ARAB TIMES

THE FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY IN FREE KUWAIT
Established in 1977 / www.arabtimesonline.com

Scan the QR code to access the Arab Times WhatsApp Channel

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2026 / RABEE'A AL-THANI 3, 1448 AH | emergency number 112 | NO. 19307 | 16 PAGES | 150 FILS

KUWAIT TO COMPLETE KUWAITIZATION AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

Judiciary to go fully Kuwaiti

- New rules reshape recruitment
- Courts clears 111,000 cases
- Payment orders cut cases 36%
- Assaults on officials dip 92%

Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait said the Kuwaiti judiciary will be 100 percent Kuwaitis ahead of schedule.

Speaking at a press conference on the sidelines of his inspection tour of the electronic written exams for applicants for the Junior Legal Researcher position (a prerequisite for the Grade C Public Prosecutor position), Al-Sumait stated that the current percentage of Kuwaitis in the judiciary is 87 percent.

He added that the ministry is working hard to accelerate the achievement of this goal within the plan of the country to Kuwaitize the judiciary—a process mandated by law to be completed within five years. He indicated that this number will increase to 92 percent by Sept 30, 2027, based on an annual replacement rate of 15 percent. "I affirm that we will achieve full Kuwaitization of the judiciary ahead of schedule. By Sept 30, 2030, the judiciary will be 100 percent Kuwaitis," he asserted.

He stressed that Kuwaitizing the judiciary is "a matter of sovereignty and a directive from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. We will not accept anything less than a 100 percent national judiciary."

He pointed out that the members of the judiciary have the full capability to manage the judicial system in an efficient and competent manner. He stated that everyone is aware of His Highness the Amir's interest in the judicial system, while focusing on national security.

He asserted that the selection of applicants for public prosecution positions must be based on the principle of equal opportunity. "Today, all applicants have an equal opportunity. No one is given an advantage, as everyone must meet the criteria," he clarified.

He said the Public Prosecution serves as the primary pipeline for the judiciary, such that the ministry puts great importance on the applicant selection process.

Continued on Page 5

Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Where is the 'incapacitated' Iran heading?

A TRADITIONAL Kuwaiti proverb states: "When errors multiply, one becomes incapacitated, stagnant, and burdened by one's own blunders."

This saying accurately captures the present reality of Iran, as its ruling regime made the state powerless —unable to even defend itself, after overextending its influence far beyond its borders.

To drive a wedge between peoples in the region, Tehran consistently sought to leverage secondary contradictions. A clear illustration is its exploitation of the Lebanese crisis following the 1982 Israeli invasion, when it used a certain segment of the population to secure a foothold on the Mediterranean coast. In doing so, it destabilized the Lebanese society and entrenched deep sectarian and denominational divisions.

Building on that success, the regime exported this model to the broader Arab world, most notably to Syria, post-2003 Iraq, and later to Yemen. However, its attempts to replicate this approach in the Gulf were thwarted. Thanks to the prudent leadership of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and the strong national identity of their peoples -- who firmly rejected sectarian strife and violence, the Iranian regime suffered defeats in all of these endeavors.

Nevertheless, Tehran continues to manipulate regional conditions in a bid to bolster its leverage at the negotiating table.

As previously noted, Iran today is in a state of 'rubdhah' — a term in classical Arabic denoting a man who is incapacitated and confined to one place. In this sense, the country resembles a sick man looking for a cure for his problems beyond his own borders, hoping to alter the reality and achieve his goals.

Continued on Page 5

Follow me on:
@Ahmedaljaralah
Ahmed aljaralah
ahmed@aljarallah.com
Scan QR code to visit the website: aljarallah.com

Minister Al-Fulaij meets Al-Jarallah

Kuwait vows fairness for farm holders

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Minister of State for Development and Sustainability Affairs Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij had a meeting with Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah, during which they discussed priorities for the agricultural sector, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Jarallah was accompanied by colleague Mohammed Al-Farhan during the visit.

They talked about national food security and self-sufficiency, particularly the need to assess the vital role of agriculture in strengthening national food security and identifying strategies to bolster domestic production.

They discussed farmer and plot holder support, such as removing obstacles that local farmers and landholders are currently facing in order to ensure stability and encourage expanded agricultural operations.

They also tackled fairness and leadership directives, reaffirming the commitment of the country to guarantee fairness and protect the rights of agricultural plot holders, under the guidance of the wise leaders of the country.

Al-Fulaij affirmed the commitment of the country to ensure fairness regarding agricultural plots and respecting the rights of their holders. She explained that this approach aims to safeguard the rights of the nation, while acknowledging the efforts of farmers who developed, maintained and utilized their plots in a productive manner. She stressed that the directives of leaders underscore the importance of treating diligent individuals in the sector fairly.

She asserted that the handling of the plot issue is based on principles that serve the public interest and provide serious farmers with the stability needed to continue their activities and contribute to national food security.

She revealed that the coming period will witness heightened attention directed toward the agricultural sector and productive farmers, asserting that "diligence will be recognized and appreciated."

She confirmed that work is underway to study a new system that takes into account the circumstances of plot holders and the rights of those who have invested in and cared for their land to guarantee stability in their agricultural operations within the established regulatory frameworks.

Continued on Page 5

Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij meets with Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times, accompanied by colleague Mohammed Al-Farhan.

Charity gets a new rulebook

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah said Sunday Decree-Law No. 87 of 2026 marks a new phase in regulating charitable and humanitarian work in Kuwait.

Al-Huwailah told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), on the issuance of the law, that the legislation establishes an integrated legal and institutional framework to regulate charitable and humanitarian work, strengthen oversight and compliance and reduce risks of misuse for illicit purposes, particularly money laundering and terrorist financing.

She said the law establishes the National Center for Charitable and Humanitarian Work to regulate and oversee charitable and humanitarian activities nationwide and set policies, strategies and controls

Continued on Page 5

First graders begin school journey

First graders headed to schools on Sunday, launching the 2026/2027 academic year. The schools were adorned with festive decorations to receive the students and their parents.

School administrations and faculties worked tirelessly to ensure a smooth transition a safe environment for the students to feel comfortable on their first day. (KUNA)

Photo by Samer Shqair
Students make their way to school Sunday as the 2026/2027 academic year gets underway.

Kuwait clips wings of rogue drones

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Chairman of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Eng. Humoud Mubarak Al-Sabah affirmed Sunday that the new law regulating unmanned aircraft, light sport aircraft, air sports and related activities is a major step toward enhancing aviation safety in Kuwait.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Sheikh Humoud said the law caps government efforts to strengthen the legislative framework governing these activities in line with international standards and in coordination with relevant state authorities.

He expressed appreciation for the political leadership's support, which contributed significantly to the law's swift issuance, describing it as an achievement for Kuwait in regulating these emerging aviation activities.

He also commended the efforts of government agencies, particularly the Ministries of Defense, Interior and Justice, as well as the Fatwa and Legislation Department, for their contributions to completing the draft law.

Sheikh Humoud explained that the law regulates registration, licensing, authorization and operation requirements, as well as obligations, prohibitions and penalties for violations.

He stressed that regulating these activities addresses risks arising from the unauthorized use of unmanned and light sport aircraft, including threats to air navigation safety, public order, individual privacy, and the safety of people and property.

Misuse could also pose risks to airports, vital facilities and prohibited or restricted areas, he added.

He affirmed that DGCA will oversee implementation of the law in coordination with the Ministry of Interior, security and military authorities, and other relevant government bodies.

Such coordination, he said, will ensure these activities are conducted within approved regulatory frameworks.

He praised DGCA officials and technical teams for their sustained efforts to prepare the law and complete its requirements in accordance with international standards, contributing to the development of Kuwait's civil aviation system.

Kuwait bolsters teacher pay, incentives

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The official gazette, "Kuwait Al-youm," published Decree-Law No. 86 of 2026, replacing Table No. 1 attached to Law No. 28/2011 concerning the granting of allowances and bonuses to Kuwaiti teaching staff members in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The amendments cover educational job titles, requirements for holding those positions, job-level and incentive bonuses, teaching allowances, and rare specializations.

The decree-law stipulates the following:

Article 1: Without prejudice to acquired rights, the table attached to Law No. 28/2011 referred to above shall be replaced by the table attached to this Decree-Law.

Table No. 1, concerning the titles of educational positions, the requirements for holding them, job-level and incentive bonuses, and teaching allowances in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, is as follows:

Specialized Teacher (A):
- University degree + 17 years of experience, or a teaching diploma or equivalent + 19 years of experience.
- Job-level bonus: KD 600.
- Incentive bonus: KD 400.
- Teaching allowance: KD 200.
- Rare specialization allowance: KD 200.

Specialized Teacher (B):
- University degree + 13 years of experience, or a teaching diploma or equivalent + 15 years of experience.
- Job-level bonus: KD 500.
- Incentive bonus: KD 350.
- Teaching allowance: KD 175.
- Rare specialization allowance: KD 200.

Teacher (A):
- University degree + 9 years of experience, or a teaching diploma or equivalent + 11 years of experience.
- Job-level bonus: KD 400.
- Incentive bonus: KD 300.
- Teaching allowance: KD 150.
- Rare specialization allowance: KD 200.

Teacher (B):
- University degree + 5 years of experience, or a teaching diploma or equivalent + 7 years of experience.
- Job-level bonus: KD 350.
- Incentive bonus: KD 250.
- Teaching allowance: KD 125.
- Rare specialization allowance: KD 200.

Teacher (C):
- University degree + 2 years of experience, or a teaching diploma or equivalent + 4 years of experience.
- Job-level bonus: KD 300.
- Incentive bonus: KD 200.
- Teaching allowance: KD 100.
- Rare specialization allowance: KD 200.

Continued on Page 4

Other Voices

Pride in own culture, unity in a shared future

By H.E. Yang Xin
Ambassador of China to Kuwait

Since arriving in Kuwait, I have been deeply impressed by the unique character of this society where different civilizations interact and coexist in harmony. Here, time-honored Arab traditions meet cultures from around the world, with different languages, cuisines and lifestyles shaping the vibrant rhythms of everyday life. More importantly, when the country is confronted with difficulties and challenges, people are able to put aside their differences, find common ground and look out for each other to weather the storm together. This spirit of embracing cultural diversity while cherishing their shared home is what makes Kuwait so remarkable.

H.E. Yang Xin

Likewise, China presents its own vibrant picture, where diverse cultures blend and coexist, and multiple ethnic groups prosper together.

China is a big family composed of 56 ethnic groups. Each ethnic group has its own distinctive language, costume, music, diet and festivals, all of which contribute to the defining hallmark of Chinese culture — unity in diversity.

Today, from the Uyghur dance to the Tibetan costume, from the Mongolian diet to the Dai festivals, all are alive in the everyday life of Chinese people. As a matter of fact, over the long course of more than 5,000 years of Chinese civilization, all ethnic groups of China have, through their exchanges, interactions and integration, jointly created the splendid Chinese culture and forged the great national spirit.

Continued on Page 5

Weyay Bank joins PAAET orientation as strategic sponsor, empowering freshmen students — 8

KFH: Integrated financing solutions to support construction projects at 'Baiti' — 9

ABK wraps up Platinum sponsorship of 'Baiti' — 9

Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:12	Asr	15:13
Sunrise	05:32	Maghrib	17:55
Zohr	11:44	Isha	19:13

Traffic patrols hike presence as new academic year starts

MoI arrests 13 suspects in 10 drug cases

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Traffic and Operations Sector in the Interior Ministry intensified its field presence at the start of the academic year. Patrols were deployed at neighborhood entrances and exits, as well as in the vicinity of schools, to regulate traffic flow.

The sector urged parents to cooperate with the traffic officers, drop off students only in designated areas, avoid haphazard parking or obstructing traffic, and strictly adhere to traffic instructions and guidelines.

It also emphasized that students and their guardians must use the designated pedestrian lanes to ensure their safety and that of other road users, and in order to contribute to efforts to guarantee safe and organized traffic movement throughout the school year.

In an awareness initiative marking the start of the academic year, traffic officers joined students at the beginning of the academic year and distributed items to promote road safety.

❑ ❑ ❑

Juveniles without license: Traffic officers arrested three juveniles for driving without a license, while the vehicles they were driving were impounded.

These juveniles were referred to the competent authorities for legal action.

A security source stated that the arrest is in line with ongoing efforts to uncover violations and take action against those breaching the Traffic Law.

The source affirmed that the incident was handled according to legal procedures.

❑ ❑ ❑

13 held in drug cases: Officers from the Drug Control General Department at the Interior Ministry apprehended 13 suspects, including one woman, in 10 separate cases of possession of narcotics and psychotropic substances with the intent to traffic and use.

These operations are in line with the ongoing security efforts to combat drugs and arrest dealers, made possible through the concerted efforts of the Local Control Department, International Control Department and Operations Department.

The operations resulted in the seizure of various quantities of narcotics and psychotropic substances, as well as shotguns, ammunition, precision scales, packaging and distribution equipment and cash.

The suspects and the seized items were referred to the competent authorities for necessary legal action.

The confiscated items include 4.480 kg of shabu (crystal methamphetamine), 4.872 kg of hashish, three grams of cocaine, 14,500 Lyrica capsules, 590 psychotropic tablets, 100 Captagon tablets, 99 A4 sheets impregnated with chemicals (synthetic cannabinoid), 10 ampoules of chemical substance, 280 ml of hashish oil, 40 pieces of hashish-infused candies, three shotguns and a large quantity of ammunition, 10 weighing scales and an undisclosed quantity of packaging bags, and cash totaling KD12,155.

❑ ❑ ❑

3,228 citations issued: Traffic Law enforcement campaigns carried out by the General Traffic Department in various governorates resulted in the issuance of 3,228 traffic violation citations and impoundment of 33 vehicles, which were referred to the garage for impounded vehicles.

According to a security source, these campaigns are part of ongoing efforts aimed at reducing traffic violations and ensuring adherence to traffic regulations.

The source affirmed that such campaigns will continue to uncover violations and take legal action against offenders.

The source stressed the need for motorists to abide by the traffic regulations in order to avoid violations and the legal repercussions.

Judicial promotions, transfers

Decree promotes 50 judges, Public Prosecution members

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Decree No. 142/2026 was published in the official gazette, 'Kuwait Al-Youm', (Issue No. 1808) on Sunday.

The decree stipulates judicial promotions and transfers, including the promotion and transfer of 84 judges, public prosecution members and public prosecutors, promotion of 50 judges, public prosecution members and public prosecutors to the ranks specified next to their names, effective July 5.

This is in addition to the transfer of 34 public prosecutors to serve as judges in the Court of First Instance, effective Oct 1.

The promotions covered the ranks of Second-Class Judge and Public Prosecutor (Class A), while the transfers to the Court of First Instance covered the ranks of Second-Class Judge and Third-Class Judge.

It includes the promotion of three Public Prosecutors (Class B) to the rank of Second-Class Judge and transferring them to the Court of First Instance, transferring three Public Prosecutors (Class A) to serve as Second-Class Judges, and transferring 28 Public Prosecutors (Class B) to serve as Third-Class Judges.

Clause A of Article One stipulates the promotion of the following judges and members of the Public Prosecution:

1. Ahmed Ayman Ahmed Hussein Al-Tamm□r—Second-Degree Judge
2. Fahad Ahmed Jassim Mohammed Al-Awadh—Second-Degree Judge
3. Hamad Abdulaziz Ibrahim Abdulaziz Al-Rabiah—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
4. Abdulrahman Dherar Abdullah Sulaiman Al-Waqian—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
5. Khalaf Talal Mohammed Saad Al-Farhan—Second-Degree Judge
6. Ibrahim Abdulnasser Ali Ibrahim Khuraibet—Second-Degree Judge
7. Mohammed Talal Shaheen Mohammed Al-Hajri—Second-Degree Judge
8. Nasser Salem Abdullah Amer Al-Rajbani—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
9. Abdullah Nada Abdullah Abdullah Al-Otaibi—Second-Degree Judge
10. Musaed Mohammed Mutlaq Daher Al-Shammari—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
11. Khaled Abdullah Jasser Khaled Al-Jasser—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
12. Abdulwahab Adnan Abdulrahman Al-Tabtabaei—Second-Degree Judge
13. Nasser Khaled Jassim Saleh Al-Masbahi—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
14. Nasser Salman Khunailan Salem Al-Mutairi—Second-Degree Judge
15. Abdullah Mohammed Fahad Rashid Al-Ajmi—Second-Degree Judge
16. Khaled Badr Abdulaziz Abdullah Al-Jariwi—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
17. Salem Abdulrahman Ayed Atallah Al-Mutairi—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
18. Abdulrahman Rashid Saad Falah Ghareeb—Second-Degree Judge
19. Mishari Mohammed Ahmed Khaled Al-Mishari—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
20. Abdullah Badr Ghassab Mohammed Al-Zamanan—Second-Degree Judge
21. Abdulrahman Abdullah Ibrahim Abdullah Al-Jiran—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
22. Talal Mohammed Abdullah Mukhayet Abu Salib Al-Mutairi—Second-Degree Judge
23. Abdulaziz Nasser Obaid Mansour Al-Subaie—Second-Degree Judge
24. Abdullah Faisal Abdullah Hussein Al-Mudhin—Second-Degree Judge
25. Rashid Salah Mohammed Daoud Al-Hamdan—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
26. Ghathi Rashid Nayef Shaliweeh Al-Mutairi—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
27. Mishari Abdulaziz Abdullah Khalaf Al-Salem — Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
28. Jassem Nu'man Jassem Mohammed Al-Misbah—Second-Degree Judge
29. Ahmed Salem Abdullah Salem Al-Bughaili—Second-Degree Judge
30. Mohammed Khaled Mubarak Abdulaziz Al-Wohaib—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
31. Mohammed Khaled Abdullah Mutairan Al-Azmi—Second-Degree Judge
32. Fahd Nayef Bandar Qanwan Al-Mutairi—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
33. Abdullah Badr Nasser Ma'touq Al-Aslawi—Second-Degree Judge
34. Sayed Yousef Adnan Al-Sayed Al-Rifai—Second-Degree Judge
35. Abdulrazzaq Adel Abdulrazzaq Al-Dosari—Second-Degree Judge
36. Abdullah Jamal Saud Fahd Al-Sumait—Second-Degree Judge
37. Hamad Khaled Mutlaq Raja Al-Hadhin—Second-Degree Judge
38. Abdullah Ali Fuhaid Subaih Al-Zoubi—Second-Degree Judge
39. Hamad Salah Abdulrahman Ali Al-Tabikh—Second-Degree Judge
40. Dhari Nasser Salem Saleh Al-Huwaidi—Public Prosecutor (Grade A)
41. Mohammed Ali Hamoud Mansour Al-Hajri—Second-Degree Judge
42. Fahd Saad Mohammed Ishaq Al-Hajri—Second-Degree Judge
43. Abdulrahman Yousef Rashid Yousef Al-Duwaihi—Second-Degree Judge
44. Mishari Falah Abdullah Al-Misharri Al-Kulaib—Second-Degree Judge
45. Hamad Khaled Ahmed Jassim Al-Tuwaitan—Second-Degree Judge
46. Omar Saud Omar Nayef Al-Otaibi—Second-Degree Judge
47. Dhari Tariq Mudhayif Salem Al-Mudhaf—Second-Degree Judge
48. Shamlan Fahd Abdullah Mukhayit Abu Salib Al-Mutairi—Second-Degree Judge
49. Ahmed Nasser Ahmed Mohammed Al-Ajiri—Second-Degree Judge
50. Khaled Abdullah Khaled Abdullah Al-Wazzan—Second-Degree Judge

Clause B stipulates the promotion of the following Class B public prosecutors to the rank of second-degree judge:

1. Ahmed Mahmoud Abdulaziz Mohammed Al-Faraj
2. Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah Abdulkarim Al-Saqr
3. Barak Nasser Rashid Hamad Al-Muhareb

Clause C stipulates the transfer of the following:

Class A Public Prosecutors to serve as Second-Degree Judges at the Court of First Instance:

1. Munwah Abdulrahman Mohammed Abdulrahman Al-Othman
2. Abdullah Khaled Jaber Ramadan Al-Jaber
3. Dr. Waleed Ali Mubarak Salem Al-Azmi

Clause D also stipulates the transfer of the following Class B public prosecutors to serve as third-degree judges at the Court of First Instance:

1. Ibrahim Salah Bandar Al-Qamlas
2. Abdullah Waleed Mohammed Al-Ali
3. Hamad Sami Mohammed Al-Dakhil
4. Ali Saad Shaji Al-Ajmi
5. Dhari Anwar Falah Al-Ali
6. Issa Abdulatif Issa Al-Qassar
7. Nouria Nasser Ali Al-Mannai
8. Muhanna Mohammed Muhanna Al-Ghorbah
9. Khalil Adnan Abdullah Al-Qallaf
10. Ali Abdulredha Qasim Dashti
11. Hamad Mash'e Matar Al-Dhafiri
12. Faisal Nabil Mohammed Al-Mashari
13. Jouri Musaed Ali Al-Jediae
14. Sarah Mohammed Hazzaa Al-Sallal
15. Mohammed Nayef Rafe' Al-Duhayani
16. Hamad Yousef Mohammed Al-Faris
17. Alaa Abdulhamid Abbas Ali
18. Abdulaziz Mohammed Abdulaziz Al-Fairouz
19. Sarah Ahmed Abdullah Al-Awadhi
20. Farah Nabil Hussein Al-Rashed
21. Mohammed Abed Marzouq Al-Azmi
22. Amal Hussein Ali Al-Farraj
23. Turki Meshal Mohammed Al-Mutairi
24. Abdulaziz Jalal Mustafa Al-Zuhair
25. Munira Hamad Abdullah Al-Bulaihis
26. Abdulrahman Abdulrazzaq Khalifa Al-Shayji
27. Ali Abdullatif Hussein Al-Rashed
28. Fawaz Khaled Ali Al-Abdulghani

Sheikh Jarrah Jaber

Laura Frigenti

Kuwait FM, GPE CEO seek boost in education sector

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Sunday Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Chief Executive Officer Laura Frigenti on her visit to the country.

The foreign ministry said in a statement that the meeting reviewed cooperation between Kuwait and GPE and ways to boost it.

The two sides also discussed the partnership's key activities and programs supporting the education sector, especially in least-developed countries.

Jahra Gov. sends congrats to staff, students, parents

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi conveyed his heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to the entire educational community -- staff, students and their parents, as the 2026/2027 academic year commences, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Habashi

Al-Habashi is hoping for an academic year that is full of success and excellence. He appreciated the dedication of all those involved the educational sector, considering they play a vital role in molding the future generations.

He affirmed the commitment of Jahra Governorate to continue collaborating with the relevant authorities to ensure the provision of an educational environment conducive for the students.

He offered prayers to Almighty God for the success of the students, to bless the efforts of the educational community, and to ensure that the academic year is characterized by achievement, dedication and success.

❑ ❑ ❑

Kifaya Al-Najdi, Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works, inspected the latest developments at the new airport terminal and Road 268 on Saturday during a field tour to review work progress, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement, the Ministry of Public Works explained that the visit aligns with directives from Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, instructing ministry officials to intensify monitoring, follow-up, and field supervision of projects. These measures aim to assess the latest developments in ongoing works, track completion rates, and monitor actual progress on the ground.

Oil Ministry team visits KUNA to explore news services

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): A delegation from the Ministry of Oil visited Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Sunday to learn about its operations, editorial departments and news services, including the Information and Research Center and KUNA Smart Oasis.

The delegation received a briefing from Acting Editor-in-Chief Bader Al-Sharhan and editorial officials on daily operations, news writing and editing, and the preparation and distribution of content in Arabic, English and French.

The briefing also covered KUNA's general bulletin, social media platforms, photo services, postproduction and headline selection.

The delegation visited the Information and Research Center, where officials explained its professional and scientific approach to handling information, as well as its archiving, collection and classification of news and media materials.

They also reviewed the center's work in preparing reports, studies, periodicals and research.

At KUNA Smart Oasis, the delegation learned about its role in adapting to new media and using artificial intelligence technologies in media content production and delivery.

Ministry of Oil Director of Public Relations and Petroleum Media Sheikh Tamadhur Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah said the visit provided an opportunity to learn about KUNA's professional experience in traditional and digital media and its use of modern technologies.

She said the visit also facilitated the exchange of expertise in digital media, artificial intelligence, news verification and professional handling of misinformation and rumors.

She stressed that benefiting from successful national experiences is important for developing petroleum media tools and capabilities amid rapid changes in the media industry.

KUNA photo
A delegation from the Ministry of Oil visited Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) to explore news services.

She added that the Ministry of Oil attaches great importance to cooperation and knowledge exchange with national media institutions, noting that the visit would strengthen cooperation with KUNA and support specialized oil and gas content.

The delegation was received by Director of Public Relations and Marketing Esam Al-Ruwaieh.

KUNA photo
Kuwaiti Naval Force Rear Admiral Saif Al-Hamlan meets his Saudi counterpart Rear Admiral Mansour Al-Otaibi.

Expertise exchange eyed

The commander of the Kuwaiti Naval Force Rear Admiral Saif Al-Hamlan held talks on Sunday with his Saudi counterpart Rear Admiral Mansour Al-Otaibi, focusing on efforts to ratchet up cooperation and the exchange of expertise.

The talks, described as a "coordinative" meeting, also aim to ensure greater preparedness among the naval forces of the two Gulf Arab neighbors, the Saudi defense ministry said in a statement. (KUNA)

Cooperatives must settle outstanding dues: MoSA

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Ministry of Social Affairs instructed the cooperative societies to promptly settle debts to the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy.

This move is in line with the initiative of the government to collect state receivables and maximize revenue.

In a circular addressed to the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies, the Ministry of Social Affairs stressed the need for cooperatives to take the necessary steps to settle their financial obligations for electricity and water services and to clear outstanding dues as soon as possible.

This directive is through the coordinated efforts of the ministries of Social Affairs, Finance, and Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to collect dues owed by entities benefiting from government services.

The relevant authorities underscored the importance of expediting the collection of these funds to boost state revenue and ensure the settlement of dues owed to government bodies, while urging cooperative societies to commit to the payment and avoid delaying the settlement of their outstanding obligations.

❑ ❑ ❑

Kuwait participated in the 65th coordination meeting of the Council of Labor Ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, held in Cairo Saturday evening on the sidelines of the 52nd session of the Arab Labor Conference.

In a press statement Sunday, the Public Authority for Manpower announced that the Kuwaiti delegation was led by the Authority's Director General Engineer Rabab Al-Osaimi.

KUNA training course on media check of news, rumors started

KUWAIT CITY, Sep 13, (KUNA): The KUNA Center for Development of Media launched its training program, "Media Monitoring of News and Rumors," on Sunday with the participation of several KUNA staff members, which explores the concept of rumors, their types, the reasons behind their spread, and their impact on society.

Al-Qadi

Led by media and communications consultant Ikhlas Al-Qadi, the program, which runs until September 17, covers the concept and nature of media monitoring reports, how to avoid key errors when monitoring news, and the essential pillars for verifying monitored news.

The program also addresses how media monitoring supports decision-making, the clear distinction between rumors and news, common mistakes journalists make when monitoring and countering rumors, reverse verification tools, crisis management in the face of rumors, and the crafting of media messages during crises triggered by rumors.

Utilizing both theoretical and practical approaches, the program covers several topics, including best practices for containing rumors, modern media terminology for "fake news," methods for refuting fake news and drafting official denials, as well as the role of social media algorithms and AI tools in the dissemination of rumors.

Established in 1995, the KUNA Center for Development of Media is considered one of the most important media training centers and has offered hundreds of training programs in various media fields, with the aim of developing media capabilities and advancing professional media work.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

When war becomes option, working for just peace vital

"IN international relations, war is rarely the first option. Rather, it becomes an option when political tools fail, opportunities for dialogue diminish, and crises reach a point where other alternatives begin to disappear," Kuwaiti writer Lawyer **Abdullah Falah Al-Hajri** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"When tensions reach this level, the region enters a delicate phase that requires considerable wisdom to avoid sliding into a military confrontation whose costs may outweigh any anticipated gains. The Middle East is currently witnessing an escalation of tensions, with ongoing political and security disputes and an increasing exchange of military messages.

Abdullah Al-Hajri

"In such circumstances, the likelihood of resorting to force increases for some parties, who believe that it can achieve deterrence or protect their interests. Meanwhile, others maintain that dialogue and diplomacy remain the least costly path and the most capable of achieving long-term stability. However, history offers a clear lesson - while wars may achieve limited military or political objectives, they often leave behind lasting consequences for years, including human losses, economic decline, and tensions that are difficult to overcome.

"Therefore, the decision to wage war, whatever its justifications, remains one of the most dangerous decisions a nation can make. Its consequences are not limited to the battlefield but extend into the daily lives of ordinary people and affect the future of generations to come. On the other hand, the continuation of crises without political solutions further complicates the situation and increases the likelihood of confrontation. Thus, the success of diplomacy is not measured by the number of meetings held or statements issued, but rather by its ability to prevent escalation, keep channels of dialogue open, and find common ground that reduces the chances of sliding into a wider conflict.

"The region today stands at a pivotal moment, with the paths of de-escalation and escalation competing simultaneously. Some parties may see war as an option to achieve their goals or impose new realities, but this does not mean that war is the only available option or that it is a guaranteed path to stability. Every war has consequences that cannot be fully predicted, and its effects may extend beyond the borders of the countries involved.

"The real challenge lies in the ability of decision-makers to prioritize wisdom over emotion and recognize that a just peace, however difficult to achieve, is less costly than a war that may begin with a political decision but could end by altering the balance of power in the entire region. When war becomes a viable option, the responsibility for preserving peace becomes even greater."

Also:

"In a rapidly evolving digital landscape, where waves of big data continue to surge, information institutions such as national libraries, universities, and documentation centers are no longer merely traditional repositories of books and references. They have transformed into living databases and vital arteries that sustain the scientific and educational research system," Kuwaiti writer **Dr. Nasser Hussein Abbas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"This underscores the importance of data governance as a strategic necessity, not only for regulating the flow of information but also for establishing robust foundations that enhance academic trust and stimulate knowledge innovation. In the context of information institutions, data governance refers to a comprehensive and integrated framework that defines the policies, roles, responsibilities, and organizational standards governing the collection, storage, organization, retrieval, and sharing of data.

"Data governance is the professional code of conduct that ensures data quality and integrity, clearly defining access privileges and protecting data from manipulation or misuse. For educational researchers, data governance means that the digital resources, research databases, and institutional repositories they rely on are subject to rigorous standards of reliability and objectivity. There is no room for randomness here, but rather for systematic integration that ensures accurate attribution and transparent sourcing.

"Throughout history, libraries have existed to serve a higher purpose - preserving truth and human knowledge. Today, the application of data governance reinforces this role through several essential avenues. When libraries manage their data according to rigorous governance frameworks, they ensure that digital resources and repositories are free from misleading or incomplete data, providing researchers with a greater sense of academic security.

"Governance policies protect intellectual property rights and establish clear controls to safeguard user privacy. Data governance also contributes to standardizing metadata description criteria, making access to educational resources faster and more accurate across various platforms. Data governance is not limited to oversight and regulation; it represents a true launchpad for innovation. In the educational field, modern curricula and future research trends rely on big data analysis to understand learners' needs and improve learning outcomes.

"Carefully structured and categorized data allows those involved in educational policy to study usage patterns and subsequently develop information tools and services that precisely meet researchers' needs. Governance provides educational leaders with reliable performance indicators that facilitate the development of new strategies for curricula and academic institutions. Organizing and making data available within clear legal and ethical frameworks encourages researchers to reuse it to generate innovative educational ideas and theories.

"Moving libraries and information institutions towards adopting data governance practices is a strategic investment in the future of knowledge. When rigorous governance aligns with the mission of established libraries, academic confidence increases and the doors to educational innovation open, ensuring that the library remains the beating heart of enlightened intellectual and cultural activity."

❑ ❑ ❑

"I admit that I am not a fan of watching live theatrical performances. I rarely attend a play in person, whether by invitation or by personal choice," Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Theater is truly a fine art, as long as it does not descend into buffoonery and ridiculous jokes merely to generate laughter. Often, and in many performances, I do not feel that I am watching a complete play - from the writing and script to the dialogue and the actors' performances. When theater shifts from being a social, cultural, educational, and entertaining message into a commercial tool and a means of enrichment, it becomes devoid of values.

"Egyptian theater was once a school for theatrical arts in most Arab countries. However, we did not follow, watch, or attend Egyptian theatrical performances in the 1940s and 1950s. After the invention of television, live broadcasting was not available, nor were the technical capabilities to transfer a theatrical performance from the stage to the television screen. Television channels were not accessible to all Arabs, and the technology required to transmit a theatrical performance from the stage to the television screen had not yet been developed.

"Therefore, this art form was not accessible to the general public, particularly educated and informed audiences or those familiar with European theater. Much of our modern art is borrowed from the West. We must be humble and not claim that theater has an Arab history when it came to us from the West, just as cinema did. The West brought us theater, televised concerts, and symphonies. European culture reached us long before television. Cinema was a pioneer in spreading awareness and culture amid an atmosphere of freedom and intellectual openness.

Hassan Ali Karam

"We fell behind because we closed ourselves off from the world and embraced a deceptive reality during a period that proved disastrous for the human mind. We are the inheritors of a civilization that stretches back thousands of years, but then came eras of decline, and we began to believe the pronouncements of charlatans and obscurantists. From this came backwardness and the hijacking of the mind. Civilization is not built by minds living in dark rooms.

"The mind rejects isolation and stagnation. God addressed His servants, saying, "Perhaps you will understand, O people of understanding." Undoubtedly, the decline in the level of theater reflects the decline of society. Human beings are products of their environment, and those currently working in theater are far removed from the goals of education and broadening society's horizons. They fail to address important issues such as the decline in educational standards, weak curricula, and moral decay.

"Undoubtedly, entertainment and laughter are among the essential and primary goals of theater. However, our theaters these days are not based on ethical principles. Comedy has become reliant on slapstick and the telling of jokes. Actors resort to bullying one another to elicit laughter from the audience, as if people actually enjoy this type of theater simply because it is labeled comedy."

– Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

KFF, EQUATE launch 'Safe Return' campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Kuwait Fire Force and EQUATE Petrochemical Company will launch Monday their annual "Safe Return" awareness campaign in coordination with the Ministry of Education, marking the new school year.

The campaign aims to promote safety and prevention among students and raise awareness of potential risks and preventive measures.

The Fire Force said Sunday the campaign will engage students across all educational stages, congratulating them on the new school year and encouraging academic commitment while introducing fire prevention, safety procedures and proper responses to emergencies.

Brig. Al-Gharib

Director of Public Relations and Media Brig. Mohammad Al-Ghareeb said the campaign supports prevention and social responsibility efforts and seeks to provide a safer environment for students and educational staff.

He stressed that raising students' safety awareness is key to reducing accidents, highlighting the importance of cooperation among government agencies, educational institutions, the private sector and families in promoting preventive behavior among young people.

Decree-Law sheds light on KFF new rules, disciplinary system

Bid to bring order in firefighting service

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Decree-Law No. 85/2026, amending certain provisions of Law No. 13/2020 concerning the Kuwait Fire Force, has been published in the official gazette, "Kuwait Al-Youm," reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decree includes amendments concerning the disciplinary sanctions system, stipends for trainees, the settlement of certain fire safety violations, and the appointment of physicians and professionals within KFF.

The Decree-Law stipulates the following:

Article 1 replaces the definition of "Competent Minister" set forth in Article 1 of Law No. 13/2020 with "Competent Minister: The minister designated by the Council of Ministers."

It also replaces the text of Article 21, Paragraph 1, of Law No. 13/2020 with the following:

"The disciplinary sanctions applicable to members of the Kuwait Fire Force up to the rank of Colonel are:

1. Caution.
2. Reprimand.
3. Warning.
4. Assignment to additional duties, not exceeding 15 duties per violation, in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations.
5. Deduction from salary for a period not exceeding 15 days per violation.
6. Reduction of salary by one-quarter for a period of not less than three months and not more than 12 months per violation.
7. Deferral of promotion for a period not exceeding two years.
8. Dismissal from service."

Article 2: Two new articles, numbered 5-bis and 32-bis, shall be added to Law No. 13/2020, referred to above, reading as follows:

- Article 5 bis: "Trainees enrolled in the educational and training bodies of the Kuwait Fire Force shall be granted a financial stipend throughout the duration of their enrollment. A decision determining the value of the stipend and the rules governing its grant shall be issued by the competent minister, following coordination with the Ministry of Finance."

- Article 32 bis: "A settlement may be accepted, either prior to the initiation of criminal proceedings or while such proceedings are pending, in cases that do not result in the death or injury of any person, subject to the payment of a sum not exceeding KD 10,000 and the rectification of the violation."

A decision shall be issued by the competent minister specifying the violations eligible for settlement, as well as the applicable rules and procedures. Such settlement shall result in the non-initiation or termination of criminal proceedings, as the case may be. However, the settlement shall have no effect on civil rights arising from the violating act."

Article 3: A new paragraph shall be added following the second paragraph of Article 10 of Law No. 13/2020, referred to above, reading as follows:

"Physicians may be appointed directly to the rank of Captain.

If a physician holds a specialized diploma requiring a period of study of no less than one full year following the acquisition of a bachelor's degree, they may be granted an increment within the rank of Captain, calculated as one year of seniority.

If the physician holds a higher specialization qualification, they may be appointed directly to the rank of Major at the starting salary step of that rank. The specific higher specialization qualifications shall be determined by a decision of the minister."

A new paragraph shall be added to Article 16 of Law No. 13/2020, referred to above, reading as follows:

"The competent minister shall issue a decision, after consulting the General Committee for Kuwait Fire Force Affairs, establishing the rules for the appointment, promotion, and termination of service of professionals within Kuwait Fire Force, as well as their salary scales and all matters related to their employment status. This shall be without prejudice to the provisions of Articles 5 and 38 of Decree-Law No. 15/1979, referred to above."

Article 4: "Articles 17, 18, 19, and 20 of Law No. 13 of 2020, referred to above, are hereby repealed."

Article 5: "The ministers, each within their respective jurisdiction, shall implement this Decree-Law, which shall come into force on the date of its publication in the official gazette."

Explanatory Memorandum:

The explanatory memorandum for the Decree-Law clarified that Law No. 13/2020 was enacted to regulate the firefighting service. However, practical experience revealed the need to amend certain provisions to address shortcomings and loopholes identified during implementation.

These amendments aim to enhance institutional performance, professional discipline, and compliance, ultimately achieving the highest standards of safety and fire prevention.

The Amiri Order dated May 10, 2024, stipulated in its fourth article that laws be issued through decrees-law.

Accordingly, this five-article Decree-Law was drafted to amend specific provisions of the Kuwait Fire Force Law.

It stated that Article 1 amended the definition of the "Competent Minister" and introduced a new disciplinary sanction for Kuwait Fire Force members up to the rank of Colonel - assignment to additional duties, not exceeding 15 duties per violation, in accordance with the established rules and regulations.

This measure aims to diversify methods of addressing professional conduct, ensure proportionality and fairness in the workplace, and strengthen the effectiveness of the disciplinary system.

It explained that Article 2 introduced articles 5-bis and 32-bis. The former provides for the granting of a financial stipend to students enrolled in Kuwait Fire Force educational and training programs throughout their period of enrollment.

This initiative seeks to encourage national personnel to pursue firefighting-related specializations, invest in human capital, and enable students to devote themselves fully to their studies and training without financial burdens. It also aligns with practices in military agencies and upholds the principle of workplace equality.

Article 32-bis permits the settlement of fire safety violations, either before criminal proceedings are initiated or while they are pending, in cases that do not result in death or personal injury.

Such settlements are contingent upon the payment of a sum not exceeding KD 10,000 and the rectification of the violation, thereby helping to reduce the burden on judicial authorities.

Article 3 provides for the direct appointment of physicians to the rank of Captain or Major. This measure aims to secure specialized medical personnel capable of immediately addressing injuries and critical cases, thereby reducing medical intervention times.

Furthermore, the same article empowers the competent minister, following consultation with the General Committee for Kuwait Fire Force Affairs, to issue regulations governing the appointment, promotion, and termination of service of professionals within the Fire Force, as well as their salary scales and other employment-related matters.

These measures are intended to attract non-traditional talent, address shortages in technical and specialized personnel, and enhance field performance and efficiency.

The memorandum clarified that Article 4 stipulates the repeal of Articles 17, 18, 19, and 20 of Law No. 13/2020, while Article 5 mandates the implementation of the Decree-Law and its entry into force upon publication in the official gazette.

Arrests in plot misuse

Kuwaiti beaten by 2 men after 'hot chase' on road

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: A Kuwaiti citizen was allegedly chased along a highway in Messila by two men in a pickup truck and was assaulted, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to his complaint, the pursuit began while he was driving his vehicle and continued until he was forced to pull over. The two individuals then assaulted him and verbally abused him. The citizen submitted a medical report documenting injuries sustained in the incident.

The Public Prosecution has ordered the Criminal Investigation Department to investigate the case, identify the two suspects and establish the circumstances surrounding the pursuit and assault.

❑ ❑ ❑

5 held in plot misuse: The Criminal Security Sector, represented by the General Department of Criminal Investigation, apprehended five individuals who misused an agricultural plot in Kabad by using it for the illicit manufacture and storage of food and consumer goods rather than for its designated purpose, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that the raid, conducted in coordination with the relevant authorities, resulted in the seizure of machinery and equipment used to manufacture paper tissues, wet wipes, paper cups, and labels, along with stocks of food products, consumer goods, and packaging materials.

The competent authorities destroyed the seized items and referred the suspects for the necessary legal action.

The ministry affirmed that any property found to be used for purposes other than those designated will be revoked.

290 traffic citations issued in front of hospitals – GTD

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry continued its traffic enforcement campaigns in front of hospitals, resulting in the issuance of 290 traffic violation citations.

A security source disclosed that traffic officers issued the violation citations within 24 hours.

According to the source, these campaigns are conducted daily at the hospitals. He urged the motorists to park in designated areas rather than violating regulations in order to facilitate the movement of patients and visitors.

Meanwhile , the Ministry of Public Works, in coordination with the General Traffic Department, announced a partial closure of Streets 102 and 103 in Siddiq to carry out civil and asphalt maintenance work, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

KUNA photo

Water sports and aqua parks attract lots of visitors to Bahrain throughout the year.

'GCC has great potential to pull local and international visitors'

MANAMA, Sept 13, (KUNA): Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) Chief Executive Officer Sarah Buhiji affirmed that GCC tourism integration is a key pillar for enhancing the region's competitiveness and sustaining the sector's growth.

Sarah

In an exclusive interview with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Buhiji said GCC countries possess diverse tourism assets and advanced infrastructure that qualify them to provide integrated experiences and strengthen their position as a leading regional and international destination.

She stressed the importance of unified efforts and joint initiatives to attract more visitors and tourism investments, highlighting the authority's participation in GCC tourism committees and cooperation programs.

Buhiji also underlined the importance of joint promotional campaigns and multi-destination tourism packages developed with airlines and tour operators.

Such initiatives, she said, would facilitate movement between GCC countries, encourage longer stays and promote the Gulf as an integrated destination capable of attracting visitors from global markets.

She noted that tourism cooperation directly benefits GCC economies by increasing tourist flows, stimulating spending, attracting investments and creating employment in tourism and related sectors.

Buhiji said improved transport networks and air connectivity further enhance opportunities for visitors to explore several GCC destinations during one trip, supporting hospitality, aviation, retail, transport and restaurant sectors.

Regarding Bahrain-Kuwait relations, Buhiji described them as based on deep-rooted historical and fraternal ties and strong social and human bonds between the two peoples.

She said Bahrain is proud to welcome Kuwaiti visitors and ensure they feel at home, noting that their continued presence reflects the strong trust and affection between the two countries.

She affirmed that tourism cooperation between Bahrain and Kuwait continues to develop under the support of the leaderships of both countries.

The cooperation includes exchanging expertise, participating in tourism events and exhibitions, working with airlines and travel companies, and implementing joint promotional programs to increase tourist flows and investment.

On strengthening Bahrain's position as a preferred destination for GCC visitors, Buhiji said the "Walahna Alaikum" campaign highlights the Kingdom's diverse tourism attractions, geographical proximity and ease of access.

She said the campaign invites visitors to enjoy a comprehensive summer experience combining entertainment, events, culture, hospitality and shopping, with activities suitable for different family members.

MoE, PAYS ink protocol to up sports in schools

Bid to boost skills of talented students

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei and Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma stressed the importance of a joint cooperation protocol to strengthen coordination in school sports and develop student programs and activities.

Al-Tabtabaei

Al-Jalahma

In separate statements to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Sunday after signing the protocol, the ministers said the agreement would help identify and develop sporting talents, improve their skills and encourage students to engage in sports as an integral part of education.

KUNA photos

Ministry of Education and Ministry of State for Youth and Sports Affairs signing the protocol.

Minister Al-Tabtabaei said the agreement reflects the Education Ministry's commitment to providing an integrated learning environment extending beyond academics to include sports, cultural and social activities.

He said cooperation with the Public Authority for Youth and Sports, the Kuwait School Sports Federation and Higher Education represents an important step toward developing school sports and supporting talented students. Such efforts, he added, would provide greater opportunities for talented students to represent Kuwait at sporting events.

For his part, Minister Al-Jalahma said the protocol reflects the importance of integrating government, sports and educational efforts to support Kuwaiti youth, stressing that investing in students and young people is an investment in Kuwait's future.

The cooperation will provide an environment conducive to identifying and developing talents, promoting sports among students and encouraging healthy, active lifestyles. The protocol seeks to strengthen coordination among education, youth and sports authorities, expand participation in sporting activities, and identify, support and prepare student talents through systematic and scientific approaches.

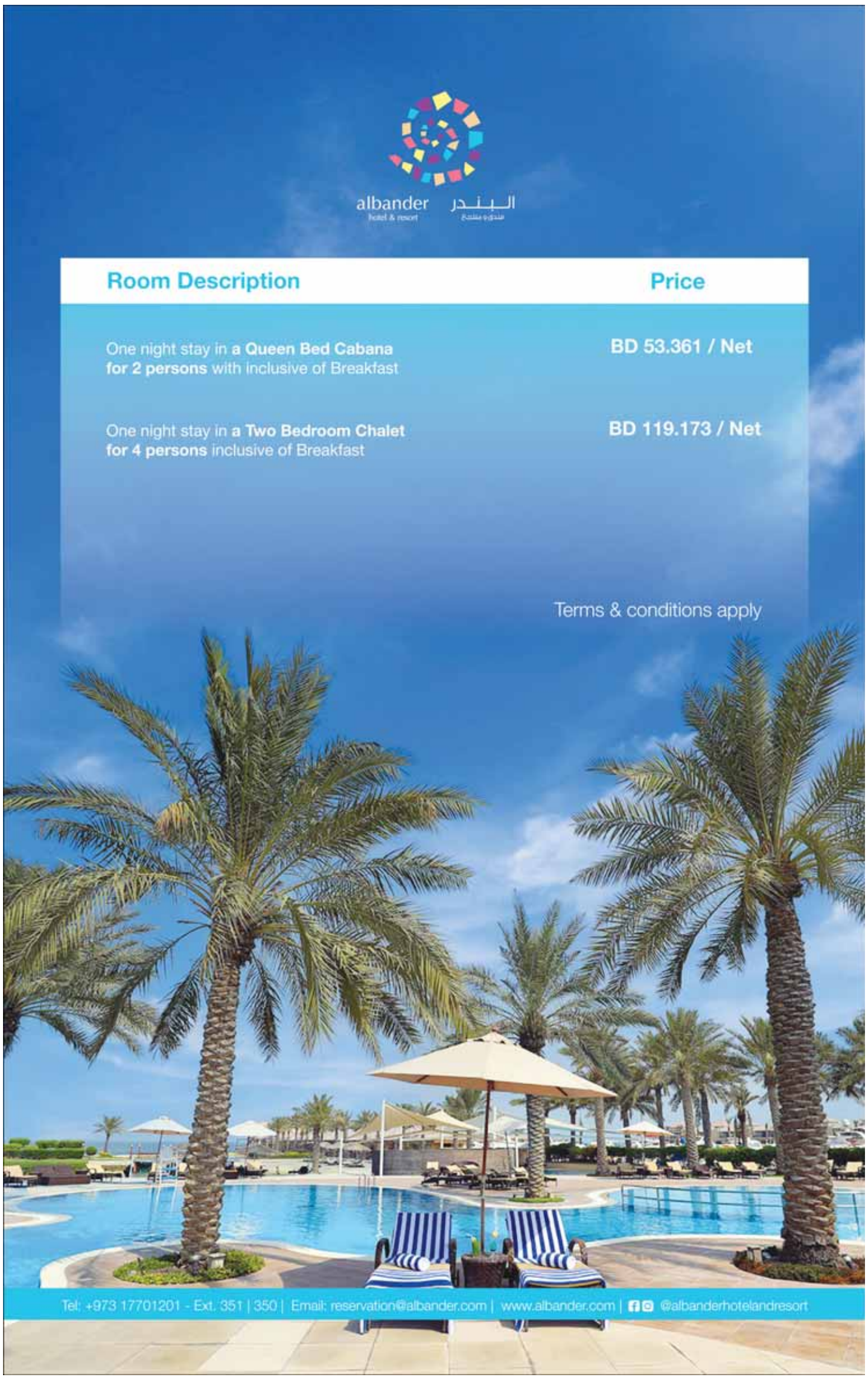
Cuba hails Kuwait economic support

WASHINGTON, Sept 13, (KUNA): Cuba's First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Gerardo Penalver Portal praised Saturday the State of Kuwait's continuous support, through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), for his nation's infrastructure and economic development initiatives.

According to a press release by the Kuwaiti Embassy in Havana, the remarks were made during a meeting between Kuwait's Ambassador to Cuba Adel Al-Adgham and Cuba's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Portal, attended by senior officials from the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ambassador Al-Adgham and Portal reviewed the trajectory of bilateral relations and explored strategic pathways to expand mutual cooperation across multiple sectors.

Portal commended the distinguished bilateral ties between the two friendly nations, expressing appreciation for Kuwait's steadfast political and economic solidarity, as well as KFAED's vital funding role in key Cuban infrastructure projects, particularly in water resources and municipal development.



Continued from Page 1

Kuwait bolsters

Teacher (D):

■ University degree + one year of experience, or an educational diploma or equivalent + two years of experience.

■ Successful completion of the training program for trainee teachers.

■ Job-level bonus: KD 250.

■ Incentive bonus: KD 150.

■ Teaching allowance: KD 75.

■ Rare specialization allowance: KD 200.

Trainee Teacher:

■ University degree

This job level is initially assigned for a period of one year, during which the trainee teacher undergoes a training program. The conditions, controls, and mechanism for successfully completing the program are determined by a decision of the Minister of Education. The salary is determined according to the financial grade to which the trainee teacher is appointed.

If the trainee teacher successfully completes the aforementioned training program, they will automatically advance to the next job level, in accordance with the conditions and controls established for each level, as well as any additional conditions set by the Civil Service Council and the Ministry of Education concerning advancement through the job levels.

If the trainee teacher does not successfully complete the training program, they shall be transferred to an administrative position within the Ministry of Education if they hold a university degree in education (Bachelor of Education) from the College of Education at Kuwait University or the College of Basic Education at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training.

If they do not hold the aforementioned university degree, their papers shall be referred to the Civil Service Commission for placement in another government entity under an appropriate job title corresponding to their qualification.

The trainee teacher is not entitled to the job-level bonus, incentive bonus, teaching allowance, or rare specialization allowance.

Article 2: Any provision that contradicts the provisions of the schedule attached to this Decree-Law shall be repealed.

Article 3: The ministers - each within their respective jurisdiction - shall implement this Decree-Law, which shall come into effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette.

Explanatory Note:

The explanatory memorandum to the Decree-Law explained that the Ministry of Education seeks to support teachers and provide them with all the means necessary to perform their mission, in recognition of their role in raising academic and cultural standards. This comes in light of the rapid changes in education, which have placed responsibilities on teachers that extend beyond the traditional framework of classroom instruction and require the development of tools and methods that keep pace with modern technologies.

The ministry is keen to invest in developing the skills of male and female teachers through advanced training programs and workshops that keep pace with modern developments, with the aim of improving the educational process and building a modern educational system based on the latest global standards.

It pointed out that Law No. 28/2011, concerning the granting of allowances and bonuses to teaching staff members, as amended by Law No. 26/2016, aimed to provide stability for teachers and create a professional environment that makes the teaching profession more attractive.

This was intended to attract the competencies and qualifications required for the profession, encourage constructive competition among employees, and reward those who excel in the promotion process, leading to the approval of certain financial benefits for teaching staff members in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs.

It also stated that Table No. 1 attached to that law included the titles of educational positions, ranging from Teacher (E) to Specialized Teacher (A), along with the requirements for each job level in terms of educational qualifications and years of experience. It also specified the value of the job-level bonus, incentive bonus, teaching allowance, and rare specialization allowance granted at each level.

The memorandum indicated that Law No. 86/2017, amending Law No. 28/2011, had previously replaced the two aforementioned tables with another table.

The Civil Service System had established the general conditions for filling civil service positions and allowed government entities to add other requirements after consulting the Civil Service Commission. It also allowed the appointment of individuals who did not hold the required qualifications but had relevant experience or had successfully completed training courses for specific positions, in accordance with the rules and conditions established by the Civil Service Council.

The memorandum emphasized that the teaching profession has a special nature, given its importance and impact on shaping learners' thinking. It is a comprehensive educational and pedagogical mission, not merely a matter of instruction, as it requires a combination of academic and educational skills, the ability to address and modify behavioral problems, as well as the capacity to plan and deliver lessons and evaluate students' performance.

The teacher must also serve as a role model for students in behavior and values, given their direct influence on shaping the student's personality. This necessitates additional requirements for candidates applying for educational positions to ensure that the assigned duties achieve their intended objectives.

It explained that Civil Service Council Resolution No. 2/1996, concerning the positions, allowances, and bonuses of teaching staff members, had previously specified the job levels for teaching staff and the requirements for each level. The new table accompanying the Decree-Law, however, specifies the job titles, requirements for holding them, and the amounts of job-level bonuses, incentive bonuses, teaching allowances, and rare specialization allowances.

Continued from Page 1

Where is the

This is after suffering painful blows from the United States and attempting to manipulate the global economy by threatening to close the Strait of Hormuz and mobilizing proxies in Yemen to shutdown the Bab al-Mandab Strait.

However, Iran has once again found itself in a bind, having alienated its closest allies—China and Russia—that adopted stances distinct from its own. This stems from crushing fiscal pressures straining their internal affairs. Beijing is facing severe petroleum deficits, while Moscow—entangled in its conflict with Kyiv—urgently pursues a diplomatic turn, potentially forged through dialogue with Washington, as the United States searches for its own resolution to this extraordinary impasse.

On the other hand, Iran is no longer the disruptive regional and global force that once used terrorism to blackmail other nations. Today, it is too weak to even defend itself.

Consequently, it is attempting to open channels with Arab Gulf states in hopes of restoring past relations. Yet, the path forward has been blocked since the Revolutionary Guard fired the first missile at these nations. Trust has been lost, and it will likely take half a century to rebuild confidence between Tehran and the regional capitals.

Iran is currently suffering from a multifaceted crisis, from which there is no escape without first repairing the devastation wrought by the current regime—whose terrorist conduct has persisted for 47 years, and then working diligently to extricate the state from the crushing financial liabilities owed to the nations it attacked, a debt that will take decades to settle.

Therefore, the Iranian regime finds itself pushed into the corner. It has no remaining hope other than to submit to the Gulf states and Iraq, open the Strait of Hormuz, and stop instigating peripheral conflicts—such as the one involving Saudi Arabia—through its Houthi proxy. Otherwise, it will enter the terminal in a downward spiral.

Pride in

They have come together as one community with a shared future, characterized by blood ties, common beliefs, shared culture, interdependent economy and close emotional ties.

Fine traditional culture of every ethnic group is an integral part of Chinese culture. China attaches great importance to protecting and developing the best of all traditional ethnic cultures. To this end, China has created a harmonious and inclusive environment for the coexistence, mutual learning and shared development of all ethnic groups, and incorporated its effective theory and practice into the legislation, so that people of various ethnic groups are united as one, like seeds of a pomegranate sticking together. In July 2026, the Law of the People's Republic of China on Promoting Ethnic Solidarity and Progress entered into force. It is the first law to explain, from a legal perspective, core concepts such as "advancing the building of the Chinese national community". It also provides for the "respect for and protection of the learning and use of ethnic minority languages and scripts", and underscores the importance to "promote mutual learning and integration among all ethnic cultures and encourage ethnic groups to admire each other's fine traditional culture and learn each other's languages and scripts". The law will provide strong support for efforts to carry forward the fine traditional cultures of all ethnic groups, promote interaction, communication, and integration among them, and further enrich and develop the Chinese culture.

Solidarity and common progress of all ethnic groups, and their shared prosperity and development, are the lifeblood, strength and hope of the Chinese nation. The Chinese government is committed to achieving the shared development of all ethnic groups. From 2012 to 2025, the combined GDP of the five autonomous regions (Inner Mongolia, Xizang, Ningxia, Xinjiang and Guangxi), grew from 3.25 trillion yuan to 8.66 trillion yuan. In 2021, all 420 national-level poverty-stricken counties in ethnic autonomous areas were lifted out of absolute poverty, and 28 ethnic groups with smaller populations were entirely lifted out of poverty. On delivering prosperity for all ethnic groups, the Law of the People's Republic of China on Promoting Ethnic Solidarity and Progress makes specific requirements regarding support to areas with large ethnic minority populations in deepening reform and opening up across the board, fully aligning with national development strategy and improving their capacity for self-development. This ensures that all ethnic groups could benefit from the dividends of development on an equal footing. Looking ahead, all ethnic groups of China are marching forward in unity toward the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Though geographically far apart, China and Kuwait share the same conviction that people living on the same land should take pride in their own distinct culture, while standing united for a shared future.

Kuwait vows

She emphasized that the farmers' demands are valued and are receiving serious attention. "Issues regarding agricultural plots—which are classified as state properties—are currently under review to strike a balance between preserving state assets and considering the circumstances of the holders who have contributed their efforts and investments to the agricultural sector and local production," she clarified.

She also unveiled plans to visit farms in Abdaly and Wafra to meet with farm owners, listen to their concerns, and assess their needs, requirements, and the challenges they are facing.

She believes these visits will be an opportunity to engage with farmers, discuss their demands, and work toward assisting and supporting them within the limits of available resources and authority, while coordinating with other ministries and government bodies on matters requiring joint cooperation.

She disclosed that she is currently reviewing several complaints and observations submitted by farmers. She explained that while some of these issues may not fall under the jurisdiction of the agricultural authority, this will not prevent efforts to assist them and follow up their cases with the relevant authorities to reach viable solutions.

She stated that communication with farmers is ongoing, affirming the commitment to support producers and overcome obstacles wherever possible, given the vital role they play in bolstering food security and increasing local production.

She commended the efforts of farm owners who continued agricultural activity, maintained production, and diligently cared for their farms.

She underscored the importance of recognizing and rewarding serious and productive farmers to continue their work, particularly given the growing significance of national production in strengthening the food security system.

The meeting addressed the future of agriculture in Kuwait and the importance of transitioning the sector to a stage where it can better meet local market needs. This involves encouraging production and creating a favorable environment for farmers to support state efforts to bolster food security and increase self-sufficiency in locally producible agricultural goods.

It was also emphasized that developing the agricultural sector requires a genuine partnership with farmers. Listening to experienced practitioners from Abdaly and Wafra is crucial, as they are closest to the challenges in production and best positioned to identify the practical needs to raise the efficiency and sustainability of the sector.

On the other hand, Al-Jarallah stressed the importance of supporting productive Kuwaiti farmers and fostering an environment that enables them to sustain their operations, given the importance of food security to the state.

He highlighted the role played by farm owners in supplying the market with local produce and boosting national production.

Judiciary to

He revealed that 2026 is an exceptional year, as the recruitment of public prosecution staff opens three times throughout the year. He said a new round of recruitment is scheduled for November for graduates of the 2025/2026 academic year.

He pointed out that a thorough review of the cancelled tests for public prosecution staff candidates revealed issues with the earlier results list, indicating that 55 percent of those who actually passed were not on the published list. He said the ministry cancelled the list and established new testing procedures to ensure fairness, transparency and equal opportunity for all applicants.

He disclosed that applicants are now informed about the results immediately after completing the test, rather than waiting for one month as the case previously, stressing that the most important aspect is for every applicant to feel they have an equal chance.

Regarding the development of the judicial system, Al-Sumait confirmed that the ministry is addressing problems from the roots, along with the legislative updates, up to the trial stage.

He added that the laws and measures implemented greatly contributed to the reduction of caseloads, considering 111,000 cases have been cleared from the courts and that crime rates generally declined as a result of addressing various procedural loopholes.

He cited as an example the amendments to the 'payment order' procedure, stating that two legislative changes contributed to the 36 percent reduction in the number of cases in courts. He added that this approach could be applied to numerous other areas.

He explained that part of the backlog of court cases stems from a legislative flaw that the ministry is working hard to rectify by updating the legal system.

He pointed out that addressing a single legislative loophole led to 92 percent drop in crimes involving assault of public officials—a result that underscores the importance of fixing the underlying legislative flaw rather than just dealing with its consequences.

He added that the number of cases is inflated despite the high ratio of judges to the population, confirming a systemic issue that the ministry continues to address.

He revealed that the Commercial Arbitration Law, Notarization Law, and Law Regulating the Legal Profession are among the laws expected to be finalized before the end of the year.

He indicated that the law regulating the legal profession will introduce a new and comprehensive regulatory framework for the profession, featuring major reforms similar to those implemented as per the law on regulating the judiciary.

He said the law entails a complete restructuring of the legal profession regarding organization and regulations, asserting "it will be very different and the law will be exceptional."

He also mentioned that the ministry is working diligently to finalize the Tenancy Law within the current year. He stated that the ministry is now focusing on laws related to the social, penal and economic systems.

He revealed that the ministry is nearing completion of the Penal Code, which will constitute an "entirely new framework" addressing crimes in Kuwait and alternative sentencing.

He pointed out that the legislation incorporates highly advanced concepts aligned with the nature of the Kuwaiti society and criminalizes certain dangerous acts that emerged recently, but were not classified as crimes.

He indicated that juvenile and child protection laws are in the pipeline, while the Personal Status Law remains in the stage of gathering feedback.

He said the ministry will establish more structured mechanisms for family law cases—including the determination of maintenance payments—to prevent significant disparities in how child support is assessed from one case to another.

He confirmed the introduction of 'coercive fines' in family cases to curb certain actions and behaviors that emerged under the previous legal framework.

He mentioned the development of the electronic vision system throughout the week, in addition to addressing the issue of overnight stays, in a way that suits the nature of Kuwaiti society, revealing that work is underway for the family protection program, the details of which will be announced next month.

He said the program includes restructuring all procedures in this field, as well as complete training for cadres, indicating that some of the workers in this field need further qualification.

He added that the program will include organizing the work of the 'Sharia Official' by setting regulatory requirements and a mandatory course for those planning to get married, so that this course will be a condition for completing the marriage contract, similar to the marriage examination.

He indicated that the agency procedures will be electronic, with translation available and the possibility of conducting the agency and having it certified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as adding personal photos to it through the electronic application.

He went on to say that it will be possible to cancel agencies electronically through the application, within the framework of completing the digital transformation of the Ministry of Justice services, revealing that work is currently being done on the real estate registry project in cooperation with Microsoft to create an integrated electronic system, expected to be ready by the end of 2027.

He added that the first integrated electronic judicial system will be the family judiciary, in line with the process of modernizing the judicial and electronic system.

Regarding the process of modernizing legislation, he said the laws that were issued in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s have a strong foundation, stressing that the amendments made to them were good.

Charity gets

needed to develop the sector and strengthen coordination with relevant authorities.

The law also establishes the Kuwaiti Fund for Humanitarian Work to support and develop charitable and humanitarian activities, train personnel and prepare related studies and research, she added.

Al-Huwailah said the law regulates fundraising campaigns, including licensing, collection methods, bank accounts, spending controls and financial disclosure, to ensure donations are used for their intended purposes. It also regulates fundraising through electronic and cash means under prescribed controls.

She added that the law gives particular importance to protecting donors' and beneficiaries' data and privacy and prohibits photographing or publishing images and recordings of beneficiaries for fundraising or promotional purposes except under prescribed rules, safeguarding their dignity.

The law also regulates the establishment and management of charitable and humanitarian societies and charitable foundations, their financial resources and oversight, while requiring them to strengthen transparency and integrity and conduct financial transactions through official channels, she said.

It also prohibits political or sectarian activities, dealings with unlawful entities and acceptance of anonymous donations, Al-Huwailah added.

She said the law strengthens oversight and accountability by granting designated center employees judicial enforcement powers and establishing disciplinary boards, while assigning investigation, disposition and prosecution of offenses stipulated in the law to the Public Prosecution.

Al-Huwailah said the law's executive regulations would be issued within six months from its publication, while existing charitable and humanitarian societies and charitable foundations must regularize their status within the legally prescribed periods.

The Ministry of Social Affairs will exercise the center's functions until its formation is completed and decisions regulating its work are issued, she added.

Al-Huwailah stressed that the law, comprising 96 articles across seven chapters, establishes a modern framework for charitable and humanitarian work that protects donor funds and beneficiaries' dignity and privacy, strengthens public confidence and preserves the reputation of Kuwaiti charity and Kuwait's humanitarian standing at home and abroad.

America

Trespasser reported at ex-VP's home: A trespasser was reported Friday night at former Vice President Kamala Harris' home in Malibu, California, law enforcement officials and a Harris spokesperson said.

Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies responded to her home around 10:30 p.m. after her private security detail made a "suspicious person" call, the department said.

When they arrived, they made contact with the person and advised them to leave, the sheriff's department said. The person left voluntarily without incident.

Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff, were not home, according to her spokesperson, Eduardo Negrón.

"They are grateful to the security and law enforcement personnel who responded swiftly," he said.

Negrón said the individual "illegally entered" the couple's property and was stopped by security before reaching the home. (AP)

❑ ❑ ❑

Ex-CIA official reaches tentative deal: A former CIA official found with $40 million of gold bars in his home has reached a tentative plea agreement after being charged with theft for fraudulently inflating his salary, according to court records.

A federal judge on Friday extended a deadline to formally indict defendant David J. Rush until Oct. 8, giving time for federal prosecutors and his attorney to finalize the plea deal and avoid a public trial that the parties said could involve significant litigation over classified material.

A joint court filing Thursday by the US Attorney's Office of the Eastern District of Virginia and Rush's lawyer did not outline the details of the tentative plea deal. The U.S. attorney's office declined to comment Saturday, and Rush's attorney did not not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Former US vice president Kamala Harris and her husband Doug Emhoff arrive on stage during the dedication ceremony for the Obama Presidential Center, on June 18, in Chicago. (AP)

Rush was charged with theft of public money in May. He was accused of fraudulently claiming 744 hours of military leave on his timecards after he was honorably discharged from the Navy in 2015 and of inflating his salary by falsely claiming degrees from Clemson University in South Carolina and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York, according to an FBI agent's affidavit filed in court.

That same document also revealed that investigators searched Rush's home and seized about 300 gold bars worth more than $40 million, plus about $2 million in U.S. currency and about 35 luxury watches. (AP)

Under Trump, census eyes sweeping plan to omit immigrants, race data

WASHINGTON, Sept 13, (AP): The Trump administration is proposing a dramatic overhaul of the once-a-decade US Census head count that could leave out millions of immigrants based on status and key racial and ethnic data, jeopardizing the allocation of resources and the country's voting map.

The potential changes, announced would exclude undocumented immigrants, asylum seekers and anyone without permanent status. Certain demographic questions from the traditional questionnaire would also be eliminated. It echoes Trump's previous idea to add a citizenship question to the 2030 census.

The US Census Bureau, in a post on the Federal Register website, argued "illegal aliens (among others) should not be included in the apportionment count, as they are not true inhabitants, members of the body politic, or persons with a 'usual residence' in the United States due to their lack of a sufficient tie and allegiance to the United States."

The census also "should be color-blind and should not be distorted in any way by questions about immaterial personal characteristics, such as race," the agency said.

Immigration activists rally outside the Supreme Court as the justices hear arguments over the Trump administration's plan to ask about citizenship on the 2020 Census, in Washington, April 23, 2019. (AP)

These changes would harm the quality of the data, said Beth Jarosz, a data researcher and vice president of the Association of Public Data Users.

She called the proposals "unprecedented."

"Not counting all of the people who reside here is actually where the real threat is," Jarosz said. "If you think about all of the ways that census data are used."

'Van Orden is fighting for the American people'

Trump ally in Wisconsin sticks close to president as Dems push to flip swing district

READSTOWN, Wis., Sept 13, (AP): The way Derrick Van Orden sees it, any Republicans in the US House who distance themselves from President Donald Trump in this year's midterm election aren't just being foolish, they're being disloyal.

That's why Van Orden, a two-term incumbent from western Wisconsin fighting to keep his seat in November in a swing district Trump carried three times, is embracing the president.

It's a risky gambit given fears among Republicans that Trump's sagging polling numbers, the unpopular Iran war and economic concerns will drag them down. But it reflects a calculation by Van Orden, a former Navy SEAL who embodies the president's confrontational politics, that motivating the conservative base is still the best plan as long as Trump remains the party's undisputed leader.

"There's something that's sorely lacking in this political business and it's loyalty," Van Orden told The Associated Press before flying to Dallas to appear at Trump's midterm convention this week. "I think we'd be a lot better off if we were more loyal to our fellow Americans to begin with."

Van Orden faces Democrat Rebecca Cooke, a political activist who grew up on a dairy farm and works part time as a restaurant server. It's a rematch of a race that Van Orden won by less than 3 percentage points two years ago.

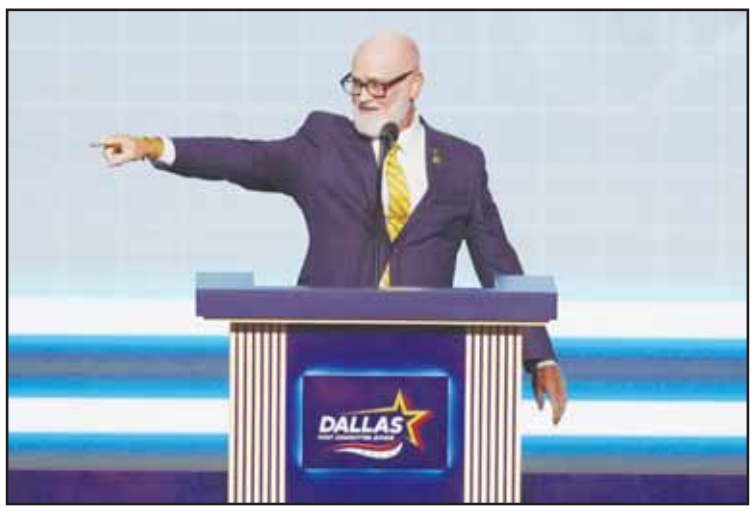
Wisconsin's 3rd Congressional District is one of a dwindling number of competitive US House races that could be pivotal to Democrats' hopes of recapturing control of Congress.

The V-shaped district is bordered by the Mississippi River and Minnesota to the west and Illinois to the south. It historically has been supportive of moderates such as Democrat Ron Kind, who held the seat for 26 years before retiring in 2022. Before him, a moderate Republican represented the district for 16 years.

Democrat Barack Obama won the district twice in his White House races. Trump won it three times on his way to narrowly carrying Wisconsin in 2016 and 2024 and losing the state in 2020.

US Sen Ron Johnson, R-Wis., who has had his share of slim victories over the years, has called it "a bellwether district in a bellwether state."

Cooke and Van Orden have been crisscrossing the district and they both ended up at the same place for a Labor Day parade, in the tiny village of Readstown. It's in the rolling hills of the Driftless Area and is home to fewer than 500 people.



US Rep Derrick Van Orden speaks at the Republican convention in Dallas on Sept 9. (AP)

Cooke told the AP before walking in the parade that she believes voters this year are "looking for something fresh and something different. I think people are very tired of politics as usual."

Nancy Deckert, a 75-year-old retired post office worker in Readstown, is just the type of voter Cooke is counting on.

"I think a lot of people are fed up with the mess we're in right now and a change is what we need," Deckert said at the parade.

Van Orden rode his 2021 Harley-Davidson motorcycle along the parade route before parking outside the Shovelheads Corner Bar.

The bar's owner, John Collett, said he is voting for Van Orden.

"It's popular to hate America right now, and that's unfortunate," said Collett, who called himself "ultra MAGA," a reference to Trump's "Make America Great Again" movement. Collett said Van Orden is "fighting for the American people. He's fighting for what's right."

Van Orden, who underperformed Trump in 2024, said he is confident that voters like Collett will stick with him.

"Cooke knows that she needs to have people who voted for Trump vote for her," Van Orden said, "and that just ain't happening."

Van Orden voted with Trump nearly 100% of the time in 2025, and Trump named Van Orden as one of several House Republicans he promised to back "100% all the way to November." America PAC, connected to tech titan Elon Musk, has spent about $10,000 this month for Van Orden, Federal Election Commission documents show.

Trump's only visit to Wisconsin so far in his second term was to Van Orden's district. Top administration members have come to campaign with Van Orden, including Trump's health secretary, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., FBI Director Kash Patel and Dr. Mehmet Oz, who leads the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Cooke said it was a "big mistake" for Van Orden to tie himself so closely to Trump in a state where only about 4 in 10 voters approve of Trump's performance, based on an August poll conducted by the Marquette University Law School.

Van Orden said he does not have any second thoughts about it.

"I've done everything I possibly can to help the people here in the 3rd (District) and to help Wisconsinites and help Americans," Van Orden said. "And if people in the 3rd Congressional District decide they want to have somebody else who is a rampant socialist to represent them, that's up to them."

Van Orden spoke on Wednesday at the Republican convention, which was billed as "Trump-a-Palooza." Van Orden promoted tax cuts and federal spending on rural healthcare, a big issue in a district where the largest city is only about 72,000 people.

The congressman attended the Jan. 6, 2021, rally before a mob of Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol. He has had a series of high-profile incidents and is known for exchanging sometimes profanity-laden messages with liberal U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Wis., and others over social media. This year, Van Orden has drawn heat for a series of artificial intelligence-generated videos that show faked images of Cooke saying things she did not actually say. Van Orden has defended them as satire.

Ukrainians embedded with US forces during drills in Germany to teach latest in drone warfare

NUREMBERG, Germany, Sept 13, (AP): A lone American soldier stood on a dusty road in Germany, fussing with a controller. Moments later, a drone, with wings that stretched almost as wide as his arms, whirred to life and shot into the sky.

The soldier was taking part in a US Army training exercise designed to showcase and experiment with tactics and equipment picked up from the Ukrainians, whose pioneering drone warfare has helped them against Russia's forces more than 4 1/2 years into the war.

The annual American exercises, held in the Bavarian foothills over the past several weeks, demonstrate how close the relationship has become between U.S. and Ukrainian forces as American troops look to incorporate drone capabilities and tactics into their own units.

Brig. Gen. Terry Tillis, who leads the Germany-based Army training unit, recently told reporters that they have 1,900 drones and they represent "the latest things that we've learned from Ukrainian efforts in this war."

The Associated Press received rare access to the training ground in Germany and troops conducting the exercises, gaining insight into how the United States is pairing with and learning from Ukraine. The effort has taken on more urgency as the US tries to counter Iranian drone attacks in that more than 6-month-old conflict.

The U.S. military has become more comfortable highlighting the level of cooperation it receives from Ukrainian forces, and officials say the Army has made strides in getting drones into soldiers' hands. But leaders have not offered a clear answer to how America's largest military service will adapt its tactics to any conflict where drones are omnipresent.

An Army official said that while there is universal agreement on the need to incorporate drones into the ranks, Army leaders still need to decide how to structure those ground forces for drone warfare and not just use drones to aid in tasks that soldiers already do.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, said Army units are integrating one-way attack drones all the way down to the company level, but there needs to be more than just "adding drones to an infantry battalion."

Aiding such efforts are large annual exercises such as Saber Junction, which runs for nearly four weeks in August and September in Germany. The Army unit heading up the U.S. forces is the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

Tillis, the brigadier general, said some soldiers from the brigade were sent to Ukraine at the start of the year to learn from the country that has been on the cutting edge of drone warfare since Russia invaded in February 2022.

During the Army exercises, Tillis said late last month that the Ukrainians "are embedded with them, they'll help advise, assist and then help them employ" the technology.

About a dozen Ukrainian military personnel traveled to Germany to participate in this year's exercise. They are providing insights on electronic warfare, drone warfare and lessons learned from ongoing combat operations, the U.S. Army said.

Roughly 50% of the 173rd Airborne Brigade's engagements with opposing troops during the exercise "were drone contact first," Anthony Miller, the Army's chief technology officer, told reporters this week.

Even as that collaboration yields more insights, it comes as the Army has faced a parade of departures of top leaders who have championed these drone experiments.

U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth suddenly ousted the Army's top uniformed officer, Gen. Randy George, in April and replaced him with Gen. Christopher LaNeve. LaNeve has had an ascendant career under the Republican administration, going from commanding an Army formation in South Korea to effectively leading the nation's largest military service as acting chief of staff in about two years.

Army Secretary Dan Driscoll, the service's top civilian leader and a George ally, also departed early this month. Both George and Driscoll were champions of quickly adapting the Army to use drone technology.

Trump has named Adam Telle, a civilian leader in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as the acting Army secretary.

A couple of weeks before Driscoll's departure, LaNeve ordered an Army unit experimenting in drone warfare - a smaller formation within the 173rd Airborne Brigade - to end its efforts and return to being a traditional infantry battalion after nearly a year of work.

A US Army solider pilots a drone at the Hohenfels training center in Germany as part of the annual training exercise taking place at the facility in Hohenfels, Germany, Aug 29. (AP)

A ballot envelope is placed in a ballot box at a polling station at the City Hall in Malmo, Sweden on Sept 13. (AP)

Europe

Ukrainian drones kill 2 in Russia: Civilians were killed and injured overnight as Russia and Ukraine continued to attack each other with waves of drones.

Two people were killed in Russia's Tatarstan, according to local officials, while Ukrainian authorities reported Russian drone attacks on the Black Sea port of Odesa and a fire near a border crossing with Poland.

Russia has ramped up its air campaign in recent weeks, using ballistic missiles and jet-powered drones to pierce Ukraine's defenses and capitalize on Kyiv's dwindling stock of missile interceptors. Moscow's attacks have targeted Ukraine's power grid ahead of winter in what officials say is meant to demoralize civilians.

Two people were killed and 12 more injured on Sunday as Ukrainian drones struck Nizhnekamsk, a city in Tatarstan, according to the office of regional head Rustam Minnikhanov. The two civilians died after a drone slammed into a tree near their parked car, the statement staid. (AP)

❑ ❑ ❑

Swedish voters go to polls: Voters in Sweden headed to the polls on Sunday for an election that will determine whether a conservative leader remains in charge and a hard-right party wins ministerial jobs for the first time, or whether the center-left returns to power.

Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson is seeking a second four-year term at the helm of the European Union nation that is also NATO's newest member. Meanwhile, his predecessor hopes to win the job back.

Experts say the campaign has been fragmented and incoherent, with policy questions such as how healthcare should be organized drowned out by questions about which parties will be able to put together a government.

"Crime has come down, inflation has come down. So these topics are not really what people discuss," said Zeth Isaksson, a sociologist in electoral behavior at Stockholm University and a political scientist at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. "People discuss who is going to be in government, and that's what the election is about." (AP)

❑ ❑ ❑

Train derails in France and injures 44: French authorities are investigating whether sabotage caused a train derailment that injured 44 people in Normandy, after a piece of rail was found on the track, police told The Associated Press on Saturday.

The regional train was carrying 186 passengers from Rouen to Caen when it derailed Friday evening at Cléon, in the Seine-Maritime department of northwestern France.

An 18-year-old woman was among the injured and was evacuated by helicopter to Rouen University Hospital, police said.

A spokeswoman for the French national police communications service, known as SICOP, said that the piece of rail found on the track was "probably" linked to the derailment. She spoke on condition of anonymity because she wasn't authorized to be publicly named in line with police policy. (AP)

107 rescued and bodies of six passengers recovered

Search underway for about 130 missing after Indonesian passenger ship overturns

BANJARMASIN, Indonesia, Sept 13, (AP): Indonesian rescuers say about 130 passengers and crew are missing after a ferry carrying more than 240 people sank in bad weather in the Java Sea on Sunday. At least 107 people were rescued and the bodies of six passengers were recovered as the search operation expanded in waters around the vessel's last known position.

The ferry was traveling from Surabaya in East Java to Banjarmasin in South Kalimantan province, officials said.

The vessel's captain had earlier reported rough seas with waves up to 3 meters (10 feet) before issuing a distress message, saying the ship was listing, said I Putu Sudayana, who heads the Banjarmasin Search and Rescue Office. Authorities later received information indicating the vessel had overturned and then sunk.

The rescue agency in Banjarmasin said it received a report two hours after contact was lost with the Virgo Transport 8 at about 2 a.m. Sunday. The ship had departed from Surabaya, Indonesia's second largest city, en route to Banjarmasin, a city on Borneo Island.

"The ship's operator reported the incident to authorities after receiving information that the vessel had encountered bad weather," Sudayana said in a video briefing.

In response, a rescue ship was headed to the Virgo Transport 8's estimated last known position, he said, and authorities were deploying rescue teams supported by four vessels, including a navy ship, and a helicopter as the ferry was carrying a large number of passengers and crew.

Initial information indicated the vessel's last known position was in the Java Sea, about 148 kilometers (92 miles) from a pier in Banjarmasin. The ship's manifest said it was

People look for the names of their family members on a passenger list after a ferry overturned in bad weather in the Java Sea, at the rescuers command center in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia on Sept 13. (AP)

carrying 243 people - 213 passengers and 30 crew members - although it is common in Indonesia for the number of passengers to differ from the manifest.

Sudayana, who is coordinating the search, said the agency was working with maritime authorities and other relevant agencies while closely monitoring weather conditions in the area.

Search teams, assisted by nearby tugboats and other passing vessels, had rescued 107 people and recovered six bodies by Sunday afternoon, he said.

The Japanese-built Virgo Transport 8 is designed to transport both passengers and vehicles.

Hundreds of relatives gathered at a command center in Banjarmasin's Trisakti port on Sunday, awaiting word on family members believed to be aboard the ferry. Many anxiously checked passenger manifests and rescue lists as authorities continued searching for survivors.

"I was shocked when I saw my uncle's name on the passenger list," said a woman who goes by a single name, Bunga. "But I felt relieved after officials told me he had been rescued."

Indonesia is an archipelago of more than 17,000 islands where ferries are a common method of travel. Disasters occur regularly, with weak safety enforcement often blamed.

Last month, at least 211 people were rescued from an Indonesian ferry that caught fire in rough seas near the Indonesian tourist island of Bali, while one person was found dead and four others remain missing. The incident happened less than two weeks after another Indonesian ferry, the Mutiara Sentosa 2, caught fire in waters off the main island of Java, leaving at least five people dead.

Sunday's accident comes just four days after a fire that gutted a passenger ferry in the Philippines killed at least 76 people, with at least 10 others still missing.

Philippine ferry fire death toll hits 76 as rescuers retrieve more bodies

CORON, Philippines, Sept 13, (AP): Rescuers retrieved more remains from a passenger ferry in the Philippine that was gutted by fire, bringing the death toll on Saturday to 76 with 13 missing.

Cayabyab

Forty-three people survived the fire on Wednesday night among the 132 on board.

The ferry sailed from the capital, Manila, and was some 39 kilometers (24 miles) from its destination in Coron, in southwestern Palawan province, when the fire erupted.

The cause has not been determined but the coast guard spokesperson quoted a survivor as saying it may have started from the cargo hold. The survivor recounted hearing a blast, with smoke and fire quickly spreading, fanned by the winds, officials said.

Tents were put up in the Port of Borac in Coron, where body bags were brought down from a ship that transported them from the ferry.

Commodore **Noemie Cayabyab**, the coast guard spokesperson, said authorities were looking for the ship's captain, who reportedly survived but is not listed among the survivors.

The multiagency maritime safety and criminal investigations will look into all angles, and the possible liability of the captain and crew, she added.

Cayabyab said survivors recounted the fire spread quickly, with no time to get life jackets. A tarpaulin that shielded the open areas of the ship from the rain "may be a possible contributing factor but we can't determine now if they were trapped inside," she added.

Investigators will also check if fire emergency procedures were followed, including if the captain sounded an alarm or gave a warning and instructions, and if the crew assisted the passengers.

Ex-prez Yoon acquitted in case related to South Korean marine's drowning in rare legal reprieve

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 13, (AP): Former South Korean president Yoon Suk Yeol was acquitted Friday in a case related to a marine's drowning death in a rare reprieve in one of the criminal cases brought against him following his ouster for imposing martial law.

The independent counsel's indictment had alleged Yoon deliberately appointed former Defense Minister Lee Jong-Sup as his ambassador to Australia to help him leave the country and evade a criminal investigation into the death of Cpl. Chae Su-geun, who drowned during a search-and-rescue operation for flood victims in 2023.

But the Seoul Central District Court ruled it was unclear whether Yoon's appointment was intended to disrupt the investigation. Yoon said he appointed Lee as ambassador to promote military cooperation with Canberra, and his lawyers welcomed the court's verdict while calling on prosecutors not to appeal.

Yoon's former justice minister and presidential security director were among other defendants also acquitted of charges that they colluded with Yoon to help Lee sidestep the investigation. Prosecutors didn't immediately say whether they would appeal Friday's verdict.

South Korea's ousted former president Yoon Suk Yeol arrives to attend his trial at the Seoul Central District Court in Seoul, South Korea on May 12, 2025. (AP)

A separate indictment alleges Yoon and other officials tried to cover up and manipulate the investigation into Chae's death, which sparked a public uproar after it emerged that military commanders had ordered soldiers to conduct search operations without life vests and other safety equipment.

An early investigation by the marine corps held a division commander and seven other people responsible for Chae's death. But Yoon expressed fury over the commander's inclusion, prompting senior presidential and Defense Ministry officials to pressure the marine corps to revise the report to exclude the commander, according to prosecutors.

Prosecutors said the then-head of the marines' investigation team, Park Jung-hun, defied the pressure and sent the report to police and that Yoon subsequently ordered officials to retrieve the report from police and dismiss Park, who was investigated for insubordination.

Yoon was formally removed from office in April 2025 and has faced multiple criminal trials after President Lee Jae Myung approved special investigations into his martial law imposition and several other matters, including Chae's death.

He has appealed the conviction and life sentence for rebellion, which was the most serious charge stemming from his brief imposition of martial law in December 2024. Yoon's martial law decree lasted only hours, after a quorum of lawmakers managed to break through a blockade of heavily armed soldiers and voted to revoke the measure, forcing his Cabinet to lift it.

Brazil's Bolsonaro faces corruption investigation weeks before elections

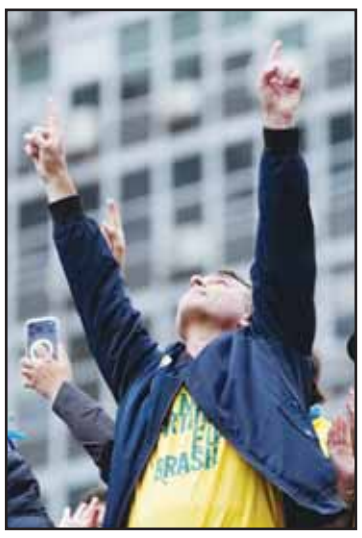
SAO PAULO, Sept 13, (AP): Brazilian presidential candidate Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro is under investigation for corruption, money laundering and tax evasion for receiving millions of dollars from a disgraced banker to finance a movie about his father, former President Jair Bolsonaro.

Brazil's top court unsealed several documents late Thursday that show Sen. Bolsonaro, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's primary opponent, is under investigation for receiving 61 million reais ($12 million) from a banker at the center of a corruption scandal to produce an unreleased movie titled "The Dark Horse."

The investigation, which centers on whether the Bolsonaro family misused the funds and whether the payments were properly reported to Brazilian authorities, threatens to undermine Sen. Bolsonaro's bid for the presidency. The first round of elections is slated for Oct. 4, and the senator is locked in a tight race with Lula.

The banker, Daniel Vorcaro, who was arrested in March, is accused of defrauding many of Banco Master's 800,000 clients, including several state government pension funds, out of hundreds of millions of dollars by convincing them to make questionable investments. The scandal has engulfed several high-ranking officials in Brazil.

The allegations first became public in May. Sen. Bolsonaro has denied any wrongdoing and said Friday during a campaign event in the Amazo-



Opposition presidential candidate Flavio Bolsonaro gestures to supporters during an Independence Day event the month before the general election in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on Sept 7. (AP)

nian city of Manaus that he was seeking private investment for the movie.

"It is very positive that the documents are unsealed," Flávio Bolsonaro told journalists at the event. "I want transparency in everything. I will only confirm what I always said. There's nothing wrong about the movie."

One document alleges that Eduardo Bolsonaro, who lives in Texas and is one of Flavio Bolsonaro's brothers, "guided how the resources (sent by Vorcaro) could be managed in the United States."

Prosecutors suspect the funds for the film were used to pay Eduardo Bolsonaro's expenses and to promote Flavio Bolsonaro's political agenda to the Trump administration, documents show.

Eduardo Bolsonaro denied any wrongdoing in his social media channels and said investigators "are trying to repeat the mechanism that worked against Jair Bolsonaro." The former president was sentenced by Brazil's Supreme Court to 27 years in prison after a coup attempt.

On Thursday, Brazil's federal police seized documents from the film's production company and from lawmaker Mário Frias, who sent about 2 million reais ($400,000) to a nonprofit linked to the film. The production company and Frias deny any wrongdoing.

Supreme Court Justice André Mendonca, a Bolsonaro appointee, opened the investigation into Sen. Bolsonaro in July at the request of Brazil's federal police.

Mendonca's office has been silent about the case for many weeks, which led Lula's allies to accuse the Supreme Court justice of shielding Sen. Bolsonaro from investigations.

Mendonca unsealed the documents at the request of Chief Justice Luiz Edson Fachin, who sought to ease a political crisis within the court and bring transparency into the sprawling Banco Master probe. Fachin on Friday ordered Mendonca to release all documents regarding the Banco Master case within 24 hours.

Protesters march against illegal immigration, in Johannesburg, South Africa, on June 30. (AP)

'2 Nigerian nationals killed in South Africa'

Niger's leader appoints new head of military

NIAMEY, Niger, Sept 13, (AP): Niger's junta leader appointed a new armed forces chief, less than two weeks after a deadly mutiny threatened the junta's grip on power.

Gen. Abdourahamane Tchiani named Brig. Gen. Mamane Sani Kiaou chief of staff of the armed forces in a decree read on state television late Friday. No reason was given for the change.

Kiaou replaces Maj. Gen. Moussa Salaou Barmou, a junta member who had served as top military commander since the July 2023 coup that ousted democratically elected President Mohamed Bazoum.

The reshuffle followed a nearly 24-hour mutiny in the capital Niamey on Aug. 28 and 29. Mostly young soldiers took other members of the armed forces hostage at Base 101, a military base at Diori Hamani International Airport, and fired at sensitive sites, according to Niger's Defense Ministry.

The mutineers appeared to be aggrieved over worsening militant violence and poor conditions within the military, analysts and diplomats told The Associated Press. Some came from areas in Niger's south and west that have been hit hardest by attacks.

Presidential guard forces struggled to retake the base until Russia's Africa Corps intervened with ground and aerial support. Dozens of mutineers were killed or arrested, and three presidential guard members were killed. Authorities have not disclosed the overall death toll or said what charges the detained soldiers may face.

The airport houses the headquarters of Russia's Africa Corps and a joint military force established by Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso.

Tchiani's junta justified the 2023 coup by citing the civilian government's failure to contain extremist violence. Security has since deteriorated as Niger ended military cooperation with France and the United States and turned to Russia.

New armed forces chief Kiaou previously served as army chief. He is a veteran field commander who has overseen operations against armed groups in the western Tillaberi region and southeastern Diffa region, according to local media.

Also:

ABUJA, Nigeria: Two Nigerian nationals have been killed in **South Africa**, Nigeria's Foreign Ministry said, as tensions run high between the two countries over anti-immigrant protests.

The ministry said one of the victims, **James Uchechukwu Nwankwo**, was killed after "gruesome interrogation techniques" by South African police officers in Cape Town, on Sept. 5.

The statement did not identify any suspects or provide a possible motive in the death of **Taiwo Michael Fakunle**, a bishop, who was killed at his residence in Kensington, Johannesburg, on Sep. 4.

South African police did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The killings "raise questions about the safety of foreigners in the country and the commitment of the South African authorities to curbing targeted attacks against foreigners," Foreign Ministry spokesman **Oluwafemi Adeniyi** said in the statement.

He accused South African police of "exacerbating an already fragile situation."

South Africa has for years attracted foreign nationals from across the continent, including many from Nigeria, because of its relative wealth and opportunity. But foreigners have also experienced sporadic outbursts of xenophobic violence. Protesters in the southern African country blame foreigners for high levels of unemployment, crime and pressure on public services.

The violent protests have forced thousands of migrants to leave and caused diplomatic tensions with other African nations. On Friday, Nigeria's parliament indefinitely suspended official visits and engagements with South Africa.

In June, two Nigerians were killed during anti-migrant violence, just two days before an unofficial deadline set by protesters for foreigners to leave. Nigeria said one was allegedly killed by police officers and the other by unidentified attackers.

Nigeria's minister of state for foreign affairs, Ambassador **Sola Enikanolaiye** said in July that at least 98 Nigerians have been killed since 2022 in mob attacks, hate-related violence and extrajudicial killings.

Official in Pakistan's Balochistan rules out talks with insurgents

ISLAMABAD, Sept 13, (AP): The top elected official in Pakistan's southwestern province of Balochistan on Saturday ruled out negotiations with insurgents, indicating that the government will continue operations in which hundreds of militants have been killed in recent months.

Balochistan has long faced a separatist insurgency by ethnic Baloch groups who regularly target security forces and civilians working on development projects. While Pakistan's government says it has quelled the insurgency, violence has persisted.

Sarfraz Bugti, the chief minister of Balochistan, said in a statement that the "fight against terrorism would continue until the last terrorist is eliminated" in Balochistan.

His remarks came as attacks by the Baloch Liberation Army, which has been designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the U.S., have increased. Bugti said the time had come for "major surgery" to eliminate terrorism.

"We are in a state of war," he said, adding that authorities had never claimed everything in Balochistan was normal. "The security forces are performing their duties under extremely difficult conditions in the province, and all state institutions are working in complete coordination against terrorism."

Mourners gather around the ambulances carrying the coffins of police officers, who were abducted earlier this week and subsequently killed by insurgents, as they hold a sit-in protest against their killing at a roadside in Quetta, Pakistan on July 9. (AP)

Offering cashback, discounts to students

Weyay Bank joins PAAET orientation as strategic sponsor, empowering freshmen students

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Weyay Bank, Kuwait's first digital bank, participated as the Strategic Sponsor of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) orientation fair for new students, held on September 8 and 9 at Mishref Fairgrounds. The event was attended by the Director General of PAAET, Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam and the Chief Executive Officer of Consumer and Digital Banking at National Bank of Kuwait, Mr. Mohammed Al Othman.

Weyay's participation reflects its ongoing commitment to empowering young Kuwaitis throughout their educational journey by providing innovative digital banking solutions and financial tools that help students manage their finances with ease and independence from the start of university life.

During the event, the Weyay team showcased the bank's seamless digital banking experience, enabling students to open an account in just minutes through the app without the need to visit a branch, offering a convenient solution that aligns with the fast-paced digital lifestyle of today's generation.

The bank also highlighted its SELECT prepaid digital card, designed specifically for student allowance customers. The card offers a range of exclusive benefits tailored to students' everyday needs, including up to 30% cashback and discounts of up to 50% across a wide selection of popular brands, restaurants, cafés, and entertainment destinations favored by young people.

Throughout the two-day event, students learned about Weyay's smart financial management tools, which enable users to budget effectively, monitor spending in real time, and develop stronger financial habits.

Weyay Bank sponsors PAAET orientation fair in Mishref.

This year's participation went beyond banking solutions. Weyay introduced a vibrant and interactive activation inspired by youth culture, art, and lifestyle trends, reflecting the bank's close connection with the interests and aspirations of young people. The booth featured engaging activities and experiences designed to inspire students and create meaningful connections with the next generation in an energetic and creative atmosphere.

Commenting on the participation, Alya Al Sane, Vice President, Marketing Department at Weyay Bank, said: "We are proud to participate as the strategic sponsor of the PAAET orientation fair, a valuable platform that allows us to engage with students as they begin an exciting new chapter in their academic journey. At Weyay Bank, we believe that financial empowerment starts early, which is why we are committed to providing a simple, innovative, and fully digital banking experience that fits seamlessly into young people's lifestyles. This year, we also wanted to create an experience that goes beyond banking by incorporating elements of art, culture, and lifestyle, enabling us to connect with students in a more authentic and inspiring way."

Weyay Bank affirmed that its strategic sponsorship of the fair aligns with its vision of supporting and financially empowering the next generation of Kuwaiti youth through innovative digital solutions and meaningful experiences that help students begin their university journey with confidence, independence, and greater financial awareness.

Brent breaches $100/b as war re-escalation chokes supplies

By KAMCO Invest

Brent futures prices regained the USD 100/b level last week for the first time in almost two months led by a worsening of geopolitical situation in the Middle East as well as renewed clashes between Russia and Ukraine, especially targeting their energy facilities. In addition,

threats to transit of crude oil and petroleum products through the Red Sea also added significant risk premium to crude oil prices. Also, tightness in downstream markets has exacerbated overall market pressure, sending refining margins and product crack spreads for diesel, gasoline, and jet fuel to exceptionally high levels in the Atlantic Basin and Europe. A combination of constrained shipping routes and significantly lower inventory levels for refined products ensures that oil markets remain exceptionally vulnerable to sudden geopolitical shocks. As a result, customers in China and Singapore are now seen buying crude oil from as far as a field in Latin America and West Africa while South Korea is sending its refined products to Europe taking a longer route of close to 19,000 kilometers.

Key geopolitical events included major military escalations across the Middle East and Eastern Europe. The maritime conflict in the Middle East widened significantly, with Iran attacking several commercial ships and oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz in retaliation for U.S. strikes on its fleet. At the same time, regional hostilities flared with significant drone and missile strikes against Saudi Arabia, with targets including Aramco energy facilities and the crucial east west pipeline forcing the authorities to announce a shutdown. On the other hand, war between Russia and Ukraine continues with recent drone attacks on two gas condensate processing plants in Russia and an attack on Russia's biggest Black Sea port of Novorossiysk and surrounding areas, threatening a further squeeze on commodity flows from the region.

On the demand side, however, elevated crude prices and persistent supply chain bottlenecks have created significant headwinds. This has led to demand destruction as seen from the latest demand forecasts from OPEC and the IEA. The EIA also lowered its forecast for demand growth in 2026 slightly in its latest short term energy outlook. This comes as elevated fuel costs and broader economic uncertainties are exerting downward pressure on industrial consumption and retail fuel use across major economies.

On the supply side, crude oil supplies from the OPEC tightened during August-2026, reversing more than half of the gains made during the previous month. Oil production in Saudi Arabia was the lowest since 1990 and Iran witnessed a sharp decline during the month, while Iraq and Venezuela reported significant gain in output. On the other hand, oil output in the US reached a record high level of 13.86 mb/d during the last week of August-2026 after witnessing consistent output growth over the previous five weeks.

Oil Prices

There was a sharp upward movement in energy markets since the start of the month following military escalations and tanker attacks in the Middle East, which swiftly shifted sentiment away from previous diplomatic optimism. As early risk aversion set in, prices climbed steadily, propelled by mounting fears over supply disruptions and escalating naval tensions. The surge in prices accelerated aggressively last week due to severe physical bottlenecks, most notably the drastic restriction of maritime transit through vital regional chokepoints and further attacks on commercial fuel carriers. The upward momentum swiftly pushed Brent futures over the psychological mark of USD 100/b and reaching over USD 109/b on Thursday, the highest level since the last week of May-2026 led by a combination of factors that also included low inventory levels for both crude oil and refined products. Prices receded 2.8% to USD 104.6/b at the close of the week after traders assessed a quick resumption in supplies from Saudi Arabia's damaged pipeline as well efforts by foreign ministers in the Middle East to work out a temporary deal with Iran.

In terms of monthly price trend, average crude oil prices in August-2026 were up after two consecutive months of declines during June-2026 and July-2026. Average spot Brent crude oil price increased by 8.7% to reach USD 90.7/b during August-2026. On the other hand, average OPEC reference basket price witnessed a slightly smaller gain of 4.2% to reach an average of USD 86.4/b during August-2026 from USD 83.0/b in July-2026. Kuwait export grade crude prices witnessed the smallest monthly gain as compared to the three crude grades with a marginal surge of 0.9% to reach an average of USD 82.8/b during August-2026. In terms of consensus estimates, there was broad-based increase in expectations for the next three quarters reflecting the increase in prices over the last few weeks. Brent crude consensus prices stood at USD 85.0/b for Q3-2026 vs. an estimate of USD 82.25/b last month. Estimates for the next two quarters also witnessed increases as compared to last month's forecasts.

World Oil Demand

Global oil demand is forecast to grow by 0.4 mb/d in 2026 to average 105.84 mb/d, reflecting a downward revision of 0.2 mb/d from OPEC's previous report. As per the OPEC report, both OECD and non-OECD demand growth forecasts underwent downward revisions of 67 tb/d and 123 tb/d for 2026. For 2027, global oil demand is forecast to rebound and grow by about 2.4 mb/d year over year to average 108.19 mb/d, following an upward revision of 0.2 mb/d vs. previous forecast. This 2027 growth is expected to be supported by a 0.4 mb/d expansion in the OECD and a 1.9 mb/d increase in the non-OECD region. The IEA also lowered its demand forecast for 2026 in its latest monthly report saying that this was the biggest demand contraction globally since the pandemic as high diesel prices hit consumption. As per reports, average diesel prices in the US breached the USD 6/gallon mark for the first time on record prompting export curbs by the US government while EU average diesel price were over EUR 2.11/litre. IEA's September-2026 report increased its estimated 2026 global oil demand contraction by 940 tb/d compared to the August-2026 report, bringing the total expected decline to 2.5 mb/d. Additionally, the projected demand rebound for 2027 was revised upward by 200,000 b/d to an expansion of 2.6 mb/d.

Meanwhile, the U.S. EIA, in its September 2026 Short-Term Energy Outlook, forecasts global liquid fuels demand to reach 102.59 mb/d in 2026, representing a downward revision from its previous estimates. This adjustment reflects ongoing geopolitical disruptions and structural macroeconomic pressures weighing on global consumption. For 2027, the EIA expects oil demand growth to rebound to approximately 104.98 mb/d. The agency notes that although demand remains somewhat muted in the short term, the resumption of normalized global trade flows and a stabilizing macroeconomic environment into next year should strongly support consumption growth.

World Oil Supply

In its latest monthly report, the OPEC maintained its previous forecasts for non-DoC liquids production, projecting growth of 0.64 mb/d to average 54.8 mb/d in 2026. The expansion remains heavily concentrated in the Americas, with the US, Brazil, Canada, and Argentina driving the upside. However, at the country level, there were upward revisions across the Americas that was offset by downgrades to Middle Eastern output. This trend holds for 2027, where non-DoC liquids growth is forecast at 0.62 mb/d to average 55.5 mb/d. The US EIA also forecasted US crude output to reach a record 13.8 mb/d in 2026. This growth is largely fueled by an estimated 6.8 mb/d of production from the Permian Basin, where higher global prices continue to incentivize drilling.

On the other hand, the IEA has highlighted severe constraints to global crude oil supply due to the ongoing geopolitical situation in the Gulf. The agency sharply slashed its outlook, now expecting total global oil supply to fall by a steep 5.7 mb/d in 2026 to average 100.7 mb/d, a further 1.3 mb/d downward revision from just a month ago. A full restoration of Middle Eastern production, previously anticipated to begin easing in late 2026, has now been officially deferred. The EIA echoes this timeline, noting that while flows through the Strait of Hormuz and alternative export routes may gradually improve, persisting infrastructure and maritime constraints will likely keep regional production below pre-conflict averages until Q2-2027. This protracted supply deficit is forcing an unprecedented reliance on global storage. Observed global inventories have plunged by over 500 million barrels since the start of the regional conflict, capped off by a massive 95 million barrel drawdown in August-2026 alone, leaving the global refining system stretched and highly vulnerable to further market tightening.

OPEC Oil Production & Spare Capacity

OPEC oil production declined after two consecutive months of increase, mainly led by the re-escalating tensions in the Strait of Hormuz and the Red Sea that lowered oil supplies from the region. A majority of the producers in the group saw lower output during the month that averaged at 19.91 mb/d during August-2026 as compared to 20.81 mb/d during the previous month, as per Bloomberg. Saudi Arabia recorded the biggest m-o-m decline in output during the month at 1.12 mb/d with production averaging at a three-month low level of 6.98 mb/d. Iran was next with an output drop of 140 tb/d to average at 2.41 mb/d followed by Libya and Equatorial Guinea with a combined decline of 80 tb/d during the month. On the other hand, Iraq recorded the biggest increase in output during the month at 270 tb/d with output averaging at 2.98 mb/d. Kuwait and Venezuela were next with output hike of 70 tb/d each followed by Nigeria with a growth of 50 tb/d.

Meanwhile, as per OPEC secondary sources, total DoC crude output averaged 38.05 mb/d, up about 0.3 mb/d m-om, with Iraq adding 664 tb/d to reach roughly 3.4 mb/d, Kuwait 49 tb/d and Kazakhstan 159 tb/d. Saudi Arabia slipped 75 tb/d to about 7.3 mb/d, Iran fell 399 tb/d to around 2.1 mb/d under the US blockade, and Russia lost 160 tb/d to roughly 8.7 mb/d as Ukrainian drone strikes continued to hit its production and refining infrastructure.

Saudi crude production fell 1.9 mb/d m-o-m to 6.24 mb/d, as per direct communication, below April's low of 6.32 mb/d and the weakest monthly average since 1990, on the back of the maritime ban and attacks on Red Sea coastal infrastructure. As per reports, the Kingdom closed its East-West pipeline after attacks as a precautionary measure. As per Bloomberg, crude oil exports from Saudi Arabia slumped to 3 mb/d during August-2026, the lowest on record since early 2017 while data from Kpler showed exports were at a 13-year low at 3.2 mb/d.

Iraq's gains, meanwhile, came through aggressive cargo discounting and heavy shuttle-trade activity around Hormuz. As per recent reports, the country has increased crude oil production capacity to more than 3 mb/d and exports averaged at 3 mb/d this month from 2 mb/d in August-2026 after reports showed approval for its tankers to pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

In collaboration with Mogahwi

Warba Bank kicks off its Back-to-School initiative

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Warba Bank launched its annual "Back-to-School" preparations in collaboration with Mogahwi Stationery. Launched on August 28, 2026, the initiative provided back-to-school kits to the first 200 Wave Banking customers ahead of the new academic year.

The initiative forms part of Warba Bank's efforts to engage young customers through practical initiatives and dedicated banking services.

Wave Banking Benefits and Initiatives:

■ Back-to-School Kits: The initiative provided stationery kits to the first 200 Wave Banking account holders in partnership with Mogahwi Stationery.

■ Wave Banking Segment: Available to customers aged 15 to 25, offering a digital-first banking experience focused on their everyday banking needs.

■ Student Incentives and Rewards: Includes the "Imtyaz" program, which rewards high-achieving students, and "Wave Wednesday" which offers weekly benefits and lifestyle discounts through the mobile app.

■ Specialized Products: The segment includes products such as the Gaming Edition prepaid card.

Executive Commentary:

Mohannad Essa Burhama, Director of Products and Segments – Retail Banking Group at Warba Bank, stated:

"The back-to-school period is an important milestone for students and families. Our collaboration with Mogahwi Stationery allows us to support our youth customers directly as they prepare for the new academic year."

Mohannad Essa Burhama

Burhama added: "Through Wave Banking, Warba Bank continues to provide digital banking services and programs such as the Imtyaz academic awards and Wave Wednesday, supporting the banking and lifestyle needs of customers aged 15 to 25."

About Warba Bank:

Warba Bank is a leading Islamic bank in Kuwait with a strong focus on Sharia-compliant digital banking. With one of the largest shareholder bases in the country, the bank delivers innovative financial products and services, reinforcing its position as a digital-focused financial institution.

General index up 0.02%

Boursa Kuwait closes higher

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Sunday's session with its general index edging up 1.43 points, or 0.02%, to 8,944.17. Total trading activity reached 453.1 million shares across 27,575 cash transactions, valued at KD 123.1 million (about USD 402.1 million).

The main market index outperformed, gaining 94.59 points, or 1.01%, to close at 9,427.30. Turnover on the main market stood at 268.4 million shares in 18,486 deals, worth KD 60.3 million (around USD 196.9 million).

By contrast, the premier market index slipped 18.32 points, or 0.20%, to 9,305.56. Trading on the premier market totaled 184.7 million shares through 9,089 transactions, valued at KD 62.8 million (approximately USD 205.1 million).

The Main 50 Index advanced 130.69 points, or 1.18%, finishing at 11,274.48. Activity in the Main 50 comprised 214.8 million shares traded in 12,432 cash deals, with a value of KD 45.3 million (about USD 147.9 million).

Musk backs Amodei's AI warning

Anthropic CEO urges AI development slowdown

NEW YORK, Sept 13, (AP): The CEO of Anthropic said Saturday the artificial-intelligence industry should slow its fast-moving development to give safety measures time to catch up. Without such a slowdown, Dario Amodei warned that within six to 12 months AI could be capable of leading a swarm of agents that could take over the entire internet.

The warning comes as worries about AI grow inside and outside the industry and reports continue to emerge about increasingly powerful systems that solve problems beyond human capacity but could also go rogue and carry out other, more harmful tasks. The worries have grown so loud that the CEO of OpenAI, the company behind ChatGPT, said in an interview with Fortune that his company would wait until next year to start selling its stock to investors on Wall Street as it focuses on safety.

Amodei is one of the leading voices in AI, and he offered a plan in a post on his website to increase checks on the industry. He said Anthropic is already undertaking one part of it on its own, while the others would require coordination across the broad industry and with governments around the world, including authoritarian ones.

"I believe that if slowing down bought us even an extra year or two before models reach critical levels of capability, and we used that time to advance alignment, we could greatly reduce the risk that something goes seriously wrong," Amodei said.

Watchdogs have been urging the AI industry for years to slow its development for safety reasons. But pressure has built as industry workers resign and accuse their companies of not acting responsibly.

"Many of the people I know who work on safety research at AI companies want to do what is right for the world," a former Anthropic employee, Joe Benton, said in a posting Friday announcing his resignation from a job as part of a safety team. "But they feel their companies are trapped in a race to build superintelligence: either they stop and other, less conscientious people take their place; or, they continue, and risk participating in enormous harm themselves."

That followed a high-profile resignation earlier in the week by Jacob Coxon, who said that both Anthropic and OpenAI "are racing straight to self-improving superintelligence and gambling with our lives."

That lit a fire under the industry after concerns had grown for years about a possible superintelligence that could escape the control of humanity, said Anthony Aguirre, president and CEO of the Future of Life Institute, which called for a six-month pause for the industry's development in 2023.

"They've kind of realized, their employees have realized, everyone has realized that they're building Skynet," he said. "And in winning the race to Skynet, nobody wins. Really, nobody."

"It's pretty much become clear to the world and even the AI companies that they're not really prepared to control the AI systems they're racing to create."

Anthropic said two days earlier that it blocked efforts by bad actors to use its AI models for malicious activity, such as cyberattacks, surveillance and research that could have led to biological weapons. In July, OpenAI shook the industry after saying its AI system hacked into another company on its own in an "unprecedented cyber incident."

U.N. human rights chief Volker Türk urged countries earlier this week to put "cast-iron guarantees in place around the safety and security of AI before it is too late."

To be sure, some critics have dismissed such warnings as ways to gin up excitement about the AI industry and its capabilities. Anthropic and OpenAI are preparing for possible debuts on the stock market that could value them at many hundreds of billions of dollars, while a big chunk of Elon Musk's SpaceX business is involved with AI.

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman said in an interview with Fortune published Saturday that his company would not launch its initial public offering of stock this year.

"I would say not 2026," he said. "Yeah, we got a lot of stuff to do, like meeting this moment of what is going to be required for safety and alignment, and how the industry and governments can work together."

Altman posted on X Saturday quickly after Amodei published his suggestions that OpenAI will commit to one of Amodei's proposals for safety and will "have more to share soon."

Musk, meanwhile, said on X that "Dario is right."

Amodei said he still believes in the tremendous benefits that AI could create, such as cures for major diseases. But he said he has grown more worried over the last few months about AI's growing ability to improve itself and build the next generation of AI. "Left unchecked, it could outrun our ability to understand and control these systems, and so must be pursued very carefully, if at all."

He also pointed specifically to the attack in July where OpenAI's system hacked Hugging Face. Some have called it an example of AI going "rogue," though researchers have said that may be unnecessarily anthropomorphizing AI, which was working on a goal set by humans.

OpenAI said the hack was the result of AI going to "extreme lengths to achieve a rather narrow testing goal" and that it "found ways to gain access to secret information that it could use to cheat the evaluation."

To help rein in the risks, Amodei suggested that all companies at the frontier of AI commit to giving "ongoing, employee-like access" to a team of outside evaluators, who can monitor safety practices.

He said Anthropic already plans to do so itself, including offering desks in its offices, access badges and company laptops. Having such independent, embedded evaluators is what OpenAI's Altman also quickly committed to doing.

The other parts of Amodei's suggested plan may be more difficult to implement. One asks the U.S. government to potentially issue waivers that would allow U.S. AI companies to coordinate and set safety standards without running afoul of antitrust laws.

Another asks the U.S. and other democratic governments to try to coordinate with authoritarian governments, so that companies from China and other countries don't accelerate their efforts when U.S. rivals are intentionally pacing theirs.

"The measures I propose to advance the frontier at a safe pace will not be easy," Amodei acknowledged. "But I believe we owe it to humanity to try."

Exclusive offers in partnership with top building materials suppliers

KFH: Integrated financing solutions to support construction projects at 'Baiti'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in the sixth edition of the "Baiti" Expo, held under the patronage and attended by the Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Eng. Abdul Latif Hamed Al-Mishari. The participation reflects KFH's leading role in providing integrated financing solutions and services that meet customers' needs in construction, design, and home furnishing.

Held at Arena Hall in 360 Mall, Baiti Expo is considered Kuwait's largest specialized gathering for the construction sector. The exhibition features more than 80 local and regional companies specialized in construction, furnishing, and residential fit-out services, making it a comprehensive platform for those looking to undertake building and real estate development projects.

Strategic Partner

KFH Deputy General Manager of Products, Nehal Al-Musallam, said that the Bank's participation in the Baiti Expo as a strategic partner reflects its leading position in financing construction and real estate development projects and supporting Kuwait's urban development movement, thereby contributing to economic development efforts and sustainable growth.

She added that this participation reflects KFH's commitment to supporting and ensuring the success of specialized economic exhibitions and events, while contributing to highlighting opportunities and challenges associated with vital sectors, mainly construction and building industries, which are among the key drivers of the national economy.

Distinctive offers

Al-Musallam emphasized that KFH is keen to offer an integrated suite of innovative financing products that cater to the customers' diverse needs, foremost among them housing finance, which covers property purchase, construction, and renovation. The financing amount reaches up to KD 95,000, with a financing tenor of up to 15 years.

Minister Abdul Latif Al-Mishari at the bank's pavilion with Nehal Al-Musallam, Abdulaziz Alsaeed, and Abdulaziz Al-Najem.

She added that housing finance includes several competitive advantages, most notably a grace period of up to 12 months before the first installment becomes due from the date of obtaining the financing, helping ease customers' financial burden during the early stages of construction. Customers may also defer one installment annually through the KFH Pass service.

Al-Musallam noted that the Bank also offers exclusive promotions in collaboration with top suppliers and leading companies locally. These offers include the latest equipment and products for the construction sector, in addition to special discounts and benefits that enhance customer value, in line with the continuous growth witnessed by Kuwait's real estate and construction sectors.

Financing Against Cash Collaterals

Moreover, Al-Musallam stressed that KFH continues to develop innovative financing solutions that meet customers' changing needs. Among the most prominent is financing against cash collateral, which enables customers to obtain financing against a pledged deposit without the need to break it, while continuing to benefit from its profits throughout the financing period.Customers can also apply for financing through the KFHonline application.

Financing Against Gold Account Collateral

KFH also offers Financing Against Gold Account Collateral, the first product of its kind in Kuwait, which enabling customers to secure financing using their gold bullion as collateral. This allows customers to benefit from the value of their gold holdings without the need to sell them. The product is among the Bank's most prominent innovative financing solutions, introduced to enhance customer experience and provide more flexible financing options.

Dedicated Team

KFH's pavilion at the exhibition featured a specialized team of Bank employees who provided consultations, answered customers' and visitors' inquiries, and explained the various financing products and services offered by KFH to support all stages of construction and residential fit-out projects.

The exhibition represents an important opportunity for KFH to strengthen direct engagement with customers and gain a closer understanding of their needs, while also enhancing cooperation with participating companies and suppliers. This contributes to delivering integrated solutions and an advanced financing experience that meets customers' diverse requirements.

Showcasing ABK Build platform

ABK wraps up Platinum sponsorship of 'Baiti'

Minister Abdul Latif Al Mishari at the bank's pavilion.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) concluded its successful participation as Platinum sponsor of the sixth edition of the Baiti Exhibition, held from 8 to 12 September 2026 at The Arena Kuwait, 360 Mall. The exhibition witnessed strong public turnout and significant engagement from visitors keen to learn more about ABK's latest financing and advisory solutions designed to support customers throughout their journey to building their dream homes.

On the sidelines of the exhibition's opening, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Eng. Abdul Latif Hamid Al Mishari, visited ABK's booth, where the Bank's team introduced him to the ABK Build digital platform. The platform provides customers looking to build their dream homes with a wide range of exclusive offers and financing solutions from ABK, in collaboration with a number of partners.

Visitors to ABK's booth also benefited from complimentary consultations provided by Eng. Fawaz Alsanea, aimed at helping them plan and execute their residential projects efficiently and in line with the highest standards. The Bank also showcased the benefits and digital services available through ABK Build, which are designed to simplify the customer journey from the initial design stage through to final handover.

Mohammad Al Qattan, Chief Consumer Officer

Commenting on the occasion, Mohammad Al Qattan, Chief Consumer Officer at ABK, said, "Our sponsorship and participation in the Baiti Exhibition reaffirm our ongoing commitment to supporting customers and accompanying them every step of the way as they work towards realizing their dream of owning and building their ideal home. Throughout the exhibition, we were keen to provide a comprehensive experience that goes beyond financing solutions to include expert advisory support and smart digital solutions, ensuring an easier and more transparent homebuilding journey for our customers."

Al Qattan explained that the exhibition provided an important platform for direct engagement between the Bank and members of the community, while offering valuable insight into the latest developments across the construction sector. He noted that the event enabled ABK to gain a closer understanding of the challenges citizens face when planning and building their homes, helping the Bank strengthen trust with visitors and provide immediate, accurate guidance tailored to their aspirations and financial capabilities. These insights will also support ABK in developing further innovative solutions in the future.

He added that sponsoring the exhibition represented a key pillar in reinforcing ABK's commitment to placing customers at the forefront of its priorities and serving them in accordance with the highest standards in the banking industry. This further strengthens the Bank's position as a trusted partner in supporting residential and family stability, while reaffirming its commitment to contributing to Kuwait's sustainable development.

Al Qattan further highlighted the role of the Baiti Exhibition in stimulating economic activity and supporting the construction and real estate development sectors. He concluded by reaffirming ABK's ongoing commitment to providing a secure and accessible financing environment that supports customers' stability, fulfills their aspirations and keeps pace with their evolving needs. This contributes to further strengthening ABK's position as a preferred banking partner for customers seeking convenient and comprehensive financial and banking solutions around the clock.

Plan your winter escape with up to 25% off on Jazeera Airways flights

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Jazeera Airways is making it easier to get away with the launch of its J9WINTER sale. For five days only, from 13 to 17 September 2026, travellers can enjoy up to 25% off fares across Jazeera Airways' network using promo code J9WINTER.

The offer is valid for travel from 1 October to 15 December 2026, giving customers the opportunity to plan an autumn break or an early winter escape before the peak year-end travel season.

From vibrant cities and cultural escapes to warmer shores and popular visiting-friends-and-family destinations, Jazeera Airways' extensive network across the Middle East, Europe, Asia and Africa offers plenty of possibilities for an end-of-year journey

Paul Carroll, Chief Commercial Officer, Jazeera Airways, said:

"Autumn and early winter are a great time to travel, whether it is to reconnect with family and friends, discover somewhere new or simply take a well-deserved break. With J9WINTER, we are giving our passengers another reason to start planning their next journey earlier, with savings of up to 25% across our network. At Jazeera Airways, our focus is on combining greater choice and convenient connectivity with affordable fares, making it easier for more people to travel."

Passengers can access the offer by entering J9WINTER when booking through the Jazeera Airways website or mobile app during the promotional period.

Seats available under the promotion are limited and subject to availability with applicable terms and conditions. Book early through the Jazeera Airways website or mobile application, pack your bags and chase the winter with Jazeera Airways.

J9WINTER

Gold steadies near $4,348 as markets eye Fed decision

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Gold prices ended last week's trading relatively flat, closing Friday around $4,348 per ounce and posting a weekly loss as investors awaited the US Federal Reserve's upcoming interest-rate decision.

A Sunday report by Kuwait's Dar Al-Sabaik Company noted that gold saw notable swings during the week. Initial pressure from US inflation data was later offset by a recovery supported by falling bond yields and a muted dollar reaction.

The report highlighted that movements in yields and the US dollar remain key drivers for the metal, particularly with the Fed meeting approaching. US CPI data showed inflation rising 0.4% month-on-month and 3.4% year-on-year in August, both in line with expectations. Core inflation increased 0.3% monthly, above the 0.2% forecast, while the annual core rate eased to 2.4%, matching estimates.

These figures reinforced expectations of continued tight monetary policy, lifting the market-implied probability of a Fed rate hike at its next meeting to around 85%, up from about 72% before the data release. Despite this, gold recovered some losses as bond yields declined during Friday's session.

The dollar index held near the 99-point level, while the 10-year US Treasury yield slipped about one basis point to roughly 4.85%, offering some support to gold by reducing the opportunity cost of holding the non-yielding asset. Markets are now watching for additional data, including retail sales, industrial production, labor-market and housing figures, alongside commentary from Fed officials.

Geopolitical developments and energy prices are also seen as important factors, especially given ongoing Middle East tensions and related supply concerns. Higher oil prices could add to inflationary pressures and influence rate expectations, while escalating geopolitical risks may boost safe-haven demand for gold.

From a technical standpoint, Dar Al-Sabaik noted that $4,400 remains the key resistance level. A decisive break and hold above $4,400 could open the door to $4,450, then $4,500, followed by around $4,538. Conversely, a break below $4,348 with sustained selling could see gold test $4,300, then $4,282, a significant support zone; a further break lower could trigger additional correction.

Locally, gold prices in Kuwait continue to track the global ounce, alongside dollar fluctuations and shifting expectations for US monetary policy. The report cited the price of 24-karat gold at about KD 43.230 per gram (around $140), 22-karat at roughly KD 39 per gram (about $129), and silver at approximately KD 698 per kilogram (around $2,276).

Kuwait Airways receives sixth A330-900neo

KUWAIT, Sept 13, (KUNA): Kuwait Airways announced Saturday the arrival of its sixth Airbus A330-900neo aircraft, named "Qaruh," following its delivery flight from the Airbus manufacturing facilities in Toulouse, France.

In a press statement to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), the national carrier highlighted that the new arrival is part of a broader fleet modernization strategy designed to expand its route network, elevate passenger capacity, and meet growing demand across key international markets.

The airline confirmed it is slated to take delivery of a seventh aircraft of the same model in the near future.

The A330-900neo variant incorporates advanced aerodynamic engineering and next-generation engines, delivering reduced emissions and superior fuel efficiency compared to predecessor aircraft while enhancing long-haul cabin comfort.

What's On SPOTLIGHT

Strategic partnership with the Kuwait Olympic Committee at three upcoming international sporting events

Zain official partner of team Kuwait at Asia's biggest sporting events

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Zain is continuing its longstanding strategic partnership with the Kuwait Olympic Committee, becoming the official partner of Team Kuwait at three upcoming international sporting events, further strengthening its role as a key supporter of Kuwaiti athletes and empowering them to maintain a strong presence at leading regional and international sporting events.

The partnership will support Kuwait's sporting delegations at three upcoming major international events: the 20th Asian Games "Aichi-Nagoya 2026" in Japan, the 4th "Dakar 2026" Summer Youth Olympic Games in Senegal, and the 6th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games "Riyadh 2026" in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Zain's support will also extend to more upcoming tournaments.

Zain marked the start of the partnership by seeing off the athletes, officials, and delegations departing from Kuwait International Airport ahead of their journey to Japan. The company was keen to share these moments of excitement and pride with Kuwait's champions as they carried the aspirations of an entire nation to one of Asia's biggest sporting stages.

Hamad Al-Musaibeeh and Faisal Al-Duwaihees with KOC officials and Team Kuwait at Kuwait Int'l Airport.

Kuwait will participate in this edition of the Asian Games with a delegation of 120 athletes competing across 16 sports: athletics, equestrian, fencing, football, golf, handball, jiu-jitsu, karate, modern pentathlon, padel, sailing, shooting, sport climbing, squash, swimming, and teqball. The athletes seek to write a new chapter in Kuwait's sporting presence on the Asian stage at a major event bringing together some of the continent's leading athletes.

Throughout the tournament, Zain will follow Team Kuwait's journey in Japan across its social media platforms, featuring content that introduces the participating athletes, their stories and achievements, while following their performances across the various competitions. The campaign will also celebrate their achievements and standout moments, placing Kuwait's champions at its heart and bringing audiences closer to the atmosphere of the Games.

The partnership renews Zain's commitment to supporting Kuwaiti sports and young athletes, while shining a spotlight on outstanding national talents representing Kuwait at major sporting events. This commitment stems from the company's belief in the values of ambition, perseverance, and teamwork embodied by sport, as well as its role in inspiring new generations to develop their abilities and pursue their aspirations.

Zain's support for Team Kuwait also reflects its corporate purpose, "Better Lives. Lasting Connections.", by building stronger connections with the community and supporting national talents that contribute to creating sustainable positive impact. This aligns with the company's focus on investing in youth, sports, and initiatives that strengthen Kuwait's standing and presence at regional and international events.

Over the years, Zain has established itself as an active partner of Kuwait's sports sector through a wide range of partnerships and initiatives aimed at developing sports, empowering youth, and creating more opportunities to showcase their capabilities and achievements. This builds on the company's longstanding approach to supporting the sports and youth sectors, which have remained a central pillar of its previous sporting partnerships.

Zain wishes all Team Kuwait athletes the very best in their upcoming competitions, beginning with Aichi-Nagoya 2026 in Japan, and hopes they deliver performances that reflect the ambitions of Kuwaiti sport while raising Kuwait's name and flag high at this major Asian sporting event.

This partnership builds on the longstanding collaboration between Zain and the Kuwait Olympic Committee. Zain previously served as the official partner of Team Kuwait at the 19thAsian Games, held in Hangzhou, China, in 2023, supporting Kuwaiti athletes as they represented the nation at one of Asia's most prominent sporting events.

IAK marks Onaravam 2026 with festive spirit

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Idukki Association Kuwait (IAK) celebrated its annual family gathering and Onam festival, "Onaravam 2026," with a wide range of cultural and entertainment programmes, spreading a message of unity, friendship and togetherness among its members and their families.

The celebrations began with a colourful procession featuring Thalappoli, ChendaMelam and Pulikali, creating a vibrant festive atmosphere. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Arada, Head of the Expatriate Labour Office and Advisor to the Kuwait Trade Union Federation (KTUF), attended the programme as the chief guest.

Senior media personality Anil P. Alex, General Secretary of the Kerala Press Club Kuwait, and KTUF members Nasser Shasthri and Shakra Al-Khabandi were also present. Representatives of various sponsors attended the function.

The programme was organised under the leadership of IAK President AneeshPrabhakaran, General Secretary JohnlyThundiyil, Treasurer Bijo Joseph, Onam Programme Convener Jomon P. Jacob, Women's Forum Chairperson Sonia Sujo, and Advisory Board Chairman BinuAgnel, with the collective efforts of the Executive Committee, Women's Forum executives and the extended organising committee.

IAK Vice President ShijuBabu, Secretary Terrence Jose and Joint Treasurer Sojan Joseph coordinated various aspects of the programme in association with the respective committees.

A sumptuous traditional Onam Sadya, arranged under the leadership of IIK Executive Member Biju Jose, added further flavour to the celebrations.

The event featured a variety of cultural performances presented by IAK members, along with a magic show, a payasam competition organised by the Women's Forum, and a specially arranged photo booth, which were among the major attractions of Onaravam 2026.

Bringing together the Idukki community in Kuwait, the celebration showcased the rich cultural heritage and spirit of togetherness of the district. With enthusiastic participation from members and their families, Onaravam 2026 became a memorable celebration of friendship, fraternity and community spirit.

Photos during the event.

Faculty awards, fashion walk highlight ICS Khaitan Teachers' Day event

ICSK Khaitan honours teachers with student-led celebration

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Indian Community School Kuwait-Khaitan celebrated Teachers' Day on Thursday, 3rd September 2026, with enthusiasm, warmth, and gratitude, paying a heartfelt tribute to the teaching fraternity for their unwavering dedication, guidance, and contribution to the lives of students. The celebration was held in honour of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the first Vice-President and second President of India, whose birth anniversary is observed as Teachers' Day in India on 5th September. The programme was organized and executed by the CBSE and IGCSE Senate members, in collaboration with the students of Classes 11 and 12.

As part of a cherished school tradition, the senior students stepped into the roles of student teachers, taking over classroom responsibilities for the day with confidence and dedication. Adding a significant leadership dimension to the occasion, School Senate President Master David Mathew Samuel and Vice President Master Ayman Mohammed took on the roles of Acting Principal and Acting Vice Principal respectively, taking charge of the school's administrative responsibilities. Their leadership and the active participation of the student teachers reflected the school's commitment to nurturing responsibility, initiative, confidence, and leadership among its senior students.

The special assembly commenced with a solemn Islamic Prayer, setting a respectful tone for the celebrations. The student comperes then welcomed the gathering and conducted the programme with energy and confidence. The morning's festivities began with engaging interactive challenges and games, creating an atmosphere of excitement and participation. This was followed by a captivating live band performance and an energetic dance performance by the Class 12 students, which emerged as one of the highlights of the morning. The celebration continued with special surprise segments planned by the Senate to make the teachers feel truly appreciated. The light-hearted "Guess Who? – Teacher Edition" brought moments of laughter as teachers were identified through amusing clues and anecdotes, followed by an elegant Faculty Fashion Walk. The cultural segment continued with impressive fusion dance performances by the Class 11 and IGCSE student groups, showcasing creativity and teamwork.

One of the most heartfelt moments of the celebration was the Teacher Awards, thoughtfully planned by the students to recognize and appreciate their teachers. Through these special awards, the students celebrated the unique qualities of their teachers, making the segment a sincere and joyful expression of their love and gratitude.

Adding further excitement to the occasion, Al Ansari Exchange organized a special lucky draw for the teachers, with six fortunate winners receiving attractive prizes. The celebration was further sweetened by Malabar Gold, which provided a special Teachers' Day cake, adding a delightful touch to the joyous occasion.

The Principal K. Gangadhar Shirsath delivered an inspiring address, appreciating the dedication of the teaching fraternity and commending the senior students for their initiative, leadership, teamwork, and exceptional organizational skills.

He also extended his sincere gratitude to Al Ansari Exchange and Malabar Gold for their generous support and thoughtful contribution towards making the celebration even more special. Their kindness and goodwill added to the joy of the occasion and made the Teachers' Day celebrations truly memorable.

The programme concluded with the Vote of Thanks proposed by the School Senate President Master David Mathew Samuel. The Teachers' Day celebration served as a sincere expression of love, respect, gratitude, and admiration for the teaching fraternity.

Photos during the event.

ARAB TIMES
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2026

'NAZA' awarded special jury prize

Danish drama 'Woman Unknown' wins Golden Lion

VENICE, Sept 13, (AP): "Woman Unknown," a drama about Denmark in the aftermath of the Nazi occupation directed by May el-Toukhy, won the prestigious Golden Lion at the 83rd Venice Film Festival on Saturday.

The Maggie Gyllenhaal -led jury announced the winners, which included a best actor prize for John Malkovich for his performance in the dark CIA comedy "Wild Horse Nine."

Malkovich was not in attendance at the ceremony, but he sent a video message, explaining that he is shooting in Montreal.

"I am humbled to be chosen for this award which has been given to so many wonderful actors," Malkovich said.

El-Toukhy, who was the only woman to have solely directed a film in the main competition this year, is the eighth woman to have won the festival's top prize.

"To me personally, 'Woman Unknown' is about the female body as a battleground," el-Toukhy said. "At the same time the film tells the tale of women who are unseen, invisible and voiceless."

She thanked Gyllenhaal for using her voice to shine a light on unequal opportunities for women in moviemaking.

The film, which does not yet have distribution in North America, is centered on a young nanny and housemaid who is about to marry her wealthy employer in the immediate aftermath of the war. But she harbors a secret past intimate relationship with a German soldier that threatens to upend her reputation. The lead, Mathilde Arcel, won the festival's best actress prize.

Arcel was visibly emotional as she accepted the award, which she placed on the floor as she spoke as she said it was very heavy.

"This is my first lead role in a movie and my first time at a film festival," she said. "I'm extremely honored."

South Korean auteur Lee Changdong's poetic portrait of class and labor, "Possible Love," won the Silver Lion grand jury prize. "Possible Love" is Lee's first film in eight years, following his acclaimed "Burning."

"We are living in an era where the meaning of labor is fading and human connections are increasingly becoming severed," Lee said through a translator. "I made this film to ask what cinema can and should do in times like these. I take this award as a sign that you want me to keep asking these questions."

"NAZA," a harrowing documentary about military strategies employed in the war in Gaza from Israeli filmmakers Yuval Abraham and Rachel Szor, was awarded a special jury prize.

"It's honestly not very easy to stand here, thinking of all the people, the Israeli politicians, the journalists back home who are attacking this film, denying it without even seeing it," Abraham said. "It is really, really especially important to us that Israelis watch this film."

The film was added to the main competition late - at the request of the filmmakers - and debuted late in the schedule as well, but its impact was felt as it received a record-breaking standing ovation, lasting some 25 minutes, after its premiere.

Shot on the rooftops of Tel Aviv at night in extreme secrecy over three years, "NAZA" features testimony from 24 Israeli military insiders including intelligence officers and soldiers give who insight into the war in Gaza and what they say is the systemic killing of Palestinian civilians.

The jury gave the Silver Lion for directing to Ilya Krzhanovsky for his film "Dau," a project about the Soviet physicists who built the atomic bomb that has taken over 20 years to make. Krzhanovsky, who renounced his Russian citizenship in protest of the war in Ukraine, dedicated the prize to Ukrainians, including his mother who was born there.

French director Stéphane Brizé's won the screenplay prize for his corporate drama "A Good Little Soldier." Malou Khebizi was given the Marcello Mastroianni award for emerging actor for her role in Cédric Kahn's "A Place to Heal," which is set in an adolescent psychiatric ward in a public hospital.

The jury this year included "The Voice of Hind Rajab" director Kaouther Ben Hania, English composer Daniel Blumberg, French filmmaker Xavier Giannoli, Afghan filmmaker Shahrbanoo Sadat and Hong Kong filmmaker Johnnie To.

Aside from Malkovich's win, the starrier, Hollywood films playing in competition were shut out of the awards, including "Primetime," "Bunker" and "Ink."

Some look to the Venice Film Festival awards for early indications of who might be in with a shot at Oscar nominations and wins. In recent years, Venice has launched winning best actor campaigns for people like Brendan Fraser and Adrien Brody.

Malkovich has yet to win an Oscar.

Director May el-Toukhy, winner of the Golden Lion for best film for 'Woman Unknown', poses for photographers at the awards photo call during the closing ceremony of the 83rd edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

Mathilde Arcel, winner of the Coppa Volpi for best actress for the film 'Woman Unknown', poses for photographers at the awards photo call during the closing ceremony of the 83rd edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

Ilya Khrzhanovsky, winner of the Silver Lion for best director for the film 'Dau', poses for photographers at the awards photo call during the closing ceremony of the 83rd edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

Directors Rachel Szor, left, and Yuval Abraham, winners of the special jury prize for the film 'Naza', pose for photographers at the awards photo call during the closing ceremony of the 83rd edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

Riccardo Scamarcio, winner of the Orizzonti best actor award for 'Children of the Monkey', poses for photographers at the awards photo call during the closing ceremony of the 83rd edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

Toronto Festival brims with films, buzz and surprises

TORONTO, Sept 13, (AP): The 51st Toronto International Film Festival is underway, with steady parades of premieres running like traffic jams through downtown Toronto. Here are glimpses of what's happening on the ground, and what festivalgoers are talking about.

A year after Curry Barker first premiered "Obsession" at TIFF, the filmmaker and his star, Inde Navarrette, returned for a victory lap.

In the midnight section of last year's festival, "Obsession" first hit audiences, quickly prompting a bidding war. Focus Features landed the $750,000 indie horror film for about $15 million in what would become one of the most lucrative festival acquisitions ever. This year, "Obsession" grossed $512 million worldwide.

"What a difference a year makes!" said Peter Kuplowsky, TIFF Midnight Madness programmer.

Their return was partly strategic. Focus is now gearing up for an awards season campaign for "Obsession," running the film in many categories, including best picture and best actress for 25-year-old Navarrette.

"Everything changed for me. I am now in rooms that I could not even imagine," Navarrette said. "I'm now pitching my own projects and am hopefully able to produce and direct my own stuff. It's been really, really exciting because I love cinema and I love filmmaking and being a part of Midnight Madness last year lit that fire for me."

Barker, 26, and Navarrette spoke in a staged talk at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, not far from the theater where "Obsession" debuted. In the year since, Barker said he has realized that his movie now belongs to audiences.

"It starts to feel like it's not mine anymore," Barker said. "It's not mine anymore."

A running question through film festivals this year has been: Where are the major movie studio movies?

The first pang of unease came when Warner Bros. last September skipped all the fall festivals and instead launched Paul Thomas Anderson's "One Battle After Another" right into theaters - even premiering it while TIFF was going on. You could hardly question a strategy that paid off with a best-picture win at the Oscars.

The major studios generally don't produce the kinds of movies that launch at fall festivals anymore. And for the few adult-driven, non-franchise studio movies that get made, the downside of a festival - unpredictable critic response; an inconvenient release date - has sometimes meant festivals aren't worth the risk. Just ask the producers of "Joker: Folie à Deux," which was immediately slammed at its Venice Film Festival launch in 2024.

"I hope the studios will come back," Cannes Film Festival director Thierry Frémaux said on the eve of a Cannes that lacked any major Hollywood film.

This fall, Warner Bros.' anticipated "Digger," directed by Alejandro G. Iñárritu and starring Tom Cruise, is bypassing festivals. But it's not the only big title to do so. Also missing in action are Sony's "The Social Reckoning," Aaron Sorkin's Facebook follow-up to "The Social Network," and Netflix's "The Further Mis-Adventures of Cliff Booth," from David Fincher and Brad Pitt.

At the same time, the potential attention-grabbing showcase of a festival has rarely had more obvious upside. A small, surprise screening at the Telluride Film Festival of A24's "You Can See Everything," Nathan Fielder and Lance Oppenheim's documentary on Theranos founder Elizabeth Holmes, was enough to make it one of the most buzzed-about movies of the year.

TIFF has traditionally been home to the kind of populist, midbudget movie that Hollywood now seldom produces. To make up for that absence, the festival has increasingly programmed movies up for sale, in the hopes of luring studios to acquire something that pops with Toronto audiences. This year, the festival officially launched a movie market.

Companies like Netflix, Apple, Amazon MGM, Neon, A24 and Mubi tend to be the dominant players at festivals - so it can depend where you're looking and how you define "major studio." On Thursday night, the top brass of Warner Bros. was at TIFF, too. Mike De Luca and Pam Abdy, co-chairs and chief executives of the Warner Bros. Motion Picture Group, attended. They were on hand to trumpet the studio's new specialty label, Clockwork.

Clockwork's first release will be "Ti Amo!" from Sean Baker. Few filmmakers can better attest to the power of film festivals than Baker. Last year, his "Anora" went from Palme d'Or winner at Cannes to best-picture winner at the Academy Awards.

Opening night at TIFF belonged to Siân Heder's "Being Heumann," a true-story drama about the disability rights pioneer Judy Heumann and the 1977 sit-in that sparked the movement leading to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Like Heder's last film, the best picture-winning "CODA," Heder made "Being Heumann" with an ensemble you don't usually see on screen. Actors with disabilities play many of the major roles, including Ruth Madeley, who stars as Heumann.

The film, which Apple will release in November, makes a powerful case not just for a seminal moment in disability rights history but for casts that authentically reflect underrepresented communities.

As the saying goes, the best way to start a film festival is with a taxidermy musical.

One of the first premieres this year was "Stuffed," and it's sure to remain one of the most peculiar, macabre and oddly sweet entries of the festival. Theo Rhys' debut feature, the opener of TIFF's Discovery section, stars Jodie Comer as Araminta, a reclusive taxidermist. Her longheld dream of stuffing a human is answered when a lonely man named Bernie (Harry Melling), who works in a sandwich factory, steps forward to volunteer. Araminta, a little like the inverse of Dr. Frankenstein, promises death but a strange kind of frozen-in-time immortality.

It's a tribute to this quirkily gothic tale and its extraordinary leads that it's also quite a tender romance. "Stuffed" would pair remarkably well with Harry Lighton's not-so-different "Pillion," from earlier this year, also starring Melling as a timid soul looking for obliteration, or love. Melling remains a singular screen presence, and it continues to be fascinating to see what kind of situations he gets himself into.

Mahira Khan is pictured on the red carpet for "Your Mother Your Mother Your Mother" at the Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto, on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

Abubakr Ali is pictured on the red carpet for "Your Mother Your Mother Your Mother" at the Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto, on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

Chris Rock arrives on the red carpet to promote the film "Misty Green" at the Toronto International Film Festival, in Toronto, on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

Chase Infiniti attends The Road to the Golden Globes party during the Toronto International Film Festival on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026, at the Four Seasons Hotel in Toronto. (AP)

Tens of thousands gather to fund Romania's first pediatric psychiatry hospital

Romania sets Guinness record with 3-mile table in Bucharest

People sit at a 5-kilometer (3.1 miles) long "Uniting Table", made from recycled materials, during a Guinness World Record event to raise money for a children's psychiatric facility, outside the communist-era built Palace of Parliament, in Bucharest, Romania, Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

People walk along a 5-kilometer (3.1 miles) long "Uniting Table", made from recycled materials, during a Guinness World Record event to raise money for a children's psychiatric facility, in Bucharest, Romania, Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

BUCHAREST, Romania, Sept 13, (AP): Tens of thousands of people gathered in Romania 's capital Saturday to sit down at a miles-long table to break a Guinness record and raise money for what organizers said will be the country's first pediatric psychiatry hospital.

The 5,055-meter (3.1-mile) "Uniting Table" was sprawled along Unirii Boulevard to Constitution Square in front of Bucharest's massive communist-era Palace of Parliament. The Romania-based organizers Bloom The World Association were awarded a certificate by Guinness World Records for the "longest table made from recycled materials."

The event brought together a reported 20,000 people at the many tables, many of which were decorated with flowers and snacks.

Joanne Brent, a senior adjudicator and official onscreen judge for Guinness World Records, who joined the Bucharest event, said on stage that it proved that the record-breaking achievement had been put to good use.

"Everyone, 20,000 people I am told are here today, have come around one table and a common cause," she said. "I get to see this often, people coming together, record-breaking achievements with real-world impact."

Money raised from the event will go toward a 3,900-square-meter children's psychiatric facility within the Obregia Hospital complex in Bucharest. It is being funded by private donations and sponsorships and will cost an estimated 16.5 million euros, according to the Metropolis Foundation, which is behind the construction project.

"It is a project that started from a real need," the foundation states on its website. "The current section at Obregia Hospital operates in an old, overcrowded space, which no longer meets the medical and emotional needs of children. ... It means the chance to bring closer to reality a hospital that will benefit over 5,700 children facing severe mental illnesses annually."

The foundation says the number of children diagnosed with serious mental disorders, such as depression, behavioral disorders, substance use, autism and ADHD, has "increased alarmingly" in Romania, from 3,839 in 2018 to more than 5,600 in 2024.

The hospital's current pediatric psychiatry clinic has 62 beds, but wards with many beds that lack their own bathrooms, according to the foundation. It also states that the old facility's lack of space can make private discussions with patients and their families challenging.

The new five-level building will host medical offices, occupational therapy and virtual reality rooms, sensory and educational spaces, dedicated relaxation spaces, as well as a section dedicated to treating addiction among adolescents.

"We clearly want as many people as possible to donate (toward) the first psychiatric hospital for children," said Alexa Vilcan of Bloom the World.

The previous Guinness record for the longest table made from recycled materials was also held by Bloom the World, measuring 2,782 meters in Romania's central town of Alba Iulia, and was recorded on the same date last year.

In 2023, Romania had one of the lowest healthcare budgets in the European Union relative to GDP at 5.7%, compared to a bloc average of about 10%, according to the EU's statistics office, Eurostat.

Romania's Minister of Health Alexandru Rogobete has pledged to support the initiative by supplying the "equipment and furniture necessary" to equip the medical facility, construction for which is scheduled to be completed by 2027.

Music

Lambert follows with six

Langley leads '26 Country Music Association Awards with 9 nods

Ella Langley performs during the 61st annual Academy of Country Music Awards in Las Vegas on May 17, 2026. (AP)

NEW YORK, Sept 13, (AP): Ella Langley, riding the wave of her crossover megahit "Choosin' Texas," led Thursday's nominations for the 2026 Country Music Association Awards with nine nods, followed by her mentor Miranda Lambert with six.

Also among top nominees: Kacey Musgraves and Ben West with five nominations each, Cody Johnson, Chris Stapleton and Stephen Wilson Jr. with four nominations each, and Dave Clauss, Luke Combs and Lainey Wilson with three nominations each.

Joining Langley in competing for the night's highest honor - CMA entertainer of the year - will be Johnson, Stapleton, Combs and Wilson, who is aiming for a repeat.

Langley's "Be Her" and "Choosin' Texas" both nabbed nominations for single of the year, along with Taylor Swift's "I Knew It, I Knew You" from the movie "Toy Story 5," Wilson's "Somewhere Over Laredo" and Johnson's "The Fall." Producer-writer Jack Antonoff got his first nomination in the single of the year category as producer of Swift's song.

In February, Langley became the only woman to simultaneously hit No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100, Hot Country Songs and Country Airplay charts, all thanks to "Choosin' Texas," co-written with Lambert. Langley also won all seven of her nominations at the 2026 ACM Awards.

Nominated for album of the year are Langley's "Dandelion," Zach Top's "Ain't In It For My Health," Musgraves' "Middle of Nowhere," Parker McCollum's self-titled album and Combs' "The Way I Am." Song of the year nominees are "Be Her," "Beautiful Things," "Choosin' Texas," "Dry Spell" and "Gary."

Lambert, whose 14 CMA awards are more than any other woman, co-produced Langley's "Dandelion" album and co-wrote "Choosin' Texas."

Lambert said Thursday in an interview that although she has earned a haul of CMAs over the years, this year is special because of the work she did on "Dandelion."

"This time's a little different because I get to be nominated as a producer, which has never happened before. So I'm really excited about that," she said.

Last year, Wilson, who hosted and performed at the CMAs, took home the entertainer of the year award, as well as album of the year. Male vocalist of the year went to Johnson, and Brooks & Dunn won vocal duo of the year. Wilson will return as host this year.

The vocal group of the year category this year includes Lady A, Little Big Town, Midland, Old Dominion and The Red Clay Strays. New artist of the year candidates are Avery Anna, Carter Faith, Emily Ann Roberts, Tucker Wetmore and Wilson.

Female vocalist of the year nominations pit Lambert and Langley against Megan Moroney, Musgraves and Wilson. (Lambert has now passed Reba McEntire with the most female vocalist of the year nominations all-time with 19.) The male counterpart has Combs, Johnson, Stapleton, Top and Wilson.

The prizes are nominated and voted on by more than 7,000 members of the Country Music Association, which includes music executives, artists, publicists, songwriters and other industry professionals. The 60th annual CMA Awards will be broadcast live from Nashville's Bridgestone Arena on Nov. 18 on ABC and Disney+, and the next day on Hulu.

Recording Academy leaders cite key milestones

Kenya's Grammy hub bid gets major boost

In this photo taken with a smartphone, The Latin America Recording Academy CEO Manuel Abud, The Recording Academy President Panos A. Panay, and Carla Benini, the acting deputy chief of mission for the U.S. Embassy, participate in a panel discussion on Kenya's creative economy Friday, Sept. 11, 2026, in Nairobi, Kenya. (AP)

NAIROBI, Kenya, Sept 13, (AP): Kenya's quest to host an Africa Recording Academy headquarters got a boost Friday when Recording Academy officials said key milestones had been completed, and Kenyan artists will travel to the U.S. next month to get acquainted with the international music business.

Academy President Panos A. Panay, speaking after a meeting with Kenyan President William Ruto on Wednesday, said Africa's place in the global music industry was a project that cannot be measured by a single launch date, but by the work being put into building a foundation. The California-based Recording Academy is the organization that presents the Grammy Awards.

The academy now wants to expand its presence in Africa by establishing an Africa Recording Academy headquarters, which Kenya is bidding to host alongside Nigeria and South Africa. The Kenyan government has invested $3.9 million toward hosting the hub.

At a panel discussion Friday with various creative economy actors, Panay said the introduction of the best African music performance category in the Grammys and the establishment of the American Music Mentorship Program in partnership with the U.S. State Department, is part of the milestones achieved in the African music industry.

Panay said expanding the global reach of African music was a process like that of gardening where all the necessary conditions have to be in place before the final harvest.

"For things to happen, you need conditions, you need persistence. You need pruning," he said.

Panay said plans were underway to enroll more African members in the Recording Academy, noting that Grammy Award winners are chosen through a peer-voting process rather than by a jury.

The Recording Academy has been working to expand and diversify its voting body by reaching out to underrepresented communities. Since 2019, the Academy has reported significant growth among voters from different racial backgrounds, including a 100% increase in Asian American and Pacific Islander voters, a 90% increase in Black voters and a 43% increase in Latino voters.

At the 2026 Grammy Awards, Bad Bunny won album of the year, making history as the first time a Spanish-language album has taken home the top prize.

Four years ago, the Grammys introduced the Best African Music Performance category and later formed an American Music Mentorship Program in partnership with the U.S. State Department.

Ruto, speaking Wednesday during a business summit, said the investment in the African hub to be hosted by Kenya was aimed at transforming Kenya's creative economy into a viable source of income for artists.

In this photo taken with a smartphone, The Recording Academy President Panos A. Panay, right, poses with Kenyan content creator Andrew 'Dru' Thiga on Friday, Sept. 11, 2026, in Nairobi, Kenya. (AP)

"It is about attracting studios, labels, platforms and investors, and making Kenya a permanent center of African creative production," he said.

The center will provide more opportunities on the international stage for African artists.

Manuel Abud, CEO of the Latin Recording Academy, said Africa's push to establish a stronger presence within the Grammys should be viewed as a long-term project.

He compared it to the development of the Latin Recording Academy, saying it also took years to build the structures and networks needed to establish a strong presence in the global music industry.

Maritime groups urge their rescue

Two historic schooners sink near NYC's Gowanus Canal

The Victory Chimes passes the Rockland Breakwater Lighthouse during the Maine Windjammer Parade, July 17, 2009, in Rockland, Maine. (AP)

Debris of the Victory Chimes and the Pilot floats next to abandoned Red Hook Grain Terminal in the Henry Street Basin, Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2026, in the Brooklyn borough of New York. (AP)

NEW YORK, Sept 13, (AP): For more than a century, the Pilot and the Victory Chimes - two historic schooners with towering sails - have between them served the country in wartime, hosted the likes of Jacques Cousteau and graced the Maine state quarter.

But an inlet just off New York City's famously polluted Gowanus Canal could be their final port of call.

The boats - now owned by a company that turns historic vessels into floating bars and restaurants - sank there in early July while docked on the Brooklyn waterfront.

Now many in the maritime community are calling on the company to do what it can to save them - and to account for how they sank in the first place.

The 121-foot (37-meter) Pilot, which is a little more than a century old, and the 128-foot (39-meter) Victory Chimes, which dates to 1900 and is the ship that graces the 2003 Maine quarter, are owned by New York City-based company Crew. Both schooners sank around the time of strong squalls, though the exact cause of the sinkings has not been fully determined.

Crew is working with insurers, marine salvage experts and marine surveyors to determine what to do about the sunken boats, said Alex Pincus, the company's CEO.

"Raising wooden vessels of this size is a highly complex operation that requires specialized equipment, careful planning and extensive coordination," Pincus said. "The vessels remain submerged as part of that ongoing process while assessments and planning continue."

Many in the maritime community are calling on the company to do what it can to save the ships and to account for why they sank. Brad Vogel, a member of a canoe club called the Gowanus Dredgers, whose members paddle near the site, called the potential loss of the ships "a shame" and "in some ways unforgivable."

"People in Maine, people in New York City, do want answers, and want to know what's going on. And it's not at all certain that there is a commitment to raising the vessels," he said.

The Victory Chimes is on the National Register of Historic Places and is the last surviving Chesapeake ram, a kind of flat-bottomed schooner designed to navigate narrow and shallow waterways. Crew acquired it at auction about three years ago.

The loss of the ship is "heartbreaking for Maine and the nation's maritime heritage" because it's the last schooner of its type, said Steve Bromage, executive director of the Maine Historical Society.

Want to lower your risk of dementia? It doesn't involve a blood test

WASHINGTON, Sept 13, (AP): New blood tests that might predict Alzheimer's years before symptoms begin may sound tantalizing for people who worry about later-in-life dementia. But doctors say they aren't quite ready yet - and besides, you don't need a test before trying to lower your risk.

The US Food and Drug Administration has cleared four blood tests to help doctors diagnose whether Alzheimer's - not another kind of dementia or something else - is behind someone's memory problems or other cognitive symptoms. Some laboratories and online services offer their own tests. Faster diagnosis can help people with early-stage Alzheimer's qualify for drugs that can modestly slow the worsening of their symptoms.

Yet dementia specialists say people without symptoms also seek those tests even though they're neither approved nor recommended for that population.

For now, "the worried well should not be getting those tests" outside of a research study, stressed testing expert Nicholas Ashton, of Arizona's Banner Health.

Instead, focus on addressing potentially preventable brain risks. One large study found people who reached middle age without high blood pressure, diabetes and smoking lived dementia-free for a lot longer - nearly 13 years longer - than people with all three of those common health problems in their 50s.

"Be aggressive," advised Dr. Josef Coresh of NYU Langone Health, the study's senior author. Even delaying those risky conditions "has a huge payoff."

Like many people who have watched a loved one succumb to Alzheimer's, Mark Yost wonders about his own risk even though he doesn't have symptoms.

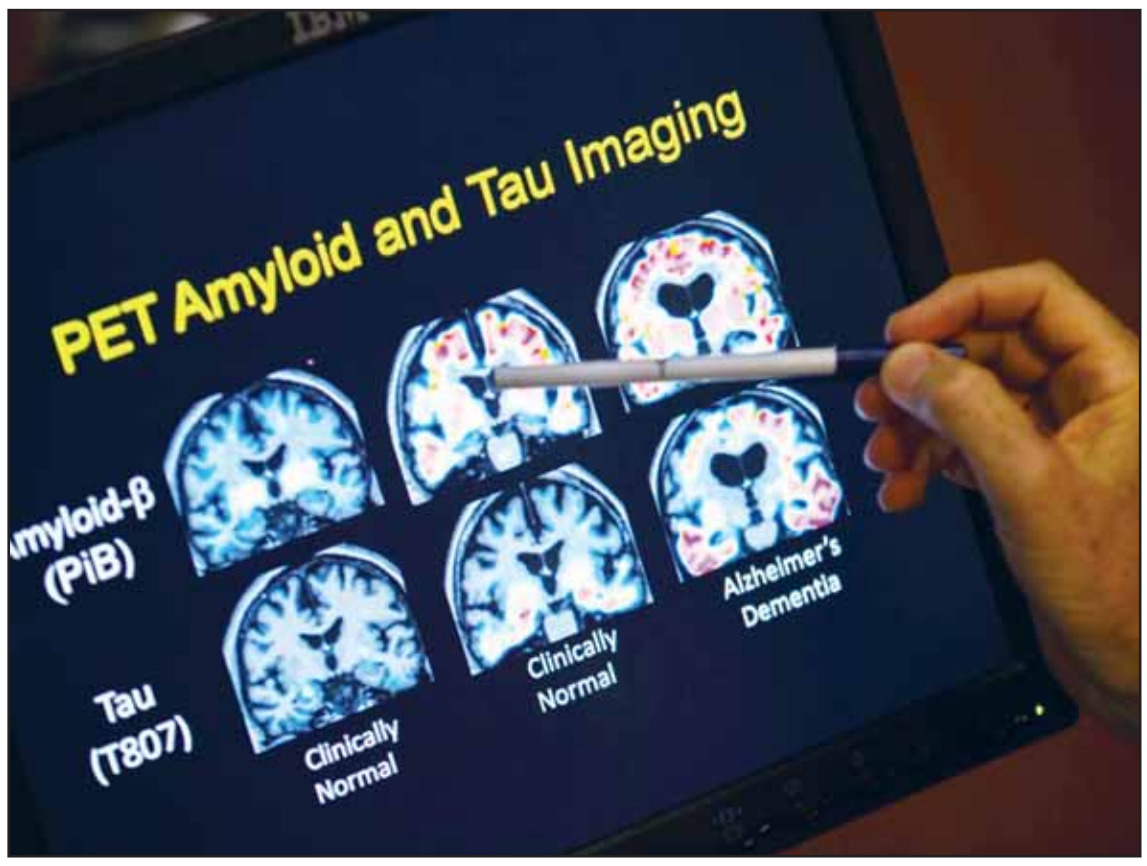
"I want to know what my status is," said Yost, 60, of Phoenix. And if signs of trouble develop, "what I can do about it to either avoid it or slow it down."

It's not clear what causes Alzheimer's, but its telltale markers are abnormal forms of two proteins. Sticky beta-amyloid can build into brain-clogging plaque over decades, eventually spurring neuron-killing tau tangles that lead to symptoms. Blood tests that measure a tau type called p-tau217 seem particularly good at reflecting amyloid buildup in people with symptoms.

As for the symptom-free, a study led by Mass General Brigham researchers found older adults with very high p-tau217 levels had a 38% risk of developing cognitive impairment within five years, and a higher risk over 10 years.

Here's the rub: A "positive" test result is just a risk factor, not a guarantee someone will later develop Alzheimer's, Ashton cautioned. Lots of older adults harbor high levels of amyloid but never show cognitive trouble. And while negative test results seem pretty reliable, a positive test sometimes is wrong, a so-called false positive.

Yost volunteered for a Banner blood test study that included cognitively normal people and learned his result was "intermediate," defined as maybe having some amyloid but not a worrisome "elevated" level.



A doctor points to PET scan results that are part of a study on Alzheimer's disease at Georgetown University Hospital, on May 19, 2015, in Washington. (AP)

'World's oceans have been record hot for 100 days'

Where have all Atlantic hurricanes gone? El Nino might bring record slow storm season

WASHINGTON, Sept 13, (AP): The Atlantic is quiet - record quiet - this hurricane season thanks to an enormous El Nino that crushes storms before they get going.

No Atlantic hurricanes have formed yet this year and none are likely to form for at least another week, even though this would normally be the peak of the season, according to the National Hurricane Center. Only five relatively weak and brief tropical storms have spun up this season.

On Saturday, 2026 set a record for the longest a season has begun without a storm that has reached winds of 74 mph (119 kph) to qualify as a hurricane - at least in the satellite era, said Nick Novella, a meteorologist at the government's Weather Prediction Center. Before the 1950s there were a few years where no hurricanes were recorded this late in the season, but meteorologists don't trust those records because ocean monitoring wasn't complete.

Overall hurricane activity using a measurement that factors in the number of storms, their strength and how long they last is also at a post-1950 record low, according to Colorado State University hurricane expert Phil Klotzbach. Storm activity in the Atlantic is only 7% of normal for this time of year.

People shouldn't let down their guard because it just takes one storm, even during an El Nino, to be catastrophic. Several experts pointed to 1992, which kicked off late but nastily with devastating Hurricane Andrew.

"It's really staggering, just how inhospitable the Atlantic is to anything that could form a tropical cyclone right now," said Kristen Corbosiero, a University at Albany atmospheric science professor. "Anything that tries to form is just getting this triple whammy" of winds that decapitate a storm, dry air that starves it and downward pushing winds that basically stomp it.

Those three forces are classic impacts of El Nino, the natural and temporary warming of parts of the equatorial Pacific that warps and warms weather worldwide, five experts told The Associated Press.

"It's just hammering the Atlantic. It's just impressive," Klotzbach said. "We haven't even had anything really even close to a hurricane."

The biggest El Nino effect in the Atlantic is record-strong wind shear, which is when strong easterly winds hit a storm system at low levels while strong westerly winds push it the other way at upper altitudes. The result is that they "tear apart" the storm, Corbosiero said.

Waves roll in from the Gulf of Mexico toward lots where only empty foundations and debris remain after homes were swept away in Hurricane Milton on Manasota Key in Englewood, Fla. on Oct. 13, 2024. (AP)

In the area between Africa and the Caribbean where the strongest storms normally form and head west, that wind shear is about 45 mph (74 kph) more than what a tropical cyclone can withstand, Corbosiero said. That's an unheard of level, she said.

"Their heads are cut off before they even have a chance," said University of Miami hurricane expert Brian McNoldy.

The one area where wind shear hasn't been high has been the Gulf of Mexico and those storms tend to really get going later in the season, so there could still be some strong ones coming to that region, Corbosiero and others warned.

Along with the dry air that starves the storm, African dust is choking it and there are fewer "seeds" of stormy weather that could develop, all classic El Nino signs, the experts said. And in the Atlantic, high pressure is pushing the air downward, which also hinders storms from forming, they said.

This is all despite warm waters - the world's oceans have been record hot for 100 days - that normally feed storms. It shows the power of El Nino to overcome that, Klotzbach said.

The trouble is the Atlantic waters, while warm, haven't warmed up nearly as quickly as the atmosphere above, which got hotter quickly as part of El Nino, said Massachusetts Institute of Technology meteorology professor Kerry Emanuel. His research found what matters more than just the water temperature is the difference in temperature between the air and the water; because hurricanes are powered by the flow of heat from the ocean to the air, the higher that is, the less storm activity there will be.

The waters of the Atlantic are a few months behind the atmosphere in feeling the El Nino effect. But next year, as the El Nino winds down and cools closer to normal, the warm water will persist, which will increase the odds for next season to be extra busy, Emanuel said.

Just as El Nino traditionally dampens Atlantic hurricane season, it tends to rev up tropical cyclone activity in the Pacific, with moist air and little wind shear. And so far this year, storm activity in the eastern Pacific is nearly double normal, with hurricanes lasting much longer than usual. In the central Pacific, activity is about 40% more than normal.

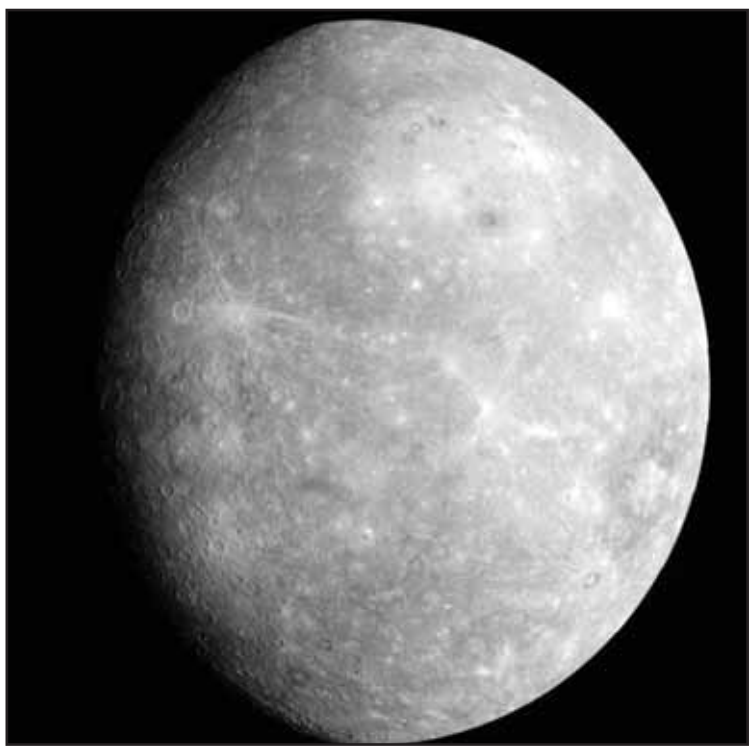
"It's just a party out there, one right after the other in the eastern Pacific," Klotzbach said.

While the Atlantic has had only five small tropical storms, there have been 16 named storms in the eastern Pacific and 20 in the central Pacific.

Hawaii has been hit twice. El Nino tends to push storms farther west than other years, Corbosiero said.

Because scientists have long known about El Nino's effects on storm activity in both oceans, forecasters months ago predicted a slow Atlantic hurricane season.

"I don't think anyone really foresaw it being this quiet," McNoldy said. "This is quite remarkable."



This composite image provided by NASA/Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory/Carnegie Institution of Washington on Oct. 22, 2013, shows Mercury as it appeared to the Messenger spacecraft following a flyby of the planet. (AP)

Little Mercury may be shrinking faster than scientists expected

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., Sept 13, (AP): A new study shows that little, wrinkly Mercury may be shrinking faster than expected, the cosmos' version of a grape shriveling into a raisin under the sun.

Scientists from the German Aerospace Center's Institute of Space Research reported that Mercury's shrinkage may be 30% greater than previously believed - a loss in diameter of as much as 14 miles (23 kilometers). That's significant for a planet barely 3,000 miles (4,900 kilometers) across.

Mercury's rough surface, continually reshaped by debris hurled from impact craters, may have hidden the true extent of the loss, according to the researchers whose findings appear in the journal Geophysical Research Letters.

The news comes one week after a pair of European and Japanese spacecraft shed its cruising platform and advanced toward Mercury. Known as BepiColombo, the linked craft are expected to enter orbit around Mercury in November before splitting up for a fuller survey.

BepiColombo's laser instrument should confirm how much Mercury is withering as a result of internal cooling, said Gaku Nishiyama, the study's lead author who is taking part in the space mission.

The shrinkage could be even more than his team is estimating based on measurements from NASA's Messenger spacecraft in the 2010s. Only one other spacecraft has ever visited Mercury, NASA's Mariner 10 in the 1970s.

Our solar system's smallest and innermost planet has been shrinking ever since its formation 4.5 billion years ago. Its hot iron core - oversized for such a small world - cools and contracts along with the mantle and crust, tightening the surface like a girdle to fit its new slimmer self.

Nishiyama and his team compared maps showing faults and other geologic signs of contraction at Mercury with newer maps highlighting surface roughness. They discovered that the roughest patches exhibited fewer shrinkage wrinkles. The missing wrinkles could be buried under impact debris, they said.

After accounting for these obscured regions, the researchers provided a fresh take on Mercury's shrinkage that could shed light on other contracting worlds, said Nishiyama, who is affiliated with Hokkaido University in Japan.

Online mental healthcare here to stay: How to navigate your options and find right clinician

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

❑ ❑ ❑

By Shari Harding

UMass Chan Medical School

As a mental health nurse practitioner who sees patients both in person and via telehealth, I'm often struck by just how many of my patients would not have received any mental health treatment before the COVID-19 pandemic: the stay-at-home mother without any childcare; the college student on a rural campus, many miles away from home or a clinic; the middle-aged man who is finally ready for help - but not ready to be seen by a neighbor in the waiting room.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, access to remote mental healthcare sprouted up almost overnight. In 2020, Medicare, a federal health insurance program for seniors and people with disabilities, began covering online mental health, and most state Medicaid programs and private insurers soon followed.

Fewer than 2% of people getting mental health treatment received such care online in 2019 - but now about half receive at least some of their mental healthcare this way.

Undoubtedly, this shift has brought many benefits. Online mental health visits literally meet you where you are - whether in the comfort of your home, a parked car or a quiet space on your break at work. Virtual care offers convenience, ease and privacy.

But with so many choices, it can be hard to decide how to start accessing mental healthcare online. Many patients get stuck trying to find clinicians who can treat their concerns and fit their schedule and budget. But finding an online clinician who fits your needs doesn't have to be overwhelming.

Whether you are seeking care online or in person, it helps to define what's troubling you and what you'd like to change. One approach is to write down the symptoms, such as emotions or behaviors, you are experiencing. For example, many people seek treatment for anxiety or mood changes, especially if these feelings are interfering with their daily life.

You should be able to find online practices for any type of clinician you'd see in person, such as psychologists, psychiatric nurse practitioners or clinical nurse specialists, psychiatrists, social workers or other licensed counselors.

Consider whether you would prefer engaging in talk therapy, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, exploring the use of medication, or both. This will help point you to the type of clinician who could best help you.

But don't worry too much if you're not sure. Any clinician you see will be able to evaluate your concerns and help direct you to the best treatment plan. For example, a therapist who does not prescribe medication will still be able to let you know whether you should consider medication and point you to an advanced practice nurse or psychiatrist who can prescribe it.

Clinicians typically list the types of problems they treat and whether they offer therapy, medication or both. They may also have a profile - either through their practice or on a site such as Psychology Today's provider listing - outlining their background, treatment style and their license and qualifications.

Services such as life coaching are different from therapy but are also often found online. Life coaches are not licensed or regulated in the same way as mental health clinicians. If you are seeking formal mental health treatment, you should ensure you are seeing a licensed clinician.

If you plan to use insurance, confirm that the clinician you chose accepts your specific insurance plan. Before your first appointment, make sure to clarify any policies related to copays, missed visits and communication between visits, including what to do if you have an urgent or after-hours concern.

If the clinician doesn't seem to have clear policies, you may find yourself with surprise bills or a lapse in treatment when you need it most.

Talking to a clinician through a screen about things that are often kept highly private can take a little getting used to. Don't worry if it takes a few meetings to get comfortable with it.

Ensuring that you have a private and comfortable space for your visit can help. These health appointments should be as secure and private as in-person visits. You and the clinician should both be in quiet and private areas, away from other people.

Your appointment is your time to focus on you - a good mental health clinician will not appear distracted or have a lot of outside interruptions. You should be able to see and hear each other clearly. If they seem disorganized, or you do not feel they understand and are attentive to your concerns, that is a red flag.

The clinician will ask a lot of questions about you, the history of your symptoms and your current concerns. After the first meeting or two, they should share their diagnosis and treatment plan. They should be able to explain how those recommended treatments work, any potential risks and how you both will decide whether things are improving.

As online mental healthcare has become more available, more people are seeking care. That is a good thing, but it's important to remember that mental healthcare should provide a specific treatment for a specific problem. You and the practitioner you work with can't know whether you have addressed it if you haven't first defined it.

If you have any concerns, ask questions and don't be afraid to speak up. Questions about privacy, a clear diagnosis, understanding your treatment options - whatever it is, if the clinician cannot address your concerns, they are likely not a great fit for you.

Regulations for online mental health services have changed a lot in the past several years, and they are still in flux. Many Medicare plans have committed to covering remote mental healthcare through December 2027, but what happens after that is an open question.

The same pandemic-era regulations that expanded access to telehealth in 2020 also permitted mental health practitioners to prescribe controlled substances - medicines with higher potential for abuse or misuse, including benzodiazepines such as or stimulants such as Adderall - via online care, without an in-person exam. These rules are set to expire in December 2026, though some states already have additional laws, such as requiring an in-person visit before or during treatment.

If you take controlled substances prescribed by a clinician you see remotely, ask how they will manage potential changes in laws or regulations that affect your access to them. This might involve switching to in-person visits, transitioning to a clinician who can continue prescribing them or changing your treatment plan.

No matter what kind of mental health treatment you receive, it is essential to work as a team with your primary care team and other clinicians. As a start, inform your primary care and your online mental healthcare clinicians about everyone who is treating you and their contact information. You may have to sign a release so that they can share information to coordinate your care.

This coordination is important because many mental and physical health conditions have overlapping symptoms. Additionally, if you take any medications to treat mental health conditions, your primary care clinician or other clinicians may be best positioned to manage any possible side effects. You may need certain lab tests or other assessments, such as vital signs or a physical exam, to safely use those medications.

Online mental health treatment can be just as effective as traditional in-person visits. In my experience, communication and teamwork are the keys to making it work. (AP)

South Africa seals series win over New Zealand

Van den Berg named Player of the Match

BALTIMORE, Sept 13, (AP): With a rapid double blow at the start of the second half and powerful finish, South Africa overran New Zealand 43-28 Saturday in the fourth and final test between rugby's Greatest Rivals.

Only three points separated the teams at halftime but tries to Malcolm Marx and Pieter-Steph du Toit in the 49th and 53rd minutes gave the Springboks a critical 15-point margin.

The All Blacks counterpunched with a try to Ethan Blackadder before Kurt Lee Arendse arrested New Zealand's momentum and went more than 50 meters for the try that settled the match and series.

As in the last three tests, South Africa had just too much for New Zealand: too much field position, too much time in the 22, too much edge at set pieces and in the air, and too much ferocity in defense. In front of almost 70,000 fans at the home of the Baltimore Ravens, South Africa had too much.

Cameron Hanekom's try in the 78th minute made the margin greater on the scoreboard than it was on the field, though the All Blacks had the final word with a try in the last minute to Beauden Barrett.

Springboks captain Siya Kolisi defined the margin between the teams.

"We've got coach Rassie (Erasmus)," he said. "He knows us and gets us up. When he speaks to us he reminds us where we come from.

"The players who are in the group but not playing today, we do it for them, the guys who are injured and also for the people of South Africa who would love to have the opportunities we have."

South African players celebrate after defeating the All Blacks in their rugby international in Baltimore, USA, Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

The Springboks delivered the coup de grace after four weeks of gripping hostilities Saturday, winning the series 3-1 in a manner that will reverberate through international rugby in the 12 months before the next World Cup. They are world champions and will not easily surrender that title.

The All Blacks started poorly, conceding two penalties in the first four minutes, the second stroked between the posts by Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu. New Zealand also turned over its first possession in South Africa's 22.

But when the passes stuck in the eighth minute, New Zealand again found space on the edges of the South African defense. Quick hands found Damian McKenzie on the left wing. He stepped infield past Damian Willemse and Malcolm Marx before finding captain Codie Taylor, who barrelled over for the try.

South Africa then exposed the All Blacks' weakness against quick-phase ball and strong carries inside their 22. The Springboks took the ball to the line, scrumhalf Morne van den Berg went close and Damian de Allende dashed through a hole left by a defensive misread.

Van den Berg was Player of the Match and a constant threat.

Just as the game was heating up, a long delay caused by communications issues among the referee brought the action to a halt.

Communications restored, South Africa had a chance to bring its formidable lineout drive to bear. When the All Blacks halted the maul, van den Berg darted around the fringe and found the defense absent again for the Springboks' second try.

In a highlight of the match, the All Blacks battered the Springboks defense close to the line and found it impenetrable through 32 phases until quick hands from Richie Mo'unga and Jordie Barrett put Will Jordan over. The teams went to halftime with South Africa leading 17-14.

Two dangerous incursions gave the Springboks field position and, after both teams went to their benches, the All Blacks conceded a scrum penalty. South Africa opted for the lineout drive and, on the second push, the backs joined in to force Marx over the line.

The second try came almost immediately and broke the game open. A knock-on gave South Africa a scrum, from which van den Berg went short side and found Feinberg-Mngomezulu at pace. With the All Blacks retreating, Andre Esterhuizen carried into the 22 before South Africa patiently worked the ball to du Toit, who finished the move.

By the time the All Blacks left the field at the end of the last of four majestic tests in the " Greatest Rivalry " series, the optimism that had been present at the tour's outset six weeks before had drained away.

In its place was a weariness and a steel that might reappear, tempered by another year's experience, when the World Cup comes around.

After winning the first test, the All Blacks kept close in tests two and three, but close wasn't good enough against the world champion in its own backyard.

By the start of the final test, the All Blacks were battered, while the Springboks mostly were unscathed. The All Blacks had lost their captain Ardie Savea and a number of notable others to injuries, forcing changes to their pack and backline.

Mo'unga, who hadn't played a test since the 2023 World Cup final in which South Africa edged New Zealand by a point, had been installed at flyhalf in place of the younger Ruben Love.

They still fought hard in the final test but South Africa had too much.

Opetaia stuns Mikaelian

Garcia stops Benn to retain WBC title

LAS VEGAS, Sept 13, (AP): After taking 10 years to win his first world championship, Ryan Garcia needed only 4:25 to finish off Conor Benn in the first defense of his WBC welterweight title.

"I kind of figured he would just come at me crazy," Garcia said, explaining what he expected of his challenger. "Second round, I said I'm tired of him coming forward; I'm gonna stand my ground a little bit ... and then he got caught with a hellacious one."

Garcia's sharp right hand to the jaw put Benn on the canvas early in the second round. Moments later, with the Englishman on the ropes, Garcia (26-2, 21 KOs) served a flurry of punches that prompted referee Thomas Taylor to step in and end the contest at the 1:25 mark and send the announced sold-out crowd of 18,855 into a frenzy.

"He's exactly what I thought he was; he went in and tried to fight me. I think he needs to be a little bit more patient," Garcia added. "I don't think he has enough experience. I think he will be back. I have a new level of respect for him."

Garcia closed -300 at BetMGM, meaning bettors would have had to lay $300 to win $100.

Ryan Garcia, left, punches Conor Benn in their welterweight championship fight in Las Vegas. (AP)

The bout was more than another high-profile main event, as it marked a career-defining crossroads for both fighters.

For Garcia, he solidified himself in the 147-pound weight class as a durable, legitimate titleholder rather than a gifted attraction whose career has often been defined by controversy, inconsistency and unrealized potential.

The convincing victory positioned Garcia for a lucrative welterweight fight against the division's other leading names, including Teofimo Lopez, who was ringside, or another major showdown with Devin Haney, who was also in attendance.

For the 29-year-old Benn (25-2), it's likely back to the middleweight division after failing in his first world-title opportunity and a chance to escape the considerable shadow of his father, former two-division champion Nigel Benn.

Benn was transported to a hospital after the fight for observation.

In the co-main event, Jai Opetaia (31-0, 24 KOs) patiently weathered several cagey rounds before stopping Noel Mikaelian in the ninth round of their scheduled 12-round lineal cruiserweight championship fight.

Opetaia stunned Mikaelian (28-4) with a multi-punch combination and two crushing hooks, then sent him backward into the ropes with a powerful right hand. Referee Harvey Dock administered a standing eight-count before determining Mikaelian could not continue, ending the competitive fight by TKO at 1:30.

Da'Mazion Vanhouter (13-0, 10 KOs) wasted no time in his scheduled 8-round heavyweight bout, delivering a crushing right hand at the 1:58 mark of the first round for a knockout of Raphael Akpejiori (19-4).

In the 10-round lightweight bout that opened the main card, Andres Cortes (26-0) retained his belt with a unanimous decision over Mark Magsayo (29-3), with all three judges scoring the fight 97-93.

Dedication fuels Al-Khorafi's success

Kuwait Equestrian League set for Nov 6 start, says Al-Kazemi

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Kuwait Equestrian Federation Vice President and international rider Shaker Jamal Al-Kazemi said preparations are complete for the 2026-27 season, which will feature a packed program of local and international competitions.

Al-Kazemi said the sixth edition of the domestic league will get underway on November 6, with the fifth and final round scheduled for April 16 next year.

The season's first international competition is set for November 19-21, with international events continuing through February and attracting riders from Kuwait and several other countries.

The first local competition will be held on October 2 as part of preparations for the domestic league.

Meanwhile, international rider Ali Jassem Al-Khorafi achieved a historic milestone last season by winning the domestic league title for the fifth consecutive year. His remarkable achievement was a testament to his efforts, as well as the work of the Kuwait Equestrian Club management and the support of those who helped him reach and remain at the top.

Shaker Jamal Al-Kazemi, Vice President of the Kuwait Equestrian Federation and international rider.

Role focused on developing athletes

Abdullah Shaaban named deputy head of Islamic Solidarity Athletes Committee

TAIF, Saudi Arabia, Sept 13: Kuwait Olympic Committee Board Member and Athletes Committee Chairman Abdullah Shaaban has been elected Deputy Chairman of the Athletes Committee of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation for the 2026-29 term.

The election took place during the 15th General Assembly of the federation in Taif, Saudi Arabia.

Shaaban's election strengthens Kuwait's representation within the federation and reflects the growing confidence in Kuwaiti sports expertise at the regional and Islamic levels.

In his new role, Shaaban will contribute to initiatives aimed at developing athletes' programs, enhancing their involvement in sports decision-making and conveying their views and needs to help improve the sporting system across member countries.

The new term is expected to feature several programs focused on developing sport and strengthening cooperation among member states. Shaaban's presence on the Athletes Committee further enhances Kuwait's representation at regional, international and Islamic sporting forums.

Abdullah Shaaban, Board Member of the Kuwait Olympic Committee and Chairman of the Athletes Committee.

Turki Al-Sheikh tops boxing's most influential figures list

RIYADH, Sept 13: Turki Al-Sheikh, Chairman of the General Entertainment Authority and President of the Saudi Boxing Federation, has topped Boxing News magazine's 2026 list of the 50 most influential figures in boxing for the third consecutive year.

The recognition highlights Al-Sheikh's growing impact on the global boxing scene, particularly his role in staging major bouts, bringing the sport's biggest stars together and forging partnerships with leading promoters and boxing organizations.

His involvement has also helped cement Riyadh's status as a major destination for international boxing, attracting high-profile fights, leading fighters and fans from around the world, while boosting Riyadh Season's profile on the global sports stage.

Founded in Britain in 1909, Boxing News is one of the world's oldest specialist boxing magazines. Its annual BN50 ranks the figures considered to have the greatest influence on the sport

Turki Al-Sheikh, Chairman of the General Entertainment Authority and President of the Saudi Boxing Federation.

Messi scores 19th MLS goal as Inter Miami draws with Nashville

MIAMI, Sept 13, (AP): Lionel Messi scored his MLS-leading 19th goal of the season as Inter Miami played first-place Nashville to a 2-2 tie on Saturday night.

Messi appeared to have Miami on its way to its first win over Nashville this season when he scored with a left-footed shot to make it 2-1 in the 62nd. Nashville's Sam Surridge equalized with his second goal of the night just a minute into stoppage time to keep his club unbeaten in four meetings with Miami this season.

The draw also kept Nashville nine points ahead of second-place Miami in the Eastern Conference standings.

Nashville struck just four minutes into the match when Surridge finished Andy Najar's pass for his 14th goal of the season.

The score was evened in the 19th when Nashville defender Reed Baker-Whiting scored an own goal on a corner kick.

Messi had a shot blocked from outside the box in the 27th minute and sent a free kick wide shortly afterward before breaking through in the second half.

Antoine Griezmann scored for the eighth time in 10 matches, and rookie Harvey Sarajian notched his first goal and assist to spark Orlando City to a 3-0 victory over Toronto FC on Saturday night.

Maxime Crépeau finished with two saves in each half for Orlando City (10-11-4), which has won three in a row while extending its unbeaten streak to six. It was his fourth shutout in 24 starts this season.

Orlando City took a 1-0 lead into the second half when Griezmann scored in the first minute of stoppage time with assists from 20-year-old rookie defender Zakaria Taifi and Marco Pašalić. Taifi has three assists and Pašalić two.

Orlando City added an insurance goal in the 82nd minute when rookie forward Sarajian took a pass from Daryl Dike and scored in his seventh appearance - all as a substitute. Sarajian subbed in to the match two minutes prior to scoring. Dike picked up his second assist in six appearances after entering in the 65th minute.

James Rodríguez heads home after brief MLS stint, signing with Atlético Nacional

WANTED – LOGISTICS & ACCOUNTS PROFESSIONAL

Experienced individual required to manage logistics operations with a strong accounting background. Must be organized, responsible and capable of working independently

Interested candidates may contact +965 9008 4153

Email : tryskuwait@gmail.com

First Olympic flame arrives in Dakar ahead of Youth Oly Games

DAKAR, Senegal, Sept 13, (AP): The Olympic flame was welcomed by music and dancing in Senegal's capital, as a march by 100 women marked the countdown to the first Olympic sporting event held in Africa - the Youth Olympic Games.

More than a hundred people gathered at Dakar's Place du Souvenir Africain, a waterfront plaza overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, surrounded by portraits of prominent figures from Africa and its diaspora, to greet the flame ahead of the Youth Olympic Games next month.

The event, running from Oct. 31 to Nov. 13, will bring together about 2,700 young athletes to compete in 35 sports across Dakar and the nearby cities of Diamniadio and Saly.

The Youth Olympics, first held in Singapore in 2010, are a smaller version of the Olympic Games for athletes aged 15 to 18.

The flame was carried on Saturday by 100 Senegalese women, known as "lingeer" - a title for queens or royal women in Wolof, one of the main languages of Senegal. They included influential actors from the cultural, sports and economic sectors.

Dressed in flowing orange and golden traditional dresses with yellow headwraps, they carried the flame to the plaza in a procession celebrating Senegalese women and the passing of values between generations.

Gacirah Diagne, one of the lingeer, said the Games will inspire young people across Africa, the continent with the world's youngest population.

"Senegal is only the gateway to showcase a continent that is moving forward and looking to the future," she said. "It is only natural that we support its youth."

Senegalese basketball legend Mame Maty Mbengue lit the Olympic cauldron at the ceremony.

Kuwait ready for Asian Games challenge: Saiwan

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

NAGOYA, Sept 13: The Kuwait national handball team is putting the final touches to its preparations at a training camp in Japan ahead of the Asian Games, which get underway on Sept. 19 in Nagoya.

Kuwait is in Group B with Bahrain, South Korea, Iran and Kazakhstan in what national teams director Faisal Saiwan described as a demanding group featuring closely matched sides.

Saiwan said the team is working hard to reach peak readiness and produce a performance that reflects the reputation of Kuwaiti handball. He added that all five teams have the quality to compete for positive results, making every game a tough test.

National teams director Faisal Saiwan.

He said the preparation program had progressed as planned, with domestic and overseas camps complemented by a series of warm-up matches against teams employing different tactical and technical styles. The matches provided valuable preparation for the players physically, technically and mentally.

Saiwan also praised the administrative and coaching staff for creating the right conditions throughout the buildup and helping the players reach the highest possible level of readiness.

He stressed that the players are fully aware of their responsibility and are determined to give their best while representing Kuwait at the Asian Games.

Kuwait Club targets strong start against Al-Wahda

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Kuwait Club is stepping up preparations in Abu Dhabi for Wednesday's AFC Champions League Two opener against UAE side Al-Wahda at Al Nahyan Stadium.

The match marks the first Group A fixture for both teams, with Uzbekistan's Nasaf and Bahrain's Al-Khaldiya completing the group.

The Kuwait Club delegation arrived in the UAE on Saturday after conducting several training sessions in Kuwait. The team has continued its preparations in Abu Dhabi as coach Firas Al-Khatib looks to make a strong impression in his first continental assignment since taking charge.

Coach Firas Al-Khatib

Al-Khatib, who began his coaching career four years ago, will be seeking a positive result against an Al-Wahda side that enters the match in a confident mood.

Al-Wahda has won its last three ADNOC Pro League matches, climbing to sixth place with nine points. The winning run has revived its campaign after setbacks in the opening two rounds and moved the team within four points of leaders Al-Jazira and second-placed Al-Ain.

The three-match winning streak is Al-Wahda's first since September and October 2025, giving the UAE side added confidence ahead of its continental opener.

Mbappé leads night of braces across Europe, Real routs Rayo

Rayo's Gnangoro Bouare, left, and Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe vie for the ball during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Rayo Vallecano in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

Pulisic returns for AC Milan

BARCELONA, Spain, Sept 13, (AP): Kylian Mbappé scored twice in a jittery Real Madrid victory in La Liga while Christian Pulisic played his first game since the World Cup and helped AC Milan rally for a draw in Serie A.

Borussia Dortmund and Freiburg remained perfect in the Bundesliga, while Monaco dropped points for the first time in Ligue 1.

Mbappé scored the first and last goals of Real Madrid's 4-1 win over Rayo Vallecano.

Mbappé converted a 14th-minute penalty after Florian Lejeune made a rash tackle of Álvaro Carreras. Lejeune was again to blame when his poor pass was intercepted and led to Mbappé assisting Carreras to make it 2-0.

Lazio's goalkeeper Christos Mandas, right, saves during a Serie A soccer match between Lazio and AC Milan, in Rome. (AP)

Jude Bellingham slotted the third goal in the 35th.

But modest Rayo took the initiative at the Santiago Bernabeu after halftime, dominating the ball for stretches and finding holes in Madrid's new-look defense.

Sergio Camello poked home a goal in the 51st, moments after Pedro Díaz hit the post and drew the first of several saves from Thibaut Courtois. The Belgium goalkeeper had to bail out Madrid again, parrying more shots by Lejeune and Heorhii Tsitaishvili.

That was too much for many of the home fans, who whistled the dip in performance by José Mourinho's side - until Mbappé found the corner in stoppage time.

His double pulled the France striker level with Barcelona's Raphinha and Rayo's Camello with six goals apiece in five rounds in La Liga.

Pulisic helped to spark AC Milan's comeback at Lazio for a 2-2 draw in the United States midfielder's first appearance for his Italian club this season.

Pulisic and Diego Moreira were sent on at halftime by coach Rúben Amorim with Milan trailing by two goals in Rome.

They both linked up to spark a rally. Pulisic lobbed a pass to the far post for Moreira to smash in his first goal in the 65th. Moreira needed just two more minutes to fire a second goal in from distance and split the points.

Unlucky break for pole-sitter Norris

Antonelli wins 1st Formula 1 race in Madrid in 45 years

MADRID, Sept 13, (AP): Kimi Antonelli took advantage of an unlucky break for Lando Norris to win the Spanish Grand Prix in Formula 1's return to Madrid on Sunday, increasing his lead in the drivers' standings.

It was the second consecutive victory for Antonelli, the young Mercedes driver who had come-from-behind to win his home race at the Italian GP last weekend.

Antonelli was second early on at the new Madring track in the Spanish capital, but pole-sitter Norris relinquished his lead after he wasn't able to pit when a virtual safety car was deployed. He had already passed the pit entrance and had to pit on the next lap in a questionable strategy call by McLaren that dropped him a few positions.

"Lucky for the virtual safety car, feel a bit bad for Lando," Antonelli said on the radio after the race. "Really strong race, strong weekend, let's keep pushing."

Norris ended third, behind Red Bull's Max Verstappen.

"There was nothing I could do. Congrats to Kimi and Max, they drove a good race today," Norris said. "Just luck not on our side. Rough race, one that just got away from us. I thought we deserved it today."

Charles Leclerc, who led most of the race after opting not to pit when the virtual safety car was deployed, ended fourth after having to change tires late.

Leclerc's Ferrari teammate Lewis Hamilton saw his race last only seven laps after he reported a problem with his brakes and retired. The seven-time world champion had also struggled last weekend in the Italian GP, when he finished sixth following an early dust-up with Leclerc.

The Spanish GP returned to the Madrid region for the first time in 45 years. It last took place at the Jarama circuit in the capital's outskirts in 1981.

It was the eighth race win this season for Antonelli, who now leads teammate George Russell by 81 points with nine races remaining. Russell finished fifth Sunday.

The start of the race gained importance with the new track yielding few overtake opportunities, and Antonelli was able to challenge Norris into the first turn. He got past the McLaren driver after cutting the corner to avoid a collision but had to give the position back.

Verstappen also had to give back the position to Lewis Hamilton after gaining advantage while going off the track shortly after the start.

The race changed on Lap 15 when the virtual safety car was deployed after the Aston Martin of Lance Stroll stopped on the track with a brake problem.

Norris missed the opportunity to pit under the safety car and Antonelli took advantage to stop and come out in front of the McLaren. Leclerc stayed out and moved to first place on a different strategy.

Mercedes driver Andrea Kimi Antonelli of Italy celebrates with the trophy after winning the Spanish Formula One Grand Prix race in Madrid. (AP)

Norris ended pitting a lap later, when the virtual safety had ended, so he lost more time and returned to the track in fifth position. He also lost time because his stop was slower than usual because of a problem with the right-front wheel.

With the hard tires holding on well, the front-running drivers did not have to pit again and Leclerc had to come in late for his required stop, relinquishing the lead.

The home grand prix was one to forget for the local drivers.

The only two Spaniards on the grid, Fernando Alonso and Carlos Sainz, started on the back and touched each other early in the race.

"He squeezed me into the wall," Alonso said. "(At) the start, he crashed into two people, now he squeezed me into the wall on breaking."

Sainz had also collided with other drivers after an aggressive start at his home race. He received a five-second penalty for the incident with Alonso, and eventually retired with a car issue.

Spanish King Felipe VI was among those on hand for the race in the Spanish capital.

Organizers expected a total attendance of nearly 350,000 spectators throughout the weekend.

Hours before the start, a few hundred residents from neighborhoods in northern Madrid protested against the return of the race.

Many of them were clad in bright yellow T-shirts and carried signs reading "Stop Formula 1 in Madrid."

There was plenty of support for the event locally, but some residents complained about the noise generated by the cars, the road closures and the environmental effects of the race, which is contracted to take place in the Spanish capital for 10 years.

Al-Harbi calls time on 28-year career

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Former Kuwait national handball player Mishari Abbas Al-Harbi has announced his retirement after a 28-year career that saw him represent several Kuwaiti clubs and the national team.

Al-Harbi began his career with Al-Sulaibikhat before also playing for Kuwait Club, Kazma and Al-Arabi. He spent many years with the Kuwait national team, featuring in numerous domestic, Asian and international competitions.

He enjoyed a highly successful club career, winning the Asian Club Championship, Gulf Cup and Arab Club Championship with Al-Sulaibikhat. He also claimed the Kuwaiti league title 12 times with Al-Sulaibikhat and Kuwait Club.

Al-Harbi won the Kuwait Handball Federation Cup 12 times with the two clubs, while also lifting the Kuwait Super Cup twice with Kuwait Club and once with Kazma.

At international level, he represented Kuwait in several Asian competitions and also played for the youth national team, including at the World Championship.

A file photo of Mishari Abbas Al-Harbi making a goal attempt.

Following his retirement, Al-Harbi thanked the administrative, coaching, and medical staff who supported him throughout his career, as well as his former teammates who shared his journey on the court.

He expressed pride in his years in Kuwaiti handball, bringing an accomplished career spanning nearly three decades to an end.

Al-Arabi 'completes' foreign signings with Francisco Silva

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Al-Arabi has completed its foreign-player recruitment for the 2026-27 handball season with the signing of Portuguese player Francisco Silva.

Silva joins South Korean Jinho Kim to complete the club's foreign contingent as Al-Arabi looks to build a stronger squad and compete for domestic honors after falling short of expectations in recent seasons.

The club has also brought in several experienced Kuwaiti players, signing Hamoud Qaed Al-Adwani, Salman Al-Sanad, Ahmed Abdulhadi, Abdullah Al-Saffar, Mohammed Amer and Abdullah Al-Mutawa.

The new arrivals are expected to increase competition for places and give coach Hussein Habib greater tactical options.

Al-Arabi has already begun preparations for the new season while completing the remaining fixtures from the previous campaign. Training has initially focused on improving fitness and rebuilding team cohesion following the recent interruption to competitions.

The Al-Akhdar will play their first friendly tonight against Al-Sulaibikhat at the hosts' court. The match will allow Habib to assess the players' fitness, introduce the new signings and evaluate their understanding with the rest of the squad.

Mohammed Amer in action.

Further friendly matches will provide the coach with opportunities to test different formations and settle on his starting lineup ahead of the official competitions.

Barcelona's Karim Adeyemi scores his side's 4th goal during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Levante and Barcelona in Valencia, Spain . (AP)

Sports

Yemen first participating team to arrive in Jeddah

Ambassador Al-Shuraim backs Kuwait to make strong Gulf Cup 27 showing

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

DOHA, Sept 13: The Kuwait national team has switched to evening training at its Doha camp as preparations intensify for Gulf Cup 27 in Saudi Arabia.

The Blues had trained twice daily in recent days but will now hold one session a day before concluding its Doha camp tomorrow. The delegation will travel to Jeddah on Tuesday ahead of the tournament, which runs from September 23 to October 6.

Kuwait will face Yemen in a friendly on Friday in its final warm-up before the tournament. Drawn in Group A, Kuwait will open against hosts Saudi Arabia on September 23, face Iraq on September 26 and complete the group stage against Oman on September 29. Group B features Bahrain, the UAE, Qatar and Yemen.

Kuwait Ambassador to Qatar Ahmed Al-Shuraim and Chargé d'Affaires Ahmed Al-Haroun visited the team's training session in Doha to check on preparations and the delegation's requirements.

Al-Shuraim said Kuwait's participation in Gulf competitions helps promote the country's sporting achievements and highlights its rich sporting heritage.

Ambassador Al-Shuraim with Kuwait national team delegation in Doha.

He expressed confidence in the squad, saying Kuwait has talented players capable of producing positive results at the tournament. He also pointed to Kuwait's record 10 Gulf Cup titles, which underline the country's historic standing in the competition.

Kuwait Football Association Vice President for Technical Affairs Ayman Al-Hussaini thanked Al-Shuraim for his support and efforts to meet the delegation's needs during the camp. He also praised the Kuwaiti Embassy in Qatar for its continued cooperation in facilitating the team's preparations.

Yemen, coached by Algerian Noureddine Ould Ali, was the first participating team to arrive in Jeddah, reaching the Saudi city on Friday.

Yemen is in Group B alongside Qatar, the UAE and Bahrain, with the coaching staff working to raise the players' fitness and readiness ahead of the tournament.

The other participating teams are expected to arrive in Jeddah over the coming days to complete their final preparations before the competition begins.

Oman coach Tarik Sektioui is expected to announce his squad today or tomorrow, with the team scheduled to travel to Jeddah on Thursday.

Sektioui will be the 18th coach to lead Oman in Gulf Cup history and the fourth Arab coach to take charge of the team in the tournament, following Egypt's Mamdouh Khafagy at Gulf Cups 3 and 4, Tunisia's Moncef Melliti at Gulf Cup 6 and Egypt's Mahmoud El-Gohary at Gulf Cup 13.

Rybakina edges Sabalenka to win maiden US Open title

Elena punctuates her rise to No. 1

NEW YORK, Sept 13, (AP): Elena Rybakina came to New York and took everything that had belonged to Aryna Sabalenka.

First, it was the No. 1 ranking in women's tennis, then the U.S. Open trophy.

The tournament that for so long was a struggle for Rybakina turned into the site of her coronation.

Rybakina won her first U.S. Open title and punctuated her climb to the top of her sport by beating Sabalenka 6-4, 5-7, 6-2.

Rybakina had already been guaranteed to replace Sabalenka at No. 1 in the rankings next week and for good measure took the title that Sabalenka had won the previous two years.

"It's still so difficult to process what happened," Rybakina said. "Too many achievements these few weeks."

It was the third Grand Slam title for Rybakina and the second this year - both against Sabalenka on hard courts. She opened the season by beating Sabalenka for the Australian Open title.

Elena Rybakina, of Kazakhstan, holds up her trophy after winning the women's singles final of the U.S. Open tennis championships against Aryna Sabalenka, of Belarus in New York. (AP)

This time, Rybakina stopped Sabalenka's 19-match winning streak at the U.S. Open, where she hadn't lost since falling to Coco Gauff in the 2023 final.

Rybakina earned $5.5 million, the largest prize in Grand Slam history, and tied Sabalenka and French Open winner Mirra Andreeva with a tour-high three titles this season.

Sabalenka took home $2.8 million but it was clear how little that meant to her, as she smashed her racket after a brief hug with Rybakina at the net.

Sabalenka was trying to become the first person since Serena Williams from 2012-14 to win three in a row at Flushing Meadows.

"I was just out there competing, trying to do my best with what I had there today," Sabalenka said. "Not good enough."

Rybakina dethroned the champ without even having her best stuff. The WTA Tour leader in aces got less than half of her first serves in but instead put Sabalenka under constant pressure with a strong return game, racking up 12 break chances and converting three, which was all she needed.

The third meeting of No. 1 vs. No. 2 in a U.S. Open women's final since 2000 was the first to go the way of the challenger. Williams was the top seed for the other two, beating her sister Venus in 2002 and Victoria Azarenka in 2013.

Fatat Club claims bronze at Arab Women's Basketball Champ'ship

Fatat players celebrate Arab Basketball Championship bronze.

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

ALEXANDRIA, Cairo, Sept 13: Fatat Club claimed third place and the bronze medal at the 27th Arab Women's Basketball Championship after beating Egypt's Al-Jazira 80-74 in the third-place playoff in Alexandria.

Egyptian club Sporting won the title after defeating compatriots Al Ahly 73-65 in the final.

Fatat's bronze underlines the team's steady progress in recent months. The club also finished third at the Arab Games in Sharjah, UAE, in February, continuing its strong run in international competitions.

Fatat professional Alexis Latrice was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player after an impressive campaign, adding a personal accolade to the team's bronze medal.

Meanwhile, the Arab Basketball Federation announced the participating teams for the Arab Club Basketball Championship, which will be hosted by Al-Hikma in Beirut from October 9 to 20.

The 12-team field includes Kuwait Club and Kazma from Kuwait; Al-Hikma, Beirut, Hoops and Centralia from Lebanon; Yemen's Shaab Hadramout; Qatar's Al-Arabi and Al-Rayyan; Syria's Al-Ahli Aleppo; Oman's Al-Seeb; and one team yet to be announced.

Kuwait Club will enter the Arab Championship just days after competing in the WASL West Asia finals, also in Beirut, from September 26 to October 1, leaving the team with a demanding schedule over a short period.

Barcelona sinks Levante to maintain unbeaten run

Haaland's disputed goal wins derby for 10-man City

MANCHESTER, England, Sept 13, (AP): Erling Haaland's hotly contested goal settled the 199th Manchester derby on Sunday.

The Norwegian struck in the 60th minute at Old Trafford to seal a 1-0 win for 10-man Manchester City over fierce rival Manchester United in the Premier League.

At first, the goal was ruled out for offside, but after VAR review the on-field decision was overturned. That sparked a roar of celebration from the away fans.

United's players were incensed by the decision, with Enzo Fernandez appearing to be in an offside position during the buildup. But the Premier League said the goal was allowed because, despite diving to head the ball, the Argentine did not get a touch before it reached Haaland at the far post.

However, league rules state a player is interfering with play when "clearly attempting to play a ball which is close when this action impacts on an opponent."

City will feel justice was done after Phil Foden was sent off in the 23rd for kicking out at Bruno Fernandes.

With an extra man United hit the post either side of halftime - first from Marcus Rashford's long-range free kick and then Kobbie Mainoo's low shot from the edge of the area.

Haaland's goal makes him the top scorer in the Manchester derby in Premier League history with nine.

City moved level on points with defending champion Arsenal at the top of the standings.

Coventry's nightmare start to the season continued with a 5-0 home loss to Brighton.

After running away at the top of the Championship last season it has been a rude awakening for Frank Lampard's team since its return to England's top flight.

Four straight defeats leaves Coventry rooted to the foot of the standings without a goal and a goal difference of minus 10.

Brighton led 1-0 at halftime through Charalampos Kostoulas before going on a scoring spree after the break with goals from Malick Yalcouye, Pascal Gross, Lewis Dunk and Yasin Ayari.

Manchester City's Erling Haaland, right, challenges for the ball with Manchester United's Kobbie Mainoo during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and Manchester City in Manchester, England. (AP)

Lamine Yamal produced another double and Barcelona also got a goal from another 19-year-old product of its famed youth academy in a 4-2 win at Levante on Sunday.

Xavi Espart scored the opener for Barcelona with a low, bouncing shot from the edge of the area after getting set up by Raphinha five minutes in for his first goal with the senior squad.

Espart joined Barcelona's La Masia academy as an under-10 player and made his senior team debut last season.

For Barca's second, Raphinha dribbled around the goalkeeper and crossed for Yamal, who used one touch to smash it in from inside the 6-yard box.

Yamal then added a penalty shortly after the break for his sixth league goal of the season and his third straight brace in the Spanish league.

A poor back pass from Espart, who was playing as a left back, allowed Ivan Romero to pull one back for Levante. Then Roger Brugué scored again for Levante before Karim Adeyemi restored a two-goal advantage in stoppage time as Barcelona improved its perfect start with its sixth win in six matches across all competitions.

Kuwait set for Asian Games opener against Vietnam

The U-23 team intensifies training for the opener.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Kuwait U-23 national team will wrap up preparations today ahead of its opening match at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, where it faces Vietnam tomorrow in Group C.

The tournament runs from September 19 to October 4, with Kuwait scheduled to meet Uzbekistan on September 18 before concluding its group campaign against the Philippines on September 22.

The top two teams from each group will advance to the quarterfinals.

Head coach David Doniga has selected a 23-player squad for the tournament. The squad includes Dhari Al-Masri, Abdulrahman Ajaj, Abdulridha Shehab, Hamoud Al-Sanousi, Bandar Al-Brazi, Ahmed Boudi, Montaser Al-Abdulsalam, Ali Hassan, Jassem Al-Anzi, Bandar Al-Salama, Jassem Shamouh, Abdullah Al-Ghanimah, Omar Al-Matar, Abdullah Fares, Saleh Al-Mohatab, Talal Al-Qaisi, Muath Al-Asima, Eid Al-Azmi, Ahmed Khorashid, Mohammed Al-Suraie, Fawaz Al-Mubailesh, Nasser Khader and Mohammed Al-Sharifi.

Ali Hassan, Abdulrahman Ajaj and Nasser Khader were subsequently left out of the squad, with Salmiya goalkeeper Abdullah Al-Ayyoub and Al-Nasr player Abdulaziz Al-Shammari called up as replacements.

ARAB TIMES
THE FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY IN FREE KUWAIT
Published by: Arab Times Publishing House
Editor-in-Chief
AHMED AL JARALLAH
Editorial Office:
Tel: 24826912 - Airport Road, Shuwaikh
P.O. Box: 2270, 13023 Safat, Kuwait
E-mail: arabtimes@arabtimesonline.com
Advertising:
Tel: 99659717 - 50232062
E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com
Annual Subscriptions:
Individuals KD 30, Companies & Official Departments KD 45
Airmail charges extra for overseas
Tel: 51526559 - 51508991