



Kuwait's Amir congratulates Saudi King on National Day

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AMIR REPRESENTATIVE HEADS KUWAIT DELEGATION AT U.N.G.A.



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Celebrating the Kingdom of the Arabs and Muslims

ON this day in 1932, King Abdulaziz Al Saud announced the unification of a vast territory—one destined to command significant influence on the international, Arab and Gulf stages. It was then that its official name, the 'Kingdom of Saudi Arabia', was proclaimed.

The man who forged this Kingdom created a nation that played a vital role in history, consistently serving as a central axis in Arab and international political affairs. It stands as a sheltering canopy for the peoples of the Arab and Islamic worlds, owing to its enduring stewardship of the Two Holy Mosques.

While the Hajj pilgrimage to the Sacred House was once fraught with the perils of bandits, plunder and violence, the unification of the Kingdom transformed it into a journey free from such hardships.

Consequently, the peoples of the Islamic world hold the rulers of Saudi Arabia in deep affection and esteem—from the founding King to the present

day. The Kingdom enjoys security and stability under the leadership of King Salman bin Abdulaziz and his Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman.

Over the course of about a century, the Kingdom has witnessed both successes and setbacks, yet, it has always risen with renewed strength. It is safeguarded by God Almighty, who blessed it with rulers keen on serving the Sacred House and the resting place of the Messenger of God—leaders who fulfill their duties to their faith, their Arab identity, the Gulf region, and their citizens with unwavering integrity and transparency.

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UN chief calls for unity amid wars, climate, AI

World leaders confront widening fault lines



Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, heads the Kuwait's delegation on Tuesday to the opening of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

NEW YORK, Sept 22, (Agencies): Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah led Kuwait's delegation on Tuesday to the opening of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres, delivering his final address to the annual gathering of world leaders, urged the international community to build "a world based on interdependence" as it confronts a daunting array of challenges - from climate change and armed conflict to inequality and the rapid rise of artificial intelligence.

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Saudi King Salman slams Houthi assault on Makkah's sanctity

JEDDAH, Sept 22, (KUNA): Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz condemned Tuesday the attempt by the Houthi militia to target Makkah, which has drawn international condemnation over its violation of the sanctity of holy sites and provocation of Muslims worldwide.

Saudi Minister of Media Salman Al-Dosari

said in a statement carried by the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) following the Cabinet session chaired by King Salman in Jeddah that the King condemned the repeated attempt to target Makkah.

At the beginning of the session, King Salman expressed praise and gratitude to Allah for the blessings bestowed upon Saudi

Arabia and for honoring the Kingdom with serving the Grand Mosque, the Prophet's Mosque and pilgrims, Umrah performers and visitors.

He also expressed hope that, as Saudi Arabia celebrates its National Day on Wednesday, the Kingdom would achieve further accomplishments and successes in its development, progress and leadership across various fields.

King Salman commended the military and security sectors and their personnel for defending the homeland and firmly confronting any attack targeting holy sites, pilgrims, citizens and residents in the Kingdom.

Meanwhile, the Saudi Cabinet, following developments in the region, stressed the need to adhere to international law principles concerning respect for sovereignty, peaceful settlement of disputes and ensuring safe navigation through international waterways.

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His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet session on Tuesday. - See Page 5

Major Riyadh Road closure begins Friday

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The Ministry of Public Works, in coordination with the General Traffic Department, announced the full closure of Riyadh Road (Road 50), specifically the section extending from the Third Ring Road intersection to the intersection of the Fourth Ring Road and King Faisal Road, in the direction of the airport, for 48 hours, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The closure will take effect in the early hours of Friday, September 25, and remain in place until the early hours of Sunday, September 27.

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First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah oversees the apprehension of the accused during the arrest operation.

KAFCO expands footprint with overseas fueling deal

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The Kuwait Aviation Fueling Company (KAFCO) recorded a remarkable achievement through the expansion of its operational and logistical activities beyond the borders of the country.

According to the report of Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, this regional expansion followed the participation of KAFCO in the Arab Air Carriers Organization (AACO) tender. It was selected to provide aircraft fueling services for Kuwait Airways at three international airports with high air traffic volume -- Colombo Airport (Sri Lanka), Salalah Airport (Oman) and Najaf Airport (Iraq).

Official service and field operations commenced at the beginning of the 2026/2027 fiscal year, which is considered a vital step in strengthening the presence of the company in regional and international aviation energy markets.

Domestically, the company continues to boost its partnership with government entities

by signing a fixed three-year contract with the Amiri Diwan to supply fuel for the Amiri aircraft and the aircraft for state guests at Kuwait International Airport—a move that reflects the high level of confidence in the capabilities, efficiency and reliability of the company.

In a related development, the official operational data of the company showed exceptional field efficiency in meeting the growing domestic demand for aviation fuel.

KAFCO refueled a total of 50,856 aircraft with commercial Jet A-1 fuel at Kuwait International Airport during the period, while military refueling operations using JP-8 fuel covered 693 aircraft.

These integrated measures and tireless efforts underscore the success of KAFCO in solidifying its position as a trusted logistics partner supporting the national carrier in its overseas stations.

Moreover, the company maintains the highest standards of quality, security, safety and operational excellence at Kuwait International Airport, while advancing the long-term developmental goals of the local oil sector.

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65 years later, Kuwait-US partnership stands strong

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Chargé d'Affaires at the American Embassy in Kuwait Steven Butler confirmed the stable and robust relationship between Kuwait and the United States of America.

Butler made the statement at the celebration of the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

He pointed out the significance of this milestone, as it depicts a partnership built on decades of collaboration and shared values. He indicated that 65 years ago, the newly independent Kuwait embarked on a crucial journey in its history, with the United States extending its congratulations and support.

He disclosed that the roots of official engagement trace back to 1951, when the US established a consulate in Kuwait. He stated that formal diplomatic relations were solidified on Sept 22, 1961, when the consulate was elevated to an embassy, led by Chargé d'Affaires Dayton S. Mak. He added that he is honored to hold the same position today. "I am proud that I am able to contribute to the next chapter of our shared story," he stressed.

He also revealed that the US-



Steven Butler, Chargé d'Affaires at the American Embassy in Kuwait

Kuwaiti relationship was molded by an enduring friendship that went through conflicts and triumphs, fostered by generations of Americans and Kuwaitis who worked hard to strengthen their ties.

He affirmed the commitment of both nations to stand together through prosperous and challenging times, concluding with a hopeful message: "Today, we celebrate 65 years of friendship and partnership. We look toward the future as we always have—side by side."

Kuwait's Mol busts meth operation, arrests suspect

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (Agencies): The Ministry of Interior (Mol) announced on Monday the arrest of a suspect accused of manufacturing methamphetamine (shabu), trafficking and distributing narcotic substances that used a place in Kabd area to conduct his criminal activities.

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No transit takeoff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): The official spokesperson for the Public Authority of Civil Aviation, Abdullah Al-Rajhi, denied Tuesday reports that an airline operating at Kuwait International Airport had announced the launch of transit flights starting Oct 1.

Al-Rajhi told KUNA that the announcement was inaccurate, stressing that airlines operating at Kuwait International Airport had not been informed or notified of any decision to launch transit flights from the date mentioned.

He urged all airlines operating at the airport to verify information and regulatory decisions before issuing or publishing announcements concerning operations or air services, and to refer to the competent authorities at the Public Authority of Civil Aviation before announcing any operational procedures or arrangements.

Al-Rajhi added that the authority condemned the issuance of such inaccurate announcements, which could cause confusion among passengers and the public.



China-Kuwait friendship & regional stability highlighted at Chinese National Day reception



National Bank of Kuwait renews strategic partnership with Spain's IE University to foster talent development & corporate innovation



Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:17	Asr	15:07
Sunrise ..	05:37	Maghrib ..	17:44
Zohr	11:41	Isha	19:01



His Highness the Amir



King Salman bin Abdulaziz

Kuwait's Amir congratulates Saudi King on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Aal-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable on Tuesday to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz congratulating him on the Kingdom's National Day.

His Highness the Amir lauded the Kingdoms development under King Salmans leadership and wished him continued well-being, as well as security, stability and prosperity for Saudi Arabia, with the support of Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman.

Crown Prince congratulates

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable on Tuesday to

Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz congratulating him on the Kingdom's National Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince lauded the Kingdom's development under King Salman's leadership and wished him continued well-being, as well as security, stability and prosperity for Saudi Arabia, with the support of Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman.

PM congratulates

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable on Tuesday to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz congratulating him on the kingdom's National Day.



Amiri Diwan photo

Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, and Chief of the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receive the Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to the State of Kuwait, Dr. Arsen Arakelyan.

Kuwait, Armenia discuss bilateral relations, COP17 leaders' summit

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, Sheikh Hamada Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, and Chief of the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, received on Tuesday, the Ambassador of the friendly Republic of Armenia to the State of Kuwait, Dr. Arsen Arakelyan.

During the meeting, they reviewed the distinguished bilateral relations connecting the two friendly nations and their peoples.

They discussed ways to further support and enhance these ties, reaffirming a mutual commitment to developing coop-

eration across various fields to serve their shared interests.

The two sides also exchanged views on regional developments and discussed the latest updates on both the regional and international arenas.

Furthermore, the Ambassador outlined the ongoing preparations for the Republic of Armenia to host the Leaders' Summit as part of the United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP17), which is scheduled to take place in the capital city of Yerevan this coming October.

The meeting was also attended by the Director of the Office of the Minister of Amiri Sami Suleiman Al-Mulla.

Cutting emissions

New multi-faceted strategy on anvil

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): Kuwait is advancing environmental sustainability as a national development priority, aligning its efforts with Kuwait Vision 2035 and the transition toward a green economy.

The government has expanded environmental policies, renewable energy projects and sustainable practices, with the Cabinet following the national long-term roadmap for low-carbon development.

Kuwait's Low Carbon Strategy 2050, launched by the Environment Public Authority (EPA) in November 2023, supports the countrys climate commitments, with Kuwait targeting carbon neutrality by 2060.

The country is also diversifying its energy sources through renewable energy, greater reliance on natural gas and energy recovery from waste.

Renewable energy projects are being developed through three tracks: long-term projects such as Shagaya, short-term projects including Abdali and smaller projects required under the Energy Conservation Code.

The Shagaya project, implemented through the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects, comprises two phases producing 1,100 megawatts and 500 megawatts respectively.

Kuwait is targeting a 50 percent share of renewable energy by 2050, while the Energy Conservation Code requires facilities to generate renewable energy equivalent to 10 percent of their electricity needs.

Minister of State for Development and Sustainability Dr. Reem Al-Fulajj told KUNA that Kuwait is establishing an integrated institutional approach linking sustainability policies



Dr. Al-Fulajj

with measurable programs, governance, risk management and data.

She said the Cabinet approved in 2026 the Government Environmental Sustainability Reporting System, the first unified government framework for measuring environmental performance through 14 national indicators.

The system aims to establish a national database, support monitoring and measure the impact of government initiatives while identifying areas for improvement.

Al-Fulajj said the National Environmental Risk Register had identified eight major environmental risks and established response mechanisms with relevant authorities.

She noted that 36 environmental incidents were addressed during 2026, involving air quality, marine pollution, hazardous materials and wastewater.

On climate change, she said Kuwait had completed drafts of its Third National Communication and first Biennial Transparency Report under the Paris Agreement, while nearly 100 participants had received climate negotiation training.

Efforts to protect and restore ecosystems continue through protected areas, natural habitats and marine initiatives, including a national marine debris program involving more than 20 entities.

In urban development, the Cabinet approved 30 greening and public-space initiatives in 2026, bringing the total approved since December 2024 to 64.

For her part, Dr. Hanan Al-Sarawi, head of the Sustainability Team and director of the Research, Studies and Strategic Planning Office at EPA, told KUNA that Kuwait was strengthening environmental performance through unified reporting and measurable indicators.

She said the reporting system will cover energy, water, fuel and paper consumption, waste and recycling, green spaces, environmental training and awareness programs.

The initiative will transform sustainability from separate projects into a regular institutional practice aimed at reducing resource consumption, waste and emissions.

Amir Rep. receives Jordanian King, Crown Prince

NEW YORK, Sept 22, (KUNA): The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Monday Jordan's King Abdullah II and Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah II at his residence in New York on the sidelines of the High-Level Week of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.

During the meeting, His Highness the Crown Prince of Kuwait conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir to the Jordanian King and Crown Prince, wishing them everlasting good health and Jordan and its people further progress and prosperity.

Both sides discussed the fraternal deep-rooted relations between Kuwait and Jordan and means of developing them in a manner that serves the two sisterly countries and their peoples' interests, along with the latest developments on both international and regional arenas.

The meeting featured Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Director-General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi, Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Tareq Al-Banai, the head of His Highness the Crown Prince's office Maj. Gen. Ah-



Crown Prince Diwan photo

mad Al-Daie and Assistant Foreign Minister for Minister's Office Affairs Minister Plenipotentiary Abdullah Nasser Al-Obaidi.

Kuwait Amir Rep. receives heads of Google & Alphabet, World Bank, Turkiye President & senior US officials



Kuwait Amir Rep. meets World Bank official.



Kuwait Amir Rep. meets Turkiye President.

NEW YORK, Sept 22, (KUNA): The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met on Monday with the President and Chief Investment Officer (CIO) of Alphabet and Google Ruth Porat at the headquarters of the Kuwait Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, on the sidelines of the High-Level Week of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.

During the meeting, the two sides followed up on the latest developments of the framework agreement between Kuwait and Google Cloud and the implementation of the strategic projects related to digital transformation, Cloud computing infrastructure, data centers, the development of digital skills of Kuwaitis.

They also discussed horizons of cooperation between Kuwait and the Alphabet in a manner that contributes to supporting Kuwait's vision.

The meeting featured Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Director-General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Organization Ambassador Sadiq Marafi, Kuwait's Ambassador to the United States Sheikhha Al-Zain Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah and Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Tareq Al-Banai.

Microsoft Vice Chair

Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Microsoft Vice Chair and President Brad Smith on the sidelines of the High-Level Week of the 81st Session of the UN General Assembly.

The meeting, hosted by the Permanent Mission of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations in New York on Monday, focused the progress of the strategic partnership between Kuwait and Microsoft and the preparations for opening Microsoft Digital Innovation Center in Kuwait - the biggest such center in the region, in the coming few weeks.

Both sides also exchanged views on the prospects of cooperation in such areas as AI, digital transformation and data centers with a view to speeding up Kuwait's digitization drive and building the capacity of the national cadres.

Also attending the meeting were Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Director General of the Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Ambassador Mansour Ayyad Al-Otaibi, Ambassador to the United States Sheikhha Al-Zain Sabah Al-Naser Al-Sabah, Permanent Representative to the UN



Crown Prince Diwan photos

Kuwait Amir Rep. meets Google representative.

Tareq Mohammad Al-Banai and Chief of Staff of His Highness the Crown Prince's Office Maj. Gen Ahmad Abdulrahman Al-Da'ei.

World Bank Group

The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Monday World Bank Group President Ajay Banga and the group's Executive Director Abdulaziz Al-Mulla at the headquarters of the Kuwait Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, on the sidelines of the High-Level Week of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.

During the meeting, the two sides followed up on the latest developments regarding developing and training the national cadres and means of benefiting expertise from the World Bank in providing technical support in a manner that serves the Kuwait Vision.

They also discussed means of enhancing cooperation in consultation and development fields and shared views on international and regional development and scientific issues and efforts of funding sustainable development.

Turkish President

The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met on Monday with the President of the friendly Republic of Turkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan, at the headquarters of the Turkish Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, on the sidelines of the High-Level Week of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.

During meeting, His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir to the Turkish President, along with his wishes for his continued good health and for the friendly Republic of Turkiye and its people permanent progress and prosperity.

The two sides discussed the close bilateral relations between Kuwait and Turkiye, as well as ways to strengthen and develop them across various fields in a manner that serves the interests of

the two countries and their friendly peoples. They also discussed regional and international developments and issues of mutual interest.

The meeting featured Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Director-General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Organization Ambassador Sadiq Marafi and Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Tareq Al-Banai.

US senior officials

The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Monday some US senior officials at the headquarters of the Kuwait Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, on the sidelines of the High-Level Week of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.

The officials welcomed by His Highness the Crown Prince were Khush Choksy, Senior Vice President for International Member Relations and Senior Vice President for the Middle East, Turkiye, and Central Asia at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Steve Lutes, Vice President for the Middle East at the Chamber; Lydia Jabs, Executive Director of the U.S.-Kuwait Business Council at the Chamber; Donna Milford, Executive Vice President at State Street and Chair of the U.S.-Kuwait Business Council; and Jenny Johnson, President and Chief Executive Officer of Franklin Templeton.

During the meeting, the discussions focused on ways to strengthen economic, trade, and investment relations between Kuwait and the friendly United States of America, along with reviewing investment opportunities in Kuwait for leading U.S. companies and institutions across various vital sectors.

European Council chief

The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Monday European Council (EC) President Antonio Costa at the headquarters of the Kuwait Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, on the sidelines of the High-Level Week of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.

At the onset of meeting, His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir to the president, wishing him success, and further development and progress to the friendly peoples of the EU countries.

The two sides discussed cooperation and partnership relations between Kuwait and the EU and ways to strengthen them in a manner that serves the mutual interests, along with the latest developments on international and regional arenas.

Civil aviation chief praises AACO role in industry uplift

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): Chairman of the Public Authority of Civil Aviation Sheikh Eng. Hamoud Mubarak Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah praised Monday the role of the Arab Air Carriers Organization (AACO) in supporting and developing the Arab air transport industry.

The Public Authority of Civil Aviation said in a statement to KUNA that Sheikh Hamoud made the remarks after receiving AACO Secretary-General Abdul Wahab Teffaha at the authority's headquarters.

He welcomed Teffaha's visit to Kuwait and commended the specialized expertise and knowledge he provided during professional meetings and sessions attended by personnel from the civil aviation sector, Kuwait Airways and Jazeera Airways.

Sheikh Hamoud stressed the importance of continuing to exchange expertise and benefit from specialized knowledge to help improve performance and keep pace with rapid developments in the aviation and air transport industry.

Meanwhile, Public Works Minister Dr. Nora Al-Mashaan affirmed Tuesday that developing modern, sustainable transport infrastructure is vital for achieving Kuwait Vision 2035. Delivering Kuwait's speech at the 2026 Global Sustainable Transport Forum in Beijing, Al-Mashaan highlighted the nation's commitment to building an integrated, efficient, and environmentally responsible transport system.

The forum, organized by China's Ministry of Transport under the theme of smooth passenger travel and freight flow, brings together global officials to foster international cooperation and share expertise.

Discussions focus on five core pillars: global initiatives, connectivity, green transport, artificial intelligence integration, and accessible transport services for all.



KUNA photo

Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shariaan discusses joint defense cooperation with South Korea's Military Attache Colonel Jin Chulho.

Kuwait, South Korea mull joint defense cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shariaan discussed joint defense cooperation and bilateral ties with South Korea's

Military Attache Colonel Jin Chulho.

The meeting covered topics of mutual interest and ways to further strengthen relations between the two friendly countries.

diwaniya

ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

‘As you sow, so shall you reap’

Justice of Kuwaiti judiciary

“THE judge called out the defendant’s name, and an elderly woman in a wheelchair came forward, embarrassment clearly visible on her face. As the judge looked at her, she began to weep over her son’s imprisonment on drug-use charges,” columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“The judge asked her, “Where is your son’s lawyer?” He abandoned me and left, Your Honor,” she replied. After a moment of silence, she added, “He is my only son. He is the one who cares for me, lifts me up, and washes my feet.” Tears then streamed down her face. The judge smiled and asked her, “He certainly doesn’t harm you?” No, I swear to Allah...” she replied, weeping again.

“Is he... dutiful toward you?”

“I swear to Allah, he is dutiful to me.”

“So... he won’t do it again?”

“No, he won’t do it again.”

“The judge then asked, “What do you think, shall we call the lawyer?”

The mother replied, “No, never mind the lawyer. May Allah grant you and the judges alongside you a long life.” Smiling, the judge addressed the mother, “We will release him... and by this afternoon, the young man will be back with you.” At this, the mother raised her hands to the heavens, praying for the court’s success after they had brought such joy to her heart. The courtroom filled with sounds of rejoicing, creating a deeply moving scene for all present.



Ahmad Al-Dawas

and consumers.

“I hope for a season free from market volatility, price fluctuations, and distribution bottlenecks. Agriculture requires strong support and a stable environment that encourages farmers to remain productive and persevere, while reducing financial losses that could discourage people from pursuing farming.

“We acknowledge the long-standing problem of marketing local agricultural produce, which still awaits a fair solution. Addressing it requires the concerted efforts of all entities responsible for agriculture. Their roles are complementary and serve farmers and local production. Constructive national dialogue, cooperation, mutual understanding, and joint action are essential to overcome shortcomings and move beyond unilateral or isolated approaches.

“A new agricultural season begins not merely with the calendar, but with the preparations made for it. Here is to a new and fruitful agricultural season, God willing.”

□ □ □

“Media today is a discipline that permeates societies, nations, and individuals - both young and old - especially with the advent of modern social media platforms,” Kuwaiti media professional **Sami Al-Enezi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Media is responsible for conveying facts, news, and information, whether accurate or inaccurate, by clarifying the veracity of a matter or news item through various channels - written, audio, and visual. As is well known, the term “media” (i’lam) is derived from the root for “knowledge” (‘ilm). It entails being informed about events - past, present, and future. Indeed, there is a form of media that relies on emotion and the heart, encompassing both truth and falsehood, in which emotion reigns supreme. It seeks to sway the intellect whenever possible to prevail over the audience. Consequently, the audience may be misled into believing things that are not true, potentially turning away from the actual truth.

“Then there is the approach based on reason and objective knowledge, which is highly desirable and important. However, emotion should not be entirely abandoned in media. Incorporating it ensures that the message is persuasive to an audience driven by emotion. Reason and knowledge convince rational individuals through their inherent solidity. Thus, media discourse hits the mark when it integrates reason, knowledge, and emotion. This creates a holistic media approach - maximizing its impact on the audience and across generations, both now and in the future.

“Emotion undoubtedly relates to the heart’s reaction to a presented topic or news item. Ideally, reason and knowledge serve as the starting point, while decisiveness governs the media presentation. When emotion, manifested through the heart and an affective response, is added to the mix, a beneficial balance is achieved for the project or topic at hand, both in the immediate term and in the future.

“Reason establishes studies, analyses, and logic while attempting to anticipate outcomes. It is infused with emotion to strike an acceptable balance, incorporating science and emotional elements, heritage and tradition, prevailing social norms, and the like, ensuring that nothing is sacrificed for the sake of cold, rigid rationality.

“Achieving a harmonious balance in media communication, between reason and science on one hand, and the heart and emotion on the other, is crucial for persuading an audience, whether regarding a current initiative or a future project. Indeed, when reason and science align harmoniously with emotion, the results are superior, and the project’s future vision becomes clearer. This allows for the identification, reinforcement, and development of the project’s positive aspects, as well as the clear identification of potential downsides and the formulation of solutions, plans, or suitable alternatives to overcome them.



Al-Enezi

“I conclude with a saying often repeated by my mentor, Mohammad Al-Afi (may Allah have mercy on him) - “Media, my son, becomes the master and focal point of both elite and popular culture when its discourse combines science, emotion, and reason, and is dominated by truthfulness.” I once asked him, “Why didn’t you simply list ‘truthfulness’ alongside science, reason, and emotion?” He replied, “If the media claims that everything it says is the absolute truth, it is being imprecise. Media sometimes requires silence or reticence, sometimes allusion, and sometimes detailed explanation, depending on the situation and necessity, without ever deviating from these bounds.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Kuwaiti and Pakistani military contingents during the joint coordination discussions.

KUNA photo

Kuwait, Pakistan eye joint military coordination

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): Director of Joint Operations at the Kuwaiti Army Brigadier General Salama Al-Shammari met Sunday with Commander

of Pakistan’s Kuwait Task Force Brigadier Omar Khan to discuss joint military coordination. The General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army

said in a press statement that the meeting was held within the framework of the joint military defense protocol between Kuwait and Pakistan.



Fire-fighters tackling the blaze.

KFF photo

Fire engulfs vehicles at MoE basement parking

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Fire broke out in several vehicles inside the basement parking garage of the Ministry of Education building in Sharq on Tuesday morning, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Teams from the Al-Madina and Al-Hilali fire stations responded to the incident and brought the fire under control.

The Kuwait Fire Force said the blaze was contained and extinguished, confirming that no significant injuries were reported.

Jahra patrol officers nab man in his 30s with drugs

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Security patrol officers in Jahra apprehended a man in his thirties on drug-related charges after finding him under the influence of narcotics and in possession of illegal substances and drug paraphernalia, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to security sources, the incident occurred on Monday evening when patrol officers noticed a vehicle being driven recklessly in the governorate. After intercepting the vehicle and ordering the driver to pull over, officers determined that he was under the influence of narcotics.

A background check revealed that the driver was unemployed and in his thirties. A precautionary search subsequently uncovered narcotics and drug paraphernalia in his possession.

The suspect, along with the seized narcotics, was referred to the Drug Control General Department to complete the legal procedures and take the necessary action.

□ □ □

Two hurt in accident: A Kuwaiti citizen and an Asian national sustained serious injuries and fractures in a three-vehicle collision on the Sixth Ring Road and were taken to Farwaniya Hospital for treatment, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

After the Ministry of Interior’s Operations Room received a report of the accident recently in the morning, traffic police, emergency response, and ambulance crews immediately rushed to the scene.

Upon arrival, paramedics found that three vehicles had collided, leaving the two individuals with serious injuries and fractures.

The injured were transported to Farwaniya Hospital, while the vehicles were cleared from the road to restore traffic flow, which had been disrupted by the accident.

Dr. Al-Jaza’a acquitted in blasphemy lawsuit

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The Court of Appeals upheld the decision of the Criminal Court to acquit Dr. Jassim Al-Jaza’a of insulting the companions of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him), reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The verdict was issued based on the arguments presented by lawyers Abdullah Al-Kandari and Mahmoud Al-Qattan.

The court affirmed that freedom of thought and expression is guaranteed by the Constitution, indicating that articles 36 and 37 of the Constitution guarantee the freedom of opinion, expression and publication.

Article 36 of the Constitution states that “freedom of opinion and of scientific research shall be guaranteed. Every person shall have the right to express and propagate his opinion verbally, in writing or otherwise, in accordance with the conditions and procedures specified by law.”

Article 37 states that “freedom of the press, printing and publishing shall be guaranteed in accordance with the conditions and manner specified by law.”

The court affirmed that the statements of the defendants are considered permissible publication, which is protected by the constitutional guarantees of freedom of opinion and expression.

Court jails 6 for fake nationality

Property damaged in kin brawl

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: **The Criminal Court sentenced five defendants to seven years in prison and a sixth defendant to three years, all with hard labor and immediate enforcement, in a case involving the falsification of Kuwaiti citizenship. The court also refrained from imposing a penalty on a young woman involved in the case, reports Al-Anba daily.**

The ruling ordered the defendants to repay the funds obtained through the crime and imposed a fine equivalent to double the amount.

The case centers on an agreement between a Kuwaiti defendant and several Gulf nationals to impersonate his children and have them added to his citizenship file.

Investigations revealed that the primary defendant submitted applications to add the other defendants to his file and provided false information to the relevant official, resulting in the issuance of Kuwaiti documents for them based on the

falsified information.

□ □ □

Property damaged: A family dispute between two brothers escalated into a formal investigation after a non-Kuwaiti man reported vandalism at his home to the Ahmadi Police Station, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The damage affected several parts of the property, including an exterior surveillance camera, the diwaniya’s window, and the main entrance. The complainant accused his brother, also a non-Kuwaiti, of being responsible for the damage.

According to security sources, the complainant reported the damage to police and attributed it to his brother, turning the private family dispute into an official complaint classified as a domestic violence case.

Security personnel documented the details of the incident and referred the matter to the competent public prosecutor.

The prosecutor ordered the registration of a case for “vandalism and domestic violence” and directed that it be referred to the appropriate authority to investigate the circumstances, identify the perpetrator, and complete the necessary legal procedures.

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HH Amir congratulates Mali Pres. on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Tuesday to the Interim President of Mali, Assimi Goita, on his country's Independence Day.

His Highness the Amir wished the leader and his people further progress and development.

Crown Prince congratulates

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable on Tuesday to the Interim President of Mali, Assimi Goita, congratulating him on his country's Independence Day.

Kuwait plays pioneering role in helping needy: Al-Huwaila

KRCS marks 60 years of humanitarian service



Left: Minister of Social Affairs and Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila and KRCS Chairman Khaled Al-Maghamis during the opening of the celebrations. Right: Minister of Social Affairs and Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila honors an old woman at the gathering. KRCS Chairman Khaled al-Maghamis looks on .

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs and Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila said Monday the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has embodied the values of solidarity, compassion and relief for those in need in Kuwaiti society over six decades.

Speaking at a ceremony marking the society's 60th anniversary, Al-Huwaila said humanitarian work had throughout Kuwait's history enjoyed the generous support of the political leadership, making assistance to those in need and relief for affected people a consistent approach and an integral part of Kuwait's standing among nations.

She said Kuwait continues to play its pioneering role under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and their continued support for humanitarian work.

She noted that Kuwait's humanitarian efforts

culminated in 2014 with its designation as a "Humanitarian Center," adding that the anniversary provides an opportunity to recall six decades of dedicated service to humanity.

Since its establishment in 1966, the society has been an active national partner in relief efforts inside and outside Kuwait, maintaining a prominent presence during crises and disasters and carrying Kuwait's humanitarian message to communities around the world, she said.

Al-Huwaila highlighted the importance of partnership between state institutions and civil society, noting the Ministry of Social Affairs' keenness to support public-benefit organizations and strengthen their capabilities based on governance, transparency and efficiency.

She said the anniversary was not only an occasion to celebrate the past, but also an opportunity to look toward the future by developing response mechanisms, investing in national expertise, employing modern technologies, empowering youth and expanding their volunteer participation.

Al-Huwaila expressed appreciation to the society's founders, successive boards of directors, executive management, staff, partners, donors

and supporters, particularly its male and female volunteers who represent its field presence and humanitarian mission.

In turn, KRCS Chairman Khaled Al-Maghamis told KUNA that the 60th anniversary represents a national and humanitarian milestone recalling a journey that began in January 1966 and helped strengthen Kuwait's position in humanitarian and relief efforts worldwide.

He said the society continued to carry out its mission from October 2024 to September 2026 amid growing humanitarian challenges, extending its activities to 13 countries and conducting 27 airlifts carrying around 550 tons of aid.

He highlighted the "Gaza Joy" campaign, which delivered 400 tons of food supplies to the Gaza Strip, in addition to humanitarian flights and convoys to Syria, Sudan and Yemen.

Al-Maghamis said the society's success over the decades was based on support from the political leadership, official authorities, donors, volunteers and international humanitarian partners, stressing that its mission is founded on preserving human dignity and supporting those affected without discrimination.

Active Gulf presence in global forums reflects states' status

RIYADH, Sept 22, (KUNA): GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi confirmed on Monday that the active Gulf presence in international forums, and the growth of relations with other countries, groups, and organizations, reflects the prominent position that the GCC countries hold on the international stage.

This came during Al-Budaiwi's statement on the sidelines of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly in New York, USA, on the Coordinating Ministe-

rial Council meeting yesterday Sunday, chaired by Bahrain's Foreign Minister Abdulatif Al-Zayani, with participation from GCC foreign ministers.

During the meeting, the ministers reviewed a number of topics related to strengthening cooperation and common interests.

Al-Budaiwi emphasized that the GCC countries are moving towards strengthening their regional and international relations with other countries and building effective partnerships based on mutual respect and shared interests.

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah participated in the meeting yesterday Sunday, held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.



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FM, BoP leader mull ways for Gaza security, stability

NEW YORK, Sept 22, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Nikolay Malenkov -- the Board of Peace (BoP) High Representative for Gaza, in New York on Monday on the sidelines of the high-level week of the 81st Session of the UN General Assembly.

They reviewed the latest developments of the situation in Gaza Strip and BoP efforts to restore security and stability in the besieged strip, according to a statement from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The meeting also dealt with the regional and international efforts to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people and deliver humanitarian aid to the residents of Gaza.

Swiss

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met Monday with Swiss Vice President and Federal Councillor for Foreign Affairs Ignazio Cassis on the sidelines of the high-level



Sheikh Jarrah Jaber week of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.

According to a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the meeting reviewed bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and ways to enhance and develop them in various fields.

The two sides also discussed the latest regional and international developments.

Portuguese

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met Monday with Portuguese Minister of State and Foreign Affairs Paulo Rangel at Kuwait's Permanent Mission to the UN in New

York.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the high-level week of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.

According to a Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations between Kuwait and Portugal and ways to enhance and develop them in various fields.

They also discussed the latest developments on the regional and international arenas.

Maldives

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met Monday with Foreign Minister of the friendly Republic of Maldives Iruthisham Adam.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that the meeting reviewed bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and ways to enhance and develop them in various fields.

The two sides also discussed the latest developments on the regional and international arenas.

MoJ begins interviews for 424 Kuwaiti graduates on Sept 24

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The Ministry of Justice will begin conducting in-person interviews on September 24 for 424 Kuwaiti graduates from the 2024/2025 academic year who passed the electronic written examination for the position of "Junior Legal Researcher," a prerequisite for appointment as a Public Prosecution Deputy (Grade C), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The selection committee for the "Junior Legal Researcher" position, first announced on February 8, 2026, will conduct the interviews at the headquarters of the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies according to each applicant's individual schedule.

The interviews follow the electronic written examination administered by Kuwait University. Of the 578 applicants who attended the examination, 424 passed, while 632 applicants had met the eligibility requirements.

The ministry stressed that this stage advances the process of selecting qualified national talent to join the Public Prosecution through uniform and objective standards that promote justice, transparency, and equal opportunity for all applicants.

It also stated that the Sahel application will be used to notify each applicant of their interview time and advised selected candidates to adhere to their scheduled appointments.

PAAET concludes student educational trip to China

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) concluded a student educational trip to Shenzhen and Shanghai to enhance technical and innovation expertise.

PAAET stated that the initiative aims to provide students with firsthand global technical experience, supporting the development of qualified national cadres aligned with modern practices. The eight-student delegation, accompanied by two faculty members, visited Shenzhen Polytechnic University and Shanghai University of Engineering Science to explore advanced laboratories and research facilities.

The program featured academic tours and direct engagement with China's applied education model, connecting training with industry needs and labor market demands.

Following their return, Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Yang Jian hosted a celebratory reception honoring the delegation, praising the visit's role in strengthening bilateral educational and cultural exchanges.

Kuwait Cabinet clears fresh financing path for housing

Mortgage financing law supports sustainable housing: Minister Al-Mashari

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): Kuwait's Cabinet approved a draft decree-law on mortgage financing for beneficiaries of housing welfare on Tuesday, aimed at ensuring the sustainable provision of adequate housing for Kuwaiti citizens.

The Cabinet meeting, chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, reviewed the draft decree-law as part of the State's commitment to family welfare, housing needs, and efforts to provide sustainable housing solutions.

The Cabinet referred the draft decree-law to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for consideration.

The draft legislation comes in support of Law No. 118 of 2023 on establishing companies to construct and develop residential cities or areas economically, as amended by Decree-Law No. 89 of 2025, which the government considers one of the pillars for addressing the housing issue.

The Cabinet said the new legislation would provide an additional alternative to addressing the housing issue from an economic perspective while achieving the required sustainability.

At the outset of its meeting, the Cabinet was briefed on a letter addressed to His Highness the Amir from King Abdullah II of Jordan inviting him to participate in the High-Level Conference on Preserving Humanity in War, scheduled for Dec 7, 2026, in Jordan.

The Cabinet was also informed that His Highness the Amir had tasked Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-

Ahmad Al-Sabah with representing him at the opening of the third phase of Al-Shaheed Park.

The Cabinet reviewed the official delegation accompanying His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah during his official visit to Bern, Switzerland, from Sept 27-29 to participate in celebrations marking the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Kuwait and Switzerland.

The delegation includes Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Director-General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Kuwait's Ambassador to Switzerland Yousef Ahmad AbdulSamad, Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ambassador Najeab Abdulrahman Al-Bader, Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Abdullah Al-Hain, as well as several officials from the Crown Prince's Diwan and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Cabinet also congratulated King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud and Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, as well as the Saudi people, on the Kingdom's 96th National Day, which falls on Wednesday.

It affirmed the deep-rooted fraternal ties between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and expressed wishes for the Kingdom's continued security, prosperity and development.

It also commended Saudi Arabia's development achievements and its positions on Arab and Islamic issues, as well as its support for Kuwait.

The Cabinet strongly condemned the targeting of Taif Governorate by the Houthi militia with a drone last Thursday, which resulted in the death of one person, injuries to two others and mate-



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

rial damage after the drone was intercepted and its fragments fell.

It affirmed Kuwait's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and support for measures taken to safeguard its sovereignty, security and stability and protect citizens and residents.

The Cabinet also condemned the Houthi militia's attempted targeting of Riyadh with a ballistic missile and attempts to target civilians and civilian objects in Bisha, Taif, Farasan and Yanbu on Sunday.

It praised the vigilance and efficiency of the Royal Saudi Air Defense Forces in confronting the attacks, stressing that Saudi Arabia's security is an integral part of the security of Kuwait and the GCC states.

The Cabinet reviewed several agenda items, reports and minutes of ministerial committees and approved several of them, while referring others to the relevant committees for study and submission of appropriate recommendations.

Meanwhile, Minister of State for Mu-

nicipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdulatif Al-Mashari said Tuesday the cabinet approved a draft decree-law on mortgage financing for housing welfare beneficiaries, to ensure sustainable provision of adequate housing for Kuwaiti citizens.

In a statement to KUNA following the Cabinet's weekly meeting, Al-Mashari said the draft decree-law consists of 15 articles covering the scope of application, eligibility requirements, financing mechanisms, repayment procedures and the roles of relevant government and financial institutions.

He noted that Article 2 defines the scope of the legislation, allowing financing for purchasing a housing unit from a real estate developer in accordance with Law No. 118 of 2023 on establishing companies to construct and economically develop residential cities or areas, as amended by Decree-Law No. 89 of 2025.

The provisions also cover financing for constructing a government housing

plot allocated by the Public Authority for Housing Welfare, subject to its conditions and regulations in completed and ongoing housing projects.

Under Article 3, beneficiaries seeking supported mortgage financing must meet the general conditions stipulated in the Kuwait Credit Bank's real estate loan regulations for purchasing or construction and must not have previously received housing welfare from the State.

Article 4 sets out provisions governing supported and non-supported mortgage financing and repayment mechanisms, allowing beneficiaries to combine the two types of financing in accordance with rules and procedures set by the Central Bank of Kuwait.

The beneficiary remains responsible for repaying the principal of both supported and non-supported financing, as well as interest or returns on non-supported financing, while the State bears the cost of interest or returns on supported financing in accordance with the draft decree-law.

Al-Mashari said Article 5 provides that all mortgage financing shall be repaid in equal monthly installments, with the repayment period not exceeding 25 years from the date financing is first disbursed, in accordance with Central Bank of Kuwait regulations.

Article 6 refers financing procedures for purchasing housing units from developers to Law No. 118 of 2023, while financing for construction on government housing plots will be disbursed in stages in accordance with bank rules.

Article 7 requires financing entities to notify beneficiaries in case of failure to meet repayment obligations. It allows such entities to reschedule the financing for a period not exceeding five years, subject to Central Bank regulations, with the beneficiary bearing interest or returns resulting from the rescheduling period.

Article 8 requires financing entities to register mortgage financing cases and provide the Central Bank with relevant documents, including repayment schedules and default cases, in accordance with its regulations.

The minister said Article 9 authorizes Kuwait Credit Bank to act on behalf of the State in signing agreements with financing entities within the framework of the draft decree-law and its executive regulations. It also requires the Ministry of Finance to pay interest or returns on supported financing to Kuwait Credit Bank from the General Reserve, which in turn pays the financing entities.

Under Article 10, Kuwait Credit Bank, on behalf of the State, guarantees to financing entities payment of the outstanding balance of supported mortgage financing if a beneficiary defaults.

Article 11 provides for Kuwait Credit Bank to obtain a mortgage over the property in return for its obligation on behalf of the State, with the mortgage becoming effective only through an official mortgage contract.

Article 12 grants Kuwait Credit Bank, or an entity designated by the competent minister, the right to purchase all or part of the mortgage financing provided to beneficiaries by financing entities.

Article 13 requires the Central Bank of Kuwait to issue rules and regulations governing the provision of mortgage financing and determine interest rates or returns applicable to non-supported financing.

Article 14 provides for the executive regulations of the draft decree-law to be issued by decree, upon the competent minister's proposal, within six months of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Article 15 stipulates that the draft decree-law's provisions shall apply to beneficiaries from the date the executive regulations are published in the Official Gazette.

Continued from Page 1

Celebrating the

For 96 years, Riyadh has truly lived up to its name—a 'garden of wisdom' and a 'garden of goodness' for the Arab world, as well as the source of support for its Gulf brethren. This was particularly evident in the case of Kuwait. When a major calamity befell the country, the Kingdom stood at the forefront of those offering support.

Up to this day, Kuwaitis remember the words of the late King Fahd bin Abdulaziz, "Kuwait must return, God willing, otherwise, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait will go down together." This stance epitomized the shared destiny of two sister nations—a bond that unites all countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

In 1990, the Emirate of Riyadh was transformed into an operations center to assist Kuwaitis, as per the directives of its then-Amir, Salman bin Abdulaziz—a gesture that Kuwaitis remember well. This commitment extends beyond Kuwait, up to the entire Arab and Islamic world, as frequently articulated by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz. He said "we cooperate with our Arab and Muslim brothers everywhere to defend their countries, ensure their independence, and preserve their government systems as chosen by their peoples."

Since 2015, the Kingdom's leadership has been spearheading a drive to open up to the world. This initiative included monumental steps that garnered global acclaim and brought great happiness to the Saudi people through major development projects, thereby, restoring the pioneering role of the Kingdom as the creator of culture and leader in development excellence in various fields.

The benevolence of Saudi Arabia is not confined to its own borders, as it rather extends to the Arab and Islamic worlds and to the far corners of the globe, sharing the blessings God has bestowed upon it.

The Kingdom has always been—and remains—the primary pillar of regional stability. In doing so, Saudi Arabia proves daily its unwavering loyalty to its faith, its Gulf identity, its Arab heritage, and to humanity as a whole.

Within almost a century, this land transformed into the hub of achievements in all sectors. Thus, the National Day slogan, "Our Pride Lies in Our Character", reflects the authenticity of the Saudi identity and the values of goodness and loyalty. These are the hallmarks of great leaders—those true to their Creator, themselves and their people. They embody the path that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been toing since its inception till date.

Kuwait's Mol

The operation was carried out in the presence of and under the supervision of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Following the surveillance and monitoring of the suspect's movements, the General Department for Ant-Drug Trafficking arrested him at his home in the Saad Al-Abdullah area, the ministry said in a press statement.

Two kilograms of "shabu," along with raw materials used

in the manufacture of psychotropic substances, were found in his possession.

Officers also found money that the suspect had carefully concealed in an underground pit. When confronted, he admitted to manufacturing "shabu" and stated that the seized money was proceeds from his drug trafficking activities, it said.

The ministry stated the suspect had previously been stripped of his Kuwaiti citizenship after it was established that he held dual citizenship and another nationality.

According to the statement, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef affirmed that the Ministry of Interior would continue to act firmly against the scourge of drugs and work to cut off its sources.

He added that the ministry would not tolerate anyone who seeks to threaten the country's security or endanger its people.

Separately, the Drug Control General Department (DCGD), in coordination with the General Administration of Customs (GAC), thwarted an attempt to smuggle narcotics into the country and arrested two Sri Lankan nationals, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Ministry of Interior explained in a press statement that surveillance and investigative operations led to the suspects' arrest in Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Salwa after they received a shipment in which the drugs had been concealed using a covert method.

A search of the suspects' residence uncovered a quantity of Shabu (crystal methamphetamine) and a precision scale.

Further search operations uncovered approximately 4 kilograms of heroin, 100 grams of Shabu, 16 metal "crankshaft" components used in the smuggling operation, and another precision scale.

When confronted with the seized items, the suspects admitted that they had received instructions from a Sri Lankan national residing abroad to collect shipments, extract the narcotics, and distribute them within the country in exchange for payment. The ministry stated that the necessary legal measures had been taken and that the suspects, along with the seized contraband, had been referred to the competent authorities on charges of possessing narcotics for the purpose of trafficking and personal use.

KAFCO expands

The report indicated that the operating expenses of KAFCO for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026 reached KD24,043,925, compared to KD12,140,875 in the previous fiscal year—an increase of 98 percent.

On the other hand, the aviation fuel sales volume of the company decreased to 895,203,467 liters -- 8.24 percent lower compared to the previous fiscal year.

Meanwhile, the report of KNPC for the 2025/2026 fiscal year indicates that the net profits of KAFCO dropped to KD1,859,657—down from KD19,647,857 in the 2024/2025 fiscal year, a sharp decline of KD17,788,289.

The analysis of an oil industry expert provided to the newspaper attributed the significant drop in net profits to the hostile attacks on the assets and main facility of the company in March 2026.

These attacks have had financial and operational repercussions, specifically the 98 percent surge in company expenses—KD24,043,925 compared to KD12,140,875 in the previous year—due to the exorbitant cost of managing the aftermath of the attacks and the rehabilitation efforts.

Sales also declined, with aviation fuel sales dropping by 8.24 percent, which negatively affected total operating revenues, along with the effects of global energy price fluctuations over the past year.

Saudi King Salman

The Cabinet said such measures would safeguard states' security, meet the aspirations of their peoples and contribute to protecting international trade and supply chains.

Elsewhere, Kuwait Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva renewed on Tuesday its strong condemnation of Houthi's repeated attacks on Saudi Arabia, including the attempted drone attack on Makkah.

This came in a statement delivered by Counselor Bashar Al-Muwaizri before the UN Human Rights Council, convened at its 63rd session in Geneva.

Al-Muwaizri condemned the attacks as a flagrant violation of the Kingdom's sovereignty and international law, and an affront to the sanctity of Muslims' Qibla and their religious sentiments.

He warned of escalating political and military tensions threatening regional security and maritime navigation, stressing the importance of dialogue, diplomacy, respect for sovereignty, and adherence to international law and the UN Charter.

He called for avoiding any steps that could escalate tensions or further jeopardize the region's security and stability.

Al-Muwaizri also stressed the importance of addressing human rights through constructive, non-politicized dialogue and cooperation to build trust and tackle challenges effectively.

Major Riyadh

The ministry stated that the closure will affect part of the traffic signal and the U-turn for vehicles coming from the air-

port, as well as the entrance and exit to Khaldiya, to facilitate the laying of the final asphalt layer.

Separately, the Ministry of Public Works, in coordination with the General Traffic Department, announced the closure of the fast lane and the two middle lanes opposite Nuzha, extending from the Second Ring Road to the section just beyond the Third Ring Road, starting at dawn on Tuesday, for a period of 25 days, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The ministry also announced the closure of Street 10 in Block 4 of Surra, effective from Tuesday, until Thursday, October 1, to facilitate asphalt replacement.

UN chief

The U.N. leader has long implored leaders not to give up on cooperation and shared decision-making in the face of

accelerating global challenges and increasing great-powers competition. Tuesday's message at the U.N. General Assembly took on additional urgency because he leaves office at the end of this year.

"The fault lines in our world are widening," he said, citing raging wars, rising temperatures and artificial intelligence, among other matters. Instead of letting the future continue to veer toward fragmentation, transactionalism and mistrust, he called for "a world built on interdependence - and sustained by a dense web of economic, political, social and technological connections."

His speech opened the main portion of the world's biggest diplomatic meeting of the year. Leaders from the U.N.'s 193 member countries address each other and the international community and air their hopes, plans and grievances.

— See Also Page 6

وزارة التجارة والصناعة
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This photo provided by the National Parks Service shows the Dome Fire burning in Yosemite National Park on Sept 16. (AP)

Firefighting helicopter crashes near Yosemite, killing both pilots

Two helicopter pilots were killed when their aircraft crashed Sunday afternoon while conducting water drops on a wildfire at Yosemite National Park, officials say.

The pilots were the only people on board and were employed by the contract aircraft company Precision. One of the pilots was Greg King, who used to work for the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection and fought several

wildland fires in that state before moving to Precision, said agency spokesperson Emery Johnson.

King's close relatives work at the agency and gave their permission to release his name, Johnson said. The identity of the second pilot has not yet been released.

At least 14 people have died while helping with wildfires in the U.S. this year, the most since 2022 when 25 deaths

were recorded, according to government reports. In August, two helicopter pilots died while helping fight a fire in Utah and a helicopter pilot in Colorado crashed into a reservoir.

Details about the circumstances surrounding Sunday's crash were not immediately released. It will be investigated by the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board. (AP)

Former VP seeks to boost progressive El-Sayed in key Michigan Senate race

Kamala Harris launches into 2026 midterms as 2028 decision looms

WASHINGTON, Sept 22, (AP): As Kamala Harris mulls whether to run for president again, she's throwing herself into the midterms by campaigning with fellow Democrats, starting with a Tuesday trip to Michigan on behalf of Senate nominee Abdul El-Sayed.

It's an especially notable destination for the former vice president. Michigan was one of seven battlegrounds she lost to Donald Trump two years ago, and it's now one of six states that will start Democrats' next presidential nominating process. Harris has additional rallies scheduled in Nevada and Georgia, two other key places on the political map.

Her campaigning could serve to solidify or undermine her status as a potential Democratic front-runner. Although she's one of the nation's best-known politicians and a barrier-breaking figure, there are others eager to turn the page after she failed to defeat Trump when she replaced President Joe Biden on the top of the ticket.

"I think she's run her course," said Barry Goodman, a Democratic National Committee member from Michigan who raised money for

Biden and then Harris. "I just don't think her running again would be the right thing for America moving forward."

Some Democratic candidates, especially in places Trump won handily, have curtly dismissed any possibility of campaigning with Harris. "No thanks," Iowa gubernatorial nominee Rob Sand told Politico. "Let's move on. We need some new leadership."

But plenty of Democrats, including some influential Black women who helped convince Biden to select Harris as his running mate in 2020, said she has more than earned the space to consider her options without being rushed or pilloried. Underscoring her unique position, California Gov. Gavin Newsom recently told CNN that he would not seek the nomination if Harris does.

"Kamala isn't under any deadline to run for anything," said Donna Brazile, a former Democratic National Committee chair who managed Al Gore's presidential campaign in 2000. She called it a "waste of time" to relitigate Harris's truncated 2024 campaign and said any White House hopefuls "should follow Kamala's lead and get out there" by trying to



Former US vice president Kamala Harris speaks during the National Action Network Convention in New York on April 10. (AP)

help midterm candidates.

Harris has not announced any upcoming trips to South Carolina, where Democrats will hold their first primary. Antjuan Seawright, a political consultant in the state, said she could make a strong case for herself but another campaign would need to look and sound different.

"She's going to have to admit that

Trump defends war on Iran as world watches at UNGA

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 22, (AP): US President Donald Trump returned to the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday at a tumultuous moment for the world - and for his presidency - and made the case that he's shown fortitude while other leaders have equivocated as he defended his decision to start a war with Iran.

But Trump also suggested that he could be at a crossroads in the conflict even as he called on the Islamic Republic to fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz and return to the negotiating table to find a settlement to end the conflict.

"I have a big decision to make," Trump said. "Will a deal be made with Iran that lets them rebuild and create a far greater country than it ever was before, maybe one of the greatest in the Middle East or even the world. Or do I annihilate the Islamic Republic and do it quickly, never giving them a chance to kill and destroy people and countries again?"

The president's comments came in his wide-ranging address to the international body in which he also celebrated this year's U.S. military operation to oust Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro from power, a new agreement to expand the U.S. military presence in Greenland, and pushed back against calls for greater regulation of the artificial intelligence industry.

But at the heart of the address was a fulsome defense of the war and pushback on the notion that Iran has



US President Donald Trump speaks to the United Nations General Assembly, Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2026, at the UN headquarters. (AP)

shown a measure of resilience.

"The terrorist regime is behaving badly, not because they are strong and confident, but because they are weak and desperate," Trump said.

Trump also accused Iran of stalling to make a deal to fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz and negotiate an endgame to the war until after the midterm elections in the United States. He insisted the tactic would have no effect on how he approaches the conflict.

Most of Iran's delegation walked out of the chamber as Trump railed against the Islamic Republic.

After his speech, Trump gathered with Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Greenlandic Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen on the sidelines of the General Assembly to sign a new security agreement.

The deal, announced last week, came together after Trump repeatedly threatened to "take over" Greenland, a territory of NATO-ally Denmark, by military force if necessary. Trump said Tuesday the U.S. will immediately begin the process of developing a larger military presence in Greenland including "building two very major military bases."

Netherlands braces for potentially devastating US sanctions against ICC

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, Sept 22, (AP): Dutch officials are preparing for the United States to impose a tough new round of sanctions on the International Criminal Court as it seeks to dismantle the global tribunal over what the Trump administration sees as overstepping its authority.

Officials in the court's host country, the Netherlands, have been notified that the sanctions are imminent and are looking at ways to help the tribunal keep operating, including paying staff, protecting witnesses and maintaining the detention facility, diplomatic and government officials with knowledge of the briefings told The Associated Press. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly.

Washington has already sanctioned more than a dozen current and former staff members, including half of the court's sitting judges, in what US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has described as a "sweeping campaign to dismantle the threat posed



A general view of the exterior of the International Criminal Court is seen in The Hague, Netherlands, March 12, 2025. (AP)

its military actions in Afghanistan.

Like Russia, China, India and Israel, the United States is among countries that have never joined the panel, with Washington citing fears of politically motivated prosecutions of its military. The court currently has 125 member states.

The sanctions could prevent the court from accessing financial and IT services, and even paying its U.S. employees. When the court's former chief prosecutor was sanctioned in 2025, he lost access to his Microsoft email, his bank accounts were frozen and he was barred from entering the United States.

According to two sources familiar with the situation, US officials warned their Dutch counterparts that sanctions would be levied as early as Monday and encouraged the court's host state to withdraw from the institution.

Two US officials told the AP that more ICC sanctions may be coming, but stressed that the scale and scope of the penalties had not yet been finalized and that no announcement is expected this week.



A municipal worker carries plywood to board up windows of an apartment building damaged by a Russian drone strike in Kyiv, Ukraine on Sept 22. (AP)

Zelenskyy prepares to meet Trump

Russia, Ukraine trade deadly strikes

KYIV, Ukraine, Sept 22, (AP): Russia bombarded at least four Ukrainian regions overnight with missiles and drones, killing five people, officials said Tuesday, and Ukraine's forces damaged another Russian oil refinery in their latest long-range strike.

The ongoing exchange of daily aerial attacks, while positions on the battlefield's front line barely change, provided a backdrop to the visit by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to the United States.

Zelenskyy was due to meet other world leaders, including US President Donald Trump, at the UN General Assembly in New York. The Ukrainian leader is hoping to recruit their help to end Russia's more than 4½-year-old full-scale invasion of his country.

Russian President Vladimir Putin isn't due to attend the annual event.

The war, which Western officials say has killed more than 500,000 Russian troops, has had global repercussions.

The repeated attacks on Russian refineries, following Moscow's strikes on Ukraine's power grid, have caused international shortages of diesel and price spikes, according to Trump. However, the global crunch also came after the Iran war led to curtailed oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz.

Zelenskyy also wants help to ensure the flow of Ukrainian grain and other farm products to world markets through the Black Sea. Russian attacks on cargo vessels have severely disrupted Kyiv's exports, hurting its economy and threatening global

supplies.

Russia and Ukraine have in recent years accounted for around 30% of the world's wheat exports and 12% of corn exports, most of it shipped through the Black Sea. But last month, attacks slashed both countries' agricultural exports by two-thirds, Thomas de Waal of the Brussels-based think tank Carnegie Europe said in a report Tuesday.

"The lack of that grain in world markets puts several African countries at risk of famine, while world cereal prices, already pushed up by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, could rise even higher," it said.

French President Emmanuel Macron said Tuesday that his country would provide Ukraine with more radars to help protect its power grid.

Turkey school shooting injures 11, say officials

ANKARA, Turkey, Sept 22, (AP): An attacker opened fire near a high school in western Turkey on Tuesday and wounded at least 11 people, officials said. The suspected shooter was arrested.

At least two of the injured were in serious condition, Justice Minister Akin Gurlek said in a statement on X.

The attack took place in front of a vocational and technical high school in Turgutlu district, in Manisa province, the provincial governor's office said. Police and medical teams were immediately sent to the scene.

HaberTurk news channel said the assailant was a 15-year-old student at the school. The report added that he arrived at the scene armed with a shotgun he took from his grandmother's house and fired randomly near the school before trying to flee the scene on foot.

The motive of the attack was not known, according to Gurlek, who said two chief prosecutors were appointed to investigate the shooting, including claims that the student was bullied at the school.



People walk past a vocational and technical high school in the Turgutlu district of Manisa province, western Turkey on Sept 22. (AP)

Kim observes tests with teenage daughter

N.Korea touts new weapons system described as hypersonic

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 22, (AP): North Korea said Tuesday its latest missile tests involved a new weapons system of “great significance,” with photos indicating it launched a missile previously described as hypersonic.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said the weapon’s development would strengthen the country’s war readiness and give its enemies an “incurable headache,” the North’s official Korean Central News Agency said. He did not describe what the weapon was.

Kim observed Sunday’s tests with his teenage daughter, widely seen as a potential successor.

South Korea’s military detected North Korea firing two short-range missiles three hours apart from the eastern coastal Wonsan area Sunday. South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missiles flew about 450 and 600 kilometers (280 miles and 370 miles) toward the sea, while Japan’s military said they landed in waters outside the country’s exclusive economic zone.

The launches extended a recent run in military displays, including live-fire exercises and the commissioning of a new warship, as Kim continues to flaunt his growing nuclear program despite U.S. calls to revive diplomacy.

Following years of intensified testing, Kim now has an extensive arsenal of nuclear-capable missiles, including long-range weapons potentially capable of reaching the U.S. mainland and shorter-range systems designed to overwhelm missile defenses in South Korea and Japan.

Among the weapons North Korea has tested in recent years are various missile systems fitted with purported hypersonic weapons, which are designed to travel at more than five times the speed of sound.

Their speed and maneuverability are intended to help them evade regional missile defenses, but some experts have questioned whether they have consistently reached the speeds claimed by the North during tests.

KCNA’s photos of Sunday’s tests showed what appeared to be two missiles tipped with conical, finned vehicles being fired from launcher trucks. Kim is seen looking at a monitoring screen that identifies the missile as a Hwasong-11Ma, a system North Korea has previously described as hypersonic.

Graphics on the screen showed a missile trajectory overlaid on a map, along with figures for a speed of 2,146 meters (1.3 miles) per second, an altitude of 35.8 kilometers (22 miles) and a range of 908.2 kilometers (564 miles).

The reported distance exceeded the flight range announced by South Korea’s military. Jang Do-young, a spokesperson for South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the military was assessing the details from the North Korean report and cautioned that the North’s claims about missile capabilities “cannot be 100% trusted.”

The launches were the latest in a series of weapons demonstrations by North Korea even after U.S. President Donald Trump scaled back a joint military exercise with South Korea last month in

an apparent effort to revive diplomacy with Kim, who has called such drills invasion rehearsals. Kim’s sister and senior official, Kim Yo Jong, dismissed Trump’s overture, saying that shortening the drill would not change its “provocative, aggressive nature.”

North Korea has a long history of ratcheting up pressure on South Korea when it doesn’t get what it wants from the United States, and Kim Jong Un has recently taken a particularly hostile stance toward Seoul, suspending virtually all inter-Korean cooperation and dialogue and declaring the South a permanent enemy.

In a written response to questions by The Associated Press, liberal South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, who favors engagement with the North, expressed hope Tuesday that a resumption of Trump-Kim diplomacy would help reopen dialogue between the two Koreas.

He called for a practical, step-by-step approach to North Korea’s denuclearization, with incentives offered as Pyongyang makes progress toward eliminating its nuclear weapons.

Emboldened by his advancing nuclear arsenal and deepening ties with Russia and China, experts say Kim likely sees himself as having greater leverage in any renewed diplomacy with Trump.

His government has said Washington must first drop its “hostile policy” - a term Pyongyang mainly uses to describe U.S.-led sanctions and joint U.S.-South Korea military drills - and abandon demands for North Korea’s denuclearization as a precondition for talks.



In this photo provided Sept 22, 2026, by the North Korean government, its leader Kim Jong Un, center right, watches missile tests in an undisclosed location, North Korea on Sept 20. (AP)

South Korean court reduces former first lady’s prison sentence to five years

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 22, (AP): A South Korean appeals court on Tuesday reduced the prison sentence of the wife of ousted President Yoon Suk Yeol from seven to five years, following her initial conviction of accepting luxury gifts from businesspeople and others seeking political and business favors.

The Seoul High Court threw out some of the corruption charges against Kim Keon Hee, including one involving a luxury watch from businessman Seo Seong-bin who allegedly sought government support for his robotic dogs business.

In June, the Seoul Central District Court found Kim guilty of accepting the watch, but the high court on Tuesday said the prosecutors had not sufficiently proved that the watch was provided in exchange for business favors. The court upheld most of her other convictions.

Kim’s legal team said in a statement they would appeal to the Supreme Court to get the remaining charges overturned, arguing that prosecutors had failed to prove her guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The prosecution would also appeal, according to Kim Han-soo, a member of an investigation team led by special prosecutor Min Joong-ki.



South Korea’s former first lady Kim Keon Hee, wife of impeached former president Yoon Suk Yeol, arrives at a court to attend a hearing to review her arrest warrant requested by special prosecutors, in Seoul, South Korea, on Aug 12, 2025. (AP)

“It’s difficult to accept that a first lady’s acceptance of a watch worth tens of millions of won from a businessman with pending business matters does not constitute a crime,” he told reporters.

The latest ruling came after the high court - in a separate case in April - sentenced Kim Keon Hee to four years over charges that she accepted gifts from the Unification Church and profited from a stock

price manipulation scheme. She has separately appealed that sentence.

Among Kim’s convictions upheld on Tuesday was one for receiving a Van Cleef & Arpels necklace and other jewelry items worth more than 100 million won (\$73,500) in all in 2022 from Seohye Construction Chairman Lee Bong-kwan in exchange for securing a government post for Lee’s son-in-law.

Anger in Jamaica over deal to accept migrants expelled by US

KINGSTON, Jamaica, Sept 22, (AP): A deal to accept migrants expelled by the United States is sparking protests by Jamaica’s main opposition party and a host of other groups.

The deal was signed on June 10 by the US and Jamaica, which this week finished rules meant to defuse public anger about it. The agreement allows the Trump administration to send non-Jamaican migrants to the island en route to their home countries.

Jamaica is joining nearly 30 nations that have agreed to accept migrants expelled by the US. The opposition center-left People’s National Party, along with civic organizations, commentators and members of the Jamaican diaspora, is demanding that the ruling conservative Jamaica Labour Party go beyond this week’s rules and disclose the details of the agreement.

PNP officials say they worry about strains on resources and national security, and human rights protections for migrants. They have also expressed fears that Jamaica could incur unexpected costs or take in individuals with criminal histories.

“We just don’t trust what the government is saying,” said Bishop Alvin Bailey, leader of an alliance of evangelical churches.



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, (left), and Jamaica’s Prime Minister Andrew Holness speak after giving a joint news conference at the office of the prime minister in Kingston, Jamaica on March 26, 2025. (AP)

Jamaica’s ministries of national security and foreign affairs have said the new rules stipulate that the US will assume the cost of the deal and not send any migrant with a criminal record.

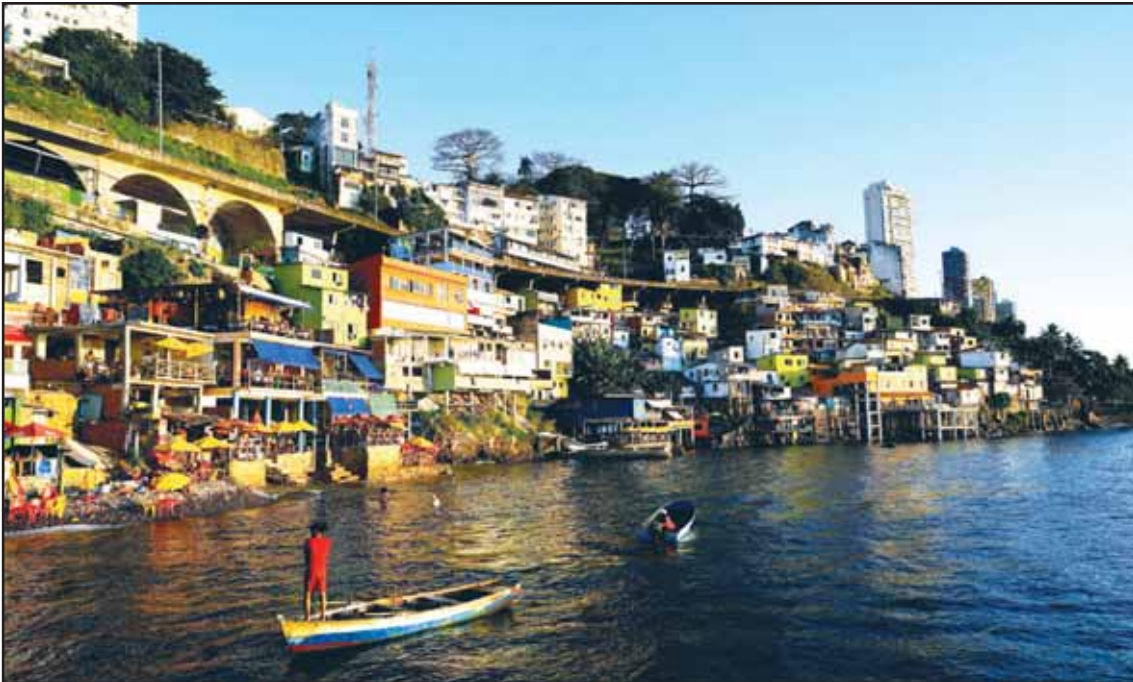
Jamaica also says the UN’s International Organization for Migration will meet migrants’ needs while they are in the country.

The PNP’s national security spokesman, Fitz Jackson, said that citizens should know what their country has agreed to. The document laying out the deal also must be approved by Parliament, he said.

“Jamaicans are being asked to trust a secret document that touches their security, their communities and their public services,” Jackson said.

Foreign Affairs Minister Kamina Johnson Smith said that Washington is opposed to the details being made public. The State Department said it didn’t comment on communications with other governments.

“They have not generally released their agreements, and they have not agreed to release this one,” Johnson Smith said.



Homes in the Gamboa community line the waterfront, with high-rise buildings in the background, at sunset in Salvador, Bahia state, Brazil on Aug 29. (AP)

Increasing violence in Brazil’s Bahia challenges Lula in election stronghold

SALVADOR, Brazil, Sept 22, (AP): On the day they were going to kill him, Evilásio Santos da Silveira Júnior, 33, told his sister he was going grocery shopping in the city of Salvador in northern Brazil where the line between the crossfire of rival drug gangs and police lethality has been increasingly blurred. But he never came back home.

His death and the questions surrounding it encapsulate a major hurdle for President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to beat Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro in October’s national elections.

The rising violence and critiques of government response could impact Lula in his stronghold state, where he won 72% of votes in the 2022 runoff against then incumbent Jair Bolsonaro.

The 80-year-old president needs to maintain a strong lead with the 11 million bairanos, as the state’s residents are called, to beat his predecessor’s son, Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro. The former trade unionist is polling below his results four years ago in Bahia, and public security is pointed to as the key reason.

Yet the president’s campaign

trusts the appeal of his flagship social programs with bairanos so he can once again win big.

Born and raised in the colorful capital of Bahia, Júnior died after bleeding for hours in an abandoned favela house with a shot through his brachial artery, close to the armpit.

Bahia state police officers at the scene said he was caught in a shootout between rival factions and suspect him of involvement. His family said he had no ties to gangs and was instead randomly killed by state forces during an unprovoked surprise raid.

“My confidence today is only in God, in my prayers ... I can’t say I feel protected (by police). I am sorry to say that many times, at the end of the day, they are the criminals,” said Magnólia Nascimento, Júnior’s sister, who said she hopes the next president improves public safety and stops gangs from spreading, as Lula and Sen. Bolsonaro have promised to do.

Both police officers interviewed by The Associated Press and Júnior’s family agree that their state of Bahia has never been as violent, with five out

of the country’s 10 most deadly cities there, according to non-profit group Brazilian Public Security Forum. Salvador is the nation’s deadliest state capital, with nearly 53 violent deaths for every 100,000 residents, according to the most recent data from 2024.

Some voters blame national crime gangs migrating to Bahia. Others point to Lula’s Workers’ Party, which has governed the state - and thus local police - since 2006. They say they have failed to make police less lethal or stop the flow of drugs and weapons and have not invested enough in education.

Lula has tried to beef up his security credentials with the promise to create a public security ministry and dedicate more federal resources to fighting violence should he be re-elected.

Sen. Bolsonaro has campaigned on a tough-on-crime stance, including the construction of massive prisons nationwide inspired by the model of Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele, although he hasn’t directly addressed violence in Bahia.

Lat/Am

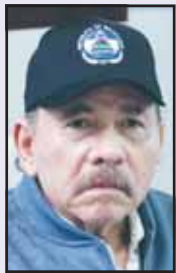
‘Nicaraguan govt responsible for 8 deaths’: The Nicaraguan government is responsible for at least eight deaths in custody since it began its crackdown on dissent and assault of democratic institutions in 2018, UN experts said Tuesday.

The report from the UN Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua was the latest condemnation of the government of co-Presidents **Daniel Ortega** and Rosario Murillo, which has crushed dissent since 2018 mass protests and recently canceled elections.

“A State that resorts to enforced disappearance and allows persons to die in its custody falls short of the minimum human rights standards required for credible democratic governance,” said Jan-Michael Simon, the group’s chair.

The report detailed inconsistencies in the government’s account of the in-custody death of Indigenous Miskito leader Brooklyn Rivera, who was imprisoned for 32 months with almost no contact with his family before he died in May.

The official statement after his death linked it to complications following a previous COVID-19 in-



Ortega

fection, which previous statements in the days before never mentioned. An independent assessment from Physicians for Human Rights said the explanation was “not medically coherent.”

Its assessment also found that the “timing of the illness and the pattern of organisms identified both point to the infections having been acquired in custody or in hospital, rather than in the community.” (AP)

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Polo grows into Category 4 storm: Hurricane Polo grew into a Category 4 storm in the eastern Pacific late on Monday and was forecast to bring heavy rain to southwestern Mexico but remain offshore.

It had maximum sustained winds of 130 mph (215 kph) and may intensify further and reach Category 5 strength Tuesday or Wednesday, the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said. Category 4 storms have winds of 130-156 mph (210-250 kph) on the Saffir-Simpson scale, and Category 5 hurricanes have winds exceeding 157 mph (250 kph).

Polo was moving east-southeast at 5 mph (7 kph) and was forecast to sharply turn northwest and west-northwest. On that path, Polo would skirt the Mexican coast for a few days without directly making landfall.

A tropical storm watch was issued for part of the coast south of Manzanillo in Colima state to Tecpan de Galeana in Guerrero state, meaning tropical storm conditions were possible in the area within two days. Polo was centered about 330 miles (530 kilometers) south-southeast of Manzanillo as of late Monday. (AP)

Amnesty alleges possible M23 war crimes at Congo mines

DAKAR, Senegal, Sept 22, (AP): Amnesty International accused M23 rebels in eastern Congo of carrying out abuses and unlawful killings of miners while trafficking critical minerals to neighboring Rwanda, in what it said could amount to war crimes.

The Rwanda-backed rebels control dozens of artisanal mines in Congo’s eastern North Kivu and South Kivu provinces, where tens of thousands of miners dig for minerals critical for much of the world’s electronics, including mobile phones.

Amnesty International said in its report on Monday it interviewed 26 people to document the crimes allegedly committed from January 2025 to March 2026, particularly at a coltan mine near Rubaya in North Kivu and a gold mine in Lomera in South Kivu.

Sixteen of the interviewees, in-



M23 rebels stand with their weapons in Kibumba, in the eastern region of Democratic Republic of Congo on Dec 23, 2022. (AP)

cluding miners and civilians, said the M23 rebels or security guards at the rebel-controlled mines had tortured or mistreated them, the report said.

The rights watchdog said it documented abuses by the rebels that

likely amounted to crimes under international law, including “summary killings” - a term used to describe killings outside of any legal framework - torture, arbitrary detention, forced labor and pillage.

Oil drops \$5.64 to \$109.30 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil dropped USD 5.64 during Monday's trading to reach USD 109.30 per barrel compared with USD 114.94 pb last Friday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Tuesday. Brent futures lost USD 3.53 to USD 100.34 pb and West Texas Intermediate declined USD 4.52 to USD 95.78 pb.

Zour Refinery output exceeds

KIPIC profit increases to KD 239.2 mln in 2025/26

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) achieved a net profit of KD239,152,417 for the 2025/2026 fiscal year, compared to KD 52,250,585 in the previous year, according to the annual report of the company for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

KIPIC CEO Wadha Al-Khatib affirmed that the past year was exceptional, as it was marked by significant transformations that reflected the commitment of the company to realize the vision of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and the State of Kuwait regarding the energy sector.

She expressed her deep appreciation for the efforts of the employees, indicating that Zour Refinery achieved a refining rate of 422,947 barrels per day, exceeding the target by 21.97 percent compared to the previous year.

She also cited the success of the company in processing 'om niga' and 'heavy crude' at substantial rates. She pointed out that KPC confirmed that it has strengthened its global competitive position by exporting its first shipment of low-sulfur jet fuel (ATK), which meets the highest international standards.

She said the company secured a guarantee for continuous export of ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel (ULSD) that meets French specifications and standards. She added that the liquefied natural gas (LNG) import facilities continue to play their vital role as the main energy artery.

She confirmed the arrival of 85 LNG carriers with a total cargo of 13.18 million cubic meters, highlighting the historic peak on Aug 19, 2025, when 1.609 million standard cubic feet (MMscf) of LNG were shipped within one day, equivalent to 1.576 billion British thermal units (BTUs).

She stressed that she is proud of the fact that the Technical Services Group received the KPC Excellence Award, in recognition of its role in heavy oil

processing.

She went on to say that KIPIC is progressing towards carbon neutrality, with the energy management services contract for Zour Complex reaching around 86 percent completion, while the budget for the first phase of the solar energy system installation project at Zour Refinery has been approved, along with the planting of more than 3,500 trees around the refinery.

She asserted that the company continues to play its role in the strategy of KPC regarding the oil sector restructuring project through the merger of KIPIC with Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) to raise operational efficiency and rationalize expenses. She expects the completion of the merger in the coming months and the fruitful integration between the Zour, Mina Al-Ahmadi and Mina Abdullah refineries.

She then affirmed that the two companies have made significant progress in implementing the merger, while pointing out that the Kuwaitization rate has reached 97.10 percent of the total workforce of 1,378. She said these competencies were developed through 449 local and international training programs.

She added that the company strengthened its health, safety and environment systems by training new batches of firefighters, as well as the security cooperation with state institutions.

She disclosed that the company organized health awareness campaigns for its employees and that of contracting companies, including proactive medical examinations for the early detection of common diseases, such as hypertension, heat exhaustion, hepatitis and work-related stress.

She said the local spending of the company accounted for 31.2 percent of its total operating and capital expenditures by the end of March 2026.

She also stressed that the company remains committed to playing its humanitarian role through several community initiatives during Ramadan, embodying the values of social solidarity.

Al-Ghais, Puri co-chair meeting

OPEC, India stress market stability & energy security

NEW DELHI, Sept 22, (KUNA): OPEC and India stressed Tuesday the importance of oil market stability, energy security, and timely investments across all sectors of the petroleum industry.

Co-chaired in New Delhi by Indian Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and OPEC Secretary-General Haitham Al-Ghais, the seventh high-level meeting reviewed short, medium, and long-term energy outlooks.

Both sides highlighted India's vital role in supporting global economic growth and energy demand, while emphasizing the continued importance of producer-consumer cooperation.

Puri noted that India and OPEC share mutually beneficial ties, and praised the Organization for enhancing market stability and transparency amid geopolitical challenges.

He added that India's status as one of the fastest-growing economies makes it a key driver of global energy demand, calling for ongoing dialogue to ensure reliable supplies.

Al-Ghais affirmed that dialogue with India is a top priority for OPEC, noting that the partnership has progressed over 11 years since launching in New Delhi in 2015.

He praised India's balanced and practical approach to global energy challenges, noting that both sides share key strategic priorities.

Al-Ghais also commended the Indian government's commitment to international diplomacy and cooperation, thanking Minister Puri for hosting the delegation.

The meeting reviewed strong technical progress made to date and concluded with an agreement to hold the eighth high-level meeting in Vienna.

Boursa Kuwait closes lower

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Tuesday's trading session lower, with the general index falling 91.10 points, or 1.03 percent, to 8,755.35 points.

Trading volume reached 421.7 million shares through 30,027 cash transactions, with a total value of KD 121.1 million, equivalent to approximately USD 394.7 million.

The Main Market Index dropped 332.67 points, or 3.53 percent, to 9,088.15 points. A total of 271 million shares changed hands through 20,651 transactions worth KD 66.3

million, or about USD 216.1 million.

The Premier Market Index declined 44.43 points, or 0.48 percent, to close at 9,138.91 points. Trading volume stood at 150.6 million shares through 9,376 transactions, with a value of KD 54.7 million, equivalent to approximately USD 178.2 million.

The Main 50 Index fell 856.45 points, or 7.61 percent, to 10,399.45 points. Trading volume reached 206.9 million shares through 15,037 transactions valued at KD 51.3 million, or approximately USD 167.2 million.



The app offers a simpler and more flexible motor insurance experience designed to meet customers' needs and expectations.



Officials from Zain and Boubyan Takaful Insurance, the representative of the Minister of Commerce, and the event organizers at the Zain Insure booth.

In partnership with Boubyan Takaful Insurance

Zain Insure showcases a fully digital motor insurance experience at Auto World Show

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Zain Insure, in partnership with Boubyan Takaful Insurance, are participating in Auto World Show 2026, running daily until 26 September at the Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref, bringing its fully digital motor insurance experience directly to one of Kuwait's biggest automotive gatherings. The Zain Insure booth is located at the main entrance of Hall 6.

The event is being held under the patronage of H.E. Abdulaziz Al-Marzouq, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment and Acting Minister of Commerce and Industry, and brings together leading representatives from Kuwait's automotive and business sectors. At the opening ceremony, Zain was represented by Malek Hammoud, Chief Investments and Digital Transformation Officer at Zain Group, and Waleed Al-Khashti, Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer at Zain Kuwait.

Zain Insure is inviting visitors to discover a simpler and more convenient way to insure their vehicles, built around an end-to-end digital journey that removes the need for traditional paperwork and lengthy processes. Visitors can learn more about the app's digital services, insurance options, and competitive offerings, while experiencing firsthand how Zain is reimagining the

- The Zain Insure app developed in partnership with Boubyan Takaful Insurance
- A simpler, convenient way to insure vehicles through an end-to-end digital journey

motor insurance experience around convenience and accessibility.

Zain Insure is Kuwait's first fully end-to-end digital motor insurance application, developed in partnership with Boubyan Takaful Insurance specifically for the Kuwait market. Through one seamless app, customers can receive an instant quote and purchase motor insurance online, manage and renew their policies anytime and anywhere, file and track claims digitally, and securely access their insurance documents.

The platform was designed to make motor insurance simpler, faster, and more accessible by bringing the entire customer journey into a single digital experience, from receiving a quote and purchasing a policy through to managing claims. It also reflects Zain Group's ongoing transformation into a TechCo, as the Group continues to expand beyond traditional telecom services into new digital and financial services that address evolving customer needs. By combining technology, convenience, and

customer-centric innovation, the platform supports Zain's ambition to deliver digital solutions that simplify everyday experiences and create value beyond connectivity.

Zain Insure's Platinum Sponsorship of Auto World Show also places the platform at the heart of Kuwait's automotive community, alongside a wide range of vehicle brands, technologies, and automotive services. The exhibition features more than 300 vehicles from different brands and models under one roof, spanning general, electric, hybrid, luxury, and other automotive categories, alongside interactive experiences and automotive services.

The step further supports Zain's broader digital transformation journey and its focus on developing technology-driven services that respond to evolving customer expectations. By making insurance available digitally wherever customers are, Zain Insure aims to make protection a more convenient and naturally integrated part of everyday life.

Visitors can meet the Zain Insure team at Hall 6 of the Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref until Saturday, 26 September, and explore how the platform is transforming the motor insurance experience in Kuwait. The Zain Insure app is available for download on the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.



Eng. Ahmed Al-Mutairi, Director of the General Services Department at the Kuwait Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in a group photo with the KIB team.

Enhancing its customers' digital banking experience

KIB launches new 'DriveNow' app to simplify car ownership journey at Auto World Show

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the launch of its new 'DriveNow' app on the sidelines of its participation in Auto World Show 2026, taking place September 21 to September 26 at the Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref. The app reflects the Bank's ongoing efforts to provide innovative banking solutions that keep pace with customers' evolving needs. It is designed to simplify the car ownership process by bringing vehicle search and financing applications together on a single integrated platform.

The DriveNow app, which is available on both Android and iOS platforms, enables customers to browse available cars, compare specifications and prices, explore financing options, choose a suitable payment plan, submit a financing application, and track its progress from submission through completion.

During the exhibition, KIB is offering a total of 25 zero-profit (0%) financing offers on various car models, including the Toyota Land Cruiser in collaboration with ALSAYER Group, with free servicing for up to 50,000 kilometers and a five-year warranty. These offers are available exclusively throughout the duration of Auto World Show.

The zero-profit financing offers also apply to the Nissan X-Trail from Al-Babtain Group, the GAC GS8 from Mutawa Al-Kazi, and the Avatr 07 from Adel Alghanim Automotive, alongside several other offers, giving visitors the opportunity to choose their preferred vehicle while benefiting from KIB's special financing solutions.

Commenting on the new app, Othman Tawfeq, General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said: "KIB's DriveNow app reflects the direction in which we are continuing to develop our retail banking propo-

- Customers can browse cars, compare specifications and prices, calculate financing, apply, and track their financing application
- KIB is showcasing 25 zero-profit financing offers on various car models, including the Toyota Land Cruiser in collaboration with ALSAYER Group

sition: building solutions around customers' everyday needs and making their financial transactions simpler and easier. Car ownership is an important financial decision for many customers, and we saw an opportunity to bring together the different stages of that journey within one digital platform."

Tawfeq added: "We chose to reveal the 'DriveNow' app at Auto World Show, as it is one of the most prominent events specializing in the automotive sector in Kuwait. Our participation also represents a valuable opportunity to engage directly with customers, understand their aspirations, and showcase our innovative digital banking solutions, specifically designed to meet all their needs."

At Auto World Show, KIB is welcoming visitors across three dedicated booths, where they can explore ALSAYER Group offers, Takaful insurance services, as well as a dedicated booth for the direct sale of GAC vehicles. In addition to discovering the vehicles and the features of the new "DriveNow" app, the Bank is offering visitors a distinctive interactive entertainment experience featuring a virtual reality simulation game, along with a coffee corner available throughout the exhibition.

For his part, Abdulaziz Al-Shammari, Assistant General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said: "Whether customers already have a specific vehicle in mind or are still considering their options, the new DriveNow app offers a range of features that simplify the ownership process. It helps streamline many of the steps customers previously had to navigate when moving from choosing a vehicle to arranging its financing."

Al-Shammari further explained that DriveNow operates in line with KIB's Islamic banking principles, with financing options available through the app, including Musawamah financing, structured in accordance with Sharia principles. Once an application is submitted, a KIB team member will contact the customer to continue the process, and financing is subject to KIB's approval requirements. The cars shown on DriveNow are offered by KIB's partner merchants, who remain responsible for availability, delivery, warranty, and returns, while KIB's role is to facilitate financing.

Al Shammari added: "Auto World Show gives customers an opportunity to experience how DriveNow works in practice. They can explore the vehicles on display, identify their financing needs with the Bank's specialized team, and then easily complete the process digitally through the app."

It is worth noting that the new app further reflects KIB's commitment to expanding its digital ecosystem and introducing solutions that are relevant to customers' lifestyles. By adding the DriveNow app to its constantly expanding digital offering, the Bank continues to combine innovation, convenience, and customer engagement in line with its strategy of delivering a more advanced banking experience and its main slogan, 'Bank for Life'.

As part of its vision to invest in human capital & provide the best educational opportunities for its employees

National Bank of Kuwait renews strategic partnership with Spain’s IE University to foster talent development & corporate innovation

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has renewed its strategic partnership agreement with Spain’s IE University, a leading global academic institution specializing in higher education, as part of its ongoing commitment to investing in human capital and fostering a culture of learning, development, and innovation across the Group.

The agreement was signed in the presence of Mr. Emad Al-Ablani, Group Chief Human Resources Officer at National Bank of Kuwait, and Mr. Germán Vivas Lamozas, IE University’s Corporate Accounts Director, alongside senior executives and officials from both parties.

The renewal of this partnership underscores the success of this collaboration and reflects the two parties’ shared commitment to supporting the Bank’s efforts in cultivating a qualified banking workforce, which is equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to keep pace with the rapid transformations occurring in the local and global financial and banking sectors.

Under the renewed agreement, NBK will continue to utilize the academic and research expertise provided by IE University through specialized educational and training programs tailored to the developmental needs of the Bank and its employees, which encompasses executive education and postgraduate studies, in addition to initiatives aimed at fostering corporate innovation and developing solutions that enhance performance, operational efficiency, and competitiveness.

The agreement also enables NBK’s employees to benefit from diverse educational opportunities offered by the University, including attending conferences and academic or professional events, as well as participating in specialized lectures and knowledge-sharing sessions led by distinguished global experts and academics.

Moreover, the partnership’s benefits extend to the families of NBK employees; IE University offers academic support programs and benefits that provide them with exceptional opportunities to pursue undergraduate and postgraduate studies within a world-class educational environment characterized by innovation, diversity, and an openness to the latest trends in business, management, and technology.

On this occasion, Najla Al-Sager, SVP - Head of Talent Management & Learning at NBK, stated: “Renewing our partnership with IE University reflects our firm belief that investing in people is the most sustainable and impactful investment. Through this continued collaboration, we aim to enhance our employees’ future readiness and empower them to acquire advanced skills and knowledge that support their career paths and keep pace with the rapid developments in the banking sector”.

Al-Sager added: “We view talent development as a long-term strategic investment, which is why we are committed to providing the best learning and development opportunities in collaboration with prestigious global academic institutions. This approach has helped solidify NBK’s position as a top employer for Kuwaiti talent and graduates, offering a supportive work environment that provides employees with genuine opportunities for professional growth and fosters leaders capable of adapting to change and leading the future”.

Additionally, Al-Sager emphasized that the renewal of the agreement reflects the shared commitment of both parties to embedding a culture of continuous learning, encouraging innovation, and facilitating knowledge exchange, all of which positively impact the work environment and contribute to achieving the Bank’s long-term strategic goals.

For his part, Mr. Germán Vivas Lamozas expressed his pleasure with the continued collaboration with NBK, emphasizing that the renewed partnership reflects the mutual trust between the two parties and the success achieved by joint initiatives over the past years.

He added: “We are proud to continue our partnership with such a prestigious financial institution, and we look forward to expanding the scope of collaboration, through which we aim to provide the Bank’s employees and their families with advanced educational opportunities and world-class academic and executive programs that contribute to talent development and enhance readiness to meet future demands”.

Through these strategic partnerships, NBK continues to reinforce its position as a leading institution dedicated to developing its human capital. It is also worth noting that the bank places education, training, and talent development at the forefront of its strategic priorities, driven by the conviction that skilled human talent is the fundamental pillar for achieving sustainable growth and maintaining leadership within the banking sector.

Founded in 1973, IE University is recognized as a premier global institution, consistently ranking highly in prestigious international academic lists published by specialized global organizations and platforms.



NBK renews strategic partnership with Spain’s IE University.



Najla Al-Sager

Najla Al-Sager:

- We provide premier professional development opportunities in collaboration with world-class academic institutions.
- Our training and development strategy has cemented NBK’s position as a top employer for Kuwaiti talent and graduates.
- We continuously work to cultivate a qualified workforce equipped with the skills needed to keep pace with the rapid transformations in the banking sector.
- The partnership with IE University offers our employees exceptional opportunities for learning and networking with global experts.

Germán: Renewing the partnership reflects the mutual trust between both parties and the success achieved by joint initiatives over the past years.

quire advanced skills and knowledge that support their career paths and keep pace with the rapid developments in the banking sector”.

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Children receive rewards for recycling

Warba Bank promotes the ‘Omniya Madrasatik’ sustainability initiative

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Warba Bank continued its sustainability and corporate social responsibility efforts through its participation in the “Omniya Madrasatik” initiative, featuring the cartoon character “Saleh – The Good Monster.” Dedicated to children aged 5 to 12, the initiative aims to introduce sustainability and environmental conservation concepts in an interactive, entertaining manner, encouraging positive environmental habits from an early age.

Promoting Recycling Through Interactive Activities

Warba Bank’s participation stems from its commitment to supporting community initiatives that raise environmental awareness among younger generations. The bank set up a dedicated booth at the event to welcome participating children and encourage them to collect plastic bottles and bring them to the bank’s booth at The Avenues Mall.

The initiative encourages active participation in recycling, with children receiving a KD 1 voucher provided by Canteen. This approach turns recycling into a practical and engaging activity that combines environmental awareness with entertainment.

Spreading Environmental Awareness Among Younger Generations

The initiative introduces children to environmental conservation and encourages sustainable everyday practices, with a particular focus on reducing plastic bottle waste and making recycling an accessible daily habit. By presenting sustainability in a simplified manner tailored to children, the event delivers practical environmental messages that help develop positive environmental habits over the long term.

Hamadah: Transforming Environmental Awareness into Practical Action

Awatef Abdulaziz Hamadah, Senior Specialist, Corporate Communications and Public Relations at Warba Bank, stated:

“Warba Bank’s participation in the ‘Omniya Madrasatik’ initiative through the character ‘Saleh – The Good Monster’ aligns with our commitment to initiatives that combine community engagement with educational awareness. Investing in children’s awareness is an essential step toward building a generation that understands the importance of sustainability and environmental protection.”



Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education Dr. Khaled Al-Rasheed during his visit to the pavilion set up as part of the event.



Warba Bank team participating in the “Omniya Madrasatik” initiative.

Hamadah added that the initiative gives children the opportunity to put environmental awareness into practice by collecting plastic bottles and bringing them to the bank’s booth.

Hamadah explained that focusing on children reflects the importance of instilling positive environmental habits early on. Presenting these concepts through interactive entertainment helps make sustainability more relevant to children’s everyday lives and can also encourage them to share these habits with their families and communities.

Promoting a Culture of Sustainability and Social Responsibility

Hamadah noted that environmental programs involving children are an important part of Warba Bank’s community and sustainability efforts, as early awareness can help encourage responsible environmental practices over the long term.

An Event Combining Education and Entertainment

Organized in collaboration with Omniya and Fursa, the initiative provides an interactive space that combines recreational activities with environmental education tailored to children aged 5 to 12.

Through Warba Bank’s booth, children learn about the proper disposal of plastic waste and the role of recycling in reducing environmental impact, while actively collecting and handing over bottles to receive the designated reward after meeting the initiative’s collection requirement.

A Community Partnership Toward a More Sustainable Environment

Warba Bank said its participation reflects its continued support for community initiatives that promote environmental awareness and encourage practical, sustainable habits, particularly among younger generations.

About Warba Bank:

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

Collins backs Fed hike, sees another this year

AI data-center boom adds to inflation pressures

WASHINGTON, Sept 22, (AP): A top Federal Reserve official said Monday that stubbornly high inflation and the renewal of combat in the Middle East in August were key reasons she supported raising borrowing costs last week, when she also penciled in a second rate hike for later this year.

Susan Collins, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, said in an interview with The Associated Press that she agreed with the Fed’s decision last Wednesday to lift its benchmark interest rate by a quarter-point to about 3.9%. She also expects that the Fed will keep rates unchanged next year, she added.

“I did not see the inflation progress I was hoping to see,” she said. “Geopolitical developments suggest that we could continue to see additional pressures push on the energy side.”

“There were reasons to see an increased likelihood of some of the scenarios in which inflation gets stuck above 2%,” she added, referring to the Fed’s 2% inflation target, which it has not hit for more than five years.

Collins was the second Fed official Monday to outline their thinking about rates, along with Austan Goolsbee, president of the Chicago Fed, who spoke earlier in London and then addressed a roundtable of reporters. Both spoke about inflation pressures arising from supply shocks, such as the war in Iran, as well as from solid business and consumer spending.

Collins said data showing that hiring has improved also played a role in her decision to support a rate hike. Solid job gains can signal that the economy may be able to withstand higher rates.

Neither Collins nor Goolsbee have a vote on the Fed’s rate decisions this year, but they participate in the meetings where rate changes are discussed. Goolsbee will have a vote next year, while Collins will have a vote in 2028.

Collins also said that businesses in her district, which includes Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, Rhode Island and Vermont, continue to express concern about high costs. Many of those companies expect they may have to pass rising costs on to their customers, which could push up measured inflation.

Goolsbee, for his part, said that the central bank may have to cause economic pain in the form of higher unemployment to combat stubbornly high inflation.

Goolsbee said that the Fed is facing a series of persistent supply shocks that have driven up inflation, including higher oil prices from the Iran war and tariffs. Typically, Goolsbee noted, the central bank would essentially wait for such shocks to fade and inflation to fall on its own rather than raise borrowing costs.

But faced with an ongoing series of persistent supply shocks, the Fed now has little choice but to hike rates, Goolsbee said. The increases are needed to lower consumer and business demand to a level consistent with reduced supply, he added, which should bring inflation back to the Fed’s 2% target.

“The only way to bring inflation down is to raise rates and narrow the gap between supply and demand,” he said in a written copy of his remarks. “Forcing inflation back to target in the short run means pushing employment below target. ... In the short run, supply shocks force a difficult trade-off” between the Fed’s goals of low inflation and maximum employment.

“It’s going to be painful,” Goolsbee said in later to reporters. “It would necessarily be painful.”

Goolsbee’s comments contradict Fed Chairman Kevin Warsh’s remarks last Wednesday at a news conference that took place after the Fed lifted its key interest rate for the first time in three years to about 3.9%.

“I don’t believe that we need to do harm to the labor markets to achieve our objective,” Warsh said last week.

The Fed generally fights inflation by raising interest rates to cool borrowing and spending. Historically, such rate hikes have often slowed growth and have even led to recessions.

Yet in 2022-2023, the Fed sharply raised interest rates and inflation did decline, without a significant rise in unemployment or economic slowdown.

Goolsbee also suggested while speaking with reporters that the Fed may need to implement more than just the one additional rate hike later this year that policy-makers, as a group, forecast last week.

There are signs that surging investment in data centers for AI are also pushing up inflation, he said, suggesting that strong demand is playing a role, as well as the supply shock from oil.

If inflation mostly comes from supply shocks, then just one more rate hike could be sufficient, Goolsbee told reporters.

“And if we get evidence that convinces us that it’s coming from demand, then it likely would not be enough,” he said.

Trump and Xi see tensions flare over AI, trade and Iran but still seek stability

WASHINGTON, Sept 22, (AP): State visits usually occur when two countries are on warm terms, but U.S. President Donald Trump is hosting Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Washington this week as their economic and tech competition is only escalating, especially through an artificial intelligence race.

Neither expects any grand bargain, but the leaders are expected to play nice in their third meeting since Trump returned to the White House to try to steady fragile ties. That is despite the world’s two largest economies seeking the upper hand on AI developments and trade, while pushing for leverage in persistent hot spots like Iran and Taiwan.

“The fact that they are meeting, and there’s dialogue occurring and building that relationship, is probably as important as outcomes from the meeting,” said Sen. Steve Daines, a Montana Republican who advises Trump on China and recently traveled there to lay groundwork for the summit.

Cui Tiankai, a former Chinese ambassador to the U.S., said at a recent forum in Beijing that there are “always problems, sometimes very big problems” between the two countries, but “we’ll make our best efforts to maintain overall stability.”

Xi’s visit to Washington, which begins Wednesday, is his first in 10 years. He and Trump are meeting after their countries climbed down from last year’s intense trade war, where they traded tit-for-tat sky-high tariffs that threatened the global economy. China also choked off its world-leading supplies of critical minerals needed in products from electric cars to fighter jets.

The U.S. is not only trying to balance trade but also maintain its tech dominance

to protect national security and global leadership. China, which has amassed tremendous economic, technological and military power over the past several years to close gaps with the U.S., is seeking to solidify its place in the global order.

The stability both sides are seeking is “for deeply competitive reasons,” said Evan Medeiros, a senior adviser at The Asia Group consultancy. “This is basically two geopolitical strongmen circling each other on the playground, trying to determine what their next move may be.”

The countries appeared to be entering a “new normal” of “overall stability” despite blacklisting each other’s companies and restricting the flow of high-tech products, said Da Wei, director of the Center for International Security and Strategy at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

The leaders now should produce deals that their governments can carry out, he said, noting that “we need to move fast.”

Developing AI technology has emerged as a key battleground, with both sides showing little interest in slowing down despite warnings from tech CEOs about threats that rogue AI could pose to humanity. “Whoever wins AI wins,” Trump has repeatedly said.

He claimed on social media Monday that the U.S. is leading over China and that he was “not going to stifle Growth, of something that will be bigger than the Industrial Revolution, or the Internet, itself.”

China cannot afford to lose either. In a rare, blunt essay, Chen Yixin, head of China’s Ministry of State Security, warned that AI poses a direct threat to Com-

munist Party rule if foreign and hostile forces achieve superior capabilities.

The U.S. is already restricting exports of the most powerful AI chips to China and has accused Chinese developers of tapping into American AI models at an industrial scale to extract their capabilities.

Beijing says the practice, known as distillation, is widely used, including by American companies, and has criticized the U.S. for trying to monopolize the industry.

Beijing also is upset about U.S. efforts to build an alliance that excludes China, so it is seeking to craft new global AI guardrails by appealing to developing nations.

However, the U.S. and China are taking a small step to cooperate on AI. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Sunday after meeting with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng in New York that the U.S. has proposed a new “notification mechanism” for AI incidents that could affect national security.

“We think that just like any cross-border activity, that moving from opaque to more transparency between the No. 1 and the No. 2 AI powers in the world is very important,” Bessent said.

While the U.S. and China have refrained from taking broad, punitive actions that would break their trade truce, they still are blacklisting individual companies and banning specific products.

“What we’ve seen is kind of testing and probing by both sides to understand what can be done competitively, while still keeping that leader-level rapprochement on track,” said Mira Rapp-Hooper, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution’s Center for Asia Policy Studies.

Ambassador highlights 55 years of China-Kuwait relations

China-Kuwait friendship & regional stability highlighted at Chinese National Day reception

By John C. Fernandes
Online Media Manager – Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The Chinese Embassy in Kuwait hosted a reception at the Waldorf Astoria on September 21, 2026, to mark the 77th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Kuwait's Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, His Excellency Dr. Subaih Abdulaziz Abdul Mohsen Al-Mukhaizeem, attended as guest of honor.

In his speech, Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait His Excellency Yang Xin welcomed guests and thanked friends from various sectors for their continued support for China and their commitment to strengthening China-Kuwait friendship.

HE. Yang Xin said China's economy had maintained steady growth as it entered its 15th Five-Year Plan period, with GDP expanding 4.7 percent year-on-year in the first half of the year, an increase of 3.6 trillion yuan. He said new growth drivers, including advanced manufacturing, the digital-intelligent economy and modern services, accounted for more than 40 percent of the growth.

The ambassador also highlighted China's role in promoting world peace, global development and international cooperation. He said the Global Development, Global Security, Global Civilization and Global Governance initiatives had contributed to addressing shared global challenges.

HE. Yang Xin noted that the Global Governance Initiative had received support from nearly 160 countries and international organizations, while more than 60 had joined the Group of Friends of Global Governance. He also referred to the commencement of operations of the International Organization for Mediation and the establishment of the World Data Organization and World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization.

China calls for Middle East peace

Addressing the situation in the Middle East and Gulf region, HE. Yang Xin said China was committed to easing tensions and promoting peace through dialogue.

He called on all parties to pursue a political settlement and a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire, stressing the importance of respecting the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of all countries in the region and protecting personnel, facilities and maritime shipping lanes.

"China supports regional nations in enhancing dialogue, rebuilding trust, and establishing a new security framework," Yang said, adding that China was ready to work with Kuwait and other peace-loving countries to contribute to stability in the Middle East and Gulf.

55 years of China-Kuwait relations



Chinese Embassy marks 77th anniversary of PRC founding.

Photos by Rezk Tawfik

HE. Yang Xin noted that 2026 marks the 55th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Kuwait, saying the two countries have maintained a partnership based on mutual respect, equality and shared success over

the past five decades.

Under the strategic guidance of their heads of state, China-Kuwait relations have accelerated, with cooperation in trade, infrastructure, energy, and science and technology delivering benefits to both peoples.

"China is eager to work alongside Kuwait to implement the important consensus reached by the two heads of state, fully realize the partnership toward a broader and brighter future," Yang said.

He concluded by wishing China and Kuwait continued progress and prosperity and expressing hope that the "vibrant and deep-rooted friendship" between the two countries would endure.

New Cooperation in Energy, Trade, Technology and Logistics

This year marks the 55th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Kuwait; the two countries established a strategic partnership in 2018. Under the strategic guidance of their heads of state, bilateral cooperation has accelerated across political, economic, cultural, scientific and technological, and security fields. China looks forward to further deepening this cooperation for the benefit of both peoples.

China is ready to strengthen the alignment between the Belt and Road Initiative and Kuwait Vision 2035, while expanding cooperation in trade, investment, energy and infrastructure. New areas of cooperation include port development, artificial intelligence, the digital economy, smart cities and cybersecurity. China also sees potential for Kuwait to develop its position as a regional logistics hub connecting Asia and Europe and extending toward Africa. Beijing is ready to cooperate with Kuwait on ports, infrastructure, logistics parks and supply chains.

Energy and regional cooperation

China and Kuwait are important energy partners. China is a major importer of Kuwait's crude oil, while Kuwait remains among China's top 10 oil suppliers. Both sides are looking to deepen oil and gas cooperation while expanding collaboration in renewable energy.

China also regards the Gulf Arab states as close friends, with relations extending beyond energy to political, economic and cultural cooperation. Both sides support upholding international law, international humanitarian law, the UN Charter and the basic norms of international relations.

The Strait of Hormuz, an important international route for goods and energy, must remain safe and open, as this serves the common interests of the international community. China said it has actively worked to help end the conflict and hopes all sides will work toward the early resumption of normal traffic through the Strait.

Mona Haddad El-Khoury leads IWG for 2026–27 season

IWG begins 2026–2027 season with Danish-themed meet-and-greet

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The International Women's Group (IWG) opened its 2026–2027 season with a warm Danish-themed meet-and-greet at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

The event commenced with an introduction by the master of ceremonies, Mrs. Rima Khalidi, wife of the Ambassador of the State of Palestine and Vice President of the IWG. This was followed by the introduction of the new board by Mrs. Marika Kochlamazashvili, wife of the Ambassador of the Republic of Georgia and Presidential Advisor to the IWG.

The newly elected President, Mrs. Mona Haddad El-Khoury, wife of the Ambassador of the Republic of Lebanon, expressed her gratitude for having been entrusted with this responsibility and emphasized the board's dedication and commitment to supporting the group. She also thanked the Honorary President, Sheikhah Hanouf Bader Al Sabah, for her continued support.

Looking forward to a season of meaningful encounters and new friendships, Mrs. Haddad introduced the motto for the year:

Discover, Connect, Empower

"Discover and experience more of Kuwait. Connect with one another. And empower each other."

The program continued with a



Photos during the event.

journey through Denmark, The Land of Hygge, Happiness and History, prepared and presented by active IWG member Mrs. Elsie

Qutteineh. The presentation showcased the Scandinavian country's rich heritage, from its Viking roots and long-standing monarchy to its

modern identity.

It also explored hygge—the Danish concept of warmth, comfort, simplicity, and togetherness—

as well as family life, work-life balance, cycling culture, equality, and trust.

As part of the event, the group

recognized the host country, Kuwait, through two of its important national landmarks—the Kuwait Towers and the National Assembly Building. Their inclusion created a meaningful connection between Denmark and Kuwait.

Following a documentary about Denmark, Mrs. Leen Odeh, wife of the Ambassador of the United Kingdom and Vice President of the IWG, presented members with a lively quiz based on the film.

IWG member Mrs. Patricia Alenezi then spoke about her passion for cycling in Kuwait and the cycling culture in Denmark. Using cycling as a metaphor for life, she said:

"The road isn't always smooth. There can be wind, obstacles, and sometimes you need to slow down or change direction. But you keep pedaling."

Mrs. Alenezi expressed her hope that more people would discover the joy of being on two wheels in Kuwait. When she thinks of Denmark, she said, she thinks of the bicycle—something simple that connects people, places, and cultures: "Two countries, two wheels and one feeling."

The event concluded with a raffle, and members are looking forward to a new season filled with friendship and cultural exchange.

Beyond celebration: Saudi Arabia marks its 96th year with Vision 2030 in motion

By Bassam Al-Qassas
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Saudi National Day is not merely an occasion to revisit the shining chapters of Saudi Arabia's history, nor simply a milestone to celebrate achievements spanning decades. Rather, it is an opportunity to examine the present reality of a nation that has chosen to step into the future with clear resolve, a defined vision, and an unrelenting work ethic.

Saudi Arabia celebrating its National Day in 2026 differs significantly in many respects from the nation that existed prior to the launch of "Vision 2030."

The economy is expanding beyond its traditional reliance on oil. Giga-projects are reshaping the urban landscape. Tourism is opening Saudi Arabia's doors to the world. Sports are securing a prominent place on the international events agenda. Culture is reclaiming its presence. Saudi women are transitioning from empowerment to active participation in the labor market. Digital services have become central to government operations. Saudi investments are crossing borders, creating new opportunities both within Saudi Arabia and abroad.

Behind this landscape stands a leadership that recognizes that a nation's strength is measured not merely by what it possesses, but by what it can achieve with those assets.

King Salman bin Abdulaziz, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, symbolizes the stability of the state and the continuity of its journey.

Meanwhile, His Royal Highness Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman spearheads the most significant transformation initiative in Saudi Arabia's modern history, an effort focused not only on economic reform but also on redefining Saudi Arabia's role in the region and on the global stage.

In this context, Prince Mohammed bin Salman has earned the title of the "Architect of the Saudi Transformation."

This designation is rooted in a comprehensive strategy that integrates politics, economics, investment, tourism, culture, sports, technology, and quality of life.

When Saudi Arabia unveiled "Vision 2030," it set forth ambitious objectives: to create a more diversified economy, foster a vibrant society, provide greater opportunities for youth, attract global investment, and develop sectors such as industry, tourism, culture, and entertainment.

This vision also includes the establishment of new cities aimed at positioning Saudi Arabia at the forefront of the global economy.

Today, "Vision 2030" has evolved beyond a mere document, and has transformed into a substantial, nationwide initiative. The progress is evident in the figures.

In 2025, Saudi Arabia's real economy grew by 4.5 percent, with the non-oil sector expanding by 4.9 percent. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at current prices reached approximately SAR 4.789 trillion.

The importance of this progress extends beyond the statistics, as it reflects a clear trajectory of advancement.

Saudi Arabia views economic diversification as more than just a catchphrase and does not regard oil as a liability to be shed. Instead, it recognizes oil as a vital asset that finances the country's transition towards a more diversified economy with multiple drivers of growth.

Oil: Today's wealth for tomorrow's economy

Saudi Arabia is a major oil power, and energy will continue to be a cornerstone of its economic and strategic strength.

What has changed, however, is how this power is managed. Rather than oil revenues simply marking the end of the economic cycle, they have become part of the capital reinvested into new sectors, national corporate giants, strategic projects, and investments capable of generating added value for decades to come.

Foremost among these instruments is the Public Investment Fund (PIF), whose assets under management exceeded SAR 3.4 trillion in 2025, while its cumulative domestic investments since 2021 reached approximately SAR 750 billion.

These figures encapsulate a vital aspect of the Saudi transformation philosophy - converting wealth into investment, investment into industry, industry into jobs, and jobs into a sustainable economy.

Thus, Saudi Arabia is not building a "post-oil" economy so much as an economy capable of benefiting from oil while avoiding dependence on it.

A new economy defined by opportunity

Industry, mining, tourism, logistics, technology, energy, entertainment, sports, culture, and artificial intelligence - these sectors are no longer peripheral to the Saudi economy; rather, they have become integral to the transformation project.

In the fourth quarter of 2025, non-oil exports, including re-exports, rose by 18.6 percent year-on-year, while the share of oil exports in total merchandise exports declined to 67.5 percent.

Crucially, Saudi Arabia is not content with merely exporting its natural resources. It is working to maximize their value through manufacturing, petrochemicals, mining, and energy-related industries.

The new Saudi equation is that possessing resources is not enough. What matters is what we create from them.

Giga-projects and cities shaping the future

Across Saudi Arabia, giga-projects appear as successive chapters of a single story. NEOM, Qiddiya, Diriyah, the Red Sea, and others are not merely isolated projects, but they are components of a comprehensive vision to redistribute economic activity and establish new hubs for tourism, investment, culture, entertainment, and technology.

The goal is not simply to build beautiful cities, but to build cities that generate a new economy.

This underscores the significance of these projects - they open markets, attract companies and investment, create jobs, and redefine the relationship between place and economy.

Saudi Arabia is doing more than developing its cities; it is building cities that will drive its future economy.

Saudi Arabia opens its doors to the world

The tourism sector perhaps best illustrates the rapid pace of Saudi Arabia's transformation.

Saudi Arabia, which for decades relied primarily on religious tourism, has opened its doors to global tourism, presenting a new face to the world - one defined by heritage, nature, culture, entertainment, sports, and adventure.

From Al-Ula to the Red Sea, and from Diriyah to Riyadh, a new tourism map is taking shape.



Al-Sariya Square in Jeddah, Western Saudi Arabia, 2026.

Saudi Press Agency photo

key partners in driving it.

The Citizen: The compass of development

While mega-projects often capture the spotlight, the true measure of any development initiative remains its impact on the citizen. Consequently, Vision 2030 has prioritized housing, healthcare, quality of life, and public services.

Saudi homeownership rates surpassed 60 percent in 2025, up from 47 percent in 2016.

In the health sector, life expectancy rose to approximately 79.7 years in 2025, while primary healthcare coverage reached 97.5 percent of population centers.

Development here is measured not merely by what is built, but by the changes in people's lives.

Regarding digital transformation, Saudi Arabia has made a remarkable leap, ranking second globally in the World Bank's 2025 Digital Government Maturity Index, with a score of 99.64 percent.

The significance extends beyond an international ranking. Technology has become integral to the state's structure, with government services moving toward greater integration, speed, and intelligence, while Saudi Arabia opens up vast opportunities in artificial intelligence, data, and advanced computing.

Saudi Arabia seeks not merely an e-government, but a state that operates with a digital mindset.

Amid this openness, Saudi Arabia has not abandoned its identity; rather, heritage and history have become integral to shaping the future.

Sites such as Diriyah, Al-Ula, and other historic Saudi locations are transforming into bridges connecting the past with the present, serving as catalysts for tourism, culture, and soft power.

This is a defining characteristic of the new Saudi experience: openness without assimilation and renewal without severing ties to one's roots.

Mohammed bin Salman: An impact beyond Saudi borders

Here, the story of Prince Mohammed bin Salman extends beyond Saudi Arabia's borders. The project he leads is no longer confined to the Saudi economy and society; the outcomes of Saudi Arabia's transformation have themselves become influential factors across the Gulf landscape.

With the size of its economy, its geographic location, and its political, religious, and strategic weight, Saudi Arabia has always been a pivotal state in the Gulf.

What is new, however, is that this traditional influence is now bolstered by a sweeping transformation project, massive investments, growing soft power, and an increasingly active presence in regional and international affairs.

In April 2026, Prince Mohammed bin Salman chaired

the 19th Consultative Meeting of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) leaders in Jeddah, where they discussed regional developments and ways to enhance the region's security and stability.

When Riyadh hosts Gulf leaders to discuss issues affecting the region's security and future, it underscores Saudi Arabia's position at the heart of the Gulf cooperation framework.

In May 2025, Riyadh also hosted the Gulf-US Summit, attended by GCC leaders, an event that affirmed the Saudi capital's status as a key platform for dialogue between the Gulf and major international powers.

Yet, this impact extends beyond politics. Saudi Arabia's economic rise inevitably leaves its mark on the entire Gulf region.

As Saudi Arabia transforms into a hub for investment, tourism, technology, sports, and services, attracting global companies and capital, it opens up new opportunities for integration and partnerships across the region.

Saudi investments and major national corporations have become significant players in the regional economy, while the country's growing presence drives the development of trade, investment, tourism, infrastructure, the digital economy, and artificial intelligence across the Gulf.

Politically, Saudi Arabia's role has expanded to encompass Arab and regional issues extending beyond the boundaries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), ranging from Sudan, Syria, Yemen, and Lebanon to the Palestinian cause, alongside an increasing presence in mediation, de-escalation, and stability-building efforts.

It is precisely here that the nature of the influence created by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman becomes evident.

He is not merely leading a transformation within Saudi Arabia; he is steering a nation whose transformative impact is reshaping the Gulf and regional landscape.

From economics to politics, and from investment to soft power, Saudi Arabia has become a pivotal player that cannot be overlooked when assessing the future of the Gulf.

Saudi Arabia's weight requires no introduction. Its G20 membership, status in energy markets, religious significance, geographic location, and the sheer scale of its economy and investments all grant Riyadh influence that extends far beyond its borders.

Yet, current Saudi policy operates through a multifaceted toolkit - diplomacy, economics, investment, energy, soft power, and international engagement, meaning Saudi power is no longer anchored to a single element. It is an integrated system of power components advancing in unison.

In examining this transformation, one cannot overlook the historic role of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz.

King Salman represents the continuity of the modern Saudi state. He possesses a wealth of experience in statecraft and embodies the enduring nature and historical depth of the Saudi political establishment.

Under his reign, Saudi Arabia has entered a new phase of development, while Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has driven the transformation project forward with unprecedented speed, ambition, and execution.

It is an equation that balances state stability with future ambition.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman is the figure most closely associated with Vision 2030.

He chairs the Council of Ministers, the Council of Economic and Development Affairs, and the Board of Directors of the Public Investment Fund, placing him at the heart of the economic and operational transformation Saudi Arabia is undergoing.

Yet, the significance of this experience lies not in the multiplicity of his roles, but in the nature of the project itself.

The question Saudi Arabia asks today is no longer, "How do we preserve what we have?" but rather, "What can we create with what we have?"

From this question emerged the process of redefining the economy, launching new sectors, empowering youth and women, attracting investment, developing cities, opening the doors to tourism, transforming sports, entertainment, and culture into industries, and rapidly transitioning to a digital economy.

Thus, the title "Architect of the Saudi Transformation" best captures the essence of this era.

The project he leads is neither limited to a single sector nor a standalone economic plan. Rather, it is a comprehensive process of reshaping Saudi Arabia's global standing, economic functions, and international image.

On the 96th Saudi National Day, Saudi Arabia does not simply stand before the mirror of the past, but it looks toward the future.

An economy that is diversifying, cities that are changing, tourism that is growing, sports that are becoming an industry, women participating strongly, young people with greater opportunities to dream and work, a government that speaks the language of technology, Saudi investments that transcend borders, and political and economic influence that is expanding across the Gulf, regionally, and internationally.

All of this is taking place under leadership that combines the stability of King Salman with the ambition of Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

If the history of Saudi Arabia has shaped its status, the current stage is working to build on that status and write a new chapter in its story.

It is the new Saudi Arabia - a country that does not abandon its roots as it opens up to the world, does not abandon its oil strength as it diversifies its economy, and is not satisfied with its regional weight as it expands its international presence.

At the heart of this transformation stands Sheikh Mohammed bin Salman, the architect of the Saudi transformation. He leads a project that turns ambition into an action plan, plans into projects, and projects into a reality that is reshaping the country on the ground.

Most importantly, this transformation is no longer only an internal Saudi matter. When Saudi Arabia grows economically, its investments expand, its soft power increases, and its political and diplomatic presence grows, the entire Gulf feels the impact of this rise.

Thus, Saudi National Day comes this year with Saudi Arabia not only reflecting on what it achieved in the past, but also celebrating what it is creating for the future.

Saudi Arabia celebrates its history, but at the same time, it is writing a new history.

This is perhaps the most prominent message in Saudi Arabia's experience today - a nation that knows its roots, a leadership that sees the future, and a people with the will to turn ambition into reality.

‘A sense of detox, purification and healing’

The centuries-old Japanese art of ikebana draws those seeking calm

TOKYO, Sept 22, (AP): Ikebana, the Japanese art of arranging flowers, is a form of expression that dates back more than 500 years. It continues to blossom, quietly, not only with traditionalists but also with newcomers who find its blend of creativity and mindfulness to be restorative. Ikebana can be a bit like solving a puzzle, except there’s no fixed answer. Because each flower, and human individual, is different, there are multiple solutions.

“There’s a ‘detox’ purifying factor, and a healing,” says Hiroyuki Okada, 40, who began taking lessons in ikebana about seven years ago. He now teaches Ikenobo, the oldest of three major ikebana schools.

Okada, who also teaches backflips to anyone who wants to learn, usually wears silver chains and jeans, but he wears a nice kimono when he formally demonstrates his arrangements. He considers himself typical of those drawn to ikebana today, people looking for joy, purpose, or solace from the daily grind or pain of modern life.

“In arranging (flowers), you are dealing with the life that is there, the beauty, of course, but you find what’s in your heart,” said Okada. “You come face to face with yourself.”

The Kyoto-based Ikenobo school,



This photo released by Hiroyuki Okada shows a free-style Ikenobo ikebana arrangement in Tokyo on March 11, 2026. (AP)

which is rooted in Buddhism, now has chapters around the world.

Okada’s previous job at a nonprofit involved talking to people from around the world, and he realized how different - and alike - people were. When he switched to his current job, at a flower shop, he decided to take up a pursuit that was Japanese, so he could explore that aspect of himself, and one that could be

done for a long time, alone.

Ikebana involves interacting with nature, although on a small scale - usually in a little vase.

“It is about the relationship of the creator with the flowers,” said Senko Ikenobo, headmaster-designate of the Ikenobo school.

Her family dates back generations to the originators of the art. Her father is the current headmaster.



Ikebana instructor Hiroyuki Okada demonstrates a basic flower arrangement style called “Shoka Shofutai” at a studio in Tokyo on Aug. 11, 2026. (AP)

Jeannette Haviland-Jones, professor of social psychology at Rutgers University, says studies have shown “that flowers and even flower scents promote happiness in people. We suggested a coevolutionary theory for this in which flowers became the ‘pets’ of the plant world.”



This photo released by Hiroyuki Okada shows a free-style Ikenobo ikebana arrangement in Tokyo, on Feb. 11, 2026. (AP)

Besides a flower’s beauty and fragrance, the feel of its petals and leaves to the touch is crucial, like petting a kitten or a puppy, according to Okada.

There are toddlers who do Ikenobo, copying their moms, and there are devoted centenarians. The headmaster-designate says she has seen ikebana help women who are juggling work and motherhood, or taking care of aging parents.

Ikebana has a healing effect similar to that of yoga, meditation or play, says Mayu Shimizu, who works for an online educational service and has been taking lessons from Okada for about three years.

“I like this moment of nothingness when you are concentrating on the flowers before you,” she says. “My mind feels clearer. I feel more at peace, and gentle.”

‘AI could curb inequality’

Gates pushes for smarter AI use & more inclusive language data

NEW YORK, Sept 22, (AP): Bill Gates told his foundation’s Goalkeepers gathering that “increased generosity” and “the smart use of AI” together could accelerate the fight against inequality, urging the world’s richest countries to expand international aid and apply artificial intelligence toward what he considers “lifesaving innovations.”



Microsoft's Bill Gates attends a dinner with President Donald Trump in the State Dining Room of the White House, Sept. 4, 2025, in Washington. (AP)

“We failed to build in the right human values and ways of keeping our moral code controlling what these AIs do,” Gates, the foundation’s chair, said during a Monday conversation with political commentator Van Jones at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York.

The Gates Foundation’s annual event, usually hosted the week of the United Nations’ high-level meetings, opened with a reminder: 26 of the world’s 34 wealthiest nations decreased development aid to poorer countries last year. Meanwhile, the U.N. has warned that progress on its sustainable development goals - lofty targets to reduce poverty, improve health and protect the environment by 2030 - is “slow and uneven.”

The contraction comes at a time when Gates suggested “we have some of the best innovations ever to improve people’s lives.” His foundation spent much of its two-hour event elevating educators, farmers and health workers who are using AI to identify students’ learning gaps, combat pest infestations and better recall patients’ medical records.

The Gates Foundation also touted its new coalition of Anthropic, Google, OpenAI Foundation and dozens of other organizations working to make AI more accessible in underrepresented languages.

The partners - 60 in total, according to Monday’s announcement - include frontier AI labs, corporations, philanthropies and others already working to expand the number of languages available in AI tools that the Gates Foundation believes could combat global inequality. The coalition aims to reach more than 3 billion people over five years by better coordinating existing efforts.

It’s work that must continue “full speed ahead,” according to Gates Foundation CEO Mark Suzman, even as some of the largest AI companies urge their industry to slow down development of advanced models. Governments must regulate the impacts on cybersecurity or children’s development, he said, while they extend AI’s humanitarian applications to poor communities currently “shut out” from the technology.

“Even if AI was frozen right

now - which I don’t expect and I am not calling for - we would want to be building these language sets and making them usable with the tools that we have available right now,” Suzman told The Associated Press.

The collaboration follows last week’s Goalkeepers report, where the foundation committed \$1 billion toward AI-focused efforts to improve health outcomes, upgrade educational tools and inform small farmers’ practices around the world. Unrepresentative language data could lead a model to mis-translate a pregnant Malawi woman saying her “water has broken” into the direct English that she’d “thrown away water,” the report warned.

The “original sin” is that many AI tools were trained on language data scraped from the internet, according to Mozilla Data Collective CEO E.M. Lewis-Jong, whose company was incubated by the Mozilla Foundation and is now a subsidiary of the not-for-profit Mozilla.org. The data-sharing platform seeks to help communities upload cultural and linguistic data sets on their own terms rather than have that data taken from the web without their explicit consent.

“The internet is not a representative space,” she said. “Why would you think that you were going to get a culturally diverse and representative system out of something that was predominantly trained on Reddit?”

Details such as the coalition’s governance are still getting hammered out, according to Suzman. A secretariat will track each signatory’s commitments and the Gates Foundation may nudge partners to fill larger gaps when necessary.

Google, a member of the coalition, has been funding an effort to collect more than 150,000 hours of audio across every district in India. Known as Project Vaani, the push underscores the need to gather speech data on dialects within languages, according to Google senior vice president James Manyika. To get there, he said, Google is working with local partners to record speech in the field.

Books

Memoir details Diana funeral feud

Spencer, King Charles trade barbs over new book

LONDON, Sept 22, (AP): A new book published Tuesday by the brother of the late Princess Diana has made headlines around the world with its damning allegations about Diana’s ex-husband, now King Charles III, and reopened decades-old wounds within Britain’s royal family.

In “Swan Song: Diana, My Sister,” Charles Spencer alleges that he argued with the then-Prince Charles over palace plans for Prince William and Prince Harry, then 15 and 12, to walk behind their mother’s coffin during her 1997 funeral procession.

Spencer says he told Charles that Diana, who was killed in a car crash in Paris at the age of 36, would not have wanted her boys to undergo the ordeal. He claims the prince “went ballistic” during the argument, and told him: “Rest assured, we’ll forget her soon enough.” Spencer also accuses Charles of having “contempt” for his ex-wife and of sounding “elated” after her death.

After excerpts of the book were published last week, Buckingham Palace responded with a strongly-worded statement that’s rare by the measured standards of the royal household.

“His Majesty is mindful that the pain of fraternal grief can cloud reason, affect judgment and color memory in ways others do not recognize, even many years after such a loss,” it said.

Spencer has stood by his claims,



Copies of a new book by Earl Spencer, brother of the late Princess Diana, entitled “Swan Song: Diana, My Sister,” on display in a bookshop in central London, Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2026. (AP)

insisting to the BBC that he is telling the truth. On the royal rebuttal, he asked: “Is he furious? Is he furious or is he embarrassed?”

Charles, then 32, married 20-year-old Lady Diana Spencer in a lavish ceremony at St. Paul’s Cathedral in 1981. The couple divorced in 1996, and a decade later Charles married Camilla Parker Bowles, now Queen Camilla.

Charles Spencer, the 9th Earl Spencer, has long clashed with the royals over their treatment of his older sister.

Tensions between the palace and

the Spencer family following her death were dramatized in the film “The Queen” and the Netflix series “The Crown.”

In a searing eulogy at his sister’s funeral, Spencer vowed that her “blood family” would carry on her “imaginative and loving” legacy in raising her two sons. The speech was widely considered a swipe at the royal family.

At the time, many in Britain and beyond felt Queen Elizabeth II and the royals were too slow to acknowledge the global outpouring of grief over Diana’s death and that the mon-

archy was deeply out of touch with the public mood.

The royals have spent decades putting that period of crisis behind them. The warmer, more personable approach of William and Harry - and, in recent years, the king - is a legacy of that time.

In his book, Spencer also criticized the royals for what he described as a “lack of obvious care” for the then 12-year-old Harry.

He recounted how “tiny, and slight, and bereft” his nephew looked after the funeral. “He needed Diana’s hugs, of course, and they would forever be denied him,” he wrote. “But instead of calm and nurture, he was allowed to spin out of control.”

Some critics have questioned why Spencer felt the need to revisit the pain and trauma 30 years on.

The aristocrat said he wanted to write down his own thoughts and memories about Diana, “once and for all, rather than having the discomfort of again reading the opinions of others, many of which are based on untruths.”

Asked if the relationship between the press and Harry and his wife, Meghan, mirrors the way the media treated his sister, Spencer told the BBC: “(Diana) was really brought low by all that criticism. I suppose it’s a pity when I see echoes of that now.”

Penguin Press said the book will be published globally and translated into 12 languages.

\$81 billion deal awaits final approval

States settle Paramount-Warner lawsuit

CHICAGO, Sept 22, (AP): Twelve states and Hollywood writers challenging Paramount’s buyout of Warner Bros. Discovery agreed to settle their lawsuits on Monday, effectively paving the way for the \$81 billion mega merger to cross the finish line, with some new commitments from the company.

The blockbuster deal will still vastly reshape Hollywood - bringing together two of the “big five” remaining studios, key TV networks like CBS and CNN and streaming platforms HBO Max and Paramount+, as well as decades-old libraries with titles ranging from “Harry Potter” to “Top Gun.”

But among terms of Monday’s agreement announced by California Attorney General Rob Bonta - who led the states’ case - Skydance-owned Paramount pledged to increase film production in the U.S., commit millions of dollars to a fund to support workers displaced by the

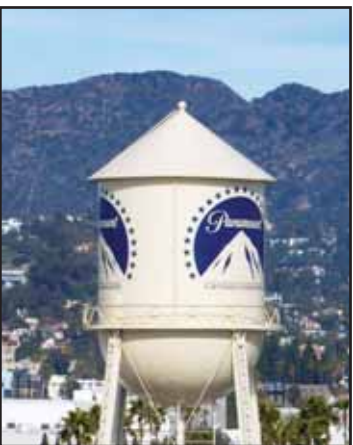
merger and create new monitoring of the editorial independence of the company’s news operations.

The settlement still needs a final sign-off by a judge.

Paramount CEO David Ellison welcomed the terms reached with both the states and the Writers Guild of America on Monday, which he said marks “complete clearance” for his company’s merger with Warner - reiterating that such a combo will “build a stronger Hollywood.”

Critics, however, decried the settlement terms as too weak and accused the state attorneys general of capitulating to corporate pressure. Many saw the litigation as the last guardrail from keeping a combined Paramount-Warner from becoming a reality.

Talks were contentious for months - and, despite new remedies announced Monday, Bonta and other top state prosecutors who sued said that they still didn’t think the compa-



The Paramount Pictures water tower is seen in Los Angeles, Dec. 18, 2025, with the Hollywood sign in the distance. (AP)

nies should merge.

Politics have also surrounded much of Paramount’s quest for War-

ner. Many eyes are on the billionaire Ellison family’s relationship with President Donald Trump and the future of assets like CNN, which the Republican administration barred from the White House over what Trump called unfavorable coverage.

The coalition of states - which, beyond California, also includes entertainment heavyweight New York - sued to block the merger in July, alleging it would “extinguish competition” and lead to fewer choices for consumers, particularly movie theatergoers and cable customers.

In Monday’s agreement, the states said they had secured a handful of “court enforceable” commitments from Paramount - including pledges to increase domestic film production over the next five years by spending at least an additional \$1.5 billion, or \$300 million per year, and commit another \$47.5 million to help fund training and career development for workers displaced by the merger.

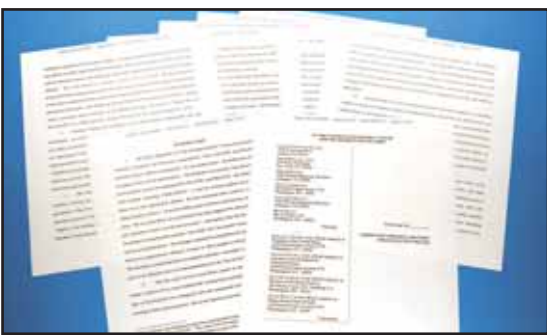
‘Blatant violation’ of First Amendment cited

CNN, MS NOW and Politico sue Trump over White House ban

NEW YORK, Sept 22, (AP): CNN, MS NOW and Politico on Monday sued President Donald Trump’s administration days after they were barred from White House grounds, calling the selective ban - based on the content of their coverage - a “blatant violation” of the First Amendment. Trump said on social media that he “cherished” a free press but not “FAKE NEWS.”

“White House access is a privilege - not a right,” the administration posted on X.

The extraordinary ban of the three news outlets’ reporters, which began over the weekend, represented a clear escalation of Trump’s long-running efforts - in the courts and through administrative action - to restrict news coverage he finds objectionable. They were also the latest test of First Amendment protections in the United States, where the government is constitutionally forbidden from restricting the press.



The lawsuit filed by CNN, MS NOW and Politico against the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump is photographed Monday, Sept. 21, 2026. (AP)

The Constitution, the banned news outlets said in their lawsuit, “does not allow a president or any other government official to deprive the press of their First Amendment rights and liberty and property interests with no notice or process based solely on his dislike of the content of their reporting.”

The three outlets filed the joint lawsuit two days after their reporters were blocked from the White House and prevented from doing their jobs. The reporters’ entry badges were disabled Saturday, a day after Trump had suddenly announced he was barring the outlets because of reporting he considered “fake news.”

On Monday morning, the banned TV networks were reporting from an intersection just outside the White House complex. CNN, meanwhile, was removed from its pool duties, which are shared by the five major net-

works. It had been scheduled to cover the president’s trip to New York for the United Nations General Assembly. In an email to members, the TV pool said there would be no replacement coverage - and other networks would suspend their own pool coverage indefinitely.

“Effective today, the TV pool will not be covering events designated as pool coverage of the President,” said the email, seen by The Associated Press, from the current chair of the pool, Fox’s Washington bureau chief, Bryan Boughton. “This follows the White House’s position preventing CNN from fulfilling its assigned pool duties.”

Other news outlets also took steps in solidarity. The AP joined a number of news organizations, including The Washington Post and The New York Times, in a decision not to publish photographs of presidential events on Monday.



A photo from the event.

Kuwait Health Ministry holds Alzheimer’s awareness campaign

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The Elderly Health Services Department at the Health Ministry on Monday organized an awareness campaign about Alzheimer’s disease to sup-

port patients, their families and caregivers, as part of the celebration of World Alzheimer’s Day, which falls on Sept 21 every year. The event included six lectures and workshops presented by doctors and specialists in Alzheimer’s disease.

It aimed to raise awareness about the disease and its symptoms, train and qualify caregivers, improve the quality of life for the patients and their families, and inform the public about the support services available within the healthcare system.

West African scientists warn of weakening health systems

LOME, Togo, Sept 22, (AP): West African laboratory scientists called on governments Friday to strengthen capacity to detect disease outbreaks to avoid another major outbreak, saying health systems across the region are becoming weaker. The scientists issued their warning in Togo’s capital, Lome, where they have gathered this week to discuss the region’s level of preparation for disease outbreaks and dependence on vaccines from Western countries. They said governments in the region have to cooperate to strengthen disease detection and invest in diagnostic capacities, citing lessons from Ebola and COVID-19 outbreaks that the region has grappled with in the past decade. Between 2014 and 2016, an Ebola outbreak killed at least 11,000 people across West Africa, overwhelmingly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. “We need to anticipate these outbreaks,” said Kossi Kabo, the head of the Association of Medical Biologists of Togo and a co-chair of the congress. “We shouldn’t wait for an epidemic to emerge somewhere before responding. By then, it would be too late.” Africa as a whole remains at risk for outbreaks. The rare Bundibugyo virus has killed over 3,600 people among nearly 7,500 cases in Congo



A specialist handles blood bags inside a laboratory at a hospital during a regional congress focused on strengthening laboratory capacity and preparedness following lessons from Ebola and COVID-19, in Lome, Togo on Sept 16. (AP)

since mid-May, when Congolese authorities announced a fresh deadly Ebola outbreak. The Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the tolls are likely three times the official figures and the outbreak is already history’s fastest-spreading Ebola outbreak. The virus spread without detection for several weeks. Also, Hantavirus was detected on a cruise ship that docked in the Atlantic off Cape Verde in May.

Scientists are worried that in the absence of a major outbreak threatening the region, maintenance of the health systems has waned, leaving them unprepared for potential future epidemics. Arthur Bodurie Calvin Garber, president of the Sierra Leone Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists, said the governments must also invest in people as much as infrastructure.

Noma rapidly progressing and often fatal infection of face and mouth

Free operations give hope to children with neglected but deadly disease in Africa

SOKOTO, Nigeria, Sept 22, (AP): Ibrahim Dalhatu was just 3 years old when he contracted noma, a severe disease that disfigures the face and kills most of the children it infects. He had his first facial reconstructive surgery in 2021 at the Noma Children Hospital in Nigeria’s Sokoto state. Since then, Ibrahim, now 8, has had six operations to help him recover. Noma is a rapidly progressing and often fatal infection of the face and mouth. It begins with gum inflammation in malnourished children living in polluted environments and quickly spreads to destroy soft tissues and bones. It mostly affects 2- to 6-year-old children, especially in poor communities. Early-stage treatment includes antibiotics, wound care and improved nutrition. But once the disease worsens, surgery is required. In Nigeria, health workers are seeing more noma patients. Doctors Without Borders, the humanitarian organization known by its French abbreviation MSF, is carrying out multi-stage operations free of charge as part

of its efforts to tackle diseases. Parents say the operations have given their children another chance to live a normal life, a relief for many in one of the world’s poorest regions. “I was very excited because I thought there was no solution to the disease,” said Muhammad Dalhatu, Ibrahim’s father, an Islamic teacher married to a trader. “Before, I was worried about the cost of the treatment, but when I was told it was free of charge, I was so happy.” Noma is classified by the World Health Organization as a neglected tropical disease, meaning it receives little or no global attention and funding, despite its impact on victims. WHO has said evidence shows the disease “can be greatly reduced by early treatment.” WHO has not updated its data on noma since 1998, when it estimated 140,000 cases per year with a 90% fatality rate. A study published in July in The Lancet Global Health journal, relying on data from the Sokoto hospital, reported over 50,000 noma cases across 12 northern Nigerian states between 1999 and 2024.



Hajira Sahabi, (second left), and other children who underwent facial reconstructive surgery to help them recover from noma disease, sit with relatives at the Noma Children Hospital in Sokoto, northwest Nigeria on Sept 3. (AP)

While it is hard to track how common the disease is in different countries, a so-called “noma belt” stretches across Africa, from Senegal and Mauritania in the west to Ethiopia in the east.

Yuka Makino, a technical officer for oral health at the agency’s Africa office, said research has shown that noma can be caused by 117 different microorganisms, calling it “an opportunistic, polymicrobial infection.”

But the major risk factors, experts say, are extreme poverty and severe malnutrition. WHO calls the disease “a marker of absolute poverty.” The United Nations Human Rights Council says the conditions leading to it constitute a human rights violation for affected children. During the United Nations General Assembly, which begins Tuesday, WHO has said it will engage heads of state and partners to raise global awareness and advance shared solutions to diseases and other health challenges. In northern Nigeria, ravaged by the fallout from armed violence and economic hardship, experts say more children are being diagnosed with noma. Many of those affected arrive late for treatment due to a lack of awareness and the deadly impact of the disease, MSF and medical officials said. “We are seeing more acute noma cases, and we are veering toward awareness for the community so they can bring their children earlier to prevent tissue loss and require reconstructive surgery later in years,” said Bukola Oluyide, Nigeria medi-

cal coordinator at MSF. According to WHO’s Makino, Nigeria reports more noma cases than other countries due to its specialist hospitals, large population and a government-led response that likely ensures more cases are reported than in most other countries. Neither the federal Ministry of Health nor the state ministry for Sokoto responded to a request for comment regarding the government’s plans to combat the disease. At the specialist hospital in Sokoto, more than 500 children with noma from across northern Nigeria were treated between 2023 and 2025, according to data seen by the AP. Others are waiting for surgery at the three sessions MSF runs each year for the children whose bodies can take it. “It is quite worrisome,” said Dr. Abubakar Abdullahi Bello, the chief medical director of the Noma Children Hospital. “The disease damages the mouth tissues within a short period. It eats up the tissue within two weeks of onset if the patient does not receive treatment.”



A small spotted wild cat identified as a new species, Leopardus tilcayo, rests inside Senda Verde wildlife sanctuary in Bolivia’s Yungas region near Coroico on Sept 20. (AP)

Whale spotted in Calif river

Tiny wild cat newly ID’d

COROICO, Bolivia, Sept 22, (AP): A tiny wild cat hidden away in the cloud forests of Bolivia has become an unlikely tourist attraction, drawing a stream of visitors hoping for a glimpse of the animal that scientists have identified as a brand new species. There is just one problem: Tigrino, as he has been affectionately dubbed, doesn’t like the attention. The small, spotted feline with large, leopardlike spots is easily stressed, so caretakers at the wildlife sanctuary near La Paz keep him out of public view, turning away the crowds eager for a closer look. When The Associated Press visited Sunday, Tigrino cautiously emerged from his shelter, sniffed the air and paced around for a few minutes before slipping back into the foliage. Tigrino belongs to Leopardus tilcayo, the first living wild cat species described by scientists in more than a century. At just 18 inches (46 centimeters) from head to the base of his tail and 3 pounds (1.4 kilograms), he is smaller than the average house cat. The discovery published Thursday in the journal Current Biology set off a flurry of excitement on social media. Visitors from across Bolivia and beyond have flocked to the Senda Verde Wildlife Sanctuary, where Tigrino has lived since 2017, when

a family brought him there after trying unsuccessfully to make a house cat of him. “Tigrino has become, in just a few days, an ambassador for conservation,” said sanctuary co-founder Marcelo Levy, adding that the new species designation has helped raise awareness about the need to protect wild cats and their habitat in Bolivia’s tropical forests. “He’s such a tiny animal, and he has become something so important,” Levy said. **Also:** **ALAMEDA, Calif:** Denny Glover was hoping for a big catch when he went fishing with buddies on the Sacramento River, but he wasn’t expecting a fully grown humpback whale. Glover saw the whale surfacing on Wednesday while he was fishing for salmon and striped bass from a 21-foot (6.4-meter) boat, less than half the length of the animal. He shot a few videos as the whale broke the surface of the water in California’s largest river, about 60 miles (97 kilometers) from its more typical home of the Pacific Ocean. “One of the guys on the boat, he said, ‘I see a whale.’ He saw the spout,” Glover said. “At first we didn’t believe it. We thought he had mistaken a dolphin or a porpoise. Then we saw the spout again, and there’s no mistaking a whale spout.”

Worsening El Nino threatens Asia with drought, potentially raising food prices globally

BANTEN, Indonesia, Sept 22, (AP): All signs are pointing toward a record-breaking El Nino this year, which experts say may cause severe drought in Asia and other extreme weather across the world, threatening food security for millions of people. El Nino is part of a natural climate cycle of warming ocean temperatures, but this year’s is expected to reach new extremes of drought, heat waves, flooding and other climate-related disruptions in South America, Africa and Asia. Southeast Asia is one of the world’s most climate vulnerable regions. It’s already beset by an energy crisis triggered by the war in Iran. El Nino is already fueling wildfires across farmland, depleting water supplies for major cities and hurting fish catches in the region. Asian governments that have been drawing on their financial reserves to mitigate the war’s ripple effects of higher energy costs and scarce fertilizer supplies have less capacity to cope with this year’s intensifying El Nino, which is forecast to peak in December. The phenomenon may amplify other crises in Southeast Asia, according to Paul Teng, with Singapore’s IS-EAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, who said, “El Nino is only compounding all the other problems that we see.” During El Nino years, sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean are warmer than usual. This happens every few years and often alters global weather patterns. This year, the seas already are hotter than average, with global oceans hitting new temperature records in August as the climate warms, said Kareff Rafisura, chief of the Disaster Risk Reduction Division at the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. This intensifying El Nino may be the “strongest in living memory,” according to the United Kingdom’s national weather and climate service. Similarly, the U.S.’ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said there is a 69% chance that this will be the strongest recorded El Nino since record-keeping began in 1950. El Nino’s impact will be felt differently across regions, but it is expected to jeopardize food security worldwide. It could push at least 49



Long-submerged houses are exposed after prolonged drought lowers the water level of Karian Dam, in Lebak, Banten Province, Indonesia on July 31. (AP)

million more people into acute food insecurity by the end of 2027, according to the United Nations’ World Food Program. The problem will be worst in parts of Central America and southern Africa, with significant effects also anticipated in eastern Africa and South and Southeast Asia, warned the food agency. In Southeast Asia, wildfires are torching forests and peatlands in Indonesia, sending up plumes of toxic haze. The water level of a major reservoir supplying the bustling capital city of Jakarta - the world’s biggest metropolis - is dropping inch by inch. As the lake dries, the ruins of one of 11 villages that had been inundated by the reservoir have emerged, as alarm grows over the need for alternative water supplies for the city of 42 million. “I would have rather not moved. There were plenty of livelihood opportunities here,” said Hussien, who only uses one name, as he ferried people across the receding reservoir. This is just the beginning, said Erma Yulihastin with Indonesia’s Research Center for Climate and At-

mosphere, who warned El Nino has only just begun its “super phase.” Less rainfall and hotter temperatures are putting pressure on Southeast Asia’s fisheries, an essential source of protein. It’s a pressing problem along the Mekong, a river basin that flows through six nations and is being disrupted by mining and construction of hydropower dams. “It’s one punch after another,” said Zeb Hogan, with the University of Nevada, Reno, who runs the research and conservation project, Wonders of the Mekong. “If the river doesn’t catch a break, we will reach a point where it’s no longer going to sustain people in the way that it always has.” Lower flows are especially hard on communities along the Mekong that depend on predictable water levels for fishing and farming, said Kongmeng Ly, with the Mekong River Commission, an intergovernmental group for Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. Southeast Asia’s wet season generally runs from June to October,

when rains usually replenish reservoirs, cool overheated cities and supply water for irrigation ahead of the next planting season. Drought may force farmers to delay planting, reduce acreage or switch crops entirely, said Rafisura, with the U.N. “Agriculture is definitely on the front line,” she said. Cutbacks in staple crops like rice and palm oil can have global impacts. The world’s top three exporters of rice - India, Vietnam and Thailand - are among the nations most likely to be hit hard by El Nino this year. North of the Thai capital Bangkok, rice farmers like 55-year-old Boonmark Marksuk are already facing tough choices. Apart from pricier fuel and fertilizer because of the war, he’s spending most of his days pumping water into his rice fields because he no longer trusts the rain. El Nino is also bearing down on Indonesia and Malaysia, suppliers of about 85% of the world’s palm oil, which is used in everything from cookies and lipstick to toothpaste and laundry detergent.

A new chapter in electrified luxury

Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons unveils the all-new Lexus ES

- All-new, eighth-generation Lexus ES makes its Kuwait debut, offered with Hybrid Electric (HEV) powertrains and, for the first time in the regional ES lineup, a Battery Electric Vehicle option in the ES 500e
- Lexus Pavilion also displays fully electric RZ 500e, the first Lexus SUV Battery Electric Vehicle introduced in Kuwait, advances the next chapter of Lexus VOLT POWER
- ALSAYER reaffirms its commitment to guaranteed customer satisfaction, including complimentary home charging station installation

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Company inaugurated the Lexus pavilion today at the Auto World Show 2026, held at the Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref. The inauguration was officiated by H.E. Kenichiro Mukai, Ambassador of Japan to Kuwait, and Mr. Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer, Board Member, Salah Mohammad General Manager Marketing, in the presence of senior Lexus and ALSAYER executives together with members of the local and regional media. The occasion marked the official unveiling of Lexus's presence at this year's show, anchored by the Kuwait debut of two hero models built around the brand's Lexus Electrified vision: the all-new Lexus ES and the fully electric Lexus RZ 500e.

The All-New Lexus ES: Kuwait Debut of a New Chapter in Electrified Luxury

Centre stage at the pavilion is the all-new Lexus ES, marking the eighth generation of a model that has anchored the brand since 1989 and long been recognized for its exceptional quietness, ride comfort, and premium quality. Developed under the concept of "Experience Elegant and Electrified Sedan," the new ES advances electrification, driving performance, design, interior space, safety, and technology for a new era of luxury mobility, while preserving the relaxed, refined character that has defined the model across three decades.

The Kuwait debut of the all-new ES marks an important evolution of Lexus Electrified in the region. Customers can choose from Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV) powertrains or, for the first time in the regional ES lineup, a Battery Electric Vehicle in the ES 500e — reflecting Lexus's multi-pathway approach to offering different electrified solutions for different customer needs. The ES 350h brings enhanced power performance and the availability of all-wheel drive, while the fully electric ES 500e combines a large, low-mounted battery with all-wheel drive and Lexus's DIRECT4 force control system for confident, composed handling.

Both powertrains are built on a comprehensively redesigned TNGA GA-K platform, developed to accommodate HEV and BEV alike, with increased structural rigidity for stability under steering, acceleration, and



The official unveiling of all-new Lexus ES.



The inauguration officiated by H.E. Kenichiro Mukai, Ambassador of Japan to Kuwait, and Mr. Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer, Board Member.



Mr. Mohamed Naser presents H.E. Kenichiro Mukai, Ambassador of Japan to Kuwait, with a commemorative plaque during the unveiling of the all-new Lexus ES.



The Interior of all-new Lexus ES.



H.E. Kenichiro Mukai, Ambassador of Japan to Kuwait, is pictured in the driver's seat alongside Mr. Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer during the all-new Lexus ES unveiling event.



The exterior of all-new Lexus ES.

Key Highlights:

- Redesigned TNGA GA-K platform and DIRECT4 all-wheel drive (ES 500e) deliver greater stability and driver confidence
- Longer body and wheelbase create a more spacious cabin and exceptional rear-seat comfort
- "Clean Tech x Elegance" design debuts the new-generation Spindle Body and Twin L-Signature Lamp
- World-first Responsive Hidden Switches and a new 14-inch Display Audio system elevate cabin technology
- Lexus Safety System+ 4 with a Lexus-first 3D View enhances safety and convenience

ward visibility. Occupants can personalize the cabin through 14 preset illumination themes and 50 custom colors, while available Modern Bamboo and Micro Geometric interior ornamentation add warmth and texture.

Technology is integrated with the same emphasis on simplicity. A new 14-inch Display Audio system features a flat, clean design with rich graphics, and the all-new ES introduces the world's first Responsive Hidden

Switches, seamlessly integrating physical controls into the steering wheel and instrument panel. Safety has also advanced through Lexus Safety System+ 4, with an expanded Pre-Collision System, a Radar Cruise Control that reads surrounding traffic earlier, and a newly developed 3D View within the Panoramic View Monitor — the first application of this feature in a Lexus.

Speaking on the development of the all-new ES, Lexus International Chief Engineer Kohei Chiashi said: "The development of an automobile is a continual process of harmonizing engineering excellence and sensibility, with each elevating the other. The all-new ES, the culmination of this philosophy, also symbolizes the beginning of the next generation of Lexus.

We invite everyone to experience the enriching journey offered by this vehicle, thoughtfully designed to bring a sense of harmony and well-being to all on board."

RZ 500e and the Next Chapter of Lexus VOLT POWER

Alongside the ES, the pavilion showcases the fully electric Lexus RZ 500e, the first Lexus SUV Battery Electric Vehicle introduced in Kuwait and a significant milestone in the brand's electrification journey. Purpose-built from the ground up as a dedicated BEV, the RZ 500e carries forward the next chapter of Lexus VOLT POWER, the brand's ongoing commitment to carbon neutrality through advanced electrification.

The 2026 Lexus RZ 500e delivers up to 375 horsepower through an enhanced dual-motor DIRECT4 all-wheel-drive system, offering exceptional stability and precise control across a wide range of driving conditions. A new 77 kWh battery extends driving range and efficiency, supported by faster charging and battery pre-conditioning technology, while, for the first time, Lexus introduces Steer-by-Wire technology on selected grades and in certain markets for quicker steering response and a more engaging connection between driver and road. Inside, a fully featured 14-inch digital display and Lexus Safety System+ combine a modern, intuitive cabin with proactive protection and driver confidence.

Commenting on the launch, Mahmoud Abou Zahr, Senior Business Director, Lexus Kuwait, said: "At ALSAYER, we believe going electric shouldn't mean compromising on convenience. As part of our Volt Power initiative, Lexus customers in Kuwait can now experience our most advanced electric drive technology, backed by the added benefit of a complimentary home charging station installation. It's our way of making the transition to electric mobility as seamless and rewarding as the drive itself."

ALSAYER: Guaranteed Customer Satisfaction at Every Step

The inauguration of the Lexus pavilion also reflects ALSAYER's broader commitment to guarantee customer satisfaction at every step of the ownership journey. As the exclusive distributor of Lexus in Kuwait, ALSAYER continues to invest in its sales, service, and after-sales network to ensure customers are supported well beyond the point of purchase, with trained technicians, genuine parts, and dedicated care for both conventional and electrified models.

That commitment extends directly into the brand's electrification journey. Through the Volt Power initiative, ALSAYER is working to make electric ownership as convenient as possible for Lexus customers in Kuwait, including complimentary home charging station installation for RZ 500e owners and dedicated guidance on charging infrastructure and EV ownership. ALSAYER's teams at the Lexus pavilion will be on hand throughout the show to walk visitors through the ES and RZ 500e ranges, available powertrains, and ownership benefits.

The Lexus pavilion will remain open to the public at the Kuwait International Fairground, Hall No. 5, Mishref, for the duration of the Auto World Show 2026, running from 21 to 26 September 2026, giving visitors the opportunity to experience the all-new ES and the fully electric RZ 500e up-close.

Copper sparks Mercury rally

Dream strengthens top-four hopes with win over Liberty

NEW YORK, Sept 22, (AP): Jordan Canada scored 19 points, Angel Reese added 18 points and 10 rebounds, and the Atlanta Dream beat the New York Liberty 95-84.

DeWanna Bonner had 17 points and Rhyné Howard 16 for the Dream (29-14), who moved closer to clinching a top-four seed in the WNBA playoffs. A win against New York on Wednesday or a loss by Indiana in one of its final two games would give the Dream home court in the opening round of the postseason.

The Liberty (26-17) had their three-game winning streak end and now will be on the road in the opening round of the playoffs.

Atlanta led by three at the half and extended the lead to 73-62 after three quarters thanks to Allisha Gray and Howard. After a scoreless first half, Gray had 12 points in the period, including seven during a 9-2 run to start it. Howard then took over with 10

points in the quarter.

New York, which played in Toronto on Sunday, got within eight a few times, but could get no closer.

Breanna Stewart had 27 points and 14 rebounds to lead the Liberty. Jonquel Jones added 18 points and 13 rebounds.

Mercury 87, Wings 86

In Phoenix, Kahleah Copper scored 16 of her 31 points in the fourth quarter, including a go-ahead layup with 2.4 seconds left, and the Phoenix Mercury rallied to beat the Dallas Wings.

A foul call against Phoenix was overturned with 13.3 seconds left in the fourth quarter, and the Mercury secured the jump ball. Then, Alyssa Thomas found Copper on a backdoor cut along the baseline to take the lead. Phoenix forced a difficult shot at the buzzer as Paige Bueckers' 3-point attempt did not hit the rim.

Thomas finished with 15 points, 12 assists and 11 rebounds for her fifth triple-double of the season for Phoenix (16-27), which trailed 74-63 early in the fourth.

Dallas (26-17), which led by as many as 14 points, had a six-game winning streak snapped with its first loss since Aug. 17. The Wings remain tied for sixth place in the WNBA standings.



Kahleah Copper

We developed rules focused on athlete safety & Olympic values, says Tang

Mixed martial arts without wire cage and blood bids to make the Olympics

NAGOYA, Japan, Sept 22, (AP): Mixed martial arts - without the wire cage and with less blood and mayhem - could be coming to the Olympics.

It's a long shot. However, a version of the sport - let's call it "MMA Light" - is being contested at the two-week Asian Games. The campaign to get the sport into the Brisbane Olympics in 2032 is being led by Chinese billionaire Gordon Tang.

"We have developed a rule set specifically focused on the safety and well-being of athletes, and aligned with Olympic values," Tang said. "The debut of MMA at the Asian Games is an important step in that journey."

Tang heads the Federation of International Mixed Martial Arts, one of many groups lobbying to represent a very fractured global sport.

Removing the cage is a must for any chance to gain entry. But cage or no cage, it's a rough road to get the approval of the International Olympic Committee.

"We think without the cage we will have a better alignment with the Olympic values and hopefully recognition from the IOC," Galastein Tan, the director general of the FIMMA, told The Associated Press.

First, the IOC would have to approve a governing body of the sport - there are many - and then Brisbane organizers would have to put it on their schedule.

So far the Australians have not announced what sports they might add and, of course, it's too late to get into the Los Angeles Games in 2028.



Firdavs Atamuratov of Uzbekistan, left, competes with Mirzobek Umarov of Tajikistan during their men's modern 60kg mixed martial arts final at the Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan. (AP)

The IOC, in an email to The Associated Press, clarified that as of now "mixed martial arts does not meet ... eligibility criteria" for the Olympics.

The top issue is the sport's violent image. The IOC has had issues with violence depicted in esports, so that rub is clear.

This version at the Asian Games looks more like judo or boxing, set on an open mat. No wire cage. Contestants wear small gloves, similar to amateur boxing at the Olympics. Both men and women fight, and there are two styles - traditional with more grappling and modern with more striking.

"It takes time to change a perception," Tan said.

"We hope to be able to share that there is a new from of MMA, and this form is more aligned with the Olympics."

Alex Engelhardt, the executive vice president of FIMMA, suggested this was an attempt to bring MMA into the "normal" range of sports and concentrate less on spectacle.

"It's very challenging in the sense that the whole mind set in the sport is so focused on promotions," Engelhardt said. He might have been referring to a UFC fight three months ago on the grounds of the White House.

Tan argues that MMA could be a draw for the IOC as it tries to stay relevant with new sports. MMA is popular, youth oriented, and would not require any unique venue construction. It could share venues with other combat sports.

However, that could be a negative. MMA is yet another combat sports and the Olympics already have boxing, wrestling, judo and taekwondo.

"MMA is popular globally, able to engage the fans at a gut level and attract fans at a youth level," Tan replied.

The FIMMA also has an influential president in Tang, a Chinese billionaire property developer who seems to know his way around the IOC. His biography, offered by FIMMA, lists him with "more than a decade of senior roles within the Olympic Movement."

He is also a vice president of the Olympic Council of Asia.

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Hadjar returns to Red Bull for Azerbaijan GP after injury

BAKU, Sept 22, (AP): Isack Hadjar will be back driving for Red Bull at this week's Azerbaijan Grand Prix after a "successful recovery" from the wrist injury which kept him out of three Formula 1 races, the team said Tuesday.

Hadjar injured his wrist during F1's mid-season break, reportedly during a boxing workout, and was sidelined with a splint on his arm as he recovered.

Liam Lawson took over Hadjar's car for the Dutch, Italian and Spanish Grand Prix races, while Yuki Tsunoda returned to F1 in Lawson's usual seat at Racing Bulls.

"Oracle Red Bull Racing is delighted to welcome Isack back this weekend. Having made a successful recovery from his wrist injury, Isack will return to action at the Baku City Circuit on Thursday," Red

Bull said.

"The team would sincerely like to thank Liam for this professionalism, dedication and hard work over the past three races. Stepping in under challenging circumstances, he delivered some impressive performances and made a valuable contribution to the team. We wish him all the very best as he returns to Visa Cash App Racing Bulls."

This week's race in Azerbaijan is, unusually, on a Saturday because of a public holiday. That means practice on Thursday and qualifying Friday.

Lawson adapted fast on his return to Red Bull as Max Verstappen's teammate, with a best finish of sixth in Madrid this month. It was a strong statement from the New Zealander after he was dropped by Red Bull two races into the 2025 season.

Gold rush for Kuwait at Special Olympics MENA Games



The dressage team.



The weightlifting team with officials.

Stars deliver six-medal haul in Cairo

CAIRO, Sept 22, (KUNA): Kuwait athletes won six medals — three gold, two silver and a bronze — in weightlifting and equestrian events on Monday during the second phase of the 10th Special Olympics MENA Regional Games 2026 in Cairo.

Deputy Head of Kuwait’s delegation Sadiqa Al-Ansari said Kuwaiti athletes from Altomouh Sports Club for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities delivered strong performances in the equestrian competitions.

Basma Al-Busaili won gold in the



Kuwaiti equestrian preparing for action.

dressage event, while Nawaf Al-Qassar also finished first. Mariam Ziaib took second place, while Abdullah Al-Ali finished fifth in competition against their Egyptian counterparts.

In weightlifting, Salman Shehab claimed gold, while Shaker Al-Hulaili secured third place. The two athletes also finished third and sixth, respectively, in another event.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Egypt Ghanem Al-Ghanem praised the participation of the Altomouh Sports Club delegation, describing Kuwait’s athletes’ achievements as a source of pride for the country and its people.

Al-Ghanem made the remarks while receiving the delegation at the Kuwaiti Embassy in Cairo. He commended the club’s efforts to support

and rehabilitate persons with intellectual disabilities and provide athletes with opportunities to compete in regional and international events.

He also praised Egypt for hosting and organizing the games and for its efforts to promote sports for persons with intellectual disabilities.

Al-Ghanem reaffirmed Kuwait’s continued support for programs and initiatives aimed at empowering persons with disabilities and enhancing their participation in society, in line with the country’s commitment to humanitarian, social and sporting initiatives.

The regional games feature delegations from Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the UAE and host Egypt.



The Kuwaiti officials.

Burgan Club broadens sponsorship network ahead of season

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Burgan Sports Club is expanding its partnerships with the private sector as part of efforts to strengthen its resources and provide greater support for its sports teams ahead of the 2026-27 season.

The club signed a strategic partnership agreement with VS Sports in the presence of Chairman Anwar Zaid Al-Otaibi. The agreement is aimed at supporting Burgan and enhancing its presence in upcoming competitions.

Burgan also signed sponsorship agreements with Mohammed Al-Saghir Real Estate, ASM and LEVO. The companies will support the club during its participation in the World Club Championship in Egypt and throughout the upcoming local season.

The agreements are part of the club’s strategy to broaden its private-sector partnerships and secure additional support for its teams as they prepare for a demanding schedule of domestic and international competitions.

Burgan said the new partnerships will help provide better con-



Officials pose for photo after signing the strategic partnership.

ditions for its teams, support their development plans and strengthen cooperation with the private sector, while creating new opportunities for sports and investment initiatives.

Wood retires from international cricket with England

Japan, India celebrate friendship through cricket

SANO, Japan, Sept 22, (AP): Japan and India celebrated 75 years of friendship with an international T20 cricket match as the backdrop on Tuesday, marking a new chapter in sports and diplomacy between the two.

The match was hosted as part of an agreement reached during a summit between Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to mark the 75th anniversary of their diplomatic relationship.

It was delayed nearly three hours, first by the late arrival of match officials and the Indian team due to traffic and then by a wet outfield. The match was then

reduced to five overs per side as Japan gave the three-time world champions a royal scare before falling two runs short.

India opted to bat and finished 32-4 in its five overs, with skipper Shreyas Iyer scoring 16 off 12 balls. Japan’s Charlie Hara-Hinze, a 17-year-old left-arm spinner, etched his name in the history books by getting Abhishek Sharma out for a duck and also dismissing Iyer.

Axar Patel and Washington Sundar then held their own to defend India’s low score. Skipper Kendel Kadowaki-Fleming scored 12 runs, but was unable to take his side past the finish line as Japan finished 30-3.

Despite the defeat, it was a heroic effort from the 41st-ranked Japanese team against the biggest team in world cricket.

Mark Wood, a multifaceted World Cup-winning England cricketer who was one of the fastest bowlers of his generation, announced his retirement from the international game after a string of injury problems.

The 36-year-old Wood was part of World Cup-winning teams in the ODI (2019) and T20 (2022) formats and also played in four Ashes series, taking the wicket to win back the urn at Trent Bridge in his first series in 2015.

He has been blighted by injury issues in recent years, not least last year when he missed eight months following left knee surgery before returning in time for the Ashes series Down Under. Wood bowled just 11 overs in the first test before suffering swelling in the same knee, prompting him to fly home for treatment, and he has not played for England since.

Wood said it was the “natural time” to retire at the end of his central contract with England.

“I’ve always tried to be resilient and come back from injury to prove people wrong and show everyone what I can do,” Wood said in a statement. “Unfortunately this time I lost the battle.”

“On medical advice, test cricket and 50-over cricket are not possible, so the England dream has slowly been ground out of me over the past year.”

Wood, who plays county cricket for Durham in the north of England, said playing for his country was a “dream come true.”

“The little lad in me would be so chuffed to have played so much for England,” he said. “To travel the world, meet incredible people and play against the best, is something I feel incredibly lucky to have done, doing something I have loved.”

Wood finishes his 11-year international career with 119 wickets from 38 tests and 54 wickets in 38 T20s, with nine coming in England’s World Cup-winning campaign in Australia in 2022.

Of his 80 wickets in 70 ODIs, 18 came at the 2019 World Cup where he topped speeds of 95 mph as England won the 50-over trophy for the first time.

Infantino open to independent governance review after backlash

MEXICO CITY, Sept 22, (AP): FIFA President Gianni Infantino has indicated he’d be open to an independent review of its governance system and signaled a willingness to consider reforms.

Facing intense scrutiny and criticism following the failure of the “FIFA Forward Enterprise” (FFE) project, Infantino sent a letter on Monday outlining this proposal to all FIFA Council members and the 211 member associations ahead of the next FIFA Council meeting scheduled for Oct. 15.

“I will ask the Council whether it wishes to commission an external, independent assessment of FIFA’s current governance framework for major strategic initiatives and to recommend potential improvements,” Infantino stated in his letter, which was seen by The Associated Press.

“I will propose that the Council establish a direct, structured, and time-bound consultation with the confederations and member associations on how to further strengthen FIFA’s decision-making processes,” he added.

Under the FIFA Forward Enterprise concept, private investors would have purchased shares in the World Cup and other competitions.

However, the project leaked publicly sooner than Infantino had anticipated, sparking sharp criticism and creating a rift among member associations. Some of the most high-profile members - including several from European soccer body UEFA - withdrew their support for Infantino.

“The proposal entered the public domain before FIFA’s planned institutional process had been completed and before it could be presented in full to the Council and the member associations. I recognize that, without full context, this caused concern and created the impression that decisions had already been taken. They had not,” Infantino said in the letter.

The fallout has escalated beyond internal disagreement. Last month, UEFA started drafting criminal charges against Infantino in U.S. courts regarding the FFE plan, requesting the release of all relevant documents.

Despite the controversy, Infantino continues to champion the goal of generating more revenue for world football’s governing body.

“Withdrawing this proposal does not diminish our ambition or our responsibility to reinvest a greater share of the fruits of FIFA’s success into football. We will continue to explore sustainable ways to increase FIFA’s resources,” Infantino added. “What changes is not the ambition, but the strength of the process.”

This governance crisis comes at a crucial political time for FIFA’s leadership. In March 2027, the 56-year-old FIFA chief will run for office for a fourth time, while any prospective rivals have until Nov. 18 to submit a candidate to challenge him.



India's Ishan Kishan, left, chases a ball batted by Japan's Kendel Kadowaki-Fleming, right, during the Suzuki Cup T20 cricket match in Sano, Japan, marking 75 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries. (AP)

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Gold medalist, Japan's Aiko Sugihara, left, and bronze medalist, Japan's Misa Nishiyama, pose with their medals after the women's all-round final in the artistic gymnastics at the Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan. (AP)

Sports

Kuwait handball team routs Kazakhstan at Asian Games



Kuwaiti player goes for a shot.

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

NAGOYA, Sept 22: Kuwait's national handball team bounced back in style at the Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan, cruising to a 43-19 victory over Kazakhstan in the third round of Group B.

Kuwait dominated from the outset, imposing its tempo with solid defensive organization, quick transitions and a variety of attacking moves. Its effective play allowed it to take control early and build a comfortable lead.

Kuwait maintained its intensity throughout the match, with the players staying focused until the final whistle to complete a 24-goal victory.

The result marked Kuwait's second win in the group, following its opening victory over Iran. It suffered their only defeat against South Korea in the second round and now has four points ahead of its final group match.

Kuwait will face Bahrain next Friday in their final Group B game, with the result expected to have a significant bearing on the final standings. The Blues seek to maintain their momentum and secure another positive result before moving into the knockout stage.

The emphatic victory over Kazakhstan showed that Kuwait had quickly put the South Korea defeat behind it and remained determined to make a strong push in the remainder of its Asian Games campaign.

Iraq takes on Oman

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia renew Gulf Cup rivalry

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Gulf football fans will turn their attention to Jeddah today as Kuwait take on host Saudi Arabia in a much-anticipated Gulf derby at 9:00 pm at King Abdullah Sports City in the opening round of Group A at the 27th Arabian Gulf Cup (Gulf Cup 27 – Gulf of Arab Lands).

Iraq and Oman will kick off the group's action at 5:30 pm at Prince Abdullah Al-Faisal Stadium.

The Kuwait-Saudi clash promises a competitive encounter, with both sides looking to make a strong start to their Gulf Cup campaign.

Kuwait coach Hélio Sousa knows the importance of the opening game, with a victory providing a valuable boost and putting the team in a strong position in the race for a semi-final place.

Sousa has named a 27-man squad featuring Khaled Al-Rashidi, Saud Al-Houshan, Abdulrahman Al-Fadhli, Rakan Al-Saeed, Fahad Al-Hajeri, Khaled Sabah, Yousif Al-Haqqa, Abdulaziz Naji, Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi, Rashed Al-Dosari, Muath Al-Dhafiri, Mohsen Falah, Reda Hani, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Khaled Al-Murshid, Jassem Al-Matar, Athbi Shehab, Abdullah Al-Qarzai, Nasser Faleh, Mahdi Dashti, Eid Al-Rashidi, Yousif Majid, Mohammed Daham, Mubarak Al-Fanini, Abdullah Al-Awadhi, Shabib Al-Khaldi and Yousif Nasser.

Kuwait has enjoyed an extended preparation period, beginning its camp on September 7 with two training sessions before moving to Doha for a camp that ran until September 16.



Kuwait preparing the opener.

The Blues beat Qatari club Lusail 2-1 in a friendly during the Doha camp before traveling to Jeddah. Eight Kuwait Club players joined the squad later after their AFC Champions League Two commitments.

Kuwait then faced Yemen in a four-period training match last Friday, losing 2-1 in a game that gave Sousa the opportunity to field all his players.

The team enters the opener at full strength after Yousif Nasser and Mohsen Falah recovered from their injuries. Sousa has used the

final training sessions to fine-tune his tactics and select his starting lineup.

Saudi Arabia will look to capitalize on home advantage and strong fan support as they seek a winning start.

Coach Georgios Donis is aware of the expectations surrounding the hosts, who are chasing a Gulf Cup title that has eluded them for 23 years. Hosting the tournament in Jeddah provides another opportunity to challenge for the trophy after Saudi Arabia failed to win the title

on home soil in 2014.

The host will be without several key players, including Salem Al-Dawsari, Saud Abdulhamid and Musab Al-Juwair. However, Donis can call on a number of talented players, including Rayan Hamed, Saleh Abu Al-Shamat, Zakaria Al-Hawsawi, Ziyad Al-Juhani, Firas Al-Buraikan, Hassan Al-Tambakti, Abdulrahman Al-Amri, Nawaf Boushal, Hassan Kadesh, Moteb Al-Harbi, Mohammed Kanno, Abdullah Al-Khaibari and Abdullah Al-Hamdan.

India storms to women's Asian Games T20 gold

China continues pool dominance

NAGOYA, Japan, Sept 22, (AP): India handed Sri Lanka a crushing 147-run defeat to win the women's T20 cricket gold medal at the Asian Games on Tuesday.

Led by Smriti Mandhana's 79 and equally splendid contributions from Shifali Verma (48) and Richa Gosh (49), India posted its third-highest T20 score of 216-3 winning the toss and electing to bat.

Sri Lanka, which chased down its biggest-ever T20 score of 177 to beat Pakistan in the semifinals, succumbed to Indian spinners and was bowled out for 69 in 15.4 overs. Captain Chamari Athapaththu was the top scorer with 29 off 21 balls.

In a repeat of the 2023 final won by India, Sri Lanka crashed against Deepti Sharma, who bagged three wickets for just six runs off her four overs. Verma (2-3), Shree Charni (2-13) and Shreyanka Patil (2-9) also shared six wickets between them.

Athapaththu's dismissal in the seventh over saw Sri Lanka lose its last eight wickets for just 26 runs.

Earlier, left-handed Mandhana and Verma set the tone of a mammoth total with their 99-run opening-wicket stand in 10 overs as Sri Lankan bowlers gave away too many boundary balls.

Verma smashed three sixes and three fours before she was caught at short third while attempting a reverse hit. Captain Harmanpreet Kaur's struggle continued in the tournament with another unimpressive knock of 19 off 17 balls, but Gosh and Mandhana ensured India set up a stiff target.

Mandhana smashed seven sixes and five fours in 45 balls before she holed out in the outfield in the 17th over, before Gosh's onslaught, which featured three sixes and six fours, provided a perfect finish.

Gosh smashed fast bowler Mithali Ayodhya for two sixes and a boundary in the final over which cost Sri Lanka 25 runs.

Earlier, Pakistan clinched the bronze medal by beating Bangladesh by 31 runs. Captain Fatema Sana made 45 in Pakistan's score of 145-8 and spinner Umm-e-Hani grabbed 3-10 as Bangladesh was restricted to 114-7.

China added four more gold medals on Tuesday in swimming, giving the powerful team 15 in 20 events over the first three days in the pool at the Asian Games.

Chinese 13-year-old Yu Zidi did not swim on Tuesday after winning gold the first two days in the 200-meter butterfly and the 200 individual medley. She will swim the 400 IM on Wednesday, her last individual event.

China won 28 gold medals in swimming three years ago at the Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, and seems on target to break that mark. Three more days remain.



Gold Medalist team India poses on the podium after the women's gold medal T20 cricket game between India and Sri Lanka at the Asian Games in Nisshin, Japan. (AP)

Peng Xuwei took the women's 200 backstroke (2 minutes, 5.77 seconds) and teammate Zhang Zhanshuo won the men's 1,500 free (14:42.42). The other two Chinese gold medalist were Li Bingjie in the women's 400 free (4:02.71), and the men's 4x100 medley relay (3:27.89).

That time not far off the world record held by the United States (3:26.78).

The non-Chinese winners on Tuesday were Siobhan Haughey of Hong Kong in the women's 100 free (52.45), and Japan's Yumeki Kojima in the 400 IM (4:07.02). Gold Medalist team India pose on the podium after the women's gold medal T20 cricket game between India and Sri Lanka at the Asian Games in Nisshin, Japan. (AP)

Ronaldo still in action at 41

Zidane, Klopp start fresh as European national teams return after World Cup

GENEVA, Sept 22, (AP): Champions League-winning coaches Zinedine Zidane and Jürgen Klopp debut in their new careers this week when national team soccer returns in Europe after the World Cup, with Cristiano Ronaldo still in action at 41.

The Zidane era starting for France at Turkey and Germany under Klopp in the Netherlands highlight the Nations League program filling the first four-game, two-weekend break on the FIFA international calendar where coaches are the fresh attraction as much as their players.

Thomas Tuchel is a third Champions League winner among the 54 European national teams in action, with his England hosting Spain on Saturday in what was so close to being the World Cup final in July.

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente - with a fresh contract extension through 2032 - is the current king of international coaches as a low-key hire in 2022 promoted from within the federation who then won European and world titles at the first attempt.

Not bad for a 65-year-old who coached the grand total of 11 first-team club games in his career, all in the Spanish second tier, 15 years ago for Alavés.

This break from club soccer in the European fall for national teams is the first in the reshaped international match calendar managed by FIFA. That schedule mandates when clubs must release players to national teams.

Club leaders had for years wanted fewer but longer international breaks

to limit disruption in their seasons and ensure players from outside Europe made fewer long-haul flights to represent their country.

FIFA pushed the idea in 2021 in its failed plan to play World Cups every two years instead of four. In 2023, FIFA approved combining two-game breaks in September and October into a single block of four.

Zidane was an elegant, all-time great player and then a dominant coach. He won three straight Champions League titles in his first 2½-year spell at Real Madrid into 2018.

He finally got to succeed former club and country teammate Didier Deschamps, and greatness is expected from Zidane's mentoring of a richly talented Les Bleus squad captained by Kylian Mbappé.

"I've waited five years for this chance, so that's why I'm a bit emotional," the 54-year-old Zidane said in July after getting the job that seemed destined since his second Madrid spell ended in 2021.

Zidane inherits a team stopped twice with ease at the semifinals by De la Fuente's Spain in the past two tournaments.

France did beat Spain in the 2021 Nations League final. The path back starts Friday against Turkey at Izmit then three days later in Brussels against Belgium. Italy and Belgium then come to Stade de France.

Klopp was denied a first Champions League with Liverpool in 2018 by Zidane's Madrid hat trick in Kyiv. The title arrived one year later against Tottenham.

Two years after leaving Anfield, Klopp takes over a Germany team seeming in need of his refreshed energy and inspiration. Germany last won a World Cup knockout game in the 2014 final and has not reached a Euros final since 2008.

Klopp made a big impact announcing his first squad: picking 44 players - two groups to play two games each - and wearing a cap with a slogan designed to reclaim the national flag from far-right politics.

The Klopp era starts at neighboring Netherlands on Thursday, hosting Greece in Augsburg and Serbia in Munich, then going to Greece on Oct. 4.

The German star coach in play this week, Tuchel, had England within 10 minutes of reaching a first World Cup final in 60 years.

He claimed last week "99.9%" of fans don't focus on his choice of substitutions and tactics to defend a one-goal lead late in the semifinal that Argentina won 2-1. Still, it's a memory seared into the Three Lions' national soccer story.

Tuchel can start shaping a new narrative at Wembley on Saturday against World Cup winner Spain. Their group also includes Croatia and the Czech Republic.

Any doubt 41-year-old Cristiano Ronaldo would continue with Portugal after another World Cup elimination should have ended before the tournament was done. The federation hired a new coach in 72-year-old Jorge Jesus, whose previous job was leading Ronaldo and Al Nassr to a Saudi league title in May.