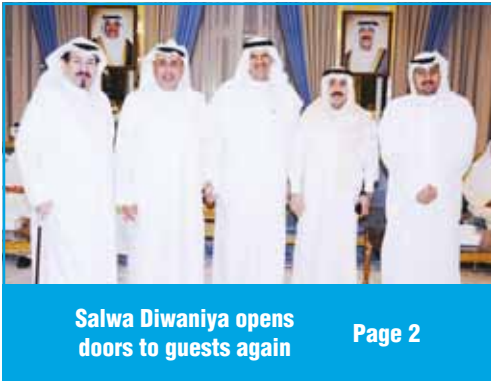




PM inaugurates Al-Shaheed Park Phase III under Amir's patronage

New era of Kuwait's culture and heritage

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Representing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah inaugurated Phase III of Al-Shaheed Park Wednesday evening at Al-Soor Theater.

Upon arrival, the Prime Minister was received by Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Head of the Office of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Abdulaziz Meshal Mubarak Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and members of the project's supervisory committee.

His Highness the Prime Minister unveiled the commemorative monument, officially inaugurating the new phase in the presence of senior state officials.

The ceremony commenced with the national anthem and Quranic recitation.

Delivering an address on the occasion, Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah expressed deep gratitude to His Highness the Amir for his gracious patronage, emphasizing that the project reflects His Highness's unwavering commitment to sustainable national development.

Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali noted that Phase III represents a vital expansion of the landmark park, cementing its role as a vibrant hub for culture, recreation, and community engagement.

Continued on Page 6



Representing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah is joined by guests and performers during the inauguration of Phase III of Al-Shaheed Park Wednesday evening at Al-Soor Theater.

First Deputy PM calls for tighter PAM governance

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior, and Chairman of the Board Directors of Kuwait's Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah stressed for stronger governance, transparency and administrative efficiency.

Chairing PAM's board meeting on Wednesday, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef called for improving the authority mechanism to meet its strategic goals, as well as

enforcing labor market regulations to fully protect the rights of all parties, said a PAM statement.

He also called for implementation of development plans and programs for citizens, employers, and workers in line with the state's efforts to modernize government services, it added.

The meeting also reviewed several agenda items, the latest development in the authority's work and plans to improve institutional performance.

Zakat House gets leaner board

Cabinet eases rules for businesses

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The Cabinet convened its weekly meeting Tuesday at the administrative building of Al-Shaheed Park (Phase III), chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Following the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sharida Al-Maousherji stated that the Cabinet approved a draft decree-law amending provisions of Companies Law No. 1 of 2016.

The amendment waives formal notarization requirements for corporate actions, establishing Commercial Register entry as sufficient to render agreements effective against third parties. It also abolishes unincorporated joint venture companies and allows professionals to establish single-person professional firms, granting existing businesses a one-year grace period to adjust their status.

The Cabinet also approved a draft decree repeal-

ing Decree No. 240 of 2012, which established the Silk City and Boubyan Island Development Authority, and referred both drafts to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for final approval.

Additionally, the Cabinet approved a draft decree-law restructuring the Zakat House Board of Directors under the chairmanship of the Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, reducing board membership from 12 to 7 members to streamline operational efficiency.

At the outset of the session, the Cabinet was briefed on a letter to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, inviting His Highness to the second GCC-EU Summit scheduled in Riyadh on October 24, 2026.

Continued on Page 6



Bahrain News Agency
Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bahrain Jassem Al-Najem presents credentials to King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Kuwaiti Ambassador presents credentials to King of Bahrain

MANAMA, Sept 30, (KUNA): The Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Kingdom of Bahrain Jassem Al-Najem presented his credentials Tuesday to King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa as Kuwait's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Bahrain.

The Kuwaiti Embassy in Manama stated that Ambassador Al-Najem conveyed greetings and well wishes from 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 to the Bahraini monarch, wishing King Hamad good health and the brotherly people of Bahrain continued progress and prosperity.

Ambassador Al-Najem expressed Kuwait's pride in the deep-rooted historical ties binding both nations across all domains, affirming his commitment to furthering bilateral cooperation during his tenure.

Continued on Page 6

Pay, display, call

One WhatsApp to lose the clamp

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The General Traffic Department (GTD) outlined the procedures for removing a vehicle wheel clamp after payment of traffic fines as part of efforts to streamline and simplify procedures for vehicle owners, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

It explained that the process begins with paying the fine through the Sahel app or the Ministry of Interior's application. Alternatively, individuals may visit GTD to complete the payment in accordance with approved procedures.

After payment, the receipt must be clearly displayed on the vehicle's windshield in preparation for the clamp's removal. The owner should then contact GTD via the dedicated WhatsApp number 99324092 to initiate the necessary procedures for removing the clamp.

If the clamp falls off, the owner must immediately call the emergency number 112 and await the arrival of a traffic patrol, without attempting to move or tamper with the device.

Legal action would be taken against anyone who breaks or damages the clamp.

Continued on Page 6



Kuwait's delegation, headed by Nazaha President Dr Rana Abdullah Al-Fares, attends the 12th Meeting of the GCC Ministerial Anti-Corruption Committee in Bahrain. — See Page 4

US completes Iraq troop exit

Midair trouble, emergency touchdown in Tabuk

RIYADH, Sept 30, (Agencies): Tabuk Airport in Saudi Arabia said on Wednesday that it received a distress call from a Flydubai flight at 8:44 a.m. requesting an emergency landing, prompting the activation of emergency procedures to ensure the safety of passengers and crew.

The airport said in a statement that the aircraft landed safely, adding that the pilot and

co-pilot sustained injuries during the flight and were taken to hospital for necessary medical care.

It provided no further details on their injuries or the reason for the emergency landing.

It added that coordination was underway with Flydubai to provide a replacement aircraft to transport passengers to their destina-

tion, while efforts continued to follow up on their condition and provide necessary services.

Investigations and technical procedures are underway to determine the circumstances and causes of the incident in coordination with the relevant authorities, the airport said.

Continued on Page 6

Sahel to send alerts

Grid tune-up to trigger blackouts

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Official spokesperson of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Eng. Fatima Hayat said the ministry shall start the routine maintenance of electrical networks on Thursday.

In a press statement, Hayat disclosed that the routine maintenance shall cover components of the transmission and distribution networks, main substations, overhead lines,

underground cables and secondary substations.

She stated this is part of the annual plan of the ministry to improve the electrical system to be ready for the summer season and limit power unexpected outages.

She added that some maintenance works might require temporary power shutdown in certain areas, which will be in accordance with the schedule published in the official social media platforms of the ministry.

Continued on Page 6

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

A dervish to Al-Rashid: Had the Caliphate been destined to last for anyone else, it would not have reached you

I call upon One far better than you by His name, yet He does not take offense at me.

Look, here are their palaces and there lie their graves, for when the world smiles, it eventually mires one in sorrow.

How many graves are built and left unbuilt, how many sick people we visited or failed to visit?

We ask Almighty God for the life of the blessed and the death of martyrs... Amen.

When a Briton shouted at Churchill, "You are a foolish prime minister."

Winston told the Parliament, "We arrested him because he divulged a state secret."

Instead of defending himself against the insult, he turned it into a joke.

A man told his son, "I will arrange a marriage for you with a young woman," but the son refused.

My son works as the governor of the Central Bank for West Asian nations.

An order was issued to find a watch that had gone missing from the presidential headquarters.

We arrested five people and three of them confessed to stealing the watch.



Fajr 04:22 Asr 15:02
Sunrise .. 05:41 Maghrib .. 17:34
Zohr 11:38 Isha 18:51



Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali and Sheikh Ali Al-Jaber



Sheikh Hamad, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Faisal, Editor-in-Chief Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Mu'ayyad Al-Khalaf Al-Saeed, colleague Saud Al-Farhan, and Jawad Boukhamsin



Sheikh Hamad welcomes the American Chargé d'Affaires.



Sheikhs Azzam Al-Sabah, Hamad Jaber Al-Ali, Khaled Al-Abdullah, Abdullah Al-Salem, Khaled Bader Al-Mohammed, Abdullah Al-Khaled, and Salem Abdulhadi Al-Ajmi

Photos by Rizk Tawfiq

Fraternity at its peak

Salwa Diwaniya opens doors to guests again

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali resumed receiving visitors at the Salwa Diwaniya, hence, continuing the tradition of regular gatherings that bring together diwaniya regulars and friends, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali had friendly conversations with the attendees, in a social atmosphere exuding warmth and strong connection.

The diwaniya continues to welcome guests every Tuesday evening, reflecting the spirit of social interaction for which Kuwaiti diwanis are known.



Sheikh Dr. Ahmed Al-Nasser, Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali, Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali, and Sheikh Ahmed Al-Duaij



Sheikh Salem Al Jaber and the Saudi Ambassador, Prince Sultan bin Saad



Sheikh Hamad, Sheikh Salman Al-Hamoud, Editor-in-Chief Ahmed Al-Jarallah, and colleagues Saud and Mohammed Al-Farhan



Sheikh Mubarak Salem Al-Ali and Sheikh Fawaz Saud Al-Nasser



Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Al-Mishal, Sheikh Sabah Bader Al-Sabah, and Sheikh Firas Al-Malik



Sheikh Hamad welcomes Sheikh Bandar Al Jaber.



A conversation between Sheikh Ahmed Al-Duaij and the ambassadors of Britain, Japan, and Lebanon.



Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya shaking hands with Sheikh Hamad.



Sheikh Mubarak Al-Faisal, Sheikh Hamad, the Egyptian military attaché, Fahd Al-Rish, and colleague Bassam Al-Qassas



Hamad Al-Dosari and Fahad Al-Khunain



Sheikh Hamad, flanked by Bahraini Ambassador Salah Al-Maliki and Jordanian Ambassador Sinan Al-Majali.



Bader Al-Awadhi and Mohammed Al-Barjas

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



A dervish to Al-Rashid: Had the Caliphate been destined to last for anyone else, it would not have reached you

THE story goes that Harun Al-Rashid built a palace. As he stood before it, waiting to hear the poets’ praises, a poor dervish passed by and called out, “O Harun!”

The soldiers moved to seize him, how could he address the Caliph by his name, without the title ‘Commander of the Faithful’?

But Al-Rashid said, “Let him alone.” Then he asked the man, “What do you want?”

The man replied, “You are angry that I call you by your name? Yet I call upon One far better than you by His name any time and He does not get angry. I say, “O God, O Most Merciful, O Compeller.”

The Abbasid Caliph said to him, “Come closer.”

The man stepped forward and Harun said to him, “Admonish me.” The dervish said, “Had the Caliphate been destined to last for anyone else, it would not have reached you.”

The Caliph said, “Tell me more.”

He said, “Look, here are their palaces and there lie their graves. When the world settles, it muddies the waters, when it clothes, it strips bare, when it dazzles, it strikes with dread, when it blooms, it heralds decay, and when it turns away, it gallops off in haste.

“How many graves are built and then abandoned? How many sick people do we visit, only to see them pass away? How many kings saw their banners raised high, only to die at the peak of their power?

“The righteous will die, the sinful transgressors will die, the arrogant will die and the humble will die... Everyone in existence will die and perish, while the Face of your Lord—Possessor of Majesty and Honor—will remain.

“To whom does the dominion belong? To God, the One, the Irresistible. ‘Indeed we belong to God and to Him we shall return.’ We ask the Almighty for the

- I call upon One far better than you by His name, yet He does not take offense at me.
- Look, here are their palaces and there lie their graves, for when the world smiles, it eventually mires one in sorrow.
- How many graves are built and left un-built, how many sick people we visited or failed to visit?
- We ask Almighty God for the life of the blessed and the death of martyrs... Amen.
- When a Briton shouted at Churchill, “You are a foolish prime minister.”
- Winston told the Parliament, “We arrested him because he divulged a state secret.”
- Instead of defending himself against the insult, he turned it into a joke.
- A man told his son, “I will arrange a marriage for you with a young woman,” but the son refused.
- My son works as the governor of the Central Bank for West Asian nations.
- An order was issued to find a watch that had gone missing from the presidential headquarters.
- We arrested five people and three of them confessed to stealing the watch.

life of the blessed and the death of martyrs.” Harun said, “Amen.”

“You are a foolish prime minister.”

With these words, during World War II, a British man boldly shouted at Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s motorcade, right in the middle of the

street, where everyone could see.

Such a confrontation with the head of government was highly unusual, so the man was arrested immediately.

However, the real twist came the next day when an opposition member of Parliament asked Churchill, “Is it acceptable to arrest a citizen just for insulting the Prime Minister?”

Silence fell over the chamber as everyone anticipated a political explanation, or perhaps, a passionate defense of the dignity of the office.

When Churchill stood to respond, he skillfully turned the entire situation around with just one sentence. He raised his head and declared, “He was not arrested for insulting the Prime Minister, but for disclosing a state secret.”

The chamber erupted in laughter and applause. Rather than defending himself against the insult, he transformed it into a humorous remark that made everyone forget the insult itself.

This incident illustrates that it is not about sheer force but rather about quick wit, making your few words more impactful than the entire situation.

Becoming the prime minister’s in-law

A man told his son he wanted to arrange a marriage for him, but the son refused. The father explained that his son thought of him as an old man with an outdated mindset, unwilling to accept his choice of a bride.

Then the father revealed, “The girl is the daughter of the prime minister.” Instantly, the young man consented to the marriage.

The father went on, “I approached the prime minister to request his daughter’s hand for my son, but he declined. So I informed him, ‘My son is the head of the Central Bank for West Asia.’”

The prime minister immediately agreed.

GTD arrests 2 ‘drifters’, destroys their vehicles

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The General Traffic Department apprehended individuals involved in reckless and irresponsible driving in two separate incidents as part of its ongoing efforts to curb traffic violations that endanger road users and protect lives and property, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the department explained that the first suspect was arrested after a video surfaced showing him driving a vehicle recklessly without license plates.

Investigations by the Security Control Department revealed that the vehicle had been driven at dawn in the Wafra Agricultural area. It was subsequently tracked to the Umm Al-Haiman area, where the driver was apprehended.

The vehicle had no registration details, and the suspect confessed to reckless driving.

Regarding the second incident, the department explained that the Operations Room received a report of reckless driving in the Wafra Agricultural area.

Patrols were dispatched to the scene and seized the vehicle. Although the driver initially fled, he was subsequently arrested through coordination with the Security Control Department.

Legal measures were taken against both suspects, who were referred to the Central Prison.

In addition, both vehicles were crushed following their confiscation by the Ministry of Interior, in accordance with Article 33-bis of the Traffic Law.

The General Traffic Department warned that reckless driving would not go unpunished, emphasizing that attempts to flee would not prevent the pursuit and arrest of violators.

It affirmed that it would not hesitate to take legal action against anyone who endangers lives and property.

Meanwhile, the General Traffic Department, represented by the Security Oversight Department, apprehended individuals accused of reckless and negligent driving that endangered other road users in the Wafra Agricultural area, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

One suspect deliberately obstructed a security patrol in an attempt to help the other suspect escape.

In an official statement, the General Traffic Department explained that the arrests followed the sighting of a vehicle being driven without license plates and producing excessive noise, accompanied by another vehicle whose driver obstructed the patrol. Investigations led to the apprehension of the suspects, while video footage documented the first driver engaging in reckless and negligent driving.

Traffic citations were issued, the necessary legal measures were taken, and the suspects were referred to the Central Prison.

In addition, the two vehicles were impounded following the completion of legal procedures for violations involving reckless driving, negligence, and endangering road users, in accordance with Article 33-bis of the Traffic Law.

The General Traffic Department warned against reckless driving and obstructing security patrols, emphasizing that monitoring and surveillance operations are ongoing to apprehend violators and take legal action to ensure the safety of road users.

Customs sleuths foil bid to smuggle drugs, pills

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Customs inspectors at the Salmi border crossing thwarted an attempt to smuggle narcotic substances, pills and cartons of cigarettes, which were hidden in various parts of the vehicle of the suspect.

According to Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC), the inspection, which was conducted under the supervision of Salmi Border Director Saad Al-Quraini, resulted in the discovery of three Captagon pills, a blister pack of Lyrica pills, and hardened powdery substance suspected to be either shabu (crystal meth) or chemical (synthetic drugs) that was set aside for testing to determine its nature. This operation also led to the discovery of 28 cartons of cigarettes.

KGAC affirmed that security and commercial violation reports were filed, the vehicle was impounded, and the suspect and confiscated items were referred to the Drug Control General Department for legal proceedings.

Prison sentences in ‘media’ cases

Two acquitted in ‘drowning death’

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The State Security and Terrorism Crimes Court, presided over by Judge Nasser Al-Bader, with Judges Omar Al-Mulaifi, Abdullah Al-Faleh, and Salem Al-Zayed as members, issued several rulings in state security cases, ranging from imprisonment and acquittal to declarations of lack of jurisdiction, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The court sentenced Talal Al-Dabbous to five years in prison with hard labor, with immediate enforcement, for offending the entity of the Amir through social media.

In a case involving the dissemination of false news on social media, the court sentenced Lulwa Al-Hussainan and Mansour Al-Muhareb to five years in prison with hard labor, with immediate enforcement, and ordered the destruction of the video posted online.

The court also ruled that it lacked jurisdiction to hear the case filed against Mahmoud Al-Failakawi.

In a case involving a lawyer, the court acquitted him of the second charge. Regarding the other charge, it ruled to refrain from imposing a penalty, instead requiring him to pledge to maintain good conduct for two years, backed by a KD 5,000 bail.

In addition, the court sentenced a citizen to three years in prison with hard labor and immediate enforcement for inciting sectarian strife.

In cases involving the offense of insulting the entity of the Amir, the court sentenced one citizen to two years in prison with hard labor and immediate enforcement, while sentencing another to five years in prison

with hard labor and immediate enforcement.



The Court of First Instance acquitted two citizens of involuntary manslaughter and negligence of a vulnerable person, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The two citizens were accused of unintentionally causing the drowning death of an Arab in Fintas.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendants with causing the death of the victim due to their alleged negligence. They were accused of leaving the victim near the shore without ensuring that he reached the land despite his inability to swim, which resulted in his drowning.

Police investigations ruled out criminal suspicion, while the forensic report confirmed that the cause of death was drowning.

Case files indicate that the victim boarded a boat with the defendants for a short excursion before being dropped off at a safe location—a sequence of events corroborated by prosecution witnesses.

In its ruling, the court doubted the charges, citing the consistent denial of the defendants, the investigations ruling out criminal suspicion, and the lack of proof their negligence or failure to exercise caution caused the death of the victim.

Consequently, the court acquitted them pursuant to Article 172 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and Trials.

Defense lawyer, Attorney Jarrah Al-Malik, argued that the elements of the crime were absent and that there was no causal link between his clients’ actions and the drowning incident, emphasizing that they adhered to the safety precautions. He stated that the victim asked his clients to transport him to the shallows near the Fintas jetty even if they did not know each other, and that the victim claimed he could swim. He was then dropped off at a safe location where the water level allowed a person to stand.

Municipality continues campaign

Bid to protect workers, residents

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Kuwait Municipality confirmed on Tuesday that field inspections are continuing as part of the “Build, Don’t Destroy” campaign, which is aimed to ensure compliance with safety regulations and safeguard the security and well-being of workers and residents in residential areas, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Mohammad Al-Muwaizri, Head of the Safety Department’s inspection team at Farwaniya Municipality, stated that a tour carried out in Farwaniya Governorate resulted in the issuance of eight warnings for violations of construction regulations and guidelines.

Al-Muwaizri explained that the campaign seeks to raise awareness of the importance of complying with regulations governing construction, demolition, and renovation work. It also educates proper-

ty owners and contractors on the need to transport rubble and construction waste to designated sites rather than leaving them in vacant lots, on roads, or in public areas.

He emphasized the need for proper handling of construction debris, noting that negligence by contractors or property owners in this regard could endanger the lives of workers and local residents.

Al-Muwaizri explained that the “Build, Don’t Destroy” campaign is part of Kuwait Municipality’s efforts to strengthen oversight, curb violations, and foster a culture of environmental preservation and respect for public property.

He urged owners of plots and homes under construction to follow Kuwait Municipality’s official social media accounts to benefit from upcoming awareness messages and guidelines.

Mol team visits Turkiye to gain expertise in security

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Major General Abdulwahab Ahmad Al-Wuhaib and his



Al-Wuhaib

accompanying delegation looked into the experience of Turkiye in developing its security and correctional systems, as part of efforts to strengthen security cooperation and the exchange of expertise between the two countries, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the ministry disclosed that the visit was conducted as per the directive of First

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, covering the General Directorate of Prisons and Detention Centers affiliated with the Turkish Ministry of Justice.

During the visit, the delegation was briefed on the latest systems and technologies used to raise operational and security efficiency.

Director General Çelebi Yılmaz and other officials warmly welcomed the visiting delegation.

The delegation also visited the electronic monitoring center, training centers and Sincan Complex, in addition to reviewing the healthcare system, medical services, trial process, courtroom facilities, vocational and professional training workshops.

Special Buffet

MUGHAL MAHAL Hawally & MUGHAL MAHAL Fahaheel

LARGEST SPREAD IN TOWN

Why Not TASTE 45 ITEMS At One Go

For

ADULT KD 5.950

CHILD KD 3.450

EVERY THURSDAY DINNER ONLY | 6 PM TO 11 PM

EVERY FRIDAY LUNCH & DINNER 12:30 PM TO 4:30 PM & 6 PM TO 11 PM

HAWALLY EVERY SATURDAY LUNCH ONLY 12:30 PM TO 4:30 PM

www.mughalmahal.com

1800 188

@mughalmahalkuwait



HH the Amir HH Crown Prince HH Prime Minister

Amir congratulates Botswana President on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Botswana, Duma Gideon Boko, on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished the President good health and wellbeing, and more progress and prosperity for Botswana and its people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad

Al-Sabah also sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Botswana, Duma Gideon Boko, on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished the President good health and wellbeing.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah then sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Botswana, Duma Gideon Boko, on his country's National Day.

Who ultimately owns or controls business?

GCC tracks down actual beneficiaries



1 Members of the GCC countries delegations.



The meeting in progress.

MANAMA, Bahrain, Sept 30: The State of Kuwait, represented by Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), participated in the 12th Meeting of the Ministerial Anti-Corruption Committee of the States of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), held in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Kuwait's delegation was headed by Nazaha President, Dr. Rana Abdullah Al-Fares. The meeting brought together the heads of the anti-corruption bodies of the GCC Member States and was attended by GCC Assistant Secretary-General for Legislative and Legal Affairs.

The meeting adopted the recommendations of the specialized GCC workshop "Combating Corruption and Identifying Beneficial Owners," organized by Nazaha in coordination with the GCC Secretariat General in July 2026. The workshop brought together the anti-corruption bodies and the ministries of commerce and industry of the GCC Member States, as well as



Nazaha President, Dr. Rana Abdullah Al-Fares.

anti-corruption strategy to help coordinate efforts and share expertise among Member States.

It further discussed a proposal to hold a workshop entitled "Mechanisms for Enhancing Integrity and Compliance in the Private Sector," as part of efforts to build national capacities and support the private sector's role in safeguarding integrity and embedding responsible business practices.

In addition, the meeting approved the evaluation results for the research papers submitted to the 2026 GCC Research and Studies Competition in the Fields of Integrity Protection and Anti-Corruption, held under the theme "Combating Corruption through Non-Judicial Means: Theoretical Approaches and Practical Experiences."

Nazaha's participation in the meeting reflects the State of Kuwait's commitment to contributing to the development of joint GCC initiatives and supporting cooperation among anti-corruption bodies, in a manner that promotes integrity and transparency, safeguards the achievements of the GCC Member States, and serves their peoples.

Over KD120 mln saved: CAPT 154 tenders awarded in 6 months

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) announced that the number of tenders awarded in the first six months of the current year totaled 154, at a total value of KD1.07 billion, compared to the estimated value of KD1.19 billion, hence, saving KD120.334 million.

In its semi-annual statistics, the agency revealed that the value of four tenders awarded for oil and petroleum sector projects totaled KD474.163 million, while 150 tenders were awarded to government agencies with a total value of KD596.285 million.

CAPT processed 91,191 requests related to tendering projects for government enti-

ties and the oil sector.

In the government sector, the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy ranked first in terms of awarded tender value, with KD430.405 million for 35 tenders, the Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) ranked second with KD35.404 million for five tenders, and the Ministry of Public Works ranked third with KD16.533 million for seven tenders.

In terms of project classification, the statistics indicate that electrical and mechanical works ranked first with 39 projects (25 percent of total contract awards), technology, information systems and telecommunications projects ranked second with 26 (17 percent), and labor supply projects ranked third with 17 (11 percent).



WEEKDAYS (Saturday-Wednesday)

One night stay in a **Queen Bed Cabana** for 2 persons with inclusive of Breakfast

One night stay in a **Two Bedroom Chalet** for 4 persons inclusive of Breakfast

WEEKENDS (Thursday-Friday)

One night stay in a **Queen Bed Cabana** for 2 persons with inclusive of Breakfast

One night stay in a **Two Bedroom Chalet** for 4 persons inclusive of Breakfast

Price

BD 38.115 / Net

BD 85.124 / Net

Price

BD 46 / Net

BD 102.148 / Net

Terms & conditions apply

Tel: +973 17701201 - Ext. 351 | 350 | Email: reservation@albander.com | www.albander.com | @albanderhotelandresort

Supply, logistics high on agenda

MANAMA, Sept 30, (KUNA): The 21st meeting of the GCC Committee for Supply and Logistics for the Armed Forces concluded Wednesday, hosted by the Bahrain Defense Force.

The meeting was attended by specialized delegations from the GCC armed forces, Assistant Secretary-General for Military Affairs at the GCC Secretariat Major General Salman Al-Fadhala, and a representative of the Unified Military

Command.

The Bahrain Defense Force said in a statement that the meeting discussed agenda items aimed at coordinating supply and logistics among GCC armed forces.

It said the discussions contribute to supporting joint Gulf military cooperation and strengthening integration among various sectors of the GCC armed forces.

Other Voices

Mao Zedong ... & uniform of the Finance Ministry

By Ahmad alsarraf

AS we pass through a critical transitional phase, witnessing positive developments while having limited time, it is essential to prioritize effectively and avoid getting bogged down in trivial matters.

The Under-secretary of the Ministry of Finance issued a circular regarding the dress code for ministry employees. The title immediately drew my attention to the uniform worn by hundreds of millions of Chinese during the rule of Chairman Mao Zedong. It consisted of a simple, practical cotton jacket in gray, blue, or khaki, with a closed collar, no tie, and four pockets, paired with matching trousers for both men and women as a symbol of equality. However, the government quickly abandoned this absurd practice after Mao's death.

The Ministry of Finance justified its circular by stating that it aims to establish a professional work environment and eliminate any ambiguity or confusion among employees regarding what constitutes appropriate "official attire" in the workplace.

The circular focused particularly on female employees' attire, stating that the "official dress code" is an abaya in calm, formal colors. It also specified that appropriate work attire includes a skirt or a wide-cut dress of a modest length below the knee, or a jacket or shirt of an appropriate, covering length.

The circular emphasized moderation in the use of jewelry and makeup, in keeping with a formal work environment.

Therefore, employees are prohibited from wearing tight or ripped clothing, shorts of any kind, short or transparent clothing, dresses with excessive slits, sleeveless shirts, short jackets or blouses, low-cut clothing, sportswear, or hats while at work. Tattoos must be covered, while



alsarraf

shirts or clothing bearing inappropriate slogans or designs are prohibited. The circular also warned that violations would be subject to disciplinary action.

I have some questions about this circular:

1. Is the priority now productivity, dedication, and honesty in performing one's work, or has dress become the standard by which employees are judged?
2. Who decides the appropriate length of a woman's dress? Should the department head carry a measuring tape?
3. What happens if two or three millimeters of a large tattoo are visible?
4. Who decides, fairly and objectively, whether an employee's makeup is inappropriate? Are there established standards, or is it left to the discretion of the department head?
5. Are department heads required to conduct daily rounds to monitor female employees and ensure compliance with the decision?
6. Since the department head is responsible for enforcing the decision, does it apply equally to them and to those above them? Otherwise, we may end up with inconsistencies even in something as basic as skirt length.
7. Is there a regulation that defines what constitutes a "calm and formal color"?

Is the logic behind this circular to occupy an important ministry throughout the workday with matters of discipline, reprimands, and warnings over dress-code violations, in addition to printing, stamping, and signing penalties, suspending promotions, deducting salaries, and referring employees for disciplinary action?

What about employees' ethics, work discipline, and dedication to their duties?

Will department heads have any time left to perform their actual work? And who will hold them accountable if they act arbitrarily?

Has any authority established that ethical standards within the Ministry of Finance were so low, and work performance so poor, that such a circular was necessary?

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

‘Strong governors expedite issues resolution’

Jahra Gov. receives Editor-in-Chief Al-Jarallah, highlights media importance



Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi receives Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah.



Jahra Governor, Editor-in-Chief and Saud Al-Farhan



Photos by Rizk Taufiq
Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi and Editor-in-Chief Ahmad Al-Jarallah in the governor's office.



Jahra Governor, Editor-in-Chief and the security team.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi met with Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah and his colleague Saud Al-Farhan at the headquarters of Jahra Governorate on Wednesday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The discussion focused on the role of governorates in overseeing service-related matters and strengthening coordination among government entities, as well as the role of the media in highlighting the needs of citizens.

Al-Habashi praised the collaboration of the media with the governorate and their coverage of its initiatives and events. He confirmed the significance of this partnership in monitoring service projects, providing citizens with a clear understanding of the progress, and communicating their feedback and opinions to governorate officials.

He underscored the importance of ongoing coordination and communication between governorates and all the relevant organizations in address-

ing the concerns of citizens.

He agreed that while some issues may encounter bureaucratic challenges within government agencies and departments, teamwork and unified efforts can help navigate these barriers and yield solutions that benefit the public.

He added that the governorate formed committees consisting of relevant entities, indicating these committees convene regularly to address issues affecting the governorate, assess service needs, and collaborate with the appropriate authorities to eliminate obstacles.

He asserted that the citizen is a key partner in the success of the governorate's vision. He pointed out that achieving the desired goals is not the sole responsibility of government agencies, as it requires the cooperation of residents and a commitment to serve them, protect facilities, and maintain cleanliness and the aesthetic appeal of the governorate.

He stressed that cooperation between citizens and government bodies is the fundamental factor in realizing these objectives.

He also talked about the historical and social significance of the governorate, outlining its stages of development, succession of governors over the decades, and the urban and population expansion it has witnessed—growth that necessitated an increase in service requirements.

He explained that the vast geographical area and numerous districts in the

governorate entail more responsibilities, hence, the need for continuous coordination, follow up and joint action with the concerned government entities.

On the other hand, Al-Jarallah expressed appreciation to the governor for the comprehensive overview of his role.

He acknowledged the personal contributions of the governor and the constructive efforts exerted by various departments in the governorate to address issues concerning citizens, particularly cleanliness, environment, aesthetics and services that affect their daily lives.

He cited local governance models in different countries where the governors have more powers to oversee their respective areas, including roads, infrastructure, public aesthetics and service and regulatory matters, enabling them to make decisions and address issues directly.

He emphasized that strengthening the role of governorates and enhancing coordination with executive bodies will accelerate the resolution of local issues and the development of these areas, particularly since the governor is best acquainted with the needs of residents and the daily challenges they face.

Both parties agreed on the need for stronger cooperation between the governorate and the media to ease communication with citizens, highlight their concerns and needs, and support efforts to develop the governorate and its services.

Developers cast as key housing partners

Finance law to ease Kuwait housing crunch

By Najeh Bilal

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Real estate expert Khaled Al-Enezi emphasized that the real estate finance law represents a pivotal step toward addressing the housing issue by establishing a more sustainable financing mechanism.

In an exclusive statement to the daily, he stressed that this mechanism could help shorten the waiting period for citizens to secure housing while increasing private sector participation in providing financing solutions.

Al-Enezi explained that the law's main feature is strengthening public-private partnerships and involving local banks and financing institutions in providing the liquidity needed for housing finance, thereby reducing reliance on traditional government channels.

Expanding the banking sector's role would help alleviate the financing burden on the state budget, allowing more resources to be directed toward infrastructure projects and essential services.

The law paves the way for more flexible financing alternatives and credit solutions that go beyond traditional government support, offering citizens a wider range of options tailored to their financial capabilities and housing needs, while also reinforcing the role of banks as partners in urban development.

The impact of real estate financing would extend beyond the housing sector to the national economy by stimulating banking credit activity and driving growth in the contracting, construction materials, and real estate development sectors.

Al-Enezi noted that increased activity in these sectors would create new investment opportunities in the local market and boost liquidity and commercial activity, thereby supporting economic growth and enhancing the private sector's contribution to development.

Real estate researcher Abdulrahman Al-Hussainan affirmed that the Cabinet's approval of the draft decree-law regarding real estate financing for those eligible for housing welfare marks a significant step toward resolving the housing problem, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He noted that this move reflects the commitment of the political leadership and the government to prioritizing citizens' needs and the stability of Kuwaiti families.

Al-Hussainan explained that the close attention paid to the housing file by His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, combined with the government's successive legislative and regulatory measures, demonstrates a clear understanding of the challenges facing citizens. It also highlights the need to shift from traditional solutions toward more flexible and sustainable tools for providing housing welfare.

Real estate financing initiative fits into this context by offering citizens more options for securing housing and enabling access to financing tools alongside state-provided housing welfare, thereby enhancing the housing system's capacity to meet growing demand.

Highlighting the scale of the challenge, Al-Hussainan pointed to the volume of housing applications. The latest statistics from the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) show 108,086 pending applications as of June 15, 2026. This underscores the importance of pursuing multiple avenues rather than relying on a single tool to address the housing issue.

He further noted that the increase in the number of applications com-

pared with previous statistics confirms the ongoing need for solutions capable of accommodating the natural growth in demand for housing welfare.

Al-Hussainan explained that the project's significance lies in the fact that it does not offer financing as a standalone solution. Rather, it integrates financing into a wider ecosystem involving the state, the Kuwait Credit Bank, commercial banks, financing entities, and real estate developers. This approach contributes to building a more comprehensive model for providing housing to citizens.

The availability of both subsidized and unsubsidized financing, along with the option to combine the two in accordance with Central Bank of Kuwait regulations, gives beneficiaries greater flexibility in choosing the mechanism that best suits their needs. Also, a repayment period of up to 25 years provides greater flexibility in managing financial obligations.

Al-Hussainan emphasized that a main aspect of the project is enabling the purchase of residential units from real estate developers, alongside financing for the construction of government-allocated plots, indicating that this approach would strengthen the private sector's role in delivering diverse housing products, thereby increasing supply and reducing waiting times.

He commended the government's move to enhance the role of real estate developers and expand partnerships with the private sector.

Al-Hussainan pointed out that the housing issue can no longer rely solely on the traditional model, given the rising number of applications and the need to provide housing units at a pace that keeps up with population growth and future demand.

He noted that the government has already launched projects under the Real Estate Developer program as part of a strategy to increase private sector participation in housing provision.

Al-Hussainan stated that the presence of a new generation of young ministers, foremost among them the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Eng. Abdullatif Al-Mishari, is a crucial factor in developing a realistic understanding of the needs of families and young people. This is particularly important given that the housing issue is directly linked to family formation, living stability, and building a future.

He stressed that officials' close familiarity with these needs facilitates the introduction of fresh approaches to the housing issue, approaches that go beyond simply considering how the state provides housing to examining how it can be delivered with greater speed, efficiency, and quality, while offering options that align with the aspirations and evolving needs of Kuwaiti families.

He affirmed that the development of legislation and financing mechanisms reflects a shift toward seeking practical, sustainable solutions that go beyond simply addressing the backlog of applications.

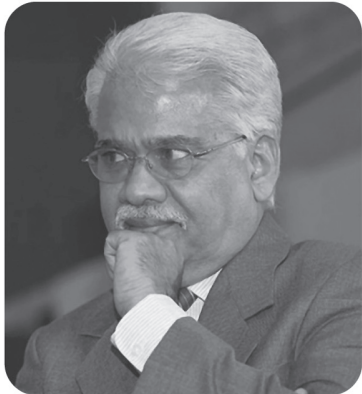
Al-Hussainan emphasized that the political leadership's focus on the housing file, aligned with government action on both legislative and executive fronts, sends a clear message - citizen well-being and family stability are central to the formulation of housing solutions.

He noted that the objective should not be limited to merely shortening the waiting list but should extend to building a sustainable housing ecosystem capable of meeting the needs of both current and future generations.

Al-Hussainan pointed out that the real estate financing project also carries an economic dimension, as it can help revitalize broad sectors linked to real estate, construction, building materials, contracting, and engineering services, while also strengthening the roles of the banking and financing sectors and real estate developers within the national economy.

IN MEMORIAM

With deep sorrow,
we mourn the passing of
our beloved Ramu Chettan,



N. K. Ramachandran Menon
Chairman of Bhavans Schools
in the Middle East.

A cherished brother, cousin and mentor, he
will always be remembered for his warmth,
wisdom and the lasting legacy he created in
the field of education.

His cousins and relatives in Kuwait mourn
his loss and extend their heartfelt
condolences to the bereaved family.

May his soul rest in eternal peace

Armenia’s tech sector emerges as Kuwaiti investment target

Armenia National Day highlights robust Kuwait ties



Photos by Rezk Tawfiq

Armenian envoy hails growing partnership with Kuwait.

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to Kuwait Dr. Arsen Arakelyan has affirmed the depth of Kuwaiti-Armenian relations.

Speaking at a reception organized by the Embassy of Armenia on the occasion of the Armenian National Day, Arakelyan revealed that his country is proud of the strong ties with Kuwait and the mutual trust that is the foundation of a growing partnership between the two nations.

Present at the event were Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan, officials, heads of diplomatic missions and members of the Armenian community.

Arakelyan praised the role of Kuwait on the regional and international stages, for promoting peace and dialogue, supporting efforts to resolve conflicts peacefully, and undertaking humanitarian initiatives to provide aid to areas affected by conflict and disaster.

He stressed that Armenia appreciates the steadfast stance of Kuwait in support of efforts to maintain peace and stability in South Caucasus.

He reiterated that his country rejects any approach based on resolving conflicts through force, while it remains committed to the law on international relations and its advocacy for settling disputes through political and diplomatic means.

He said the diplomatic relations between Armenia and Kuwait were established in 1994, Armenia opened its em-

bassy in Kuwait in 2010, and Kuwait opened its embassy in Armenia in 2011.

He indicated that bilateral relations have since witnessed continuous development, resulting in agreements and memoranda of understanding covering economics, investment, agriculture, tourism, culture, education, air transport and other sectors that serve the interests of the two nations.

He lauded the support of Kuwait for educational and cultural cooperation, revealing that Kuwait University provided about 70 scholarships to Yerevan State University in recent years.

He added that support from the Kuwaiti Al-Babtain Foundation enabled the Center for Arabic Literature at Yerevan State University to operate successfully and contributed to a remarkable increase in the number of students who opted to study the Arabic language in Armenia.

He expressed the Armenian government’s deep gratitude to the government and people of Kuwait for this support.

He also pointed out that both countries are taking concrete steps to unlock new potential for cooperation between their governments.

He highlighted the first trade forum for businesspeople from Armenia and Kuwait, held in January, which was hosted by the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), in coordination with the Armenian Embassy in Kuwait and the Kuwaiti Embassy in Armenia.

He disclosed that the forum is a milestone in the commer-

cial and economic relations between the two countries, adding that meetings were held with the Kuwaiti government officials, state institutions, commercial enterprises and private investment firms to explore cooperation opportunities in different sectors.

He revealed that discussions are currently underway with the Kuwaiti side regarding the reconvening of the Armenian-Kuwaiti Joint Governmental Committee, while welcoming the participation of a Kuwaiti business delegation in the second business-to-business trade forum.

On the economy, he cited the developments that Armenia witnessed in recent years, such as the diversification of its international economic partnerships and enhanced its appeal as a tourism, cultural and investment destination.

He stated that the information technology and software sector is one of the fastest growing industries and the cornerstone of the national economy, pointing out that the number of technology companies in Armenia has increased more than 12 times since 2018.

He pointed out the construction or rehabilitation of about 5,000 kilometers of roads from 2018 to 2026, which improved internal connectivity and supported regional development.

He also mentioned the artificial intelligence facilities and data centers powered by NVIDIA Blackwell technology—with estimated investments reaching \$7 billion. He invited interested Kuwaiti entities to participate in this growth

through investment and collaboration.

He confirmed the potential for both countries to strengthen and expand cooperation, particularly in the fields of trade, tourism, science, education, modern technology, student exchange programs, sports and culture.

He underscored the importance of facilitating high-level reciprocal visits and solidifying coordination among government committees, sectoral bodies and trade delegations in order to open new horizons for partnership between the two nations.

He indicated that the Armenian and Kuwaiti governments are keen on cooperating within the multilateral forums. He expects the participation of a high-level Kuwaiti delegation in the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17), which will be held in Armenia.

He expressed his appreciation for the Armenian community in Kuwait, as most of them consider Kuwait their second home and consider Kuwaitis their brothers.

He commended the efforts of Armenian charitable, cultural and sports organizations in Kuwait, specifically their role in preserving and developing Armenian cultural heritage through participation in local activities, which enrich social life in Kuwait.

He thanked all those present at the event, conveying the warmest sentiments of affection and friendship from Armenia to Kuwait. He wished Kuwait and its people continuous progress, prosperity, security and stability.

Continued from Page 1

Grid tune-up

She affirmed that the ministry will inform the affected customers through the Sahel application based on their data registered in the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) and it will provide a link on its official social media channels to monitor the maintenance status and progress from start to finish.

Kuwaiti Ambassador

For his part, King Hamad welcomed Ambassador Al-Najem and praised the distinguished level of bilateral relations between Bahrain and Kuwait, highlighting their steady growth across various fields and wishing the ambassador success in his diplomatic duties.

Earlier in the day, Ambassador Al-Najem presented a copy of his credentials to Bahraini Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Abdullatif Al-Zayani.

One WhatsApp

The General Traffic Department urged the public to comply with traffic rules, regulations, and instructions, thereby contributing to enhanced traffic safety and the protection of all road users.

Cabinet eases

The Cabinet commended the address delivered on behalf of His Highness the Amir by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah at the 81st session of the UN General Assembly in New York.

It was also briefed on His Highness the Crown Prince’s participation in a joint multilateral session attended by representatives of Arab and Muslim countries and hosted by US President Donald Trump during UNGA High-Level Week.

The Cabinet concluded by strongly condemning recent Houthi missile strikes targeting Taif and Yanbu in Saudi Arabia, reaffirming Kuwait’s complete solidarity with the Kingdom and stressing that Saudi security remains integral to the collective security of Kuwait and the GCC.

Finally, the Cabinet reviewed several agenda items, reports, and minutes from ministerial committees, approving some and referring others to the relevant ministerial committees for study and the submission of appropriate recommendations.

PM inaugurates

He highlighted that this landmark joins a portfolio of major Amiri Diwan developmental projects, including

the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre, the Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre, Al-Salam Palace Museum, and Kuwait Motor Town, aimed at elevating quality of life and empowering Kuwaiti youth.

He also extended appreciation to Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Abdulaziz Meshal Mubarak Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Head of the Supervisory Committee Anwaar Al-Yatama, Deputy Head Khaled Al-Failakawi, and the entire project team, commending their dedication as a testament to the capability of national cadres to execute megaprojects.

Attendees then viewed a documentary showcasing the cultural centers affiliated with the Amiri Diwan and their role in preserving national heritage and enriching Kuwait’s civilizational landscape.

Addressing the gathering, Head of the Supervisory, Management, and Follow-up Committee Anwaar Al-Yatama stated that the inauguration of Phase III and its state-of-the-art Al-Soor Theater marks a new milestone in Kuwait’s civilizational journey, bridging heritage with future aspirations.

She expressed gratitude to government entities, organizing teams, participating artists, and private sector partners, including National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), Kuwait Finance House (KFH), Alshaya Group, Ooredoo, and Best Al-Yousifi, for their support.

The ceremony featured a grand national artistic performance titled “Al-Soor” (The Wall), executed by prominent local artists, which commemorated key historic milestones and depicted values of national cohesion, loyalty, and solidarity under the wise leadership.

After receiving a commemorative gift, His Highness the Prime Minister toured the indoor and outdoor cultural, tourism, recreational, and logistical facilities of Phase III before departing the venue.

Midair trouble,

It affirmed that the distress call was handled in accordance with approved operational plans and safety procedures followed in such cases.

In other news, the U.S. military announced Wednesday that it completed the withdrawal of all American troops from Iraq, ending a 12-year mission to fight the Islamic State group. The last U.S. troops left an air base in northern Iraq under a deal between Baghdad and Washington.

The withdrawal, agreed on two years ago, comes against the backdrop of the ongoing war between the United States and Iran that has also sometimes spilled over into Iraq, with Iran-backed militias firing on U.S. troops and the U.S. striking the groups’ strongholds.

In recent years, Washington has ap-

peared to seek to shift its focus from the Middle East toward Asia, but that shift has been inconsistent, with the Pentagon alternating between reducing its Mideast presence and then finding itself engaging in new conflicts - including the ongoing war in Iran.

Baghdad touted the end of the U.S. mission as a sign of the country’s increasing strength and sovereignty.

The withdrawal was also celebrated by Iran-backed groups but raised concerns among some other Iraqis, particularly in the Kurdish region, where many fear a resurgence of the Islamic State group as well as more attacks by Iran-linked groups, possibly emboldened by the departure of U.S. forces.

Meanwhile, questions loom around the future of the Iraqi militias, which the Baghdad government has sought to disarm, with little success so far.

Pentagon spokesperson Sean Parnell said in a statement that U.S. troops and equipment had completed an “orderly departure” from the air base in Irbil, in northern Iraq’s semi-autonomous Kurdish region.

“This milestone reflects the success of a 12-year campaign that defeated ISIS as an organized military threat in Iraq and across the region,” he said. “It also marks a transition from a wartime coalition mission to an Iraqi-led security effort supported by a more normal bilateral security relationship.”

He added that the U.S. military “will continue to provide targeted training and intelligence support to our Iraqi partners.”

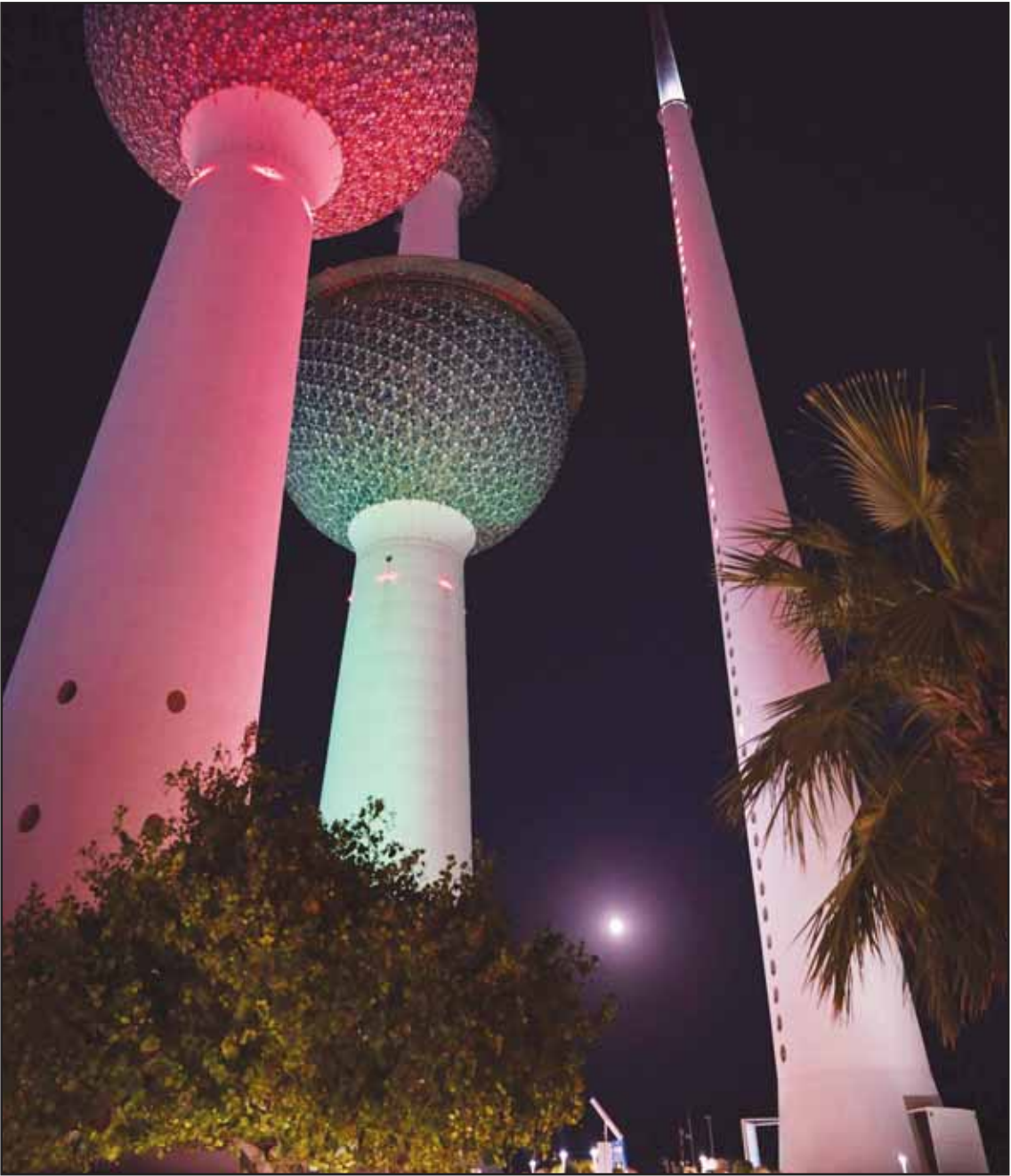
Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi presided over the handover ceremony and described the U.S. withdrawal as the beginning of a “new phase, one defined by Iraq’s sovereignty, the strength of its institutions, the readiness of its forces, the unity of its decision-making, and balanced partnerships with its friends.”

He said Iraqi security forces will continue the fight against IS and the government will ensure that non-state groups no longer hold weapons.

U.S. troops invaded Iraq in 2003 to topple Saddam Hussein. They departed in 2011, but three years later, Iraqi authorities invited a smaller U.S.-led mission to fight the Islamic State group, which had rampaged across Iraq, seizing large swaths of territory.

With the extremist group reduced to scattered sleeper cells, Washington and Baghdad agreed in 2024 to wind the mission down.

U.S. troops pulled out of bases in most areas of Iraq last year but maintained a small presence of hundreds of troops in the semiautonomous northern Kurdish region. Bases there have regularly come under attack since the U.S. and Israel launched their war against Iran on Feb. 28. Iran-backed Iraqi militias also have coordinated with Yemen’s Houthi rebels to attack Saudi Arabia.



A moon is seen over Kuwait City on Sept. 26, 2026. (Xinhua)

Kuwait set for a cooling shift as rain chances build into weekend

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Acting Director of the Meteorological Department Dhirar Al-Ali said Wednesday that temperatures were expected to fall, with a slight chance of scattered rain Friday and occasional thunderstorms Sunday.

Al-Ali told KUNA that weather maps and numerical models indicate the country will be affected by an extension of the Indian monsoon low, accompanied by a hot, humid air mass.

Winds will range from variable to southeasterly, light to moderate in speed, occasionally strengthening and causing sea waves to exceed six feet, he said.

He forecast a relative decline in maximum tempera-

tures, ranging between 40 and 43 degrees Celsius, while minimum temperatures will range between 24 and 27 degrees across most areas.

Al-Ali said scattered rain chances will begin Friday and may become thundery at times Sunday.

The weather will generally be hot and relatively humid, particularly along coastal areas during the day, while temperatures will range from warm to moderate at night.

He added that fog may form Saturday evening and persist until Sunday morning.

Al-Ali urged citizens and residents to follow weather updates through the department’s official website, application and social media accounts.

Raman stresses independence as rivals for LA mayor duel over homelessness

Dems want blue wave, New Hampshire is Exhibit A for why that may not happen

HUDSON, NH, Sept 30, (AP): Five weeks before Election Day, Democratic enthusiasm is reaching a fever pitch.

With Republicans struggling to overcome President Donald Trump's low standing, Democrats are on the offensive in Republican strongholds like Texas and Florida, and even eyeing contests in deeper-pered Kansas and Mississippi. Many Democratic leaders predict that the House majority is all but theirs, and that the Senate majority, almost unthinkable a year ago, is nearly in their grasp as well.

In the midst of such confidence, however, Democrats are ignoring glaring vulnerabilities that threaten to undermine the unstoppable blue wave they say is coming.

Look no further than swing-state New Hampshire, where Democratic leaders are sounding the alarm about political challenges that could jeopardize Rep. Chris Pappas' campaign for an open Senate seat and undermine the party's ability to win races around the country.

Democrats point to Republicans' overwhelming financial advantage

that is allowing them to dominate the airwaves in the closing days of the campaign. At the same time, the Democrats' brand remains deeply unpopular, and they have virtually no margin for error in midterm races that are playing out largely in Republican-leaning states.

New Hampshire Democratic Chairman Ray Buckley says that national Democratic leaders "have consistently been overly optimistic" as they look to expand the midterm map. He's particularly worried about his state's Senate contest, where Republicans are investing far more resources than Democrats.

"There is reason for concern," Buckley said. "We don't want to let this one slip away because they were sending resources to some other unicorns - some other state that's just not possible."

Despite such warnings, there is little sign of concern among senior Democratic officials, who point to Trump's poor standing with voters who are frustrated by the war with Iran and surging costs with Republicans in control of Washington.

"It's nothing we're doing. We're



US Rep Chris Pappas, a Democratic candidate for US Senate, (left), listens to Aaron Bagshaw at the WH Bagshaw company on Sept 29, in Salem, NH. (AP)

winning because they're losing," said Democratic pollster John Anzalone. "And they're losing dramatically with every action the president has taken."

There is almost no state where Democrats cannot compete in November, he said: "America is the battleground state."

For all the Democrats' confidence, the party's brand remains deeply unpopular and fundraising is lagging.

More than half of voters, 55%, have a "strongly" or "somewhat"

unfavorable view of the Democrats, according to a Fox News poll from September. A similar share, 58%, say the same about the Republican Party, while about 6 in 10 voters have a negative view of Trump (62%).

At the same time, about half of registered voters say the Democratic Party is "too far to the left," according to a recent New York Times/Siena poll.

As the election approaches, few Democratic leaders acknowledge there is a problem.

In an interview, Sen. Mark Kelly, D-Ariz., pointed the finger at Republicans when asked about issues with the Democratic brand.

"We've made a much better case than them, and that's why it looks like we're going to win a bunch of House seats and probably win back the Senate," Kelly said. "Right now, I think the Republican brand is the one that's damaged."

And yet Democrats are struggling to keep up with Republican fundraising. Flush with campaign cash, Republicans are dominating the airwaves over the final weeks of the campaign. There isn't a single state that features a top-tier Senate contest in which Democrats are spending more than Republicans.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Democrat Nithya Raman stressed her independence Tuesday from the Democratic Socialists of America, highlighting her disagreements with the group that is backing her candidacy for Los Angeles mayor.

"My independence will always be paramount," said Raman, a city council member who is trying to oust her fellow Democrat, Mayor **Karen Bass**. If elected, "My focus will be on what I believe is best for Angelenos."

Her comments came during a forum co-hosted by the Jewish Federation Los Angeles at a time when the party has been deeply divided over the war in Gaza and aid to Israel. Raman also faced questions about her interview with progressive commentator Hasan Piker last spring in which she responded "I do, yes," when asked by Piker if she believed Israel had committed genocide.

Hurricane's remnants bring more rain to flood-struck US Southwest

PHOENIX, Sept 30, (AP): As former Hurricane Polo weakened over northwestern Mexico on Tuesday evening, the storm's remnants battered the US Southwest, flooding roadways and forcing residents in small New Mexico towns to evacuate over concerns about a dam failing.

Polo had struck the Mexican state of Baja California Sur in the morning with maximum sustained winds of 110 mph (177 kph). It crossed the Gulf of California and weakened to become a tropical storm as it moved inland to the northeast.

By Tuesday evening, the New Mexico Department of Transportation reported flooded roads and debris on highways across the state, while parts of Arizona had become especially drenched, leading to several water rescues.

That is after storms rolled through parts of the US Southwest overnight Monday, saturating the ground, which can make flooding worse.

Later in the week, the flood risk is expected to move into parts of the central US, according to the National Weather Service.

Bands of rain continued to



A man carries items through floodwater past downed electric lines after the passing of Hurricane Polo in Puerto San Carlos, Baja California Sur state, Mexico on Sept 29. (AP)

sweep across the US Southwest, causing desert rivers to surge and usually dry arroyos to rage with floodwater.

The potential failure of the dam in south central New Mexico prompted evacuations in three small communities with hundreds of residents along the Rio Grande. People in Rincon, Salem and Garfield were told to seek higher ground immediately "before conditions worsen."

Top court lets quick deportations to 3rd countries resume for now while it weighs Trump policy

WASHINGTON, Sept 30, (AP): The Supreme Court on Tuesday let US President Donald Trump's administration continue swiftly deporting people to countries other than their own for now, while the justices consider whether the policy is legal.

The apparent 6-3 order temporarily lifts lower court requirements for migrants to get a chance to object before being sent to countries to which they have no ties.

The Supreme Court will hear arguments in December.

Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson would have kept the lower court order in place.

The Trump administration said last week the lower court order forced the cancellation of a deportation flight carrying about 70 people bound for three countries.

The conservative majority has sided with the administration before on the core Trump administration policy, allowing deportation flights to temporarily continue last year.

The court said it will consider several questions: whether the policy is lawful, whether lower courts had the authority to consider the



A group of undocumented migrants is deported by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents across the McAllen-Hidalgo-Reynosa International Bridge in McAllen, Texas on March 13. (AP)

case and issue a sweeping block, as well as other questions the government deems appropriate.

The order "has now allowed the administration to resume sending people to third countries where they may face persecution, torture, imprisonment, or other grave danger,"

said Trina Realmuto, executive director of the National Immigration Litigation Alliance and one of the lawyers representing immigrants in the case.

"But today's order does not decide that the government's policy is lawful," she said in a statement.

"The Court will hear that question on an expedited schedule."

Under a series of often-secret agreements, the Trump administration has deported some 25,000 people to more than two dozen countries, from Liberia to Guyana. The vast majority have been sent to Mexico.

Trump's Republican administration has said that it sends people with final deportation orders to third countries when they can't be returned to their homelands or their native countries won't accept them, including those who have criminal convictions. Those governments provide assurances that people won't be persecuted or tortured, federal attorneys said.

Attorney General Todd Blanche called the policy "an entirely lawful and critical tool for immigration enforcement" in a social media post.

Some migrants, though, have found themselves imprisoned in countries they'd never heard of before their arrivals. Others also face serious safety risks and are left with little choice except to return to the home countries they were fleeing.



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

S.Africa announces measures to tackle GBV after series of killings

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 30, (AP): South African President Cyril Ramaphosa announced new measures Tuesday to combat gender-based violence (GBV) following the killing of at least 11 women in Ekurhuleni, east of Johannesburg, since July.

The measures include an audit of women's safety to be completed within 60 days, requiring local authorities across the country to identify dangerous and high-risk areas, including places with broken streetlights, abandoned buildings and poorly secured parks.

Ramaphosa also ordered police and the National Prosecuting Authority to review within 90 days unresolved cases involving murders, attempted murders, rapes and other gender-based violence cases, he said in a televised national address on Tuesday.

The recent spate of killings in Ekurhuleni has frightened residents, particularly after the 11th victim's body was discovered Sunday. The area remains on high alert while authorities investigate whether a serial killer or killers are responsible.

Ramaphosa said four suspects have been arrested. In some cases, police have identified persons of interest and



In this photo provided by the South African Government Communications and Information Services (GCIS), South African President Cyril Ramaphosa addresses the nation on new measures to tackle his country's scourge of femicide and violence against women and children, in Pretoria, South Africa on Sept 29. (AP)

collected forensic material, including DNA, blood samples, clothing, cell-phones and cellphone records.

While police have not confirmed that the recent killings are linked, they have sparked fear and anger over the country's long-term femi-

cide and violent crime problem.

"This cannot be accepted as a normal part of life in South Africa," said Ramaphosa. "We must confront an uncomfortable truth. What we have done has not been enough."

He said the audits would be followed by funded plans to address the identified hotspots and backlogs in solving gender-based violence crimes.

Also:

ABUJA, Nigeria: Three Nigerian nationals have been killed in recent weeks in **South Africa**, Nigerian authorities said Tuesday, adding to tensions between the two countries over persistent violence against migrants.

Nigeria's ambassador-designate to South Africa, **Femi Fani-Kayode**, said the three were killed between Sept. 18 and 21. He identified them as **Kenechukwu Christopher Igwemmadu**, killed in **Bloemfontein**; **Olaniyi Olaleye Olatunde**, in **Pretoria**, and **Christian Hillary Nnaemeka**, in **Primrose**.

The deaths bring the number of Nigerians killed in South Africa this year to 12 and 112 since 2022, the Nigerian official said.

Colombia issues lengthy sentences against ELN leaders for recruiting kids

BOGOTA, Colombia, Sept 30, (AP): A judge sentenced in absentia 11 commanders of Colombia's largest remaining rebel group to prison for recruiting 60 children as young as 8 into their ranks between 2004 and 2018.

The commanders of the National Liberation Army, or ELN, were found guilty of recruiting boys and girls between the ages of 8 and 17. Prosecutors said that some of the girls were sexually abused.

Sentences handed to the rebel leaders ranged from 11 years to 20 years in prison. Some of them recently participated in peace talks with Colombia's government.

The trial was conducted in absentia because the commanders haven't been captured by Colombia's government.

One of the leaders who was convicted, Israel Ramirez Pineda, also known by the alias Pablo Beltrán, now lives in Cuba and recently led a delegation that held peace talks with Colombia's government.

The government canceled peace talks with the ELN last year after the group staged a string of attacks in the northeastern Catatumbo region in which at least 80 people were killed.

Human rights groups have pointed out that the recruitment of children by rebel groups and gangs in Colombia continues to be a problem, with these organizations now using social



Pablo Beltrán, commander and chief negotiator for the National Liberation Army, ELN, rebel group speaks during a joint news conference with Jose Otty Patiño, chief negotiator for the Colombian government, as a part of the peace talks between both parties in Bogota, Colombia on Oct 10, 2023. (AP)

media to lure youth into their ranks.

In 2016, almost 14,000 fighters laid down their weapons following a peace deal between Colombia's government and the nation's largest rebel group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC.

But violence has resurfaced in some rural areas where there is little state presence and where groups like the ELN are fighting for control of drug trafficking routes, extortion rackets and illegal

mines abandoned by FARC.

According to Colombia's Human Rights Defenders' Office, at least 1,500 children have been recruited by armed groups since 2021, with 625 cases reported in 2024. Recruits are given a wide range of tasks that include serving as messengers, gathering intelligence, cooking or engaging with the enemy - while girls are sometimes forced into sexual acts with commanders.

Subcontinent

Pakistan forces kill 3 militants: Pakistani security forces killed three militants in an intelligence-based operation in North Waziristan district of the country's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, security sources told Xinhua on Wednesday.

The operation was carried out in Mir Ali area of North Waziristan, where security forces targeted militant hideouts in and around the town, said the sources.

A large quantity of weapons and ammunition was recovered from the militants during the operation, according to the security sources.

The sources added that security forces also foiled an attempt by militants to intercept a truck carrying rations near the main market of Mir Ali area.

Pakistani President **Asif Ali Zardari** and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif commended the security forces for the successful operation. (Xinhua)



Zardari

5 dead in India LPG cylinder blasts: Five people belonging to the same family died, and three others were injured when two liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders blew off in India's northern state of Uttar Pradesh, confirmed the local police on Tuesday.

Among the dead were three children, and the three people who suffered from burn injuries were admitted to a local hospital, the police said.

The mishap occurred late on Monday night while dinner was being cooked, the police said.

Firefighters were called in to douse the fire, and damage to nearby houses was being assessed. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

8 killed in India drowning incidents: A total of eight people, including five family members, died by drowning in two separate incidents in India's northern state of Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday, confirmed the local police.

Police said a family including a father-son duo and three relatives drowned in the Sukhnai river, while they were performing certain religious rituals in remembrance of their forefathers.

In a separate incident, three boys went bathing at a spot inside Sukma-Dukma dam in the Jhansi district, and later died of drowning in deep waters. (Xinhua)

Kuwait oil prices down to \$105.39 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went down USD 1.12 to reach USD 105.39 per barrel (pb) in Tuesday's trading, compared to USD 106.51 pb on Friday, according to the Kuwait Petro-

leum Corporation (KPC) on Wednesday.

In global markets, Brent crude went down USD 2.69 to reach USD 102.59 pb, while US West Texas Intermediate went down USD 3.22 to reach USD 89.38 pb.

New framework to give Kuwaiti citizens more choices

Kuwait advances new housing finance system integrating banks & developers

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The issue of housing provision in Kuwait is no longer tied solely to the number of plots distributed by the state or the liquidity available at the Kuwait Credit Bank, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The real estate financing initiative opens a new pathway for citizens to secure housing by broadening the scope of financing and integrating banks and real estate developers into a unified system regulated by the state and supervised by the Central Bank of Kuwait.

Following the Cabinet's approval on September 22 of a draft decree-law regarding real estate financing for eligible housing beneficiaries, and its subsequent submission to the Amir, a key component of the new housing system has reached an advanced stage.

This marks a shift away from the long-standing reliance on direct government funding as the primary channel for meeting citizens' housing needs.

The draft law, comprising 15 articles, does not introduce a housing loan in the traditional sense. Rather, it establishes a mechanism that brings the banking sector into the housing finance landscape, while the state continues to provide support and regulate the relationship between beneficiaries and financing entities.

The draft law outlines two pathways for accessing real estate financing - purchasing a residential unit from a real estate developer in accordance with the governing regulations, or constructing on a government-allocated plot provided by the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) as part of its projects.

This approach links financing to the real estate developer model, whereby the private sector supplies residential units, while the financing mechanism enables eligible citizens to acquire these units or construct homes on their government-allocated plots.

The draft law categorizes financing into subsidized and unsubsidized options while permitting a combination of both, subject to regulations set by the Central Bank of Kuwait.

Under the subsidized financing scheme, the beneficiary is responsible for repaying the principal amount, while the state bears the cost of interest or returns. The beneficiary may also obtain additional non-subsidized financing, the cost of which they must cover in accordance with the financing entity's terms.

Eligibility for subsidized financing requires compliance with the Kuwait Credit Bank's real estate loan regulations and stipulates that the beneficiary must not have previously received state housing assistance.

The draft law sets a maximum repayment period of 25 years from the date financing dis-

bursement begins, with repayment made in equal monthly installments.

Financing for the construction of a government-allocated plot is disbursed in stages linked to construction progress, as defined by the executive regulations.

In the event of default, the financing entity issues a notice to the beneficiary. The financing may then be rescheduled for a period not exceeding five years, subject to the Central Bank of Kuwait's guidelines, with the beneficiary bearing the interest or returns accrued during the rescheduling period.

The Kuwait Credit Bank retains a pivotal role in the new system, albeit one that differs from its traditional function as a direct lender. The draft law authorizes it to sign contracts with financing entities on behalf of the State.

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for paying the interest or returns due on subsidized financing to the Kuwait Credit Bank.

Should the beneficiary default, the bank is obligated, on behalf of the state, to pay the outstanding balance of the subsidized financing to the financing entity, secured by a formal mortgage on the residential unit.

The project began taking shape in January 2025 through meetings involving relevant government, regulatory, and banking entities.

The framework focuses on limiting the system to those eligible for housing assistance and engaging the private sector and real estate developers, while preserving citizens' freedom of choice and the role of the Kuwait Credit Bank.

With the approval of the Real Estate Developer Law, the equation is completed through a clear division of roles - the developer constructs the units, the banking sector provides financing, and the state provides support and regulation, while the citizen selects the housing option best suited to their needs.

Following the Cabinet's approval and the submission of the project to His Highness the Amir, the operational details will depend on completing the legislative process and issuing the executive regulations within six months of the decree-law's publication in the official gazette.

In this regard, Mansour Al-Nuzhan, an expert in consumer protection, regulatory oversight, and commercial transactions, stated in a post on his X account the following:

"Concerns are being raised regarding the prices of residential units to be offered by real estate developers and the potential for price increases that could affect monthly installment amounts, particularly for middle-income earners, amid fears that housing-related financial obligations could consume a significant portion of household income."

However, while these concerns are valid, the real estate developer model does not restrict citizens to a single housing option. Existing laws and housing plans provide applicants with multiple alternatives, allowing them to choose a path that aligns with their specific needs and financial capabilities.

Housing options available to citizens fall into three main categories.

- The first involves purchasing a housing product from a real estate developer, such as a residential plot, a completed house, or a unit under construction. This enables citizens to acquire a home without having to manage construction phases, contract with builders, or oversee the execution process.

- The second is traditional self-construction, whereby PAHW allocates a residential plot to the citizen. The beneficiary then uses a KD 70,000 housing loan from the Kuwait Credit Bank to manage and oversee the construction of their own home.

- The third option consists of ready-made government houses, which are developed by PAHW and distributed to eligible applicants based on application priority and established regulations.

Furthermore, the law governing the establishment of residential cities and governorates reinforces the state's move toward diversifying the products offered by real estate developers to include residential plots.

Regarding ready-made houses and apartments, the success of this approach hinges on developers' ability to offer products that balance quality with affordability, particularly for middle-income earners.

In this context, it is crucial to reduce land and construction costs for developers and consider providing subsidized building materials, subject to specific guidelines. This would enable developers to offer lower-priced units while easing the financial burden of financing and monthly installments on citizens.

Developers could also be encouraged to offer flexible housing models designed for future expansion. This would lower initial costs while allowing families to adapt their homes as their needs evolve.

The housing authority is already moving to involve the private sector in projects in Al-Mutlaa and East and West Saad Al-Abdullah.

Ultimately, however, citizen acceptance of these products will depend on factors such as price, installment terms, size, design, and available services, while ensuring that a range of housing alternatives remains accessible so citizens can choose the option best suited to their circumstances.

Digital payments reach 85%

CBK expands digital banking framework

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Kuwait's banking digital transformation began with the launch of the country's first ATM and use of plastic cards in 1979, led by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK).

CBK has pursued a proactive approach based on regulatory frameworks supporting financial innovation, adoption of modern technologies, cybersecurity, data protection and financial stability.

Global experience has shown that digitally prepared countries were better able to limit the economic impact of crises, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic and amid rapid technological advances.

Kuwait has kept pace with these developments through its Kuwait Vision 2035, which seeks to establish the country as an advanced financial and commercial center.

The vision promotes a shift from an energy-based economy toward a knowledge-based economy that delivers sustainable growth, while prioritizing information and communications technology infrastructure.

CBK has been a key driver of this transformation through a series of regulatory measures and policies covering monetary and banking activities.

The bank launched its Regulatory Sandbox, among the world's pioneering regulatory environments, for companies and individuals seeking to introduce innovative financial technology products and services.

The sandbox supports innovation by allowing financial service providers to test products using advanced technologies or innovative applications of existing technologies.

Since 2004, CBK has continued developing Kuwait's payment systems infrastructure, including the Kuwait Automated Settlement System for Participants (KASSIP) and Kuwait Electronic Cheque Clearing Company (KECC).

These systems have undergone continuous expansion and modernization, improving operational efficiency and reliability.

CBK also implemented the second phase of the National Payment System project, whose development began in January 2024.

As part of the project, the Kuwait Automated Clearing System was launched in January 2026, marking a strategic step in developing payment infrastructure.

In February, CBK launched the Kuwait Dispute Management System as part of the project's second phase.

The system provides an integrated mechanism for handling and settling disputes arising from financial transactions conducted through national payment systems.

It also supports the digital transformation of related financial correspondence.

CBK also launched the Electronic Banking Services System (EBSS) for government entities, providing faster, more accurate and efficient financial transactions.

The system now serves 46 government entities, enabling automated and immediate transfers and responses, while allowing direct monitoring of transfers and account balances.

In cross-border payments, the second group of local banks joined the AFAQ Gulf payment system, which enables fast, low-cost transfers in GCC and other currencies within a secure environment.

To foster financial technology, CBK approved the launch of the Wamd instant payment service for individuals in 2024.

Apple Pay entered the Kuwaiti market in 2022, while approvals were also granted for other digital payment services, including Samsung Pay.

These developments helped increase the share of non-cash transactions from about 34 percent in 2010 to 85 percent in the first quarter of 2026.

As part of regulating electronic payments, CBK required companies and financial institutions operating payment and electronic settlement systems to regularize their status and obtain its approval.

Entities established after the regulatory instructions were issued must also register with CBK before offering electronic payment-related services or products.

CBK has approved nine companies to provide electronic payment services and seven companies as electronic money service providers.

Regarding digital banking,

CBK established a digital banking framework in 2022 allowing digital banks under three main models.

The first allows an existing bank to establish a digital banking unit under a different brand, as demonstrated by Weway of National Bank of Kuwait, Tam of Kuwait Finance House and SiDi of Warba Bank.

The second model is banking-as-a-service, based on partnerships between licensed banks and digital partners.

The third involves a fully independent digital bank operating under a banking license and providing integrated digital services relying heavily on cloud-based systems.

CBK has consistently stressed that financial innovation requires a trusted environment supported by effective supervision.

Accordingly, it launched the Wolooj Innovation Hub in 2023 to encourage innovation in artificial intelligence, digital transformation, information security, financial technology and regulatory technology.

The hub also supports turning ideas into practical solutions by providing resources and fostering a culture of experimentation.

CBK's digital strategy views transformation as more than adopting modern technology, emphasizing innovation, flexibility and adaptability to rapid changes. The strategy seeks to establish advanced operational and technological capabilities that meet customer needs while supporting financial sector stability and sustainability.

CBK also supports financial technology through regulatory instructions, frameworks and procedures designed to provide a secure environment for innovation.

These measures allow innovative products and services to be tested and assessed against international best practices while safeguarding financial system stability.

The bank's digital transformation strategy is based on partnership and integration with local banks.

It has urged banks to develop forward-looking strategies outlining their objectives for improving banking products and services through high-quality, cost-effective financial technologies.

To develop national talent, CBK launched an internal scholarship program on April 30 for Kuwaitis pursuing master's degrees in financial technology.

The program aims to prepare national professionals capable of leading digital transformation in the financial sector.

Financial inclusion is another key pillar of CBK's digital strategy, with policies and strategies designed to facilitate access to financial services for individuals and small and medium-sized enterprises.

Kuwait has made tangible progress in financial inclusion, particularly in banking accounts for low-income groups and domestic workers, which exceeded 1.46 million as of April 14, 2026.

CBK considers cybersecurity and digital risk management key pillars of its digital strategy, balancing rapid financial and technological innovation with financial stability and infrastructure protection.

In December, it issued the Cyber and Operational Resilience Framework for local banks and financial institutions, updating the 2020 Cybersecurity Framework.

The updated framework addresses evolving digital risks and strengthens the banking sector's ability to counter cyber threats. In April, CBK also launched the Fraud Shield Initiatives Accelerator Program to strengthen detection and prevention of electronic financial fraud and raise public awareness.

The initiative involves banks, payment service providers, fintech innovators and regulatory authorities.

To build national capabilities, CBK developed Risk Management Leaders and Cybersecurity Leaders programs to qualify Kuwaiti professionals and equip them with relevant knowledge and skills.

As financial digitalization accelerates, CBK recognizes consumer trust as essential to ensuring a secure, inclusive and resilient financial system.

It has therefore adopted an integrated approach focused on consumer protection, digital innovation and financial literacy, alongside awareness campaigns addressing emerging digital risks and threats.

Tajikistan, Kuwait discuss enhancing economic & investment cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Tajikistan's Minister of Finance, Faididdin Kahhorzoda stressed on Wednesday, the importance of strengthening economic, financial, investment and tourism cooperation with the State of Kuwait.

In a statement to KUNA following a meeting between Minister Kahhorzoda and Kuwait's Ambassador to Tajikistan, Mohammed Al-Amairi, at the Ministry of Finance in the capital, Dushanbe, the Embassy of the State of Kuwait said the minister praised the role of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) in supporting development projects in Tajikistan.

For his part, Ambassador Al-Amairi said the meeting discussed ways to

enhance communication and coordination between the finance ministries of the two countries, as well as opportunities to encourage Kuwaiti investment across various sectors.

He added that the two sides also underscored the importance of continuing joint coordination to develop and strengthen economic relations, particularly in the energy, transport, agriculture and tourism sectors, in a way that contributes to advancing the shared interests of the two friendly countries.

KFAED has provided numerous development loans to Tajikistan to finance several projects in the road, electricity, irrigation and education sectors.

under a single Arab umbrella and network.

She expressed hope that this entity would contribute to supporting the Arab economy, empowering women, and preparing a generation of young people capable of shaping the future.

For her part, Dr. Hala El-Said, Economic Advisor to the Egyptian President, emphasized that the coming phase requires the role of Arab women to evolve from mere participation in economic activity to exerting a genuine influence on its trajectories and future, particularly amidst the rapidly unfolding political and geopolitical challenges facing the region.

El-Said stated that the meeting underscores the fact that women have become key partners in shaping the future and supporting the economy.

She noted that the challenge lies in transforming the individual successes of Arab businesswomen into a collective economic force that bolsters joint Arab action through the establishment of broader ties and partnerships.

She emphasized that cooperation between businesswomen and Arab institutions is "not a luxury but a necessity for success," calling for

the establishment of genuine partnerships linking companies, investors, and opportunity holders across Arab nations.

For her part, Counselor Amal Ammar, Head of Egypt's National Council for Women, affirmed that women's economic empowerment is no longer merely one development pathway, it has become a strategic imperative linked to a nation's ability to sustain growth and enhance economic competitiveness.

She explained that the National Council for Women has supported various projects and programs aimed at women, creating opportunities for training, employment, and capacity building, while enabling Egyptian women to achieve higher levels of success and competitiveness.

The meeting included a documentary screening on the journey of the Arab Businesswomen Council, as well as a General Assembly session to present financial and administrative reports and to outline the Council's administrative structure and leadership roles for the eighth term (2026-2030).

Trading value hits KD 88.1 mln

Boursa Kuwait closes lower on Wed

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Wednesday's trading session lower, with its All-Share Index falling 18.25 points, or 0.21 percent, to 8,779.38 points.

A total of 289 million shares changed hands through 22,283 transactions, with a trading value of KD 88.1 million (approximately USD 270.4 million).

The Main Market Index declined 58.63 points, or 0.64 percent, to close at 9,094.64 points. Trading volume reached 161.6 million shares through 12,932 transactions, valued at KD 34 million (approximately USD 104.3

million).

The Premier Market Index dropped 10.59 points, or 0.12 percent, to 9,167.93 points. Some 127.4 million shares were traded through 9,351 transactions, worth KD 54 million (approximately USD 165.7 million).

The Main 50 Index fell 102.35 points, or 0.99 percent, to close at 10,212.60 points. Trading volume stood at 112.5 million shares through 9,096 transactions, with a total value of KD 24.3 million (approximately USD 74.6 million).

Under the theme ‘The Future of Banking’

Warba Bank opens registration for ‘ROWAD 7.0’

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Warba Bank announced the opening of registration for the seventh edition of its innovation program, ROWAD 7.0, in collaboration with the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC). Held this year under the theme “The Future of Banking,” the program aims to explore and develop innovative solutions based on the latest emerging technologies and their applications in the banking sector.

The launch of the program’s new edition comes as part of Warba Bank’s commitment to supporting innovation, empowering young talent, and encouraging advanced banking ideas and solutions that can contribute to the development of banking services. The program targets Kuwaiti and GCC students currently pursuing undergraduate, master’s, or doctoral studies in the United Kingdom.

Al-Ghaith: We Believe Innovation Is a Fundamental Pillar for the Future of the Banking Sector

In a statement on this occasion, Anwar Bader Al-Ghaith, Deputy Chief Executive Officer – Digital Transformation and Operations at Warba Bank, stated:

“The ROWAD 7.0 program represents an extension of Warba Bank’s commitment to supporting innovation and providing an environment that enables young talent to transform their ideas into practical, applicable solutions. We view this program as a platform combining knowledge, technology, and creativity, offering participants a genuine opportunity to understand the future challenges facing the banking sector and work toward developing innovative solutions to address them.”

Al-Ghaith added: “Choosing ‘The Future of Banking’ as the theme for the seventh edition reflects the importance of leveraging rapid technological developments, particularly advanced technologies that are actively reshaping customer experience and enhancing financial operations and services. Through ROWAD 7.0, we seek to encourage students and young talent to think differently and leverage their academic knowledge to create solutions that deliver real value to the banking industry.”

Al-Ghaith noted that investing in young talent represents an important pathway to supporting the innovation



Anwar Bader Al-Ghaith, Deputy Chief Executive Officer – Digital Transformation and Operations

ecosystem. He affirmed that Warba Bank continues to build partnerships and programs that offer participants opportunities for learning, experimentation, and development, in line with global shifts across the financial and banking sector.

“The Future of Banking”: The Theme of the Seventh Edition

ROWAD 7.0 focuses on exploring use cases for advanced technologies and examining how these technologies can be applied within the banking industry. This provides participants with the opportunity to present innovative ideas and solutions addressing future needs and challenges in the sector.

The program aims to foster innovative thinking among participants, turn theoretical knowledge into practical applications, and enable students to develop and present new ideas within an environment centered on innovation, technology, and banking services.

An Innovation Program Spanning Several Weeks

The ROWAD 7.0 program spans a period of up to eight weeks. Training sessions will be delivered virtually through digital platforms designed to support interaction and participation, enabling participants to make the most of the program.

The program will conclude with a Demo Day in London, where participating teams will have the opportunity to present their projects and innovative solutions in December.

An Invitation to Students to Participate and Pitch Their Ideas

The program invites students cur-



rently pursuing undergraduate, master’s, or doctoral degrees in the United Kingdom to register and participate in this innovative experience. Registration is open to students from the State of Kuwait and other GCC countries.

Participation offers students an opportunity to develop their skills in innovation and teamwork, gain a deeper understanding of technology’s potential applications in banking, and develop solutions and ideas that can be presented to a group of specialists during the final stage of the program.

Cash Prizes Totaling £30,000

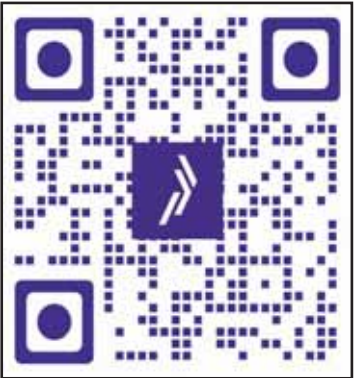
The program features cash prizes for participating teams totaling £30,000, alongside additional prizes and rewards that will be announced in the coming period.

Through these awards, the program seeks to incentivize participants to deliver innovative ideas with potential for further development, encouraging them to advance their projects and transform them from mere concepts into solutions that can create future value.

A Partnership Bringing Together Warba Bank and DIFC

The ROWAD 7.0 program is organized in collaboration between Warba Bank and the DIFC to support innovation and open new avenues for young talent to explore recent developments in technology and financial services.

This partnership highlights the importance of collaboration between financial institutions and specialized innovation ecosystems, creating an environment that nurtures new ideas and links them to the evolving needs of the banking sector. In the previous edition,



ROWAD registration

participants were given the opportunity to visit the DIFC headquarters in Dubai to gain valuable experience in banking innovation, an opportunity that will be offered again to participants in the current edition.

Warba Bank Continues Its Support for Innovation

The launch of the seventh edition confirms the program’s continuity as one of Warba Bank’s flagship innovation initiatives, providing a platform that connects students and young talent with the banking sector while encouraging them to explore the potential of modern technology.

Through these initiatives, Warba Bank continues to emphasize innovation as a core value driving business development and keeping pace with rapid transformations in the banking industry, while investing in skilled professionals and young talent capable of contributing to the development of future banking solutions.

Interested students can apply by visiting the registration link: <https://qr1.be/5SV8DU> or by contacting the program team via the dedicated email: Rowad@warbabank.com.

About Warba Bank:

Warba Bank has achieved significant milestones over a relatively short period, establishing a leading position in Islamic digital banking. With one of the largest shareholder bases among local banks, Warba Bank maintains close ties with different segments of Kuwaiti society. The bank continues to strengthen its position as a trusted banking partner, combining innovation and social responsibility in the delivery of financial products and services.

Pharmaceutical supplies strained

Iran medicine prices soar amid sanctions

TEHRAN, Sept 30, (AP): Medication prices are soaring in Iran and some treatments have become hard to find, leaving patients and their families scrambling as a U.S. blockade and stepped-up sanctions squeeze the country’s pharmaceuticals industry.

Some medicines have more than tripled in price, further squeezing Iranians’ finances seven months into the country’s war with the United States and Israel. Prices for food and other goods have skyrocketed even as unemployment has risen and the currency, which hit a record low this week, has lost half its value.

The war has become an economic endurance test. Iran has tried to push world energy prices higher with attacks on the region’s oil shipping routes; the United States, in turn, has aimed to wreck Iran’s economy by blockading its ports since June and slapping it with increasingly tough sanctions.

Iran’s pharmaceutical industry is vulnerable because of its reliance on imports. So far there has been little sign of major shortages of medicines at Iran’s hospitals, but the difficulties are showing at pharmacies.

Gholamreza Rahmani, a Tehran welder, and his wife recently scoured several pharmacies over two days hoping to fill prescriptions for four medicines for their 12-year-old daughter, who was having stomach troubles. “Each one would have one or two items, not all of them,” he said, noting that they couldn’t find one of the medicines anywhere. The search cost him two days of wages because he couldn’t go to work.

“My daughter’s illness and the loss of income are like scissors, cutting from two sides,” he said.

Iran produces more than 80% of its medicines domestically, according to official statistics, but many of those rely on imported raw materials. Before the war, most medicines and pharmaceutical components were brought in by sea, but the American naval blockade has cut off shipping, Bahman Sabour, a member of the Tehran Pharmacies Association, told local media.

Medical importers switched to more expensive air routes. But that access has been threatened by new U.S. sanctions on a number of Iranian airlines, which led to some international flights being halted.

U.S. sanctions don’t directly target medicines, but financial sanctions in place for years also hurt the pharmaceutical supply because international banks and companies often will be overly cautious and refuse transactions because they fear running afoul of sanctions, said Reza Majdzadeh, a professor at the School of Health and Social Care at the University of Essex in England.

“A medicine may be perfectly legal to sell to Iran, but a bank may refuse to process the payment,” he said. “A pharmaceutical or shipping company may simply decide that dealing with Iran is not worth the risk. ... The transaction is legal on paper, but it does not happen in the real world.”

The Iranian government hasn’t said how much medicine production has fallen. But officials say it has been hurt because airstrikes damaged more than 40 pharmaceutical

factories, including some producing cancer treatments.

Also, cash-strapped pharmacies sometimes struggle to keep their shelves stocked. Insurance companies have fallen behind by as much as nine months on payments to pharmacies for drug coverage because of the “current situation,” said Mohammad Jamalian, a member of parliament’s health committee.

Sabour, of the pharmacies’ association, said insurance companies owe pharmacies about \$270 million.

Supplies are also strained because medicines are smuggled to neighboring Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq, where prices are higher, state media reported.

“The price of almost everything has gone up, in some cases doubling, quadrupling, or even increasing six-fold,” said Mina Mohammadian, a salesperson at a pharmacy in Tehran.

Mehdi Pirsalehi, head of the government agency that sets drug prices, said last week that the prices of 2,000 types of medicines were “amended” over the past six months because of inflation and currency issues.

Ali Fallah, a Tehran resident, said the ointment he buys for inflammation has quadrupled in price in three months - from 750,000 rials, or about \$0.35, to 3.25 million rials, or roughly \$1.46. The minimum daily wage for an unskilled worker in Iran is about 7.5 million rials, or about \$3.50.

“I honestly don’t know where this situation is heading,” Fallah said.

The prices of tablets essential for patients undergoing kidney dialysis, for example, have climbed by nearly 350% in recent months. So have over-the-counter painkillers like acetaminophen, if they can be found at all.

An employee at one public hospital said there are shortages of key specialized psychiatric medicines to treat bipolar disorders and acute psychosis, and more common medications for anxiety and panic disorders. Doctors have had to use electroconvulsive therapy on patients more often because the relevant drugs weren’t available or were of inferior quality, she said.

“The side effects for patients are really a lot,” she told The Associated Press by phone from a major Iranian city. She spoke on condition that she and her location would not be identified for security reasons.

Azita Hassanpour, a part-time teacher, said that her mother, who has cancer, has been able to get her chemotherapy treatments, but sometimes they are delayed because the medicines aren’t as available as they were before the war. Hassanpour is also concerned because her mother hasn’t been able to get her annual flu shot, with authorities trying to track down new vaccine sources.

“I am worried that I may lose her because of flu. I weep out of her sight every night,” Hassanpour said.

Hadi Ahmadi, a spokesman of the Iranian Pharmacists Association, told local media Saturday that about 700,000 flu vaccine doses were imported from China and another half million doses are expected soon. But a jab this year is going for 22 million rials, or roughly \$9, which is almost double last year’s price, though authorities have promised to provide it to high-risk patients free of charge.



A pharmacy worker arranges boxes of medicine on shelves at a pharmacy in Tehran, Iran, Monday, Sept. 21, 2026. (AP Photo/Vahid Salemi)

Held at KIB Business Center to support Kuwait’s fitness & wellness sector

KIB promotes entrepreneurship through ‘Move & Build’

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Reflecting its continued commitment to empowering Kuwaiti entrepreneurs and strengthening the local business community, Kuwait International Bank (KIB), through its start-up incubator and accelerator subsidiary, KIB Business Center, hosted “Move & Build”, an exclusive networking event that brought together owners of gyms, fitness studios, and wellness centers from across Kuwait. Held recently at the Center, the event formed part of KIB’s broader corporate social responsibility efforts, creating a platform for industry dialogue and exchange that supports business development and contributes to sustainable economic growth. Participants gained access to market knowledge, peer expertise and valuable insights to help them identify emerging opportunities within their sector.

Commenting on the initiative, Abdulaziz Al-Shammari, Assistant General Manager of Retail Banking at KIB, said: “At KIB, our role in serving Kuwait’s business and entrepreneurial community extends beyond banking solutions. We believe that the growth and development of local enterprises are fundamental to building a stronger and more sustainable business ecosystem. Local business owners play an important role in driving economic activity, creating employment opportunities and supporting innovation, ultimately contributing to a more resilient, dynamic and growing economy. Through our Business Banking offering and initiatives such as ‘Move & Build’, we aim to provide business owners with tailored financial solutions alongside the knowledge, insights and connections that can help them navigate growth, strengthen their capabilities and build for the future.”

Organized in collaboration with strategic partner Boutiqaat and data partner EXC PR Consultancy and Business Management, “Move & Build” facilitated connections among entrepreneurs operating across different areas of Kuwait’s growing fitness and wellness sector, including CrossFit, strength training, Pilates, reformer, yoga, general fitness, rehabilitation, and physiotherapy. Participants gained access to exclusive market data and analysis on the local sector, while the event provided opportunities to exchange experiences, discuss shared business challenges, build new relationships and expand networks within the industry.

From his side, Hamad Al Oufan, Manager –Business Banking Department at KIB, stated: “KIB Business Center’s focus is on leveraging our proximity to the Bank’s Business Banking customers to deliver experiences that respond to the realities of running and growing a business in Kuwait. ‘Move & Build’ reflects this approach by creating a focused setting around one fast-evolving sec-



KIB's Abdulaziz Al-Shammari



KIB's Hamad Al Oufan

tor and the issues that matter most to its business owners. This proximity allows us to better understand what is shaping our customers’ businesses and continue developing distinctive initiatives that respond to their ambitions and evolving needs.”

Meanwhile, Ali Al-Tayyar, Corporate Communications Senior Manager at Boutiqaat, noted that the fruitful collaboration with KIB reflects Boutiqaat’s commitment to forging sustainable community partnerships aligned with its vision of contributing to a better future. He added that the collaboration offered a valuable platform for exchanging insights and expertise on key shifts in consumer behavior and evolving lifestyle trends, while shedding light on their implications for the fitness and health sectors.

Al-Tayyar further explained that the event provided an opportunity for direct dialogue with business owners and professionals across the fitness and health sectors, facilitating meaningful discussions around evolving consumer expectations and needs, as well as the importance of continuously enhancing services and experiences to keep pace with these shifts. He emphasized that Boutiqaat remains committed to supporting initiatives that bring diverse sectors together around shared objectives, foster knowledge exchange, and enhance businesses’ ability to understand their customers and respond effectively to their evolving needs, ultimately contributing to the sustainable growth of vital sectors and creating lasting value for the community.

Meanwhile, Nayef Bastaki, CEO of EXCPR, said: “We were pleased to collaborate with KIB through its subsidiary on ‘Move & Build’ and bring our market expertise to an initiative that places relevant insights directly in the hands of Kuwaiti business owners. The event gave fitness and wellness entrepreneurs a clearer view of customer behavior, competitive dynamics, and the factors influencing decisions around pricing and retention. We believe that combining relevant data with direct engagement can give business owners greater confidence as they plan for sustainable growth.”

It is worth noting that KIB continues to support Kuwaiti entrepreneurs and local business owners through its Business Banking services, providing customers with the financial solutions they need to manage and grow their businesses. Alongside this core offering, initiatives such as “Move & Build” and the work of KIB Business Center reflect the Bank’s broader social responsibility efforts and commitment to advancing its Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) priorities by creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, collaboration and engagement that contribute to sustainable economic development in Kuwait.

Lamu refinery set to process 700,000 bpd

Africa breaks ground on \$16 bln oil refinery

NAIROBI, Sept 30, (AP): Five African heads of state led a ground breaking ceremony Wednesday on a \$16-billion oil refinery project in East Africa, following calls for the continent to boost its self-sufficiency in processing raw materials into finished products.

Kenya’s President William Ruto hosted his counterparts from Uganda, Ethiopia, Togo, Benin as well as Nigeria’s former President Olusegun Obasanjo, shoveling soil at the site to symbolically show construction of the refinery has started.

When work is completed in 40 months, the refinery is expected to process 700,000 barrels of oil per day.

The project, in the coastal town of Lamu, will be undertaken by Nigerian billionaire Aliko Dangote, who insisted that “Africa must industrialize Africa.” He said Wednesday the continent cannot be “exporting what



Nigerian industrialist Aliko Dangote and Kenyan President William Ruto officially unveil the plaque at the launch of the Dangote East Africa Petroleum Refinery in Lamu County, Kenya, Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2026. (AP Photo/Brian Wachira)

it has and importing what it needs.”

The refinery will rely on oil from neighboring countries such as Uganda, which plans to export oil through Tanzania, and South Sudan, which exports oil via Sudan.

Dangote said East African countries have a sufficient market for the oil that will be refined locally. The countries in the region consume much more than the 700,000 barrels per day that will be refined, he said.

The refinery was initially planned to be built in Tanzania’s coastal town of Tanga, but Dangote said it was later determined that Lamu had deeper waters, solid ground capable of supporting the heavy equipment, and deep-sea access.

Other East African countries - Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, and Tanzania - sent heads of delegation to represent their heads of state at the ceremony.

Hormuz disruption drives Iraq-Syria fuel cooperation

BANIYAS, Sept 30, (AP): Iraqi fuel trucks loaded gasoline at a Syrian port on Tuesday in a bid to meet surging energy demand as the critical Strait of Hormuz remains closed and mediators work with Iran and the United States to end the war.

The disruption of the strait has sent shock waves through the global economy, prompting countries to scramble for alternatives and sending fuel prices soaring. A fifth of the world’s traded oil and gas transited through the narrow waterway before the war.

Syria, under interim president Ahmad al-Sharaa, who ousted longtime leader Bashar Assad in December 2024, has seized the opportunity to bolster the country’s economy by providing an alternative route through the Baniyas port. Markets including the United States and Europe have been using the port.

Iraq has been exporting oil to foreign markets for months by trucking

it through Baniyas as a workaround to the closure of Hormuz. Now, through a three-month agreement between the two, Iraq has begun importing gasoline via Syria; the first shipment to Iraq arrived at the port on Thursday.

Under the deal, the Qatar-based conglomerate UCC purchases the gasoline, and Syria manages transportation and receives transit fees. The shipments are then transported by land to Iraq from the northwestern port through al-Tanf in southeastern Syria.

Ahmed Qubbaji, deputy head of the state-run Syrian Petroleum Company, said Tuesday that Syria is working to bring in 200 tankers daily to Iraq.

“We are thinking of setting up pipelines from Iraq to Syria via the sea through other countries,” he told The Associated Press. “So we are not looking at interim projects, but thinking strategically for the long term.”

Offering refunds, free date changes after service delay

Jazeera Airways delays resumption of transfer, transit services at Kuwait Airport

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Based on the request of Kuwait Civil Aviation Authority to postpone resumption of Transfer and Transit activities at the Kuwait International Airport, Jazeera Airways informed passengers that the resumption of transfer and transit passenger services through Jazeera Terminal 5 (T5) at Kuwait International Airport has been delayed until further notice.

“We sincerely apologize to passengers whose travel plans may be impacted. Affected passengers may request a full refund or complimentary date change,” the airlines said.

Since March 2026, airlines operating through major aviation hubs across the GCC and the wider region have progressively and fully resumed transfer and transit passenger services. Jazeera Airways believes that enabling transfer and transit connectivity through Kuwait would similarly benefit passengers, support the markets we serve,



Jazeera Airways and Terminal 5

strengthen Kuwait’s regional and international connectivity, and contribute to the continued development of Kuwait International Airport as an important aviation gateway.

We fully recognise that the implementation of such services requires the coordination and readiness of the Kuwait Civil Aviation Authority. Jazeera Airways will therefore continue to work constructively and closely to support Kuwait Civil Aviation Authority’s preparations towards resumption of transfer and transit operations through Jazeera Airways Terminal 5.

We remain committed to supporting Kuwait’s aviation sector and expanding the connectivity and travel choices available to our customers. We will announce the resumption of transfer and transit services in due course.

We thank our passengers for their patience, understanding and continued trust in Jazeera Airways.”

Trump and AI CEOs sign voluntary safety accord

Companies agree to self-police

WASHINGTON, Sept 30, (AP): President Donald Trump on Tuesday said that he and a large group of leaders of artificial intelligence companies had signed a voluntary accord that will include internal and external reviews during a meeting at the White House aimed at addressing Americans’ fears about the technology.

“I think I’m seeing tremendous self-policing. And they understand that they have to self-police,” Trump told reporters during an impromptu press conference outside the West Wing.

Trump and House Speaker Mike Johnson met with leading executives from top tech firms that are spending hundreds of billions of dollars to build out AI infrastructure, including data centers in communities across the country, which have sparked grassroots, bipartisan opposition.

The accord was signed by Trump, Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei, Google CEO Sundar Pichai, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, OpenAI President Greg Brockman, Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang, and Elon Musk, founder of xAI, which is now part of SpaceX.

The accord, which Trump posted on his social media site, Truth Social, late Tuesday, opened the door to future regulation but focused on four voluntary steps for the companies to take.

The accord said the companies would implement “robust internal controls,” partner with an “independent external auditor” to assess whether the controls were working, and establish a committee within each company’s board of directors to evaluate reports from internal and external auditors.

“Over time, it may make sense to codify these steps into laws and regulations,” the accord said.

Trump repeatedly praised the business executives for developing a technology that he said would produce “unbelievable growth.” Investment in data centers and the accompanying computer equipment has accelerated the economy and boosted the stock market, which has swelled investment accounts for higher-income Americans and lifted their spending.

Yet there were some notes of caution Tuesday. Amodei, who has been one of the most outspoken voices calling for a slowdown in AI development, said, “The technology has very real risks.”

“And, you know, the mechanism, how we address those risks is still under discussion,” Amodei said.

Trump suggested that about 10 people would be named to a committee to “watch over the whole enterprise” and said the accord would be “morally binding.” He also said he would name someone to oversee the agreement in coming days after consulting with industry.

Some of the actions outlined in the accord are measures these companies are already taking in some form or have previously committed to doing.

The intention of the accord balances the latitude needed for innovation with regulation, said Shri Narayanan, a university professor of electrical and computer engineering at the University of Southern California. That innovation is not just limited to improving the capabilities of these AI models, Narayanan said, but also to efforts to improve model safety and security.

Other experts are skeptical of putting “so much faith

in self-policing,” like Robin Jia, an assistant professor of computer science at the University of Southern California. Jia said it’s crucial to ensure the leading labs’ intentions are “well-aligned with the broader interest of the American public.” He pointed to the recent disclosures of hacking incidents and said: “As the models get better, the consequences of such things are only going to get greater.”

Some also took issue with the accord’s vague, broad language. Alex Pascal, executive director of the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society, said: “The only way to reduce the risks and harms of AI to Americans is through robust legal liability, regulation and fundamentally changing the race dynamics that are driving unsafe decision-making by frontier AI developers whose costs are borne by the American people.”

Huang sat to Trump’s right during a White House luncheon meeting, according to a seating chart the president posted on Truth Social. Musk sat to Trump’s left.

Earlier Tuesday, Trump promised that the U.S. government wouldn’t limit the development of artificial intelligence or support calls for “guardrails” or other restrictions.

“I will never stifle the growth of a technology that will be bigger than the industrial revolution,” Trump said at the unveiling of an AI chatbot, America.gov, intended to help Americans navigate government services. “We can’t stifle it, and we’re leading by a lot.”

The unveiling of the AI government chatbot occurred at a daylong event in Washington during which multiple Trump administration officials celebrated a “Golden Age” fueled by what Trump insists on calling “super intelligence,” rather than artificial intelligence. Secretary of State Marco Rubio highlighted that the chatbot at America.gov could soon be used to apply for a first-time passport fully online, without the in-person visit to a processing center currently required.

Trump also said the executives had agreed to assuage the bipartisan opposition to data centers cropping up in local communities across the country by providing more financial support to local schools or taking steps to reduce energy costs.

“You’re going to see, data centers are going to be very popular,” Trump said. If the opposition continued, Trump suggested, “they’ll be forced to go overseas or other locations.”

Also Tuesday, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman said in a television interview that the company is increasingly focused on safety. The day before, his company halted the rollout of a new model over safety concerns.

“We are pacing our progress, which includes sometimes not training a model,” he said on CNBC. “We have to do these in a way where we can make very confident safety cases and claims, so that people don’t have a bunch of anxiety.”

For his part, Trump on Tuesday portrayed the race to develop AI as largely a global competition between the United States and China. He said there would be a winner and a loser, with no “second place.”

The two countries agreed last week to establish a channel for handling AI-related incidents during Chinese President Xi Jinping’s visit to Washington. But Trump underscored Tuesday that he didn’t want to cooperate too much with China: “I didn’t want to do anything, because we’re leading. Why would I want to do anything?”

Consumer spending jumps 0.9%

US inflation eases to 3.4% in August

WASHINGTON, Sept 30, (AP): Inflation slowed a bit last month as Americans ramped up their spending, though prices are still elevated and a challenge for many voters that will head to the polls for midterm elections in just over a month.

Consumer prices rose 3.4% in August compared with a year earlier, the Commerce Department said Wednesday, below the 3.7% economist expectations. On a monthly basis, prices climbed 0.3%, up from 0.1% in July, a sign prices that are still running hot.

Excluding the volatile energy and food categories, inflation also came in lower than expected, rising 3% in August from a year ago. And from July to August, core prices rose just 0.2%, up from 0.1% the previous month. Many economists feared core prices would rise more quickly month-to-month.

U.S. markets bounced higher immediately on the new inflation reading, with investors betting that an expected interest-rate hike from the U.S. Federal Reserve might be delayed.

Even so, inflation remains above the Federal Reserve’s 2% target and the monthly increase in August suggests it isn’t moving back toward the target anytime soon. The Fed lifted its key short-

term interest rate two weeks ago for the first time in three years to combat inflation and most economists expect it will do so at least once more this year, possibly as soon as late next month.

“Inflation’s trend is lower but still not close to their target and not improving, either,” Bill Adams, chief U.S. economist at Fifth Third Commercial Bank, said in an email.

Wednesday’s report covered a key inflation gauge closely watched by the Fed, known as the personal consumption expenditures price index. It is similar to the higher-profile consumer price index, which was released earlier this month.

High prices have cast a pall on the U.S. economy, even as growth is mostly solid and the unemployment rate is low. On Tuesday, the Conference Board’s consumer confidence survey fell to its lowest level since 2014, a period that includes both the Great Recession and a global pandemic.

Americans’ paychecks are growing but not as quickly as prices.

Inflation for July was previously reported at 3.7% but was revised lower to 3.4% by the government as part of an update in how it measures price changes in several categories, including

investment management, computer software and accessories, and legal services.

For example, the government previously put a heavy weight on some computer accessories that have jumped in price because of outsized demand from the AI buildup. The revisions lowered that weight and as a result, the higher prices for some computer equipment are not driving up this measure of inflation as much.

Despite elevated prices, Americans accelerated their spending last month, the government said, with spending jumping 0.9% from July to August, up from just 0.1% the previous month.

Some of that increase was likely fueled by wealthier Americans cashing in their gains from higher stock prices, a recent report from JPMorgan suggests. Other consumers may be taking on more debt to support their spending.

After-tax incomes, adjusted for inflation, were unchanged on a monthly basis in August, after rising 0.3% in July, the report said.

Healthy consumer spending could fuel a pickup in growth. In a separate report Wednesday, the government said the economy expanded at a 2.2% annual pace in the July-September quarter. Analysts expect that to pick up to a 3% rate in the current quarter.

Consumer spending, AI lift GDP growth

US economy expands 2.2% in Q2

WASHINGTON, Sept 30, (AP): The U.S. economy grew at a solid 2.2% pace from April through June as consumer spending and business investment came in strong.

Growth in gross domestic product - the nation’s output of a goods and services - decelerated from a 2.5% pace from January through March, the Commerce Department reported Wednesday. The second-quarter growth was an improvement on the department’s previous estimate of 1.5% - a surprise to economists who had expected little or no change in the GDP number.

Consumer spending - which accounts for about 70% of U.S. economic activity - increased at a healthy 3.8% annual pace, up from 0.7% in the January-March period. Spending has been helped by a strong stock market, which reflects enthusiasm over the prospects for artificial intelligence and which enriches wealthy investors and gives them more money to buy things with.

The overall growth number was dragged down by imports. They are subtracted from growth because GDP is only supposed to count domestic production. Imports rose at a 12.6% annual pace from April through June, partly due to a surge in shipments of

computer chips and other products that support artificial intelligence investment, and slashed nearly 1.7 percentage points off second-quarter growth.

The U.S. economy has proven surprisingly resilient in the face of fighting with Iran and the energy price spike it caused.

Business investment, excluding housing, rose at a 9% clip in the second quarter, reflecting the AI investment boom. And a measure of the economy’s underlying strength - which strips out volatile government spending and trade numbers - grew at a strong 4.6% rate, up from 1.8% in the first quarter.

“The economy is increasingly reliant on AI gains and the corresponding wealth effects boosting higher-income households’ spending power to fuel recent growth,” said Michael Pearce, chief U.S. economist at Oxford Economics. “The economy remains sensitive to a sudden reversal of optimism on AI.”

Investment in housing rose 2.8% ticking up for the first time since the end of 2024. The housing market has been depressed by high mortgage rates.

Wednesday’s report was the last of three Commerce Department estimates of second-quarter GDP growth. The first look at third-quarter growth is due Oct. 29.

Carney accuses US steelmaker of betraying Canadian workers after layoffs tied to tariffs

TORONTO, Sept 30, (AP): Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney accused the U.S. owner of steelmaker Stelco, a subsidiary of Cleveland-Cliffs, of betraying Canadian workers Tuesday after it announced layoffs it attributed in part to U.S. President Donald Trump’s tariffs - tariffs Cleveland-Cliffs’ chief executive has publicly championed.

Carney singled out Cleveland-Cliffs CEO Lourenco Goncalves, noting that he had applauded Trump’s steel tariffs. Goncalves has called the 50% tariffs “a necessary step” to protect U.S. steelmakers.

“Our thoughts are with the workers and the families who have been betrayed by the company,” Carney said.

Carney also threatened legal action against Cleveland-Cliffs, saying the Ohio-based company has binding employment obligations stemming from its C\$3.4 billion (\$2.4 billion) takeover of Stelco in 2024.

Stelco said up to 500 workers could be affected as it indefinitely idles cold-rolled and coated operations at

its Hamilton, Ontario, plant and shifts production to its Lake Erie facility in Nanticoke, Ontario.

Cleveland-Cliffs said Monday the move does not shift steel production out of Canada: Output will be concentrated at Stelco’s Lake Erie Works in Nanticoke, Ontario, where it expects a significant number of affected Hamilton workers to be absorbed, with overall steel tonnage unchanged.

In a memo to employees, Stelco said U.S. tariffs had “significantly shrunk the market” for its cold-rolled and galvanized products. The company said demand in markets it traditionally serves fell almost 25% in the second quarter compared to the 2024 quarterly average, including a 10% decline in Canada.

The layoffs come amid an escalating Canada-U.S. trade war in which Trump has imposed 50% tariffs on Canadian steel and other goods and Canada has retaliated with tariffs of its own. At a White House event Monday announcing a new \$15 billion steel plant in

Iowa, Trump credited his tariffs with reducing foreign steel imports and attracting investment to the United States, saying companies were building plants there “because they don’t want to pay tariffs.”

Carney said the federal government had offered financial assistance to preserve jobs but did not disclose the amount or terms.

“There’s money on the table from the federal government,” Carney said. “The company made representations and has legal obligations for employment. We intend to use all powers that we have and pursue them to the fullest extent of the law.”

The Canadian government approved Cleveland-Cliffs’ takeover of Stelco in October 2024 on the condition that it meet legally binding five-year employment commitments, including maintaining at least the same number of unionized workers and the vast majority of nonunion employees.

Cleveland-Cliffs did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Carney’s remarks.

China manufacturing PMI rises to 50.1 in September

HONG KONG, Sept 30, (AP): China’s factory activity expanded in September for the first time in three months, striking a more positive tone as Chinese officials look to bolster economic growth.

The official manufacturing purchasing managers’ index, or PMI, climbed to 50.1 from 49.8 in August, China’s National Bureau of Statistics said Wednesday. The index reading, based on an official monthly survey of companies, was in line with what economists had expected.

PMI is measured on a scale of between 0 and 100 and a reading above 50 reflects an expansion.

Several subindexes remained in expansion territory. The subindex on production rose to 51.7 from 50.4 in August. The subindex on new orders was at 50.5, down slightly from 50.6, while new export orders eased to 50.0 from 50.1.

A separate private survey, the Rating-Dog PMI, also showed China’s manufacturing PMI advanced to 52.1 in September from 51.5 in August, indicating improvements in the manufacturing sector.

Wednesday’s reports came ahead of China’s weeklong October national holi-

day in which domestic consumption and spending are closely watched by policymakers.

They also followed new key measures announced in China on Tuesday to support its economy, including new subsidies for Chinese homebuyers’ mortgage interest payments.

China’s economy has been under growing pressure of a slowdown as domestic demand and investment remained sluggish, in part hit by weaknesses in the property sector, even as the global artificial intelligence boom has buoyed Chinese exports of high-tech goods.

“Manufacturing has been a relative strength this year, though it has mostly been driven by external demand as domestic consumption and investment lag,” Lynn Song, chief economist for Greater China at ING Bank, wrote in a commentary.

Some economists believe China is on track to surpass last year’s record \$1.2 trillion trade surplus. Recent improvements in U.S.-China relationships, including a two-month extension of a trade truce between the two superpowers until January, are likely to help improve bilateral trade.

MILAN

FASHION



Models wear creations as part of the Christian Dior Womenswear Spring Summer 2027 collection presented in Paris, France, Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2026. (AP)

Familiarity gets a polish

Dior floats new fashion fantasy

PARIS, Sept 30, (AP): Rihanna, Jennifer Lawrence, Rosalia and Cynthia Erivo watched from the front row Tuesday as Dior’s Jonathan Anderson showed 65 spring looks on a runway stretched across a pond in the Tuileries Garden - a collection built on the idea that the most expensive way to get dressed is to stop halfway.

Trees rose from the water and fog drifted over the models - artificial mist pumped out on an afternoon when Paris hit 82 degrees Fahrenheit (28 degrees Celsius).

The opening look set the terms: a white pinstriped double-breasted jacket over a striped shirt and a short cream skirt, nothing tucked, nothing fastened with conviction.

Bras showed beneath open jackets, shirts were buttoned unevenly and pajama piping ran along the edges of tailoring.

Even the hems looked windswept before the wind arrived.

It was a long way from the house Christian Dior founded in 1946 and made famous a year later with the New Look: the Bar jacket, waist pulled tight, skirt swallowing yards of fabric.

Anderson, who took over in 2025 as the first designer since Dior himself to handle womenswear, menswear and couture, has been turning it into the “loose look” ever since.

The show notes framed this season as a question - “how light can a dress be?” - and answered it by treating tailoring like drapery.

Bar jackets went soft, their peplums - the flounce at a jacket’s waist - slumped rather than sculpted; one was crossed with a barn coat.

Houndstooth, a house classic, dissolved into sheer chif-

fon.

The 1952 La Cigale dress returned in strapless pink pleated tulle, flaring at the hips like the cicada it is named for.

Archive pieces, the notes promised, would be “articulated in new ways.” Mostly they were.

It was deliberate dishevelment, a mood running through the whole fashion month, at Prada and elsewhere.

Luxury hid in the seams - Murano glass buttons, faux fur under a lapel, visible only when the collar is popped - while spectacle sat in plain sight: jackets and miniskirts covered in hundreds of hand-cut petals that shivered as models walked.

Bronze, silver and mint-green trousers cut through a palette of black, white and gray.

The saddle bag, a hit of the John Galliano years, is back.

The invitation came with a pair of wenwan walnuts, traditionally rolled in the palm for years until they develop a polish - beauty through handling, a fitting metaphor for clothes this crumpled.

It also pointed to the collection’s weakness. This was Anderson’s 10th Dior outing in barely more than a year, and its silhouette - the ballooning chiffon mini, the see-through tailoring, the single dangling earring - is by now familiar before the first model appears.

Fashion’s oldest trick is surprise - and Anderson’s is refinement, which sells.

Whether it is what fashion wants from Dior is a question the fog could not hide.

“Long before a tree unfurls its branches toward the sky,” the notes said, “the walnut holds the knowledge of its own form.”



Jazz star Immanuel Wilkins is youngest recipient

MacArthur Foundation reveals 2026 ‘genius grants’ fellows

NEW YORK, Sept. 30, (AP): Immanuel Wilkins was riding the Amtrak from New York to Philadelphia when he got a call from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. But he said he had to wait to deboard the train to find out if it was life-changing news or not.

The Brooklyn-based saxophonist, bandleader and composer hesitated to believe they were calling to say he was part of their prestigious fellows class. He spent the last 15 minutes of his ride convincing himself they only wanted his recommendations.

“I was just outside,” said Wilkins, 29, when he finally confirmed it was the former. “Which was nice because then I could yell as loud as I wanted to and celebrate.”

The foundation unveiled its 2026 fellows class on Tuesday: 20 individuals ranging in discipline from the performing arts to the social sciences, separated in age by four decades and spread across three continents. They will each receive \$800,000 over the next five years in recognition of their “exceptional creativity.” Commonly referred to as “genius grants,” the no-strings-attached awards are intended to provide the flexibility necessary for recipients to pursue their artistic or scholarly visions.

This year’s class shows a particular interest in history. There’s a philosopher using cognitive science to investigate the relationship between memory and forgiveness; a poet repurposing historical texts to probe colonial violence and the resilience of Native American communities; and a choreographer breaking down the barriers between difference dance styles across time and place.

They “explore the depths of our humanity; they reveal untold origins to challenges; they expand the edges of scientific inquiry and life-saving research,” Kristen Mack, the vice president of communications for fellows and partnerships at the MacArthur Foundation, said in a statement.

“They show us new ways to understand the world,” Mack said.

Take Wilkins, the youngest member. His debut album “Omega” connects the 1918 lynching of a pregnant Black woman, Mary Turner, to the 2014 fatal police shooting of a Black teenager, Michael Brown. The abstraction of music, Wilkins told The Associated Press, allows him to represent these stories without “recreating the violence of them.”

That abstraction - the rhythms of jazz music that are difficult to capture in written scores - has drawn him to visual art, too.

Jazz musicians have long debated how to notate the “swing” so central to the genre, Wilkins explained. He is exploring whether that sound could be rendered through sculptures or spectrograms in the same way it is currently represented through eighth notes or triplets.

With “RECESS” - an immersive experience recently presented in his hometown of Philadelphia - he attempted a “graphic score” by performing on an industrial jungle gym that was both bandstand and playground.

“The system of Western notation, as we know it, doesn’t have the capacity to hold the sound of Black music. Like, a lot of what makes Black music maybe sound ‘Black’ is these quantum entanglements with the time,” he said. “I’m kind of trying to radically debate: what actually is this Western system of notation holding when it comes to Black music? That opens up a wide set of possibilities for what a score could look like.”

Awardees who spoke with AP had no concrete plans for how they’d use the sudden gift. Nor does the MacArthur Foundation expect any answer to that question.

Unlike traditional grants, the award requires no progress reports from its fellows. The program does not accept applications, instead relying on an ever-changing list of outside nominators whose recommendations are reviewed by a confidential committee.

Ellora Derenoncourt, a New



Vincent Valdez poses for a portrait in his art studio Friday, Sept. 25, 2026, in San Antonio. (AP)

Jersey-based associate professor at Princeton University’s department of economics, wants to use the award’s platform to translate issues of economic justice for the broader public and interested policymakers.

Racial wealth disparities may seem too entrenched to ever reverse, she said. But she finds that history explains the origins of economic inequality and highlights “watershed moments” where public policies narrowed those differences. A 2021 paper showed a drop in the Black-white earnings gap after Congress raised the minimum wage and extended its protections in industries such as agriculture, domestic services and healthcare.

Another project explained how northern cities spent less on education and recreation in the communities where the Great Migration sent millions of Black Americans escap-



Saxophonist Immanuel Wilkins poses for a portrait on Monday, Sept. 28, 2026, in New York. (AP)

ing the southern United States’ low wages and racial barriers.

As the Trump administration tosses aside requirements for workforce demographic reports and limits the availability of other official sources,

she fears her field might lack the information needed to calculate today’s racial inequality. Universities and researchers like herself, she said, must figure out how to maintain robust data sets.

“I hope that I can take this responsibility seriously to highlight these issues,” she said. “And maybe also make some more people into history nerds. Because I think, really, we need to turn back the clock to figure out sometimes either what works or what has made things the way they are today.”

It’s not dissimilar from the mantle taken up by Vincent Valdez.

The contemporary painter was drawing in his studio when the MacArthur Foundation called. For once in his life, he joked, he went “deathly silent.” Most every artist is aware of the award, he said, which carries a 45-year legacy of recognizing, as he

sees it, individuals “pushing boundaries.”

Valdez tackles questions of American identity through representational paintings recalling murals of the southwestern United States. Murals, he learned at a young age, created an “undeniable presence” for his Mexican American community whose stories weren’t reflected in dominant culture. He aims to counter what he calls “social amnesia” by helping the public remember “what we are and where we’re headed.”

His 30-foot-wide painting “The City I” depicts a modern Ku Klux Klan with hooded figures holding a smartphone, a beer and a Pikachu-toting baby. The second part of that trilogy, “Dream Baby Dream,” situates Muhammad Ali’s many eulogists in boxes that imitate “The Brady Bunch” title sequence.

He’s working on the final installment, called “The New Americans.” Unlike their predecessors, these colorful portraits stand vertically rather than horizontally. The images aim to highlight overlooked “pillars” of society who he considers to be “fighting the good fight” - or, he said, “the stubborn pulses in a dying heartbeat.”

From a soaring Michael Jordan to the forceful eviction of a mostly Mexican American community to build Dodger Stadium, Valdez’s work often engages sports. When making such images, he said, he’s reminded of San Antonio Spurs’ games with his dad. He was “overwhelmed” and “mesmerized,” he recalled, at the unified effort required to pull off a vertical version of “the wave.” Beginning courtside and moving up to the last-row dollar seats, he said, fans would stand and throw their hands in the air “like a tornado.”

“If we can do it for sports on any given Saturday and Sunday in this country, then we can do this as a collective people for the things that truly matter and affect our daily lives and the lives of our neighbors,” Valdez said.

Security questions linger

OpenAI unveils ‘Dot’ AI agents

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30, (AP): OpenAI CEO Sam Altman introduced a “remarkably capable, always-on” artificial intelligence agent at an appearance Tuesday where he avoided any reference to security concerns around the company’s most advanced models.

At the company’s annual developer conference, Altman made a slew of product announcements and updates, including the company’s new agents, called Dots. The agents, designed to complete ongoing tasks proactively on behalf of users, are a competitor of Meta’s personal agent Muse, which exploded in popularity after Meta’s own conference last week.

Dot agents will be “like an AI helper that always has your back, inspired by the cool versions of what we all watched in movies growing up,” Altman said.

On Monday, OpenAI said it was holding off on the release of a new AI model out of security concerns voiced by its researchers. The disclosure followed broader calls within the industry to decelerate the pace of the technology’s advance to let safety measures catch up.

In his remarks on stage, Altman did not address the scrapped model, but he did offer some parting words about how the AI boom should be considered more like a period of renaissance than an industrial revolution.

tion.

“The best version of AI is not about making people cogs in a giant machine, ever whirling faster and faster. There are some parts of life that we cannot and should not automate,” Altman said. “AI should be about giving people more power over their own lives, more tools to create, learn, discover, expand knowledge.”

The company also announced the release of GPT-6.1 Sol, an upgraded version of its model GPT-6 Sol, and a premium speed tier called “Ultrafast,” among other launches and updates.

OpenAI’s announcements came as Altman’s industry peers were meeting with President Donald Trump Tuesday. While many in Silicon Valley have called for the government to help establish guardrails for the technology, Trump has pushed back against the idea of greater government oversight of AI.

While Altman was not in attendance because of the conference, OpenAI president and co-founder Greg Brockman was at the White House, along with Dario Amodei of Anthropic, Amazon chief Jeff Bezos, Nvidia’s Jensen Huang, Tesla and Space X’s Elon Musk and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella. Several other industry leaders joined them, along with senior administration officials and House Speaker Mike Johnson.



Open AI CEO Sam Altman speaks at the OpenAI DevDay 2026 conference, Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2026, in San Francisco. (AP)

Women artisans present

Five-day art & handicrafts exhibition opens in Herat

KABUL, Sept. 30, (Xinhua): A five-day exhibition showcasing art and traditional handicrafts opened in western Afghanistan’s Herat province, the official Bakhtar News Agency reported.

The exhibition features a diverse range of artworks and handcrafted products, including paintings, miniature works, hand-carved pieces and ceramics, while also providing a platform to encourage and support artisans, particularly women, according to the report.

The fair has 120 booths, 70 of which are dedicated to women, offering them an opportunity to display their work, reach potential customers and generate income from their artistic skills.

Hundreds of women in Herat are reportedly engaged in various artistic and handicraft activities, including painting, drawing, miniature painting, calligraphy, engraving and other traditional crafts, and many are earning livelihoods through their work.

Books

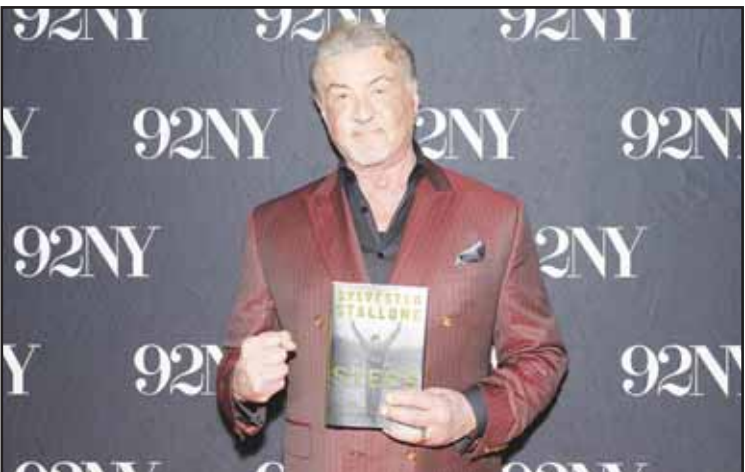
‘I am a lucky dog’

Stallone at 80 reflects on 50 years of ‘Rocky’

NEW YORK, Sept. 30, (AP): Fifty years after Sylvester Stallone pulled off one of Hollywood’s all-time long shots with “Rocky,” the Oscar-winning star still identifies with the character who for many embodies the outsider proving all the naysayers wrong.

But he no longer claims to be an underdog.

“It would be so disingenuous to say you’re an underdog,” as he said from his penthouse,” Stallone said during a recent interview, on a high floor of a luxury Manhattan hotel. “Yeah. Come on. I am a lucky dog.”



Actor Sylvester Stallone poses backstage before discussing his memoir “The Steps” at The 92nd Street Y on Monday, Sept. 28, 2026, in New York. (AP)

Stallone, who turned 80 in July, is among the most successful movie stars and filmmakers in history. He has generated billions of dollars through such blockbuster franchises as “Rocky,” “Rambo” and “The Expendables” and portrayed some of the most memorable film characters. And he is still working, starring as mobster Dwight “The General” Manfredi in the Paramount+ series “Tulsa King.”

By choice and otherwise, Stallone has been reliving his early years as a struggling actor-writer who somehow convinced United Artists to back his modest story of a journeyman boxer’s shot at the heavyweight championship, and even allow him to play the lead despite having little acting experience. His memoir “Steps,” published Tuesday, arrives less than two months before a fictionalized and semi-authorized version of his story, Peter Farrelly’s “I Play Rocky,” arrives in theaters, with Anthony Ippolito in the starring role. (Farrelly spoke about the film with Stallone, who was otherwise uninvolved.)

“Rocky,” which beat out “Taxi Driver” and “All the President Men’s” among others to win the best picture Oscar, is one of those classic movies that only seem to benefit from the back story; Stallone’s own journey from the streets of Philadelphia to the Oscars stage echoes so well his character’s improbable rise.

As he writes in “Steps,” he was a hard-luck case, an unplanned and unwanted child who seemed to face endless discouragement right through the production of “Rocky,” when he feared every day on the set might be his last.

Stallone was in Manhattan to promote his book, but spends much of his time at the Palm Beach, Florida estate he shares with his wife, Jennifer Flavin. Even when — especially when — he’s talking about his rare fortune,

Stallone speaks in a warm, rumbling, offhand manner, a kind of private street talk that suggests he doesn’t believe it all.

Last year, he was a Kennedy Center honoree, his award presented to him by President Donald Trump, who had previously named Stallone, Jon Voight and Mel Gibson his “ambassadors” from an otherwise liberal Hollywood. Stallone has called Trump “the second George Washington,” but he has contributed to both Republicans and Democrats and broken with conservatives by calling for stronger gun control laws. He also condemns war, including the Iran War, as a story of sending people into a “meat grinder while the military complex is making zillions of dollars.”

“I do believe that you have to defend yourself. But to go on the offensive?” he says, adding that he would prefer not to be known as a “political figure.”

“I love the common architecture of trying to just survive. That’s noble,” he says. “To be a politician, that’s a different animal.”

During his interview, he also talked about fate, insecurity and why he was probably better off for his unhappy childhood.

Questions and answers have been edited for brevity and clarity.

AP: Why write this book?

STALLONE: I was approached a few times (over the years) and the one thing I didn’t want to write about is my life. It’s this ambivalent roller coaster ride. It’s not always the most pleasurable ride. And I thought, ‘What am I known for?’ Pulling off this minor miracle in 1976, which falls under the heading of inspiration. That’s what I want to do. Because the character was an inspiration, I wanted to tell the people how it all came to be.

AP: How hard was it to relive

some of those early memories?

STALLONE: It was very hard because I spent 50 years burying that stuff. And it’s like you come across a lost city, and you start to become your own spiritual archaeologist, digging down. And it’s not pretty. But I didn’t want this to be, ‘Oh, woe is me.’ Everyone has issues and a lot worse than me. I just wanted to touch on the essence because I still have this conundrum. If everything was really nice, maybe I wouldn’t be here, you know what I mean? If I didn’t have that insecurity which drives us. You know, insecurity is a great motivator.

AP: For people at your level of success, do you find they all have that sense of insecurity, that drive?

STALLONE: I think so — especially the ones that are desperate to do better and constantly pushing it. For example, I don’t have to do my dialogue for another month before we start “Tulsa King.” I’m up every morning at 5:00 o’clock, studying until literally it’s like breathing. Now, that’s probably insecurity, but that’s the way I approach it.

AP: When was the last time you actually watched “Rocky” in its entirety? Did you look at it while working on the book?

STALLONE: No, I didn’t. You know what I see. You’re sitting there and going through messages and somebody who’s 18 has put it on the internet or on TikTok. And how would this person relate to an 80-year-old guy? They’re not, though. They’re not relating to me. It’s that character.

AP: Young people know about Rocky.

STALLONE: In retrospect, that to me is the greatest gift. You know, you write something — I’m just trying to get some footage on myself. I’m just trying to write

something really simple. I didn’t ever expect it to be in more than one or two theaters. So all this is a tsunami of good luck. It (“Rocky”) tapped into something that I cannot take credit for.

AP: Writers talk a lot about how they learn how they think through the act of writing. Did you experience some of that while working on this book?

STALLONE: A lot of it, yeah.

AP: Like what?

STALLONE: I was thinking while I was working (on the book). “You were really at the end of your rope.” Nothing was working. I was 29 years old. And I had this epiphany, like in the backyard, pounding the soil, asking for spiritual help. I had always avoided it. And I had thought, you know, “To each his own.” I don’t want to rely upon some idol, god, symbol, anything. But maybe we need something that makes us believe in the invisible — faith. I had no faith. I was agnostic, and then it came literally back that night.

And that’s why I pay homage in the “Rocky” movie. The first scene is, you know, at “The Resurrection” (gym). It’s amazing we found that place. A boxing club called “The Resurrection.”

AP: You’ve described how the priests in Catholic school said it was necessary to suffer for your faith, and how you turned away from that. But look at what you put yourself through to make a movie.

STALLONE: It’s the way I’m built, I think. There are no free lunches. I’ve had back operations, neck surgeries, both shoulders, heart — you name it. And it’s all because ... you do it yourself. There was a necessity to feel it. You’re not going to be like the other guys. You’re going to do it, which is completely wrong (laughs).

AP: And now you have a movie about you, “I Play Rocky,” coming out.

STALLONE: How strange is this? A movie about me being in a movie.

AP: What did you think of it?

STALLONE: It’s fantastic. And the kid (Ippolito) did a great job. This is so odd. They usually do this when you’re dead and gone. It’s 50 years almost to the day when it came out and if he gets nominated ... It’s so surreal. I have to give Peter Farrelly, the director (credit). I never in a million years had any confidence this would work. But he said that to the everyday person, this is kind of a fantastic journey. Rocky is fiction, this is real. And that’s what people are holding on to.

Awareness and integrated multidisciplinary care are key to comprehensive healthcare: Dr. Al-Bader

Health Ministry concludes Duchenne muscular dystrophy awareness month

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The Ministry of Health held Wednesday a closing event for Duchenne muscular dystrophy awareness month under the theme “Access to Care Changes Lives,” under the patronage of Health Minister Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, at the New Maternity Hospital.

In a statement, Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Dr. Al-Munther Al-Hasawi, representing the event’s patron, said Kuwait attaches great importance to Duchenne muscular dystrophy through prevention, treatment, early diagnosis and access to advanced gene therapies.

He said Kuwait’s efforts extended internationally, noting that it led an initiative to submit a draft UN General Assembly resolution during its 78th session.

The resolution, supported by 128 countries, designated September 7 as World Duchenne Awareness Day.

Head of the Medical Department at the New Maternity Hospital Dr. Rania Al-Bader said the event emphasized that awareness and integrated multidisciplinary care are key to comprehensive healthcare.

She said the Kuwait Center for Genetic Diseases joining the hospital’s departments represents a step toward continuity and integration, as genetic diseases require coordinated care beginning with the family.

Head of the Kuwait Center for Genetic Diseases Dr. Laila Bastaki said Duchenne muscular dystrophy affects approximately one in every 4,000 to 5,000 male births world-



Assistant Undersecretary of Health for Health Affairs, Dr. Al-Munther Al-Hasawi, during the awareness campaign for muscular dystrophy (Duchenne)

Photos by Rezk Tawfiq



Head of the Kuwait Center for Genetic Diseases Dr. Laila Bastaki



Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Dr. Al-Munther Al-Hasawi



Head of the Medical Department at the New Maternity Hospital Dr. Rania Al-Bader

wide, equivalent to an estimated five to seven cases annually in Kuwait.

She said joint efforts be-

tween the Genetic Diseases Center and the hospital’s assisted reproduction unit have reduced the rate to one case annually among fami-

lies without a previous genetic history of the disease.

Bastaki called for intensified cooperation to keep pace with ad-

vances in gene therapies and provide comprehensive care that safeguards patients’ rights and supports the best possible quality of life.

The event was attended by Ministry of Health officials, medical professionals and specialists, as well as patients and their families.



A photo from the event

Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Kuwait launches annual breast cancer awareness initiative

KUWAIT, Sept 30, (KUNA): The National Cancer Awareness Campaign (CAN) launched Wednesday its annual breast cancer awareness initiative under the theme “Awareness Is Your Pink Safety Belt,” coinciding with global Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The initiative aims to promote health awareness and encourage early detection of the disease.

CAN Chairperson Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh said early detection gives patients greater chances of effective treatment and better outcomes, stressing the importance of continued health awareness and education.

He said breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women in Kuwait and represents a public health issue requiring greater awareness of warning signs and timely medical consultation.

Al-Saleh urged women to monitor their health, watch for unusual changes and seek medical advice when they occur, stressing that self-awareness does not replace specialized medical examinations.

CAN board member and breast cancer awareness initiative coordinator Dr. Hessa Al-Shaheen said CAN has trained 197,000 secondary school students in self-examination and early detection since 2010.

She said more than 1,000 physical education teachers have been trained as instructors in this field.

The initiative includes exhibitions, lectures, training workshops, awareness sessions, community and sports activities, as well as publications and educational materials presenting health information simply to turn knowledge into everyday practices.

Al-Shaheen said the initiative was launched in partnership with Al-Sidra Association for Psychological Care of Cancer Patients, supported by private-sector companies and in cooperation with the International Women’s Group.

The initiative also involves the Health Ministry’s Media Office and Health Promotion Department.

Health

WHO warns of disease outbreaks in Yemen: The World Health Organization (WHO) Tuesday warned that disease outbreaks were already circulating on a large scale in Yemen re-registering over 7,780 suspected cholera cases with 22 associated deaths over 9,600 dengue cases with 37 deaths and a measles outbreak with over 22,000 cases.

WHO Regional Emergency Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Region Annet Heintzelman said during a press conference held in Geneva that Yemen’s health system is facing growing pressure as a result of more than a decade of conflict, warning that the latest escalation of violence is pushing the already fragile health system towards a breaking point.

She said that due to the ongoing escalation of violence casualties are arising, more people are being displaced and disease outbreaks risk spreading further, stressing that existing health structures are under growing pressure and strain. (KUNA)

Pakistan confirms 5th polio case of 2026: Pakistan has confirmed its fifth polio case of 2026, with the latest case reported in the north-west Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the country’s polio eradication program said Tuesday.

Pakistan recorded 31 polio cases in 2025, compared with an estimated 20,000 cases in the early 1990s. The country has conducted four large-scale vaccination campaigns this year, protecting more than 45 million children.

Pakistani authorities urged parents and caregivers to ensure children receive all recommended polio vaccine doses and called for continued surveillance and vaccination efforts nationwide.

Dengue cases in Sri Lanka exceed 100,000: Sri Lanka has reported more than 100,000 dengue cases and 77 deaths so far in 2026, according to the tally by the Sri Lankan Ministry of Health.

A total of 100,127 dengue cases had been recorded as of midnight on Sunday, according to the ministry.

Among the provinces, the Western Province recorded 52,562 cases, accounting for 52.5 percent of the national total.

Gampaha recorded the highest number of cases among districts and reporting units, with 21,234 infections, or 21.21 percent of the total. Colombo followed with 19,634 cases, while Kandy reported 7,624. (AP)



A health worker administers a polio vaccine to a child at a neighbourhood in Karachi, Pakistan, Monday on Dec 15, 2025. (AP)

BPA can cause oxidative stress: research

Are there toxic chemicals in your grocery store receipt?

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

By Sean McCann
University of Illinois Chicago

“Would you like your receipt?”

It’s a question you’re likely to hear every time you pop into the grocery store or stop for a latte on the way to work. Some people may also have heard warnings that have circulated for more than 15 years that if you say yes, toxic chemicals might rub off on your fingertips.

As a recent example, a 2025 study from the Center for Environmental Health, a nonprofit advocacy organization focused on toxic chemicals in consumer products, claimed that holding a paper receipt for only 10 seconds could result in exposure to unsafe levels of toxic chemicals.

Could something so commonplace really be slowly poisoning people?

I am a medical toxicologist - a physician who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of poisoning. I see patients in my clinic for everything from severe lead poisoning to questions about exposure to chemicals that are mostly harmless.

Receipts are printed on a special type of paper - thermal paper - which often contains chemicals called bisphenols. These chemicals are potentially - but not necessarily - toxic. So, like many questions in toxicology, the answer to whether receipts are dangerous to handle is: It depends.

Bisphenols are human-made chemicals that have been widely used in industrial manufacturing since the 1950s.

Several different types exist, each with a letter standing for the chemical they are made from. The bisphenol produced using a molecule called acetone is called bisphenol A, or BPA. Bisphenol S (BPS) is made using a sulfur atom, and bisphenol F (BPF) is made using formaldehyde.

These chemicals are used to create a type of transparent and shatter-resistant plastic called polycarbonate, found in products including hard plastic water bottles, food storage containers and eyeglass lenses. Bisphenols are also ingredients in epoxy resins, which are used to coat the inside of bottle caps and metal food and drink containers. Some products still use these chemicals, though many manufacturers have phased them out.

Thermal receipt paper uses bisphenol - usually BPA or BPS - as a developer. The bisphenol is combined with a colorless ink and applied as a microscopic, heat-sensitive film to the paper. Instead of using ink, a receipt printer applies heat to this thermal paper, causing the bisphenol and the dye to react and changing the dye from colorless to black. Fax machines, back in the day, also relied on this technology.

Toxicologists classify bisphenols as toxins called endocrine disruptors. This means that they interfere with the body’s endocrine system, which controls vital body functions like growth, reproduction and metabolism.

The endocrine system includes multiple organs, including the thyroid, pancreas and pituitary gland, which is a tiny structure at the base of the brain. These organs send messages throughout the body to control many vital functions, and the molecules that carry that message are called hormones.

Most research on bisphenol toxicity has focused on BPA. Research shows that BPA interrupts the messaging sent through multiple hormones, but most notably through estrogen.

Many people think of estrogen as the “female” hormone, but all people make estrogen, no matter what sex chromosomes they have. Estrogen helps control the growth and development of organs as they first form during fetal development, among other important roles in the body.

That’s why exposure to endocrine disruptors is potentially more serious for a developing fetus than it is for adults. BPA exposure has been linked to preterm

birth and abnormal fetal brain development.

Exposure to high amounts of BPA could also increase a person’s chances of developing heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity and other health problems. Research also shows that BPA can cause oxidative stress - chemical damage to the molecules that make up cells. Exposure to BPA might also cause changes to how genes are turned on or off, and some of these changes can be passed on to future generations.

These findings have led to a ban on BPA in Europe. In the United States, its use is banned in baby bottles, but no ban exists for most other products. However, many manufacturers have voluntarily replaced BPA with alternative chemicals - you have probably seen plastic products advertised as “BPA free.”

Unfortunately, companies often simply switch out BPA for another bisphenol, such as BPS, and it turns out that BPS shares much of its cousin molecule’s toxic traits. Recently, though, concern about all bisphenols has led many companies to move away from them entirely.

Research has also shown that bisphenols can be absorbed through the skin - for example, when handling a receipt printed on thermal paper. Touching bisphenols with greasy hands, perhaps because you’ve just applied moisturizer or hand sanitizer, can increase absorption through the skin.

You have probably heard the old saying “the dose makes the poison.” This is a foundational principle of toxicology originally written by the Swiss physician and chemist Paracelsus in 1538.

Consider the classic poison cyanide. A dose capable of killing an average person weighs less than 10 grains of rice. However, the human body actually makes tiny amounts of cyanide every day. A natural detoxification system clears it out of the body so it causes no harm.

Similarly, though we all require a fair amount of water every day to survive, there is such a thing as water toxicity. Too much water can cause your brain to swell and can be fatal, as several tragic cases over the years have shown.

In 2023, researchers estimated the daily “dose” of exposure to BPA from thermal paper receipts and found levels somewhere between about 5,000 to 50 million times lower than European Food Safety Authority standards. That’s less than one drop in an 8-ounce glass of water.

That said, this estimate is for the average person. Retail, food service and other workers who handle many receipts every day would be exposed to doses about 100 times higher than that, the researchers estimated. This is potentially more concerning, but still probably well below safety standard levels.

Bisphenols are found in many products and do have potential to harm our health, but most human exposure to these chemicals comes from food or beverages packaged in containers made with bisphenols. Exposure from handling receipts is a small piece of the pie.

The upshot is that for most people, handling receipts is a pretty low-risk activity. But if you’re concerned, you can take a few straightforward precautions.

People who handle receipts at work could protect themselves by avoiding the use of sanitizer and other skin care products on their hands before work, wearing gloves or encouraging their employer to use bisphenol-free thermal paper.

People who might be sensitive to endocrine effects of bisphenols - pregnant people, infants, children and those with certain endocrine diseases - might want to avoid contact with thermal paper receipts.

For people outside of these sensitive groups, handling a receipt is probably a very low-risk activity. But if you are concerned, some commonsense strategies that could minimize your exposure include opting for emailed receipts when available, or tucking a printed receipt into a bag or pocket rather than holding on to it for a prolonged period of time.

Personally, I avoid paper receipts for the most part - I don’t like making extra trash. (AP)

Move underscores country’s passion for F1: Crown Prince

Why Malaysia is hosting Bahrain Grand Prix in a haze of air pollution

SEPANG, Malaysia, Sept 30, (AP): The ‘Bahrain Grand Prix In Malaysia’ is one of the stranger names for a race in Formula 1 history.

The Iran war, forest fires and plenty of nostalgia are all talking points this week as F1 gears up for a Bahrain GP held 3,750 miles (6,000 kilometers) away from its nominal host nation.

The last time F1 raced at the Sepang circuit in 2017, 12 of the 22 drivers on this year’s grid had yet to make their F1 debuts. Current standings leader Kimi Antonelli had just turned 11.

F1 was originally meant to race in Bahrain back in March but that race and the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix were called off as Iran struck both countries in its response to U.S. and Israeli airstrikes.

Losing two races in lucrative Middle East markets was a financial hit to F1 and its teams, and adding a replacement event in Malaysia was meant to offset that impact. Keeping the Bahrain GP name followed extensive talks involving the governments of both countries.

Bahrain’s Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, said the decision to move the race was a sign of his country’s “commitment to, and passion for (F1).”

The race slots in between the Azerbaijan GP and next week’s race in nearby Singapore.

Bahrain is reviving an old F1 tradition by joining Switzerland, San Marino and Luxembourg as countries which were the official hosts of F1 races actually taking place elsewhere.

In those earlier cases from the



Workers use a scissor lift to install a banner over the track ahead of the Bahrain Grand Prix in Malaysia at the Sepang International Circuit in Sepang, Malaysia. (AP)

1980s and 1990s, F1 wanted a country like France, Italy or Germany to get a second race but had to work around a rule limiting each country to one event.

With security concerns persisting ahead of the Qatar Grand Prix in November and the season finale in Abu Dhabi in December, F1 has considered a fallback option in Europe, with Italy’s Imola circuit as the favorite. F1 could potentially keep the branding of a Middle East race for that, too.

When it rains at Sepang it pours.

During the Malaysian Grand Prix’s previous run from 1999-2017, the track became notorious for sudden downpours which made for thrilling races and some unexpected results.

Rain and even thunderstorms are possible this weekend, setting

up what would be the first wet race since a major regulation change for 2026. The closest F1 has come to it since then was the Dutch Grand Prix where rain arrived just as drivers finished the sprint race.

Even if it stays dry, visibility may not be great for drivers and fans because air pollution has been making for a hazy view.

Malaysia’s haze crisis is being driven largely by forest and peat fires in neighboring Indonesia, made worse by the dry weather.

Authorities are monitoring air quality and hotspots, with the government conducting cloud seeding when conditions permit to alleviate the situation. High pollution levels can cause breathing problems, and eye or throat irritation especially for vulnerable people.

Liberty sweeps Lynx, 1st No. 8 seed to oust a No. 1

Clark keeps Fever playoff hopes alive

NEW YORK, Sept 30, (AP): The New York Liberty are peaking at the right time and were able to complete a historic sweep of the Minnesota Lynx to advance to the semifinals of the WNBA playoffs.

Jonquel Jones had 21 points and 13 rebounds and the No. 8 seed Liberty beat the top-seeded Lynx 87-71 in Game 2 of their WNBA playoff series. New York became the first No. 8 seed to eliminate a No. 1 seed in the league’s 30-year history.

The WNBA has undergone a number of different playoff formats. And in many of the formats, it wasn’t possible for those seeds to match up. However, in 2022 the league changed to the current format in which the top eight teams play in the quarterfinals.



New York Liberty forward Breanna Stewart (30) dribbles around Minnesota Lynx forward Nia Brodie (12) during the first half of Game 1 in the first round of the WNBA basketball playoffs in Minneapolis. (AP)

Breanna Stewart added 21 points and Sabrina Ionescu had 18 for the Liberty, who await the winner of the Atlanta-Washington series. The Dream are up 1-0 and play at Washington on Wednesday night. The semifinals begin Sunday.

A year after losing in the first round to Phoenix after going up 1-0 in that series, New York was determined not to have that happen again.

The Liberty were up five points after one quarter and led 40-35 with 2:39 left in the half. New York scored nine of the final 11 points in the second quarter to go up 49-37 at the break.

New York was up 52-39 with 6:26 left in the third when Stewart drove to the basket and was hit in the face by Olivia Miles as she tried to block the shot. Stewart was down for a minute as the officials reviewed the play and upgraded the play to a Flagrant-1 foul.

As Stewart walked off the court, she raised her hands to the sellout crowd of 17,593, who serenaded her with M-V-P! chants. Stewart hit both free throws.

Minnesota couldn’t get closer than seven points the rest of the way.

The Lynx’s season ended in disappointment again. The Lynx had the best regular-season record, but just couldn’t put it together against

New York. On Monday, Cheryl Reeve won the league’s Coach of the Year and Miles was a unanimous choice for Rookie of the Year.

Miles struggled in both games against New York. She had five points, missing seven of her eight shots in 17 minutes, on Tuesday night. The Liberty’s size and ability to protect the rim bothered the stellar first-year player.

Reeve said she offered encouragement to her star rookie after the game.

Napheesa Collier and Kayla McBride each added 14 to for the Lynx.

Fever 99, Aces 89

In Indianapolis, Caitlin Clark wanted was one more chance to play this season. She delivered a masterpiece.

The All-Star guard scored 27 points, had 15 assists, reached another milestone and provided the energy on both ends of the court to help keep the sixth-seeded Indiana Fever’s postseason alive with a victory over the defending WNBA champion Las Vegas Aces. Kelsey Mitchell added 26 points as the crowd chanted “M-V-P” throughout the game.

Indiana evened the best-of-three series at 1-1. Game 3 will be played Thursday at Las Vegas.

Clark became the first player in league history to produce a points-assists double-double in the first half of a playoff game. She had 14 points and 11 assists in the first 20 minutes, and it wasn’t just her scoring or passing that impressed.

What the Fever and Aces didn’t need was the fourth-quarter incident between a fan and four-time league MVP A’ja Wilson. The two appeared to be pointing and shouting at one another after Sophie Cunningham drew a foul. Wilson walked toward the seats and two teammates, an assistant coach and security intervened to separate everyone.

Wilson was assessed a technical foul for stepping off the court but was not ejected. The man was escorted out by security but was allowed to return because the Fever said he did not violate the fan code of conduct policy.

The incident seemed to motivate Las Vegas, which was trailing 90-79 when it happened at the 4:10 mark,

and when Clark fouled out with 2:45 to play, the Aces got as close as 92-87.

But the Fever managed to hang on. It was a complete turnaround from Game 1 when Wilson dominated the middle and Las Vegas controlled the game. This time, Jackie Young scored 31 points while Wilson had 22 points and nine rebounds and passed Rebekkah Brunson for fourth on the league’s career playoff list.

The Aces looked poised for a second straight blowout when they closed the first quarter on a 9-2 spurt and started the second with a 3 to take a 29-18 lead.

But Clark had something else in mind - she tied up Wilson for a jump ball, grabbed the ball and walked into the baseline corner while pumping her arm toward the crowd. Then Clark put on a dribbling clinic, made nifty pass after nifty pass and became both a harassing presence on defense and the Fever’s emotional leader during a 20-6 second-quarter run.

The spurt ended with Raven Johnson’s short jumper to give Indiana a 46-39 lead. It never trailed again.



Mohammed Ben Sulayem, FIA President, during the 24 Hours of Le Mans, June 13, 2026, in Le Mans, France.

Sulayem hails landmark deal

FIA WEC positioned for record growth with historic new deal

DUBAI, Sept 30: The Fédération Internationale de l’Automobile (FIA), the global governing body for motor sport and the federation for mobility organisations worldwide, and the Automobile Club de l’Ouest (ACO), the founder and organiser of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, have today announced a major deal for the FIA World Endurance Championship (FIA WEC), securing another decade of growth.

The landmark agreement, which comes during a period of unprecedented growth for the championship, will ensure a common ambition to expand the partnership and drive its commercial success. It will run from the end of 2027, when the current agreement expires, to the end of 2037.

Under the extended partnership agreement, all regulatory processes will be overseen by FIA Working Groups, the FIA Endurance Commission, and will require the final approval of the FIA World Motor Sport Council.

The homologation process has also been streamlined, with the FIA and ACO overseeing the homologation of all cars competing in the Hypercar class.

The renewed partnership will also deliver significantly increased branding for the FIA. This includes enhanced branding prominently displayed across key areas including parc fermé, the podium and the Safety Cars, as well as across broadcast coverage.

With an expanding fanbase, a wider pool of competitors, and a global calendar of iconic events, the championship is stronger than ever. Since its inception in 2012, it has set the global standard for long-distance circuit racing. Following the introduction of the Hypercar regulations in 2021, interest in the championship from motor sport fans and from the automotive world has surged.

FIA WEC’s trackside audience has grown 8% so far in 2026, with millions of fans following the championship globally. The fanbase for the championship is also evolving. This year, 44% of attendees are aged 34 or younger, while 40% are attending an FIA WEC event for the first time. The championship has secured the long-term loyalty of its existing fanbase, while building the next generation of endurance racing fans.

Eight of the world’s leading auto-manufacturers currently compete in Hypercar, the top category of FIA WEC. Following the addition of the LMGT3 class in 2024, the championship now counts no fewer than 14 marques in total on the starting grid. Two more giants of the automotive industry – Ford and McLaren – are set to join the Hypercar ranks in 2027.

For over 100 years, endurance racing has served as a proven testbed for technologies that transfer from track to road. This renewed agreement creates a solid framework for advancing hydrogen powertrains in competition,

providing a clear pathway toward more sustainable transport and mobility.

It will also deliver a more unified technical framework that defines top-level endurance racing Hypercars competing both in the FIA WEC and IMSA in North America, which will be introduced from 2030. The new framework will provide greater cost-efficiency for manufacturers to compete in endurance racing championships and events globally, boosting potential participation and increasing the spectacle for motor sport fans.

With interest in FIA WEC at levels never seen before, the championship is positioned for continued growth and success over the coming decade. This new deal offers the solid foundation needed to secure its future, marking a milestone moment in the history of FIA WEC.

Mohammed Ben Sulayem, President of the FIA, said: “This is not simply an agreement, it is a vital step forward for racing that will secure the future of the FIA World Endurance Championship for years to come.

“This is a deal built for the future, a deal of the century, one that strengthens the collaboration between the FIA and ACO, a relationship that dates back over 120 years, and sets the championship up for a decade of record growth that will deliver real benefits to fans, drivers, teams and manufacturers.

“It has been an honour to play a part in the collaboration that has helped usher in this golden age of endurance racing. I look forward to continuing our work alongside President Pierre Fillon and his team as we build on this momentum and shape an even stronger future.”

Pierre Fillon, President of the Automobile Club de l’Ouest, said: “We are delighted to see the agreement between the FIA and the ACO extended, reinforcing the strong and long-standing relationship that has been at the heart of the FIA World Endurance Championship since its creation in 2012.

Nurse begins fourth season as Sixers coach

James brings new spotlight to 76ers training camp

CAMDEN, N.J., Sept 30, (AP): The answers Anfernee Simons gamely tried to offer about the first day of 76ers training camp were suddenly drowned out by the furious whirring overhead of a helicopter leaving the team’s complex.

LeBron James’ helicopter.

James indeed used the rotorcraft for the rich to take him after practice from New Jersey to presumably close to wherever he decided to live in New York. The helicopter noises are usually reserved for when billionaire team owner Josh Harris lands at the complex for the NBA draft or a major news conference.

Not anymore.

The Sixers were quickly caught in the whirlwind of the first days of the LeBron Effect, even as a pair of players and coach Nick Nurse professed all was good on the court.

Off the court, make room.

Sixers staff moved the news conference backdrop from a corner where a few dozen reporters are usually stuffed to shout questions at Joel Embiid or Tyrese Maxey to a spot closer toward midcourt for a roomier feel for the more than 50 credentialed reporters, bloggers, TV camera operators and more that came to get an early report card on James’



Philadelphia 76ers’ Jaylen Brown, LeBron James, Joel Embiid, Tyrese Maxey, and VJ Edgecombe (from left to right) pose for photos during the NBA basketball team’s media day in Camden, N.J. (AP)

official first day as a Sixer.

James was gone Tuesday by the time media was allowed on the court to watch practice. Embiid, Maxey, former Boston star Jaylen Brown, they were all absent, too, a day after holding court on media day.

Nurse is starting his fourth season as coach of the Sixers. He’s used to handling the demands that come with

working in a major market and dealing with star players in Philly such as with Embiid and his daily injury report or the high drama that surrounded former Sixer James Harden.

Nurse did say he had conversations with the team about looking out for each other and staying connected while navigating a spotlight season - especially early - that already has

a postseason-type of aura around the franchise before the Sixers even played a game.

“It is going to be different,” Nurse said. “More people, more eyes, more stories, more national TV. All that kind of stuff. It’s the same, just a little more. I’m just trying to get to the practice floor and to the game floor. If we can do those two things, all that other stuff, we’ll just kind of handle it as smoothly as we can.”

Nurse called the sight of so much talent “impressive” once the Sixers hit the floor for practice. James is a future Hall of Famer. Embiid has certainly built a strong case. Brown was an NBA Finals MVP and champion with the Celtics. Maxey earned his first All-Star start last season and has blossomed into an elite talent.

The fifth starter is more than just, oh, that other guy.

VJ Edgecombe was third in rookie of the year voting last season and his buoyant personality and defensive playmaking made him an instant fan favorite and immediate force in helping the Sixers return last season to the playoffs. Edgecombe worked out with James over the summer and volunteered that he orchestrated the starting five group text thread - well, once he asked Maxey for James’ number.

‘A lot of pressure’

South Korean golfers trying to win gold to be free from military duty

NAGOYA, Japan, Sept 30, (AP): A gold medal for two South Korean golfers at the Asian Games would mean more than a chunk of metal to dangle around their necks.

For Kim Joo-hyung and Kim Seong-hyeon, winning gold at the Asian Games - in the men’s individual or team event - would excuse them from mandatory military service at home.

Kim Joo-hyung goes by Tom Kim when he plays on the PGA Tour, and Kim Seong-hyeon goes by S.H. Kim.

Under any name, they got a good start in the first round on Wednesday toward landing the exemption. The final round is Saturday.

“I am 100% nervous,” S.H. Kim said. “A lot of pressure.” He added he’s struggling with knee and back injuries and was not optimistic about his chances in the individual event.

“Team gold is easier,” he said.

Japan led the men’s team competition after the first round, with South Korea and China two strokes behind.

In the individual event, Wang Wei-hsuan of Taiwan and Kazuki Higa of Japan were tied at 5-under 65 atop the leaderboard at Kasugi Country Club.



Kim Joo-hyung of South Korea hits a shot during the first round of the men’s golf competition at the Asian Games in Kasugai, Japan. (AP)

Mun Do-yeob, the third member of the South Korea team, was tied with four others at 4-under 66.

Unlike his teammates, 35-year-old Mun doesn’t need the exemption. In South Korea most men serve 18-21 months of military service.

The format is 72 holes of stroke play. The teams are made up of three players, but only the best two scores count each day toward the team total.

‘We’re proud of our partnership’

AAW celebrates opening of SQUATWOLF’s second store in Kuwait at Al Khiran Mall

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. (AAW) and SQUATWOLF, the Dubai-based activewear brand, celebrated the opening of their second store at Al Khiran Mall in the South of Kuwait. The event was attended by SQUATWOLF Co-Founders and Co-CEOs Anam Khalid and Wajdan Gul, and AAW Deputy CEO Mr. Khalid Faisal Al Mutawa.

The opening was marked by a countdown leading into the official store reveal, followed by a confetti celebration and music that set the tone for an evening dedicated to fitness and movement, allowing guests to experience SQUATWOLF’s approach to performance and active living.

AAW Deputy CEO Mr. Khalid Al Mutawa said: “We’re pleased to partner with SQUATWOLF, a growing brand that continues to make its mark in the activewear sector. Opening the brand’s second store in Kuwait at Al Khiran Mall in less than a year, reflects our commitment to meeting the growing demand for quality apparel that supports today’s customer active lifestyles.”

SQUATWOLF Founder and Co-CEO Wajdan Gul said: “We’re proud of our partnership with AAW as we open our second store in Kuwait at Al Khiran Mall, following the successful launch of our first store at The Avenues. This opening marks another important milestone in our continued expansion across the Gulf and the Middle East. Our new location in Al Khiran Mall is more than just a new store, it is a space designed to inspire customers to embrace a healthy, active lifestyle and experience SQUATWOLF’s commitment to performance, quality, and innovation.”

Located on the ground floor of Al Khiran Mall, the SQUATWOLF store offers a wide range of activewear for men and women. The brand combines technical innovation with contemporary design, creating performance-driven apparel designed for comfort, durability, and everyday movement.



A glimpse inside SQUATWOLF’s Al-Khiran branch.

Built on values of discipline, resilience, and commitment, the brand represents more than performance gear by embodying a community driven by determination and personal strength.

Founded in Dubai in 2016, SQUATWOLF has grown its regional presence across UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Lebanon, and Kuwait, building a commu-



SQUATWOLF’s Al-Khiran Mall branch.

nity around discipline, resilience, and a commitment to personal growth.

Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Company is one of the largest retail and distribution companies in Kuwait, operating across multiple sectors and representing more than 100 global brands in the wholesale and retail markets.

Spain extends unbeaten run to 40 with Croatia rout



Spain’s Alex Baena, right, battles for the ball with Croatia’s Ivan Smolcic during the Nations League soccer match between Spain and Croatia in Seville, Spain. (AP)

SEVILLE, Sept 30, (AP): Lamine Yamal led World Cup winner Spain as it defeated Croatia in the Nations League to add to its record unbeaten streak in its homecoming game, while England rebounded from its opening loss to the world champions with a victory over 10-man Czechia.

Yamal scored twice and set up another goal as Spain beat Croatia 4-1 at home to reach 40 matches unbeaten. It was Spain’s first home game since it won its second world title in July.

Before the match, captain Rodri lifted the World Cup trophy in front of a raucous home crowd at the Ramón Sánchez Pizjuán Stadium in Seville.

England needed second-half goals by Anthony Gordon and Harry Kane to defeat the Czechs 2-0, with the hosts playing a man down from the 23rd minute after Pavel Sulc was shown a red card.

Spain got past Croatia in its second game since beating Argentina in the World Cup final, with Yamal scoring two minutes into the match and again in the 63rd.

Marc Pubill also scored, finding the net in the 31st for his first goal with Spain, two minutes after



England goalkeeper James Trafford catches the ball in front of Czechia’s Robin Hranac during the UEFA Nations League soccer match between Czechia and England in Prague, Czechia. (AP)

Dion Drena Beljo had equalized for the visitors, also with his first international goal. Substitute Nico Williams sealed the Spain victory in the 89th.

Yamal, who also found the net against England, gave the assist for Pubill’s goal. He has scored 11 goals in his last eight matches for country and club Barcelona.

“He is a very generous footballer who puts all that talent at the service of the team,” Spain coach Luis de la Fuente said. “We are fortunate to have him with us. He is someone who is truly loved within the squad. We are very happy with him.”

La Roja had extended its unbeat-

en streak to 39 games by rallying to a 3-2 win over England at Wembley Stadium on Saturday.

Spain has lost only one of its last 16 Nations League group matches, winning seven straight.

“We know Spain are the best. There is no debate about that,” Croatia coach Slaven Bilic said. “We knew that before kickoff. They have been the best side for several years. Against England, we did not see them play quite like this, but tonight there was simply too much space.”

Spain leads Group A3 with six points, three more than both England and Croatia.

Croatia won 2-1 at Czechia,

formerly known as the Czech Republic, on Saturday, with veteran midfielder Luka Modric scoring his nation’s opening goal. Modric started on the bench against Spain, entering the match in the 81st.

Spain will still host Czechia on Saturday and visit Croatia next Tuesday.

England played with an extra man for most of the match and needed goals by Gordon in the 47th and Kane in the 69th to win its first match in the Nations League this season.

Sulc was sent off for a foul in the first half, with video review changing a yellow card into a red.

“We played very professionally in the second half,” England coach Thomas Tuchel said. “We stepped up, we needed to be a bit more dynamic and bring a bit more urgency into our play, which we did, but we kept the intensity going, and the effort was still there. We deserved victory. We got an important win, and that’s what counts.”

In the lower-tiered League B, Switzerland won 3-0 at Scotland, which played a man down from about the 10th minute after a red card to Jack Hendry. It was Sebastian Pocognoli’s first home game as Scotland’s coach.

Slovenia beat visiting North Macedonia 2-0.

In League C, host Moldova and Faroe Islands drew 1-1, while Finland and Belarus played to a scoreless draw in Helsinki.

Brazil won’t replace injured Raphinha

France midfielder Koné ‘shocked’ by coach Zidane ability in training

PARIS, Sept 30, (AP): France midfielder Manu Koné had to pinch himself when new coach Zinedine Zidane laced up his boots to take part in training.

Arguably the world’s best playmaker during his heyday, the 54-year-old Zidane was in his element spraying passes around and whipping in crosses to his awe-struck players.

“What shocked me during the first week of training was his technical range. He’s lost none of his ability,” Koné said on Tuesday ahead of Friday’s game against Italy at Stade de France in the Nations League.

“Seeing it in person is even better, especially at his age,” the 25-year-old Koné added. “It’s true that I was little when he was near the end of his career. To see that he still has that technique now means it must have been incredible in his era.”

Zidane’s two goals in the 1998 World Cup final win against Brazil made him an overnight superstar, with his face famously beamed on the Arc de Triomphe in Paris as a nation celebrated. A Ballon d’Or award followed and, two years later, his superb performances led Les Bleus to more glory at the European Championship.

“It’s a pleasure to be coached by Zidane, a world legend. He’s told me to play freely and given me confidence,” Koné added. “He was a midfielder, so as a midfielder I listen to everything he says and I can only learn by his side. He advises me a lot about my positioning and gives me more responsibility.”

Zidane’s last performance for France was in the 2006 World Cup final, which ended in a penalty shootout loss to Italy. Even though Zidane was sent off in extra time for head-butting Italy defender Marco Materazzi when France was dominating, it did not affect his popularity among French soccer fans.

Since his arrival Zidane has been in the spotlight even more than some of the stars in his squad.

“We shouldn’t be shocked, you can only congratulate him for his career,” Koné said. “We will see that on Friday, the ovation he gets (against Italy).”

Zidane played Koné in a sentry midfield role in a 1-0 win at Turkey last Friday, which meant largely sitting in front of and protecting the defense



France’s coach Zinedine Zidane gives instructions during the UEFA Nations League soccer match between Turkey and France in Izmit, Turkey. (AP)

with limited scope to push up.

Two weeks ago, Koné scored twice for Roma against Inter Milan in a table-topping Serie A clash but has yet to find the net in 21 appearances for Les Bleus.

“The goal will come,” he said. “But the important thing is to meet the coach’s requirements.”

□ □ □

Raphinha was released by Brazil on Wednesday because of a thigh injury. The forward was replaced during the 4-2 win over Australia on Tuesday, when he scored from a penalty kick.

The Brazilian Football Confederation said the Barcelona player underwent imaging tests that revealed a minor muscle edema on the back of his right thigh.

“As a precaution and to ensure a speedy recovery, the player will be released from the Brazilian national team,” the confederation said. “No replacement player will be called up for the friendly match against India.”

Brazil will play at India on Saturday for its final match of the international break. It also drew with Australia 1-1 on Friday.

Raphinha is expected to undergo further tests in Spain, where he will continue his recovery process at his club.

Muller isn’t ready to retire, signs extension with Whitecaps

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, Sept 30, (AP): Thomas Muller is not ready to retire.

The Vancouver Whitecaps announced Tuesday that the club has signed the German soccer great to a contract extension through Major League Soccer’s 2027 “sprint season.”

The sprint season is set to run from February through May 2027 before the league switches to the international summer-to-spring calendar in July 2027.

“So far it’s a hell of a ride. It’s really fun to be with this team, to be with these people and to be with the club,” Muller said in a video released by the Whitecaps. “And my body is still good. “I just feel that it’s so much fun to be out on the pitch, week in and week out. Every match

day is a good day for me. And we want to achieve our goals.”

Reaching the extension required the 37-year-old Muller to evaluate how his body was feeling and whether he could physically handle another season, Whitecaps CEO and sporting director Axel Schuster said.

“He’s smart enough to say, ‘I don’t want to be on the pitch one day, and people say, ‘You should have stopped,’” Schuster said. “He doesn’t need that. He had his massive career. He could have retired before he came to Vancouver, and he can retire at any given end of a season, and everyone will be happy. And he doesn’t want to play then over that time.”

Muller signed with Vancouver in August 2025

following 17 seasons with Bayern Munich, where he scored 250 goals across all competitions.

The midfielder has continued to be a dominant force in MLS, tallying 16 goals and 11 assists over 29 regular-season games.

He has made 45 appearances across all competitions for the Whitecaps, contributing 19 goals and 12 assists in the process, and was named an MLS All-Star this summer.

Before joining the Whitecaps, Muller led Bayern to 13 league championships and 33 total titles.

He also won the 2014 World Cup with Germany, scoring five goals in the tournament, and took home the Golden Boot from the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, finishing with five goals and three assists.

ARAB TIMES

Kuwait’s No.1 English Newspaper

For Subscriptions and Complaints

Please Call

51508991

51526559

NEWS



From left, bronze medalists China's Long Jia and Kyrgyzstan's Meerim Zhumanazarova, gold medalist Japan's Ami Ishii, silver medalist North Korea's Pak Sol Gum pose for a photograph during the awards ceremony for the women's 68kg wrestling match at the Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan. (AP)

Al-Osaimi dedicates Kuwait shooting success to HH Amir

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Obaid Al-Osaimi, secretary-general of the Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations, dedicated Kuwait's latest shooting success at the Asian Games in Japan to His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, His Highness the Prime Minister and the people of Kuwait.



Obaid Al-Osaimi

Kuwait's shooters collected five medals — two gold, one silver and two bronze — in the shooting competitions, led by Khaled Al-Mudhaf's gold in the men's individual trap. Al-Mudhaf then joined Talal Al-Rashidi and Abdulrahman Al-Feihan to secure gold in the men's team trap event. In the women's trap, Hajar Abdulmalek won bronze in the indi-

vidual event, while Abdulmalek, Sarah Al-Hawwal and Shahed Al-Hawwal claimed bronze in the team competition. Al-Osaimi hailed the results, saying the shooters had produced strong performances despite facing tough competition from some of Asia's leading athletes. He attributed the success to careful planning and continuous follow-up by the Kuwait Shooting Federation and Club, together with the efforts of the shooters and technical and administrative staff. Al-Osaimi said the Asian Games also provide valuable preparation for the World Shooting Championships in Qatar next November, where direct qualification places for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics will be at stake. He added that the latest medals further strengthen Kuwait's shooting record and enhance the country's presence at major international competitions.

Burgan faces Derb Sultan in Club World Cup finale

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

CAIRO, Sept 30: Burgan will bid to close its historic debut at the IHF Men's Club World Championship on a high when it faces Morocco's Montada Derb Sultan in the seventh-place playoff in Cairo today. The Kuwaiti side is looking to end its first appearance on the global stage with a positive result after gaining valuable experience against some of the world's leading clubs. Burgan finished fourth in Group B following a 44-19 defeat by Hungarian powerhouse Veszprém in their final group match. It was its third loss of the tournament, following defeats by Germany's Füchse Berlin and Egypt's Al Ahly. The tournament has nevertheless provided Burgan's players with valuable exposure to different styles of handball and high-level competition ahead of the new domestic season, which begins in October. Burgan earned its place in the Club World Championship after winning the Asian Men's Club League Championship in Kuwait in July. It defeated Saudi Arabia's Al-Khaleej in the final to secure the club's first-ever appearance at

the global tournament. Meanwhile, Barcelona and Veszprém will meet in today's final, while Egyptian rivals Al Ahly and Zamalek contest the bronze-medal match. Füchse Berlin and Brazil's Pinheiros will play for fifth place. Burgan's coaching and administrative staff will now seek to build on the experience gained in Cairo, address the weaknesses exposed during the tournament, and carry the lessons into the new season as they look to build on their Asian triumph.



Burgan goalkeeper makes a save during the IHF Men's Club World Championship match against Veszprém.

Kuwait volleyball team sweeps Egyptian Army in Cairo friendly



Players pose for the camera after the win.

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

CAIRO, Sept 30: Kuwait's national volleyball team continued its preparations for the Arab Volleyball Championship with a convincing 3-0 victory over the Egyptian Army in Cairo. The Blues won the third friendly of their training camp 29-27, 25-22, 25-23 as the coaching staff continued to assess the squad and fine-tune its tactical approach. Kuwait had previously faced the Egyptian Army, Al-Mokawloon Al-Arab and Petrojet in a series of warm-up matches designed to improve the players' technical and physical readiness. The team will conclude its Cairo camp with another friendly against Petrojet tomorrow before travelling to Jordan on Oct. 4. The Arab Volleyball Championship will be held in Amman from Oct. 5 to 15. Head coach Julian Alvarez and assistant Zaid Al-Kadhmi are using the camp to implement their tactical plans while building greater understanding between the experienced players and the younger members of the squad. The coaching staff hopes the preparations will have Kuwait in peak condition when the tournament gets underway.

Kuwait seeks fresh start after Cup disappointment



Kuwait players look unhappy after winless run at the Gulf Cup.

Blues make Gulf Cup history — for the wrong reason

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

JEDDAH, Sept 30: Kuwait's senior national football team ended its Gulf Cup campaign with a third successive defeat, losing 3-1 to Oman at Prince Abdullah Al-Faisal Stadium in Jeddah in the final round of Group A.

The result saw the Blues make unwanted history, becoming the first team to exit the Gulf Cup without a single point. That is a disappointing record for the tournament's most successful side, with 10 titles, including a record four consecutive championships in the first four editions from 1970 to 1976. Kuwait's dominance of the Gulf Cup represents a unique legacy and an identity that has shaped the country's footballing stature since the tournament began. The Blues have always been a presence at the competition, leaving their mark even when they have fallen short of winning the title. That legacy demands greater effort and a stronger commitment to preserving it. The current squad, however, cannot be accused of failing to compete. Despite three defeats, Kuwait showed encouraging spells and remained competitive in all three games, although its performance dropped significantly after halftime. Coach Hélio Sousa's willingness to trust young players and give them opportunities to prove themselves was one of the positives to emerge from the tournament. Several youngsters showed enough potential to make a greater contribution in future competitions, while the team's overall shape and style

were noticeably improved. Among the players who impressed were Saud Al-Houshan, Yousif Al-Haqan, Khaled Al-Murshid, Jassem Al-Mutair, Abdulaziz Naji, Mohsen Falah, Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi and Nasser Faleh. The next step should be to develop this group further, while adding one or two experienced players to provide guidance improve cohesion and strengthen the team physically. Kuwait faced a demanding group, taking on Saudi Arabia and Iraq, both of whom featured at the most recent World Cup, as well as Oman, ranked more than 50 places above Kuwait. Despite the difference in resources and ranking, Kuwait produced respectable performances. Ultimately, however, defensive lapses, costly mistakes, loss of concentration and poor organization in the closing stages proved decisive. Kuwait also continues to face a considerable gap with its Gulf neighbors in areas such as infrastructure and professionalism. Yet the Blues showed during the tournament that they can still compete and produce quality football in spells. With Kuwait's last Gulf Cup title coming in 2010, the focus must now turn to the 2027 Asian Cup in January. The national team needs technical stability and a clear long-term plan to rebuild its identity and restore the character that once defined Kuwaiti football. The current generation of promising players should be retained, developed and given the support needed to grow, while the shortcomings exposed in Jeddah must be addressed. Kuwait's rich footballing legacy will not be restored overnight. It will require a collective effort, patience and a sustained commitment to rebuilding the national team and returning the Blues to the podium.

Financial breaches involve more than \$1.19 billion

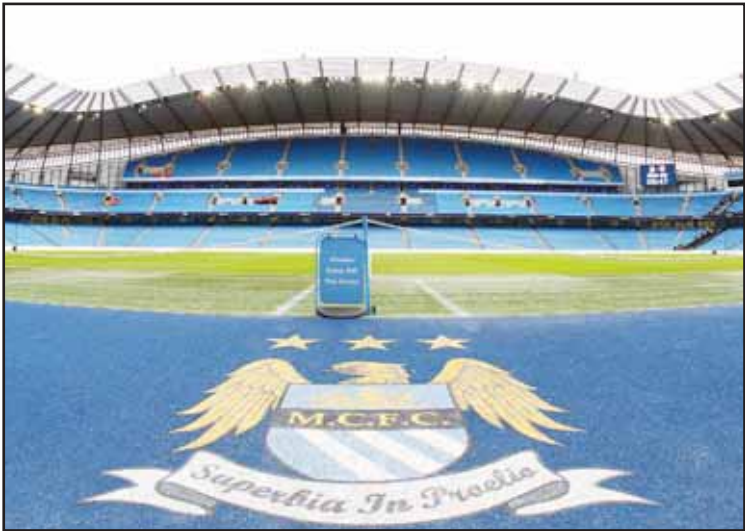
Man City found guilty of 115 Premier League charges

MANCHESTER, England, Sept 30, (AP): Manchester City artificially inflated its revenue by more than \$1 billion over nearly a decade, circumventing fair-play rules that restricted rival clubs and allowing it to pad its roster with some of soccer's biggest stars, an investigatory panel found in a bombshell report published. In what is widely viewed as the biggest scandal in Premier League history, the independent panel determined that the United Arab Emirates-backed team committed almost all of the 115-plus violations it was accused of during a period in which City changed the landscape of the world's most popular soccer league. That included 80 from 2009-18 for alleged financial misdeeds and another 35 from 2018-23 for allegedly not cooperating with the investigation. City's alleged financial wrongdoing -- made possible in part through what the league said were "sham" commercial deals -- was worth more than 900 million pounds (\$1.19 billion). Premier League chief executive Richard Masters said the ruling showed that City "systematically broke Premier League rules for nearly a decade." "This disciplinary case, and this decision, are the most significant in Premier League history," Masters said. City now faces severe sanctions that could include a huge points deduction or even expulsion from the league, causing heavy reputational damage to its Abu Dhabi ownership. The Premier League said sanctions will be decided during a separate hearing held by the independent commission at an unspecified date. City has always denied wrongdoing

and said in a statement that it was "disappointed and surprised" by the ruling. It plans to appeal the verdict and said it would be "relentless" in its fight to clear its name, which would further drag out a case that has already run for more than three years. Any appeal by City would have to be made by Friday, the league said. In an internal video to City staff - obtained by broadcaster Sky News - the club's CEO, Ferran Soriano, went into detail about why he felt the verdict was wrong. "This has gone on for so long that it is important to remind ourselves that the whole Premier League case against us is based on a single false accusation: that the owner's personal money was somehow and secretly

put into the club via some sponsors from Abu Dhabi," he said. "This is just not true. Irrefutable evidence has been provided to the Premier League commission that shows it could not happen and that it did not happen." The allegations first arose in 2018 from leaked club emails and documents, and the Premier League initiated its case more than three years ago. Tuesday's findings come after it emerged last week that the accusations against City were expected to be upheld following an exhaustive process. City is accused of providing misleading information about its finances over a nine-year period from 2009-18 - a span in which it emerged from the shadow of its crosstown rival, Manchester United, won three

titles and signed some of the world's best players, including Yaya Toure, Sergio Aguero and Kevin de Bruyne. The violations included failing to provide accurate financial information and submitting inflated figures for sponsorship deals out of Abu Dhabi, hiding payments and breaching financial rules established by the Premier League and UEFA, European soccer's governing body, intended to keep clubs financially stable by not spending beyond their means. On top of that, City faced many other charges of failing to cooperate with the investigation between 2018-23. "An independent commission has found Manchester City guilty of all charges related to serious breaches of the Premier League's financial rules over a nine-season period," the league said, "and the majority of charges in relation to its failure to co-operate with the league's investigation." Regarding the sponsorship deals, the league said: "Manchester City arranged 'sham' contracts (which misrepresented the true agreement between the parties) with a number of its commercial partners, as well as relying on 'sham' agreements with others, to artificially inflate the club's revenues and reduce its costs. "The club," the league added, "filed misstated accounts and concealed the true state of its finances from its auditors and football regulators." The purpose of City's "schemes" was to "artificially inflate the club's revenues, and reduce its costs, by more than £900 million (\$1.19 billion) during the affected period, to appear to comply with financial rules," the league said.



In this file photo, a general view of the stadium ahead of the FA Cup third round soccer match between Manchester City and Manchester United at the Etihad stadium, Manchester, England. (AP)