartment building as police responded to an active shooting Wednesday that left three people dead, including the suspect, and five others wounded, authorities said.

The five wounded by gunfire included two Minneapolis police officers, while a sixth person, another officer, suffered other injuries, police Sgt. Garrett Parten said at a news conference. All three officers are in stable condition, according to Hennepin County Medical Center.

A 911 call about shots fired at the building came in just after 4:30 p.m. Officers were dispatched and less than two minutes later they were inside the building and quickly found victims, said Interim Police Chief Bill Peterson.

Officers heard more gunshots and followed them to a higher floor, where they found “a haze that significantly limited their visibility,” he said. Peterson did not provide additional details about the haze. (AP)

□ □ □



Law enforcement agencies respond to a shooting on Sept 2, in downtown Minneapolis. (AP)

Waynesboro, knew the victim or whether he had any connection to the school. Shaw said no children were inside the library at the time, and that officers responded within three minutes of getting the initial call. (AP)

□ □ □

1 wounded, gunman kills self in Virginia: A 19-year-old gunman forced his way into a Virginia elementary school Wednesday morning and shot and wounded a staff member before killing himself, authorities said.

Officers found Anthony Ignatiadis-Isabelle dead inside the Westwood Hills Elementary School library after responding to a report of a suspicious person, Waynesboro Police Chief David Shaw said during a news conference. Shaw said an adult staff member suffered a gunshot wound but has been released from the hospital. Authorities did not say whether Ignatiadis-Isabelle, of

Storm Edouard lingers over Texas: Texas authorities rescued dozens of people from stranded cars, homes surrounded by floodwaters and an assisted living facility Wednesday as former Tropical Storm Edouard lingered over rural parts of the state and dumped nearly 2 feet of rain in some places.

Heavy rains from the storm, which weakened into a tropical depression after making landfall Tuesday, were expected to threaten the eastern part of the state through Thursday morning, the National Weather Service said.

Meanwhile, a burst of tropical weather persisted in the Pacific Ocean, where three hurricanes were churning in open waters. (AP)

Platner no longer scheduled to speak at Labor Day rally

US President Trump promises to campaign for Republican lawmakers

WASHINGTON, Sept 3, (AP): US President Donald Trump on Wednesday urged Republican lawmakers facing tough reelection campaigns to run on his record in the White House despite his sagging popularity, and he pledged to campaign in all of the roughly three dozen contests that are likely to determine control of Congress.

Voters’ dim views of the economy and the war in Iran have put Republicans in a tough spot as the midterm election season enters its final stretch. But during a dinner in the Rose Garden, one of the spaces he has controversially renovated since returning to office last year, the president told his party’s most vulnerable lawmakers that they had a triumphant story to tell voters.

“All you have to do is talk about it, and you’re going to win and you’re going to win big,” Trump said a week before the party gathers in Dallas for an unusual midterm convention.

The audience of Republican lawmakers listened quietly to Trump through his speech, occasionally offering applause as many sipped

on cocktails ahead of their dinner. Menus checkered in yellow gingham called it an “end of summer BBQ” featuring cheeseburgers.

Trump talked up economic investment in the United States and lower drug prices, using significantly inflated figures, as well as diminished border crossings.

Control of Congress will come down to about 35 races, Trump said. He pledged to spend the 30 days before the election campaigning hard in those battlegrounds, recalling his aggressive travel schedule ahead of his own White House victory two years ago.

“I’m going to go to every one of those 35 places, and we’re going to see if we can get everyone elected,” Trump said. His focus, he added, would be on House and Senate races.

He specifically listed Senate races in Alaska, where Republican Sen. Dan Sullivan faces Democratic former Rep. Mary Peltola, and Texas, where Republican state Attorney General Ken Paxton is running against Democratic state Rep. James Talarico.



US President Donald Trump speaks during an event with Republican lawmakers in the Rose Garden of the White House on Sept 2, in Washington. (AP)

Trump backed Paxton in this year’s primary despite a scandal-plagued past, but he poked fun at his style of dress and presence on the campaign trail on Monday.

“You might not love his look. You might not love his television inter-

views,” he said. “But he was the best attorney general in the country, perhaps. He was one of the best in the entire country. And that speaks a lot louder than the suit he’s wearing that doesn’t look so great.”

Republicans’ midterm struggles,

he suggested, were simply following a pattern that virtually all modern presidents have faced.

“Whether you’re a good president or a great president, you lose the midterms,” Trump said. “We’re going to turn that around because there’s no reason for it.”

Also:

PORTLAND, Maine: Former Democratic Senate nominee **Graham Platner** is no longer set to speak at a Labor Day rally when he makes his first major public appearance since ending his campaign against Republican Sen. **Susan Collins of Maine**.

Platner, who won the nomination in June but dropped out in July after Politico reported that a former girlfriend said he sexually assaulted her, had been scheduled to speak Monday at the rally in **Ellsworth**, near his hometown of Sullivian. He has denied the allegations.

Platner was expected to speak about labor history and the importance of unions in the US Event organizers were urged not to let him speak by the former girlfriend and another woman who has accused him

of domestic abuse.

Organizers said Wednesday that the planned speech was drawing negative media attention, and he will instead lead a veterans’ march after the rally.

“Graham is not speaking,” said **Carol Leonard of Hancock County** Activists, a progressive group organizing the rally. “The media frenzy got just too insane, and we became concerned about safety.”

Platner is an oyster farmer and combat veteran who filled theaters around Maine during a barnstorming campaign that resulted in a decisive win over Gov. Janet Mills, who suspended her campaign before the primary.

He has no experience in elected office but fashioned a campaign focused on working-class issues such as the high costs of housing and healthcare.

Platner’s campaign was frequently interrupted by scandals, such as the emergence in late May of media reports that he previously exchanged sexually explicit text messages with several women while he was married.



People are attending the civil defense exercise Shelter 2026 in Kuopio, Finland on Sept 2. (AP)

Finland runs Europe’s biggest civil defense exercise since the Cold War

KUOPIO, Finland, Sept 3, (AP): In a civil defense shelter hewn into rock, behind doors designed to withstand a nuclear or biological attack, two Finnish conscripts wearing hazmat suits and breathing masks are measuring radiation levels as they take part in an exercise to turn a cave into a place of safety for thousands of people.

Inside, in what is normally a sports hall, hundreds of people are sleeping overnight on trestle beds.

More than 2,000 people including volunteers and students are taking part in the biggest civil defense exercise in Europe since the end of World War II. In the scenario, critical infrastructure in the central Finnish city of Kuopio, including power and water, has been disrupted by cyberattacks and there’s the threat of missile strikes from Finland’s neighbor, Russia.

The goal is for local authorities and ordinary people to rehearse what they would do if they came under attack for real.

But while underground bunkers and shelters may offer some protection from missiles, they are no defense against the campaign of sabotage and disruption that Western officials say Russia is carrying out across Europe. That has involved

setting fires, attacking water facilities and power stations, and sending drones for sabotage into European Union airspace.

Finland’s border with Russia stretches more than 830 miles (1,300 kilometers) from the Baltic Sea up to the Arctic Circle. In 2024, along with Sweden, Finland joined NATO, following Russian President Vladimir Putin’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Until then, Finns were prepared to defend themselves against Russia largely alone.

Finland’s defense, said retired Army Colonel Asko Muhonen, relies not only on the military but on the “mindset” of ordinary Finns who are ready to take responsibility for their country’s security.

Muhonen, who organized the exercise in Kuopio, said that comes partly from the system of conscription which continued in Finland, even after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Not everyone is happy about doing national service but “it’s our duty to serve and protect this country like people have before us. That’s why we have our independence,” said Jyry Pietikainen, 23, a conscript who was taught how to run the Kuopio shelter overnight.

Finland also needs to learn lessons

from Ukraine, Muhonen said.

While the biggest shelter in Kuopio can fit 7,000 people, Ukrainians sometimes only have a few minutes to run to a subway station or underground parking lot. That means people need a shelter they can reach easily that offers some form of protection - not necessarily one that can withstand a nuclear attack, he said.

Dmytro Untila, 20, a Ukrainian student at the university in Kuopio, was at home in Odesa when Russian missiles struck his city on Feb. 24, 2022, the first day of the war. He sheltered in the entrance hall of his building because he didn’t have anywhere else to go, he said.

Training for such a situation would have definitely helped in Ukraine, he said, “because nobody knew this could happen.”

The biggest threat to energy infrastructure in the Kuopio region is heavy snowfall, storms and bad weather, said Juha Räsänen, CEO at the Savon Voima electricity company.

But since the invasion of Ukraine, and the company’s decision to stop buying Russian biofuel, the number of cyberattacks against the network has significantly increased, Räsänen said.

Italy weighs results as Giorgia Meloni’s government sets a longevity record

ROME, Sept 3, (AP): In a country where governments are famously short-lived, the perceived success of Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni has often been attributed to her survival skills rather than her accomplishments.

On Thursday, after 1,413 days - nearly four years - Meloni’s conservative administration became Italy’s longest-serving uninterrupted government since World War II, surpassing the record set by the late Silvio Berlusconi between 2001 and 2005.

None of Italy’s 68 governments in the country’s 80 years as a republic has yet to complete a five-year term without interruption. Berlusconi came closest, but a government crisis forced him to resign briefly in 2005 before forming a new Cabinet.

Meloni and her party will celebrate their feat on Friday with a large pre-election rally in the southern city of Bari.

Meloni, straightforward and pragmatic, has managed to stave off the crises and defections that have toppled past governments. The results - or lack of results - from this uncharacteristic period of stability may ultimately define Meloni’s legacy and her odds of winning another term.

“If you have five years in office and not much to show when you go back to voters, it can weigh against you,” said Nathalie Tocci, an international relations expert and professor at Johns Hopkins University.

When Meloni took office in October



Right-wing party Brothers of Italy’s leader Giorgia Meloni addresses a rally as she starts her political campaign ahead of the Sept 25 general elections, in Ancona, Italy on Aug 23, 2022. (AP)

2022, she was Italy’s first female prime minister. Her government was also the first led by a party with neo-fascist roots, and European allies and financial markets viewed her with unease.

But Meloni has largely governed pragmatically. She maintained steadfast support for Ukraine following Russia’s full-scale invasion, worked within European institutions and embraced fiscal discipline.

Her relationship with U.S. President Donald Trump became one of her most notable foreign policy assets - at least initially.

While political instability has re-

shaped governments elsewhere in Europe - including the United Kingdom and France - Meloni has kept the same coalition in place since taking office, a rarity in modern Italian politics and a central pillar of her reelection bid.

“Meloni has reaped a part of what she sowed, because I know few people so determined, so hardworking, so precise, so meticulous, who have sacrificed both their human and private spheres in order to serve the institutions,” Defense Minister Guido Crosetto told The Associated Press in an interview on Wednesday.



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez arrives for a Parliament session in Madrid on Sept 3 to address lawmakers about the situation in Ceuta, the Spanish exclave in North Africa facing a migrant crisis. (AP)

Spain rejects suggestions that Morocco behind Ceuta crisis

MADRID, Sept 3, (AP): Spain’s Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez on Thursday rejected suggestions that Moroccan authorities helped orchestrate the deadly mass crossing of migrants from Morocco into the Spanish exclave of Ceuta, as pressure grows over his handling of the crisis.

“I can assure you that that no institution - neither the diplomatic service, nor the European Commission, nor any international body - has provided the Spanish government with solid evidence that Morocco planned or carried out the incident. None,” Sánchez told lawmakers.

A day earlier, tens of thousands of Spaniards in cities across the country joined protests against the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Ceuta, demanding solutions and Sánchez’s resignation.

In late July, some 72,000 migrants swam, scrambled and later charged into Ceuta, a Spanish exclave in North Africa with just 84,000 residents. Most returned to Morocco or were ushered back over the border within days, but around 5,000, including 1,200 minors, remain in the city weeks later, according to the national government. Ceuta’s local government cites a higher figure.

Pacific island nations seek to turn geopolitics into funding to offset climate change harm

KOROR, Palau, Sept 3, (AP): When stormy seas batter Melekeok state on Palau’s biggest island, the Pacific Ocean floods right into people’s homes.

“We keep telling the legislature we need to move inward,” said Bol Sebalt, 43, who was born and raised on the low-lying beachfront. “But because of a shortage of funding we cannot.”

The fate of Melekeok, a chiefdom of 300 people, is echoed by stories from many island nations in remote parts of the vast Pacific Ocean. Their leaders, gathered for a summit in Palau this week, are wrestling once more with the question of how tiny countries with little global power can use major polluters’ geopolitical interest in their region to secure a chance of survival.

Some hope for funding to help them adapt to changes they can’t reverse. Sebalt, a legislative clerk, is also a trained volunteer for her local disaster readiness team, making her one of 200 people across the western Pacific country now prepared to shepherd their communities through events such as catastrophic typhoons



A sliver of beach remains after sea level rises on the coastline in Melekeok state, Palau on Sept 3. (AP)

that have struck before.

Almost a year ago, Sebalt moved to a subdivision being prepared inland for Melekeok’s people, where she’s the only resident so far. Sebalt said funding for plumbing, sewage and enough street light poles for others to move in was sourced in small chunks and much too slowly.

“We cannot move faster than climate change,” she said.

About 32 kilometers (20 miles) across the volcanic island, down winding roads fringed by tropical jungle, leaders from some of the small Pacific nations most imperiled by rising seas renewed dire warnings Wednesday about their expected fate.

The officials standing in sweltering, wet heat outside the annual Pacific Islands Forum summit were responding to a bleak first-of-its-kind report issued by the United Nations, which said Earth would soon exceed the safe temperature threshold agreed upon in the 2015 Paris climate accord because of warming from the burning of coal, oil and gas.

“Loss and damage is a reality that currently exists in my country,” Vanuatu Climate Adaptation Minister Ralph Regenvanu said.

“It will only accelerate with any overshoot, encompassing economic and non-economic losses that no finance can fully restore,” he said, adding that the loss encompassed “our ancestral lands, our heritage, our identity.”

For years, Regenvanu and other Pacific leaders have urged action from major polluters that would limit global warming to an accepted goal of 1.5 Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) above mid-19th century temperatures, which scientists said could avoid the dramatic impacts on people and the planet expected at 2 C.



Palau’s President Surangel Whipps Jr and Australia’s Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, left, at Palau’s solar farm in Babeldaob, during the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Palau on Sept 3. (AP)

USS Lincoln crew hits streets of Thai beach city after Mideast deployment

PATTAYA, Thailand, Sept 3, (AP): Buses carrying crew members of the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier streamed into Thailand’s seaside resort city of Pattaya on Thursday, as part of a port call after a lengthy deployment to the Middle East.

The Lincoln was supporting the US war against Iran, and its deployment included a record-setting uninterrupted time at sea of more than 260 days. Its lengthy deployment drew concerns last month about deteriorating mental health among the crew as well as shortages of key food supplies aboard.

The Navy downplayed any problems, and President Donald Trump commented that the deployment was “not nearly long enough.”

The ship has been deployed for a total of 286 days, according to the US Embassy in Bangkok. Its total uninterrupted time at sea before Wednesday’s arrival in Chonburi province was 264 days.

The ship is expected to depart Thailand this weekend and continue its journey back to the US.

After clambering down from buses, laden with luggage, several service members told The Associated Press they were excited to be



Crew members of the USS Abraham Lincoln leave a hotel in Pattaya, Thailand, Thursday, Sept. 3, 2026. (AP)

in Thailand.

Vendors and travel agents gathered outside the Hard Rock Hotel, the designated pickup and drop-off point for troops traveling from the Lincoln, which is docked nearby at Laem Chabang port.

They swarmed service members as they arrived, offering a range of souvenirs and services. Many sailors waved them away while waiting for their rides.

Two other ships from the Lincoln’s strike group are docked

elsewhere in Thailand, with the destroyer USS Frank E. Petersen Jr. at Chonburi’s Sriracha port and the cruiser USS Robert Smalls in Map Ta Phut in neighboring Rayong province.

A-ngoong Sombat traveled 200 kilometers between Pattaya and the central province of Ayutthaya to sell colorful braided bracelets to the visiting crew, as she does every time she hears a US ship is coming for a port call in Chonburi province.

Ex-Venezuela president, wife seek to end drug charges case on immunity grounds

NEW YORK, Sept 3, (AP): Former Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro and his wife asked a judge on Wednesday to dismiss the drug trafficking indictment against them on the grounds that they have immunity as the leader and first lady of a foreign country.

In papers filed in Manhattan federal court, lawyers for Maduro said a judge was required by law to reject the indictment because it cannot be brought against a foreign leader.

“No American court has ever presided over the criminal trial of a foreign leader who was recognized by their own country as the sitting head of state at the time the charges were brought,” the lawyers wrote. “That is not an accident of history. It reflects a rule older than the common law: heads of state are exempt from the criminal process of any national court but their own.”

Maduro and his wife are scheduled to go on trial on drug trafficking charges next June 1. Judge Alvin K. Hellerstein has set oral arguments for Nov. 17 on motions to dismiss the



Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores wave after his swearing-in ceremony for a third term at the National Assembly in Caracas, Venezuela, on Jan 10, 2025. (AP)

indictment.

Maduro, 63, and his wife, Cilia Flores, 69, have been held at a Brooklyn jail since U.S. forces seized them from their Caracas home in a middle-

of-the-night raid in early January and brought them to New York.

In separate papers filed Wednesday, lawyers for Flores said she too has immunity from U.S. prosecution on sovereign immunity grounds.

“It is an attribute of Venezuela’s sovereignty, and only Venezuela may surrender it,” her lawyers wrote.

Maduro’s lawyers said that even if Maduro were not entitled to sovereign immunity as the head of state, the case against him must be dismissed because he is also entitled to conduct-based sovereign immunity.

Meanwhile, the lawyers argued, Maduro “vehemently denies the allegations against him.”

“If this case were to proceed to trial, it would be apparent that he has been falsely accused,” they said.

Both have pleaded not guilty in a criminal case first brought six years ago against numerous alleged co-conspirators. They face potential life prison sentences if a jury agrees that they were part of a conspiracy to send cocaine into the US.

KATHMANDU, Nepal, Sept 3, (AP): Some survivors sheltering in relief camps after deadly floods in Nepal struggled Thursday to obtain essential medicines and cash, even as authorities provided food and other basic supplies to thousands of displaced people.

The shortages are adding to the hardships of those living in temporary shelters after having lost homes and belongings.

Suresh Kumar Karanjit, who has been staying at a relief center in Devighat, a town in one of the worst-affected areas in Nuwakot district, lost his younger brother in the floods last week. He said the camp did not have the exact medicine prescribed for his heart condition.

Karanjit only managed to get the cash he needed to buy his regular medicine after selling a carton of noodles he received as relief for 400 rupees (\$2.60). “We have been living here for a week. The relief materials are being provided, which is good. But there is a lack of medicine,” he said.

Nepal’s disaster chief, Dharam Raj Uprety, said health centers staffed by doctors and stocked with medicine have been set up at each shelter.



Residents pull a newly installed zipline to help people commute across the Trishuli river in the aftermath of flash floods at Bidur in Nuwakot district, Nepal, on Sept 2. (AP)

Uprety said authorities were also focusing on hygiene and sanitation to reduce the risk of disease.

The Aug. 26 floods that were likely caused by a glacier collapse devastated towns and valleys in Nepal, destroying homes, roads, bridges and other criti-

cal infrastructure. At least 1,252 people were killed and more than 4,200 remain missing, according to the country’s disaster management agency. China as of late Wednesday said 21 people were killed and 541 were missing on the Tibet side of the border.



A wildfire burns through a forest in Jijel, Algeria on Aug 27. (AP)

Algerians battle deadly wildfires as prez seeks death penalty for arson

ALGIERS, Algeria, Sept 3, (AP): Algerian firefighters are struggling against an unprecedented wave of deadly and devastating wildfires that have prompted the president to call for reinstating the death penalty for arsonists.

The fires have spread across several provinces, creating a vast front of flames stretching from the center to the far east of the country. Civil Protection units, supported by army squadrons, were still battling flare-ups in the provinces of Sétif and Guelma this week, where large swathes of forests have been burned.

The province of Jijel, 200 kilometers (125 miles) east of Algiers, renowned for its fine sandy beaches, turquoise waters and hills of olive trees and fruit trees and cedars, has suffered the greatest damage.

Nothing remained of the 1,200 square kilometers (460 square miles) of forests, only smoldering ashes and charred tree stumps. The official number of deaths in Jijel stood at 12, according to one of the first statements by the Interior Ministry at the beginning of the crisis at the end of August.

But the situation is far more tragic, with videos on social media showing dozens of coffins lined up beside

mass graves, awaiting burial before the bodies decompose in the heat.

“I have worked in Civil Protection for 40 years. We have dealt with fires, but this is the first time we have faced such a human, environmental, and material catastrophe. There are hundreds of dead,” Lt. Djabri Said told The Associated Press.

Abdelwahab Boukrouh, a journalist with the Presidency’s Communications Directorate, announced on his Facebook page that his family, living in the mountain village of Ouled Riyah, lost 12 members during the night of Aug. 22-23, with three others missing, among them women, children and older people who were surprised by the flames in their modest homes.

Thousands of livestock, including cattle, sheep, goats, mules, and donkeys, were unable to escape. Their charred carcasses litter the steep lanes leading to the villages, while the houses have been reduced to nothing more than piles of smoking ashes.

The private and public media, all of which are under state control, have stuck to the figure of 12 deaths in their reports, while emphasizing the presence of ministers on the ground and the interventions of state institutions to assist the victims.

Faced with the catastrophe, President Abdelmadjid Tebboune interrupted his vacation to personally visit the specialized hospitals in Algiers where the severely burned victims were treated. He declared three days of mourning and convened a special Council of Ministers meeting to declare the Jijel region a “disaster area” and allocate resources to deal with the crisis.

A spontaneous wave of national solidarity has seen endless convoys of trucks loaded with food, medicines, packs of water and clothing heading toward the villages ravaged by the fire. Tebboune also announced compensation to affected families, with the state undertaking to rebuild their homes.

Priority was given to restoring schools to ensure students can return for the start of the school year, scheduled for Sept. 21.

Tebboune has rejected what he called “conspiracy theories” for the fires, instead pointing to climate-related explanations. He cited other Mediterranean countries hit by fires this summer, such as France, Portugal, Spain and Italy. Scientists warn that climate change is exacerbating the frequency and intensity of heat and dryness.

Lat/Am

Brazilian justice now under fire: The Brazilian Supreme Court justice who sentenced former president Jair Bolsonaro to 27 years in prison for a coup attempt is now facing pressure to resign over alleged links to a disgraced banker.

Politicians, government ministers, newspapers and legal experts scrutinized Justice **Alexandre de Moraes** on Wednesday after federal police documents made public by one of his peers showed disgraced banker Daniel Vercaro, the owner of Banco Master, repeatedly sought advice from a person authorities identified as de Moraes.

Investigators believe, according to the documents, that Vercaro acted on different occasions based on advice from de Moraes. The banker also thanked the justice in replies to messages that police could not read and spoke about the alleged conversations in other messages with his friends.

The 10 members of the Supreme Court gathered in the capital Brasilia on Wednesday, less than 24 hours after the revelations, but none of them addressed the situation. As usual, de Moraes sat next to Justice An-



De Moraes

dré Mendonca, who unsealed the documents. The two didn’t speak during the session, which focused on other cases.

But the pressure on de Moraes was on outside the court. (AP)

□ □ □

US extends ban on flights to Haiti: The US Federal Aviation Administration has extended a ban on U.S. flights to Haiti’s capital until March as gang violence persists.

The ban means that commercial operators and US registered civilian aircraft can’t fly below 10,000 feet (around 3,000 meters) in Port-au-Prince and nearby areas, including parts of central Haiti.

The FAA first halted such flights in November 2025 after gunmen shot at a Spirit Airlines flight as it was landing at Port-au-Prince’s Toussaint Louverture International Airport. A flight attendant received minor injuries and other commercial planes on the ground were hit.

The FAA has extended its ban several times since that incident, a move that continues to isolate Port-au-Prince from the rest of the country.

The latest extension was implemented on Tuesday and will remain in place until March 2.

Police and a UN-backed gang suppression force are trying to quell gangs that control an estimated 70% of Port-au-Prince and swaths of land in Haiti’s central region. (AP)

Kuwait oil price up \$2.12 to \$98.23 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): Kuwait oil price rose by USD 2.12 to reach USD 98.23 per barrel (pb) in Wednesday’s trading, compared with USD 96.11 in the previous day, according to the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on

Thursday. In global markets, Brent crude went up by USD 98 cents to reach USD 95.63 pb, and US West Texas Intermediate crude also increased USD 79 cents to stand at USD 91.01 pb.

Business

KIB announces successful pricing of unsecured sukuk

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced on Wednesday the successful pricing of its inaugural issuance of senior unsecured Sukuk valued at USD 500 million with a five-year tenure. In a statement to KUNA, the bank said that this issuance falls under its USD 1.5 billion Sukuk program and carries a fixed annual profit rate of 5.502

percent. The bank elaborated that the issuance attracted strong investor demand from the outset, with orders reaching approximately USD 1.2 billion, equivalent to 2.4 times the issuance size, reflecting significant investor appetite for the Sukuk.

Highlighting role of partnerships in risk management

Al-Bseis calls for shift from aid to empowerment

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: United Nations (UN) Ambassador for Community Partnership and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation Counselor Hamad Zaid Saud Al-Bseis said social responsibility is no longer limited to charitable and volunteer initiatives, as it is now an integrated development approach that maintains the stability of societies and improves their capability to overcome economic, social and environmental crises and risks, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Bseis made the statement at the International Forum for Sustainable Economy 2026 in the Kingdom of Bahrain, where he presented a working paper titled, “The Role of Social Responsibility in Enhancing Community Stability and Risk Management.”

He asserted that the best risk management begins even before it occurs by investing in human capital, empowering the most vulnerable groups, supporting education, training and skills development, raising health and environmental awareness, supporting poverty and women, and combating poverty and unemployment.

He pointed out that societal stability is a shared responsibility between the government and private sector, particularly in protecting jobs, supporting small businesses and productive families, utilizing innovation and technology, participating in crisis response, and building long-term partnerships with government agencies and civil society organizations.

He underscored the importance of developing the role of charitable and civil society organizations, and moving from providing aid to establishing sustainable development solutions. He stated that building more stable and resilient societies necessitates integrated partnerships between the government, private sector, charitable organizations, civil society, academia and media.

He called for a shift from aid to empowerment, from response to be-



International Forum for Sustainable Economy 2026

ing proactive, from temporary initiatives to sustainable programs, and from community spending to impact investing. He emphasized that this transformation improves the ability of the society to deal with changes

and ensure social stability.

He asserted that stable societies are not those devoid of risks, but those with the capacity to anticipate, prepare for, manage and recover from the repercussions of risks.

He added that every investment in human capital is an investment in societal stability, and every effective community partnership is a step towards a more resilient and sustainable society.

Summit draws over 2,000 investors

Global Investment Summit charts path to Riyadh 2030

PARIS, Sept 3, (KUNA): The Global Investment Summit 2026 concluded its work in Paris Wednesday after two days of discussions, dialogues, and investment meetings, and deals that brought together a select group of investors, decisionmakers, business leaders, and experts from around the world.

The sessions focused on the future of investment, global economic transformations, and opportunities related to promising sectors.

The summit included several key sessions, specialized dialogues, workshops, and bilateral meetings that addressed capital flows between global markets, the future of investment in the technology and industrial sectors, energy and sustainability, artificial intelligence, health and biotechnology, tourism and hospitality, and the cultural and creative economy.

Discussions also covered a number of topics related to the future of cities, infrastructure, and the digital economy.

The summit concluded with several agreements signed by participating entities and companies, aimed at expanding areas of cooperation, building new investment partnerships, and enhancing joint ventures in several priority sectors.

These agreements support the transformation of the summit’s discussions and meetings into scalable, actionable projects and initiatives.

The summit also announced four significant initiatives during its proceedings, reflecting its commitment to supporting investment projects and initiatives that address the needs of various sectors and markets.

These initiatives aim to develop new models of cooperation between investors, government entities, and the private sector, thereby reinforcing the summit’s role as a platform connecting investment opportunities with international capital and expertise.

The four initiatives focused on developing new investment pathways across several sectors, supporting viable and scalable solutions, and fostering international partnerships that contribute to building projects with significant economic and developmental impact.

This aligns with the transformations occurring in global markets and the rising demand for investments related to technology, sustainability, infrastructure, and future sectors.

Over two days, the summit brought together more than 2,000 participants, including investors, decisionmakers, business leaders, and experts, along with over 80 speakers.

The diverse program combined specialized economic discussions with direct meetings between investors and opportunity providers, providing a space for exchanging perspectives, building relationships, and opening new channels of cooperation between Gulf, European, and global markets.

The summit sessions addressed a range of topics related to the transformations in global investment, the future of capital, advanced technology financing, the creative economy, artificial intelligence, health sovereignty, water, and energy, as well as the shifts that are reshaping investor decisions and market trends in the coming period.

At the conclusion of its proceedings, the summit emphasized the importance of continuing to translate the outcomes of dialogues and meetings into tangible partnerships and projects, and of strengthening communication between investors, institutions, and decisionmakers.

This will contribute to creating new opportunities that support economic growth and expand the scope of international investment cooperation.

The Paris edition is a milestone in the summit’s global trajectory, which will extend to several international economic capitals in the coming years, culminating in Riyadh in 2030.

This vision aims to build a broader network of partnerships and connect markets and investment opportunities with global capital and expertise.

The summit is sponsored by Al-Eqtisadiah newspaper, Al-Sharq newspaper (Qatar), Al-Ru’ya newspaper (Oman), Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Al-Seyassah newspaper (Kuwait), and Al-Bilad newspaper (Bahrain), reflecting the Gulf and Arab media interest in the summit’s outcomes and investment themes.

Oil prices edge higher, while world shares are mixed after Wall St gains

HONG KONG, Sept 3, (AP): Oil prices advanced on Thursday, with Brent crude trading near \$97 a barrel, while world shares were mixed.

Renewed fighting between the U.S. and Iran has pushed oil prices sharply higher, though U.S. President Donald Trump said Wednesday he doesn’t expect the U.S. bombing campaign to last “much longer.”

Brent crude, the international standard, rose 1.7% to \$97.25 per barrel after falling early Thursday. Benchmark U.S. crude advanced 1.9% to \$92.71 a barrel.

In early European trading, Britain’s FTSE 100 gained 0.1% to 10,766.32. Germany’s DAX fell 0.2% to 25,801.86, while France’s CAC 40 dipped 0.4% to 8,250.94.

U.S. futures were little changed.

In Asia, Tokyo’s Nikkei 225 fell 0.2% to 64,214.48. Among major gainers, OpenAI investor SoftBank Group rose 1.6%, memory chipmaker Kioxia Holdings rose 1.3%, and chip equipment manufacturer Tokyo Electron gained 0.4%.

South Korea’s Kospi rose 0.3% to 6,579.48. Samsung Electronics dipped 0.2%, while memory chipmaker SK Hynix was down 1.1%.

In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng edged 0.4% lower, to 25,213.31. The Shanghai Composite index climbed less than 0.1% to 3,942.09.

Australia’s S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.5% to 9,020.10.

The Taiex in Taiwan fell 0.7%, while India’s Sensex lost 0.6%.

The regional advance followed

gains for stocks on Wall Street, where the benchmark S&P 500 gained 0.5% on Wednesday. The Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed 0.6%, and the technology-heavy Nasdaq composite rose 0.5%.

Investors welcomed some encouraging signals about demand for artificial intelligence from two big tech companies, Dell and Palo Alto Networks. The AI boom has been the key driver behind the S&P 500’s gains this year.

Dell Technologies surged 15.8% following strong quarterly profits. Among some of the biggest names, Nvidia gained 3.2%, Meta Platforms climbed 2.5%, and Micron Technology rose 2.4%.

In the bond market, the yield on the U.S. 10-year Treasury fell to around 4.78% from more than 4.81% early Wednesday after a global bond sell-off triggered growing concerns over inflation and the Iran war -caused energy shocks as well as rising U.S. government debt.

The U.S. is set to release an employment report for August on Friday.

In other dealings early Thursday, the Japanese yen strengthened sharply against the U.S. dollar, with the dollar trading at 156.40 yen early Thursday, down 1.5% from 158.71 yen late Wednesday. The dollar had surged to above 160 yen earlier in the week, raising expectations that regulators might intervene to prevent the yen from falling further.

The euro was trading at \$1.1602, up from \$1.1588.

Boursa Kuwait closes lower, Main 50 bucks trend

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Thursday’s session in the red, with the general index slipping 18.72 points (0.21%) to 8,847.93.

Total market turnover stood at 421.12 million shares across 30,316 cash deals, worth KD 97.2 million (about USD 298.4 million).

The main market index fell 22.80 points (0.25%) to 9,134.78, on 321.5 million shares traded in 21,090 transactions valued at KD 58.7 million (USD 180.2 million).

The premier market index also declined, down 18.83 points (0.20%) to 9,246.08, with 99.6 million shares changing hands in 9,226 deals worth KD 38.5 million (USD 118.19 million).

In contrast, the Main 50 Index advanced 35.57 points (0.32%) to 11,000.85, supported by 142.2 million shares traded in 9,737 transactions valued at KD 28.5 million (USD 87.4 million).

Kuwaiti lawyer adds Gulf voice to global justice reform

Bahrain, Singapore deepen commercial justice ties

SINGAPORE, Sept 3: The Bahrain International Dispute Resolution Council organised a specialised workshop in Singapore on Friday, 28 August, focusing on the future of international commercial dispute resolution. The workshop brought together a distinguished group of legal practitioners, specialists and stakeholders interested in the resolution of cross-border commercial disputes.

The workshop featured a review of the Council’s work and initiatives, as well as the latest developments in legislation and arbitration procedures. Discussions also addressed the role of specialised international judicial institutions in advancing the international commercial dispute resolution framework and in providing a legal environment characterised by efficiency, reliability and impartiality.

The working sessions focused on the theme of “Assured Neutrality in Cross-Border Commercial Dispute Resolution”, recognising neutrality as one of the fundamental elements in strengthening the confidence of investors and commercial parties in international justice systems and in ensuring that parties to a dispute have access to fair and impartial proceedings, free from considerations relating to their nationality or place of business.

The discussions highlighted the importance of drawing upon the Kingdom of Bahrain’s long-standing legal expertise and Singapore’s internationally recognised and pioneering experience in commercial dispute resolution. Such engagement is expected to enhance opportunities for legal and judicial cooperation



Attorney Abdulrahman Al-Houti (2nd from right), Founder and Managing Partner of Dar Al Muhama Law Firm, during his participation in a workshop organized by Bahrain International Dispute Resolution Council in Singapore.

and contribute to strengthening Bahrain’s position as a regional centre for legal services and the resolution of disputes of an international nature.

Commenting on the significance of the workshop, Mr Ahmed Hussein, Chief Executive Officer of the Bahrain Chamber for Dispute Resolution (BCDR), stated:

“This workshop represents an important milestone in consolidating the presence of the newly established Bahrain International Commercial Court (BICC), alongside other specialised dispute resolution institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, within the global commercial justice system. It also provides a unique platform for the exchange of perspectives and expertise with Sin-

gapore’s leading model, which has established itself as an international benchmark in the field of commercial dispute resolution.

The assured neutrality demonstrated by our courts is not merely a theoretical principle; rather, it is an integrated institutional framework founded upon the independence and competence of judges and extending to the laws, procedures and legal frameworks in force, thereby ensuring that every litigant—regardless of nationality or place of business—has access to a fair and reliable judicial environment.

We believe that the partnership between Bahrain and Singapore will open broader horizons for international judicial cooperation and further consolidate the

Kingdom of Bahrain’s position as a trusted regional centre for the resolution of commercial disputes of an international nature.”

The participation of Attorney Abdulrahman Al-Houti, Founder and Managing Partner of Dar Al Muhama Law Firm, in this workshop forms part of his ongoing commitment to following legal and judicial developments at the international level and exchanging expertise with institutions and specialists in the field of commercial justice. Such participation contributes to strengthening the Kuwaiti and Gulf presence in international legal forums and supports the continued development of professional practices in the fields of law and dispute resolution.



Specialist Anthony Matesic works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in New York, Friday, Aug. 21, 2026. (AP Photo/Yuki Iwamura)

VW, BMW, Bosch cut jobs

German growth stalls as Chinese goods flood EU

MOOSBURG, Sept 3, (AP): The heart of the German economy is making and exporting the big-ticket, complex goods that make global business run: everything from cars and locomotives to factory machinery, aircraft and construction equipment.

That model for growth is under serious pressure from a new competitor whose exports can often match or approach Germany's in quality and sell for far less: China.

The China shock - as economists call it - is emerging as a key reason for Germany's chronic economic stagnation since the COVID-19 pandemic. The sluggish economy has helped make Chancellor Friedrich Merz's governing coalition unpopular ahead of an election Sunday in the eastern region of Saxony-Anhalt in which the far-right Alternative for Germany has its best chance yet of getting its first state governor.

German companies once reaped fat profits selling to China. But the tables have turned as Beijing supports companies in targeted sectors - often where German companies make competing goods. China's goods cannot find enough buyers in China's currently tepid economy, so they are shipped to foreign markets, including Europe.

The German economy - Europe's biggest - has stagnated for several years, shrinking in 2023 and 2024 and showing only 0.2% growth last year. Although the unemployment rate of 4% is lower than the EU average, Germans can see the unsettling headlines about job reductions at companies that have defined the German economy for decades: 50,000 at Volkswagen, with media reports of plans for more, 8,000 buyouts at BMW by the end of next year, a reduction of 13,000 at auto technology firm Bosch by 2030. And inflation has run ahead of wage increases after the pandemic, with last year's real wages only just catching up to where they were in 2019.

Costs must come down "in an environment where the Chinese total market is down by 20%, and Chinese competitors are increasing exports and thereby competitive pressure in Europe," said Volkswagen's finance chief, Arno Antlitz.

Germany's economy relies on exports that are similar to the kind of manufactured goods that Beijing is now targeting for support. Other major economies such as Britain, Italy and France have smaller manufacturing sectors, while U.S. tariffs block many Chinese goods, above all autos.

Germany now buys more from China than it sells in precisely the categories where German companies once dominated: cars, trucks, buses and trains, aircraft, factory machinery and medical devices. "China has already eaten much of German industry's lunch and is preparing to start on dinner," wrote economists Brad Setser and Sander Tordoir.

Jungheinrich AG, a German maker of forklifts and warehouse vehicles, is partnering with Chinese manufacturer EP Equipment to make AntOn, an entry-level forklift that can match competitors on price. The partnership is taking advantage of EP's large scale and lower production costs in China, and pairing it with Jungheinrich's global sales force and reputation as one of the world's three leading makers of warehouse vehicles.

AntOn's lineup may not quite match the features available in strictly German-made vehicles - but they're good enough and half the price. So AntOn, painted a bright purple color to differentiate it from Jungheinrich's high-end yellow machines, has a simple,

robust design with basic levers instead of a joystick, no compartment for a phone or wallet and an uncushioned seat. They sell for much less than typical Jungheinrich machinery, but are aimed at customers who may not need to run them 24/7.

"The challenge is, there comes a massive wave with Chinese products and Chinese offerings into Europe, but also into the international markets. And the key question is, how do you react?" said Chief Sales Officer Nadine Despineaux at the company's plant in Moosburg near Munich.

She views the demand for entry-level or "mid-tech" vehicles as a business opportunity to reach new customers and markets. AntOn "is a good combination of German engineering, market access and customer proximity, which we bring to the table, and highly efficient production sites, which we use in China."

Volkswagen has adopted an "in China, for China" approach, setting up a vehicle development center in Hefei to design vehicles for the local market.

German policymakers are attempting to avoid a repeat of what happened with the country's solar industry. Germany pioneered solar panel adoption in the early part of this century, but lower-priced Chinese products drove several German manufacturers into bankruptcy. Now, most solar panels in the country are imported from China.

Chinese industrial policy means key sectors get many different kinds of support, including easy credit, inexpensive raw materials, cheap land and, in some cases, "made in China" requirements. Chinese workers earn less than those in Europe and economists say China works to keep its currency artificially low, making its goods more competitive overseas.

But China's export prowess is based on more than government help. Chinese companies face brutal competition on price in a sluggish economy at home, forcing companies to keep costs down while racing to adopt new technology.

China rejects the criticism of its trading partners. A recent Ministry of Commerce report titled "China's Position on the So-Called Excess Capacity Issue" says discussions surrounding a China shock "falsely" describe China's industrial development as a threat to Western economies.

From its end, the German government has sought to improve growth by enacting a 500 billion euro (\$579 billion) fund to pay for new infrastructure such as roads, bridges and rail lines. A package proposed in July includes income tax cuts for mid- and lower-income taxpayers and reductions in red tape.

But Setser, the economist and a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, says the trade statistics show that the China shock is a dominant reason for Germany's economic malaise. And the answer for Germany may be out of the hands of German industry - and the ultimate responsibility of EU trade policy run by the European Commission in Brussels. The Commission has imposed narrowly tailored tariffs, or import taxes, on some Chinese goods such as electric autos and platforms that lift workers at construction sites.

"We do think that Europe needs a tougher trade policy, that it needs to insulate its market from some of the spillovers from China's own industrial policies," said Setser. "There has to be a bit more symmetry ... that the rest of the world will not remain open to a China that itself is not open to new imports."

Dutch central bank shifts billions in gold to London in 'crisis preparedness' move

THE HAGUE, Sept 3, (AP): The Dutch central bank announced Wednesday that it has moved billions of dollars worth of its gold reserves out of North America in a move it described as "crisis preparedness" in a time of global political unrest.

It said that between March and August, some 86 metric tons (94.8 tons) of gold were transferred to London from the combined total of around 313 metric tons (345 tons) held in New York and Ottawa, Canada. Before the move, New York housed 31.3% of the Dutch gold and Ottawa held 19.7%. After the move, both cities now hold 18.5%, the bank said.

The bank owns 612.4 metric tons (675 tons) of gold that was worth 72.2 billion euros (about \$83.6 billion) at the end of 2025.

"With this relocation, we have improved the tradability of our gold reserves," the bank's governor, Olaf Sleijpen, said in a written statement. "We expect that we will never need to use them, but we do need to strengthen our resilience and pre-

paredness." More than 27 metric tons (30 tons) of gold were "physically transferred" from the United States and Canada to the Dutch bank's heavily guarded vault on a military base near the central town of Zeist, the bank said, without elaborating on exactly how the gold bars got across the Atlantic Ocean. A similar quantity of gold was transferred from Zeist to London.

The rest of the relocation was achieved by selling around 59 metric tons (65 tons) of gold in New York and using the proceeds to buy gold in London.

The Dutch bank, known by its acronym DNB, said that gold held at the Bank of England "must meet modern international trade standards and is regarded as the world's most easily tradable gold and will therefore be the most readily available for DNB in a crisis situation. The gold reserves held in New York and Ottawa cannot be utilized as quickly and directly in such a situation."

Unemployment rate seen rising to 4.2%

US labor market remains in no-hire, no-fire mode

WASHINGTON, Sept 3, (AP): More Americans filed for unemployment benefits last week, but layoffs are still rare and jobless claims remain at historically low levels.

The Labor Department reported Thursday filings for benefits ticked up to 206,000 last week from a revised 204,000 the week before. The four-week average of claims, which smooths out week-to-week volatility, rose modestly to 207,250 last week.

Claims for jobless benefits are a proxy for layoffs, and economists watch them because they can be a sign of where the job market is headed. For the past year, claims have mostly stayed within a historically low range of 200,000 to 230,000 a week.

The number of people collecting unemployment

benefits rose slightly to 1.78 million the week that ended Aug. 22, up by 8,000 from the week before.

Companies, remembering the worker shortages that followed the end of COVID-19 lockups, are still reluctant to let go of staff. The unemployment rate is low at 4.1%.

But employers aren't eager to take on new workers. The Labor Department reported Tuesday that gross hiring - before subtracting people who lost or left their jobs - fell 5% to fewer than 5.1 million new jobs. The result is what economists call a "no-hire, no-fire" labor market in which those have work enjoy job security but times are tough for young workers trying to land an entry-level job or unemployed people seeking to get back to work.

In July, companies, government agencies and nonprofits together cut 23,000 jobs. So far this

year, employers are adding 61,000 jobs a month, up from the 9,700 they averaged last year - the weakest hiring outside a recession since 2002. The lingering effects of high interest rates and Trump's erratic trade policies discouraged companies from hiring in 2025.

When the Labor Department releases its report on last month's hiring and unemployment Friday, it's expected to show that employers added 65,000 jobs in August and that the unemployment rate ticked up to 4.2%, according to a survey of forecasters by the data firm FactSet.

Hiring this year remains well below the 166,000 monthly jobs created, on average, in 2023 and 2024, let alone the 491,000 a month recorded during the 2021-2022 hiring boom that followed pandemic lockdowns.

Judge orders changes to Google's digital ads business but spares it from breakup

WASHINGTON, Sept 3, (AP): A federal judge on Wednesday ordered Google to retool the system powering its monopoly in digital advertising, sparing the company from a wrenching breakup sought by the U.S. government.

The initial two-page decision by U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema in Virginia marks the second time in a year that Google has received a reprieve from a Justice Department proposal to dismantle its internet empire. Meanwhile, what courts have described as the company's anti-competitive practices have enriched Google's corporate parent, Alphabet Inc., which has a market value of \$4.11 trillion.

The judge's full opinion, which includes the specific remedies, will remain under seal for 14 days to allow the parties to review it and propose any necessary redactions.

"We're very pleased the Court rejected the DOJ's proposal to break apart tools that help small businesses reach new customers and grow," said Lee-Anne Mulholland, Google's vice president for regulatory affairs.

After a judge declared Google's ubiquitous search engine as an illegal monopoly in 2024, the Justice Department pushed for a penalty that would have required the company to sell its popular Chrome web browser. But it was rebuffed last September by another federal judge overseeing

that case.

Now Brinkema has also rejected the government's argument that Google should be forced to sell parts of the technology underlying a Byzantine system that generates a significant portion of the company's nearly \$400 billion in annual ad sales.

Critics of Big Tech condemned the ruling.

"It takes an Olympic level of mental gymnastics to find that Google is operating an illegal monopoly and then decide to do nothing about it," said Sacha Haworth, executive director of The Tech Oversight Project. "With Big Tech continuing to suffocate new and innovative businesses from gaining traction, Judge Brinkema, like (U.S. District Judge Amit) Mehta before her, is sending the wrong message at the wrong time."

Brinkema is adopting an approach that the Justice Department adamantly opposed last November when the judge heard closing arguments during the trial's remedy phase. The ad tech case dates back to the government's 2023 filing of an antitrust lawsuit that resulted last year in an illegal monopoly judgment.

Justice Department lawyers warned Brinkema in court documents that if Google is allowed to hold on to all its ad technology, the company will still be able to find ways to "manipulate computer algorithms that are the engine of its monopolies in

ways too difficult to detect."

In its counterarguments, Google contended would be unduly harsh to break up a complex network that distributes ads that online publishers depend upon to help finance digital services used by millions of consumers.

The technology underlying advertising exchange targeted in the case handles 55 million requests per second, according to estimates provided by Google in court filings. "This is technology that absolutely has to keep working for consumers," Google had warned leading up to Brinkema's ruling.

In her decision, Brinkema said she agreed to most of the remedies suggested by the two sides.

Even though the changes ostensibly will shake up the status quo in ways that could decrease Google's revenue or at least slow its future growth, the ruling seems likely to be viewed by most investors as the equivalent of speed bump for a company that has recently been turbocharged by AI technology.

That has been the prevailing perspective about the punishment handed down by U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta in the search monopoly case. Since that decision came down in Washington D.C., Alphabet's stock price has surged 45% to create an additional \$1.3 trillion in shareholder wealth.

\$59.69 bln profit fuels Nvidia's AI push

Chipmaker Nvidia to spend \$13 bln on Hugging Face, which will remain an open source platform

NEW YORK, Sept 3, (AP): Chipmaker Nvidia is buying artificial intelligence software platform Hugging Face for \$12.93 billion.

Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang wrote in a blog post Thursday that more than 18 million developers, researchers and creators use Hugging Face to share more than 3 million models, 500,000 data sets and 1 million applications. There's also more than 200,000 companies that use the platform, he said.

In July, the data processing systems of Hugging Face were hacked and ChatGPT maker OpenAI acknowledged that its artificial intelligence system was to blame, sending shock waves through the security community amid heightened concerns about the capabilities of powerful AI models.

Just over a week later, Anthropic said its artificial intelligence models hacked into three other organizations during testing, and that as followed closely by an announcement from Meta, which said its AI model accessed the internet on its own and hacked another company.

The wave of AI intrusions occurred just a month after President



Jensen Huang, president and CEO of Nvidia, waits for a groundbreaking ceremony for an expansion of Coherent's manufacturing facility to begin on June 16, 2026, in Sherman, Texas. (AP Photo/Jeffrey McWhorter, File)

Donald Trump signed an executive order creating a framework for the federal government to vet the national security risks of the most advanced AI systems for up to a month before their public release.

On Thursday, however, Nvidia's

Huang said that Hugging face will remain an open platform.

"Developers will choose the models they want, the frameworks they want, the clouds and inference service providers they want and the computing platforms they want,"

Huang wrote in a blog post. "Nvidia compute will not be required to build on or deploy through Hugging Face."

Hugging Face will still support multi-cloud and multi-accelerator development and deployment.

Nvidia has released more than 500 models on Hugging Face and more than 250 open datasets.

Nvidia's high-end chips have emerged as AI's best building blocks and they are highly sought after. The Santa Clara, California, late last month reported quarterly profits of \$59.69 billion.

While AI has powered stock market gains and U.S. economic growth in recent years, there's been growing skepticism about whether AI will justify the trillions of dollars that are being spent to develop the technology.

The AI industry is also increasingly facing pushback amid objections to the expansion in data centers and fears that the speed with which AI is being adopted could lead to widespread job losses worldwide.

Nvidia's shares jumped 3% at the opening bell. Hugging Face is not publicly traded.

TotalEnergies, CNOOC lead Uganda oil push

Uganda names its crude oil blend 'Pearl Sweet' ahead of commercial production

MBALE, Sept 3, (AP): Ugandan authorities on Wednesday named the country's prospective crude oil blend "Pearl Sweet," marking a milestone as the East African country gears up for commercial production by the end of the year.

Officials announced the name at a remote oil infrastructure site, celebrating Uganda's emergence as an oil producer.

The name chosen for Uganda's crude oil blend is a nod to Winston Churchill's description of Uganda in the last century as "the pearl of Africa," and officials said the "sweet" in the nomenclature reflects the crude blend's low sulfur content.

"The name combines national identity with a commercial description," the Ministry of Energy said in a statement. "Naming supports future crude marketing activities and engagement with potential buyers."

Uganda is estimated to have recoverable oil reserves of roughly 1.6 billion barrels. The investors are French oil company TotalEnergies, which owns the largest stake, and China National Offshore Oil Corporation, or CNOOC. The Ugandan people, through the Uganda National Oil Company, own 15% of the pro-



CNOOC President Dr. Liu Xiangdong, center, talks to Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni during a tour of the central processing unit at the Kingfisher oil field near Hoima, Uganda, Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2026. (AP Photo/Hajarah Nalwadda)

jects.

"This marks an important milestone in our journey to develop Uganda's oil and gas resources for value addition and economic transformation," Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni said. "Through refining, petrochemical industries and the use of associated gas for electric-

ity generation, we shall maximize the value of our resources here at home and reduce dependence on imported petroleum products."

Production is expected to plateau at about 230,000 barrels per day, with blended crude exports emerging from separate projects by CNOOC and TotalEnergies.

Wednesday's event in Kikuube, the site of a CNOOC project known as Kingfisher, signals progress despite legal and other setbacks since the discovery two decades ago of commercially viable quantities of crude deposits.

The oil development projects are linked to the controversial construction of a heated pipeline linking Uganda's oil fields near Lake Albert to a port in Tanzania. Environmentalists and others have opposed the pipeline, saying it runs afoul of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Most efforts by climate watchdogs seeking to stop Uganda's oil projects have focused on TotalEnergies, which has been sued in France at least twice by groups and individuals alleging food and land rights violations.

Oil wells are being drilled within western Uganda's Murchison Falls National Park, where the Nile River plummets 130 feet (40 meters) through a gap just 20 feet (6 meters) wide and the surrounding wilderness is home to hippos, egrets, giraffes and antelope. The pipeline is to pass through forest reserves and game parks, running alongside Lake Victoria, a source of fresh water for 40 million people.

300 children join Al Salam Summer Camp

Al Salam Hospitals & KFH partner for 2nd consecutive year on Al Salam Summer Camp

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: Al Salam Hospitals and Kuwait Finance House (KFH) have partnered for the second consecutive year on the Al Salam Summer Camp, an annual health and wellness program that introduces children to healthy habits and essential healthcare skills through interactive, age-appropriate activities.

Held at Al Salam Al Assima Hospital, this year's Summer Camp welcomed nearly 300 children between the ages of 7 and 12. The program featured a range of activities covering first aid, proper nutrition, fitness and physical health, and dental and oral care, combining practical learning with age-appropriate activities designed to make health education accessible and enjoyable for children.

As part of the collaboration, KFH sponsored two dedicated Summer Camp sessions for children of KFH employees and customers. The collaboration builds on the partnership established between Al Salam Hospitals and KFH during the 2025 edition of the program and reflects both organizations' commitment to community engagement, health education and social responsibility.

Commenting on the successful completion of this year's summer camp, Dr. Raghad Abdul Mutaleb Al-Kazemi, Deputy CEO of Al Salam Al Assima Hospital and Hospital Director of Al Salam Al Ahmadi Hospital said: "The Al Salam Summer Camp is an initiative that we are



Group photos of the participants.

particularly proud of. What began more than ten years ago as a summer first-aid course for children has grown into a comprehensive annual program that introduces children to different aspects of health and wellness in an environment that encourages them to participate, ask questions and learn through experience."

She added: "Our continued collaboration with KFH as a strategic partner allows us to build on the success of the program and extend its impact within the community. We share a commitment to investing in initiatives that benefit children and families, and we believe that introducing healthy habits and basic healthcare knowledge from an early age can have a meaningful and lasting impact."

The summer camp forms part of Al Salam Hospitals' broader commitment to promoting health awareness among children, alongside initiatives such as its Little Health Heroes program. Throughout the year, the Little Health Heroes program welcomes children from schools across Kuwait to visit departments at Al Salam Al Assima and Al Salam Al Ahmadi hospitals and take part in interactive activities designed to introduce them to health and wellness from an early age. Through these initiatives, Al Salam Hospitals continues to extend health education beyond the hospital and into the wider community.



Joe & The Juice team celebrating the opening of the Messilah branch.



Joe & The Juice branch in Messilah.

Fresh juices, shakes at new outlet

Joe & The Juice opens drive-thru in Messilah

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Light Food, a subsidiary of Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co., has announced the opening of a new Joe & The Juice store in Messilah, featuring drive-thru service and further expanding the brand's presence across Kuwait.

This opening reflects Joe & The Juice's continued commitment to strengthening its presence in the Kuwaiti market, expanding its customer base, and reinforcing its position as a preferred destination for healthy food and beverages.

Strategically located near Messilah Beach, the store offers a convenient drive-thru service, delivering a seamless experience that caters to customers' diverse needs and complements their modern, fast-paced lifestyles.

The Messilah store offers Joe & The Juice's diverse menu, featuring a wide selection of freshly prepared juices, shakes, healthy sandwiches, light snacks, and coffee, providing customers with fresh, high-quality

options. The store also features a contemporary design with comfortable indoor seating, complemented by drive-thru service, making it an ideal destination for a wide range of customers, including local residents, beachgoers, passersby, young professionals, and families alike.

The Messilah location joins a network of Joe & The Juice stores across Kuwait, including Argania Complex in Shuwaikh, Argan Square in Salmiya, The Walk Mall in Ardiya, Al Andalus Complex in Hawalli, The Warehouse in South Sabahiya, Sahara Golf Resort next to the Hunting and Equestrian Club, Al Khiran Mall, Arraya Centre in Kuwait City, Kuwait International Airport Terminal 1 – Arrivals, Murouj near the Hunting and Equestrian Club, Vibes Complex in Abu Al Hasaniya, Bnaider Resort, which operates 24 hours a day from Thursday to Saturday, 360 Mall, Mishref, Al Shaheed Park, Mutlaa Al Jahra Complex, Hessah Al Mubarak District and the Avenues Mall.

Highlighting the timeless relevance of the Prophet's life

IMA Kuwait conducts Jalsa-e-Seerat-un-Nabi events

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Kuwait, under the distinguished patronage of the Ministry of Awqaf & Islamic Affairs – Foreign Relations Department, successfully concluded its 10-Day Seerah Campaign with two Jalsa-e-Seerat-un-Nabi Gatherings held simultaneously on Thursday, 27 August 2026, at Maryam Masjid, Mahboula, and Masjid Adsani, Maliya, Kuwait City.

The concluding Programs brought together Community Members, Families and Youth in large numbers to reflect on the Life, Character and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad, focusing on two significant Themes: "Building a Better Society Through the Teachings of the Seerah" and "Raising the Next Generation Through the Seerah."

Building a Better Society Through the Teachings of the Seerah

The Topic was addressed by Renowned Islamic Scholars & Khateeb Moulana Sifat Alamat Maliya and Moulana Irfan Nadwi at Mahboula.

The Speakers highlighted that meaningful Societal Reform begins with strengthening Faith&Tawheed, establishing a sincere connection with Salah, following the Qur'an&authentic Sunnah, and developing the Noble Character & Manners exemplified by Prophet Muhammad.

The discussions emphasized the importance of Unity, Brotherhood & Social Responsibility, encouraging Individuals to contribute actively towards the Moral & Spiritual betterment of their Families & Communities. The Masjid was highlighted as not only a place of Worship but also a Centre for Learning, Guidance & Constructive Social Reform.

The Speakers also underlined the responsibility of Muslims towards Dawah, Enjoining Good&Discouraging Wrong with wisdom, stressing that reform is a collective responsibility and that neglecting it has serious consequences.

The overall Message was that a better Society is built when Faith&Prophetic Values are translated into everyday Character, Conduct and Responsible Community Participation. Raising the Next Generation Through the Seerah

The Topic was addressed by RenownedIslamic Scholars& Khateeb Moulana Umar Falahi at Maliyaand Moulana Waleed Umri at Mahboula.

The Theme focused on the vital Responsibility of nurturing a Generation that combines Faith, Knowledge, Character, Wisdom and Purposeful Action.

The Speakers presented the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad as the finest Model for developing Young People. While modern Education & Technology offer immense Opportunities, they alone cannot create a strong Generation without Sound Character and Faith. The Challenges confronting today's Youth, including Excessive Social-Media dependence, loss of Purpose & Moral distractions, make the Prophetic model particularly relevant.

Their discussions highlighted how the Prophet recognized the abilities of Young People, entrusted them with Responsibility and developed their Potential. The examples of Abdullah ibn Abbas (RA), Aisha (RA), Muadh ibn



Photos during the event.

Jabal (RA), Usama ibn Zaid (RA) and Ali (RA) demonstrated how Knowledge, Talent, Courage & Leadership can flourish when young people are given Trust, Guidance and Meaningful Responsibilities.

The Speakers also emphasized the crucial role of Parents and the home as the first school of Character. Children learn more from the Example & Conduct of their Parents than from Words alone. Education, therefore, must develop both Knowledge & Character, while Young People should be guided to use Technology wisely &channel their abilities towards Meaningful Purposes and the Benefit of Humanity &the Ummah.

Both Programs provided a fitting conclusion to IMA Kuwait's 10-Day Seerah Campaign, which sought to re-

connect the Community with the Life, Character & Mission of Prophet Muhammad and encourage the Practical Application of its Timeless Guidance.

The Events brought together a powerful message: Building better Individuals & Society today, while nurturing a Morally Strong & Purposeful Generation for tomorrow. The Campaign reinforced that the Seerah is not merely a Historical Account, but a Living Source of Guidance for Personal Character, Family Life, Community Development & Responsible Living.

Students from IMA Summer Islamic Classes presented a beautiful Islamic nashed at the Masjid Adsani program. Their melodious and heartfelt performance mesmerized the audience and added a spiritually uplifting atmosphere to the occasion.

The concluding Programs witnessed enthusiastic Participation from Community Members, Families and Youth. Separate arrangements were also made for Ladies, and the Gatherings concluded with Dinner Packets served, providing an opportunity for Fellowship and strengthening Community bonds.

IMA Kuwait, an Indian socio-religious organization, operates under the patronage of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs Kuwait. It focuses on providing a platform for the spiritual and social enhancement of expatriates living in Kuwait through various programs and social gatherings. It looks forward to organizing more beneficial programs in the future, catering to the needs of the expatriate community, especially the Indian diaspora.

Cold War clichés get comic makeover in ‘Mayday’

Branagh flies past Reynolds

Somewhere along the way, Sir Kenneth Branagh developed a knack for splaying Russians. He was the vindictive oligarch in “Tenet” and a villainous industrialist in “Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit,” but “Mayday” may be the first time he’s been asked to use his very particular set of language skills for ... comedy?

His character, Nikolai Ustinov is a United States-loving, ex-KGB agent who has been living a solitary life in the woods until a U.S. Navy pilot crash lands in his backyard.

The year is 1987, Tony Scott’s “Top Gun,” released the year prior, looms large for both servicemen and former Russian agents, and Lieutenant Troy “Assassin” Kelly (Ryan Reynolds) has found himself in a very bad situation after being shot down on a black ops mission in a Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird in the heart of the Soviet Union.

Nikolai fights like Jason Bourne, has a beard like Grizzly Adams and loves “Top Gun” with every ounce of his being. Somehow, he’s obtained a bootleg VHS of the movie which he has watched “over 100 times,” he tells Troy. That movie, he says, confirmed “all of my beliefs about your people.” Because of that, he takes it upon himself to help Troy get out of Russia - and thus another mismatched buddy action comedy is born.

Troy is a very quintessentially Reynolds character while also being fairly generic: Snarky and sarcastic and full of himself. In classic “Top Gun” fashion he’s sure he’s the best pilot. He also has a hang-up about faces he deems unpleasant including those of the Cabbage Patch Kids, the pilot leading the black ops mission (it’s one you don’t often see outside of nightmares, he tells him to his face) and a Russian child whose guardians have taken them in for the night. His Reynolds-isms really only work when playing against Branagh, however. It’s hard to say whether anyone intended for Branagh to be the real star of this film, or if that’s just what happened, but he is the one with the arc, with the comedy, with the soul. Reynolds is mainly there to react to whatever Branagh is doing.

Filmmakers John Francis Daley and Jonathan Goldstein, the directing team behind “Game Night” and “Dungeons and Dragons: Honor Among Thieves,” have made a career out of making genre fare with an irreverent twist. They seem to be both skeptics and fans of macho 80s action movies - playing up the practical hand-to-hand combat and embracing the inherent goofiness of it all.

It’s hard to shake the feeling that it is a strange time to be releasing a movie with a sense of humor about Russia and geopolitical tensions. “Mayday” has a bigger point to make about the one-sided relationship of patriotism, wherever that loyalty lays. And yet it still seems like poor timing to have Marcin



This image released by Apple TV shows Kenneth Branagh, left, and Ryan Reynolds in a scene from “Mayday.” (AP)

Dorociński playing a KGB officer, Alexander Volkov, who is hunting Troy on behalf of the motherland with the zeal of a Terminator. At one point his colleagues, content to wait for help to retrieve Troy’s boot and dog tag from a very tall tree, watch in awe as Volkov strips down to his undershirt to effortlessly do it himself.

Even so, “Mayday” is still pretty fun within its slick and self-aware packaging. It also doesn’t exactly transport you to a credible 1987, though, no matter

how hard the soundtrack and references may be working. But in the end, it knows what it is, and that’s not a serious exploration of anything, least of all individuals being used as political cogs during the Cold War.

“Mayday,” an Apple TV release streaming Friday, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association for “for violence and action, some strong language, suggestive references and smoking.” Running time: 112 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four. (AP)



This image released by LAIKA Studios shows animator Amy Greenspan on the set of “Wildwood.” (AP)

‘Wildwood’ brings handmade magic back to the big screen

NEW YORK, Sept 3, (AP): Travis Knight, the chief executive of the stop-motion animation studio Laika, wasn’t prepared for the response to the teaser for his new film, “Wildwood.”

Almost immediately, it went viral. The early trailer rapidly gained more than 90 million views on YouTube, galvanized by people awed by the apparent scale and emotional depth of Laika’s most ambitious film yet. Sample comment: “AI is the future. Laika: Hold my meticulously hand-crafted stop motion beer.”

“People that I worked with - hardened industry folks with wizened black husks of hearts - were sending me text messages: ‘Jesus Christ, your trailer just made me cry,’” Knight says, chuckling.

Why did Knight’s strange, indie stop-motion animated movie resonate so strongly?

“The making of the art leaves fingerprints on the art,” Knight surmises. “And I think people feel that.”

There’s no shortage of people proclaiming that AI is the future. There are significantly fewer proselytizing about stop-motion animation’s assured destiny. But Laika, the Portland, Oregon-based studio, has for two decades tried to keep an old movie art form alive while mixing in more modern, computer-generated advances. (“We’re not Amish,” promises Knight.)

The studio’s first release in 2009, Henry Selick’s “Coraline,” is still its most beloved. But Laika’s commitment to hand-crafted filmmaking and darkly gothic tales has won a loyal following over the years, even though its last release was the 2019 flop “Missing Link.”

Yet “Wildwood” might always have been what Laika was building toward. The film, which opens in theaters Oct. 23, is based on Colin Meloy’s 2011 fantasy novel, illustrated by Carson Ellis. Set in Portland, it’s about a teenage girl named Prue McKee (voiced by Peyton Elizabeth Lee) whose infant brother is kidnapped by a flock of crows and taken into an enchanted forest. The voice cast includes Carey Mulligan, Mahershala Ali, Jake Johnson and Jacob Tremblay.

The film, heavy with grief and radiant with adventure, isn’t just in Laika’s tonal sweet spot. It’s set in its backyard.

“It’s everything I love in one film,” Knight said in a recent exclusive interview. “I think it’s the best thing we’ve ever done at Laika.”

It was also the biggest challenge. Knight, the son of Nike co-founder Phil Knight

(who’s chairman of Laika and has helped bankroll it), acquired the rights to “Wildwood” before it was released. The adaptation is some 16 years in the making.

“I felt like we had to develop the tools, the tricks, the technologies to actually do justice to this story. We built on all of our learnings from our earlier movies and stood on those shoulders. I felt like: OK, I think we’re ready to do it,” Knight says before laughing. “And we were not.”

At 139 minutes, “Wildwood” is uncommonly long for an animated film, let alone a stop-motion animated one. Its staggering production included 136 sets and 231 practical puppets. One character, a golden eagle known as The General, took some 3,000 hours to make.

“These are great acts of care and devotion,” Knight says. “In this modern era where everything is so rapid pace, where entire worlds can be generated with a click of a mouse, the idea of taking your time, and with great devotion and care coaxing life out of something, is very special. I like to call it a quiet act of rebellion.”

Laika isn’t the only big stop-motion company still around. The Bristol, U.K.-based Aardman Animations remains a free-flowing font of pastoral whimsy. (It releases “Shaun the Sheep: The Beast of Mossy Bottom” on Sept. 18.) But it’s a precarious business. And it’s easy to wonder if Laika could have kept such long-term productions going without the Knight family wealth.

Focus Features exited its pact with Laika after the release of 2016’s Oscar-nominated “Kubo and the Two Strings.” Fathom Entertainment, the distributor owned by theater chains, is stepping in to release “Wildwood.” Laika and Fathom have enjoyed unique success in rereleases of “Coraline.” A 2024 rerelease generated an astounding \$52.4 million worldwide, fresh evidence of audiences’ yearning for something tactile and soulful.

Laika was born in 2003 when Philip Knight acquired Vinton Studios, the company founded by animator Will Vinton. Travis Knight was then an animator there. The name, Laika, comes from the dog launched into space in 1957.

From the start, Knight envisioned an animation studio where darkness and light weren’t treated as opposites. Laika has since carved out a sensibility more surreal and more idiosyncratic than the output of animation factories like Pixar or Illumination. “Wildwood,” notably, is rated PG-13.

From CIA satire to Gaza, Venice Film Fest mirrors troubled world

VENICE, Sept 3, (AP): The Venice Film Festival is in full swing with the world premieres of the dark CIA comedy “Wild Horse Nine” and Werner Herzog’s “Bucking Fastard” Thursday evening on the Lido.

“Wild Horse Nine,” which was written and directed by Martin McDonagh, is one of the higher-profile films launching at the 83rd edition of the festival. The film stars Sam Rockwell and John Malkovich as CIA agents who are dispatched to Easter Island shortly before the 1973 Chilean coup. It will have a theatrical release later this fall, and, if McDonagh’s track record is any indication, might be an awards player.

McDonagh’s previous two films, “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri,” and “The Banshees of Inisherin” both bowed at Venice and went on to receive multiple Oscar nominations, including best picture. “Three Billboards” won two, for Rockwell and Frances McDormand.

“Bucking Fastard” is more of a mystery. The Werner Herzog-directed film features Rooney Mara and Kate Mara as twin sisters whose physical and mental codependency becomes a source of public fascination. A synopsis says “they speak in unison, love the same man, and have the same dreams.”

Both films are competing for the Golden Lion, along with Danny Boyle’s Rupert Murdoch film “Ink” and the Gaza-focused documentary “NAZA.”

The Maggie Gyllenhaal-led jury will announce the winners in a Sept. 12 ceremony.

George Clooney may be at the Venice Film Festival to receive a lifetime achievement award, but he didn’t dwell just on memories and nostalgia on Wednesday.

Before the award ceremony, which he attended with wife Amal Clooney, the 65-year-old actor and director addressed issues such as the artificial intelligence revolution in Hollywood and the Paramount-Warner Bros. merger, and the state of journalism and power in America.

“There’s a great word, kakistocracy, which is a country run by the least qualified people,” Clooney said. “I think maybe we have a kakistocracy right now. But we’ll get through it.”

Of artificial intelligence, Clooney said that his industry is going to have to find ways to survive, and that he would “like to avoid being in a tampon commercial 20 years after I’m dead.” He bemoaned the fact that some of the world’s richest men own The Washington Post and X and said that the proposed merger of Paramount and Warner Bros. was “a complicated thing because I don’t know how this works out, I don’t know how it goes through.”

Over the course of 11 days, the 83rd edition of the festival will see many stars from Hollywood and beyond grace the red carpet, from Robert Pattinson to Noel and Liam Gallagher of Oasis, but the focus this year seems to be more on geopolitics than movie star moments.

The sprawling lineup includes documentaries about the conflict in Gaza (“NAZA”), Elon Musk (“Musk”) and independent Russian journalists covering the war in Ukraine (“My Undesirable Friends - Part II: Exile”) as well as Palestinian films and a short about U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Minneapolis.

Jury president Maggie Gyllenhaal spoke about the fact that many of the films in the slate are about current events and conflicts.

“Look, we could say how are we possibly here talking about movies right now when the world is in a state of emergency,” Gyllenhaal said. “To me the answer has something to do with empathy.”

When asked if she thought films should be political, she said that she thinks they are



George Clooney poses for photographers with the golden lion for lifetime achievement during the 83rd edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2026. (AP)

“fundamentally, unavoidably political.”

Festival director Alberto Barbera told The Associated Press that most of the films they saw during the selection process dealt with “contemporary problems.”

“We didn’t really have a choice,” he said. “We are in a space open to everybody for discussion, for confrontation. Everybody is completely free to express themselves. And I’m, in a way, really happy that this kind of film could help the viewers, the critics, everybody

to have a better understanding of what is going on in our contemporary, difficult world.” Gyllenhaal also addressed the dearth of female directors in the competition lineup. When the slate was announced in July, there was much attention on the fact that there was only one film directed by a woman. The documentary “NAZA,” which was added to the lineup just last week, was also co-directed by a woman.

“I guess it’s just finally become clear that men make better movies than women do,” Gyllenhaal quipped, before speaking about the systemic issues facing female directors, like financing and preconceived notions about

high art. Earlier, Barbera called it “a big problem,” adding: “There is a lot to do to give women the place that they deserve in cinema.”

He explained that while the organizers saw many interesting films from women, and programmed many in the festival’s sidebars, they didn’t find films that were strong enough for the main competition.

The festival is also known for being a launch pad for Oscar contenders.

Barbera said one such possibility could be the opening-night film “Ink,” a competition title starring Guy Pearce as Rupert Murdoch and Jack O’Connell as tabloid newspaper editor Larry Lamb, which reportedly received a five-minute standing ovation. An adaptation of James Graham’s acclaimed play, the Danny Boyle-directed film dramatizes Murdoch’s acquisition of Britain’s “The Sun” in 1969 and explores how Lamb transformed a failing paper into a bestselling one.

Pearce said Murdoch’s daughter, Elisabeth, told him: “‘Dad’s very happy that you are playing him.’ But he hadn’t seen the film at that point.”

One-year ban comes alongside new literacy classes for high school students

NYC schools ban generative AI for younger students

NEW YORK, Sept 3, (AP): New York City’s public schools will temporarily ban students in elementary and middle schools from using artificial intelligence tools in the upcoming school year, Mayor Zohran Mamdani announced Wednesday.

The one-year moratorium - part of a wider assessment of how children in the nation’s largest school district interact with the technology - will include “all software that uses student-facing generative AI” for students in grades through 8th grade, the mayor’s office said. It described the policy as the most expansive prohibition in the country.

At the same time, the city is establishing twice-yearly AI literacy classes for all public high school students, and it will set up pilots

for some high schoolers to introduce them to a handful of AI platforms under the supervision of an educator. Companion chatbots will be prohibited across all grades, officials said.

The approach comes as students, parents and schools across the country are attempting to navigate the use of AI tools in the classroom and elsewhere, moving to teach kids to how to incorporate the technology while also stopping them from overly relying on it or using it to cheat.

“Each day when our children come to school we teach them to ask questions, to challenge assumptions, to interrogate the premise, to ask why. When it comes to AI in our schools, we hold an obligation to do the same,” Mamdani, a Democrat,

said at a news conference.

The city will also recommend screen time limits for students, suggesting a cap of 30 minutes a day for students in grades three to five and 45 minutes for students between 6th and 8th grade. Teachers will be allowed to use AI for instructional planning and operational tasks.

At least 37 states have official AI guidance that schools can use as a blueprint, though the isn’t a single definition of what AI literacy means or how it should be taught. New York state last year approved a ban on students’ use of cellphones in schools.

City education officials will also perform a wide review of all technology tools used in its school system and will eliminate certain tools

if they are determined to be not essential to learning.

Michael Mulgrew, president of the United Federation of Teachers in New York, praised the screen time limits but said the city’s AI policy “leaves many questions unanswered,” including details on how the education department “will be more aggressive in demanding the products it purchases have AI safeguards.”

“If we are going to be serious, let’s start at the source, rather than expect school communities or individual educators to figure out after the fact if what their school uses fits the new policy,” he said.

New York City’s public school students are scheduled return to the classroom next week.



New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani speaks during the annual New York State Financial Control Board meeting, Aug. 12, 2026, in New York. (AP)

Century later, the statuette remains symbol of prestige & controversy

Oscar: Hollywood’s most coveted & complicated prize

LOS ANGELES, Sept 3, (AP): I’d like to thank the Academy for the Oscar.

Yes, the awards might have been a mere afterthought in Louis B. Mayer’s dreams for “the Academy” - part PR ploy to persuade the public that Hollywood was not a den of sin and scandal, part consolidation of power by a group of producers bucking unionization efforts. Yes, no one knows exactly who is responsible for the name “Oscar” (though Academy librarian Margaret Herrick is said to have nicknamed the statue after her uncle).

And yes, they often get it very wrong. Let’s not forget that “Citizen Kane” and “Brokeback Mountain” lost best picture, that “Crash” and “Green Book” won, that “2001: A Space Odyssey,” “Do the Right Thing” and “Hoop Dreams” weren’t even nominated and that David Lynch never received a competitive Oscar. Sometimes they get



Oscar statuettes to be presented at the 80th Academy Awards, are showcased in a public display “Meet the Oscars” at the Hollywood & Highland Center in Los Angeles, Feb. 8, 2008. (AP)

it right, too (see: “One Battle After Another”).

Like many things about the business of making movies in America, the Oscars are full of contradictions.

It is at once an undeniable honor - the most recognizable award one can receive for making movies - and a manifestation of everything that’s rotten in moviemaking, with egos, money and power tipping the scales over merit. But since the first awards were handed out in 1929 in a ceremony that took all of 10 minutes, the Oscars have become a cultural bellwether and a billion-dollar cottage industry - the culmination of an “awards season” supporting consultants, pundits, publications, stylists, stagehands and dreamers.

The value of an Oscar is both everything and nothing. The statue itself costs about \$400 to produce. Studios shell out tens of millions on awards

campaigns. For some lucky winners, bigger paychecks can follow. Still, it’s hardly a guarantee of a better life or career. And the resale market is complicated. If you won your award after 1951, neither you nor your heirs may sell or even dispose of the statue without first giving the Academy the option to purchase it for \$1.

Oscar’s popularity has fluctuated across the years. Not just with viewers, who have tuned in and out since the first broadcast in 1953. In 1969, a 22-year-old Candice Bergen raised her hand to help recruit a younger class of Academy members, like Dennis Hopper. In 2015, a tweet, #OscarsSoWhite, started another membership revolution. Critics have been crying irrelevance since its earliest days.

Still, we watch. Complaining about the Oscars is, after all, its own pastime.

Arts & Culture

Museum celebrates comics, pop culture and storytelling

Lucas’ new LA museum takes art far beyond ‘Star Wars’



Left: Visitors look at artwork by the artist Banksy during a press preview for the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art on Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2026, in Los Angeles. Right: Production designer Norman Reynolds’ robot R2-D2, left, and John Mollo’s costume for the C-3PO character from the “Star Wars” franchise are displayed in the Cinema Gallery during a preview of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art on Aug. 31, 2026, in Los Angeles. (AP)



A visitor looks at Mel Ramos’ oil paintings “Man of Steel,” left, and “The Green Lantern” during a preview of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art on Monday, Aug. 31, 2026, in Los Angeles. (AP)



Luke Skywalker’s landspeeder from the 1977 film “Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope” is pictured in the Cinema Gallery during a preview of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art on Monday, Aug. 31, 2026, in Los Angeles. (AP)



High resolution photos of some of the earliest known cave paintings are pictured inside the History of Narrative Art gallery during a preview of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art on Monday, Aug. 31, 2026, in Los Angeles. (AP)



A Naboo N-1 Starfighter from the film “Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace” is suspended above the entrance to the Education Lobby of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art during a preview on Monday, Aug. 31, 2026, in Los Angeles. (AP)

Dollywood to unveil new tributes to Dolly

SEVIERVILLE, Tenn., Sept 3, (AP): Dolly Parton’s theme park in east Tennessee will unveil new features for fans to honor the life of the “dreamer-in-chief,” Dolly Parton, who died at the age of 80.

Sevierville, in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains, will also be placing markers throughout the city for a self-guided walking tour of places that were important to the singer, actor and philanthropist. She grew up in rural Sevier County and transformed the theme park into the county’s largest employer and a major tourist destination.

In a press conference held Wednesday, park officials announced plans to add a new character to the park called the Dream Maker, inspired by Parton’s Imagination Library, as well as adding a waterfall and stained glass windows to a chapel inside the park to reflect her deep faith.

The park will add kiosks for visitors to share their thoughts about Parton and new additions are also coming to The Dolly Parton Experience, a multibuilding section that includes exhibits about her life and career.



A memorial wall for Dolly Parton stands outside the Dollywood theme park in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2026. (AP)

LOS ANGELES, Sept 3, (AP): The new Lucas Museum of Narrative Art will serve “Star Wars” fans what they crave, but the saga George Lucas spawned represents just one small corner of the galaxy of creative work within the walls of the Los Angeles institution he calls a “temple to the people’s art.”

The purpose of the palace that has become his life’s work since he sold Lucasfilm to Disney in 2012 is to take the work of populist painters, commercial illustrators, comic artists and paperback cover-creators and treat it with a reverence normally reserved for Rembrandts.

“That’s really what the mission is, that there’s these incredibly familiar pieces that have not had the opportunity to be platformed in this manner, to be placed like this, to be curated in this way, for people to really see the genius behind it,” museum CEO Tracey Bates said in an interview with The Associated Press inside the museum.

The building opens to the public Sept. 22.

The 82-year-old Lucas made an unannounced appearance at a media preview day at the museum on Wednesday with his wife, businesswoman Mellody Hobson, the museum’s co-founder. He said he couldn’t believe the place now exists after being conceived 17 years ago and having been “kicked out of” proposed locations in cities including San Francisco and Chicago, places where previous sites fell through.

“Part of the problem is that I’m a contrarian. I don’t like to do things people think can be done,” he said, wearing a T-shirt that read “Dedicated to the people’s art.”

“I’m used to doing the impossible,” he said. “This one almost broke me.”

Visitors to the new museum will be greeted by a bright yellow Naboo N-1 Starfighter from 1999’s “The Phantom Menace” that hangs in the lobby of the public research library. The opening exhibit, “Star Wars in Motion,” shows production versions of Luke Skywalker’s landspeeder from the original film and speeder bikes from 1983’s “Return of the Jedi.”

But Bates points out that “‘Star Wars’ only occupies 7% of the museum, actually.” And chief among the tasks of the CEO and her staff in the final days before opening is spreading the word about all it has to offer.

Nearly everything in the vast museum’s 100,000 square feet of galleries comes from the personal collection of Lucas or Hobson, a major collector of African-American art.

The filmmaker began collecting original comic art from newspaper strips like “Alley Oop” when he was in college and it could be had for pocket change. When blockbuster money started rolling in, he started buying paintings from commercial artists, including Norman Rockwell and Maxfield Parrish, that were deemed the height of uncool at the time. He joked at a San Diego Comic-Con panel last year that he needed a museum just to have somewhere to put it all.

Bates, who joined the project in 2020, spoke to the AP while sitting in the gallery devoted to Rockwell, the 20th century painter and illustrator who embodies the spirit of the museum more than Luke Skywalker or C-3PO.

“He’s one of the greatest storytellers of

our lifetime, really,” she said. “I mean the level of nuance and depth in a Rockwell, I get lost in them constantly.”

Best known for his weekly covers of “The Saturday Evening Post,” with images of Boy Scouts and family Thanksgiving dinners, Rockwell’s paintings were quintessential small-town Americana, which made them wildly popular but brought them scorn for their squareness.

Senior curator Ryan Linkof told the AP that when he joined the museum in 2018, he knew only the consensus view of the painter.

“Working here I really just grew to absolutely love the work and find him as an image-maker, him as an artist, him as the figure, the cultural icon, just to be incredibly sophisticated,” Linkof said.

The Rockwell gallery gives special prominence to a painting that shows he had greater depth than many realize: his rendering of Ruby Bridges, a 6-year-old Black girl who is surrounded by marshals as she walks into an all-white New Orleans school in 1960. It’s titled “The Problem We All Live With.”

The gallery also has a sculpture of the artist, newly commissioned for the museum, that recreates a famous comic portrait of him painting himself.

Lucas also stockpiled the work of Parrish, another painter and commercial illustrator whose imagery helped define the 20th century but who could be dismissed as cloudy fluff. His work is ethereal and angelic, marked by a signature shade of blue, and the paintings’ luminosity gives them a glow that feels made for a museum, even though one of the most ornate paintings in the collection was made for a chocolate box.

Linkof walked with the AP through the Parrish gallery, a favorite of many early visitors, calling it “a little sanctuary, a little chapel in some ways, dedicated to the work.”

“He was known for these really gorgeous light effects and creating these atmospheric landscapes,” the curator said. “We wanted to respect that and create a space that really let the paintings create that sense of tranquility.”

Many galleries are organized not by artist, era or genre but by aspects of everyday life, merging eras and styles. One examines sports. Another civic activism.

“We’re interested in the stories that they’re telling, rather than these kind of somewhat artificial categories defined by discipline,” Linkof said. “The gorgeous idea of these myths, myths of everyday life, the stories that we tell ourselves.”

The museum has its share of higher-brow artists too, with work from Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera and Andy Warhol. If it tells a story, it has a place.

Visitors will walk through the museum designed by architect Ma Yansong eight years after its groundbreaking in Exposition Park, next to Lucas’ alma mater: the University of Southern California.

Ma and his firm were chosen in 2014, and an architecture gallery in the museum shows his proposed models for San Francisco and Chicago along with the origins of the Los Angeles project.

Given the name outside, it’s hard not to think of a spacecraft when looking at the building. The architect acknowledges this, and says visitors will especially feel it when standing in front of broad oval windows that give views of Los Angeles from spaces spread throughout the galleries.

Scientists find huge 10-sided wave pattern swirling in clouds over Saturn’s south pole

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., Sept 3, (AP): Scientists have discovered an enormous 10-sided wave pattern in the icy ammonia clouds over Saturn’s south pole.

The spinning, meandering decagon appears to be even bigger and more unstable than the hexagon of clouds around Saturn’s north pole that was spied by NASA’s twin Voyagers in the 1980s, the Spanish-led team reported Wednesday.

This new jet stream formation popped up in the Hubble Space Telescope’s sights in 2023 after earlier observations came up empty. The researchers suspect the bizarre atmospheric phenomenon may have formed between 2017 and 2023, when Saturn’s south pole was tilted away from Earth and therefore out of view.

It could still be evolving, with a single side of the decagon already exceeding 10,000 miles (16,700 kilometers).

The findings are significant because it shows “the ‘unique’ hexagon is not as extraordinary as we thought,” lead author Agustín Sánchez-Lavega with the University of the Basque Country said in an email.

The findings were published in the journal Science Advances. Although all of the solar system’s planets with atmospheres have wave-spawning disturbances, only Saturn churns them out looking like polygons, geometric shapes bounded by straight lines.

Both sit on jet streams, but the hexagon is practically stationary whereas the decagon migrates eastward at a tame 6 mph (10 kph).

“Saturn still has the ability to surprise us,” the University of Leicester’s Leigh Fletcher said in a statement. He measured the wind in the decagon as part of the study using the European Southern Observatory’s Very Large Telescope in Chile.

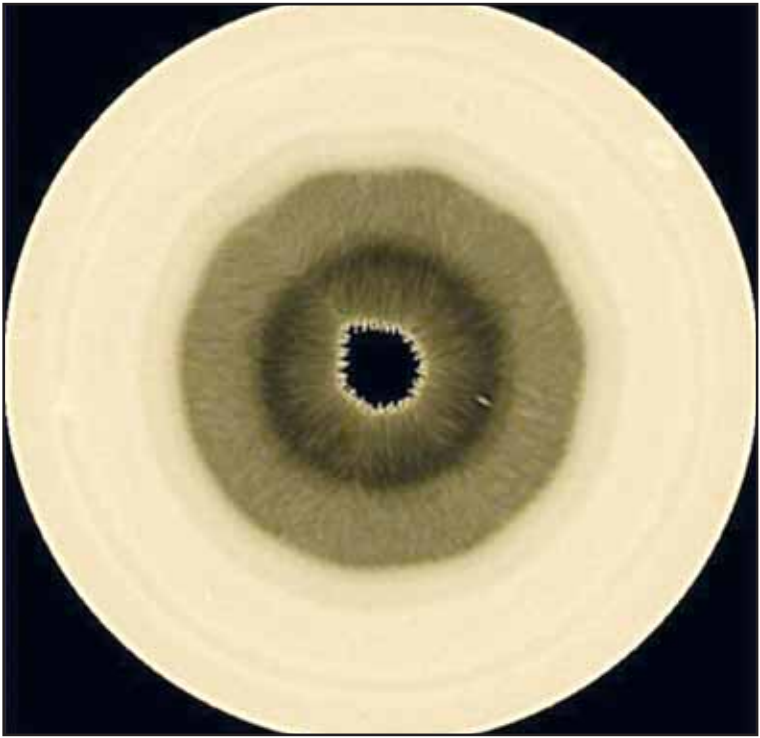
By comparing these two formations on opposite ends of Saturn, scientists can learn more about the weather patterns of giant gas planets, according to Sanchez-Lavega.

“This is a highly interesting phenomenon that appears to be unique to Saturn, and we want to know why,” he said.

Sánchez-Lavega wonders whether they might be related to the cyclones on Jupiter that are arranged in polygonal shapes. Improving views of Saturn’s southern hemisphere over the next several years should allow astronomers to capture more details of the decagon and perhaps solve “this intriguing atmospheric mystery,” he said.

It’s unclear whether the decagon will last as long as the hexagon, which has been visible by spacecraft for more than 40 years. That is longer than a Saturnian year, which is equivalent to 30 Earth years.

“For the time being, all I can confirm is that the decagon is still there,” Sanchez-Lavega said.



This photo provided by NASA/ESA/A. Sánchez-Lavega (Basque Country University) shows a pattern of clouds around the Saturn’s south pole on Aug 29. (AP)

Bid to ease confusions

Top US doctors offer updated flu and COVID vaccine recommendations

WASHINGTON, Sept 3, (AP): Leading US medical groups are urging people to get updated flu and COVID-19 vaccinations this fall, banding together Wednesday to issue shot guidelines - and highlight the science behind them - saying they hope to ease confusion caused by the Trump administration’s changing advice.

Flu vaccinations are beginning and COVID-19 shots are starting to arrive after the Food and Drug Administration approved this year’s updated versions last week. Winter also brings another vaccine-preventable risk called RSV. Exactly who should get one or all of these vaccines, and when?

That advice usually comes from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with help from its independent advisers. But despite no new scientific evidence, Trump health officials last year began pulling back on some longstanding recommendations for fall virus protection and routine children’s vaccinations. And that advisory panel, which influences state and insurance vaccine policies, is caught in a court battle. The CDC didn’t respond to questions about any new fall guidance but suggested on its website that doctors follow last year’s flu recommendations.

Doctors’ groups are filling the gap: the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Family Physicians, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists,

and the Infectious Diseases Society of America each released vaccination guidelines for their patient populations.

“There’s been a lot of confusion and chaos regarding vaccine recommendations,” said Dr. Sandra Fryhofer, of the American Medical Association.

All the groups’ recommendations plus evidence on shot safety and effectiveness are being posted on websites so “the public has clear, consistent, science-based guidance even while the federal process is in flux,” Fryhofer said.

Just about everybody starting at age 6 months needs flu vaccination, the medical societies agree. But flu is particularly dangerous for people 65 and older, pregnant women, young children and people of any age who have chronic health problems, including asthma, diabetes, heart disease and weak immune systems. The last two flu seasons were especially harsh, with unusually high numbers of child deaths - the vast majority of them in unvaccinated kids.

The vaccines don’t block all flu infections but they do help prevent the worst outcomes, decreasing older adults’ hospitalizations by 31%, according to the Vaccine Integrity Project, a public health group based at the University of Minnesota. Its analysis was published Wednesday in the medical journal JAMA.

Three “enhanced” flu vaccines are designed to better protect seniors.



A certified medical assistant holds a syringe for a flu vaccine at a clinic in Seattle, on Sept 10, 2025. (AP)

The American Academy of Family Physicians urges them to choose one - “but do not delay your vaccination if that one’s not available,” said AAFP’s Dr. Sarah Nosal.

There’s a new choice this year for people ages 50 and older, the first flu vaccine made with the same mRNA technology that was key to ending the COVID-19 pandemic. One study found Moderna’s mFlusiva was 27% more effective against symptomatic illness among 50- to 64-year-olds than a standard shot. The FDA just approved the new option and the company expects some doses to be

available soon at certain pharmacies.

The shot-averse could choose a nasal spray, FluMist, if they’re ages 2 to 49 and meet other health criteria.

COVID-19 shots once were recommended for just about everyone by federal health agencies, but like last year, the FDA has only formally approved them for higher-risk people - those ages 65 and older or younger people with at least one health condition that increases their risk.

Still, the family physicians recommend all adults get a COVID-19 vaccination, especially seniors and those with other risk factors. Adults

65 and older should get a fall dose and then a second dose six months later, as immunity wanes over time, Nosal said.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a COVID-19 shot for all children ages 6 months to 23 months, and for older kids with high-risk conditions. It also supports vaccination for any child whose parent wishes it.

With millions of shots administered, there’s no evidence that coronavirus vaccination during pregnancy increases the risk of miscarriage or other problems, “so please get the vaccine,” said ACOG’s Dr. Christina Davidson.

Depending on age, people can choose a shot from Moderna, Pfizer, or the only non-mRNA version from Novavax and Sanofi.

Just like with flu vaccines, these shots are better at preventing severe disease than mild cases. The Vaccine Integrity Project said last fall’s COVID-19 shots cut the risk of hospitalization by 53% in seniors and slashed emergency room visits for very young children.

Common side effects for flu and COVID-19 vaccines are mild and temporary, such as sore arms, fatigue, headaches, muscle aches, and mild fever. They occurred somewhat more often with the new mFlusiva than with standard flu shots.

While pediatricians and some clinics offer both flu and coronavirus shots, they’re most common in phar-

macies.

For COVID-19 shots, states have more pharmacy rules. For example, Walgreens says it offers those shots without a prescription in all but two states, Arizona and Oregon, but can provide doses for children as young as 3 in some states while others have higher age limits.

Medicare covers the fall shots and most private health insurers say they plan to continue doing so through 2027.

October is ideal for a flu vaccine, as influenza typically starts spreading in November. COVID-19 tends to rise in late summer, as it is now, and again after the winter holidays. Fryhofer says it’s fine to time the coronavirus shot a few weeks ahead of an event you wouldn’t want to miss because of illness, like a special trip or get-together.

RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, typically is a cold-like nuisance during the fall, winter and early spring. But it can be severe, even life-threatening, for infants and older adults.

The family physicians recommend a one-time vaccination for adults 75 and older, people 50 to 74 who are at increased risk, or younger people with weak immune systems.

It’s also recommended during late pregnancy to protect infants born during RSV season. Separately, the pediatricians recommend a vaccine-like medication for those infants whose moms weren’t vaccinated and some other high-risk babies.

As super El Nino strengthens, study suggests warming intensifying El Ninos

WASHINGTON, Sept 3, (AP): A new study suggests that El Ninos - the natural climatic chaos agent that pops up periodically and spikes global temperatures - are getting stronger because of human-caused climate change.

El Ninos are more than 36% stronger than they were before the industrial age began in the mid 1800s, with a 16% jump in just the last 40 years showing that the increase is accelerating, according to a study in journal Science. The findings come as a strong El Nino that formed a couple months ago is forecast to be the biggest on record in coming months. El Ninos, which are a temporary warming of parts of the equatorial Pacific, warp weather worldwide and increase extreme events, including heat waves, floods in some places and droughts in others. They can cost trillions in damage.

“That’s important because strong El Ninos have much stronger impacts on climate hazards and extremes worldwide. When we set out to answer the question of why this might be happening, we set our data up against a record of global temperature, and we found that the increase in El Nino’s strength closely parallels the rise in global temperature that is due to human causes such as the burning of fossil fuels,” said study lead author Julia Cole, a paleoclimate scientist at the University of Michigan.

Her study looks back at El Ninos going back 900 years or so.

“El Nino is the most violent aspect of climate variability worldwide, with effects ranging from local fisheries collapse, to widespread coral die-offs to severe droughts and food shortages around the world,” said Dalhousie University marine scientist Boris Worm, who wasn’t part of the study.

Worm quoted the late climate scientist Wallace Broecker who warned “the climate system is an angry beast and we are poking it with sticks.” And then Worm added: “Human emissions are the stick and El Nino is of the ‘angry’ outbursts that can be so threatening to our collective safety.”

An El Nino’s strength is determined by measuring water temperature in a region of the central Pacific around the equator and comparing a three-month average to normal. If it’s 0.5 degrees Celsius (0.9 degrees



A woman uses a fan to cool off while riding a bus on a hot day in Bucharest, Romania. (AP)

Fahrenheit) warmer than normal, it’s becomes an El Nino. The top of the scale is 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) and is called “very strong.” The most recent weekly El Nino figure is at 2.7 degrees (4.9 degrees Fahrenheit) and is expected to keep growing for another two to four months, according to Columbia University’s El Nino tracker.

Scientists have long theorized that as the world warms, El Ninos would get stronger because they are based on ocean temperature differences compared to average. But observational records only goes back about 75 years, so scientists have previously said the data is too spotty for a trend. So scientists have looked for clues that indicate an El Nino with- out measuring water temperatures directly. Scientists, for example, have looked back at historical records of changes in weather around the world and figured out past El Ninos - such as the super-sized one in 1877 - due to the changes they cause around the globe.

Cole’s team took a novel approach by looking at what happened to coral over the centuries to act as “a time machine to look into the past,” she said. Cole said measurements of the ratio of calcium and strontium in coral skeletons and of different oxygen isotopes create two independent readings of the seawater in which the coral formed. Another measurement of uranium and thorium tell when those skeletons were formed.

Cole looked at 29 coral fossils

in the Galapagos Islands - 14 from before the industrial era, 14 after the modern era began and one more from about the time the industrial era was starting up. The oldest was from around year 1100.

The temperatures she derived from the fossils over more than 900 years are patchy, with gaps, but when charted it, she said it looks like a hockey stick, the same description used for a 1990s landmark study of past global temperatures.

She and other scientists say it’s only going to get worse.

“It raises the specter of a future where larger El Niño and La Niña events are dialing up the pace and severity of weather and climate extremes,” said Kim Cobb, a coral and climate scientist at Brown University, who wasn’t part of the study.

Outside scientists are split on the research with some hailing it as important and trustworthy and others saying they don’t buy it because it clashes with some recent observations.

“Corals are the gold standard for El Niño reconstruction, and this brings a goldmine of new material to the table,” Cobb said. “We can either wait many many decades for the instrumental record to get long enough to detect a shift in El Niño properties, or we can use centuries of El Niño reconstructions provided by paleoclimate records. Taken together, the paleoclimate data that we have, from across the Pacific, is fairly consistent in pointing to an intensification of El Niño’s with global warming.”

Why millions of people around the world contracting measles in 2026

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

□ □ □

By Kathryn H. Jacobsen
University of Richmond

The World Health Organization estimates that in 2026 nearly 11 million people will contract the virus that causes measles. Most of these cases will occur in Africa and Asia, but many countries in the Americas and Europe are reporting outbreaks affecting hundreds or thousands of people.

There is no treatment for measles, but vaccines have been proven to be safe and effective at preventing the disease. Unvaccinated people who get sick with measles are at risk of serious complications that can lead to deafness, blindness and death. The risk of a bad outcome is higher for people who are undernourished and unable to access supportive medical care.

As an infectious disease epidemiologist, I study the reasons for changes in population health risks around the world. The specific factors leading to measles epidemics vary by country, but the underlying cause everywhere is decreased vaccination rates.

The vast majority of parents around the world want to protect their children from preventable infectious diseases through vaccination. In many lower-income countries, the supply of vaccines remains insufficient to meet the demand for them.

Because measles is highly contagious, the vaccination rate needs to be above 95% to protect a community from outbreaks, creating what is known as “herd immunity.” One dose of measles vaccine protects most people from the disease, but two doses are recommended to improve effectiveness.

Most high-income countries have measles vaccine rates near the 95% target. In Europe, the average one-dose vaccination rate is about 94%, and the two-dose rate is about 88%. In the U.S., more than 90% of 2-year-olds have received at least one dose of measles vaccine and more than 92% of kindergartners have received two doses. The vaccine coverage rate is above 95% in many communities, though it is much lower in some school districts.

In contrast, only about 80% of young children in low- and middle-income countries have received at least one dose of measles vaccine, and only about 70% have received two doses.

Almost every country had reduced access to vaccines during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, when supply chains and clinic access were severely disrupted. Most young children in high-income countries were able to catch up on missed doses before they reached school age. But in lower-income countries, millions of kids who missed routine vaccinations during the pandemic are still classified as “zero-dose children” who have not received any of the vaccines their countries recommend.

Only a tiny fraction of the cases of measles diagnosed in lower-income countries are confirmed with laboratory tests and reported to public health authori-

ties, so it’s impossible to get an exact case count. But healthcare workers have reported observing higher than typical numbers of cases in many countries during the past year.

In 2026, measles epidemics have been reported in countries experiencing armed conflict or housing refugees displaced by war, such as Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.

Outbreaks have also been reported in peaceful countries, including Maldives and Zambia, and cases are surging in India. Dozens of other countries are also experiencing epidemics. All of these situations are linked to undervaccination.

Bangladesh has reported more measles cases this year than any other country, and more than 900 people have died from the infection.

While Bangladesh faces many of the same challenges as other low- and middle-income countries, the past few years have presented some unique difficulties.

In 2024, the country’s longtime government collapsed and an interim government was installed. During this time of political instability the government ordered too few vaccine doses.

In 2025 vaccine shortages worsened when the interim government decided to stop procuring its vaccines through UNICEF and instead tried to purchase them through a competitive bidding process before new supply chains had been established.

Bangladesh has now resumed working with UNICEF to acquire vaccines. Unfortunately, it has returned to UNICEF at a time when its partner organization Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, is facing funding cuts.

Under Gavi’s cofinancing model, low- and middle-income countries’ initial vaccine purchases are subsidized by contributions from high-income countries and other investors. Over time, countries pay an increasing portion of their own vaccine costs.

Because Gavi pools orders from all over the world, it is able to shape markets and negotiate with vaccine manufacturers for lower costs per dose. The major limitation of this system is that reduced funding for global health shrinks the budget for subsidizing vaccine purchases.

But since 2025, France, Germany, the U.K., the U.S. and several other high-income countries have significantly reduced their budgets for development assistance, leaving Gavi with a substantial budget shortfall.

As Bangladesh has grown its economy, it is paying a greater share of the costs of the vaccines it purchases through Gavi. However, it does not yet have the means to fully self-finance its vaccine program. For now, if Gavi’s budget is not fully replenished, countries like Bangladesh will not have enough money to buy all of the vaccines they need.

Even though a mass vaccination campaign in early 2026 saw more than 1 million Bangladeshi children vaccinated against measles, the percentage of children who have been vaccinated remains far below the 95% threshold required to prevent widespread epidemics. (AP)

Founder of UAOA campaign says Monza shows all that is best about Formula One

FIA President makes renewed call for end to online abuse of race stewards

DUBAI, UAE, Sept 3: FIA President Mohammed Ben Sulayem has made a renewed appeal for an end to online abuse of race stewards ahead of this weekend's FIA Formula One Italian Grand Prix at Monza.

This follows the targeting of FIA stewards after they applied sporting penalties in line with FIA regulations during the recent Dutch Grand Prix at Zandvoort.

Ben Sulayem, who will be in attendance at Monza, founded the FIA's United Against Online Abuse campaign in 2023 as a global initiative dedicated to combatting online abuse in sport through research, policy advocacy, and collaborative action.

The UAOA is now endorsed by more than 75 governments, sports,

academic institutions and technology organisations, and is supported by the FIA Foundation and co-funded by the European Union.

"Over the last three years, we have been greatly encouraged by the overall response to the UAOA, which condemns all forms of abuse and harassment," said the FIA President.

"Disagreement with decisions is part of sport, but it must never justify threats or personal attacks, such as those experienced by our race stewards at the Dutch Grand Prix.

"As one of the oldest motor racing venues in the world, Monza is steeped in tradition and characterises all that is best in F1, and motor racing in general.

"I'm looking forward to another



Domenicali Stefano, Chairman and CEO Formula One Group FOG with Ben Sulayem Mohammed, President of the FIA.

fantastic race weekend in Italy, as are all the passionate Italian F1 fans, and race lovers around the world. The vast majority of fans have only good things to say about the sport, and all those who make it happen."

Ben Sulayem says he is particularly looking forward to sampling the special atmosphere at Monza, where the excitement will be heightened Italy's Kimi Antonelli leading the F1 drivers' standings, while Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc are both in the hunt for race and final championship podium places.

The FIA President arrives in Monza following a busy week in South America which began when he met senior leaders of the Republic of Chile in Santiago, and spe-

cifically held discussions with the President of the Republic of Chile, H.E. José Antonio Kast, who became the latest world leader to sign the FIA's United Against Online Abuse charter.

From Chile, Ben Sulayem moved on to Paraguay for discussions with President Santiago Peña on global motor sport and mobility issues as the country staged the latest round of the FIA World Rally Championship.

Next stop for the FIA President was Buenos Aires for the FIA's American Congress where he joined representatives from 32 Member Clubs across North, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, for three days of collaboration, innovation and knowledge sharing.

Chelsea tests Arsenal's defense

Maresca under spotlight as City finalizes \$600M rebuild

LONDON, Sept 3, (AP): Any concerns over Manchester City's capacity to challenge Arsenal for the Premier League title early in the post-Pep Guardiola era might have disappeared.

That's what back-to-back wins and spending \$400 million on new players in two weeks can do for a team.

City is back in a good place, it seems, at the end of a transfer window where the club had a bigger expenditure than anyone else in Europe. Deadline-day signings of Enzo Fernandez and Ilman Ndiaye took its overall summer outlay to more than \$600 million.

Over the past week, City has also bought Morocco midfielder Ayyoub Bouaddi and Brazilian winger Allan - for a combined cost of \$160 million - essentially as backups.

It leaves City manager Enzo Maresca suddenly with a strong, deep squad and therefore plenty of selection dilemmas for the home match against Coventry on Saturday.

Maresca started the season playing Marc Guehi - a center back - in center midfield, such were his shortage of options there after City sold or released a slew of midfielders such as Rodri, Bernardo Silva and Tijjani Reijnders and hadn't replaced them.

Now he has to pick two of Elliot Anderson, Fernandez or Bouaddi to play behind in-form playmaker Rayan Cherki. And on the wing, Ndiaye and Allan will provide competition for senior players Phil Foden, Antoine Semenyo and Jeremy Doku.

You fear for Coventry, a promoted team which has already traveled to Arsenal and was fortunate to lose only 3-0.

City has opened the season with a 2-1 win over Bournemouth and a 4-1 win at Crystal Palace. The first couple of weeks

might have been the best time to play City with its incomplete squad, new manager settling in and players not fully fit after the World Cup. Let's not forget the Community Shield, where City's performance was tepid in a 3-0 loss to Arsenal.

This weekend onward is the time to really start judging Maresca and this refurbished City team.

The standout fixture sees defending champion Arsenal host Chelsea on Sunday in a match between two of the four teams on a maximum six points. Arsenal has looked typically stingy at the back - it has yet to concede a goal - while Chelsea is the joint top scorer with seven goals, so something has to give.

Aside from City, promoted Hull is the other team with two wins from two and next hosts Aston Villa, which has zero points.

After back-to-back draws, Liverpool will look for its first win of the season at promoted Ipswich on Friday.

This is the first chance to see some of the top signings in the transfer window in action.

Among them is Bradley Barcola, who could make his debut - possibly off the bench - for Liverpool after his \$166 million move from Paris Saint-Germain. He hadn't made an appearance for PSG this season with uncertainty over his future.

Jack Grealish is back on loan at Everton and might be thrown straight in against Manchester United with Ndiaye no longer around.

Watch out for possible protesting by Everton fans unhappy at the American-owned club's activity in the summer transfer market that saw not only its best attacker, Ndiaye, leave but also its backup striker Beto depart without being replaced.

USA faces toughest women's World Cup challenge in years



United States women's basketball team practices during a training session ahead of the Women's Basketball World Cup match between China and the United States in Berlin, Germany. (AP)

Wilson & Plum's absence boosts France and others

BERLIN, Sept 3, (AP): The U.S. has dominated the women's FIBA World Cup for nearly two decades, winning the last four titles.

A young American roster led by the trio of Caitlin Clark, Paige Bueckers and Angel Reese now complement U.S. stalwart Breanna Stewart as the team looks to win its fifth straight championship.

The Americans will be missing four-time WNBA MVP A'ja Wilson, who the team announced Monday would miss the World Cup along with Kelsey Plum. They were replaced by newcomers Sonia Citron and Kiki Iriafan.

The world has been catching up to the Americans with France coming within a point the U.S. in the gold medal game at the 2024 Paris Olympics. That's the closest any team has come to beating the U.S. in either the Olympics or World Cup since the Americans last lost in the semifinals of the 2006 World Cup to Russia.

"I think there's no question that the world is improving at a rapid rate. It's so exciting to see, and I see it at every level," U.S. coach Kara Lawson said Tuesday. "There's more depth to the teams at the World Cup. Now when you look at rosters, there's a number of just high-quality players. ... I think it's going to be the most difficult World Cup to win that we've had because of that."

The Olympic loss is still on the mind of the French team, which has more than a half-dozen WNBA players on its roster, including Gabby Williams, Marine Johannes and Dominique

Malonga.

"We sure still do think about it," Malonga said. "We know we were right there against the best team in the world."

Other top teams that could reach the podium are Australia, Spain and China.

The next World Cup, which will be held in Japan, will move to Nov. 26-Dec. 8 in 2030 and won't potentially conflict with the WNBA schedule.

"I would I would call it one of the most significant decisions by the central boards in this decade," FIBA Secretary General Andreas Zagklis told The Associated Press. "We understood that, the women's game needs its own dedicated spot in the world calendar and in particular in the basketball calendar."

The women's World Cup used to be the same year as the men's tournament until 2014. Now the tournaments are held in different years with the men's championship a year before the Olympics and the women's tourney two years before the Games.

"It's a major decision because it creates a big window for essentially every league in the world," Zagklis said.

With no major men's tournaments this year, Zagklis said that FIBA sponsors could focus more on the women this time.

It will also help with ease the challenges for the WNBA, which this has suspended play in the league during the tournament. Play in the WNBA will resume on Sept. 17 after stopping on Aug. 31. There are over 50 current WNBA players competing in the World Cup.

The format of the tournament has changed for the betterment of the players, with the addition of four teams in Germany. The 16-team format is not new; it was used from 1990-2018. Now teams will play three pool games in four days as opposed to the five games in six days - which they did in the 2022 World Cup when only 12 teams went to Australia.

The top teams will then earn a break before the quarterfinals begin while the second and third-place teams in each group will play to reach the elimination round. Instead of playing eight games, teams will potentially only need six to win the title.

Zagklis said this could be an extremely competitive tournament.

"Within the top 10, virtually everyone can beat anyone," he said. "We saw that in 2022 where Nigeria beat in the group Australia and then Australia got the bronze medal. We saw it in the qualifier, where USA was trailing Belgium for 39 minutes."

Many current and former WNBA coaches are heading up teams in the World Cup.

Mike Thibault is in charge of Belgium while Sandy Brondello is heading up Australia again. Her husband, Olaf Lange, took over Germany and will lead the host nation. Former Phoenix Mercury coach Corey Gaines is leading Japan and Chicago Sky assistant Rena Wakama is once again in charge of Nigeria.

The Americans are led by Lawson with WNBA head coaches Nate Tibbetts, Natalie Nakase and Stephanie White serving as assistants. Jose Fernandez is a scout for the team.

Leonard fined \$700K, Clippers punished & Frank banned

NBA suspends Clippers owner Steve Ballmer

LOS ANGELES, Sept 3, (AP): The NBA imposed a sweeping punishment against the Los Angeles Clippers on Wednesday for violating salary cap circumvention rules, suspending owner Steve Ballmer for one year, fining the team \$30 million and forcing it to forfeit five first-round draft picks.

Also, two-time NBA Finals MVP Kawhi Leonard was hit with a \$700,000 penalty, president of basketball operations Lawrence Frank was banned for six months and team president of business operations Gillian Zucker was suspended for one year.

The Clippers will give up one first-round pick in each draft from 2029-2033.

The league came down hard on the organization after a nearly year-long investigation led by an outside law firm.

The Clippers had said multiple times that they had done nothing

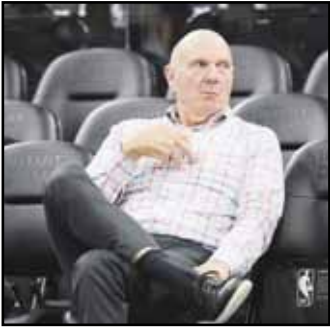
wrong and expected to be exonerated.

"I think that we're going to be in the clear," Leonard said in April, "so I'm not stressing it."

At the same time, Frank said, "If you know Steve and know Steve's integrity, you know there's nothing to it. We believe and we've very confident we're on the right side of this."

The team maintained that stance Wednesday.

"We vehemently reject the NBA's findings, which are the result of a heavily biased investigation seeking to justify a predetermined narrative rather than facts and evidence," the team said in a statement. "What the league told us privately differs from what it announced today publicly, and they have not held themselves close to the standard Commissioner (Adam) Silver set at the start of this investigation to ensure its fairness and accuracy."



In this file photo, Los Angeles Clippers owner Steve Ballmer sits on the sideline before an NBA basketball game against the Chicago Bulls on in Inglewood, Calif. (AP)

The Clippers said they will "now fight just as hard to demonstrate our innocence. We intend to vigorously challenge these findings and penalties through every avenue available to us and look

forward to an ethical and impartial arbitration process."

The league said it and the players' union agreed to confirm the penalties as final and binding on all parties. It said the outside law firm continues to receive information involving the investigation, and the league "will consider further action as appropriate."

"I am deeply disappointed by the flagrant violations of our rules and by the Clippers' institutional and leadership failures that led to this misconduct," Silver said in a statement. "The severity of the penalties reflects the seriousness of the violations."

The NBA began investigating in September 2025 whether a \$28 million endorsement contract between Leonard and Aspiration Fund Adviser LLC - a company that filed for bankruptcy last year - broke league rules, following a report by journalist Pablo Torre.

Malen brings goals, swagger and title hopes back to Roma

ROME, Sept 3, (AP): Donyell "Bobby" Malen carefully parked a three-wheel Piaggio Ape before sitting down in front of an espresso to declare he was staying at Roma in a social media video that went viral.

Three months later, it's clear again why Malen is attracting so much attention in the Eternal City.

The Netherlands center forward has scored five goals in Roma's opening two matches to raise his total to 19 in 20 games since joining the Giallorossi on loan from Aston Villa in January.

Only two players in Italian league history have scored more in their first 20 matches: Gunnar Nordahl (1949) and José Altafini (1958-59) with 20 each. And nobody had scored five in the opening two rounds since Gabriel Batistuta for Fiorentina in 1997.

Three years later, Batistuta transferred to Roma and helped lead the capital club to the Serie A title in 2001.

Now, for the first time in years - decades actually - Roma appears to have put together a squad capable of competing for the title again. With two wins, eight goals scored and none conceded, it tops the table.

Most of Malen's goals are of the pure finishing style, with only one or two touches before depositing the ball in the net. He needed only one touch for both of his goals in a 4-0 rout at Lecce on Monday, and used a backheel touch to set up the first score of a hat trick in another 4-0 win, over Fiorentina, in Roma's opener.

"He has this ability to control, turn and accelerate all within moments, which are extraordinary characteristics for a center forward," Roma coach Gian Piero Gasperini said.

At age 27, the 25 million euro (\$29 million) fee Roma activated at the end of last season to make Malen's move permanent seems like a relative bargain.

Gasperini's teams are typically high scor-

ing and Diego Milito (at Genoa), Duvan Zapata, Gianluca Scamacca and Mateo Retegui (each at Atalanta) have had explosive seasons under the manager.

Malen has been compared to Gonzalo Higuain, who scored bundles of goals for Real Madrid, Napoli and Juventus.

"Yes, they do have some similar attributes, though they're a bit different physically," Gasperini said. "Malen is not quite as robust. But with their speed of execution in controlling and shooting, and that burst of pace over the first few yards, they're certainly comparable."

However, Malen's form didn't carry over to this year's World Cup. He started all three of the Netherlands' group matches without scoring, then was benched for a shootout loss to Morocco in the round of 32.

As for his nickname "Bobby," that comes from an Italian tribute song to Bob Marley titled "Bobbie Marley."

Up next in Serie A, Roma hosts Atalanta - Gasperini's former club - on Saturday.



Roma's Donyell Malen runs for the ball during a pre-season soccer match between Borussia Dortmund and AS Roma in Dortmund, Germany. (AP)

Guendouzi, Greenwood charged

ISTANBUL, Sept 3, (AP): Mattéo Guendouzi and Mason Greenwood have been charged by UEFA over alleged provocations of Lyon fans at a Champions League qualifying play-off, their club Fenerbahce said Thursday.

Both players have played for Lyon's French rival Marseille and were seen making offensive gestures last week. Fenerbahce won 2-1 in the second leg at Lyon to advance to the Champions League main phase for the first time in 18 years.

Guendouzi raised his middle finger to Lyon fans during the warmup and after the game and shouted "Allez l'OM" ("Go Marseille"), also grabbing his crotch, in wild post-match scenes. He said Lyon fans insulted his family before and during the game.

Change Name

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Al-Hilal takes on city rival Al-Shabab

Al-Ittihad set to test Al-Nassr's perfect start

RIYADH, Sept 3: Al-Nassr will put its perfect start to the Saudi Roshn League and its title ambitions on the line on Saturday when it visits Al-Ittihad in a blockbuster fifth-round clash at Alinma Stadium in King Abdullah Sports City, Jeddah.

The defending champion has won all four of their matches so far and sits second on goal difference behind Al-Hilal, who has also maintained a 100 percent record.

Cristiano Ronaldo remains Al-Nassr's main attacking threat. The Portuguese star became the club's all-time leading scorer in the league with 104 goals after netting in the 2-1 win over Al-Taawoun last round, moving past Mohammed Al-Sahlawi's previous record of 103.

Al-Ittihad represents Al-Nassr's toughest test so far in its bid to retain the title. The Jeddah club, however, has made an inconsistent start, dropping four points after two draws. Its latest came against Al-Fateh, with the teams playing out a goalless draw that left Al-Ittihad fifth in the standings.

Other matches will see Al-Taawoun host Al-Fateh, while Al-Faisaly faces Al-Hazem.

Today's schedule featuring Al-Ahli against Al-Riyadh and Al-Shabab against Al-Hilal.

Al-Hilal will aim to remain top when it takes on city rival Al-Shabab. Despite strengthening their squad during the summer transfer window, Al-Shabab is still waiting for their first victory of the season and face a formidable challenge against an Al-Hilal side riding high after its emphatic win over Al-Ahli.

English forward Ollie Watkins made an impressive debut for Al-Hilal after coming off the bench and scoring the third goal in Tuesday's victory.

"I'm very happy with my debut and the win, and I'm looking forward to seeing you more at the stadium this year. Your support was absolutely amazing," Watkins said in comments published by the club's official website.

Kuwait selects 25 players for Arab Volleyball Championship in Jordan



Sulaibikhat management unveils new signings.

Sulaibikhat heads to Cairo for preparations

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: Kuwait selected a 25-player squad for the Arab Men's Volleyball Championship in Jordan from October 5 to 15.

The squad, chosen by Argentine head coach Julian Alvarez and his coaching staff, includes Abdunnasser Al-Anzi, Abdullah Al-Anzi, Abdullah Al-Muwainea, Abdullah Bouffain, Abdullah Al-Mulla, Nasser Dashiti, Fahad Saad, Rashid Anbar, Ali Saadoun, Saud Al-Duwaisan, Talal Al-Salman, Mohammed Al-Dhafiri, Ahmed Al-Munees, Hussein Al-Masri, Khaled Bouarki, Bader Al-Attar, Fares Al-Sarraj, Barak Al-Anzi, Abdulrahman Al-Hashmi, Hassan Al-Qattan, Abdulrahman Al-Mutawa, Nawaf Al-Sanea, Abdulaziz Najm, Omar Al-Anzi and Ibrahim Mandeel.

The selection is part of Kuwait's preparations for the Arab championship, with the coaching staff stepping up work to raise the players' technical and physical readiness before the tournament.

Sulaibikhat's first volleyball team will travel to Cairo tomorrow for an overseas training camp ahead of the 2026-27 season. The camp will run until September 17 and includes four friendly matches.

The coaching staff will use the camp to improve the team's fitness and technical level while building cohesion, particularly following the arrival of several new players.

The delegation, headed by Salem Mutaib, includes Egyptian head coach Ahmed Refaat, Tunisian coach Niaz Salam and 20 players. The squad features Ghanaian professional Ibrahim and Cuban professional Yacel.

Recent recruits include Mubarak Abdulhadi, Nasser Dashti, Abdulrazzaq Al-Loughani, Youssef Kated, Abdulrahman Al-Mutawa and Faisal Muhareb. Abdulhadi Gholoum has also joined on loan from Al-Qadsia.

The camp will give the coaching staff an opportunity to assess the squad and integrate the new arrivals and foreign professionals before the start of the season.

Sulaibikhat Secretary-General Nasser Mansi Al-Anzi said the Cairo camp was a crucial

part of the team's preparations and stressed the club's ambition to challenge for domestic honors and secure a place on the podium.

He said the team had made significant progress and that the addition of Cuban and Ghanaian professionals, together with experienced Kuwaiti players, had strengthened the squad.

"The camp is an ideal opportunity to improve the players' technical and physical levels and develop greater understanding between the new and existing players," Al-Anzi said, expressing hope that the team would benefit fully from the training program and four friendly matches.

He stressed that Sulaibikhat has ambitious targets for the new season and wants to build on its progress by competing strongly and fighting for a place among the top teams.

Al-Anzi also praised the club's board for its support and for providing the team with the necessary resources. He commended the technical and administrative staff and players for their efforts during the local preparations and overseas camp, expressing hope that their work would translate into results that meet the club's ambitions and supporters' expectations.

American pulls out of deal in final minutes

First Trump, now Everton: Balogun at the center of another fiasco as deadline-day transfer fails

MONACO, Sept 3, (AP): U.S. striker Folarin Balogun pulled out of a deal to join Everton in the final minutes of European soccer's summer transfer window because he felt uncomfortable that the English club raised doubts about his health in a medical check, Monaco's sporting director has revealed.

In an unusually candid summary by a soccer official about an aborted transfer, Thiago Scuro held a news conference and gave - in English - a detailed, step-by-step laydown on how Balogun's proposed move to Everton for a reported 40 million pounds (\$54 million) fell apart with the clock ticking on deadline day.

According to Scuro, Balogun underwent a medical examination at Everton on Tuesday afternoon. Three hours later - and with four hours left until the deadline - Everton contacted Monaco raising questions about the results of the medical "which, for our medical staff, as well as for the player's personal medical staff, made no sense at all," Scuro said.

There followed discussions between the clubs and medical departments, before Everton contacted Monaco again to say it was ready to complete the signing of Balogun, according to Scuro.

"At the last moment, the player decided not to sign," Scuro continued in the news conference held Wednesday. "And basically, the allegation of Balogun is that, 'I'm

not feeling well by the way the club treated me, I'm not feeling well by the way the medical department of Everton brought doubts about my future or my health. I have nothing (wrong with his health), so I'm not comfortable to sign a long contract here."

There was no immediate response from Everton about Scuro's comments when contacted by the Associated Press. The Premier League club's leadership - its owners are the Texas-based Friedkin Group - is being criticized by its fans for the way the Balogun deal was handled, as it

leaves the team with just one senior striker - Thierno Barry - since his backup, Beto, was sold to Fiorentina on deadline day.

There has been no public comments from Balogun, either, following the latest fiasco surrounding the New York-born striker.

During the World Cup, Balogun was the star player for the U.S. team but was red-carded during the round-of-32 win over Bosnia and Herzegovina.

His one-game suspension was deferred by FIFA after U.S. President Donald Trump intervened, calling

Gianni Infantino - president of soccer's world governing body - to see if the red card could be reviewed.

Balogun was, therefore, allowed to play in the round of 16 and had a forgettable performance as the U.S. lost to Belgium 4-1. The intervention prompted a formal complaint to FIFA's ethics investigator and led to a general outcry in the soccer world, with Balogun later acknowledging FIFA's decision to suspend his ban created "outside noise" that affected the U.S. team mentally.

Scuro has left open the possibility of Balogun, who has two years left on his contract at Monaco, still leaving the club, saying: "We still have markets that have the financial capacity to do something."

Among the leagues whose transfer windows are still open are Turkey (closes on Friday) and Saudi Arabia (closes on Oct. 12).

Monaco is under pressure to sell Balogun or another of its top players because it needs to generate money to comply with the French league's financial rules.

When it first appeared that Balogun's move to Everton was off, Monaco began negotiating with Chelsea over the sale of midfielder Lamine Camara and they reached an agreement, Scuro said.

However, that deal was also scrapped when Everton reversed its decision on Balogun and attempted to get it over the line.

In the end, neither player moved.



In this file photo, United States' Folarin Balogun (20) walks off the pitch after losing to Belgium in their World Cup round of 16 soccer match in Seattle. (AP)

Saudi federation explores Kuwait's wheelchair fencing experience

RIYADH, Sept 3: Saudi Sitting and Wheelchair Sports Federation President Khalid Masoud Al-Hajri paid an official visit to the Kuwait Paralympic Committee to learn about Kuwait's experience in wheelchair fencing and explore opportunities to benefit from its expertise in establishing the sport in Saudi Arabia.

During the visit, Al-Hajri met Kuwait's technical director and team coach, Captain Khaled Abdulnabi, and attended part of the national wheelchair fencing team's training session. He was briefed on the international rules and regulations governing the sport, as well as the requirements for preparing facilities and providing specialized equipment.

Abdulnabi also explained the technical procedures used to develop athletes and prepare them for international competitions.

The visit reflects Kuwait's extensive experience in wheelchair fencing, making it the only Gulf country currently practicing the sport. It also highlights the regional recognition of the Kuwait Paralympic Committee's role in advancing sports for people with disabilities.



Saudi Sitting and Wheelchair Sports Federation President Khalid Masoud Al-Hajri.

Dimarco wins top honors at players' association gala

Messi to get mid-game tribute by teams across Argentina after int'l retirement

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, Sept 3, (AP): Soccer teams across Argentina will pay tribute to Lionel Messi with a mid-game minute of applause during their next match following his decision to retire from international duty.

Referees will pause play at the 10-minute mark of every match in the upcoming round of the Clausura tournament, as well as in other men's and women's leagues in Argentina, in appreciation of Messi's career with the national team, the Argentine Football Association said late Wednesday.

The 39-year-old Messi, who wore the No. 10 jersey for Argentina, announced on Monday he will no longer play for the national team after 21 years of service. He led Argentina to the World Cup title in 2022 as well as two other World Cup finals, and made 207 appearances and scored 125 goals - both national records.

Messi, who is idolized in Argentina, has never played professionally in his home country. He moved to Barcelona at the age of 13 to began a once-in-a-generation career and is regarded by many as the greatest player of all time.

Messi is continuing to play at club level with Inter Miami in Major League Soccer.

when asked about reports of interest from Barcelona.

"It's always nice to be mentioned alongside these great clubs. But you know my history with Inter. I grew up here," said Dimarco, who came up through Inter's youth system.

After several years out on loan, he is in his sixth season as a mainstay in Inter's lineup.

He was also named among the league's top four defenders, along with Inter teammates Alessandro Bastoni and Manuel Akanji; and Marco Palestra, who played for Cagliari last season before signing with Chelsea.

Lautaro Martinez (Inter), Nico Paz (Como) and Donyell Malen (Roma) were voted the best forwards.

Hakan Calhanoglu (Inter), Scott McTominay (Napoli) and Luka Modric (AC Milan) took the midfield honors.

Mile Svilar of Roma was named the best goalkeeper.

Cesc Fabregas took the coaching honors after directing Como to a Champions League spot.

The 21-year-old Paz was named best young player in Serie A, and 19-year-old Mattia Liberati, who was with Catanzaro last season before joining Como for this campaign, was named best young player in Serie B.

Francisco Conceicao's blistering shot for Juventus from the edge of the area into the top corner against Roma in March won goal of the season.

All of the awards were voted on by players except for the goal of the season, which was a fan vote.



In this file photo, Argentina's Lionel Messi cries at the end of the World Cup final soccer match with Spain in East Rutherford, N.J., near New York. (AP)

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Club América midfielder Raphael Veiga, left, and Monterrey forward Jesús Manuel Corona go after the ball during the second half of a Leagues Cup quarterfinal soccer match in Carson, Calif. Monterrey won 5-4 on penalties after 2-2 draw in regulation time. (AP)

Sports

KFA and Al-Nowair join forces for ‘Football for Humanity’ initiative



Sheikh Ahmed Al-Yousef Al-Sabah and Al-Nowair founder and CEO Sheikhha Intisar Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah sign memorandum of understanding.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: Kuwait Football Association (KFA) Chairman Sheikh Ahmed Al-Yousef Al-Sabah and Al-Nowair founder and CEO Sheikhha Intisar Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah have signed a memorandum of understanding to implement the 2026-27 season of the “Football for Humanity” initiative.

The program, held under the slogan “Empower, Develop, Make a Difference,” is aimed at boys and girls aged 6 to 14.

The partnership seeks to combine the expertise of the KFA and Al-

Nowair and use football as a tool for human and community development. It will provide children in Kuwait with a safe and inspiring sporting environment where they can explore their potential improve their skills and develop their personalities.

The initiative will also promote values including respect, teamwork, responsibility and sportsmanship, to help develop a more confident and socially aware generation capable of taking leadership roles and making a positive contribution to the community.

Al-Hajri: Criticism welcome, but circumstances must be considered

Kuwait Handball Federation acting Chief calls for fair evaluation of national teams

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3: Acting President of the Kuwait Handball Federation Shabib Al-Hajri said the exceptional circumstances Kuwaiti handball faced in recent months had a significant impact on the national teams’ results in their latest international commitments.

He stressed, however, that the circumstances should not be viewed as an excuse for the results, but rather as an important factor when evaluating the teams’ performances.

Al-Hajri explained that competitions and training were almost completely halted from February through June, for nearly four months, because of the security situation and the war in the region. During that period, other Gulf and Asian teams and clubs continued their training and competitive schedules as normal.

“We returned to competition and the Asian qualifiers knowing that the preparation time we lost could not be recovered in a matter



Acting President of the Kuwait Handball Federation Shabib Al-Hajri

of days or weeks. It was natural for that to affect our performances and results, particularly at youth level, where continuity and gradual pre-

paration are essential,” he said.

Al-Hajri said the federation accepts criticism and performance assessments, but called for them to

be fair.

“We are not saying the results are beyond criticism, nor are we rejecting evaluation. But we cannot be assessed as if all teams entered the competitions under identical circumstances and had the same preparation period,” he said.

He acknowledged that fans and the handball community have every right to demand better results, but added that players and technical and administrative staff also deserve recognition of the difficult circumstances they experienced.

Al-Hajri called for a focus on rebuilding rather than assigning blame, saying the priority now is to assess the situation, learn from mistakes, and develop a plan to make up for lost preparation time.

He concluded: “Constructive criticism is essential for developing our national teams, but fairness must come first. The circumstances must be taken into consideration in any assessment.”

Sabalenka storms into US Open third round

Alcaraz recovers to advance

NEW YORK, Sept 3, (AP): Aryna Sabalenka came to the U.S. Open struggling and in danger of losing the No. 1 ranking.

She heads to the third round looking every bit ready for a three-peat.

The top-seeded Sabalenka overwhelmed Polina Iatcenko 6-1, 6-1 in 53 minutes on Wednesday night, putting on a power-hitting display that made it seem her recent problems are in the past.

“Happy with the level I played today, happy with the focus and happy to be through this match,” Sabalenka said.

A number of players have only finished one match.

Another rainy afternoon in New York suspended play for a time on outside courts, allowing action only under the roofs in Arthur Ashe Stadium and Louis Armstrong Stadium to continue uninterrupted. So the players scheduled there avoided the starts and stops that others faced.

Carlos Alcaraz was one, following Sabalenka with a 4-6, 6-0, 6-3, 6-2 victory over Jaime Faria. The defending champion rebounded after dropping a set, which he didn’t do until last year’s final, by winning the next eight games to seize control.

Jessica Pegula needed only 56 minutes to defeat Sofia Kenin 6-3, 6-1. Kenin, the 2020 Australian Open champion, beat Venus Williams in her first match.

“To be out of there in under an hour, it doesn’t always happen,” Pegula said. “So I think I’m just going to take that one and run, I guess, until the next round.”

No. 8 seed Ben Shelton followed Pegula on Ashe and beat Hubert Hurkacz 6-3, 5-7, 7-6 (3), 7-5, while No. 7 Daniil Medvedev raced past Sebastian Gorzny - ex-

cept for a brief delay to protest the chair umpire’s decision to replay a point when two birds sat on the net - 6-3, 6-3, 7-5.

Sabalenka is trying to become the first player to win three in a row in Flushing Meadows since Serena Williams from 2012-14, but arrived after losing in the fourth round of her past three tournaments. She needs help to stay atop the WTA rankings even if she wins the title.

She won 15 of 16 points on first serve in the first set and only dropped off a little in the second, finishing 21 for 28 in the match, against an opponent who is playing in her first Grand Slam tournament.

“I think I struggled a little bit in the middle of the season. Once again, I’m not going to defend myself or explain why, what happened, but I’m happy with my level,” Sabalenka said. “I can definitely say that mentally I’m way stronger than I was in the middle of the season, and physically I also feel stronger. So I feel like I’m on my level of play.”

When the U.S. Open switched to a Sunday start last year, it spread out the first round over the first three days, so Wednesday would have arrived with everyone playing in the second round had the weather cooperated.

It didn’t.

Alex de Minaur, the No. 6 seed from Australia, said with all the juggling his match was moved twice from the court where he was originally scheduled. He finally started his U.S. Open on Wednesday on Court 11 and beat Italy’s Andrea Guerrieri 6-2, 6-2, 6-4.

“It’s been a couple tough days. But I mean, these tournaments, it’s all about adapting and that’s the name of the game,” de Minaur said. “There’s too much to play for to let something like this affect you.”

Paula Badosa said she didn’t even know how to prepare for the



Carlos Alcaraz, of Spain, returns the ball to Jaime Faria, of Portugal, during the second round of the U.S. Open tennis championships in New York. (AP)

resumption of her match against Daria Kasatkina, which was halted Tuesday with her one game from winning to set up a second-round match against No. 4 Coco Gauff.

“I didn’t know if I was going to play just two points or six, or I don’t know how much, how many I play or one more set,” the Spaniard said Wednesday after finishing off her 6-1, 6-4 victory.

“So I knew that if I was winning this match, I’m playing the next day. So, yeah, it was everything a bit different. I was very

nervous that I even couldn’t eat, so a lot of different stuff I did today, but sometimes it is how it is, and I tried to play with the things I had there.”

At least she got through. No. 12 Rafael Jodar, the 19-year-old from Spain who came in after a strong summer, was routed 6-2, 6-1, 6-1 by Bu Yunchaokete of China when his first-round match was finally completed.

“I knew it wasn’t going to be easy because I was waiting a lot yesterday and today as well, but it

is what it is,” Jodar said. “We cannot control the rain, so it’s difficult for both players.”

The first round was finally completed late Wednesday, a day when 25 men’s singles matches were scheduled to get the tournament back on track.

Alex Michelsen pulled off an upset in one of them by ousting fellow American Brandon Nakashima, the No. 16 seed, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4. No. 11 Frances Tiafoe beat Japanese qualifier Rei Sakamoto in straight sets, and Argentina’s Mariano Navone

backed up his upset of Novak Djokovic by beating Matteo Berrettini 3-6, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (4).

Wimbledon champion Linda Noskova and runner-up Karolina Muchova advanced to the third round, while No. 11 Marta Kostyuk got past 2017 U.S. Open champion Sloane Stephens 6-1, 7-5. No. 31 seed Leylah Fernandez set up a matchup of past U.S. Open runners-up against Pegula, with the winner to meet either No. 16 Sorana Cirstea or No. 19 Jasmine Paolini.

Best of the Rest

Dzeko ending 19-year international career: Edin Dzeko will play a 152nd and final match for Bosnia-Herzegovina next month before ending his 19-year international career.

In an emotional post on Instagram, the 40-year-old striker wrote he would be retiring from national team duty after a Nations League qualifier against Sweden in the Bosnian city of Zenica on Oct. 2.

“Now I feel the time has come to step aside,” wrote Dzeko, who played for Bosnia at this year’s World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico. “If I have made it to the age of 40 with the national team it is because I truly gave everything I had. Every time. Everything.” (AP)

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Queiroz is back as Ghana coach: Carlos Queiroz is back as coach of Ghana less than two months after quitting the role following World Cup elimination in the last 32.

Queiroz held fresh talks with the Ghana Football Association and the country’s Ministry of Sports and Recreation, after which the Portuguese coach was handed another contract in charge. (AP)

Kuwait Club drawn in tough group for WASL finals

Kuwait Club drawn in tough group for WASL finals

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

BEIRUT, Sept 3: Kuwait Club has been handed a challenging draw in the West Asia Super League (WASL) West Asia Basketball Championship finals, with the Kuwaiti side placed in Group A alongside Lebanon’s Al Riyadi, Saudi Arabia’s Al-Ittihad and India’s Railways.

The draw was held in Beirut, which will host the tournament from September 25 to October 1. Eight teams secured their places in the finals after a fiercely contested qualifying campaign.

The teams were divided into two seeding pots, with Al Riyadi, Al-Ittihad, AlUla and Shahr-dari in the first pot, while Kuwait, Al Arabi, Al



Kuwait Club player attempts to block a shot.

Hikma and Railways were placed in the second. The top two teams in each group will advance

to the semifinals before the competition culminates in the final.

Kuwait Club will enter the tournament with ambitions of challenging for the title after strengthening its roster with several key additions. American trio Shinano Onuaku, Christian Brown and Dai Dai Granet are among the new signings recruited as the club prepares for its international commitments.

The club’s management, led by basketball director and vice president Bader Al-Osaimi, is also working to further strengthen the squad with quality additions to improve Kuwait’s chances of competing for international honors, particularly the WASL West Asia title.