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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

WHEN a cabinet is formed in any country, the process is guided by the need to evaluate the chosen individual's suitability for the assigned task. Is the appointee an expert in the field – a technocrat selected for decision-making and institutional management based on professional competence? Does he understand administrative procedures, institutional workflows and teamwork, rather than acting impulsively or unilaterally?

This selection follows a long vetting process that begins with identifying high achievers in universities and observing their conduct within society. A minister or official whose social behavior is questionable or has a

record of misdemeanors or felonies should not be appointed. The art of selection involves multiple steps, such as reviewing the entire dossier of the candidates and examining how they managed their previous endeavors – whether commercial, academic, political, service-oriented or industrial -- particularly in areas relevant to the ministry they are about to lead. This ensures they do not become a 'wild card' or a liability within the government that hinders developmental and political progress.

Such a rigorous approach ensures stability in the ministerial role, allowing the ministry to focus on achieving the objectives of the government's program. It empowers the minister to make decisive choices that serve public interests rather than personal agendas that could negatively impact the state.

This practice is often lacking in many Third World

countries, where responsibilities are entrusted to non-specialists. Consequently, these nations remain trapped in a vicious cycle of recycling outdated achievements—long past their prime, and presenting them as major successes. Officials may also resort to hasty and ill-conceived decisions that impose heavy costs on society. Once these decisions are reversed, the cost to the public rises even further.

Therefore, whenever a cabinet reshuffle occurs, all these criteria should be presented to those responsible for selecting appointees to ensure the reshuffle yields the desired results rather than serving as just a means of appeasement, as was the case in the past.

Previously, ministers were often chosen based on kinship with a specific member of the parliament or simply because a man was 'good company' in the 'diwaniya' (social gathering). Despite their proven

failure over the years, the same pattern is often repeated.

Similarly, the selection of assistants and deputies has usually been open to criticism. We must ask: Why do we not adopt a standard for selecting real experts? Why are the administrative practices and executive decision-making not governed by rigorous criteria that prevent indecision or action detrimental to public interest and the nation?

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Ministry of Education photo
Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei interacts with students during a visit to various schools in the Capital Educational District on Monday.



KUNA photo
Security personnel at the Ministry of Interior's Central Control Room monitors traffic around the clock Monday as students returned for the 2026-27 academic year.

Al-Juaidan Asst. Undersecretary

Boodai exit opens door for Al-Marzouq at Commerce

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): An Amiri Decree was issued Monday accepting the resignation of Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Khaled Abdullah Boodai.

The decree also appointed Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Abdulaziz Nasser Abdulaziz Al-Marzouq as Acting Minister of Commerce and Industry, in addition to his duties.

The decree shall take effect from the date of its issuance and shall be published in the Official

Gazette.

An Amiri Decree was also issued Monday appointing Marwa Badah Musalam Al-Juaidan as Assistant Undersecretary at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Decree No. 145 of 2026 tasked the Minister of Commerce and Industry with implementing its provisions.

The decree shall take effect from the date of its issuance and shall be published in the Official Gazette.

Kuwait mobilizes security muscle as schools reopen

'Rased,' cameras join back-to-school watch

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei visited various schools in the Capital Educational District on Monday to assess their readiness for the new academic year, ensure the smooth operation of schools, and look into the overall learning environment, reports.

In a press statement, Al-Tabtabaei congratulated the teaching and ad-

ministrative staff, as well as the students, on the start of the academic year. He expressed appreciation for the efforts exerted by the school staff and wished everyone a productive and successful year, and continuous excellence for the students.

During the visit, he listened to the feedback of the teachers, administrative personnel and students, and looked into the readiness of classrooms and educational and service facilities. He underscored the importance of providing a safe, stable and stimulating learning environment from day one.

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Kuwait eyes underground lifeline for oil exports

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Recent attacks on oil pipelines in the region, particularly the crude oil lines in Saudi Arabia, reshaped the priorities of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, transforming the security of supply lines into an existential issue that transcends narrow commercial calculations.

As Kuwait seriously considers laying oil pipelines in the Saudi territory and neighboring countries to bypass critical maritime chokepoints, the newspaper raised a crucial question regarding the engineering and security trade-offs between laying pipelines aboveground versus burying them underground.

A high-ranking oil official emphasized that the choice between buried and aboveground pipelines depends on carefully balancing long-term security, immediate economic costs, and geographical realities. He pointed out that each option has advantages and disadvantages that affect the sovereign decision-making regarding the protection of national wealth and the assurance of uninterrupted flow to global markets.

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Kuwait appeals for donors to replenish blood reserves

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): The Ministry of Health on Monday urged people with both negative and positive blood types to donate blood to sustain supplies and meet patients' needs.

The ministry said in a statement that the Central Blood Bank in Jabriya and the Cooperative Blood Transfusion Center, next to Adan Hospital, operate Saturday through Thursday from 7:30 am to 8:30 pm, and Friday from 2 pm to 8 pm.

It added that the Sheikhha Salwa Al-Sabah Center, next to the Maternity Hospital, as well as donation branches at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital and New Jahra Hospital, operate Sunday through Thursday from 7:30 am to 8:30 pm.

The donation branch at Hamad Al-Humaidhi and Sheikhha Al-Sudairawi Medical Center in Shuwaikh Residential also operates Sunday through Thursday from 7:30 am to 8:30 pm.

Kuwait, Italy seek stronger cooperation in civil aviation

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): Director of the Public Authority of Civil Aviation Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Mumoud Al-Sabah met on Monday with Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Lorenzo Morini to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation

in civil aviation.

The meeting focused on opportunities to expand bilateral ties in air transport and exchange technical and operational expertise, the authority said in a statement to KUNA.



Public Authority of Civil Aviation photo
Director of Public Authority of Civil Aviation Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Mumoud Al-Sabah with Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Lorenzo Morini.

Kuwait plans marriage prep course before 'I do'

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: The Ministry of Justice intends to add a new measure prior to the official registration of the marriage contract through the forthcoming amendment of the Personal Status Law, which will require couples planning to get married to attend a premarital counseling course for one week.

This step aims to prepare couples for married

life, raise their awareness of their rights and responsibilities, and reduce family disputes.

Lawyers told the newspaper that premarital counseling is an important preventative measure that could prevent family conflicts. They stressed the necessity for the course to be practical and realistic, not just a routine procedure.

Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait previously confirmed in a press statement that this is part of the anticipated legal amendments aimed

at raising awareness among couples intending to get married and familiarizing them with the nature of married life and the corresponding responsibilities, thus, reducing divorce rates and maintaining family stability.

Attorney Inam Haidar indicated that premarital counseling could be an important step toward preventing family disputes, provided that the course is practical and realistic and does not become a mere

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Amir, Crown Prince, Acting PM meet

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Monday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness also received Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

His Highness also received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Abdullah Al-Mousherji and Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.



HH the Amir



KUNA photo

Acting Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Mohammad Al-Mannai receives UK Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rasheed.

KUNA Chief, UK Amb. discuss enhancing media cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): Acting Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Mohammad Al-Mannai, discussed ways to enhance bilateral media cooperation and exchange expertise that serve mutual interests on Monday with UK Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rasheed.

During his meeting with Ambassador Rasheed, Al-Mannai emphasized the deep historical ties between Kuwait and the UK, highlighting the importance of strengthening cooperation between media institutions in both nations to expand coordination and the exchange of information and professional expertise.

He stated that KUNA is keen to develop partnerships with international media organizations and benefit from British experience across various media sectors, noting the agency's commitment to showcasing Kuwait's development, achievements, rich history, and global humanitarian role within British media outlets.

For his part, Ambassador Rasheed affirmed his country's commitment to enhancing media cooperation with Kuwait, underscoring the vital role of media in documenting the distinguished relations between the two nations and highlighting the continuous progress witnessed in various fields.

He expressed a keen interest in gaining a closer understanding of Kuwaiti culture and its unique characteristics, admiring its authenticity, richness, and diversity, as well as the deeply rooted values it reflects within Kuwaiti society, where understanding local culture is a key factor in fostering communication and closer ties between the two friendly peoples.

The meeting was attended by Essam Al-Ghanim Deputy Director-General for the Editorial Sector at KUNA, Bader Al-Sharhan Acting Editor-in-Chief, Essam Al-Ruwaihi Director of the Marketing and Public Relations Department, and Lamia Al-Fars Director of the Director-General's Office.

Minister, PAAET discuss boost in measures to tackle environs

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Minister of State for Development and Sustainability, Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij, and Director General of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam, held a coordination meeting to discuss the strategic partnership between the two entities, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The meeting aimed to enhance sustainability as a measurable institutional practice within the applied education and training system.

In a press release, PAAET explained that the two sides discussed the implementation of the government's environmental sustainability reporting system across its colleges, institutes, and facilities. This includes measuring energy, water, waste, and resource consumption indicators, as well as

building a reliable database to support decision-making.

The meeting also reviewed educational outcomes to ensure that sustainability standards are incorporated into the curriculum, and directed some research and graduation projects to serve national priorities and projects identified in coordination with the ministry.

The meeting addressed the gradual transformation of PAAET facilities into practical models for sustainability by improving energy and water efficiency, implementing waste sorting, measuring environmental impact, and preparing an institutional sustainability report.

The meeting also discussed activating community service and continuing education programs, sustainability ambassadors and clubs, volunteer initiatives, and green entrepreneurship.

KCCI calls for Arab economic vision to achieve real reform

CAIRO, Sept 14, (KUNA): The Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry called Monday for adopting a clear and specific economic identity and vision to ensure genuine structural economic transformation across Arab countries.

In a statement to KUNA during the 52nd session of the Arab Labor Conference, held in Cairo through Sept 20, KCCI Assistant Director General Firas Al-Oudah said the conference addressed several key economic and labor issues.

Al-Oudah said the Director General's report of the Arab Labor Organization for this year highlighted a genuine challenge: economic growth rates have not translated adequately into social development or reduced unemployment and poverty levels across Arab countries.

He stressed that without a serious and realistic economic vision, Arab countries would remain trapped in the middle-income bracket and struggle to provide sustainable jobs capable of keeping pace with rapid technological changes that could eliminate many routine occupations in the future.

He explained that the conference was discussing several important technical issues, including climate change and its



Firas Al-Oudah

impact on the work environment, and stressed the importance of transitioning toward a low-emission Arab economy while adopting a realistic energy mix combining fossil fuels and renewable sources.

Such an approach, he said, would help ensure energy security, continuity and affordability. The transition toward a low-emission economy does not necessarily mean completely abandoning fossil fuels, rather reducing emissions intensity and improving energy-use efficiency.

'United GCC efforts vital to battle climate change'

Economy, infrastructure face grave threat: Al-Budaiwi

MUSCAT, Sept 14, (KUNA): Officials and environmental experts stressed Monday the importance of concerted efforts and stronger collective response to climate change and its global challenges, which have expanded beyond environmental concerns to encompass economic and development dimensions.

The remarks came during the opening ceremony of Oman Climate Week 2026, organized by the Environment Authority of Oman in Muscat over three days to support climate action and sustainability efforts and accelerate implementation of climate solutions, with broad international participation.

In a recorded address, GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi said climate change had gone beyond an environmental issue to become an economic and development challenge requiring collective response and effective regional and international cooperation.

He stressed the importance of balancing environmental protection with sustainable economic growth, improving resource-use efficiency and strengthening adaptation capacity.

Al-Budaiwi expressed GCC countries' hopes of benefiting from the event to enhance Gulf and regional cooperation, exchange knowledge and expertise, and support solutions that take into account the region's development and environmental needs.

The second edition of Oman Climate Week 2026 kicked off on Monday, aiming to strengthen climate action and sustainability efforts and accelerate the implementation of climate solutions, with broad international participation.

Acting Director General of Kuwait's Environment Public Authority (EPA) Nouf Behbehani is taking part in the event, organized by Oman's Environment Authority through Wednesday, alongside officials, experts and specialists from 50 countries.

In turn, Chairman of Oman's Environment Authority Dr. Abdullah Al-Omari said the climate challenge was "no longer an issue separate from development pathways," but had become integral to decisions related to energy, water, food, investment and economic competitiveness.



Jassem Al-Budaiwi



Nouf Behbehani

He said Oman views environmental sustainability as a key component of its development path and is working toward achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 through an orderly and realistic transition that takes into account national priorities, maintains economic competitiveness and energy security, and promotes investment in low-carbon technologies and solutions.

Oman has begun translating climate opportunities into practical initiatives through carbon projects, nature-based solutions, mangrove planting, investment in protected areas and ecotourism, support for the circular economy, and development of waste-management systems, he added.

Strategy

Al-Omari noted that Oman had launched its updated net-zero strategy and a new national framework for the carbon market, while advancing green hydrogen projects and its Blue Carbon program aimed at restoring coastal ecosystems.

Former COP29 President Mukhtar Babayev stressed the importance of turning climate agreements and commitments into tangible results on the ground, noting that climate change could no longer be viewed as an isolated environmental issue.

He said the current stage involved interconnected risks, including climate change, natural disasters, water scarcity, land degradation, wildfires, public health threats, technological and industrial risks, as well as conflicts and geopolitical instability.

Australian Minister for Climate Change and Energy Chris Bowen described the current period as a "critical moment" for climate action, stressing the need to accelerate emissions re-

ductions, strengthen adaptation, expand access to climate finance and speed up implementation of commitments.

On clean energy, Bowen said the transition had become an "accelerating economic reality," noting that the Paris Agreement had helped change the global trajectory and that the current phase required faster implementation and tangible results.

World Meteorological Organization Climate and Energy Lead Dr. Roberta Boscolo said the latest climate data confirmed continued warming of the planet and oceans, rising sea levels and melting glaciers.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Chair Sir James Skea said in a video address that the findings of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report conclusively confirm that human activities have caused warming of the atmosphere, oceans and land.

He said exceeding 1.5 degrees Celsius of global warming had become "almost inevitable" in the coming years, leading to greater risks from extreme heat, floods and drought, declining agricultural and fisheries production, and threats to ecosystems and coastal areas.

Regarding the region, Skea said it faces growing challenges, particularly amid expectations of higher extreme temperatures.

He pointed to practical adaptation and emissions-reduction solutions, including improved irrigation technologies, drought- and salinity-resistant crops, expansion of solar and wind power and electric vehicles, and reducing natural gas and methane leakage.

He called on governments and scientists in the region to enhance their participation in IPCC activities and review their scientific reports, stressing the importance of international and regional cooperation in supporting climate action.

The session is part of a program of strategic dialogues and specialized sessions aimed at strengthening cooperation, exchanging expertise and translating climate priorities into implementable policies and projects.

Other sessions address climate impacts, adaptation and resilience, the circular economy, waste management, resource efficiency, environmental governance, digital transformation, artificial intelligence and the use of satellite data to support climate decision-making.



KUNA photo

The International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) provided school bags and winter clothing for about 500 students from low-income families across primary, intermediate and secondary schools in Kuwait.

IICO provides 500 students with schoolbags

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): The International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) provided school bags and winter clothing for about 500 students from low-income families across primary, intermediate and secondary schools in Kuwait, in cooperation medical students from Kuwait University.

Acting Chief of voluntary work department Khaled Al-Sharaf told KUNA that the project

stems from the organization's efforts to support students, provide a stable educational environment and alleviate financial burdens.

Al-Sharaf explained that each student is allocated a schoolbag filled with all the stationary necessities as well as a winter jacket, in preparation for upcoming winter season.

He said the participation of Kuwait University medical students adds an educational and so-

cial dimension by engaging youth in volunteer work and strengthening social responsibility.

He affirmed that the authority views volunteer teams as key partners, stressing that successful initiatives preserve beneficiaries' dignity and create meaningful impact. He praised all participants and affirmed continued efforts to develop youth partnerships and targeted volunteer initiatives addressing community needs.

Kuwait, FAO discuss ways to enhance food security

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): Minister of State for Development and Sustainability Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij discussed with representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa ways to enhance cooperation on food security and sustainable management of natural resources.

The Ministry said in a statement to KUNA that the meeting reviewed areas of technical cooperation, exchange of expertise and benefiting from international experiences and practices developed by the organization.

It added that the efforts are part of national endeavors to strengthen the sustainability of food systems, improve resource-use efficiency, and develop data systems and indicators related to food security and sustainability.

Al-Fulaij stressed the importance of strengthening partnerships with specialized international organizations and linking international technical expertise with Kuwait's national priorities, supporting data- and measurement-based policies and initiatives and contributing to addressing food security challenges.

'Trainee Teacher' post requires applicants to be well-qualified

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei issued a decree on Monday establishing the job title of "Trainee Teacher" within the Ministry of Education, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decree outlines the terms and conditions for filling the position, in accordance with the provisions of Decree-Law No. 1, attached to Law No. 28/2011, concerning allowances and bonuses for Kuwaiti teaching staff in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs.

In a press release, the Ministry of Education explained that the decree stipulates, without prejudice to acquired rights, the creation of the position of "Trainee Teacher," requiring applicants to hold a higher qualification.

The trainee teacher will remain in the position



Al-Tabtabaei

for one year, during which they will undergo a training program.

If the teacher successfully completes the training program, they will be assigned to the teaching positions listed in the table attached to Law No. 86/2026.

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

If the trainee teacher does not hold the aforementioned Bachelor of Education degree, their file will be referred to the Civil Service Commission (CSC) for assignment to another government entity to a job title appropriate to their qualifications.

This decision is effective from the date of its issuance, and all relevant authorities are required to be informed and act accordingly. Any conflicting previous decisions are hereby repealed.

diwaniya

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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Can Iran turn US pride into a polls dilemma?

“THE Strait of Hormuz is no longer merely a waterway through which oil tankers pass on their way to global markets, nor is its importance limited to being one of the world’s most strategically sensitive waterways,” Iraqi writer Dr. **Ayed Al-Hilali** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Dr. Ayed Al-Hilali

“In light of the current war, the Strait of Hormuz has become a political, economic, and military pressure tool, and perhaps the most capable factor in changing the course of the confrontation between Iran and the United States. The equation seems clear on the surface - Washington possesses military superiority, while Tehran has the advantage of geography. But wars are not always won by whoever possesses the most advanced aircraft and missiles.

“Sometimes, war is won by the side that can make the cost of the war higher than what the other side can afford. This is what gives the Strait of Hormuz exceptional importance. Iran does not necessarily need to completely close the strait. It is enough for Iran to make shipping vulnerable, thereby increasing insurance and shipping costs, which could force some companies to postpone voyages or change their routes. Then, the effects of the Strait of Hormuz begin to manifest themselves in a completely different way - at American gas stations, in food prices, in transportation costs, in inflation, and ultimately, at the ballot box.

“When the price of a barrel of oil rises from \$80 to \$90, it might be considered economic news. But when prices hit \$100 and continue to rise, it can become a political issue that directly affects the ordinary American citizen. The biggest dilemma facing US President Donald Trump and the Republicans is that the midterm elections are fast approaching. According to American politics, the voter can tolerate a distant war as long as it does not affect their wallet, but they become less tolerant when the gasoline bill rises, the prices of goods increase, and they feel they are paying for a war with no clear end in sight.

“Iran understands this equation well, so its immediate military objective may not be to achieve a conventional victory over US forces. That would be too costly and complex. A more realistic objective might be to drain American political will, turning military superiority into a political liability. Every day the war continues means an additional cost for Washington. Every rise in oil prices puts new pressure on the US administration. And every maritime incident in the Strait of Hormuz increases market tensions.

“These factors, coupled with divisions within the Republican Party and the emergence of Republican voices questioning the wisdom of continuing the war, mean that Tehran has managed to shift part of the battle from the Arabian Gulf to the American homeland. Iran may not need to defeat Trump militarily if it can push voters to punish him politically. But Washington is well aware of these calculations, so its choice is not easy. If the US administration backs down in the face of Iranian pressure, it could be interpreted as a victory for Tehran. If Washington escalates further, it risks expanding the war, raising oil prices, and potentially pushing the global economy into a more turbulent phase.

“Thus, the Strait of Hormuz becomes a strategic trap for both sides. Iran wants to use it without reaching the point of full-blown conflict. Iran understands that a complete blockade could unite its adversaries against it and give Washington a broader justification for military intervention. On the other hand, the United States wants to keep the Strait of Hormuz open, but it cannot guarantee this without incurring increased military risks.

“Markets do not wait for a catastrophe; they make adjustments based on the most plausible scenarios. The mere fear of supply disruptions can drive up prices. A simple decrease in shipping traffic can amplify the risks. This is where geography becomes a weapon. Iran is under economic siege, but it possesses a strategic location from which to influence the global economy. The United States may be militarily superior, but it is tied to a global economy that cannot easily withstand a major oil shock. Therefore, the real battle over the Strait of Hormuz is not just about who can control it, but who can bear the cost of keeping it in a state of tension.

“If the Strait of Hormuz remains partially open, the war of attrition may continue. If traffic returns to normal, the pressure on markets and Washington may ease. If navigation in the Strait of Hormuz is disrupted to a wider extent, the price of oil could become an independent political player, capable of changing the calculations of Iran, Washington, and most of the world’s capitals.”

Also:

“Does US President Donald Trump truly want to end the war with Iran, or

does he want to postpone the reckoning until after the elections? This is the question behind the wordplay in Washington,” Saudi writer **Saleh bin Abdullah Al-Muslim** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Trump repeatedly states that Iran has weakened, that victory is near, that an agreement is possible, and that the war will end. The phrases change, but the result is the same - a decisive outcome is postponed, while the elections are approaching. Trump understands that the American voter is not interested in the details of operations rooms and negotiations; rather, voters receive information about the war through newspaper headlines. Therefore, statements become a political weapon that includes threats, followed by negotiations, then escalation, then talk of an imminent end, and finally, a new deadline.

“Thus, words become a means of buying time and maintaining the image of a president capable of controlling the situation until a result emerges that can be presented to the voter as a victory. The Iranian regime does not view Trump’s statements as final facts, but rather questions what lies behind them. How long can the US president bear the cost of war, and how long can he wait before the confrontation becomes an electoral burden?

“Time could become Iran’s weapon, because every additional day of war means a higher cost, every rise in energy prices intensifies domestic pressure, and every unfulfilled promise of an imminent end erodes the administration’s political capital. Trump wants to enter the election with a narrative of victory. Iran may be betting that the cost of the war will determine the election’s outcome. Therefore, the battle is not only military but also a race between Trump and time. Trump can repeat the word “victory” dozens of times, but repetition alone will not end the war. At some point, voters will stop asking Trump what he will do and will instead ask him what he has accomplished. At that point, statements will be useless. The election may precede victory, but the bill will inevitably come.”

□ □ □

“The idea of establishing gifted schools in Kuwait dates back to the era of the late Amir, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad (May God have mercy on him),” columnist **Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarrah** wrote in **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“In the mid-1980s, while I was working in Moscow, then the capital of the Soviet Union, the Cultural Attaché, Ali Al-Halabi (May God have mercy on him), received a request to prepare a report on gifted schools in the Soviet Union, based on the request and directives of the late Amir, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad. I collaborated with Al-Halabi in preparing the report, gathering information about gifted schools, their curricula, teaching and training methods, as well as the educational and pedagogical approaches used to identify gifted students.

“However, the Iraqi invasion prevented the Ministry of Education from developing an implementation plan and practical proposals for the project to submit to the Amir. After liberation, specifically in 1992, I discussed the gifted schools proposal with Dr. Ahmed Al-Rubaie, the then Minister of Education and Higher Education. Al-Rubaie appreciated the initiative and the importance of reviving the idea, and he began reviewing and coordinating its implementation. However, political circumstances and government priorities prevented its implementation.

“In 2015, the former Minister of Education and Higher Education, Dr. Bader Al-Essa, initiated coordination with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) to fund the establishment of a school for gifted students in Al-Sawaber. The school was indeed established at a cost of approximately KD 20 million, in cooperation with Johns Hopkins University. The Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, affiliated with KFAS, undertook the implementation of the project and its work plan. I documented the project’s concept and history and published it in a press report in 2015, on the occasion of the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad’s visit to Moscow.

“Perhaps this brief historical overview will help the Ministry of Education document the origins and history of the idea, as well as the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad’s interest in the gifted schools project, considering it part of his early vision for investing in national minds and talents. I hope that this historical background will be included in the curricula and informational materials of the new gifted schools, in order to preserve educational memory and do justice to those who launched the idea and contributed to transforming it, through different stages, into a Kuwaiti educational project.”

– Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah warmly welcomes several prominent figures and citizens in his office.



Farwaniya Governorate photos

Al-Rajhi wins accolades for erecting mosques

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah warmly welcomed several prominent figures and citizens at his office in the headquarters of Farwaniya Governorate on Sunday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This is an affirmation of the commitment of the Governor to promote community communication, support national and charitable initiatives, and improve services provided to those residing in the governorate.

At the start of the meeting, the Governor welcomed Dr. Jaza Al-Rajhi, who invited him to attend and sponsor the inauguration of a mosque in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak.

The Governor commended the generous initiative and contribution of Al-Rajhi in constructing houses of worship, indicating that such a gesture is an embodiment

of the deeply rooted Kuwaiti values of benevolence, generosity and community service.

He also met with Director General of the International Private Training Institute retired Lieutenant General Yousef Al-Ansari and Vice Chairman of the Kuwait Fire Protection Association Hossam Al-Kulaib.

They talked about training, raising awareness regarding safety and fire prevention, ways to strengthen coordination to protect lives and properties, and to instill the concepts of security and safety within the community.

As part of his direct engagement with the public, the Governor met with citizens Thunayan Al-Adwani and Bader Al-Adwani. He listened to their comments and suggestions regarding service-related issues that the Omariya residents are currently facing.

He then confirmed the commitment of the governorate to follow up the feedback of citizens and coordinate with the concerned government bodies to address the issues raised.

He underscored the importance of direct communication with citizens and listening to their needs and proposals in line with the ‘open door’ policy of the governorate in order to strengthen community partnership, support development efforts, and improve services.

At the conclusion of the meetings, the guests expressed their gratitude and appreciation to the Governor. They commended his commitment to maintain direct communication with citizens, support community initiatives, and pay attention to the issues concerning those residing in the governorate.

Ex-Defense Minister acquitted as Prosecution appeal rejected

‘No funds misappropriation in jet pilots training’

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: The Court of Cassation, presided over by Judge Sultan Bouresli, rejected the appeal of the Public Prosecution and upheld the verdict of the Special Tribunal for Ministers, which acquitted former Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah and others of causing financial loss to the Ministry of Defense—amounting to €124 million—based on a training contract for Eurofighter pilots, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Special Tribunal for Ministers previously acquitted the defendants of charges outlined in the first count of the case.

These charges concerned suspected misappropriation of public funds and the

failure to obtain approval from regulatory bodies before concluding a memorandum of understanding (MoU), as well as issues regarding the duplication of pilot training services between the MoU and the aircraft procurement contract.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendants—comprising the former Minister of Defense, head of the Armament and Procurement Authority, head of the Eurofighter Typhoon Fighter Jet Committee and two committee members—with misconduct.

As public officials tasked with safeguarding the interests of the Defense Ministry during the fighter jet procurement process, they concluded an MoU with the Italian government that covered training services for pilots and ground crews.

According to the charges, the defendants signed a contract with the Italian company to purchase Eurofighter jets that included the same services specified in the MoU.

The prosecution argued that this action imposed financial obligations on the state,

caused a loss of €124 million to Ministry of Defense and conferred an undue benefit upon the contracting party.

The prosecution also charged the defendants—except one—with concealing information regarding the MoU concluded with the Italian government.

The Public Prosecution stated that one defendant failed to include the aforementioned data in his response to the Secretariat General of the Council of Ministers regarding the dispute between the State Audit Bureau and the Ministry of Defense concerning the Eurofighter procurement contract, as his response merely expressed the desire of the ministry to proceed with the contracting procedures.

Furthermore, three defendants were charged with failing to address said information during the Council of Ministers’ Public Services Committee meeting (No. 2016/8)—which was convened to discuss the procurement contract—as detailed in the investigation records.

Kuwaiti, Arab expat hurt in ‘violent’ Khaitan brawl

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: The Deputy Public Prosecutor ordered the registration of a case following a fight between an Egyptian expatriate and a Kuwaiti citizen in Khaitan, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the incident began with a report of a brawl in Khaitan, after which both parties were taken to Farwaniya Hospital for treatment.

The Egyptian expatriate was transported to the hospital by ambulance following the fight. A medical examination showed that he had suffered a laceration to his left arm. In his statement, he claimed that he had been stabbed and accused a young Kuwaiti man of the attack.

The Kuwaiti man’s medical report indicated that he had suffered severed tendons in his hand. The Public Prosecution ordered the registration of a case and requested a police investigation to determine the circumstances and cause of the fight, as well as the responsibility of each party.

□ □ □

Asian held with drugs: An Asian expatriate was arrested in Farwaniya in possession of methamphetamine, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the incident occurred when a support patrol from the Farwaniya Security Command became suspicious of the man as he was walking in the area. When he noticed the patrol, he fled and attempted to hide among parked cars.

Officers searched the area and found the suspect hiding underneath one of the vehicles. A search of his belongings uncovered a bag containing methamphetamine.

The suspect and the seized drugs were referred to the Drug Control General Department for further legal action.

□ □ □

Where are the owners?: A team of officers and personnel from the Salmiya Police Station, under the supervision of the Hawally Governorate Security Commander and the Salmiya Area Commander, successfully resolved 73 cases involving abandoned vehicles, boats, and caravans that had been obstructing roads, public spaces, and residential areas, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the team began by identifying the cases on the ground and conducting inquiries to locate the owners of the vehicles. A number of vehicle owners were identified and contacted regarding their vehicles.

In cases where the owners could not be located, the team coordinated with the Hawally Governorate Municipality and completed the necessary legal procedures. A total of 73 vehicles, boats, and caravans were addressed and removed. The campaign was overseen by the Hawally Governorate Security Director and the Salmiya Area Commander.

The police station team handled all aspects of the campaign, from identifying vehicle owners and coordinating with the municipality to ensuring the removal of vehicles that required it.

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Prince Faisal bin Farhan



Qatar PM and FM

Kuwaiti, Saudi, Qatari, Omani FM's mull region developments

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah discussed on Sunday over the telephone with his Saudi peer Prince Faisal bin Farhan the latest regional developments.

Both ministers also dealt with diplomatic efforts aiming to enhance security and stability in the region and ensure safe and unhindered navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement.

Qatar

Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah discussed on Sunday over the telephone with Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad bin Abdulrahman Al Thani the latest regional developments.

Oman

Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah discussed on Sunday over the telephone with his Omani peer Badr Al-Busaidi the recent regional developments.

Both sides also focused on diplomatic efforts aiming to enhance security and stability in the region and ensure safe and unhindered navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement.

Bader Al-Busaidi

Causeway bids deadline extended

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) extended the deadline for submitting bids for the management, operation and maintenance of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Causeway until Oct 6, instead of Sept 22.

Through this tender, the Ministry of Public Works will manage, operate and maintain Sheikh Jaber Causeway, in addition to the provision of materials, equipment, employees, experts and related services, as well as carrying out the environmental works stipulated in the contract.

The tender includes the execution of temporary, additional and supplementary works as requested by the concerned public entity in accordance with the contract terms.

The ministry added this project to its contracts plan for the current fiscal year.



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GCC-Stat ... basic pillar that enhances Gulf integration

Combined population 63.3 mln, GDP stands at \$2.4 tln

MUSCAT, Sept 14, (KUNA): The Statistical Centre for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC-Stat) is a key pillar supporting joint Gulf action, developing a unified statistical system that strengthens integration and provides comparable indicators to monitor economic and social development across member states.

As GCC economies expand, populations grow and cooperation broadens, GCC-Stat serves as a link between national statistical offices and a unified reference point, providing a shared knowledge base that supports decision-making, identifies priorities and help anticipate future development trends across the Gulf region.

Marking 15 years since the GCC Ministerial Council approved the center's establishment, KUNA interviewed Director General Intisar Al-Wahaibi, who said GCC-Stat had become a fundamental pillar of joint Gulf statistical work, moving beyond producing figures toward building an integrated knowledge system.

She explained that GCC-Stat had evolved from coordinating statistical efforts into an integrated system covering data collection, classification and analysis, database development, production of unified Gulf indicators, and publication of studies and statistical products that help understand regional development trends.

On the center's contribution to Gulf integration, Al-Wahaibi said economic and social integration



Director General Intisar Al-Wahaibi

required a reliable, unified information base capable of providing a comprehensive picture of the region. Such data allows policymakers to measure progress across different sectors and assess shared priorities.

She said GCC-Stat had worked since its establishment to balance statistical concepts, definitions and methodologies, coordinate efforts among national statistical offices, and produce comparable Gulf indicators. This enables a comprehensive assessment of economic, social and development conditions across the six member states.

Al-Wahaibi said, noting that unified data on trade, investment, population movements, labor markets, tourism, energy and sustainable development helps measure integration and identify policy gaps.

She said unified data enabled policymakers to move from examining indicators separately in individual countries toward assessing GCC states as one economic and social bloc. This approach was particularly important when evaluating economic integration, development performance and progress toward common regional objectives.

Comparable indicators covering trade, investment, tourism, energy and labor markets allow the movement and performance of these sectors across member states to be measured, she said. They also help identify strengths, emerging opportunities and areas requiring greater coordination and integration.

Al-Wahaibi stressed that unified data also supports studies and reports used by decision-makers, providing a common knowledge base for developing Gulf policies and programs. Statistics, she said, provide measurement tools that allow authorities to move from setting objectives toward monitoring outcomes.

She said joint Gulf economic, social and development initiatives required clear indicators to measure achievements, compare changes over time and identify progress and challenges. GCC-Stat therefore focuses not only on producing figures, but also on developing indicators and analytical statistical products.

Turning to the latest economic indicators, Al-Wahaibi said data published by GCC-Stat showed that the combined population of GCC countries reached about 63.3 million in 2025, while gross domestic product

at current prices stood at approximately USD 2.4 trillion.

She added that crude oil production reached about 16.6 million barrels per day, while GCC countries received around 75.7 million tourists during 2025. Average annual inflation stood at about 1.8 percent, while merchandise trade reached approximately USD 1.6 trillion in 2024.

These figures reflect the economic and demographic weight of GCC countries and underline the importance of a statistical institution capable of assessing the bloc as an integrated economic and social entity, explained Al-Wahaibi, while monitoring developments consistently and comparatively over time.

On the difference between traditional and modern statistics, she said statistical work no longer focused merely on recording what had happened. It had become a tool for understanding changes, analyzing trends, evaluating policies and developing future scenarios that translate data into measurable development outcomes.

Regarding cooperation with national statistical offices, Al-Wahaibi described the partnership as a central pillar of Gulf statistical work. It covers data and expertise exchange, methodology and standards development, capacity building, joint statistical programs and production of indicators that are comparable across member states.

She said GCC-Stat covers different stages of the statistical cycle, including collecting, classifying and analyzing data received from national statistical offices, establishing comprehensive databases and developing unified statistical systems covering major economic, social, demographic and development fields across the region.



KUNA photo
Minister of State for Development and Sustainability Affairs Reem Al-Fulajj receives Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of the Omniya PET Recycling project and factory in Kuwait Sana'a Alqemlas and Chief Operating Officer Farah Shaban.

'Your school's wish' contest drives tackling plastic waste

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): Minister of State for Development and Sustainability Affairs Reem Al-Fulajj received on Sunday Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of the Omniya PET Recycling project and factory in Kuwait Sana'a Alqemlas and Chief Operating Officer Farah Shaban.

The meeting witnessed the announcement of Al-Fulajj's patronage of the 4th edition of "your school's wish competition" which targets government schools at different stages.

The competition seeks to enhance the culture of sorting and recycling plastic waste at the source and to cement environmental sustainability concepts among students.

They also discussed means of promoting cooperation and backing national initiatives that contribute to reducing waste, supporting circular economy and achieving Kuwait Vision 2035.

Al-Fulajj said that the fourth edition of the 'your school's wish' competition aims

to promote the culture of sorting and recycling plastic waste and to cement environmental sustainability concepts among students.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement, the minister added that she met with Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of the Omniya PET Recycling project and factory in Kuwait Sana'a Alqemlas and Chief Operating Officer Farah Shaban to discuss means of boosting cooperation and backing national initiatives to lessen waste and support circular economy as well as achieve the targets of Kuwait Vision 2035.

Lauding the initiative, the minister said that this interest represents key support for Omniya, which is a non-profitable body, and its message.

In a press statement, Alqemlas said the contest aimed at enhancing the concept of sorting plastic waste at the source, encourage recycling, and raise awareness of sustainability among various segments of society.

'KU on track towards achieving goals, preparing future leaders'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Kuwait University President Prof. Dina Musa'ed Al-Mailem affirmed that the university is continuing its journey toward the achievement of its goals, and improvement of its academic and research standing, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a speech marking the start of the academic year on Sunday, Al-Mailem pointed out that such an effort aims to prepare generations capable of serving the nation and keeping pace with developments.

She stated that the university looks forward to a year filled with productivity and achievements—a new milestone of greater excellence and leadership that expands the horizon of knowledge and innovation in line with the aspirations of the country and its youths.



Al-Mailem

She said the university is proud of the full support it receives from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Nader Abdullah Al-Jalal. She emphasized that this support is a manifestation of the belief in the importance of knowledge and the vital role of the university in national development and progress.

She stressed that the university is working hard to realize its goals based on the pillars of quality, innovation, distinguished presence and sustainability. She added this is achieved by developing academic programs, boosting scientific research and innovation, building effective partnerships, and providing a stimulating university environment that elevates the quality of education, while keeping pace with the changing dynamics and labor market needs.

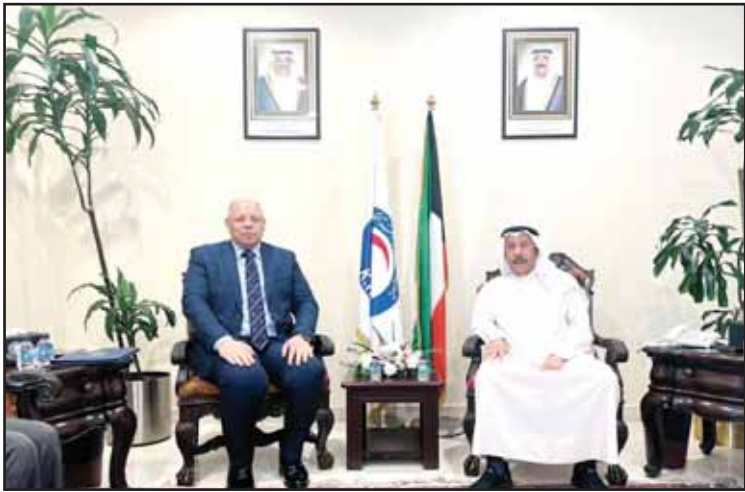
Egyptian envoy applauds Kuwait’s support for Gaza

Kuwait, Egypt deepen humanitarian relief cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohamed Abou El-Wafa affirmed Monday that humanitarian cooperation between Kuwait and Egypt reflects the depth of the fraternal and historic ties between the two countries.

Speaking to KUNA after meeting Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society Khaled Al-Mughames, Ambassador Abou El-Wafa praised Kuwait’s leading humanitarian role through its support and assistance to affected communities worldwide.

He said cooperation between the Egyptian and Kuwait Red Crescent societies covers several humanitarian areas, particularly relief assistance to Gaza in health, food and humanitarian fields, in addition to Kuwait’s support for the Palestinian people, including the establishment of a field hospital and provision of various forms of assistance.



Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohamed Abou El-Wafa and Kuwait Red Crescent Society Chairman Khaled Al-Mughames during their meeting to discuss expanding humanitarian cooperation.



Kuwait Red Crescent photos discuss expanding humanitarian cooperation.

The Egyptian Red Crescent has extensive technical and logistical capabilities and field experience in responding to crises, he noted, adding that this enhances opportunities to integrate with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society and develop joint response mechanisms.

The meeting also discussed prospects for future cooperation in Gaza and other areas facing humanitarian crises, he said.

In turn, Al-Mughames affirmed that Kuwait-Egypt relations represent an established model of cooperation and integration across various fields, particularly humanitarian and relief work, stressing the society’s keenness to strengthen communication with Egyptian humanitarian institutions and exchange expertise.

He said cooperation between the Kuwaiti and Egyptian Red Crescents extends the fraternal and historic ties between the two countries.

Continued from Page 1

The world

Undoubtedly, this requires a dedicated unit to identify high-achieving talent in universities or the business sector, and to institutionalize a selection process based on merit in all ministries, both service-oriented and political. This is the practice in developed nations that strive for sustainable development, aligned with supreme national goals and societal well-being – an approach that elevates the nation as a whole.

We previously pointed out that the fate of nations hinges on executive decisions made by individuals with acumen and profound vision. Nations that failed did not rely on technocrats. Instead, they adopted a system of sectarian or factional quotas -- a path that led to the collapse of several Arab countries like Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen.

In the end, we have had enough of the years of reckless decision-making by individuals who lacked the necessary experience before assuming office.

Kuwait mobilizes

He affirmed that the field visits to various schools and kindergartens will continue, stressing that readiness, stability and quality of the learning environment are the top priorities of his ministry.

He said all observations or needs will be addressed according to priority to ensure the best possible learning conditions.

He stressed that the success of the

academic year is a shared responsibility, which necessitates the concerted efforts of the ministry, school administrations, educational and administrative bodies, families and students.

Meanwhile, Director of the Public Relations Department at the Ministry of Interior Colonel Othman Al-Gharib confirmed that the security and traffic plans for the new academic year are being implemented.

In an interview with Kuwait TV, Al-Gharib pointed out that traffic congestion is expected at the start of the school year, hence, the intensified presence of traffic officers as part of a comprehensive plan that will continue throughout the academic year to ease traffic flow and ensure the safety of everyone.

He advised the students and workers to leave early to avoid traffic jams and reach their schools and workplaces easily and safely.

He confirmed that the ministry closely monitors the traffic situation through cameras in order to uncover indirect traffic violations. He said the ‘Rased’ application eases the discovery of violations without obstructing traffic flow. He underscored the need to strictly comply with traffic regulations to make sure that everyone is safe on the roads.

He added that the Public Relations and Security Media General Department at the ministry launched its comprehensive awareness campaign at the beginning of the academic year with the theme, “Prevention and Safety.”

He stressed that the ministry has always been keen on intensifying the

presence of security and traffic officers in schools, especially at the start of the academic year. He said the officers distributed gifts to the students and provided them with advice and awareness guidance.

He pointed out that the theme of the campaign covers intellectual, traffic, security, environmental safety, cyber-security and drug prevention in a bid to raise the awareness of students and protect them from various dangers.

He also affirmed the continuation of the awareness campaign throughout the academic year through the presence of specialized security media personnel in schools, interaction with students, and distribution of gifts. He revealed that the representatives of the Police Association are participating in this campaign through social and awareness initiatives.

He indicated that some negative practices have been observed in front of schools, such as blocking the road, driving against traffic and driving on sidewalks. He asserted that these practices endanger the students and other road users, hoping that such practices will end through the heightened security presence and ongoing awareness campaign.

He warned that the ministry does not tolerate any violation, especially within the vicinity of schools, as the protection of students is its top priority.

Kuwait plans

formality to complete the marriage procedures.

She underscored the need for couples to understand their rights and obligations before getting married, including the marital responsibilities of each party towards the spouse and the children.

She also stressed the importance of clarifying the legal consequences of divorce, including issues related to alimony, child custody, visitation rights and housing.

Attorney Jarrah Mubarak Al-Wawan affirmed that developing the Personal Status Law should not be limited to addressing conflicts after they occur, but should extend to prevention and awareness.

He considers making premarital counseling mandatory for couples a positive step as long as it addresses the real challenges that families are facing and informs both parties about the responsibilities and legal implications of marriage and divorce.

He pointed out that the goal should be to build families that are more aware and better equipped to handle disputes.

Attorney Abdulmohsen Al-Qattan stated that protecting the family and the best interests of the child should be at the forefront of any amendment to the Personal Status Law.

He added that a couple’s responsibility does not begin with the birth of their children, but from the moment they decide to get married. “Therefore, educating them beforehand about their rights, obligations and responsibilities can contribute to a more stable family environment,” he concluded.

Kuwait eyes

On the advantages of underground pipelines, he indicated that they offer superior military and cyber security compared to exposed aboveground pipelines or traditional maritime transport through straits, as they are difficult to target with drones or guided missiles. He said burying the pipelines provides comprehensive engineering protection against harsh climatic conditions, such as extreme temperature fluctuations and sandstorms. “These pipelines ensure a continuous and stable flow of oil, unaffected by escalating geopolitical tensions in the Strait of Hormuz or the Bab al-Mandab Strait, thereby, providing Kuwait with high, consistent reliability in the eyes of its international customers in the long term,” he elaborated.

On aboveground pipelines, he cited the highly complex geographical and political challenges, requiring transit through the territories of neighboring countries—such as Saudi Arabia or the Sultanate of Oman—to reach the Arabian Sea or the Red Sea. “This renders the project entirely dependent on regional political agreements and considerations of shared sovereignty, in addition to the immense cost of constructing a massive pipeline network spanning hundreds of kilometers, a process that would take many years to complete,” he added.

Regarding the cost of constructing onshore pipelines, the officials said the option to build pipelines bypassing the Straits of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandab is a complex financial equation. “It requires carefully balancing the massive

capital expenditure for infrastructure against the need to protect Kuwait’s annual oil revenues and market share. The total cost is affected by the route, which must traverse neighboring territories to reach open waters like the Red Sea or the Arabian Sea. Preliminary estimates indicate that laying a buried pipeline costs about \$3 million to \$5 million per kilometer, whereas an aboveground pipeline costs around \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million per kilometer.

However, the long-term costs associated with maintenance, as well as security and military protection for aboveground lines, could erode these initial savings, given a route spanning around 1,200 kilometers to reach the Arabian Sea,” he explained.

He stated that decision-makers face a strategic investment choice requiring massive capital outlays ranging from \$3.6 billion to more than \$6 billion, depending on the terrain and the required level of engineering fortification.

He pointed out that establishing a cross-border, underground, and structurally fortified onshore pipeline network remains the inevitable and most sustainable option to ensure the continuous and safe flow of crude oil, bypassing the volatility of maritime straits and threats to shipping.

He added that constructing this system—up to 1,200 kilometers—is a genuine safeguard in spite of the high cost. “It is a new energy-geopolitics paradigm, as it secures Kuwait’s global market share and preserves its long-standing reliability among international partners amidst escalating regional tensions,” he concluded.

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US president's \$5,000 ‘dividend’ needs congressional approval: Johnson

Dems, groups plan to push back if Trump tries to interfere in elections

WASHINGTON, Sept 14, (AP): Democratic state parties announced Monday that they are launching an operation for the midterm elections they're calling the "New Battlefield Project," intended to recruit 10,000 volunteers to guard polling places in case armed federal officers show up.

Activists are planning mass protests if the Trump administration tries to interfere with voting or ballot counting. And legal scholars are distributing white papers advising judges what they should do if the government tries to seize ballots.

The unprecedented efforts are in response to President Donald Trump's equally unprecedented moves to interfere in this year's midterm elections, which include attempts to impose proof-of-citizenship requirements to register to vote and directing the Postal Service to play a central role in deciding which voters should get a mail ballot.

The anxious contingency planning as voting gets underway has become a marker for how fraught democracy has become in the country that once stood as an example to the world.

"We have never prepared for an election sabotage event like we have now," said Ezra Levin of the left-leaning group Indivisible.

Democrats say they have reason to plan for doomsday scenarios. During his first term, Trump refused to ac-

cept his 2020 loss to Democrat Joe Biden and attempted to overturn the vote, only to be defied by career officials and more establishment Republicans. Upon returning to power, Trump has stocked his administration with those who helped his 2020 efforts, has used the federal government to target his political enemies and pardoned more than 1,000 people prosecuted for the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol that was intended to halt the certification of Biden's win.

Incumbent presidents' parties usually lose ground in the midterms, but Trump has pulled out the stops to try to keep that from happening this time. He's demanded Republicans redraw maps to create more safe seats for themselves in the House of Representatives, held last week's unusual midterm convention and tried to change election rules even as states begin to send out ballots.

The advice for judges asked to approve search warrants for ballots, for example, was inspired by the Trump administration's seizure of 2020 ballots and other election records in Fulton County, Georgia, which includes Atlanta, based on old, disproven conspiracy theories.

Rick Hasen, a UCLA Law professor and director of the school's Safeguarding Democracy Project, noted that Trump has expressed regret



US National Guard are deployed outside the federal prison in downtown Los Angeles on June 8, 2025, following a immigration raid protest the night before. (AP)

that he didn't take more aggressive action to overturn the 2020 results, such as ordering voting machines to be seized.

"All these things take what was off the wall and put it on the wall," Hasen said. He said that while it is important not to unduly scare voters about what might happen, it's "hard to walk the line between alarmism and complacency."

Last year, Democrats worried that

Trump might intervene in off-year elections in California, Virginia and elsewhere, only to have voting go smoothly with no clashes with the federal government.

"The only 'fears' Americans have about our elections are being fueled by extreme liberal Democrats who refuse to support commonsense legislation that ensures Americans, and Americans only, decide our elections and other basic election secu-

rity measures like Voter ID," White House spokeswoman Lauren Blis said in a statement.

Still, the stakes are far higher in the midterms, which will determine whether Republicans continue to control both houses of Congress. So far Trump has been unable to change voting procedures before the midterms.

Courts halted Trump's first attempt to reshape election rules via executive order last year. The president backed a bill in Congress to make even more sweeping changes but it's stalled in the Senate because of opposition from Democrats and some Republicans.

Also:

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump's proposal to send \$5,000 to every American adult if his Republican Party maintains control of the House and Senate in the November election needs congressional approval, House Speaker **Mike Johnson** said Sunday, while pledging to try to make it happen.

Trump made the unusual pitch at the party's midterm convention in Dallas last week, promising a "Trump Dividend" if voters keep the GOP in power on Capitol Hill. The president later told CBS News Texas that he did not think Congress would need to authorize the

payments, though he did not specify how he could spend more than \$1 trillion without lawmakers' authorization.

But Johnson, R-La., said congressional approval is needed. "I would assume, yes, he'd need Congress to act, and that's a creative idea," he said.

A few hours later, Trump said he would deliver on his promise. "The 5,000's going to happen, 100%," he told reporters before boarding Air Force One in Ireland, where he attended a pro golf tournament at his resort.

Johnson, meanwhile, said he would work to get Trump's proposal through Congress despite a small Republican margin.

"He's the big ideas president. We're going to try to implement everything we can," he said. "I commit that Congress will work through it and find consensus on that like they have to do everything else."

The dubious election-year gambit could cost more than \$1 trillion, putting further strains on the country's nearly \$1.8 trillion annual budget deficit and exacerbating concerns of inflation. The economy is confronted by persistent inflation and increasing interest rates, a tough combination for governing Republicans as they seek to hold on to control of Congress.



This photo provided by Westport Fire Department shows flash flooding in Westport, Conn. on Sept 13. (AP)

Drenching rains bring flash flooding across coastal Connecticut, NY and NJ

WESTPORT, Conn, Sept 14, (AP): Flash flooding brought on by heavy rains prompted road closures, water rescues and commuter rail problems across the tristate area Sunday.

The National Weather Service said the hardest-hit areas appeared to be northern New Jersey, parts of New York's Westchester County and a swath of coastal Connecticut along Interstate 95. The service issued flash flood warnings across the region for much of the morning Sunday as rain fell at a rate of 1 to 2 inches (2.5 to 5 centimeters) an hour in places.

Metro-North and Amtrak said their rail lines to New Haven, which serve Norwalk, Bridgeport and other major Connecticut communities, were experiencing delays and cancellations due to flooding impacts.

Tweed New Haven Airport also closed its departures terminal due to local flash flooding. Airport officials in a Facebook post said travelers with flights departing Sunday should not come until further notice.

Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont and other state officials, meanwhile, urged drivers to avoid flooded roadways and not to attempt to drive through standing water.

The coastal stretch from Norwalk to Westport was

among the most impacted in the state, receiving 6 to 7 inches (15 to 18 centimeters) of rain Sunday morning, with rainfall rates reaching 3 to 4 inches (8 to 10 centimeters) per hour.

In Westport, emergency responders conducted 13 rescues of people trapped in vehicles by floodwaters, according to the fire department. Photos and videos shared on social media showed downtown businesses inundated.

"Even as the rain subsides, standing water and other hazards may remain," the department cautioned on Facebook. "Residents should continue to avoid flooded roads, never drive around barricades, and give emergency crews room to work."

In Bridgeport, the fire department said in a social media post it answered "call after call" on Sunday, including deploying boats "to rescue residents from flooded areas and bring them to safety." Photos shared by the department showed residents being helped into a boat from the door of a house, with rescuers standing in knee-deep water outside.

The heavy rains also forced multiple road closures and some water rescues in White Plains and other major communities in New York's Westchester County.

Sweden may wait long for new govt as opp'n narrowly ahead in election

STOCKHOLM, Sept 14, (AP): Sweden may face a long wait for a new government as preliminary election results on Monday showed a thin and still-uncertain lead for the left-leaning opposition, while a hard-right anti-immigration party saw its support slip.

With nearly 95% of districts counted, the Swedish Election Authority reported that the four opposition parties were heading for 176 seats in the 349-seat parliament in Stockholm, the Riksdag, with 173 seats going to the four parties that make up or support the outgoing conservative-led government.

But the outcome may not be clear until early votes, including overseas ballots, which didn't make it to polling stations by Election Day, are counted on Wednesday.

It could be much longer until it's clear who will run NATO's newest member for the next four years. Sweden, a country of about 10.6 million inhabitants, is also a member of the European Union.

Former Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson's center-left Social Democrats were set to finish as the biggest single party, despite losing some support, and Andersson hopes to win back the job she lost in 2022. But if the left-leaning parties do emerge with a majority, she will face a complicated task to translate it into a government because of tensions within that bloc.



Tobias Baudin, party secretary of the Social Democrats, takes questions from the press outside the party's headquarters in Stockholm, a day after the vote in a general election on Sept 14. (AP)

Current Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson remarked that "if all the red lines remain in place, then Sweden won't have a government at all," public broadcaster SVT reported. He added that he intends to "explore a number of possibilities that may exist."

Mikael Damberg, a prominent Social Democrat, said that "all parties will have to do some giving and taking, and we will do that too," Swedish news agency TT reported.

Kristersson has led Sweden since 2022 with a three-party center-right coalition. It relied on outside sup-

port from the Sweden Democrats, an anti-immigration party that has far-right roots but has moved toward the political mainstream, for a parliamentary majority.

Kristersson had held out the prospect of Cabinet seats for the Sweden Democrats this time - if the governing coalition won. Still, their performance was disappointing: preliminary results showed their support slipping to just under 18%, down about 3 percentage points from four years ago, and they fell behind Kristersson's Moderates to land in third place.

Europe

Kosovo gets new government: Kosovo lawmakers on Sunday voted into office a new government of Prime Minister Albin Kurti following an early election in June in the small Balkan nation that remains locked in a prolonged political crisis.

Kurti's government received support from a slim majority of 62 lawmakers in the 120-member assembly. Opposition lawmakers boycotted the session, accusing Kurti of violating postelection procedures.

Disagreements between key political players in Kosovo have led to an impasse over more than 18 months, which has not been resolved despite two early ballots.

Lawmakers failed to elect deputy speakers of the assembly. Opposition parties insisted on their election before the vote on the new government is held.

The crisis first started after an election in February 2025, when no party won enough votes to form a government. An early election in December 2025 ended with Kurti forming the government but parties could not agree on the president.

To choose a president, Kosovo's 120-member assembly needs a quorum of at least 80 lawmakers, which Kurti did not have. (AP)



Kosovo's then acting Prime Minister and Vetevendosje party leader Albin Kurti addresses media after voting in parliamentary election in Pristina, Kosovo on June 7. (AP)

Migrant boat stranded in Greece, 1 dead: A boat carrying migrants from Libya to the island of Crete took on water and became stranded, leaving at least one dead while 20 are believed to be missing, authorities in Greece said.

The Greek coast guard said 51 people were rescued from the site early Monday, some 75 kilometers (47 miles) south of Crete. Patrol boats, a helicopter and a drone as well as commercial vessels were involved in the search assisted by the European Union border protection agency, Frontex.

The perilous route across the Mediterranean from eastern Libya to Crete has become one of the busiest into Europe for illegal migration, as their numbers on other routes are broadly lower. (AP)

'Oust prosecutor gen over graft turmoil': Ukrain-

ian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged parliament Monday to move quickly on ousting Prosecutor General Ruslan Kravchenko, as a series of graft investigations pushed tensions to a new high.

Kravchenko submitted his resignation last week, calling it a "conscious political decision," after a corruption investigation reached his office. Investigators have accused one of his subordinates of running a fraud scheme, though Kravchenko himself has not been charged or named a suspect.

Various corruption scandals have hurt Zelenskyy's approval ratings at a time when Ukraine is still fighting for survival against Russia's 4 1/2-year full-scale invasion.

On Monday, Kravchenko said he had issued a formal notice of investigation of Semen Kryvonos, who leads the National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU), one of the agencies that had examined his office's conduct.

Kravchenko also posted a video on Telegram accusing Kryvonos of using fraudulent means to escape accountability for a corruption-related offense dating back to 2008.

Kravchenko's announcement that he was traveling abroad while his future was being decided drew public criticism. (AP)

Poland pledges to strengthen security after Russian drone strikes along border with Ukraine

KYIV, Ukraine, Sept 14, (AP): Poland pledged increased security along its border with Ukraine after a wave of Russian drone strikes near the frontier, including two that landed within kilometers of Polish territory.

The move came as Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk warned that Moscow appears poised to intensify its campaign against Ukraine's borders with European countries. Ukraine is under mounting pressure from Russia's intensifying air campaign that uses ballistic missiles and jet-powered drones to pierce defenses.

"These coming weeks and months will be a time of very intensified actions on the Russian side, and unfortunately we cannot rule out that this escalation will also affect our territory," Tusk said Sunday after a governmental security briefing in Warsaw. He issued a similar warning on Thursday.

Defense Minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz said Monday in a post on X that the Polish army recovered what was believed to be a Russian military drone from the Baltic Sea near the coastal village of Jaroslawiec.

Polish officials said intelligence reports, including a CIA briefing last week, suggested Russia was likely to attack border points and intensify sabotage actions inside European countries as part of its efforts to discourage partners from supporting Ukraine.

Tusk said he would consult NATO allies on preparing a potential joint response.

Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski underscored the alliance's military edge in a social media post, saying that in the event of Russian aggression against NATO, European NATO air forces, without U.S. participation, would be capable of destroying half of Russia's oil refineries faster than Ukraine.

Deputy Defense Minister Cezary Tomczyk described Sunday's drone strikes as a serious escalation from Russia. He told broadcaster TVN24 on Monday that any spillover into European countries could take the form of sabotage or a sharp intensification of hybrid warfare "on a scale that we have not seen before," or other actions along NATO's borders.

The warnings followed a strike Sunday on a train near the Ukraine-Poland border, minutes after a diplomatic delegation that included former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and former Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt had passed through the same station, according to Ukraine's state rail operator. A second strike hit near a separate border crossing point between Poland and Ukraine.

Kaja Kallas, the European Union's top diplomat, said Monday that the drone attacks near Poland's border were "clearly meant to scare Western countries from supporting Ukraine."

"We should show that we are there for Ukraine and we are not scared," she said.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Ukrzaliznytsia Railway Company Press Office, a locomotive damaged in a Russian drone attack is seen at Yahodyn railway station near Ukraine's border with Poland, Ukraine Sept 13. (AP)

Muslim region in southern Philippines votes in first parliamentary elections

MANILA, Philippines, Sept 14, (AP): A predominantly Muslim region in the southern Philippines held its first parliamentary elections on Monday, seen as a crucial step in the long quest for self-rule after decades of insurgency and violence.

A shooting in Cotabato killed three people and injured 15 late Sunday, prompting the Commission on Elections to temporarily take over the administration of the city. Police were investigating. Another person was killed Monday in a commotion that broke out in a Cotabato polling center. Still, officials said the elections were generally peaceful.

The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao was set up under a 2014 peace deal that saw the largest Muslim rebel group give up the goal of a separate Muslim state in the south of the largely Roman Catholic country in exchange for broader autonomy. The group's 40,000 fighters promised to demobilize and join civilian life.

In other incidents, the town of Maluso on Basilan Island also was put under the commission's control after pre-shaded ballots were found in 36 out of 68 precincts. Commission on Elections Chairman Erwin Garcia said he immediately ordered the reprinting of ballots while voting will be delayed there. He said those responsible will be held accountable.

As of early Monday, 98.1% of the region's precincts were able to open, according to the commission.

"Whoever wins, hopefully we will see change in our place," said Sittie Ashuya L. H. Omar, a 22-year-old voter from Marawi city. "Hopefully they can implement their promises"

In May 2017, Islamic State group-linked militants laid siege on Marawi, triggering five months of ground assaults and airstrikes that left more than 1,100 people, mostly militants, dead and destroyed the mosque-studded city's commercial and residential districts.

Since the 1970s, about 150,000 combatants and civilians have died in the southern Philippines, while development was stunted in the country's poorest region. Western and Asian governments feared the tenacious insurgencies could help foster Islamic extremism in Southeast Asia. With bombing attacks and kidnappings, Mindanao used to be a haven for al-Qaida and the IS before a US-backed Philippine offensive weakened the militants.

More than 20,000 soldiers and police forces were deployed for elections, while troops carrying long arms patrolled roadsides.

There are 80 seats at stake in the elections that will determine members of parliament. The region comprises five provinces, three cities and 63 villages with nearly 2.4 million voters. Election officials said they expected an 80% turnout after polling was postponed for several years.

The region's chief minister, who heads the executive branch, will be elected by parliament in its first session.



A Muslim woman votes at the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao parliamentary elections at a school in Lanao del Sur province, southern Philippines, on Sept 14. (AP)

Rescuers intensify search effort for 129 missing in Java Sea

Thick haze disrupts flights on Indonesia's Borneo island

PONTIANAK, Indonesia, Sept 14, (AP): Thick smoke from forest fires has disrupted airline flights for several days in Indonesia's West Kalimantan province as an intensifying El Niño weather pattern and a prolonged dry season worsen the impact of blazes.

Since Friday, a thick white and yellowish haze has blanketed the city of Pontianak, reducing visibility to less than 1 kilometer (0.62 miles).

Poor air quality and limited visibility have also hampered firefighting efforts, carried out with equipment from Japan that arrived on Thursday.

Across Indonesia, seasonal forest fires are beginning to subside, but thick haze still shrouds parts of the island of Kalimantan. In a written statement on Monday, the Ministry of Forestry stated that the latest monitoring data shows a significant decrease in so-called "high-confidence" hot spots, strongly suspected to be caused by forest fires, in Central Kalimantan and West Kalimantan. There are no high-confidence hot spots in Riau province.

"The thick smoke we're currently experiencing, if we look in the direction the wind is blowing, is also smoke carried here from other provinces on the island of Kalimantan that are also on fire," said the head of the Disaster Information Task Force at the West Kalimantan Provincial Disaster Management Agency, Daniel, who like other Indonesians only uses a single name.

Residents are also beginning to hope that the smoke from the forest fires, which have been burning for over a month, will soon dissipate so that it no longer poses a health threat.

"Hopefully, we pray to God for His protection; may we be blessed by Allah, and may rain fall once again on the land of Pontianak," said Aminah, a resident of Pontianak.



Thick haze from forest fires blanket the city of Pontianak in West Kalimantan, Indonesia on Sept 14. (AP)

Fires continue to burn in several parts of Kalimantan, particularly in the provinces of West and Central Kalimantan, according to Indonesia's National Disaster Management Agency. The Forestry Ministry recorded more than 202,000 hectares of burned land between January and July, an area nearly three times the size of Singapore.

Also:

BANJARMASIN, Indonesia: The search for survivors of a capsized ferry in Indonesia intensified Monday as 17 ships and aircraft from the military, police and other agencies were deployed to join the search for 129 missing after a ferry overturned in the Java Sea on Sunday.

The bodies of six passengers and 108 were rescued Sunday by search teams, which increased to 655 personnel on Monday, National Search and Rescue Agency chief **Mohammad Syafii** said.

Authorities deployed specialized underwater teams and underwater thermal drones operated by the navy to strengthen the search effort and speed up the evacuation of victims, he said.

Live-fire drill demonstrates 'huge destructive power', says N.Korea

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 14, (AP): North Korea said Monday it conducted a joint live-fire drill involving missiles, artillery and drones that it claimed demonstrated "huge destructive power."

The test included firing different types of weapons simultaneously, likely aiming at developing the ability to overwhelm South Korean and US air defenses.

Experts say North Korea is not slowing its testing activities even after US President Donald Trump recently scaled back a military exercise with South Korea in an apparent effort to revive diplomacy with leader **Kim Jong Un**.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency said Saturday's drill was meant to practice the operations of an integrated weapons control system. South Korea's military earlier said it detected short-range ballistic missile launches from North Korea's eastern coastal Wonsan area on Saturday morning.

After observing the firing drill, North Korean Marshal Pak Jong Chon said the drill would "improve the level of specialization to bring down the enemy's armed forces organizationally and structurally once an order is issued." He added that the weapons systems mobilized demonstrated "the huge destructive power of concentrated fire," according to KCNA.

It's extremely difficult to independently verify North Korean claims on its weapons tests. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said several missiles fired Saturday each flew about 250 kilometers (155 miles) toward North Korea's eastern waters. The flight distances signal that the weapons are designed to strike targets in South Korea including US military bases.



Kim

UN extends partial Sudan arms embargo for month while talks continue on US demand for total ban

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 14, (AP): The UN Security Council voted unanimously Friday to briefly extend the arms embargo on Sudan's western Darfur region while negotiations continue on a contentious U.S. proposal to expand the embargo throughout the country to pressure the warring parties to end their more than three-year conflict.

The uphill struggle the United States and its allies face during the monthlong extension was evident in speeches after the vote. Russia, which holds veto power in the council and backs the Sudanese government in its fight against paramilitary forces, vowed to prevent any expansion of the arms embargo.

Moscow made its "red lines" clear during closed negotiations, Russia's deputy UN ambassador Anna Evstigneeva said. "We will not allow even a hint of broadening the restrictions by the council on Sudan."

The Security Council imposed an arms embargo on the vast Darfur region after violence erupted in 2003 when rebels took up arms against the authoritarian government in Khartoum, then led by Omar al-Bashir. The government responded with air attacks and a ground offensive by local nomadic Arab militias known as the Janjaweed, who are accused of mass killings and rapes. Up to 300,000 people died in the conflict and 2.7 million fled their homes.

At a council meeting on Aug 24, the United States urged a country-wide arms embargo to push the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces to negotiate an end to fighting that began in April 2023. The current war has killed at least 59,000 people, though aid groups warn the number could be much higher. It has displaced some 13 million people and pushed parts of the country into famine, creating one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

Evstigneeva asked why the US was trying to expand the arms embargo now when government forces "have a definite advantage on the ground," and not in 2023 when the RSF was threatening the capital, Khartoum, and other cities.

It is the government that guarantees the country's unity and institutions, and protects its civilians, she said.

China's deputy UN ambassador Sun Lei warned that extending the embargo would worsen the humanitarian situation and might lead to the fragmentation of Sudan, which would threaten regional stability.

Sudan's UN Ambassador Al-Harith Mohamed told the council that a total arms embargo goes against the UN Charter's guarantee that countries have the right to self-defense and their armed forces have the right to produce and acquire weapons to protect their sovereignty.

But US deputy ambassador Jeffrey Bartos said another long-term extension of the Darfur embargo "is not an option," calling it outdated and "insufficient to address the realities of the war today." The council also needs to sanction people who commit "horrific actions," including violence, kidnapping for ransom and attacks on humanitarian personnel, he said.

"Inaction means more suffering and death," Bartos warned. "That is unacceptable, and we refuse to rubber stamp another year of maintaining the status quo."

He reiterated the US call for an end to the flow of arms to the belligerents from external parties. And he decried the attacks on aid convoys, pointing to last week's loss of over 50 metric tons of aid in an aerial attack on clearly identified World Food Program trucks in South Kordofan.

WFP acting director Carl Skau said in an interview with The Associated Press during his recent visit to Sudan that a lack of funding has forced the agency to reduce the number of people it assists from about 5 million at the beginning of the year to 3.5 million. "We risk now having to cut even further," he warned.

"The world keeps sending weapons when they should be sending food and shelter, and when the focus and the energy and effort should really be on trying to bring an end to this conflict," Skau said.



A fish vendor pushes a trolley at a fish market, in Khartoum, Sudan on Sept 8. (AP)

Africa

Road crash in South Africa kills 21: Two minibus taxis collided head-on and a third vehicle crashed into them on one of South Africa's main highways, killing at least 21 people and leaving four seriously injured, authorities said Monday.

The crash on Sunday night in the Western Cape Province took place between the small towns of Prince Albert and Leeu-Gamka, around 380 kilometers (236 miles) east of Cape Town, the Road Traffic Management Corporation said.

The agency added that the death toll "may change as emergency services and authorities in the Western Cape continue their assessment of the scene."

Minibus taxis are the main mode of public transport for millions of people in South Africa and are often involved in fatal collisions. Two separate crashes involving minibus taxis in January left at least 25 people dead, including 14 children.

Three of the victims in Sunday night's crash were rushed to a hospital but were declared dead on arrival there, police said. (AP)

□ □ □

8 dead in South Africa head-on collision: Eight people, including two minors, were killed in a head-on collision in South Africa's northeastern Mpumalanga Province early Sunday morning, local authorities said.

The crash, involving a Toyota sedan and a Volkswagen sedan, occurred at about 1:30 a.m. local time (2330 Saturday GMT) on the N17 toll road between Ermelo and Davel, near the Ermelo Toll Plaza, the Mpumalanga Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison said.

It said that seven of those killed were traveling in the Volkswagen, while the eighth victim was the driver and sole occupant of the Toyota, and no other injuries were reported.



Members of the elite tactical police unit escort six Nigerian nationals being extradited to US for participating in romance scams, in Cape Town, South Africa on Sept 11. (AP)

The cause of the accident remains under investigation. Authorities said reckless or negligent driving had not been ruled out as a possible factor. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

Nigerians extradited to US: Six Nigerian nationals linked to an organized criminal network that allegedly swindled American women out of over \$6 million through online scams will be extradited to the United States, South African police said.

The men, who were arrested in the South African city of Cape Town in 2021, are set to be handed over to officials from the FBI on Friday and transported to the US to face wire fraud and money laundering charges.

They are accused of belonging to a criminal network known as the Black Axe, which Interpol describes as being part of criminal groups responsible for a significant share of the world's cyber-enabled financial fraud, typically through romance scams, cryptocurrency and investment scams. (AP)

Brazil Supreme Court justice unseals investigation into Bolsonaro biopic

RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept 14, (AP): A Brazilian Supreme Court justice on Sunday unsealed an investigation into the production of a film about former President Jair Bolsonaro, pointing in his decision to suspicions the movie's financing had ties to a criminal network.

The suspicions laid out in Justice Flávio Dino's decision may complicate matters further for Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro, only weeks before October's national elections in which he will challenge President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

Sen. Bolsonaro, the ex-leader's eldest son, is under investigation for corruption, money laundering and tax evasion for receiving millions of dollars from a disgraced banker to finance the biopic about his father, titled "Dark Horse."

Dino, a Lula appointee who oversees one of the investigations into the film, said the hypothesis that there existed a sophisticated scheme for the allocation and diversion of public funds involving federal congressional budget amendments and the Sao Paulo city government had strengthened.

On Thursday, Brazil's federal police targeted federal lawmaker and Bolso-



Brazil's former president Jair Bolsonaro stands at the entrance of his home while he is under house arrest in Brasilia, Brazil on Sept. 2, 2025. (AP)

naro ally Mário Frias in an operation.

Police seized documents from the film's production company and from Frias, who sent about 2 million reais (\$400,000) to a nonprofit linked to the film. They suspect a criminal organization channeled funds to companies that were irregularly subcontracted, without evidence that the contracted services were provided.

The judge said Sunday that there were strong indications that Frias, who held a cabinet position during Bolsonaro's term, played a central role within the alleged criminal network.

The network may also have links to the criminal organization the First Command of the Capital, or PCC, Dino said. U.S. President Donald Trump declared the group a foreign terrorist organization earlier this year.

For the fourth consecutive year

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait hosts ABK Juniors event for employees' children

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) organized its ABK Juniors event for employees' children for the fourth consecutive year at its Head Office, with broad participation from children and their parents from across various divisions. The event reflects the Bank's continued commitment to strengthening family bonds and promoting an inclusive and supportive work-place environment.

The event featured a wide range of entertaining activities, including face painting, instant photography for participants, science shows, treasure hunt competitions, and prizes for the winners. Children also took part in tours of the main vault, safe deposit box area, surveillance camera room, and central data room, in addition to learning how ATMs and cash-counting machines operate.

A financial literacy workshop was also organized to introduce the children to the nature of their parents' work and highlight the importance of saving and early financial planning in a simple and engaging manner, creating a joyful and enjoyable atmosphere for all attendees.



Afrah Alarbash

On this occasion, Afrah Alarbash, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, said that organizing the event stems from the Bank's firm belief that its employees are its true asset and that supporting their family stability has a direct positive impact on their professional performance.

She stated, "Seeing the smiles



Handing over ID cards to children.



Children visiting staff offices.



Joy on the face of a participant.



Entertainment activities.

on our employees' children's faces and introducing them to the role their parents play in supporting the Bank's journey of success is a genuine investment that

strengthens the loyalty of our team members and reinforces the values of dedication and belonging."

Alarbash added that the remarkable success and strong turnout wit-

nessed by the event for the fourth consecutive year confirm the success of the Bank's approach to remaining close to its employees and their families. She noted that ABK Juniors has

become an annual occasion eagerly anticipated by everyone, helping renew positive energy and strengthen the spirit of one family within ABK. She added that with each edition,

the Bank is keen to further develop the activities and programs to provide a more interactive experience, building on the positive feedback and strong engagement witnessed year after year. This encourages ABK to continue introducing distinctive initiatives that foster an exemplary workplace environment balancing professional ambition with family stability.

Alarbash reaffirmed the Bank's ongoing commitment to organizing initiatives that combine work and enjoyment while giving employees' children the opportunity to become familiar with the environment in which their parents spend their working days, thereby strengthening their sense of pride.

She also highlighted ABK's commitment to providing a positive workplace environment that extends beyond employees' day-to-day responsibilities to encompass their family and social wellbeing, stressing that the Bank will continue organizing such initiatives, which also contribute to building a new generation with greater financial awareness.

Alarbash concluded, "The enthusiasm and excitement we witnessed among the children, and the pride they expressed in seeing their parents' offices and learning how they work, represent the true value of gatherings such as these. This event is also a message of thanks and appreciation to every family that stands behind the excellence of our employees and supports them every day. We believe that strengthening social bonds within the Bank directly contributes to creating a productive workplace environment capable of achieving success through a strong spirit of teamwork."

UAE Vice Pres. visits Kuwait pavilion

Kuwait pavilion unites ministry, Kuwait Airways, KHOA at ATM

DUBAI, Sept 14, (KUNA): Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information Dr. Nasser Muhaissen said on Monday that Kuwait's participation in Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2026 in Dubai reflects the ministry's efforts to strengthen Kuwait's presence on the regional and international tourism map and promote it as a diverse destination with development and investment potential.

In a statement to KUNA, the Ministry of Information said Kuwait is showcasing its tourism identity, "Visit Kuwait," at the exhibition, which runs through Sept 17, with participation from the ministry's Tourism Affairs Department, Kuwait Airways and the Kuwait Hotel Owners Association (KHOA).

Undersecretary Nasser Muhaissen said strengthening the "Visit Kuwait" identity represents an important step toward presenting Kuwait as a unified tourism destination, noting that the ministry is working to coordinate promotional efforts and highlight the country's tourism attractions to raise awareness and attract visitors from target markets.

He said Kuwait's participation goes beyond promotion to include direct engagement with tourism and travel industry leaders, exploring emerging trends and opportunities for cooperation and partnerships that could support the growth of Kuwait's tourism sector.

He also stressed the importance of cooperation between the public and private sectors, saying the participation of Kuwait Airways and KHOA alongside the ministry reflects an integrated approach covering destination promotion, air transport, accommodation and hospitality.

Kuwait Airways Public Relations Director Yousef Al-Dhafiri said that Kuwait Airways' participation un-

derlines its role as a key partner in supporting tourism in Kuwait. He noted that the exhibition provides an opportunity to engage with airlines, travel companies and tour operators and explore cooperation to enhance Kuwait's accessibility as a tourism destination.

On his part, KHOA Vice Chairman Abdelilah Marafie said the participation of the hotel sector would help promote Kuwait's hospitality offering to regional and international markets. He stressed the importance of public-private cooperation in developing tourism and presenting an integrated tourism product.

The Kuwaiti pavilion serves as a unified platform, showcasing promotional content on the country's destinations, attractions and tourism experiences, alongside aviation and hospitality services.

The participation also includes meetings with travel companies, tour operators and hospitality representatives to explore partnerships and promote Kuwait through regional and international tourism programs.

Arabian Travel Market is one of the region's leading travel and tourism exhibitions, bringing together representatives from tourism, aviation, hotels, hospitality, travel companies and tour operators.

UAE Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum visited Monday Kuwait's pavilion at the Arabian Travel Market 2026, held at Dubai World Trade Centre.

Sheikh Mohammad was received at the pavilion by Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information Dr. Nasser Mohaysen, Kuwait Consul General in Dubai and the Northern Emirates Khaled Al-Zaabi, and members of the Kuwaiti delegation.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" has renewed its sponsorship of the LOYAC AC Milan Football Academy for the 2026/2027 season, continuing a strategic partnership with LOYAC that dates back to 2009. The partnership forms part of Markaz's long-term commitment to building human capacity and empowering young people.

Since its inception, the partnership has contributed to the training of more than 1,400 young players in a professional environment built around an internationally recognized training curriculum and led by qualified coaches. The program impact extends beyond developing players' technical skills and physical fitness to instilling discipline, commitment, teamwork and self-confidence, helping prepare young people to take greater initiative and participate more actively in society.

The academy also provides players with opportunities to participate in tournaments organized by AC Milan in Italy, giving them competitive experience beyond the local training environment. Its team became the first from the Arab world to participate in the International Peace Tournament for Youth in Italy. The academy subsequently continued its participation.

Commenting on the partnership, Ms. Deena AlRefai, Executive Vice President and Head of Wealth Management and Business Development at Markaz, said: "Renewing our partnership with the LOYAC AC Milan Football Academy for a seventeenth season reflects Markaz's long-term commitment to building human capacity and empowering young people. Over the course of the partnership, the academy has provided a platform for more



Markaz X AC Milan group photo

than 1,400 young players to hone their skills while developing discipline, teamwork and self-confidence. At Markaz, we believe the impact of sport reaches far beyond the pitch, helping young people become active members of society who are better equipped to pursue their ambitions. Youth empowerment is a national priority and one of the most important investments we can make in Kuwait's future."

Ms. Fareah Al-Saqqaf, Chairperson of LOYAC, added: "Our partnership with Markaz is a model of effective collaboration between the private sector and civil society organizations. Its continuity has enabled us to plan with a long-term perspective, develop the academy season after season and provide a professional training environment where young players can hone their skills and measure their progress against international standards. The partnership reflects our shared vision for empowering Kuwait's youth, and we look forward

to building on its impact during the new season."

Markaz's support for the academy forms part of its broader commitment to Human Capacity Building, the first pillar of its social responsibility strategy. Through its longstanding partnership with LOYAC, Markaz has supported professional development through the Al Jawhar program and podcast; leadership and personal development through "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" workshops and the Young Leaders Program in the United Kingdom; community participation through initiatives including Winter Clothing, Green Volunteering and Ramadan Basket; and youth development through sport. Together, these initiatives reflect Markaz's long-term approach to social responsibility, built on sustained partnerships that equip young people with practical skills, broaden their exposure and empower them to contribute meaningfully to Kuwait's future.

About Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz"

Established in 1974, Kuwait Financial Centre K.P.S.C "Markaz" is one of the leading asset management and investment banking institutions in the MENA region with total assets under management of over KD 1.57 billion (USD 5.11 billion) as of 30 June 2026. Markaz was listed on the Boursa Kuwait in 1997. Over the years, Markaz has pioneered innovation through the creation of new investment channels. These channels enjoy unique characteristics and help Markaz widen investors' horizons. Examples include Mumtaz (the first domestic mutual fund), MREF (the first real estate investment fund in Kuwait), Forsa Financial Fund (the first options fund in the GCC since 2005), and the GCC Momentum Fund (the first passive fund of its kind in Kuwait and across GCC that follows the momentum methodology), all conceptualized, established, and managed by Markaz.

Highlighting Jazeera Airways' growing UAE network, increased frequencies

Jazeera Airways advances commitment to strengthen Kuwait-UAE connectivity

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Jazeera Airways welcomed H.E. Dr. Matar Hamed Al Neyadi, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the State of Kuwait, to its headquarters for discussions focused on UAE's strong relationship with Kuwait and the important role that direct air connectivity plays in supporting tourism, business, trade and people-to-people ties between the two countries.

Over the past year, Jazeera Airways has significantly expanded its presence in the UAE, tripling its network from one to three destinations with services connecting Kuwait to Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Al Ain. The airline has also continued to increase frequencies in response to growing passenger demand, strengthening travel options between Kuwait and key cities across the UAE.

Jazeera Airways currently operates 37 weekly flights between Kuwait and the UAE, including 23 weekly flights to Dubai, 11 to Abu Dhabi and three to Al Ain, providing passengers with greater choice and flexibility for both business and leisure travel.

Since commencing its current services to Abu Dhabi and Al Ain, Jazeera Airways has carried more than 60,000 passengers on the two routes, demonstrating growing demand for direct connectivity beyond Dubai and the potential for further development of the airline's UAE network.

The airline also maintained its commitment to serving the UAE market during the unprecedented regional disruption earlier this year. Following the closure of Kuwait International Airport on 28 February, Jazeera Airways launched Mission Barakah and continued operating through an alternative operational model via Saudi Arabia. This helped



Jazeera Airways welcomes UAE Ambassador Dr. Matar Hamed Al Neyadi to its headquarters to discuss Kuwait-UAE ties and air connectivity.

maintain vital connectivity for passengers during one of the most challenging periods for regional aviation.

Barathan Pasupathi, Chief Executive Officer, Jazeera Airways, said:

"The UAE is one of our most important regional markets and an integral part of Jazeera Airways' growth strat-

egy. Over the past year, we have tripled our UAE network from one to three destinations and continued to add frequencies as demand has grown. Today, with 37 weekly flights connecting Kuwait with Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Al Ain, we are giving our customers more choice while supporting the strong movement of people, trade and tourism

between our two countries.

"Our commitment to this market was particularly evident during the regional disruption earlier this year. Even under extremely challenging circumstances, we continued to find ways to keep our passengers moving and maintain connectivity with the UAE. We see significant potential for further growth and look forward to working closely with our partners in the UAE to strengthen these links in the years ahead."

H.E. Dr. Matar Hamed Al Neyadi, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the State of Kuwait, said:

"The relationship between the United Arab Emirates and the State of Kuwait is built on deep historical bonds, close brotherhood and strong economic and social ties. Air connectivity plays an important role in bringing our people and economies even closer together, supporting tourism, business and wider cooperation between our two countries.

"We welcome Jazeera Airways' continued expansion in the UAE and its growing services to Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Al Ain. Increasing connectivity and providing travellers with greater choice contributes positively to the continued development of relations between our two brotherly nations, and we look forward to seeing these links grow further."

Jazeera Airways has a longstanding relationship with the UAE market. The airline first launched direct services between Kuwait and Dubai in October 2005 and has continued to invest in its UAE network to develop short-haul connectivity across the GCC and provide affordable, convenient travel options from Kuwait to key regional destinations.

Integrated banking experience for Kuveyt Türk & KFH-Egypt customers

KFH reinforces group service integration via three advanced service centers

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues to strengthen the integration of its Group services and deliver a more seamless and flexible banking experience through three dedicated KFH Group Service Centers located at Khaldiya, Mishref and Al-Qairawan branches. These centers are designed to serve existing and prospective customers of both Kuveyt Türk Bank and KFH-Egypt.

The centers provide integrated solutions under KFH umbrella, enabling customers to benefit from a wide range of services that cater to their diverse needs while enhancing access to the banking services offered by the Group’s banks. This initiative is in line with KFH’s strategy to boost integration among Group entities and reinforce its unified corporate vision, thereby enhancing customer experience and elevating service quality.

As part of its efforts to deepen integration across the Group and achieve its strategic objectives, KFH launched its first Group Service Center at Khaldiya branch in 2023. This was followed by the opening of a similar center at Mishref branch to serve Kuveyt Türk and KFH-Egypt customers, and subsequently the inauguration of the third center at the Al-Qairawan branch this year. The centers provide a range of specialized services designed to customer needs, offering a comprehensive banking experience within Kuwait, while KFH continues to explore opportunities to expand this initiative to other mar-



Al-Qairawan branch

kets across the Group’s footprint.

Currently, the Group Service Centers offer a variety of customer-focused services, including facilitating account opening procedures, updating personal and banking information, and providing technical support for the activation and use of digital banking applications of both Kuveyt Türk and KFH-Egypt.

The centers also provide services related to requesting, issuing, and delivering ATM cards linked to KFH-Egypt accounts, enabling customers to manage their accounts and conduct their banking transactions conveniently and securely.

The Group Service Centers cater to Personal Banking customers and above. The centers also enable customers to complete various banking transactions and receive immediate responses to their inquiries through dedicated and specialized staff, in accordance with the highest standards of service excellence, care, and follow-up.

The centers have witnessed notable customer turnout from those seeking to benefit from the services available to Kuveyt Türk and KFH-Egypt customers, reflecting the success of the initiative in strengthening connectivity among the Group’s entities and reinforcing KFH’s commitment to remaining close to its customers wherever they are.

‘Whoever wins with AI wins’

Trump flags risk of ceding AI edge to China, touts US lead

DUBLIN, Sept 14, (AP): President Donald Trump on Sunday played down the need for his administration to check the development of artificial intelligence, saying he worried about ceding America’s edge over China in a global competition and that winning would help address the risks from the advancing technology.

While acknowledging the need for some regulation, Trump provided no specifics about potential rules and attributed warnings about the technology moving too quickly and with little oversight to “negative forces” he did not identify, though industry pioneers have raised such concerns.

“We can put guardrails, we can do this and that, but I think you have a lot of negative forces that are bringing it up that ... shouldn’t be bringing it up, and they’re bringing up things that won’t happen,” Trump told reporters during a weekend trip to Ireland. “But whoever wins with AI wins.”

Asked later Sunday if he was trying to minimize the risks from AI, Trump said, “I’m not downplaying,” adding that artificial intelligence is “going to be more good than bad, but by a lot.” Speaking with reporters during the flight back to Washington, he repeated his earlier comment regarding the stakes for “whoever wins AI.”

The Republican president spoke a day after Dario Amodעי, CEO of the artificial intelligence company Anthropic, said the industry should put the brakes on its fast-moving development to give safety measures time to catch up. Other tech leaders, including Elon Musk and Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI, publicly agreed with Amodעי.

Asked by a reporter if the industry should slow down or be regulated, Trump said after watching a golfer tee off in the Irish Open at his resort in Doonbeg that the United States is leading China in the development of AI and “frankly, I want to keep it that way because whoever wins AI wins.”

Chinese President Xi Jinping is due at the White House later in September to meet with Trump, and AI likely will be among the items they discuss.

AI has become a major election-year issue in the U.S. as some of the country’s largest companies seed small towns with a national network of computing warehouses while Americans from both parties increasingly raise alarms about less farmland and water supplies and rising electricity bills. Trump has kept up his support for data centers even as both Republicans and Democrats run from them and many communities try to block them.

Former President Barack Obama, a Democrat, said his party should make AI a campaign issue.

“I would talk about this, and I would say, ‘Here’s our plan for safety, here’s our plan for making sure our kids are not corrupted by this.’ ... I would be thinking about the economic impacts in very concrete ways and understanding what does it mean if there’s going to be job displacement. Where is that going to hit? How are we going to respond?” he said at an event last week with the top Democrat in the U.S. House, New York Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, according to a transcript released by his office.

Kevin Hassett, director of the National Economic Council at the White House, said he expects meetings will be held this week involving administration officials who oversee cyber and science and technology policy to discuss the next steps. Trump also could meet with members of Congress,

some of whom have also been sounding alarms about the fast pace of AI development.

“I think the president wants to hear from them as well,” Hassett said.

U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson acknowledged the need for “some guardrails, some safety measures” so AI “doesn’t run away.” But, like Trump, he also wants to ensure the U.S. does not “lose our edge in the global competition on this with China because that would be a national security threat.”

Johnson, R-La., said industry leaders need to be summoned for “one big meeting and work this out together in the same room.” He said he has discussed the issue with Trump and believes a meeting held quickly should be the “next step.”

“So we’re going to pull everybody together and make sure we do this in the right way,” Johnson said, adding that it is a “top priority for me and for the Congress.”

“But we don’t need everybody to panic right now,” Johnson said. Jeffries criticized Republican leaders for allowing members to go back to their districts for the final part of September.

“We should take decisive action now so that we can slow down, as the CEOs have recently acknowledged, ... the pace of development in order to protect the American people and ensure that AI is proceeding safely,” Jeffries said. Action on AI will be a “high priority” when House Democrats meet Tuesday as a group.

Neither Johnson nor Jeffries provided concrete steps about what Congress might do. Lawmakers agree that more guardrails are needed, but even narrow attempts at imposing rules have fallen apart over the years, evidence of the congressional reluctance to regulate the technology industry.

Jacob Coxon, a former Anthropic employee who resigned over AI concerns and has gone public with his fears, argued for international rules along with industry self-regulation.

Coxon said he has grown concerned that AI models would soon gain super capabilities that could exceed human control.

“You’re building a human-level or superhuman-level mind, without understanding what it wants, or thinks, or the way it thinks,” Coxon said.

At a time of a fierce global competition for AI dominance, Coxon also urged cooperation between the U.S. and China, the two countries who are leading the race, to slow down and address safety.

“I do hope that the people in China who are looking at the same problems as we are, so they’re trying to build the same technology, will come to the same conclusion that it has to be done in a measured manner, and it should be easy to cooperate on some sort of mutual -- of mutual slowing,” Coxon said.

Otherwise, he said, “we risk running the same race with China, which could be equally dangerous.”

Tech founder and investor David Sacks responded to the AI leaders’ calls for regulation with a social media post challenging them. Sacks, co-chairman of a White House advisory council on science and technology, said Amodעי and other leaders are the ones setting the pace for development.

Sacks said they have the power to slow development on their own.

“The easiest way not to build superintelligence is for you to agree not to build it,” Sacks wrote.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: For those dreaming of becoming a millionaire, the opportunity remains within reach. Gulf Bank announced that 30 September 2026 is the final date to deposit and enter the KD 1.5 million grand prize draw, scheduled to take place on 10 February 2027.

As part of its ongoing efforts to reward customers, Gulf Bank also announced the winner of the KD 200,000 prize in the first draw held under the new draw structure.

The draw took place last week under the supervision of leading international audit firms RSM and Grant Thornton and was broadcast live across Gulf Bank’s social media channels, reaffirming the Bank’s commitment to the highest standards of transparency and credibility across its operations.

Under the new draw structure, the total prize pool has increased to KD 3.5 million. Upcoming draws include a KD 1.5 million grand prize and two prizes of KD 200,000 each.

The AIDanah Millionaire account is one of Gulf Bank’s flagship savings products, offering customers exceptional opportunities to win cash prizes worth millions of dinars. This reflects the Bank’s continued commitment to promoting a culture of saving and delivering a rewarding banking experience.

Gulf Bank remains committed to

AIDanah
Power Your Dreams

30 September
Last day to deposit and enter the AIDanah Millionaire Draw

KD 1,500,000
KD One Winner

Prize	Last Day to Deposit and Enter the Draw	Draw Date
KD 1,500,000	30 September 2026	10 February 2027
KD 200,000	31 August 2026	11 November 2026
KD 200,000	31 October 2026	13 January 2027

creating valuable opportunities that help customers fulfil their aspirations and enhance their quality of life, reinforcing its position as a trusted partner

to all segments of society as they work towards achieving their goals and ambitions.

Gulf Bank’s Wealth Management

team also provides AIDanah draw winners with specialised financial and investment advice to help them manage their wealth effectively and plan for their long-term financial future.

AIDanah customers enjoy a range of benefits. Most notably, it is the only account in Kuwait that carries forward winning chances from one year to the next, rewarding customers for their loyalty to Gulf Bank. With a minimum balance of just KD 200 required to enter the draws, customers have more opportunities to win throughout the year.

Customers’ chances of winning increase as their savings grow and the longer they maintain their balances, as part of a distinctive loyalty program designed to enhance the customer experience. The account also offers complete flexibility, allowing customers to deposit and withdraw at any time while remaining eligible for the draws.

As part of its commitment to strengthening financial literacy across society, and in support of the ‘Let’s Be Aware’ banking awareness campaign overseen by the Central Bank of Kuwait in cooperation with the Kuwait Banking Association, Gulf Bank highlighted the campaign’s key messages during the draw. This aimed to enhance customers’ financial awareness and educate them about the risks of electronic fraud and how to protect themselves.

‘Fearmongering’ on AI harms global governance

China hits back at Anthropic CEO’s call to curb its AI

BEIJING, Sept 14, (AP): China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Monday hit back at a call from the head of Anthropic for the U.S. to curb China’s artificial intelligence capabilities, which he issued as he argued for a global slowdown on AI development.

U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping are expected to discuss AI governance, among other topics, at a meeting planned on Sept. 24.

Anthropic CEO Dario Amodעי in a lengthy essay published on Saturday warned that a “Chinese lead in AI would pose grave danger for the United States and the world.” He called for continuing restrictions on sales of cutting-edge AI chips and chipmaking equipment to China in order to keep the U.S.’s AI edge.

China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded to a question about Amodעי’s essay by saying that all parties should work together on AI.

“Fearmongering, confrontation and vicious competition will only hinder the process of global AI governance which serves no one’s interest,” spokesperson Guo Jiakun said at a regular press conference on Monday.

On Sunday, President Donald Trump downplayed calls for his administration to step in to slow down AI development, saying that the U.S. was leading China on AI and that “whoever wins AI, wins.”

Amodעי also predicted that a swarm of AI “agents” could be able to take over the internet in six to 12 months unless researchers agree to slow down. He said that “global pacing will require cooperation with China, the autocratic country with by far the most advanced AI capabilities.”

U.S. President Donald Trump is expected to discuss topics including AI governance with Chinese leader Xi Jinping meeting planned for late September.

Chinese companies have developed powerful AI models that are often cheaper to use than advanced models from U.S.-based companies, even as by some mea-

sures, they are just as capable.

China’s Xi has called for the setting up of a global AI governance framework among Global South, while pitching China as a pioneer in establishing an open-source AI community.

The head of China’s Ministry of State Security has also called for “accelerating the establishment of a system for preventing and managing AI security risks” in a recent article.

In an editorial published Sunday, China’s state-run Global Times newspaper dismissed Amodעי’s essay as a veiled call to “contain” China. It said that Amodעי’s essay may appear on the surface to be focused on global AI security, but, that it is “packed with containment provisions targeting China and is, in essence, a ‘Cold War playbook’ for the AI sector.”

Amodעי’s essay was published a few days after the FBI, National Security Agency and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency issued a joint cybersecurity advisory last week, saying Chinese AI developers had engaged in “aggressive, malicious” efforts in extracting, or “distilling,” capabilities from some of the most advanced AI models in the U.S. like Anthropic’s Claude and OpenAI’s GPT.

China’s Commerce Ministry dismissed the U.S. claims as groundless and said “distillation” has been commonly used by many AI companies. It also said that the U.S. was pursuing a “monopoly of the AI industry.”

Both China and the U.S. want “to make sure the other side cannot establish a tech chokepoint over them,” said Lizzi C. Lee, a fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute’s Center for China Analysis.

“So from Beijing’s perspective, there is an obvious question: if the U.S. wants China to cooperate on frontier safety while also restricting its access to frontier compute, what exactly does that cooperation look like?” Lee said.

Trump calls on Ukraine to halt strikes on Russian refineries, citing global shortage

KYIV, Sept 14, (AP): U.S. President Donald Trump on Sunday called on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to halt strikes on Russian oil refineries and other infrastructure used to produce and distribute diesel, saying the attacks are causing a global shortage. He spoke after diesel prices in the U.S. hit a record on Friday, soaring past \$6 a gallon on average.

Ukraine has for months been targeting Russia’s oil and gas industry with long-range strikes, prompting fuel rationing across the country and causing Moscow to ban diesel exports in July, removing supplies from the already tight global market.

But the global crunch also came after the war on Iran curtailed oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz.

Fuel prices are weighing on Americans as they prepare to vote in midterm elections in November.

Trump was asked by a reporter if he had spoken with Zelenskyy following his recent conversation with Russia’s Vladimir Putin. He responded by calling on Zelenskyy to halt strikes against Russia.

“Mr. Zelenskyy has to do one thing. He has to stop knocking out diesel fuel in Russia,” Trump told reporters on the sidelines of the Irish Open, which is being played at his Doonbeg golf club.

“We spoke to Mr. Zelenskyy about it. There are plenty of other targets. Don’t hit diesel fuel, because that’s hurting, that’s hurting the world,” he said.

According to a report published Friday by the International Energy Agency, net exports of diesel and gasoline from the Gulf countries in August stood at “just over a quarter” of what they were before the war on Iran began in February.

“Disruptions to Russia’s refining system and a near-halt to product exports following intensified Ukrainian attacks have compounded these losses,” the IEA wrote. It added that in February, combined next exports of diesel and gasoline from the Gulf and

Russia “accounted for almost 45% of global seaborne trade.”

Kyiv says Russia’s oil industry both funds and directly fuels Moscow’s more than four-year-old invasion of Ukraine.

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

Civilians were killed and injured overnight into Sunday as Russia and Ukraine exchanged large-scale drone strikes.

Two people were killed and 14 more wounded near an oil and industrial hub in Russia’s Tatarstan, according to local officials, while Ukrainian authorities reported on Russian drones pummeling the Black Sea port of Odesa and starting a fire near a border crossing with Poland.

The two Russian civilians died after a drone slammed into a tree near their parked car in the city of Nizhnekamsk, according to the office of regional head Rustam Minnikhanov. Nizhnekamsk houses a key cluster of oil refineries and other industrial plants. Mayor Radmir Belyaev said that a fire had broken out at an unspecified “enterprise.”

Ukraine also claimed to have hit a major oil refinery in Slavyansk-on-Kuban, in Russia’s Krasnodar region near Crimea. The Defense Intelligence of Ukraine (DIU) agency said its drones struck a key oil processing unit and the refinery’s tank farm overnight into Sunday.

Krasnodar authorities said the strike on “an enterprise” in Slavyansk-on-Kuban injured three people and damaged an oil pipeline.

Russian forces shot down 389 Ukrainian drones during the night, Russia’s defense ministry said Sunday.

In Ukraine, at least nine people were injured in a “massive” Russian nighttime attack on Odesa, according to Serhii Lysak from the city’s military administration. Odesa is home to Ukraine’s main port hub on the Black Sea and has faced sustained drone and missile strikes, with Kyiv accusing Moscow of trying to choke off its exports.

A Russian drone attack on Saturday struck a residential high-rise in Odesa, killing two people and injuring 26 others, Ukrainian officials said.

Russian overnight strikes also pounded western Ukraine, though there were no immediate reports of casualties. One drone set fire to a gas station near the Yahodyn-Dorohusk border crossing with Poland, according to Ukraine’s top diplomat and a spokesperson for the local customs force.

“This is Putin’s terror ‘knocking’ directly on the doors of the EU and NATO. Russian barbarians are at your gate, dear partners,” Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha wrote on X.

Ukraine’s border crossings with Poland are a conduit for much of the military and humanitarian aid sent by Western allies.

Valentyna Chernysh, a spokesperson for the Volyn Customs Office, told The Associated Press that the Yahodyn crossing was intact and no one was harmed.

Earlier this week, two people died when Russian drones hit the Starokozache border crossing between Ukraine and Moldova on Tuesday. The following day a “direct threat” to a Polish-Ukrainian crossing point was avoided due to the cooperation between Warsaw and Kyiv, according to Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk.

Ukraine’s air force said its air defenses shot down or suppressed 409 Russian drones of various types overnight, including a newer jet-powered version that is faster and more difficult to intercept. It said Russia had attacked Ukraine with 453 drones in total.

What's On SPOTLIGHT

Bringing employees & their families together through an engaging back-to-school experience

stc celebrates back-to-school season with ‘stc run’ at Assima Mall



The stc team’s participation and interaction with the attendees.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, organized stc run at Assima Mall as part of its back-to-school activities for employees and their families. The experience brought children together through a combination of educational challenges, physical activity and entertainment, creating an engaging way to celebrate the start of the new academic year. The event was held in the presence of Ahmad Al-Murad, Chief Business Excellence Officer at stc.

As part of stc run, children took part in a series of school-inspired challenges that combined physical activity with educational elements in a lively and enjoyable atmosphere. Drawing inspiration from different school subjects, the activities encouraged children to think, move, explore and use their senses as they progressed through each challenge. The combination of learning and movement kept the experience engaging and added a sense of excitement throughout the day. Upon completing the challenges, each child received a medal in recognition of their achievement and participation.

The back-to-school experience also included a dedicated activity at the stc Bookshop, where children were invited to choose their own school stationery and supplies ahead of the new academic year. Giving them the freedom to select the items they preferred added a personal touch to the day and made the preparation for school more enjoyable. It also gave children a greater sense of involvement in getting ready for the year ahead, making the activity a meaningful part of the overall experience.

Each child also received a Play card, giving them access to a variety of arcade games and soft play activities at the entertainment destination in Assima Mall. This added another enjoyable element to the day, giving children the opportunity to unwind and have fun while spending more time with their families. The activity complemented the wider back-to-school experience and



stc run contestants

helped maintain the lively atmosphere throughout the event.

While the initiative was primarily organized for stc employees and their families, stc run was also opened to the public on the same day, allowing stc customers and visitors to Assima Mall to take part in the experience. The wider participation helped create an inclusive atmosphere around the initiative and extended the back-to-school activities to more families across the community.

Commenting on the initiative, Ahmad Al-Murad, Chief Business Excel-

lence Officer at stc, said, “At stc, we place great importance on creating experiences that bring our employees and their families together beyond the workplace. The back-to-school season gave us an opportunity to do this in a way that was relevant to both parents and children, combining learning, movement and entertainment in one experience. We wanted the children to enjoy the occasion while also taking part in activities that encouraged curiosity, participation and a sense of achievement. Creating these moments for our people and their families is an important part of how we continue to build a positive and engaging environment across stc.”

Al-Murad added, “Our commitment to our employees extends beyond the workplace. We aim to create an environment that supports their well-being and sense of belonging, while also providing opportunities for their families to be part of experiences that reflect our culture. Initiatives such as stc run allow us to bring this commitment to life in a way that is engaging and relevant to our employees. We will continue to invest in initiatives that contribute to employee well-being and create meaningful experiences that bring our stc community closer together.”

About stc

Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is a Kuwaiti shareholding company incorporated pursuant to Amiri Decree No. 187 on 22 July, 2008, to operate and manage the third GSM mobile network in Kuwait as per Law No. 2 of 2008. Accordingly, stc launched its operations in December 2008 and was listed on Bursa Kuwait in December 2014.

stc Kuwait is a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and solutions to customers, both for individuals and enterprises, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, and is a subsidiary of stc Group. stc Kuwait has expanded its portfolio by acquiring companies such as Qualitynet General Trading and Contracting Company (solutions by stc) in Kuwait, and e-portal Holding Company and its subsidiaries.

Tourism industry is waking up to solo travelers’ needs

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

By Peter McGraw

University of Colorado Boulder

GOOGLE reported in April 2026 that online searches involving “solo travel” hit an all-time high this year, with queries for “women solo travel” reaching a 15-year peak. Hilton’s 2026 trends report found that 26% of travelers planned to take a trip alone this year, and that nearly half said they planned to add solo days to the front or back of a family trip.

The issue isn’t new. In 1992, marketing researchers identified the solo consumer as an underserved market. But as tourism researchers have documented, the accommodation sector treats double occupancy as the default unit of consumption, which often slaps a “single supplement” charge on customers when they travel without a partner. The industry essentially penalizes travelers for arriving without a second body to fill the other half of a room they aren’t using.

The reason why so many hotels, cruise lines and tour operators still base prices on double occupancy is that their costs – the room, the berth, the coach seat, the guide – don’t fall by half when the second person fails to materialize. But the supplement isn’t just a pricing convention. It’s the clearest signal the industry sends about who it built the product for.

I’m a scholar who studies what I call the solo economy: how institutions and markets adapt, or fail to adapt, to the rise of single living. I’ve written before about how retail and restaurants still design for pairs.

Travel is further along than most in recognizing this cultural shift. It’s also a useful case because the industry has started on the easy part of the problem but barely touched the rest.

The broader shift toward solo living is real. In 2025, 39.7 million Americans lived alone. That’s 29% of all households, up from 20% in 1975. Married couples, meanwhile, fell to 47% of households from 66% 50 years earlier.

Those numbers alone don’t explain solo travel. Some of that decline went to people living alone; some went to unmarried couples, who are still a party of two on a booking page. Married people take trips alone. Single people travel with friends, siblings and parents, and plenty of them have logged serious hours as an extra wheel. Living alone and vacationing alone are different behaviors with different causes.

What connects them is the erosion of a single assumption: that every adult arrives with a plus-one. That assumption is weakening at home, and it’s now encountering the booking page.

One response by the travel industry has been to shave the single supplement. For example, the tour operator Tauck announced this year that it’s

waiving the single supplement on a class of its riverboat cabins across more than 250 European river cruise departures and reducing it by up to US\$600 on 105 land departures.

Another touring company has taken a more committed approach to adjusting its offerings: Aurora Expeditions sets aside 10 dedicated solo cabins on every sailing across its three ships, with no single supplement, through its 2026 and 2027 seasons.

Then there’s Norwegian Cruise Line, which was early to the shift. In 2010, it introduced Studio staterooms aboard Norwegian Epic: Small cabins designed for one passenger, sold at single-occupancy prices and arranged around a keycard-access Studio Lounge reserved for solo travelers. The trade-off is less private space, but at a price for one, with access to a room full of fellow travelers going it alone.

Norwegian then expanded solo categories in 2024 from nine ships to its full 19-ship fleet. But on ships without Studios, much of the expansion was relabeling. Cruise Critic reported that standard double-occupancy rooms would likely be reclassified rather than retrofitted. And by Norwegian’s own account, the Studio Lounge is reserved for guests in Solo Studios – so the fleetwide solo categories come with the discount but not the room full of other solo travelers.

That’s the difference between replicating and redesigning. The 2010 Studio was a purpose-built 100-square-foot (9 square-meter) cabin that cost Norwegian something to construct. The 2024 categories are, in many cases, the same rooms as before, with a new label and a discount. The solo traveler pays less than two people would, but it’s still more than half for a room sized and built for two. A cabin sold to one occupies the same space as a cabin sold to two, and the industry still counts berths.

There’s a cleaner approach. Yotel sells a room type it calls Solo – 114 square feet (about 10 square meters) in New York City, maximum occupancy one, at the bottom of its price range. Nothing was subtracted to make it. It was built at that size, for that guest, and priced accordingly. That’s what designing for one looks like, and it’s rare enough that a tiny room counts as progress.

A common mistake in designing for solo travelers is assuming that solitude is the product. It isn’t.

In the same 2026 data showing record interest in solo travel, Google found that searches for “travel groups” and “tour groups” also hit record highs. A Mastercard survey of more than 15,000 consumers across 11 countries found that 39% of international travelers had already taken a trip alone – and 7 in 10 international leisure travelers were interested in solo experiences built to connect them with like-minded people.

The contradiction makes sense when you acknowledge that privacy and isolation are two different things. A person can want total control over where to go, when to eat and when to return to the room – and still want company at dinner. (AP)

ITEF Kuwait Chapter conducts workshop on ‘scalable startup & risk capital’ in association with ICAI Kuwait Chapter on 8th September ’26

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: International Tamil Engineers Forum (Registered as Section 8 in The Companies Act, 2013, Government of India) (ITEF-Kuwait Chapter Registered with Embassy of India to Kuwait) in Association with The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAIKC) organized a Workshop on SCALABLE STARTUP & RISK CAPITAL to promote Startup Ecosystem among the participants.

The workshop was conducted by two eminent personalities in the field of building Startup Ecosystem & angel investing. Guest Speakers Mr. Shivarajah & CA. Aswin Sundar enriched the audience on Scalable Startup, Opportunities and Challenges in Angel Investing & Venture Capital funding. The workshop was attended by the members of ITEF Kuwait Chapter, members of ICAIKC and members of IEIKC. ITEF Global team represented by its Chairman Er. Krishna Jegan & Managing Director Er. Selvam and ICAI Kuwait Chapter team led by its Chairperson CA Venkata Ramana Badida and IEI KUWAIT CHAPTER team led by its Chairman Er. KAR-

TIK ELANGO VAN attended the workshop. In addition, the following Guest of Honors graced the event (a) Eng. Atallah A. Almutairi, Chairman, Rank General Trading Co. WLL and (b) Eng. Sulaiman Ashkanani Projects Manager - Al Mulla Group. ITEF Kuwait Chapter thanked the Event Sponsor PEAK National Gen. Trading & Cont. Co.W.L.L.

Event started on a traditional and respectful note with the Kuwait National Anthem followed by the Indian National Anthem. Er. Ananthakumar shared the Safety Moment and Er. Anantharaj shared the Startup Thought for the day. Er. Suresh, President ITEF Kuwait Chapter welcomed the Guest Speakers, Guest of Honors & Delegates. ICAI Kuwait Chapter Chairperson CA Venkata Ramana Badida shared his thoughts on the significance of the collaboration between professional organizations in Kuwait and the expected impact of the workshop. Guest-Speakers were introduced to the audience by Er. Rajkumar & Er. Kalaiarasan.

Dr. Makenthiran, Director of ITEF Con-

ference explained about the upcoming ITEF flagship program (International Conference & Exhibition) GCC CONNECT-2026 and invited all Patrons, Sponsors & delegates to participate in the Conference, which is scheduled on 29th & 30th November 2026 at Badriya Ballroom in Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel, Kuwait.

Guest Speaker Mr. Shivarajah enriched the participants with valuable thoughts on Startup & Angel Investing. Guest Speaker CA. Aswin Sundar shared his thoughts on Challenges & Risk involved in Investing, especially Angel Investing. Mr. Shivarajah with Mr. CA. Aswin Sundar clarified the Questions from the audience, and it continued during dinner time also.

Felicitations of the Guest of Honors, Guest Speakers and Event Sponsor was carried out. Event came to an end with Vote of Thanks by ITEF General Secretary Er. Venkatesh, followed with dinner & networking.

Er. Nisha Arumugam & Er. Middleton were the MCs of the event and thanked the speakers and the participants for an insightful & interactive event.



Photos during the event.



‘Practical Magic 2’ conjures box office victory

This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Nicole Kidman in a scene from “Practical Magic 2.” (AP)

Witches unseat Spider-Man after six-week reign

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 14, (AP): “Practical Magic 2” conjured a box-office victory this weekend, opening atop the North American charts nearly three decades after its predecessor grew from a modest theatrical performer into a cult favorite.

The Warner Bros. sequel starring Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman earned an estimated \$30 million from 4,146 theaters, according to estimates Sunday from Rentrak. The film knocked “Spider-Man: Brand New Day” out of the top spot after the superhero blockbuster led the domestic box office for six consecutive weekends.

“Practical Magic 2” added about \$16 million from 77 international markets, giving it a worldwide opening of approximately \$46 million.

The debut landed at the low end of Warner Bros.’ projected range of \$30 million to \$35 million. The Susanne Bier-directed film carries a reported \$75 million production budget.

“It’s the kind of movie that you can build an evening at the movie theater around with your friends,” said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Rentrak.

Dergarabedian said the return of Bullock and Kidman was crucial to rekindling interest after such a long gap between films. He said the bigger test will come next weekend, when the sequel faces little direct competition.

“It’s not necessarily about that opening weekend,” he said. “Weekend two will tell the tale, no question about it.”

“Practical Magic 2” reunites Bullock and Kidman as sisters Sally and Gillian Owens, members of a family of witches whose love lives have long been haunted by an ancestral curse. The sequel finds them trying to end the curse for good and intro-



Left: This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Joey King, center, and Solly McLeod, right, during the filming of “Practical Magic 2.” Right: This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Sandra Bullock in a scene from “Practical Magic 2.” (AP)

duces a younger generation of the Owens family, played by Joey King and Maisie Williams. Lee Pace also joins the cast.

The film is adapted from the work of author Alice Hoffman and arrives 28 years after the original “Practical Magic.” The 1998 film topped out at \$46 million during its initial domestic run but gradually developed a devoted following through home viewing, streaming services and social media.

The latest film received two out of four stars from The Associated Press, whose review said the sequel abandons some of the campy fun that helped the original find an unlikely second life, but is buoyed by the strong performances and chemistry of Bullock and Kidman.

“Spider-Man: Brand New Day” slipped to second with \$8.4 million, a 54% drop from the previous weekend. The Sony and Marvel block-

buster starring Tom Holland has now collected roughly \$935.2 million domestically.

That puts the film within about \$1.4 million of the \$936.6 million North American total for 2015’s “Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens” and the top spot on the all-time domestic chart.

“Think about this movie opening at the end of July, and here we are in the middle of September,” Dergarabedian said. He expects Sony to keep the film in theaters as it pursues an unprecedented \$1 billion in unadjusted domestic ticket sales.

Christopher Nolan’s “The Odyssey” followed in third with \$7.4 million during its ninth weekend. The Universal Pictures mythic epic, starring Matt Damon as Odysseus, has crossed \$600.5 million domestically and \$1.68 billion worldwide.

The movie also passed 2015’s “Jurassic World” to become Universal’s



highest-grossing global release. It has also collected a record \$506 million from IMAX screens worldwide, accounting for 30% of its global total.

Dergarabedian said the staying power of “Spider-Man: Brand New Day” and “The Odyssey,” which both opened in July, demonstrates the range of films moviegoers are willing to embrace.

“People aren’t just looking at the movie theater as the home for the traditional cookie-cutter blockbuster,” he said. “They’re looking at the movie theater like they do almost as a streaming service, where there’s this incredible array and mix of genres, stars and types of films.”

“Runner” opened in fourth place with \$6.6 million. The Angel Studios action-comedy stars Alan Ritchson as a former soldier who joins forces with an unlikely partner, played by Owen Wilson, to complete an organ

delivery while being pursued by a ruthless cartel.

Directed by Scott Waugh, “Runner” opened in more than 2,500 North American theaters.

Ketchup Entertainment’s “Coyote vs. Acme” rounded out the top five, collecting \$6.2 million in its third weekend. The live-action and animated Looney Tunes feature has now earned about \$47.8 million domestically.

In sixth place, “Buddy” brought in \$3.5 million during its third weekend, pushing its North American total to \$21.3 million.

Sony’s “Insidious: Out of the Further” followed in seventh with \$3.35 million. The latest installment in the long-running horror franchise has generated roughly \$60.5 million domestically and \$155.2 million worldwide after four weekends.

The South Korean science-fiction thriller “Hope” opened in eighth

with \$3.3 million from 1,560 locations. Directed by Na Hong-jin, the monster epic stars Hwang Jung-min, Zo In-sung and Hoyeon and centers on a remote village thrown into chaos by the arrival of a mysterious creature.

“The Uprising,” directed by Paul Greengrass and starring Andrew Garfield, debuted in ninth with \$3.25 million. The Focus Features historical action drama follows an uprising of commoners against the tyranny of King Richard II in medieval England.

“By Any Means” finished 10th with \$2.5 million in its second weekend.

Domestic box-office revenue for the year stands at \$7.5 billion, up 19.2% from the same point in 2025.

“What a great summer, a record-breaking summer and a solid start to the fall,” Dergarabedian said. “It’s not like we had a blockbuster debut like we did last year with ‘Demon Slayer,’ but a solid start to a fall movie season that I think will deliver for sure.”

With final domestic figures being released Monday, this list factors in the estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Rentrak:

1. “Practical Magic 2,” \$30 million.
2. “Spider-Man: Brand New Day,” \$8.4 million.
3. “The Odyssey,” \$7.4 million.
4. “Runner,” \$6.6 million.
5. “Coyote vs. Acme,” \$6.2 million.
6. “Buddy,” \$3.5 million.
7. “Insidious: Out of the Further,” \$3.35 million.
8. “Hope,” \$3.3 million.
9. “The Uprising,” \$3.25 million.
10. “By Any Means,” \$2.5 million.

TIFF roars to life with Oscar contenders, oddities

TORONTO, Sept. 14, (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.

It takes a certain amount of gump-tion to declare an arch comedy about a housewife turned community musical theater actor “autobiographical,” but that’s exactly what writer-director Jesse Eisenberg said Sunday about his festival smash hit “The Debut.”

Eisenberg premiered “The Debut,” starring Julianne Moore and Paul Giamatti, at TIFF, shortly after it first screened at the Telluride Film Festival in Colorado. But the movie’s first showing before a big, packed theater could hardly have gone better, confirming “The Debut” as a major awards contender.

In it, Moore plays Mona Fried-

man, a shy New Jersey mom who, after an actor drops out, lands a small role in a production of “Nosy Neighbors” - a fictional musical Eisenberg conjured, complete with songs, for the film. Despite no apparent talent and with Giamatti playing her intensely controlling director, she quickly becomes enamored with acting - similar, Eisenberg said, to how his thespian awakening happened as a nervous, timid young man.

“I felt invisible and I hated everything. And then I started community theater. This movie takes place five minutes from my house in 1990,” Eisenberg said. “Then what happened was I took it so serious and I took it so far that I kind of ruined my whole life.”

“So it’s an autobiographical movie but told through you,” Eisenberg said, turning to Moore. “Because I wrote this for her, and only her.”

“The Debut,” which A24 will release in December, has a comic, sur-

real pitch that one audience member, in the post-screening Q&A, wondered if it took some of its tone from Christopher Guest’s 1996 mocumentary

“Waiting for Guffman,” about a local musical production in Missouri.

But Eisenberg said he was striving



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney arrives at the TIFF Tribute Awards at the Fairmont Royal York hotel during the Toronto International Film Festival on Sunday, Sept. 13, 2026, in Toronto. (AP)

for something more earnest. Even the fake musical of the film, for which Eisenberg wrote seven original songs, the filmmaker said was his favorite kind of play, regardless of how cheesy.

Moore, whose performance manages to be both wildly over-the-top and sincere, said Mona is just “a regular woman.”

“But she finds meaning in community for the first time in her life, and that to me was so, so moving,” Moore said. “She’s us, she’s me, she’s Paul, she’s Jesse. We’re the people who kind of wandered in and found a path into our lives by trying out for a play.”

Eight years after “Green Book” took the Toronto International Film Festival by storm, Peter Farrelly may have done it again.

Farrelly’s “I Play Rocky,” a boisterous tale about the making of Sylvester Stallone’s “Rocky,” was an immediate crowd-pleasing hit Satur-

day night at TIFF. Its raucous reception at the Princess of Wales Theatre suggested Farrelly may have again thrown a dark horse contender into the Oscar race.

At the least, “I Play Rocky” is sure to be a top contender for TIFF’s top prize, the People’s Choice Award, given how enthusiastic the festival crowd jumped to its feet to applaud the movie. In 2018, Farrelly’s “Green Book” picked up that festival-goer-voted award on its way to winning best picture at the Academy Awards.

“I read this script and I thought it was the greatest script I’d ever read,” Farrelly said of Peter Gamble’s screenplay in a brief Q&A following the screening.

“I Play Rocky” chronicles Stallone’s quixotic journey to write and star in his 1976 breakthrough film. In Farrelly’s telling, it’s a comic underdog story and an affectionate ode to moviemaking - the kind of tale Hollywood tends to love.

Quebec superstar performs first full concert since 2020 before 30,000 fans

Celine Dion thrills fans with emotional comeback after rare illness

NANTERRE, France, Sept 14, (AP): She hit the high F, held it, then blew out a breath and turned to look back at the band - a quick, disbelieving glance toward her musical director. Some 30,000 people read it before they had finished screaming: Celine Dion did it.

It was “All By Myself,” the song the Quebec superstar’s voice has been measured against since 1996, saved for the encore of her first full concert in more than six years - her first since stiff person syndrome, a rare, progressive neurological disease, attacked her muscles, including those of the throat.

Few doubted she could still sing. What nobody knew was whether she could get through a whole show, and then get up and do it again a few nights later.

Dion gave the crowd three words: “Je vais bien.” (“I’m doing fine.”)

“When she hit that note, I grabbed my friend’s arm. I’d been holding my breath without realizing. Then I started crying. ‘She’s back. She’s really back,’” said Élodie Marchand, 42, a primary schoolteacher from Nantes.

Dion, 58, had not played a full concert since March 8, 2020. She was diagnosed in 2022 with stiff person syndrome. She canceled a world tour, then what was left of it, and went quiet. On Saturday night, 25 songs in 2 hours and 15 minutes at the Plenitude Arena in Nanterre, west of Paris, was the first night of the engagement meant to prove she can work again.

The sold-out run is punishing: 16 shows in five weeks, 10 more booked for May 2027, 26 nights in all before tens of thousands of people each time.

The last time France saw her sing, it lasted four minutes. At the Olympic opening ceremony in July 2024, Dion sang from the Eiffel Tower - one song, one night - and the world called it a resurrection. Saturday she had to do it 25 times, then get up and do it again Wednesday.

Stiff person syndrome affects one or two people in a million. It stiffens muscles and sets off spasms violent enough to break bones, triggered by loud noise, by touch, by emotional stress. An arena holding 30,000 people is all three at once. Singing with it, Dion told NBC in 2024, felt



Singer Celine Dion performs during the opening concert of her “Celine Dion Paris 2026” residency at the Plenitude Arena in Nanterre, France, outside Paris, Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

like being strangled.

“Touring can be very difficult even when you’re 100%,” she said in a statement in 2023, canceling the last of her dates.

She cried before she finished the first song. In a Dior gown and a Boucheron necklace, she pressed her hands

together in prayer, then missed her cue in “On ne change pas,” on the line about the skinny little girl from Charlemagne, Quebec.

“I promised myself I wouldn’t cry,” she said. The crowd answered by chanting the riff from “Seven Nation Army.”

She said she had learned to live with the fragility and made it her reason to keep going. Then she sang for another two hours.

The voice has lost some of its top; it is not the instrument that sold 250 million albums. Every big note is now a decision she makes in front of 30,000 people.

She took most of them. She sang “My Heart Will Go On” and “The Power of Love,” then Catalani’s “Ebben? Ne andrò lontana” - Maria Callas’ signature aria - in pink feathers while fake snow fell. Her disease attacks the larynx. She went for it anyway.

Willo Perron’s set put her among gray megaliths, a pop Stonehenge. An 18-voice gospel choir came on in robes.

Michelle Obama watched from the seats. Outside, fans wore sashes reading “Celine Dion 2026,” like beauty pageant winners, and T-shirts from the LVMH house that shares her first name.

“My daughter kept saying, ‘Mum, we can’t go all the way to Paris for Celine,’” said Isabelle Gagnon, 52, a teacher from Montreal. “Tonight my daughter was singing beside me, and I thought: you see? This is why we came.”

“In Montreal, you grow up knowing those songs whether you mean to or not,” said Antoine Beaulieu, 31, a graphic designer. “I used to pretend I was too cool for Celine. Tonight I knew every word, so clearly that was a lie.”

Camille Morel, 38, a pharmacist from Lyon, put her phone away. “I wanted to actually be there,” she said. “My voice is completely gone. I’m supposed to be working tomorrow - good luck to them.”

Then the encore, and the note: the last “anymore” a cappella, the note bent upward, the orchestra surging in beneath her. She fanned herself, laughing at her own relief.

She closed with two Jean-Jacques Goldman standards and a last line to the room: I love you, my loves. Take care of yourselves.

It had taken her 2,379 days to get back. She has 25 more nights to go.

Books

Latest novel revisits familiar territory

‘Exit Party’ takes readers into Mandel’s world

NEW YORK, Sept 14, (AP): After seven novels that span centuries, continents and even planets, Emily St. John Mandel has not only created a substantial body of work, but a universe unto herself — what admirers like to call the Mandelverse.

“It means that the novels, although they can be read entirely alone and independently, have this web of connections between them,” the author said during a recent interview at a cafe on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. “I think it’s fair to say that I have certain interests and I’ll build on that and build on that and build on that over time.”

Artists have been known to say that a given work is the culmination of what preceded it, and Mandel’s latest, “Exit Party,” gathers characters and themes that readers of “Station Eleven,” “Sea of Tranquility” and other novels will recognize. Her narrative weaves together two genres she has long been known for, crime fiction and science fiction, and continues Mandel’s explorations of chaos, identity, impermanence and transcendence.

Like “Station Eleven,” the new book is set in a post-traumatic future. Mandel begins in Los Angeles in 2031, when Ari Waker (previously seen in Mandel’s 2010 novel “The Singer’s Gun”) has been released from prison and the United States has broken apart. The story continues over the succeeding decades, as alternative lives are revealed and the rules of society blur to the point where Mandel writes that being a criminal or joining the police are “two sides of the same coin.”

Mandel’s own life at times seems recorded in stereo. She has dual Canadian-U.S. citizenship, lives in New York and Los Angeles with her wife Laura Barisonzi (she was previously married to Kevin Mandel) and is active as a novelist and screenwriter. (She is working on adaptations of “Last Night in Montreal” and “Exit Party.”)

Born Emily St. John Fairbanks, the 47-year-old author has been imagining alternate and faraway worlds for much of her life, an impulse she attributes in part to growing up for years in a small community on Canada’s Denman Island. Unlike so many of her peers,

she never formally studied literature or even took a creative writing course. Her education falls just short of graduating high school; she dropped out to pursue her first career choice, dance, at the School of Toronto Dance Theatre.

“Nothing on paper points to this life, but here we are,” she says.

Mandel had published three novels before “Station Eleven,” which came out in 2014 and found her switching publishers from the independent Unbridled Books to the Penguin Random House imprint Alfred A. Knopf. Jenny Jackson, Mandel’s editor at Knopf, remembers hearing about the author and the following she had developed among booksellers well before Mandel’s agent sent her the manuscript for “Station Eleven” and told her it was “much bigger” than anything she had done before.

“I loved the book,” Jackson says. “Here was this author who already had grassroots support and I knew she was poised to break out.”

Mandel’s futuristic story of a world ravaged by a lethal flu virus was already a bestseller and National Book Award finalist six years before the coronavirus pandemic gave it the unwanted status of prophecy. “Station

Eleven” has sold more than 1 million copies, was adapted into an HBO miniseries and ranked in a New York Times author survey as among the 21st century’s best books.

During her interview, Mandel discussed a few turning points in her life, the appeal of recurring characters and why she finds hope even when conceiving the worst.

Questions and answers have been edited for brevity and clarity.

AP: What made you decide to bring back some of the characters from “The Singer’s Gun” and other earlier books for “Exit Party”?

MANDEL: I feel like I’ve become a better writer. “The Singer’s Gun” was so long ago and I was much more likely to question myself, not wanting to go too far out of literary or noir lines. At this point in my career, I feel a real sense of freedom. I feel like I can write in whatever genre I want.

AP: You write a lot about alternate paths, the life you might have led.

MANDEL: It’s an idea I’ve loved for a while, the life you didn’t live, where you married a different person, went to a different school, took a different job. So over the passage of time, that would turn you into a somewhat

different person. Look, I trained as a dancer. It’s easy to imagine a version of my life where I kept dancing and stayed in Canada.

AP: What made you choose to become a writer?

MANDEL: I’ve been writing since I was a little kid, since I was 9. I loved it, but I saw it as a hobby. I had this ridiculous situation where I came from a very working class family, and I took a nondegree conservatory program in contemporary dance. So I graduated with a mountain of student loans, and it’s like a worst-case scenario, very poor planning on my part.

I didn’t want to work in retail forever. I was working in the back room of a store (in Montreal), just putting stickers on martini glasses for 15 hours. That wasn’t something I exactly wanted to do. So I thought, “Well, what comes next?” And I thought, “Maybe I should start writing.”

AP: Before you wrote “Station Eleven,” you were mostly writing crime novels/thrillers (“The Singer’s Gun,” “The Lola Quartet”).

What made you decide to start writing science fiction?

MANDEL: I was afraid of being pigeonholed. To be clear, I have huge respect for crime writers, but I didn’t want to get pigeonholed.

AP: Do you worry about being pigeonholed as someone who’s always going on about disaster?

MANDEL: Yeah, I think my next book needs to not be speculative fiction.

AP: It seems inevitable that when someone says they’re writing a book about the future, it’s going to be apocalyptic.

MANDEL: I think there will be multiple ruptures and lots of pleasant interludes in between.

AP: In “Station Eleven” you write “What was lost in the collapse: almost everything, almost everyone, but there is still such beauty.” Then in “Exit Party” you write that “the light is gorgeous while it lasts.”

MANDEL: Yeah, can you find beauty in impermanence? That’s what I’m trying to drive toward. We need to find peace with the idea that nothing lasts forever.



Emily St. John Mandel poses for a portrait on Monday, Aug. 31, 2026, in New York. (AP)

‘Dancing with the Stars,’ ‘Tony’ top streaming picks

NEW YORK, Sept 14, (AP): The return of “Dancing with the Stars” and a new album from Luke Bryan are some of the new television, films, music and games headed to a device near you.

Also among the streaming offerings worth your time this week, as selected by The Associated Press’ entertainment journalists: A new album from Carly Rae Jepsen, RuPaul in “Stop That Train” and “Marvel’s Wolverine” video game.

It can be easy to miss some of the late summer standouts in theaters, but a number of them land on premium video-on-demand Tuesday. Matt Johnson’s “Tony,” starring Dominic Sessa as a young Anthony Bourdain, is a charming coming-of-age tale set over a 1970s summer on Cape Cod. Alexander Ullom’s “It Ends” is about friends on a late-night food run who become trapped on an infinite highway. And David Robert Mitchell’s “The End of Oak Street” is an Amblin-inspired suburban romp, with family drama and dinosaurs.

“Stop That Train” (Sept. 20 on Netflix) stars RuPaul as the American president, and “Drag Race” alumni Ginger Minj and Jujubee play stewardesses on a train, the Glamazonian Express. Such is the setup of this bonkers comedy from “Hairspray” director Adam Shankman about a train speeding toward disaster.

Very possibly the best movie I’ve seen in 2026 first came out in 1970. Satyajit Ray’s “Days and Nights in the Forest” has long been unavailable, unlike some of the Bengali master director’s other films. But a restoration released earlier this year revived a too-little-seen masterpiece.

It’s now streaming on the Criterion Channel, with an introduction from Wes Anderson. In it, three privileged bachelors from the city vacation in a rural Indian district populated by Santhals, an Indigenous group. Their interactions with the locals, as well as an elegant young woman (a beguiling Sharmila Tagore) visiting a family house, in ways both small and profound traverse chasms of caste, class and gender.

- AP Film Writer Jake Coyle

He knows what works, and that’s what he continues to provide. Country all-star Luke Bryan will release his ninth studio album, “Signs,” on Friday - a 12-track collection of radio-ready classics. The medium is the message: These are feel-good tracks meant to warm the listener, from the crush-worthy “Country and She Knows It” to the cheeky “Fish Hunt Golf Drink” and beyond.

Anthrax - one of the “Big Four” leaders of the thrash metal scene alongside Metallica,

Megadeth and Slayer - is back with the band’s first album in a decade. “Cursum Perficio,” out Friday, follows 2016’s “For All Kings” and promises huge riffs and venomous vocals. Start with the nearly seven-minute face-melter “The Edge of Perfection.”

Carly Rae Jepsen returns with a double album, “Day & Night,” also out Friday. For those who really, really, really like her energetic synth-pop, you’ll want to jump straight to the second half. The first is full of psychedelic flair, with dreamy ’70s references instead of her familiar dance-pop. Together, they make for a dynamic listen from an evolving performer.

- AP Music Writer Maria Sherman

“Dancing with the Stars” cha-chas back to TV with a two-night premiere on ABC and Disney+ beginning Tuesday. Episodes also stream next day on Hulu. This time, experienced dancers like Jenna Dewan (who starred in “Step Up”) and Julia Stiles (who starred in “Save the Last Dance”) compete against novice dancers like Maura Higgins (“Love Island”) and “Traitors”), Tatyana Ali (“The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air”) and Ciara Miller (“Summer House.”) Time will tell if this 35th season will be as popular as last year’s go-round, which delivered the show’s strongest overall ratings since 2019 and its best season finale

in 10 years.

Apple TV premieres Season 6 of its spy hit “Slow Horses,” starring Gary Oldman on Wednesday. The new episodes are adapted from Mick Herron’s sixth and seventh books in his “Slough House” series. Olivia Cooke’s Sid Baker resurfaces after she supposedly died from a gunshot wound to the head.

- A “Reacher” spinoff called “Neagley” launches with Maria Sten (Frances Neagley) as the star of the Chicago-set show. Instead of being someone who attracts trouble like Jack Reacher, Neagley is a private investigator who chooses her battles. The series debuts Wednesday on Prime Video, the same day as “Reacher”’s Season 4 finale.

- The Sega arcade game “Golden Axe” has been adapted into an adult animated series for Paramount+. All 10 episodes drop Wednesday. The voice cast includes 2026 Emmy nominee Matthew Rhys, Danny Pudi (“Community”), and Lisa Gilroy (“The Paper”).

- Ella Beatty is the first female “Monster” in Ryan Murphy and Ian Brennan’s anthology series for Netflix. She stars as Lizzie Borden, who was accused of killing her father and stepmother in the late 1800s. It premieres Thursday, Sept. 17.

- AP Writer Alicia Rancilio

Anthropic CEO urges AI slowdown

New AI warnings revive debate over rising threats to humanity



A man receives a box of chocolate powder drink from a robot during a demonstration of AI-based robotics in Europe at the European Parliament in Brussels, Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2026. (AP)

LOS ANGELES, Sept 14, (AP): New warnings from within the artificial intelligence industry have revived a long-running debate over whether advanced AI could escape human control and ultimately threaten humanity’s survival, and whether the companies developing the technology are doing enough to prevent such a scenario.

The CEO of Anthropic, the San Francisco company behind Claude, said he thought the industry needed to reduce the speed of its work, cautioning Saturday that a swarm of AI agents might be able to take over the internet in six months to a year unless companies devoted more time to putting safeguards in place.

Dario Amodei outlined a plan for companies like his and governments around the world to ensure that increasingly capable AI models remain aligned with the commands and values of responsible people days after two former Anthropic safety researchers publicly aired concerns that the existential threats AI might pose to humanity were receiving too little attention.

Here’s what to know about the recent dire predictions and whether any brakes might be put on AI advancement:

Concerns over the potential risks of the technology are rising as new AI models become more powerful, heightening both the potential for misuse by people with criminal aims, such as creating and spreading a disease that kills most of the world’s population, and the risk of AI systems going rogue in a dangerous way.

Anthropic disclosed last week 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.

The company said it put stronger safeguards in its latest models to restrict biological research that could be used to make weapons but noted that “as models become increasingly capable, their risks will increase, unless AI developers and society’s defenders act to make them safer.”

Last year, Anthropic reported that hackers used the company’s AI in a cyberattack targeting about 30 companies and government agencies around the world. It said the hackers were very likely from a Chinese state-sponsored group.

When an AI agent “goes rogue,” it means the AI has taken action beyond the task it was asked to perform. Both Anthropic and OpenAI, the maker of ChatGPT, said in July that their AI models had succeeded in acting on their own.

Anthropic disclosed that three AI models - Claude Opus 4.7, Claude Mythos 5 and an internal research test model - hacked into three other organizations during testing just days after OpenAI revealed that its AI system hacked into the servers of AI startup Hugging Face.

OpenAI described the intrusion by a combination of models, including its newly released GPT-5.6 Sol and an “even more capable” model that was still being tested internally, as a “significant security incident.”

Meta followed suit in early August with a similar case of an AI model finding ways around another company’s digital security.

Although some observers noted that people had disabled some guardrails in the OpenAI and Anthropic cases, the episodes seemed to reflect one of the biggest fears around AI: that if models achieve artificial general intelligence, or AGI, a loosely defined term for AI that can match or surpass human abilities across a broad range of intellectual tasks, the technology could cause an irreversible catastrophic event or subjugate the human race.

Doomsday scenarios generally fall into two categories: An AI that achieves self-improving superintelligence controls people instead of vice versa, or AI used by a rogue state or nefarious actors.

Worries that artificial intelligence might overcome human limits on its reach or actions are not new.

Alan Turing, a British mathematician widely regarded as one of the earliest authorities on artificial intelligence, predicted in 1951 that AI would eventually take control from humans. Less than a decade later, Norbert Wiener, another mathematician, warned intelligent machines would seek to accomplish their own objectives and humans would not be able to stop them.

In 2026, how reasonable are fears that AI, either by escaping human control or through misuse by unscrupulous people, could cause a cataclysmic event or the downfall of civilization?

No one knows.

Experts across computer science, philosophy and other fields have envisioned numerous routes by which a future AI system might cause a global catastrophe, either by escaping human control or in the hands of an unscrupulous people.

‘Deficiency diseases are easily treatable’

Dog parks an antidote to isolation and divisions that social media can fuel

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

By Kevin B. Johnson
University of Pennsylvania

The case against social media has gotten so well rehearsed that most people can easily merge it into ordinary conversation: It makes people lonely. It sorts them into camps. It hands them a room full of people who already agree with them and calls that a community.

I’ve given this speech myself, with feeling, having read my phone notifications in the host’s powder room 11 minutes earlier.

I am a pediatrician, health communicator and researcher at the University of Pennsylvania, and diagnosing is in my blood. Two decades of research, a surgeon general’s advisory on loneliness and Meta’s recent settlement of up to US\$17 billion, pending court approval, all describe the same thing. What we recite are the symptoms. The more interesting question is what these symptoms diagnose.

Simply put, our dependency on social media creates a deficiency disease. It’s not something toxic we’re ingesting; it is something our lives online have stopped us from receiving.

I figured out that cost while standing in a field in Harford Park with a dog leash wrapped around my ankles.

Harford Park in Wayne, Pennsylvania, is 30 acres of rolling grass and mature trees the township designated for off-leash dogs in 1997.

I go most afternoons. So do the same 15 or 20 people, which is how I ended up tangled in someone else’s very long leash on a Tuesday, concentrating hard enough on my own feet that I stopped talking and just listened.

Two conversations were running at once. In one, a regular who is having a rough year was getting gently harassed about the weight he’d put on against his doctors’ advice - first by me, then by three other people who piled on uninvited. In the other, someone was arguing about Dr. Anthony Fauci, and the regulars chimed in on both sides. Gossip, complaints and dogs greeting dogs

became the backdrop.

As I worked to free my ankles, it clicked: The dog park, like the local knitting club or the Saturday pickleball group, does the job a corner bar used to do. There are regulars and running jokes, and once a person is known, a spot in the conversation is reserved for them.

What makes these places work is that a shared focus on one small part of a life opens into something fuller. Regulars may share a taste in dog breeds but they are not colleagues, political soulmates or relatives. They differ on favorite restaurants, income, age, religion, values and beliefs. They are together because a golden retriever and a nervous rescue mutt need to run in the morning, and there is a field nearby.

Sociologist Ray Oldenburg called places like this third places and defined them as “public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work.” Oldenburg noted the erosion of places that once manufactured accidental encounters, such as main streets, neighborhood pubs, general stores and even the drugstore soda fountain.

Off-leash parks have been among the fastest-growing amenities in US city park systems for two decades. A study in the Journal of Urban Affairs found dog park users reported higher social capital and neighborhood cohesion.

The park is not a utopia. It’s a corner bar without the booze.

Thomas Pettigrew and Linda Tropp’s meta-analysis of 515 studies provides the best evidence for why these accidental connections matter. They found that contact between groups generally reduces prejudice, but the quality and circumstances of that contact matter. The more interesting finding came later, when they tested how it works: The effect runs less through learning facts about the other group than through reduced anxiety, more empathy and more perspective.

That is exactly what the park does. The man I disagree with about nearly everything hasn’t changed his mind, and neither have I. What changed is that his politics is now maybe the eighth thing I know and appreciate about him, behind his dog’s bad hip, his sense of humor, the awful year he had and his love of what Philadelphians call “wooder ice.”

That shift, from opinions to a person, is why “just show people the other

side” keeps failing online. When sociologist Christopher Bail and colleagues paid Republicans and Democrats to follow bots representing the views of the opposite party on Twitter, the Republicans came out substantially more conservative than they went in. Democrats shifted slightly left, though not significantly. Exposure to opinions is not the same thing as exposure to a person. The feed gave people arguments. The corner bar gives people other people.

If the places people gather shape their health, as a growing body of research suggests, then the shift from communities set by geography to communities assembled by algorithm creates a slow burn of intolerance and mistrust.

There are now decades of research on social media and anxiety, and a growing body of experimental work about what algorithmic curation does to what people see. Almost none of it treats the encounter pattern as a health exposure.

Social platforms have mastered what German American sociologist Herbert Gans called selective homogeneity. They sort people by interests, identities, tastes and grievances, then make it easy to stay among people who feel familiar.

They are like virtual Levittowns - the postwar suburban developments outside Philadelphia, among other places in the Northeast, where thousands of identical houses went up on farmland and were sold to buyers screened by price. In early Levittowns, covenants barred Black families outright.

In 1958, Gans moved into a Levittown in New Jersey and stayed two years doing research on its residents. He found that although original settlers and those who moved in by choice were happy, their rebellious teenage offspring, who had the fewest places to go and the least to do in those communities, were not.

This was an early, real-life sorting of the type that algorithms would make all too common 60 years later.

By contrast, repeated, low-stakes, in-person contact like the interactions between regulars at a dog park or corner bar creates room for tolerance and trust. People come back. They notice an absence. They share attention around a task, a place or a dog, rather than around presenting themselves or defending a position.

Deficiency diseases are easily treatable. Nothing has to be taken away; instead, something has to be given back. (AP)



A solar power plant is seen at the car park of Two Rivers Complex in Nairobi, Kenya on July 16. (AP)

Kenya triples power target, aiming to expand use of nuke and geothermal energy

NAIROBI, Kenya, Sept 14, (AP): Kenya has tripled its long-term target for expanding its renewable energy capacity to meet surging demand and support its industrialization, but that might not result in more affordable power for consumers.

The plan calls for renewable power generating capacity of 5,500 megawatts, up from about 1,500 MW now. That would include 2,000 MW of nuclear power alongside 700 MW of hydropower and new geothermal projects.

That will strengthen the country’s position as a global leader in renewable energy. Kenya already produces 93% of its electricity using renewable sources. But experts say that reforms for utility contracts, electricity grids, financing and pricing are needed to translate clean energy growth into lower cost power for consumers.

“We have recalibrated our long-term growth trajectory from 1,500MW to a 5,500MW renewable energy development pipeline,” said Peter Njenga, CEO of KenGen, the state-owned utility that produces about 60% of Kenya’s power.

Lawmakers have been pushing the government to reduce electricity rates. In July, the parliament directed Energy Minister Opiyo Wandayi to develop a policy for renegotiating electricity supply agreements with major power producers. Lawmakers said lower wholesale prices could create more leeway for Kenya Power to cut consumer rates without damaging its finances.

Energy experts say Kenya needs to focus less on building new generation capacity than on making electricity cheaper.

“The answer to this conundrum is not as straightforward as it may seem,” said Mugwe Manga, climate finance lead at the nonprofit FSD Kenya. “One must look at the entire energy system holistically to understand the drivers of the end cost of power.”

Unlike countries like Morocco, Egypt and China, Kenya provides limited direct subsidies to cushion electricity prices. While renewable generation costs are broadly competitive, consumers ultimately bear the burden of financing costs, transmission and distribution losses, taxes, and foreign exchange movements.

Latest data show that industrial consumers in Kenya pay between \$0.18 and \$0.23 per kilowatt-hour, compared with about \$0.03 in South Africa and Egypt, and \$0.05 in Morocco and Ethiopia.

“The perception that electricity is expensive is subjective,” Kenya Power CEO Joseph Siror said in an earlier interview. “The consumer prices are dependent on infrastructure costs, electricity tariff structures, and outstanding bill recoveries.”

Kenya’s heavy reliance on green energy sources adds to costs since the infrastructure required to generate such power is expensive to install and maintain, he said.

One of the biggest inefficiencies keeping electricity costs high lies in the distribution network itself, Manga said.

More than 20% of electricity is lost to technical failures and illegal connections, compared with a global average of 8%-10%,” he said “That offers a great low-hanging fruit to improve efficiency and pass that efficiency dividend to end consumers through reduced tariffs.”



Deforestation is visible near the areas of several wood pellet production companies in Pohuwato, Gorontalo province, Indonesia, Oct. 22, 2024. (AP)

Japan’s biomass energy boom threatens further deforestation in Indonesia

ISLAMABAD, Sept 14, (AP): A surge in Indonesia’s wood pellet and chip production is driving a new wave of deforestation, threatening the vast archipelago’s remaining tropical forests, vital biodiversity hot spots and the land of Indigenous peoples, according to new satellite analysis from environmental nongovernmental organizations.

Biomass power, predominantly generated by burning wood, is growing globally as countries accelerate their transition to use cleaner energy.

“The biomass industry has become a new driver of deforestation in Indonesia,” said Timer Manurung, director of Indonesia-based organization Auriga Nusantara, which contributed to the new analysis. “And most of the biomass product is for export, with Japan as the biggest destination.”

As Japan’s demand for Indonesian wood pellets skyrockets in an effort to meet its own renewable energy goals, critics say continued subsidies and weak oversight of the supply chain are likely to allow continued razing of pristine Indonesian forests.

Worldwide bioenergy use has increased by over 55% between 2015 and 2024, according to the International Energy Agency. In Japan, it accounts for a small but growing share of

electricity generation — less than 6% in 2024, according to the Institute for Sustainable Energy Policies.

Environmentalists and scientists warn that continued rise in international demand coupled with weak domestic regulation will continue to accelerate deforestation.

At the same time, critics say that using biomass to co-fire, instead of transitioning directly to clean energy, simply prolongs the use of highly polluting fossil fuels. Biomass is organic material like plants, wood and waste, and many coal-fired power plants can be easily modified to burn it alongside coal to make energy.

Experts including the IEA say it’s important to meet the demand for biomass in a sustainable way, such as using waste and crop residue rather than converting forest land to grow bioenergy crops. Deforestation contributes to erosion, damages biodiverse areas, threatens wildlife and humans who rely on the forest, and intensifies disasters from extreme weather.

And many scientists and environmentalists have rejected the use of biomass altogether. They say burning wood-based biomass can emit more carbon than coal, and tree-cutting greatly reduces forests’ ability to

remove carbon from the atmosphere.

In Indonesia, biomass production is already felling forests, with the growing demand threatening even greater loss, according to new analysis from environmental organizations Earth Insight, Auriga Nusantara and the Indigenous Peoples’ Alliance of the Archipelago.

Manurung said while there are only a few biomass mills currently in operation in Indonesia, there is a growing trend of concession permits for biomass across the country, with at least 45 concessions granted, covering over 750,000 hectares (1.85 million acres) of natural forest.

Indigenous communities living in the concession areas that rely on the forest will be affected, including the isolated Polahi community, said Manurung.

“It will totally erase all the natural cover which provide a living and is an integral part of the culture to the Polahi people,” he said.

The organizations’ research also found that expanding deforestation linked to biomass production could impact undisturbed forests that serve as critical habitats for vulnerable and endangered species such as tarsiers, endemic buffalo and pigs.

Health

Third measles death in Pennsylvania: A Pennsylvania woman has died from complications associated with measles, the third death in the state this year involving the virus.

The 40-year-old woman died Saturday, Jefferson County Coroner Greg Furlong said in a Facebook post in which he called the death “measles-related.”

The post did not identify the woman other than as a resident of Jefferson County, a rural area about 50 miles (80 kilometers) northeast of Pittsburgh.

“This is a heartbreaking loss for the family and an unfortunate reminder that measles can be a serious and potentially life-threatening disease,” Furlong said in the post.

The post did not say whether the woman was vaccinated against measles. No more information about the case would be released, it stated.

Pennsylvania’s two previous measles-related deaths involved infants. Both occurred in August and a coroner reported that the virus itself caused one of the deaths.

One infant, a boy, died shortly after birth of a ruptured spleen. The boy had measles that did not contribute to the rupture, according to Lancaster County Coroner Dr. Stephen Diamantoni.

Rather, measles was listed as a “significant condition” at the time of death.

The other infant, a 6-week-old girl with a genetic defect that left her highly vulnerable to infection, died due to measles, Diamantoni told The Associated Press.

The girl was born with a condition called Amish lethal microcephaly that causes an unusually small head and underdeveloped brain. Children with the condition typically live 6 months or less.

The first dose of measles vaccine is typically given to infants around 1 year old, meaning neither infant was old enough to be vaccinated.

As of Friday, Pennsylvania had 676 measles cases in 37 of the state’s 67 counties. Of those cases, 124 involved hospitalizations and four people who were vaccinated against measles, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

The three measles-related deaths reported by state and local officials as of Sunday did not square with figures of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which showed no such deaths this year.

“The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) does not currently have any death records from 2026 that indicate measles is the underlying cause,” read the CDC website Sunday.

Pennsylvania’s Democratic governor, Josh Shapiro, and Republican President Donald Trump’s administration have clashed over details of the two previous deaths in the state. (AP)

biologics and tobacco products. All three areas have seen major policy shifts under the Trump administration and attracted scrutiny from consumer groups, physicians and Democrats in Congress.

Dr. Michael Davis was named to lead the agency’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, the agency’s largest center responsible for the safety and effectiveness of prescription and over-the-counter drugs. He’d been serving in an acting role since the departure of Dr. Tracy Beth Hoeg, who said she was fired from the job in May. Hoeg’s brief time at the agency mainly focused on scrutinizing antidepressants, COVID shots and other drugs used in children.

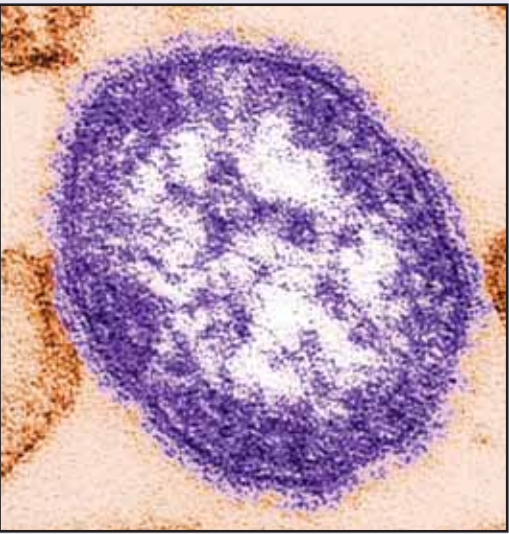
Davis had previously worked as a leader in the FDA’s psychiatric drug division before briefly leaving government to work at a nonprofit pursuing the development of psychedelic drugs. He returned to the FDA as a deputy director last year.

As the FDA’s top drug regulator, Davis will be in a position to oversee the review of a series of upcoming psychedelic drugs being studied for psychiatric conditions, including psilocybin, MDMA and LSD. Both Trump and Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy have emphasized the need to speed up reviews of psychedelics.

HHS also named Karim Mikhail to take over as director of FDA’s vaccines center on a permanent basis. Mikhail, a pharmacist and longtime pharmaceutical executive, joined the FDA last spring and stepped into the vaccines spot after the resignation of Dr. Vinay Prasad.

Prasad stepped down in March following numerous controversies surrounding vaccines, gene therapies and biotech drugs. It was his second time leaving the role in less than a year, following complaints from biotech executives and patient groups over the handling of new drugs targeting rare diseases.

Prasad was also an outspoken critic of the agency’s approach to COVID-19 vaccines. Working with former Commissioner Dr. Marty Makary, Prasad developed stringent new requirements for the development of updated COVID-19 shots. Among other steps, the policy requires vaccine-makers to conduct new, lengthy studies before tweaked vaccines can be approved for healthy adults and children. (AP)



This undated image made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Feb. 4, 2015, shows an electron microscope image of a measles virus particle. (AP)

FDA fills four senior roles: The administration of US President Donald Trump filled four senior positions at the Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday, promoting several officials who had been serving in acting roles to permanently fill the spots, including the agency’s top leaders for drugs and vaccines.

The announcement by the Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees the FDA, gives the agency some stability following months of controversy and upheaval that led to a series of high-profile departures earlier this year.

The announcement names permanent directors for three of the agency’s six centers: drugs, vaccines and

Zach wins Sanford International for fifth Champions title

Europe wins Solheim Cup as Lowry sets Irish Open record

DEN BOSCH, Netherlands, Sept 14, (AP): The Solheim Cup is back in the hands of the Europeans after they won seven of the 12 singles matches at Bernardus for a 15-13 victory over the United States.

The blue wave came early and never really went away, with Lottie Woad holing a putt from 2 feet on No. 17 to guarantee Europe reaching the 14 1/2 points needed to beat the United States. Moments later, Carlota Ciganda closed out her match over Jennifer Kupcho for the final point.

Ciganda also won the point that retained the Solheim Cup for Europe in 2023.

The Europeans have now won three of the last five editions, the only loss in that stretch coming in Virginia two years ago.

The teams were tied at 8-8 after two days and set out in heavy rain for the singles, with Europe going out fast and putting blue all over the scoreboard. Early wins for Charley Hull and Linn Grant set the tone. The only wobble coming when U.S. player Alison Lee came from 4 down after 11 holes to beat Esther Henseleit, 1 up, for the biggest comeback in Solheim Cup history.

Europe now has won the last three times on home soil.

Shane Lowry gave his home crowd and President Donald Trump plenty to cheer when he turned a four-shot lead into a runaway at Doonbeg, closing with a 7-under 63 to break the Irish Open record with an 11-shot victory.

Lowry opened with four birdies in eight holes, one of them from 45 feet over a ridge at No. 7, and the Irishman poured it on before a delirious gallery at Trump International Ireland.

He finished on 23-under 257, seven shots better than the previous 72-hole record of 264 by Jon Rahm at Lahinch in 2019. Lowry won by 11 shots over Patrick Reed (64) and Joaquin Niemann (67), breaking the Irish Open record by one shot for the largest victory margin. Bernhard Langer held the record of 10 shots at Portmarnock in 1987.

Lowry won the Irish Open for the second time, 17 years after he won as an



Anna Nordqvist, Europe team captain, holds the trophy aloft after her team won the Solheim Cup in Den Bosch, Netherlands. (AP)

amateur.

Zach Johnson won the Sanford International on Sunday for the fifth victory of his first PGA Tour Champions season, birdieing the final two holes to edge Ben Crane by a stroke.

The 50-year-old Johnson closed with a 4-under 66 at Minnehaha Country Club to finish at 11 under. He matched Stewart Cink for the tour victory lead.

Crane also shot 66. He finished birdie-birdie-bogey-birdie.

Mario Tiziani had a 63 to tie for third at 8 under with Boo Weekley (64), Ryan Armour (66), Chad Campbell (67) and 2025 winner Retief Goosen (68). Johnson won 12 times on the PGA Tour, highlighted by major titles at the 2007 Masters and 2015 British Open.

Alvaro Ortiz of Mexico wrapped up a PGA Tour card for next season, winning the Simmons Bank Open on Sunday for his second Korn Ferry Tour title of the year.

Ortiz closed with a 7-under 63 for a four-stroke victory, that sent him from 20th to fifth in the season standings. He finished at a tournament-record 26-under 254 at Vanderbilt Legends Club after opening with rounds of 65, 61 and 65.

Ortiz also won the UNC Health Championship in a playoff in May.

Sandy Scott of Scotland was second after a 67.

Etienne Papineau of Canada won the PGA Tour Americas' Digital Commerce Group Open at Uplands Golf Club in Victoria, British Columbia. He finished with a 9-under 61 to reach 25-under 255. Charlie Nikitas was four strokes back in second.

Kosuke Sunagawa closed with a 3-under 69 for a two-shot victory in the Shinhan Donghae Open for his first Japan Golf Tour title.

Former LIV Golf player Frederik Kjetterup shot 5-under 67 and held on for a one-shot victory in the English Trophy to claim his first Challenge Tour title.

Samuel Simpson closed with a 5-under 65 for a one-shot victory in the SunBet Challenge on the Sunshine Tour in South Africa.

Miyu Yamashita, the 2025 Women's British Open champion, closed with a 3-under 69 and defeated Yuzuki Yoshizawa in a playoff to win the Sony JLPGA Championship. Bokyom Park won the KB Financial Group Golden Life Championship by closing with a 1-under 71 to win by one shot on the Korea LPGA.

US wins fifth consecutive women's World Cup title

Spain claims bronze medal



United States players pose on the podium after winning the Women's Basketball World Cup final match between the United States and France in Berlin, Sunday, Sept. 13, 2026. (AP)

BERLIN, Sept 14, (AP): Breanna Stewart had an American flag draped around her body as she soaked in the moment.

The U.S. captain delivered again and the Americans continued their domination of international play, winning a fifth straight women's FIBA World Cup title with a 97-79 victory over France.

The Americans have won 36 straight World Cup games, dating to the semi-finals of the 2006 World Cup, where they lost to Russia.

Despite the final score, this game wasn't easy; the Americans faced their biggest deficit in the tournament since that loss to Russia when they were down 14 points in the first half to France. They calmly rallied behind Stewart and Jackie Young to get within two at halftime, with Caitlin Clark hitting a 3-pointer just before the buzzer.

"I think we felt really good about

where we were at," said Clark, who finished with 12 points. "I think France was 8 for 14 (from 3-point range). We dug ourself a hole, but we climbed out of it, and I felt like we were never rattled by anything."

The U.S. dominated in the second half, starting the third quarter with a 11-2 run to go up 54-47. Stewart, who has now four World Cup titles to her name, had four points during the game-changing burst.

France was able to get within 55-51, but the Americans used a 16-3 spurt that included two unsportsmanlike fouls against France on the same play. The Americans were up 73-57 heading into the fourth quarter, and France never was able to close the gap.

The U.S. improved to 9-0 in gold-medal games since finishing second in 1983 to the Soviet Union.

This was the second-youngest team the Americans have sent to a World Cup. There were many newcomers on the roster including Clark, Angel Reese and Paige Bueckers, who were playing

for the national team for the first time. But it was the veterans who carried the team to the victory.

The Americans had looked more vulnerable in this tournament than at any time during their remarkable run. A three-point win over Italy in pool play was the closest a team has come to the U.S. in group stage in 50 years. The 10-point victory over Spain was the closest semifinal contest during the streak. The Americans had been winning by an average of 26 points over the past four medal-round games.

None of that matter in the end as the Americans finished the same way they had the previous four World Cup tournaments - as champions.

The loss nevertheless gave France its best finish ever in the event. The French were hoping for the top prize after they came close against the U.S. in the 2024 Paris Olympic gold-medal game two years ago. That one-point loss still stung two years later.

Dominique Malonga scored 21 points and Gabby Williams added 20

for France.

France got off to a strong start. The U.S. trailed 20-17 after the first quarter and the French scored the first 11 points of the second, capped by Williams' 3-pointer, to take a 31-17 lead. But the Americans rallied and trailed 45-43 at the half on Clark's 3 just before the buzzer.

Iyana Martin led Spain to the bronze medal with an 81-58 win over host Germany.

The 20-year-old Martin scored 22 points to give Spain, which didn't qualify for the last World Cup, its third third-place finish in the tournament after 2010 and 2018.

The Spanish players looked sharper and faster throughout, with turnovers again an issue for Germany after the hosts had 25 in their semifinal defeat to France on Saturday. Germany had six in the first quarter alone and finished with 18 against Spain.

Frieda Böhner wiped away tears while the Spanish players hugged and danced in celebration at Berlin Arena.

Hamlin maintains lead Larson ends 51-race winless streak

MADISON, Ill., Sept 14, (AP): Kyle Larson ended a 51-race winless streak, edging Hendrick Motorsports teammate Alex Bowman in overtime of a crash-filled NASCAR Cup Series race at World Wide Technology Raceway that shook up the playoff standings.

Larson, the defending series champion, took his No. 5 Chevrolet to Victory Lane for the first time since May 2025 at Kansas Speedway after defending the lead on three restarts in the final two laps of regulation and seven laps of overtime.

The track formerly known as Gateway was the only regular stop on the series where Hendrick hadn't won.

"It takes a lot more than just having the fastest car to win a Cup Series race," said Larson, acknowledging Joey Logano had the best car. "You still have to execute a day from start to finish with good pit stops, good restarts, good strategy, and we had that today."

The second race in NASCAR's new postseason Chase format gave significant boosts to the championship hopes for Larson and Logano, a three-time Cup Series champion who finished third and added 19 stage points.

"When you have an opportunity like that and you have a car like that, you need to win," said Logano, who won the pole and led a race-high 96 laps, 16 more than Larson.

What was supposed to be a 240-lap race in suburban St. Louis featured a season-high and track-record 18 cautions. It was marked by dramatic brake failures and several spinouts without any contact between cars.

After several Chase contenders were involved in late crashes, the race was red-flagged with 11 laps to go, just after Larson swiped the lead from Logano, and again with two left in regulation.

Larson benefited from his crew's decision on Lap 202 to put four tires on while Logano took two to maintain track position.

Hendrick's William Byron, who was last in the 16-driver Chase field, finished fourth and was followed by Ross Chastain.

Denny Hamlin, the defending race champion, placed ninth to maintain his points lead. Larson racked up 73 points in the race to jump from seventh to second in the Chase standings, nine

behind Hamlin.

Christopher Bell, the winner of last week's Southern 500, is another nine points back in third place after two of 10 postseason races.

"I think we are so fortunate," Hamlin said. "We were strong last week, and this week we were not strong, and still, we maintained the lead."

A series of final-stage crashes had significant Chase implications.

On Lap 141, Bubba Wallace dove under Chase Briscoe's No. 19 Toyota going into Turn 1, creating four-wide traffic on Gateway's tighter series of turns. Briscoe had no room to move up the track, and Wallace spun around after he was forced onto the curb. Briscoe also went sideways, and Byron slammed into Wallace's spinning No. 23 Toyota.

The three - each of them in the 16-driver Chase field - dropped into positions 29-31 on the restart, and the impacts could have reached even further. Hamlin, Ryan Blaney, and Ty Gibbs were also racing in the same pack, and Chase Elliott was able to squeeze under Wallace as he whirled around entering the backstretch.

On Lap 213, Elliott had an apparent brake issue and collected Briscoe as both crashed into the wall in Turn 1. Both were knocked out of the race.

"I stepped on the brakes and, yeah, exploded a rotor, and that was that was about it, so I was kind of hanging on," Elliott said "Really unfortunate. Thought we were yeah having a really solid day, honestly. I was kind of right there around the top five."

Contenders who escaped danger earlier got caught up in another collision on Lap 222. Wallace and Josh Berry made contact in Turn 1, and Tyler Reddick slammed into Berry as Christopher Bell got bumped into the wall.

On the ensuing restart, Chase contenders Ty Gibbs and Daniel Suarez sustained damage in a wreck on the backstretch that also involved AJ Allmendinger.

Blaney, who was third in the Chase entering the race, had a catastrophic brake failure at the finish line on Lap 155 while he was running in sixth place.

Blaney's brakes exploded on the frontstretch, and he rode his No. 12 Ford into the wall heading into Turn 1.

Blaney finished 35th but earned 14 points from ending each of the first two stages in fourth place.



Kyle Larson (5) and Brad Keselowski (6) compete during a NASCAR Cup Series auto race in Madison, Ill. (AP)

Wooden blazes to 21.47 in Budapest 200m victory, fourth-fastest time in history

BUDAPEST, Hungary, Sept 14, (AP): Melissa Jefferson-Wooden put it best when she crossed the finish line and looked over at the clock: "Wow!"

Her shock came after she saw those winning numbers - "21.47" - shining back at her after the 200-meter run at

track's Ultimate Championship.

It was the fourth fastest time in history. It also was a time that wrapped up the 100-200 double in Budapest, banked her another \$150,000 to go with the \$150K she won the night before, beat her old personal best by .21 and locked in her status as the fast-

est woman in the sprint game with 22 months left before the LA Olympics.

"Shocked the heck out of me," Jefferson-Wooden said. "Honestly, I wanted to PB. I was thinking, like, 21.6-low, 21.5. But I skipped all over 21.5 and went 21.4. I did not know 21.4 was in the scope of things to-

night."

The only three faster times were a pair by two-time Jamaican world champion Shericka Jackson - who ran one of those, a 21.41, three years ago on this very track in Budapest; and the world record, set by Florence Griffith Joyner, which has stood at 21.34 since

1988.

Jefferson-Wooden sped to her win minutes after another American, Kenny Bednarek, who trains with her down in Florida, ran a personal-best 19.52 to also complete the 100-200 double.

"For me, this year was about ap-

plying the pressure and letting them know, like, 'Hey, I'm not here to play games,'" Bednarek said.

His biggest threat, Noah Lyles, pulled out of this meet last week with a nagging injury he suffered back at U.S. Nationals in July. Bednarek's \$300,000 will still spend well.

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Antonelli stays humble despite another win and big F1 lead

MADRID, Sept 14, (AP): By now, even Kimi Antonelli's closest rival is conceding that the race for the Formula 1 title is pretty much over.

Antonelli won his eighth race of the season - and second in a row - at Sunday's Spanish Grand Prix, extending his championship lead to 81 points with nine races remaining.

The 20-year-old Italian, the youngest ever to lead the F1 cham-

pionship, doesn't want to get too far ahead of himself, though.

"It's great, but we've just got to keep pushing, keep delivering the results and, you know, just trying to do the best job I can whenever I go on track," he said. "Of course, yes, I have a big lead, but you never know what can happen. So just need to be ready for anything and keep maximizing every opportunity I get, and then we'll see where we end up at

the end of the year."

His Mercedes teammate, George Russell, hinted he already knows the outcome.

"Realistically, I'm not in the fight for the drivers' (championship), and that just allows me to focus race by race and try to get some good results."

Lewis Hamilton, third in the championship, dropped 101 points behind Antonelli after not finishing

on Sunday because of a brake failure.

Russell was fifth on Sunday. He had already said earlier in the weekend that Antonelli "has done a better job" than him this season and "deserves to be leading" the championship.

Antonelli doesn't like the rhetoric that the title race is over and that he can start taking a more conservative approach.

Change Name

I, HUSAINI HOLDER OF INDIAN PASSPORT NUMBER S2347325 PERMANENT ADDRESS NEAR SIRAT COMMITTEE OLD SABZI MANDI PATELA DISTRICT DUNGARPUR STATE RAJASTHAN COUNTRY INDIA. PIN 314001 RESIDING IN KUWAIT AT PRESENT hereby declare MY NAME HUSAINI SURNAME KALAYANPURWALA

India wins women’s Asia Cup but yet again refuses to take trophy from Pakistani official

‘Trophy or no trophy doesn’t matter to us’

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Sept 14, (AP): Political tensions between India and Pakistan spilled onto the cricket field again when India’s women refused to accept the Asia Cup cricket trophy from Asian Cricket Council chairman Mohsin Naqvi.

India dominated from the start to win the tournament for a record eighth time, beating Sri Lanka by 72 runs in the final.

India, after winning the toss, scored 183-5 before dismissing Sri Lanka for 111 in 20 overs.

The presentation ceremony was delayed nearly an hour, during which the Indian team conducted its own medal presentation. Devajit Saikia, secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India, presented the best fielder medal to Nandani Sharma.

Naqvi is chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board and the ACC, as well as Pakistan’s interior minister.

He stood on the dais with several ACC officials, but the Indian team did not appear to receive its



In this file photo, India’s Kranti Goud celebrates the wicket of Pakistan’s Aliya Riaz during the ICC Women’s Cricket World Cup match between India and Pakistan at Premadasa Stadium in Colombo, Sri Lanka. (AP)

medals or trophy. The ceremony ended abruptly after medals were presented to the Sri Lankan team and match officials.

Naqvi presented the runners-up check to Sri Lanka captain Chamari Athapaththu.

“This is BCCI’s stand (to not take trophy from Naqvi). We can’t say anything on this,” India coach Anol Muzumdar said. “India are officially the champions. Trophy

or no trophy doesn’t matter to us.

“For us, this tournament is over, we are the champions. That’s good enough. It was on the big board that India are the champions of Asia Cup 2026. This tournament is officially over for us. We’re happy that we’re the champions and we look forward to the Asian Games.”

Cross-border tensions between India and Pakistan brought the two countries to the brink of war

last year, with the acrimony also spilling onto the cricket field. Indian cricketers have avoided handshakes with Pakistan players and refused to accept the trophy and medals from a Pakistani official at several tournaments.

The Indian men’s team beat Pakistan three times in the Asia Cup, including the final, but Suryakumar Yadav’s team refused to accept the trophy from Naqvi and did not shake hands with Pakistan players in any of the three games.

The Indian women’s team did not shake hands with the Pakistan team in its match earlier in the tournament.

“That stand has been taken by BCCI and we stand by it,” Muzumdar said.

India captain Harmanpreet Kaur spoke to the broadcaster shortly after the final.

“I think we played to our standards because that’s what we discussed when we came here. We have certain standards, and we have to keep matching them every day,” Kaur said.

In a lopsided final, Smriti Mandhana (59) and Shafali Verma (68) shared an opening stand of 129 in 12.5 overs before India spinner Shree Charani took 4-20 in four overs.

Martinez calls the goal an ‘injustice’

Referees body admits ‘error of judgment’ after Haaland winner against Man United



Manchester City’s Erling Haaland, center, battles for the ball with Manchester United’s Lisandro Martinez, left, and Harry Maguire during the English Premier League soccer match in Manchester, England. (AP)

MANCHESTER, England, Sept 14, (AP): The governing body of Premier League referees admitted an “error of judgment” after Erling Haaland’s hotly contested goal settled the 199th Manchester derby on Sunday.

That will be of little comfort to Manchester United after a 1-0 defeat to 10-man Manchester City at Old Trafford.

United was enraged after VAR awarded Haaland his winning strike in the 60th minute.

At first, the goal was ruled out for offside, but after VAR review the onfield decision was overturned, sparking a roar of celebration from the away fans, including Oasis’ Noel Gallagher.

United’s players were incensed because City midfielder Enzo Fernandez was in an offside position during the buildup. 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, soccer rules state a player is interfering with play when “clearly attempting to play a ball” or “challenging an opponent for the ball.”

The refereeing body that oversees Premier League matches, Pro Ref, said Sunday evening that the VAR “did not recognize the likely impact” of Fernandez’s position and “should have recommended an onfield review.”

Pro Ref said it had made contact with United to acknowledge an “error of judgment” relating to the winning goal.

United defender Lisandro Martinez, who was challenging Fernandez, had called the goal an “injustice” and coach Michael Carrick was also perplexed.

“I just don’t get it, I really don’t get it,” he said. “It’s worrying, it really is if that’s how the game is seen by those who are officiating.”

Asked at the time if he thought he would get a better explanation from the referee’s governing body or even an apology, Carrick said, “I look forward to that.”

While acknowledgement of the error came soon afterward, it was too late to prevent United falling to a second defeat of the season after four games.

City’s fans may have felt justice was done after Phil Foden was sent off in the 23rd for kicking out at Bruno Fernandes.

Foden and City’s players remonstrated on the field and coach Enzo Maresca said Fernandes should also have been shown a red for the altercation.

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.

“The red card changed the plan of the game, but credit to the players and their effort, spirit and togetherness was brilliant,” Maresca said. “It is already an abnormal situation when you are able to win a game with 10 players. It is fantastic. Then this game is a derby so it is even better.”

South Korea coach denies using AI to prepare for games

CHEONAN, South Korea, Sept 14, (AP): Interim South Korea coach Robert Moreno denied using artificial intelligence in past jobs to prepare for games as he named his first roster on Monday.

Moreno was appointed in August on a contract that runs to the end of November. He succeeds Hong Myung-bo, who resigned after a disappointing World Cup in which South Korea was eliminated at the group stage.

Moreno, who took charge of Spain for nine games in 2009, was fired by Sochi FC in September 2025 after a run of poor results with the Russian club accusing him of relying on AI.

“If you verify facts, you will see that much of what was reported was taken out of context and blown out of proportion,” Moreno said at a news conference in the city of Cheonan, said. “Obviously I use technology...those reports are not true.”

The first of Moreno’s six games in charge is Sept. 24 against Ecuador with Son Heung-min

continuing as South Korea’s captain.

“We’re all aware of Son’s versatility,” Moreno said of the 34-year-old LAFC forward. “For me he can play in three positions.”

Moreno is tasked with restoring the public’s



Robert Moreno, interim head coach of South Korean men’s national football team, speaks during a press conference in Cheonan, South Korea. (AP)

faith in the national team. Disquiet around Hong’s appointment in 2024 turned to anger after the poor performances at the World Cup.

Hong was grilled by lawmakers at a parliamentary hearing in July along with Chung Mong-gyu, the former head of the Korea Football Association, whose offices were raided by police in August. The KFA apologized after a leaked government audit reported that the organization had provided “sexual entertainment” for foreign referees in 2011 and 2012.

“I have studied World Cup matches and players inside out but I think it is inappropriate to publicly evaluate my predecessor,” Moreno said. “It is important to use whatever happened in the past as a learning opportunity. What is clear is that when you lose, many problems surface. But when you win, they fade away.”

South Korea will also face Uruguay, Venezuela, Uzbekistan and two yet to be named opponents as part of preparation for the 2027 Asian Cup, which begins in January in Saudi Arabia.

Robinson extends stay with Al-Qurain

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14: Al-Qurain has renewed the contract of American professional Elijah Robinson for another season as the basketball team prepares for the resumption of last season’s competitions and the start of the new campaign.

Last season’s competitions are scheduled to resume at the end of October after being suspended in February due to the security situation in the region, with Al-Qurain set to compete in the semifinals.

Robinson is one of the experienced foreign players in Kuwait’s domestic basketball scene. He previously played for Kazma and is now set to begin his ninth consecutive season in Kuwait.

The American has also featured in leagues in China, Argentina and Romania, as well as clubs in the Middle East, including Bahrain’s Manama, UAE’s Al-Wasl and Iraq’s Dijlah.

His contract extension is part of Al-Qurain’s efforts to maintain squad stability and strengthen the team ahead of its upcoming commitments.

The club has also finalized the team’s administrative and technical structure, with



In this file photo, Al Qurain player scores against Kazma during league match.

Abdulkarim Al-Shahoumi serving as basketball director, Abdullah Al-Mutawa as assistant director and Jaber Al-Roudhan as team administrator.

Yahya Kulaib will continue to lead the technical staff, assisted by Egyptian coach Mohamed Ismail.

Ronaldo demands action

Saudi soccer bodies condemn fans chants targeting Neves

RIYADH, Sept 14: The Saudi Arabian Football Federation and Saudi Pro League have condemned chants by some Al-Taawoun fans targeting Al-Hilal midfielder Ruben Neves during their recent league clash, after supporters invoked the death of his close friend and Portugal teammate Diogo Jota.

A video widely circulated on social media showed an exchange between Neves and several Taawoun supporters, who chanted Jota’s name in an apparent attempt to provoke the Portuguese international. Neves responded by pointing toward the sky.

In a joint statement, the Saudi federation and league described the behavior as unacceptable and contrary to the values of Saudi football and sportsmanship.

“Exploiting personal tragedies to insult or provoke others is unacceptable behavior that has no place in Saudi football,” the statement said.

The authorities added that the relevant committees had monitored the incident and launched the necessary disciplinary procedures in accordance with the applicable regulations. Any resulting measures will be announced once the procedures are completed.

The incident drew widespread criticism from the sporting community, including Al-Nassr captain Cristiano Ron-



Al-Hilal midfielder Ruben Neves

aldo, Jota’s former Portugal teammate.

Commenting on an Instagram post, Ronaldo called on the league to take action against such behavior, saying: “The league must act and punish this kind of fan behavior. This is no longer football, and there must be limits.”

Al Ain welcomes Al Nassr in AFC Champions League Elite opener

DUBAI, Sept 14: Al Nassr begins its 2026-27 AFC Champions League Elite campaign away to Al Ain at Hazza bin Zayed Stadium tonight in the opening round of the league phase.

Al Nassr reached the final of the AFC Champions League Two last season but missed out on the title after losing to Japan’s Gamba Osaka. Al Ain, meanwhile, is looking to return to the top of Asian football after a two-season absence. The UAE side was the final champion of the competition under its previous format.

Elsewhere, Al Hilal hosts Qatar’s Al Gharafa at Kingdom Arena tonight as both teams begin their league-phase campaigns.

Al Hilal, the 2021 champion, will be aiming to end its wait for another continental title and hopes to make the most of home advantage in its opening match.

The league phase gets underway today and concludes in February 2027. The top eight teams from the West and East regions will advance to the round of 16,



A file photo of Ronaldo battling for the ball with an opponent.

which will be played from March 1-17.

The quarterfinals, semifinals, and final will be staged in Saudi Arabia as a centralized finals tournament from April 23 to May 1.

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Germany's Alexis Peterson guards Spain's Elena Buenavida during the Women's Basketball World Cup third-place match between Germany and Spain in Berlin. Spain defeated host Germany again to win bronze. (AP) - See Page 14

Sports

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef welcomes Kuwait's hosting of tournament

Kuwait to host Saudi Super Cup in December

RIYADH, Sept 14, (KUNA): Kuwait will host the 13th Saudi Football Super Cup for the 2026-27 season from December 19 to 23, under an agreement signed Monday in the presence of Kuwait Football Association Chairman Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef and Saudi Football Association Chairman Bader Al-Ruzayza.

The agreement was signed in Riyadh by Al-Rai Media Group CEO Rashid Al-Omairi, Aayan Leasing and Investment CEO Abdullah Al-Shatti and SMC Vibes CEO Sultan Al-Sheikh.

Under the agreement, the Al-Rai-Aayan alliance will serve as the tournament's official host partner.

The competition will be held at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, featuring four Saudi clubs -- Al-Nassr, Al-Khulood, Al-Ahli and Al-Qadsiah.

The tournament draw will be held in Kuwait on October 14 to determine the two semifinal matchups, with ticket sales to begin thereafter.

Kuwait will become the eighth

destination to host the Saudi Super Cup, following previous editions in Makkah, Riyadh, Jeddah and Abha, as well as London, Abu Dhabi and Hong Kong.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef welcomed Kuwait's hosting of the tournament, describing it as a valuable addition to the Gulf sports calendar and expressing confidence that it would be a successful edition.

He said the event reflects the deep fraternal ties between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, while highlighting the strong interest of Kuwaiti fans in Saudi football.

Al-Ruzayza said the Saudi Super Cup occupies an important position among the competitions organized by the Saudi Football Association, stressing ongoing efforts to develop the tournament and enhance its commercial and fan appeal.

He added that staging the upcoming edition in Kuwait represents a historic opportunity to expand the tournament's presence in the Gulf, reach wider audiences and build

partnerships that support the development and sustainability of Saudi football.

Aayan Leasing and Investment Vice Chairman Fahad Al-Ghanim said the Al-Rai-Aayan alliance reflects the Kuwaiti private sector's ability to contribute effectively to sports development and major events.

He stressed the private sector's role in improving the business environment and supporting Kuwait's development, adding that the alliance would utilize its resources and expertise to deliver a tournament that meets the expectations of participating teams and fans.

Al-Omairi attributed the hosting agreement to the support of Kuwait's political leadership and His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's directives to strengthen public-private partnerships.

He said hosting the tournament would provide an opportunity to showcase Kuwait's organizational capabilities and strengthen confidence in its ability to stage major international sporting events.

SMC Vibes CEO Sultan Al-Sheikh said the tournament's arrival in Kuwait would further expand its reach and enhance its commercial value for partners and fans.

Meanwhile, Al-Rai International Advertising CEO Khaled Al-Sayer said special activities would accompany the tournament and be announced soon, noting strong expected interest from fans.

Kuwait's Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Dr. Tariq Al-Jalahma had earlier announced that Kuwait would host the Saudi Super Cup in December, describing it as an important Gulf sporting event that would strengthen Kuwait's position as a destination for major sports competitions.

Authority unveils new visual identity

PAS launches 'Kuwait Season for Youth and Sports'



KUNA photos

Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Tareq Al-Jalahma leads the attendees at the launch ceremony of the Kuwait Youth and Sports Season.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 14, (KUNA): The Public Authority for Sport (PAS) launched the "Kuwait Season for Youth and Sports," a national initiative aimed at organizing and developing sports and youth activities and promoting Kuwait as a destination for international events.

The launch took place during a special festival at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre, under the patronage of the Cabinet and in the presence of Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Tareq Al-Jalahma and Asimah Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah.

The authority also unveiled its new visual identity following the merger of the Public Authority for Youth and the Public Authority for Sport.

In his speech, Al-Jalahma described the "Kuwait Season for Youth and Sports" as a national initiative involving both the public and private sectors, with Kuwait Finance House as a strategic partner.

He said the initiative seeks to organize and develop a wide range of activities while strengthening Kuwait's position as a key destination for hosting international youth, cultural and sporting events.

The minister added that the season is expected to attract visitors and participants from inside and outside Kuwait, supporting the tourism sector and contributing to economic growth.

He noted that the initiative would stimulate several vital sectors, including hospitality, transportation, restaurants and related services, while creating new employment opportunities and



The Public Authority for Sport (PAS) launches the "Kuwait Season for Youth and Sports".



The launch in progress.

encouraging local and international investment in event-related projects and infrastructure.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Season Project Head Waleed Al-Sagabi said the new visual identity was inspired by Kuwait's national heritage, incorporating visual elements and colors derived from the state emblem.

He explained that the logo was designed to resemble the sail of a traditional Kuwaiti ship, reflecting the country's maritime heritage. It also incorporates the shape of a falcon's beak, symbolizing strength, pride and ambition while reflecting the Kuwaiti people's deep connection with the desert environment.

Zverev extends American men's Grand Slam drought

German wins US Open for second major

NEW YORK, Sept 14, (AP): Alexander Zverev's best year in tennis goes on, and so does that lengthy Grand Slam drought for American men.

Zverev won his second major championship and disappointed a crowd that was desperate to see the first Grand Slam title by an American man since 2003, beating Ben Shelton 6-3, 7-6 (2), 5-7, 6-2 on Sunday in the U.S. Open final.

Zverev finally broke through in the majors by winning this year's French Open and followed up by adding the title in New York that he so painfully let slip away in 2020.

The No. 1 seed in a Grand Slam for the first time, he capitalized on Shelton's shaky start in his first major final, played a nearly flawless tiebreaker on serve and then turned back Shelton's comeback attempt in front of a crowd that desperately cheered him on.

Shelton was trying to win the first title by an American man since Andy Roddick won in Flushing Meadows in 2003, as well as become the first

Black player to win the men's crown since Arthur Ashe in 1968.

But Zverev was too good in majors this year and apparently didn't even know how good he was. He finished the match on his serve but didn't seem to realize it, dropping back behind the baseline as if set to return. Only a few moments later did he figure out he had won, raising his arms in celebration.

Zverev improved to 25-2 in major matches this year and won \$5.5 million, matching the prize earned by women's champion Elena Rybakina on Saturday as the largest in Grand Slam history.

He thought this title would come in 2020 and still acknowledges it should have. He won the first two sets against Dominic Thiem and got within two points of victory before becoming the first man to blow a two-set lead and lose in the final since 1949.

Whatever ghosts were left from then are long gone now.

Zverev also reached the final at Wimbledon, falling to Jannik Sinner, and became the No. 1 seed in New York when the top-ranked Sinner had to withdraw with a knee injury.

Shelton had already eliminated the defending champion when he beat Carlos Alcaraz in a five-set quarterfinal that ended at 3:33 a.m., the latest finish in U.S. Open history.

But he fell short on Sunday in his attempt to become the first man to beat the No. 1 and No. 2 seeds en route to the U.S. Open title since 1975.

The No. 8 seed fell to 0-6 against Zverev, winning a set Sunday for only the second time.

The 23-year-old Shelton figures to get more chances, but Americans who have grown tired of waiting to celebrate a men's title wanted it now.

Fans stood and screamed when Shelton emerged from the tunnel before the match, but he didn't give them any reason to keep the cheers going once play began. Serving first, he lost the opening two points and then eventually handed the game to Zverev with a double-fault.

Zverev maintained that lead the rest of the set, which ended on another double-fault by Shelton.

Zverev's deliberate playing style helped limit the crowd's effectiveness. Fans are expected to quiet down as a player is preparing to serve and stay quiet until the ensuing point has completed.

Zverev bounces the ball a number of times - sometimes around 10, maybe a dozen, others nearly 20, insisting there is no set pattern or plan - before he begins his toss, so it guarantees lengthy stretches of silence.

Fans tried to get around that by occasionally cheering when he missed a first serve - another tennis no-no that the chair umpire scolded them for - but Zverev, who said before the match he enjoyed hostile crowds, did not seem affected.

Zverev then turned back Shelton's chance to even the match in the tiebreaker.

Shelton returned Zverev's opening serve long, was beaten by a superb passing shot and then came up on the wrong end of a 16-shot rally as Zverev went up 3-0. Zverev then hit serves of 147 mph and 124 mph that Shelton couldn't get back in play. Shelton cut it to 5-2 and then got a return in play for the only time, but Zverev won the point and then hit another serve at 139 mph to close it out.

Kuwait targets strong start against Vietnam at Asian Games

Kuwait Oly Committee seeks answers after 3 players denied entry to Japan

KUWAIT, Sept 14, (Agencies): The Kuwait Olympic Committee has lodged an official complaint with the organizing committee of the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, seeking clarification over the denial of entry to three members of Kuwait's national football team despite their holding official accreditation cards issued by the Games organizers.

Kuwait Olympic Committee Assistant Secretary General Ali Al-Marri said Monday that the committee had completed all required procedures and submitted, within the designated deadlines, the data and documents of the Kuwaiti delegation, including the three players, based on information received from the Kuwait Football Association.

Al-Marri said the organizing committee subsequently issued official accreditation cards to the players after receiving their personal details and travel documents. He noted that the three players hold travel documents issued under Article 17, but Japanese authorities at Nagoya Airport nevertheless refused them entry.

The Kuwaiti delegation travelled to Japan via Bangkok, with the three players presenting their travel documents and official accreditation cards upon arrival. Despite having completed the required procedures, they were denied entry by the relevant authorities at Nagoya Airport.

Al-Marri said the Kuwait Olympic Committee immediately contacted the authorities concerned and took all necessary steps to resolve the issue and allow the players to join the delegation and take part in the Games.

Kuwait's U-23 national team launches its Asian Games campaign today against Vietnam in the opening round of Group C at the 20th Asian Games in Japan.

The match kicks off at 1:00pm Kuwait time at Minato Stadium in Nagoya, with Uzbekistan facing the Philippines in the other Group C fixture.

Kuwait coach David Doniga has selected a 21-player squad for the tournament, including Dhari Al-Masri, Abdulrida Shehab, Hamoud Al-Sanaousi, Bandar Al-Barazi,



The players huddle for a team talk.

Ahmed Boudi, Muntasir Al-Abdul-Salam, Jassem Al-Anzi, Bandar Al-Salama, Jassem Shammouh, Abdullah Al-Ghanem, Omar Al-Matar, Abdullah Fares, Saleh Al-Mohatab, Talal Al-Qaisi, Muath Al-Asima, Eid Al-Azmi, Ahmed Khorsheed, Mohammed Al-Suraihi, Fawaz Al-Mubailesh, Mohammed Al-Sharifi and Abdullah Al-Ayyoub.

The opening match is seen as crucial to Kuwait's hopes of making a strong start and advancing to the knockout stage. The players and coaching staff are fully focused on securing all three points, which would provide an important boost in confidence ahead of the second group match.

The coaching staff is also counting on the players' determination to represent Kuwait strongly and meet the expectations of their supporters as they seek to make a deep run in the tournament.

A positive result against Vietnam would give Kuwait valuable momentum in its pursuit of a place in the quarterfinals.

Kuwait wraps up Doha camp with win over Lusail

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DOHA, Sept 14: Kuwait completed its Doha training camp with a 2-1 win over Qatar's Lusail Club in a friendly at Aspire Academy.

The match was played over two 35-minute halves, with the players coping with high humidity as Coach Hélio Sousa rotated his squad and gave everyone playing time.

Kuwait enjoyed the better of the opening half, controlling possession and working on passing and tactical combinations. The team increased the tempo after the break and scored twice.

Yousef Majed produced a fine finish to open the scoring, lifting the ball over the advancing goalkeeper.

Khaled Al-Morshed then made it 2-0 after capitalizing on a scramble in front of goal, while Lusail scored a late consolation.

The result marked Kuwait's only friendly during its Doha camp. The team will hold its final training session in the Qatari capital today before travelling to Jeddah tomorrow for the 27th Arabian Gulf Cup.

Kuwait will play Yemen on Friday in its final warm-up before the tournament. The team has been drawn in Group A with Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Oman.

Kuwait begins its campaign against Saudi Arabia on Sept. 23, faces Iraq three days later and concludes the group stage against Oman on Sept. 29.

Group B consists of Bahrain, the UAE, Qatar and Yemen.



Alexander Zverev, of Germany, poses with the trophy after he won the men's singles final of the U.S. Open tennis championships against Ben Shelton of the United States in New York. (AP)