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KUWAIT SLAMS HORMUZ CLOSURE, WARNS OF FOOD CRISIS

Coalition thwarts Madinah missile

Kuwait, Egypt call for de-escalation, diplomatic solutions

NEW YORK, Oct 15, (Agencies): The State of Kuwait has reaffirmed its strong condemnation of Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz and its threats to freedom of navigation therein.

It also condemned the continued obstruction of shipping in the Bab al-Mandab Strait by its proxies in the region, warning of the repercussions these practices have on global food security, the flow of essential goods, and rising transportation and insurance costs.

This statement was delivered by Diplomatic Attaché Dalal Sharar Wednesday

day before the Second Committee (Economic and Financial) of the UN General Assembly.

The address took place during the discussion of the agenda items on "Eradication of Poverty" and "Agricultural Development, Food Security, and Nutrition."

Sharar called for the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 2817 and urged Iran to immediately refrain from actions and threats that obstruct lawful transit or freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

She stressed that these demands align with international law and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, while noting that the world faces interconnected challenges affecting global food security, ranging from climate change and wa-

ter scarcity to supply chain disruptions caused by threats to vital waterways.

In a related context, Sharar warned of the persisting hunger crisis and the suffering of millions, despite a global decline in the prevalence of hunger to 7.8 percent in 2025, noting the disparity in this improvement across different regions.

She pointed out that the number of people suffering from hunger in Asia stands at approximately 292 million, while Africa now accounts for the largest number of hungry people globally, around 309 million, or nearly one-fifth of the continent's population.

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Weekend forecast gets a foggy twist

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): The Meteorological Department has forecast a gradual decline in temperatures throughout the country, accompanied by rising relative humidity, particularly in coastal areas. Light fog may develop, and occasional clouds are expected. Overall, the weather this weekend will be hot during the day and moderate late at night.

According to the acting Director of the Meteorological Department Dhirar Al-Ali, the country is currently experiencing autumn, a season characterized by rapid weather changes. The influence of the seasonal Indian low-pressure system is beginning to weaken, while temperatures are gradually declining during both the day and night. Relative humidity may increase at times, particularly in coastal areas, raising the likelihood of light fog as air masses change. Scattered clouds may also appear from time to time.

Al-Ali explained that weather will be hot and humid during the day on Friday, particularly in coastal areas, with partly cloudy skies. Winds will be variable to southeasterly, light to moderate, at speeds of 8 to 35 kilometers per hour. Maximum temperatures are expected to range from 37 to 39 degrees Celsius, while sea conditions will be slight to moderate, with wave heights of 1 to 4 feet.

Friday night will be relatively hot to moderate and humid, especially in coastal areas, with partly cloudy skies. Winds will be southeasterly to variable, light to moderate, at speeds of 6 to 26 kilometers per hour. Light fog may develop in some areas. Minimum temperatures are expected to range from 21 to 23 degrees Celsius, while sea conditions will be slight to moderate, with wave heights of 1 to 3 feet.

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Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Minister of Justice and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Minors' Affairs (PAMA), Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait during the honoring ceremony for 1,247 outstanding students under PAMA's care.

Minister Al-Sumait urges young achievers to pursue excellence

1,247 students shine at PAMA awards ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: On Wednesday, Minister of Justice and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Minors' Affairs (PAMA), Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait, honored 1,247 outstanding students under PAMA's care across all academic levels for the 2025/2026 academic year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In his speech at the annual honoring ceremony, Minister Al-Sumait expressed his pride in the students' academic achievements.

He shared in their joy and celebrated their success, which reflects their hard work and perseverance, the support of their families, and the contributions of the teachers who helped them achieve

excellence.

Minister Al-Sumait affirmed that PAMA is committed to developing the abilities and qualifications of those under its care in various fields, enhancing both their academic knowledge and practical skills.

PAMA, he noted, actively supports every initiative that advances its mission to

care for minors and those under its guardianship, helping them achieve success and contribute to the nation's development and progress.

Addressing the honorees, Minister Al-Sumait urged them to make ambition their path and success their goal.

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'Leaked questions' trigger supervisory exam retakes

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei has issued a decision to cancel all results of the fourth-stage examinations for candidates seeking supervisory educational positions and to re-administer the examinations for all applicants, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decision follows the completion of an independent investigative committee's work. The committee was established by the minister to examine concerns, complaints, and irregularities previously raised by candidates and members of the education sector regarding the examinations.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Education explained that the decision was based on the findings of the independent investigative committee. It reflects the ministry's commitment to safeguarding the integrity of examination procedures and ensuring that any subsequent administrative decisions are based on sound and valid grounds.

The decision also aims to strengthen confidence in the selection process for supervisory positions and reinforce the principle that appointments to educational leadership roles must be based on objective criteria and

rigorous procedures that comply with applicable regulations.

The ministry emphasized that safeguarding the integrity of examinations and protecting candidates' rights are responsibilities that allow no compromise.

Addressing the concerns and complaints raised within the education sector reflects a commitment to reviewing procedures, verifying their validity, and taking the necessary corrective measures to preserve the credibility of administrative processes and strengthen confidence in the selection mechanisms for supervisory educational positions.

The Educational Affairs Sector will oversee all tasks and procedures required to re-administer the examinations according to a timetable to be determined. The process will strictly adhere to established examination regulations, with the necessary measures in place to ensure confidentiality, procedural integrity, and the prevention of any irregularities.

The dates, venues, durations, and subject matter of the re-administered examinations will be officially announced by the ministry at a later date.

Candidates who participated in the fourth-phase leadership training courses will be informed of all relevant details and requirements to ensure clarity and enable them to prepare based on verified, publicly announced information.

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Lebanese Ambassador to Kuwait Gadi Khoury during the Lebanese universities fair organized by the Embassy of Lebanon.

Lebanese universities shift focus to emerging careers

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Lebanese Ambassador to Kuwait Gadi Khoury revealed that the Lebanese universities are developing their curricula to include modern fields, such as artificial intelligence, data science, cybersecurity, digital technology, business administration, health sciences and environmental sustainability, in order to keep pace with the rapid changes in labor markets, particularly in the Gulf states.

Khoury made the statement at the Lebanese universities fair organized by the Embassy of Lebanon in its premises recently.

The event featured nine universities, with the aim to introduce

students to the educational opportunities and academic programs available in Lebanon.

According to Khoury, hosting this fair in Kuwait is an important turning point in the educational and cultural cooperation between the two nations, reflecting the deep, historic and fraternal ties between them, rooted in affection, mutual respect and coordination.

He added that through the fair, Lebanon conveys a clear message that despite the challenges it has been facing, it remains committed to its pioneering role in education and culture, while investing in people and knowledge continues to be one of its strengths.

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Ministry tightens dress code

Office wear tied to appraisals

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The Ministry of Communications has issued Administrative Circular No. 15/2026, establishing regulations and standards governing the official attire and general appearance of its employees.

The initiative reflects the ministry's commitment to promoting workplace discipline and maintaining a professional appearance that aligns with its corporate identity, enhances the work environment, and improves performance standards.

The ministry affirmed that the cir-

cular is part of its responsibility to regulate the workplace and ensure compliance with professional conduct requirements, in accordance with the Civil Service Law and its regulations, as well as the Code of Conduct for government employees.

The ministry emphasized that employees' overall appearance plays an important role in projecting the professional image of government institutions, particularly in service-oriented workplaces and during direct interactions with the public.

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Bump dodgers to get the boot

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The Traffic and Operations Sector of the Ministry of Interior emphasized that motorcycle riders and delivery vehicle operators must cross speed bumps correctly on all roads in Kuwait, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Riders are prohibited from bypassing speed bumps by driving around their sides or passing through the gap between the speed bump and the curb. These measures aim to protect riders and other road users.

The sector stressed that bypassing speed bumps poses a significant risk to both riders and other road users. It

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Bishop Aldo Berardi

Bishop Berardi hails Kuwait's UN Rights Council re-election

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Bishop Aldo Berardi, Apostolic Vicar of Northern Arabia for the Catholic Church, extended his heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, and the government and people of Kuwait on the country's re-election to the United Nations Human Rights Council for the 2027-2029 term, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Bishop Berardi explained that this significant diplomatic achievement reflects Kuwait's esteemed standing within the international community. It underscores international recognition of Kuwait's humanitarian contributions and foreign policy, which is rooted in moderation, balance, dialogue, peaceful coexistence, and respect for human dignity.

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Iraq-Kuwait air routes reopen amid tensions

BAGHDAD, Oct 15, (Xinhua): Iraq's Transportation Ministry announced on Thursday the reopening of air routes between Iraq and Kuwait, which had been temporarily suspended due to recent regional security developments and tensions.

The resumption took effect at 2 p.m. local time (1100 GMT) on Thursday under operational arrangements supervised by the International Civil Aviation Organization and in coordination with Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates, the ministry said in a statement.

Air traffic will be managed according to specified routes and flight levels to ensure flight safety, with a gradual implementation subject to continuous monitoring and evaluation, the statement added.



Al-Marzouq: GCC and Asia 9 poised to build a stronger economic corridor backed by banking, investment and digital connectivity



Alshamlan: GCC-Asia banking cooperation has moved beyond dialogue to tangible partnerships and growth opportunities



11 Millinery magic charms Kuwait



Fajr	04:31	Asr	14:50
Sunrise ..	05:50	Maghrib ..	17:18
Zohr	11:34	Isha	18:36

Al-Bseis: Re-election of Kuwait milestone in diplomatic, humanitarian journey

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation Counselor Hamad Zaid Al-Bseis expressed pride and honor over the re-election of Kuwait as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council for the 2027-2029 term, garnering 173 votes in the elections held by the United Nations General Assembly recently, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Bseis considers this achievement a reflection of the position of Kuwait on the international stage and a testament to its role in supporting humanitarian work and upholding the values of tolerance, justice and respect for human dignity.

He said the re-election of Kuwait for the second consecutive term is a milestone in its diplomatic and humanitarian journey, affirming the international esteem it enjoys under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

He pointed out that, throughout its history, Kuwait has established a humanitarian approach rooted in supporting the oppressed, providing aid to those in need, and extending a helping hand to affected populations without discrimination.

He asserted that the presence of Kuwait in international forums is tied to its legacy of generosity and charitable and humanitarian works, as well as its unwavering commitment to support initiatives that safeguard human dignity and promote solidarity and mutual support.

He stressed that this milestone is not just a diplomatic achievement, as it comes with more responsibilities to continue working toward the protection of human rights, promotion of international dialogue and cooperation, support efforts to combat discrimination and violations, and reinforce the principles of justice, equality and respect for freedom.

He emphasized that civil society organizations, foremost of which is the Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation,

must continue playing their role in protecting human rights through community and humanitarian initiatives, ensuring social solidarity, and expanding the scope of charitable work in a manner that serves humanity and preserves human dignity.

He commended the efforts of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its diplomatic staff in this endeavor and strengthening Kuwait's presence and standing within international organizations.

He affirmed that this achievement serves as an impetus to continue the path of giving and to uphold responsibilities toward humanitarian causes.

In conclusion, he congratulated the political leadership and the people of Kuwait on this accomplishment, praying that God continues to bestow the blessings of security and stability upon Kuwait, and grant its people success in continuing their humanitarian mission and championing peace, justice and human rights causes throughout the world.



Hamad Al-Bseis

Kuwait's role in 'battling' graft wins global acclaim

Nazaha elected to lead UN anti-corruption working group

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Kuwait's Public Authority for Combating Corruption (Nazaha) has been elected to lead the third working group on knowledge and peer learning within the UN Office on Drugs and Crime's GlobE anti-corruption network, securing 91 percent of votes cast by participating members.

Nazaha said Thursday that the election reflected growing international confidence in Kuwait's role in combating corruption and promoting international cooperation.

Anwar Al-Qadiri, Director of International Cooperation at Nazaha, said the appointment was an achievement for Kuwait, adding that the group would translate international expertise into practical tools to address increasingly complex corruption crimes, particularly cross-border offences.

Dhari Bouyabis, Nazaha's Supervisor of International Organizations and Conferences, said the group develops guidance materials, promotes best practices and monitors emerging corruption threats, including crimes involving modern technologies, virtual assets and artificial intelligence.

He added that Nazaha would promote coordination, knowledge exchange and training to strengthen authorities' capacity to detect corruption, prosecute offenders, trace illicit proceeds and recover



KUNA photo

Nazaha was elected during an online meeting and will coordinate the group's work with other working groups, the network's secretariat and its steering committee.

assets.

Bouyabis noted that the GlobE network comprises 256 anti-corruption authorities from 137 countries, providing a platform for secure information exchange and cooperation on cross-border cases.

The election followed Kuwait's participation in the network's seventh General Meeting in Vienna from August 25 to 28, where the delegation presented the country's experience in international anti-corruption cooperation, beneficial ownership transparency and electronic reporting through the Sahel application.

Nazaha was elected during an online meeting on Wednesday and will coordinate the group's work

with other working groups, the network's secretariat and its steering committee.

Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research

Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) announced Thursday that Kuwait representative Dr. Turki Al-Saeed was elected Vice-Chair of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO), under UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), during meetings in Bali, Indonesia.

Al-Saeed, Director of KISR's Coastal and Marine Resources Program, told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that Kuwait proposed

organizing joint marine research cruises aboard its research vessel "Al-Mustakshif," extending from the Arabian Gulf to the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal, as well as the Red Sea and Mediterranean Sea.

He said the initiative aims to study microplastic pollution and strengthen regional and international scientific cooperation in marine research.

The initiative also proposes cooperation among KISR, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) and the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) to benefit from their combined research capabilities and expertise, he added.

Al-Saeed said Kuwait presented more than 30 years of experience in marine monitoring and research, along with four KFAS-funded projects covering marine ecosystems, biodiversity, pollution and climate-related changes.

Kuwait's future research priorities include developing marine monitoring systems and scientific modeling, improving the ability to predict harmful algal blooms and fish kills and studying the impact of human activities on the marine environment, he said.

Al-Saeed stressed the importance of stronger cooperation among member states, data and expertise exchange and research capacity development to protect the marine environment and sustain its resources.

Such cooperation also supports the objectives of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, he added.

Colombia's move to open Jerusalem embassy rapped

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Kuwait condemned Colombia's opening of an embassy in occupied Jerusalem, describing the move as a flagrant violation of international law and relevant international legitimacy resolutions.

In a statement on Wednesday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed Kuwait's categorical rejection of the step and all practices aimed at altering the existing legal and historical status of occupied Jerusalem.

It called on the international community and the UN Security Council to assume their responsibilities in confronting any attempts to impose a new reality in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The ministry also reiterated Kuwait's firm support for the Palestinian cause and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among them the establishment of an independent state along the June 4, 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

PACA eyes ICAO expertise to boost airport services

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Director General of the Public Authority for Civil Aviation Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah, emphasized on Thursday the importance of strengthening cooperation with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

This collaboration aims to support efforts to develop the civil aviation sector and enhance services at Kuwait International Airport, ensuring they keep pace with the rapid advancements in the air transport industry and established international standards.

Sheikh Humoud Al-Sabah's statement to KUNA came following his meeting with Mohamed Rahma, the Regional Director for ICAO's Middle East office.

Sheikh Humoud Al-Sabah noted that enhancing coordination, technical cooperation, and the exchange of expertise with the organization facilitates the adoption of international best practices. It also helps in developing technical and operational capabilities, and supports regional initiatives and programs; all of which serve to boost the efficiency of the civil aviation system and solidify the State of Kuwait's standing within the air transport sector.



KUNA photo

Bahraini Minister of Works Ibrahim Al-Hawaj and Kuwait's Ambassador to Bahrain Jassem Al-Najem discuss ways to boost bilateral relations.

Bahrain, Kuwait discuss ways to bolster deep-rooted bonds

MANAMA, Oct 15, (KUNA): Bahraini Minister of Works Ibrahim Al-Hawaj and Kuwait's Ambassador to Bahrain Jassem Al-Najem discussed ways to develop bilateral relations and expand cooperation between the two countries.

The Kuwaiti Embassy said in a statement received by KUNA that the meeting took place on Wednesday, with Al-Hawaj highlighting the deep-rooted historical ties between Bahrain and Kuwait and both sides'

commitment to strengthening their partnership.

The two sides stressed the importance of exchanging expertise in development fields and benefiting from each other's experiences to serve mutual interests and support development efforts in both countries.

They also underscored the need for continued consultations and exchange of views to broaden cooperation and reflect the longstanding ties between the two countries.

Talks focus on bid to organize and update data of 'bedoun'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): The Central Agency for Remedying Illegal Residents' Status discussed on Wednesday with the Insurance Regulatory Unit mechanisms for organizing and updating data of illegal residents (bedoun) in the unit's systems and ways to enhance electronic integration between the two entities.

In a press statement, the Central Agency said its Acting Secretary-General Brigadier Dr. Sharif Al-Kandari chaired a coordination meeting with a delegation from the Insurance Regulatory Unit, headed by

its Chairman Mohammad Al-Otaibi, to strengthen bilateral cooperation in data exchange and electronic connectivity.

The statement added that both sides stressed the importance of this step in supporting government digital transformation, ensuring data accuracy, improving the efficiency of services provided to applicants and accelerating the completion of procedures.

The meeting was attended by the Central Agency's Assistant Secretaries-General Brigadier Suleiman Al-Husainan and Abdullah Al-Farhan.

Repercussions of October War

'Principled stance could act as powerful weapon'

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The October 1973 War transcended a clash of tanks, aircraft, and the Suez Canal crossing, as it was a broader Arab confrontation with Israel that extended beyond the Egyptian and Syrian fronts.

Behind the scenes of this conflict was another equally significant front—spanning from Arab capitals to the global oil markets—where King Faisal bin Abdulaziz took a remarkable stance, establishing Saudi Arabia as a prominent Arab power in support of the Egyptian-Syrian military efforts.

As the war commenced on Oct 6, Riyadh perceived the conflict not just as a concern for Cairo and Damascus, but as a unified Arab struggle.

On Oct 17, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) decided to reduce oil production by five percent each month until Israel withdrew from the occupied Arab territories, while signaling stricter actions against countries aiding Israel militarily.

Then, on Oct 19, Saudi Arabia declared an oil export embargo against the United States—a pivotal move that, for the first time, turned the energy weapon into a direct element of the political struggle surrounding the war.

This decision was far more than an economic strategy. King Faisal understood that oil—a resource vital to western nations—could be wielded as a potent political tool, transforming it from a mere source of wealth into a major lever of influence. He recognized that the conflict extended beyond traditional warfare, encompassing strategic choices about energy resources.

Consequently, the implications of the October War transitioned from the battlegrounds of the Suez Canal and the Golan Heights to the political centers of Europe and the United States, leading to an escalation of the global energy crisis.

At the same time, Washington confronted a transformed landscape. The Arab-Israeli conflict evolved from a localized military issue into an important factor influencing the economy, energy availability and international relations.

On Nov 8, 1973, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger visited Riyadh to meet with King Faisal, where they discussed the ongoing war, oil situation and Arab embargo.

Official US records confirmed that Kissinger's meeting with King Faisal took place in Riyadh that day, with the oil embargo being a key subject in US-Saudi dialogues that time.

This meeting marked King Faisal's rise as a significant Arab political leader who viewed oil not just as a market commodity, but as a tool of sovereignty and a means of asserting political power.

Consequently, numerous accounts remained in Arab collective memory regarding his steadfastness under US pressure and his insistence on linking any change in oil policy to real progress on the issue of the occupied Arab territories.

Regarding the well-known statements attributed to King Faisal during those discussions—including his desire to pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, they are firmly embedded in the public memory of the Arab world.

However, verifying the exact wording requires a direct primary source, thus, their symbolic significance outweighs their status as verbatim, documented text.

Although the 'oil weapon' is the most recognized element of Saudi Arabia's position, it was not the sole factor. The Kingdom also engaged militarily in the conflict, sending troops to the Syrian front.

Research indicates that Saudi forces began arriving in Syria in the early days of

the war, including a mechanized infantry brigade, armored and artillery units, all aimed at strengthening the Syrian front against Israel.

So, the complete picture emerged -- Saudi Arabia did not restrict itself to offering financial or political support from a distance, as it rather dedicated a segment of its military resources to the Arab war efforts, while utilizing its oil and political influence.

The Saudi involvement did not commence with the initial shots fired on Oct 6. In the years preceding the conflict, King Faisal nurtured a strong relationship with President Anwar Sadat and backed Egypt's efforts to regain its ability to confront Israel.

US documents revealed that King Faisal had established close connection with Sadat over the years, and Riyadh actively contributed to promoting Arab unity—especially within the OAPEC—even before the October War.

Thus, when the war broke out, the Saudi position was not an impulsive response, instead, it signaled the continuation of an Arab policy advocated by King Faisal, who believed that the recovery of occupied territories necessitated a level of Arab integration that transcended mere rhetoric and slogans.

The Saudi involvement in the October War can be analyzed through three interrelated lenses: On the frontlines, Saudi troops actively supported Syria. In the economic domain, oil became a strategic tool of leverage, utilized by Riyadh as part of a cohesive Arab stance. In the political sphere, Saudi Arabia resisted global pressure, putting the issue of occupied Arab territories at the center of its position.

This sets apart the discussion of King Faisal's role in the October War from the mere account of an Arab state providing support to Egypt. He viewed the battle as having multiple fronts, believing that the Arab nations' possession of economic and political advantages could alter the course of the conflict, just as tanks and aircraft do.

During the October War, the Egyptian Army successfully crossed the Suez Canal and breached the Bar-Lev Line, restoring Arab morale after the 1967 defeat.

Meanwhile, Riyadh was engaged in a parallel struggle—one characterized by oil and strategic political maneuvers.

The importance of Saudi Arabia's involvement in the October War extends beyond the magnitude of its contributions, it lies in the innovative strategies it employed. While military forces engage in combat, the influence of oil resonated worldwide.

King Faisal recognized this dynamic. He aimed to illustrate that Arab nations possessed not only military might, but also economic and political clout capable of swaying global powers.

Decades later, the lasting lesson from the October experience is that remarkable victories are not achieved through a single means alone.

Egypt launched the 'Battle of the Crossing' with the full support of its army and citizens. Syria engaged on the Golan front, while other Arab nations contributed troops, arms and assistance.

At the same time, under King Faisal's guidance, Saudi Arabia initiated political and economic fronts that extended the conflict beyond military engagements and into the core of the global order.

This is why October remains etched in Arab memory—not just as the day of the 'Crossing', but as the moment when Arabs realized that a principled stance could act as a powerful weapon, that oil could be wielded as a political tool, and that true Arab solidarity—when transformed from mere rhetoric into action—could create an impact far greater than the battle itself.

Minister evaluates sewage pumping station readiness

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan inspected the Mishref sewage pumping station to evaluate its operational condition, confirm its readiness, and ensure it is operating safely at full capacity.

In a press statement on her visit, the Public Works Ministry revealed that Al-Mashaan assessed the facilities and operational systems at the station.

During the visit, the technical team briefed the minister on the operational processes and safety measures. She also looked into the performance of the pumps

and equipment, confirming their ability to function at maximum operational load.

In comments made during the visit, Al-Mashaan stressed the importance of the station in supporting numerous residential areas. She reaffirmed the commitment of the ministry to monitor the station's readiness to guarantee uninterrupted service in line with the highest standards of efficiency and safety.

Joining the minister in the inspection visit were acting Undersecretary Kifaya Al-Najdi, Director General of the Sanitary Engineering Affairs Department Eng. Anwar Al-Baloushi, and the technical team in charge of the operations of the station.

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KFAED ready to contribute in reconstruction of Syria

Talks yield positive results: Al-Bader

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) Acting Director General Rashed Al-Bader said on Wednesday the fund was ready to resume development cooperation with Syria and contribute to reconstruction efforts in solidarity with the Syrian people.

Al-Bader made the remarks during a roundtable meeting of partners supporting Syria's reconstruction, organized by the World Bank on the sidelines of the 2026 annual meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund in Bangkok, Thailand, according to a KFAED statement.

He said the fund had provided Syria with 28 loans over more than four decades, totaling over



Al-Bader

KD 330 million (around USD one billion), to finance vital projects in energy, roads, telecommunications, irrigation, water networks and sanitation. Development cooperation between KFAED and Syria dates back to 1969, he added.

During the years of the Syrian crisis, Kuwait provided grants worth more than USD 375 million through the fund to support affected people inside Syria and in neighboring countries hosting refugees, in cooperation with UN agencies and humanitarian partners.

Al-Bader noted that grant agreements were signed with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in August and September to support the Syria Humanitarian Fund.

He said the fund had recently held constructive talks with relevant Syrian authorities on resuming institutional cooperation, including a proposal to establish a joint technical, legal and financial team to review previously funded projects and explore opportunities for new development initiatives.

Potential areas of cooperation, based on priorities identified by Syrian authorities, include rehabilitating energy infrastructure, developing water and sanitation networks, restoring roads

and bridges, supporting social infrastructure such as schools and healthcare facilities, and providing technical assistance and institutional capacity-building.

Al-Bader affirmed KFAED's commitment to working closely with the World Bank Group, the IMF, the United Nations and partners in the Arab Coordination Group to ensure that assistance is complementary and aligned with Syria's reconstruction and economic recovery priorities.

He also said the fund was open to exploring participation in a proposed multi-donor trust fund for Syria's reconstruction to be administered by the World Bank.

KFAED welcomed further details on the proposed fund's structure and governance mechanisms, which would be examined in coordination with the Foreign Ministry.

Al-Bader expressed the fund's eagerness to strengthen cooperation with Syrian authorities and international partners to support recovery and reconstruction and help secure a stable and sustainable future for the Syrian people.

The roundtable brought together officials and representatives of international financial and development institutions.



KUNA photo
Kuwait's Ambassador to the United Republic of Tanzania Salem Al-Hamdan presents his credentials to Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

Gulf attacks, food security top Kuwait, Tanzania talks

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ambassador to the United Republic of Tanzania Salem Al-Hamdan presented his credentials to Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan at the State House in Dar es Salaam.

The Kuwaiti Embassy said in a statement received by KUNA Thursday that Al-Hamdan conveyed the Kuwaiti political leadership's greetings and wishes for the president's good health and happiness, and for continued progress and prosperity for the Tanzanian people.

President Hassan reciprocated with greetings to Kuwait's leadership and wishes for their good health and happiness, as well as further progress and prosperity for the Kuwaiti people.

The ambassador also addressed continued Iranian attacks and those by affiliated groups against Gulf states, most recently attacks on the Two Holy Mosques and King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh. He also discussed food security cooperation.

President Hassan thanked Kuwait for infrastructure assistance provided through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, as well as humanitarian and charitable aid.

The ceremony was attended by Tanzanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation Mahmoud Kombo, Chief of Protocol Yusuf Mndolwa, and Director of the Middle East Department at the Tanzanian Foreign Ministry Abdullah Kalima.

Bhutan congrats Kuwait on UN re-election

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bhutan to the State of Kuwait Kutshab Phub Dorji expressed his sincere congratulations to Kuwait, its leadership, government and people, on its re-election to the membership of the United Nations Human Rights Council for the period 2027-2029, obtaining 173 votes in the elections conducted by the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Oct 13.

Dorji affirmed that this well-deserved win for a second consecutive term is a manifestation of

the prestigious standing that the State of Kuwait enjoys in the international arena, and the great confidence of the international community in its moderate and balanced diplomatic approach and its strong commitment to follow the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter.

He pointed out that the re-election of Kuwait confirms the world's appreciation of its excellent record in the field of humanitarian action, its support for



Dorji

development and peace efforts, and its valuable work in promoting dialogue, tolerance and peaceful coexistence and safeguarding human dignity, away from selectivity and politicization.

He unveiled his country's aspiration to work closely with Kuwait during its new term in the council, which is based in Geneva, in order to promote and protect human rights throughout the world and to consolidate the principles of justice and multilateral cooperation.

He stressed that Bhutan is confident that Kuwait will continue its active and constructive role in enriching the work of the council, wishing it continuous progress and prosperity under its wise leadership.

ASBU pays tribute to late Kuwaiti composer Baqer

TUNIS, Oct 15, (KUNA): The Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) announced on Wednesday that its radio series "Arab Musicians" would celebrate late Kuwaiti composer Ahmad Baqer throughout October, with programs highlighting his artistic works and songs broadcast on Kuwait Radio and other member stations.

In a statement, the union said the initiative falls within the second part of the series, produced in cooperation with the Permanent Conference of Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators (COPEAM).

Participating Arab and European broadcasters will air the episodes as part of their autumn and winter programming schedules, with each broadcaster incorporating them



Ahmad Baqer

according to its own programming format, the statement said.

The union added that the episodes would also be published successively on its website, social media platforms and YouTube channel to reach the widest possible audience with this cultural and artistic production.

Ahmad Baqer was one of the pioneers of Kuwaiti music and among the leading composers who helped develop modern Kuwaiti song and expand its reach across the Gulf and the Arab world.

In recognition of his talent and distinctive compositional style, the Higher Institute of Arabic Music awarded him an honorary doctorate.

Beyond composition, Baqer contributed to establishing academic music education in Kuwait. He played a prominent role in founding the Institute of Musical Studies and developing it into the Higher Institute of Musical Arts, where he served as dean, becoming the first Kuwaiti to hold the position.



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Continued from Page 1

Lebanese universities

He explained that the main strength of Lebanese higher education is its ability to produce graduates equipped with the scientific, professional and linguistic skills necessary to integrate seamlessly into local, regional and international labor markets.

He pointed out that the specializations being developed by Lebanese universities align with the developmental trajectories of Kuwait and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. He clarified that the programs offered and the admission requirements vary from one university to another.

He revealed that the nine participating universities offer a range of specializations and academic programs aimed to realize the aspirations of students and meet the demands of the labor market.

The fair offers students and their parents the opportunity to engage directly with university representatives, learn about admission and registration requirements, and inquire about tuition fees, scholarships, discounts and other facilities that some universities may offer as per their policies.

On the quality of education, continuity of studies and recognition of degrees, Khoury indicated that Lebanon faced difficult economic, financial and security challenges in recent years, which affected various sectors like higher education. "Nevertheless, Lebanese universities strive to maintain the continuity and standards of their education, utilizing expertise of their teaching and administrative staff," he elaborated.

He said he fully understands the concern Kuwaiti families for the academic and professional future of their children, stressing the importance of verifying the legal status of each university and the academic accreditation of its study programs, as well as ensuring they align with the regulations and policies of Kuwait.

He affirmed that Lebanon respects the standards and criteria established by the relevant Kuwaiti authorities, most notably the Ministry of Higher Education and National Bureau for Academic Accreditation and Education Quality Assurance.

On the appeal of Lebanon as an educational destination, he confirmed that Lebanese universities have vast academic experience, range of specializations, culture of openness—both linguistically and culturally, and strong international academic ties. He indicated that several of these institutions achieved high rankings in global university assessments.

He added that the geographical proximity and the cultural and social affinity between Kuwait and Lebanon allow students to pursue their studies in Lebanon, while remaining in constant contact with their families and homeland during weekends or longer breaks, thereby, easing the burdens of travel and accommodation for their families.

He stated that the reasonable cost of edu-

cation and living in Lebanon helps alleviate the financial burdens of families, reduces the cost of scholarships funded by the Kuwaiti government, and maintains high academic standard. He asserted that some Lebanese universities can compete with prestigious international educational institutions.

He reiterated that Lebanon offers high-quality education, geographical and familial closeness and affordability, making it a good option for students from Kuwait and the entire Gulf region.

Coalition thwarts

She emphasized the necessity of directing support and resources to the areas in greatest need and strengthening their resilience against successive shocks.

Separately, the spokesperson for the Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen, Major General Turki Al-Maliki, announced Thursday the interception and destruction of a cruise missile in the Madinah region.

In a brief statement posted on the coalition's official account on the X platform, Al-Maliki provided no further details.

Elsewhere, Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty and Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah discussed bilateral ties and regional developments Thursday, stressing the need for de-escalation and diplomatic solutions to regional tensions.

In a statement, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry noted that the two ministers praised the longstanding ties between both countries during their phone call.

They also reviewed preparations for the next meeting of the Kuwaiti-Egyptian Joint Ministerial Committee, scheduled to take place in Kuwait.

Both officials exchanged views on recent regional developments, jointly condemning and rejecting the attacks on Saudi Arabia.

They also emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts to reduce tensions, advance political solutions and prioritize diplomatic dialogue to promote regional security and stability.

In Kuwait, Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian discussed issues of mutual interest with Deputy Director of Russia's Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation Frolkin Alexey.

The General Staff said in a statement Thursday that Al-Shuraian received the Russian official and his accompanying delegation during their visit to Kuwait.

The meeting featured cordial exchanges and discussions on various issues of mutual interest and ways to strengthen and develop relations between the two friendly countries.

Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Vladimir Zheltov and senior army officers attended the meeting.

Continued from Page 1

Office wear

The circular specifies the approved official attire for male and female employees, taking into account the nature of their duties and the customs and traditions of Kuwaiti society.

It requires employees to wear formal clothing appropriate for the workplace while accounting for occupational health and safety requirements for those in technical, field, and operational positions.

The circular also prohibits certain forms of workplace attire, including casual or inappropriate clothing, sportswear, and items bearing phrases, graphics, or symbols considered unsuitable or inconsistent with the standards expected of public servants.

Employees are required to maintain a professional appearance throughout official working hours and whenever representing the ministry at meetings or official events.

The ministry emphasized that compliance with the circular is a professional obligation and that any violations of the established guidelines will result in administrative action in accordance with civil service laws and regulations.

Adherence to professional appearance standards will also be taken into account in employees' annual performance evaluations.

The ministry has assigned heads of sectors, departments, and organizational units the responsibility of monitoring compliance with these guidelines and taking appropriate action in the event of violations.

In addition, the relevant authorities are responsible for determining the personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements for employees performing technical or field-based duties.

1,247 students

“The nation expects much from you,” he said, emphasizing that the country’s future is built through the efforts and creativity of its people.

The minister stressed that “an individual is measured by the positive impact they make and the contributions they offer to others.”

He added that the excellence celebrated today represents “a milestone on a journey rich in achievement - a journey undertaken by individuals who have proven that determination knows no obstacles and whose ambitions are a source of pride and an ornament for the nation.”

He encouraged them to “continue pursuing knowledge and learning so that they may become a vibrant force, contributing effectively to the advancement of our beloved Kuwait and the building of its bright future.”

Meanwhile, Alia Al-Saqer, Acting

Director General of PAMA, emphasized PAMA's firm belief that “true investment lies in our youth and that education is the fundamental pillar for building a bright future, both for them and for the nation.”

Al-Saqer noted that PAMA is committed to providing comprehensive support and care while fostering an environment that enables those under its care to excel, distinguish themselves, and achieve their aspirations.

She also expressed her gratitude and appreciation to the families of the honorees, as well as to the teachers, school administrators, and PAMA staff, all of whom have supported and encouraged these young people throughout their educational journeys.

Bishop Berardi

“As the Catholic Church, which is actively present in Kuwait, we deeply appreciate the spirit of tolerance, mutual respect, and freedom of worship that we experience here. These values are essential to promoting harmonious coexistence among citizens and residents of diverse religions and cultures.

As we celebrate Kuwait's joy over this significant national and international achievement, we reaffirm that safeguarding human rights, upholding the dignity of every individual, and promoting the values of justice, peace, and human fraternity are collective responsibilities that unite us.

We look forward with optimism and hope that, through its renewed role on the Human Rights Council, Kuwait will continue to engage constructively in promoting international dialogue and cooperation while upholding human dignity and fundamental rights without discrimination.

We offer our prayers to the Almighty, Exalted be He, to safeguard Kuwait, its wise leadership, and its noble people, and to grant this blessed land lasting security, stability, peace, and prosperity, ensuring that it remains a nation of love, tolerance, and mutual respect, and a place where people of diverse backgrounds and religions can meet in a spirit of fraternity.”

Bump dodgers

urged motorcycle riders and delivery vehicle operators to slow down when approaching speed bumps and cross them safely to avoid traffic violations and ensure public safety.

It highlighted that violations of these instructions will result in the impoundment of the motorcycle or vehicle for 60 days, in addition to other administrative measures determined according to the nature of the violation.

The sector indicated that repeated violations by riders of motorcycles or

vehicles belonging to delivery companies will result in administrative action against the operating company.

‘Leaked questions’

The decision follows a series of oversight and investigative measures prompted by numerous concerns and complaints raised during and after the examination period. These included objections concerning the integrity of the examination procedures and the extent to which they ensured fairness and equal opportunities for all candidates.

In response to these concerns and in line with the commitment to addressing them objectively and responsibly, the Minister of Education directed the formation of an impartial investigative committee.

The committee, comprising specialists from the Fatwa and Legislation Department and the Ministry of Education, was tasked with investigating the issues and irregularities affecting the fourth phase of the selection process for supervisory educational positions at the Ministry of Education for the 2025/2026 academic year.

The ministry explained that the committee examined various aspects of the examinations, verified the procedures followed in their organization and administration, assessed the integrity of the mechanisms in place, identified shortcomings, and submitted its findings and recommendations to the minister to support an appropriate decision based on the investigation's results.

The committee's mandate included investigating the electronic examinations administered to candidates for supervisory educational positions following their completion of training courses that concluded with an assessment. It also reviewed the procedures applied to examinations for candidates who had attended leadership training courses.

The investigation further examined the circulation of fourth-phase examination questions on social media platforms and the circumstances surrounding the incident. It also reviewed the examination preparation process and the programming mechanisms used, covering the technical and procedural aspects essential to ensuring the integrity and confidentiality of the tests.

Upon completing its work, the committee submitted its final report to the Minister of Education, outlining its findings from the examination and investigation of the identified issues and irregularities.

Based on the report's findings, a decision was approved to cancel all results from the fourth phase of examinations and re-administer the tests for all candidates.

The investigation uncovered practices involving the unauthorized circulation of examination questions, undermining

equal opportunities and fair competition. Such actions are incompatible with professional integrity and the standards required of those entrusted with educational responsibilities.

The decision to re-administer the examinations reflects the ministry's commitment to safeguarding the integrity of the process and ensuring fairness for all applicants.

This initiative aims to uphold transparency and integrity in the selection of candidates for educational supervisory positions, ensuring that the final approved results are based on sound procedures and that all candidates are afforded equal opportunities in accordance with established examination regulations.

The ministry emphasized that safeguarding the credibility of these examinations requires a firm response to any concerns or irregularities.

It stressed that the process must remain beyond reproach, ensuring that fair competition is maintained and candidates' rights are protected.

Safeguarding the integrity of the administrative and educational system remains a top priority in all decisions and actions related to supervisory positions. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education has directed all relevant parties to fully comply with the decision and its provisions.

They are required to follow the established guidelines for re-administering the examinations and implement the necessary measures to ensure confidentiality and procedural integrity throughout the process.

These efforts aim to strengthen confidence in the selection process for educational supervisory positions and reaffirm that fairness, equal opportunity, and integrity are fundamental principles that must never be compromised.

Weekend forecast

On Saturday, weather will be hot and humid during the day, particularly in coastal areas, with partly cloudy skies. Winds will be variable to southeasterly, light to moderate, at speeds of 8 to 32 kilometers per hour. Scattered light rain is possible, along with a chance of light fog in the evening. Maximum temperatures are expected to range from 36 to 38 degrees Celsius, while sea conditions will be slight to moderate, with wave heights of 1 to 4 feet.

Saturday night will be relatively hot to moderate and humid, particularly in coastal areas. Winds will be southeasterly to variable, light to moderate, at speeds of 6 to 26 kilometers per hour. Light fog may develop in some areas, with scattered clouds also expected. Minimum temperatures are forecast to range from 20 to 22 degrees Celsius, while sea conditions will be slight to moderate, with wave heights of 1 to 3 feet.



Photo during the final qualifying round held at the Kuwait National Library.

51Talk selects Hashem Al-Rifai to represent Kuwait at COP31

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Kuwaiti student Hashem Al-Rifai has been selected to represent Kuwait at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya, Türkiye, through 51Talk's student initiative, after winning the final qualifying round held at the Kuwait National Library on September 30, 2026. The event was organized in partnership with the library and attended by Sheikh Foz Fahad Al-Sabah.

Fifteen students learning English through the 51Talk platform participated in the finals, delivering English-language speeches on environmental protection, climate change and sustainability. A judging panel evaluated their presentations and selected the winner for the opportunity to participate internationally.

The event enabled participants to express their ideas and visions for the environment's future, use their language skills to discuss global issues relevant to their lives and futures, and gain public speaking experience.

Skills and Confidence

Sheikha Fouz Fahad Al-Sabah said: “Providing these opportunities is essential to developing students’ communication skills and strengthening their confidence. It encourages them to express their views comfortably and confidently, whether at local events or on international platforms.”

Addressing the students and winner Hashem Al-Rifai, she added: “You are Kuwait’s leaders and its future. Continue developing yourselves and broadening your knowledge and cultural understanding. God willing, we will soon see you representing Kuwait at major international forums.”

Pride in Participation

Hashem Al-Rifai will represent Kuwait at the climate conference in Türkiye through the student initiative, marking Kuwait’s first participation in this initiative. The opportunity will allow him to share his ideas on the en-

vironment and sustainability and connect with participants from different countries.

Expressing his happiness at winning, Hashem said: “I felt proud and happy after winning. Representing Kuwait in Türkiye is a wonderful feeling, and I am proud to represent my country on the global stage. I have also benefited and learned a great deal through 51Talk.”

His mother said: “Kuwait may be a small country on the world map, but it is full of talent and ambition that deserve to be brought into the spotlight. That is what 51Talk has done for my son.”

Learning and Practice

Wafaa Al-Alai said: “Through this initiative, we aim to take the English-learning experience beyond the classroom and give our students real opportunities to use their skills and express their ideas confidently. Selecting a student from Kuwait to represent his country internationally reflects our vision of empowering young learners and connecting the skills they acquire with real-world opportunities and experiences.”

51Talk Kuwait affirmed that the initiative forms part of its efforts to empower children to speak confidently and communicate with the world, develop their skills, and create opportunities to use English in practical experiences and international activities.

The company expressed its appreciation to the Kuwait National Library for its cooperation in hosting the event, which marked 51Talk’s first in-person activity in Kuwait. It also highlighted the importance of community partnerships in supporting students and developing their abilities.

51Talk is an online English-language learning platform focused on developing young learners’ language skills and strengthening their communication abilities, with a presence in several Asian and Gulf markets.

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Hot weather and winds raise California wildfire threat as power shutoffs start

LOS ANGELES, Oct 15, (AP): Large swaths of California w.ere expected to see fire weather starting Thursday and thousands of people could lose power as utilities try not to spark wildfires during hot and windy conditions expected to last through Saturday.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass, who has faced criticism for her city’s response to deadly fires in 2025, said she’s directed the fire department to deploy personnel and equipment ahead of the winds. The fire department has also requested assistance from the state’s office of emergency services, she said.

“It’s a pretty widespread event of elevated fire weather, so the whole So-Cal region should really be on alert,” said Rose Schoenfeld, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

Dry, warm and gusty northeast winds known as Santa Anas, which blow from the interior of Southern California toward the coast and offshore, are expected, with the strongest winds forecast for Thursday

afternoon through Friday afternoon.

The winds are expected to reach 20 to 40 mph (32 to 64 kph), with gusts from 50 to 70 mph (80 to 113 kph), in the San Gabriel mountains in Los Angeles County and the Santa Susana mountains, which are mostly in Ventura County, Schoenfeld said. Elevated, though brief, critical fire weather conditions are also forecast for portions of the Santa Lucia mountains in San Luis Obispo County.

Dangerous conditions began earlier in Northern California, with some communities in the Sierra Nevada and its foothills experiencing strong winds, high temperatures and low humidity starting Wednesday night, the National Weather Service said.

The service issued a Red Flag Warning for parts of central and Northern California starting Thursday and lasting through Friday morning, saying that any fires would spread rapidly. Such warnings are issued when weather conditions create an increased risk of wildfires.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company had notified 88,000 customers in 29 counties that it may need to proactively turn power off to reduce the risk of winds toppling over energized power lines that could start a fire. The planned shutoffs had started for some customers by Wednesday night.

The potential interruption in service to customers from the Central Coast to the upper corners of the Sierra Nevada could last through Saturday afternoon, the company said.

In Southern California, the Red Flag Warning for the mountainous areas in Ventura and Los Angeles counties will be in effect from Thursday morning through Friday night.

“We are augmenting our staffing, positioning our people and pre-deploying equipment ahead of this weather so we are ready before the first call comes in,” Los Angeles Fire Chief Jaime Moore said. “We are asking residents to do their part, too. Clear the streets, have a plan and stay informed.”



Water is dropped by helicopter on the advancing Palisades Fire in the Pacific Palisades neighborhood of Los Angeles on Jan 7, 2025. (AP)

Harris adds stops to final midterm campaign stretch

With anger spreading over Iran war, Dems hope to flip GOP seats with vets help

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colorado, Oct 15, (AP): The doorbell chimed “The Star Spangled Banner” as retired Col. Lou Christensen stepped inside the large house on the northeastern edge of Colorado Springs. The registered Republican and 28-year Air Force veteran was doing something he never expected to do - attending a party for a Democratic congressional candidate.

“The legislative branch needs to put up guardrails from President Trump,” said Christensen, 70. “We need another branch of government that stands up and says, ‘Uh, boss, that’s not constitutional.’”

Christensen is backing Jessica Killin, a fellow veteran, over first-term Republican Rep Jeff Crank in Colorado’s 5th Congressional District, a conservative stronghold that includes five military facilities. The district is a longshot for Democrats but they’re investing money here for the first time in years, counting on an unpopular war with Iran and upheaval in the armed forces to put more seats in play as the party pushes for control of the US House of Representatives. Democratic candidates who previously served in the military are also running in Florida, South Carolina and Virginia districts with significant veteran populations.

Although veterans hold all sorts of political beliefs, the population overall leans right - nearly 6 in 10 voted for Trump two years ago, according to AP VoteCast. Trump won Colorado’s 5th by 9 percentage points that year, and nearly one out of every nine people there is a veteran, according to federal statistics, making it one of the most veteran-heavy seats in the country. The district is home to NORAD, Fort Carson and the Air Force Academy.

“I know there’s a bunch of veterans in the room, so I don’t have to tell you where we are with foreign policy,” Killin told more than two dozen voters who gathered on a recent Friday evening. “For the first time in history, now the global community thinks more of China than of the United States.”

One of the only comparable seats in terms of veteran population is in Virginia’s 2nd Congressional District, centered in Virginia Beach and similarly dotted with military bases, with the massive Naval Station Norfolk just outside its boundaries.

Unlike Colorado’s 5th, elections in Virginia’s 2nd have zig-zagged back and forth over the last decade. Democrat Elaine Luria, a retired Naval Commander who deployed to the Middle East and Western Pacific and led a unit of 400 sailors over the course of her military career, ousted



Former US vice president Kamala Harris speaks during a special lecture titled ‘American Leadership and the Future of Alliances’ at the Asian Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul, South Korea on Oct 14. (AP)

a Republican incumbent in 2018. She held the seat for two terms before Republican Jen Kiggans, a former Navy helicopter pilot, defeated her in 2022.

Now Luria is back for a rematch, hammering Kiggans and Trump for the Iran war that she called “an expanding economic crisis” as well as a geopolitical blunder. In an interview, she criticized Kiggans for voting against resolutions intended to halt military action without con-

gressional approval.

Kiggans, whose 10 years of service included two deployments to the Persian Gulf, said she hopes the war can soon be brought to a close. But she argued that Luria, through her criticism, has “chosen the side of Iran.”

“It’s like the Democrats are now siding with the Iranians and not standing with our military,” she said in an interview.

Paul Krekorian, a Navy veteran

and retired grade school teacher in Virginia Beach, said he worries the war may become a “quagmire” for Trump. But he still decided to support Kiggans because Democrats “have gone socialist.”

Still, plenty of veterans were casting early ballots for Luria, citing their frustration at Trump and his administration.

“I think we are less safe, not just because of the war in Iran, but because of the leadership or the lack of leadership we have,” said Phyllis Mihalas, a self-described independent and retired Army lieutenant colonel. She described Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth as “an enormously incompetent man whose ego consistently gets in the way.”

Democratic veterans are trying to make that argument in other races for Republican-held seats. In South Carolina’s 1st Congressional District, Democrat Nancy Lacore, a former Navy vice admiral, is running against Republican lawyer Jennifer Honeycutt. Lacore was fired by Hegseth last year.

In Florida’s 13th Congressional District, retired Army Brigadier Gen. Leela Gray is challenging Republican Rep. Anna Paulina Luna. And in Florida’s 7th Congressional District, Bale Dalton, a former Navy Aviator and NASA chief of staff, is running against Ryan Eli-

jah, a Republican and local news anchor.

In Colorado Springs, the Republican incumbent, Crank, is in his first term in Congress. Though his father and father-in-law are veterans and his son-in-law is currently in the Army, Crank has never been in the military.

Also:

ATLANTA: Kamala Harris is building out her final fall campaign blitz on behalf of other Democrats, completing a midterm schedule that by Election Day will have taken her to multiple early presidential primary states on Democrats’ 2028 calendar as the former vice president mulls whether to seek the White House again.

Spanning from Oct. 21 to Oct. 30, Harris’ expanded closing stretch will now include **New Hampshire, Wisconsin and Mississippi**, along with a **Florida** virtual event, according to a schedule her office shared first with The Associated Press. Harris already had announced late October stops in **Georgia and Nevada**.

Harris has said in multiple recent interviews that she’s focused on helping Democrats win in November. But she has not ruled out another presidential campaign after losing the 2024 general election to **Donald Trump**.



Fireworks explode over police during clashes in Tirana, Albania on Oct 14, as students joined the Flamingo anti-government movement. (AP)

Clashes break out in Albania as anti-govt protests swell

Clashes between police and student demonstrators protesting against Albania’s long-governing Socialist government broke out in the capital Tirana on Thursday in a third consecutive day of violence.

Youths hurled rocks at a police cordon outside the Education Ministry, and riot police responded with tear gas and water cannons. Police detained several demonstrators.

The clashes followed riots on Wednesday when protesters at-

tacked government buildings, banks and businesses, leaving 89 people injured including 61 police officers, according to the Health Ministry.

The protests included student groups seeking education reforms, as well as others staging a broader anti-government movement opposed to a major development project linked to US President Donald Trump’s son-in-law, Jared Kushner.

The so-called flamingo movement is calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Edi Rama over allegations of widespread corruption. The movement earned the name after protesters used signs depicting the pink bird.

A European Union delegation in Albania called late Wednesday for a proportionate response from authorities, expressing concern at “the violent escalation at the protest in Tirana.” (AP)

Ukraine resumes attacks on Russian oil refineries: officials

KYIV, Ukraine, Oct 15, (AP): Ukrainian drones attacked a refinery in Russia’s Ryazan region early Thursday, hours after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that a brief truce spurned by Moscow was over amid deepening tensions with Washington.

The drone strike started a fire at the refinery about 300 kilometers (180 miles) southeast of Moscow, Russia’s Defense Ministry and Ryazan Gov. Pavel Malkov said. Russia’s Astra online news outlet posted what it said was a photograph of the blaze.

A senior Ukrainian official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn’t authorized to speak publicly confirmed that Ukraine had hit the refinery.

The strike could further complicate Kyiv’s relations with US President Donald Trump, which have soured again in recent days.

Zelenskyy was outraged by Russia’s continuing aerial bombardment of his country’s energy infrastructure in apparent defiance of Trump’s demand on Sunday for both sides to halt those attacks. The Ukrainian government said that it was heeding the ceasefire.

Zelenskyy complained that, de-



Britain’s Prime Minister Andy Burnham says goodbye to Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy after their meeting at 10 Downing Street in London, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2026. (AP Photo/Alastair Grant)

spite going along with Trump’s demand for a truce, Ukraine in recent days was denied the usual Western intelligence on Russian ballistic missile strikes and limits were placed on its use of US-made Starlink communication terminals. Both are vital for Ukrainian defenses and attack operations.

The Ukrainian leader said that his patience had run out. He said in an

interview with the Financial Times published Thursday that Ukrainian attacks on Russian oil refineries would resume. “We’re done,” he was quoted as saying.

Trump made a deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin to import Russian diesel, despite international efforts to sanction Russia for its invasion and diplomatically isolate Putin.

Two dead as flash floods hit Istanbul

ISTANBUL, Oct 15, (AP): A heavy downpour has shut down Istanbul, flooded homes and roads and killed at least two people. Rescuers worked overnight to save hundreds of people stranded at their workplaces, while bystanders helped countless others.

The downpour Wednesday night flooded homes and businesses and inundated roads and underpasses, stranding vehicles and causing traffic chaos in Turkey’s largest city.

Local media reported two deaths. A 14-year-old was electrocuted after stepping in a puddle at a park in the Fatih district, and a 34-year-old slipped on a sidewalk in the Sariyer district and hit their head.



Vehicles are stranded in a partially flooded highway during heavy rains in Istanbul, Turkey on Oct 14. (AP)

Europe

Ship catches fire in Black Sea, 8 missing: Romanian authorities launched search and rescue operations off the Black Sea coast Thursday after a fire broke out on board a ship, leaving eight people missing. Four were rescued.

The cause of the fire aboard the San Marino-flagged Wine Trader, a chemical tanker traveling from Tunisia to Romania, was not immediately clear, but a recent spate of drone strikes on ships in the Black Sea has raised fears of Russia’s war in Ukraine spreading.

A “group of air targets” was monitored overnight near Ukraine’s Snake Island, and a drone briefly entered Romania’s airspace at 1:34 a.m. southeast of Sulina, before disappearing from radar, according to Romania’s Ministry of National Defense.

There were 12 people aboard the ship when the fire broke out 13 nautical miles (15 miles) southeast of



Miruta

the port town of Sulina, according to the Romanian Naval Authority.

Romania’s acting Defense Minister **Radu Miruta** said an investigation was underway but that no drone was seen on military radars heading toward that tanker. (AP)

Ex-DUP leader sentenced to 15 years: Jeffrey Donaldson, the former leader of Northern Ireland’s largest unionist party, was sentenced on Thursday to 15 years in prison for the abuse of two girls decades ago.

Donaldson, 63, was convicted in Junfe. He had denied the charges.

Donaldson led the Democratic Unionist Party, the biggest party in favor of keeping Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom. He resigned as leader of the conservative DUP and gave up his seat in the House of Commons after his arrest two years ago.

Judge Paul Ramsey said that the ex-politician had undergone a “catastrophic descent into disgrace.” He sentenced him at Newry Crown Court to 11 years for offenses against one victim and four years for the other, to run consecutively. (AP)

New China-DPRK border bridge over Yalu River opens to traffic

North Korea holds first underwater-launched missile tests in nearly three years

SEOUL, South Korea, Oct 15, (Agencies): North Korea performed its first underwater-launched missile tests in nearly three years on Wednesday, likely from an as-yet-deployed submarine that it says is designed to launch nuclear weapons.

The high-profile tests come as North Korea is dialing up weapons demonstrations in an apparent bid to pressure the United States to offer greater concessions if it wants a resumption of diplomacy.

The official Korean Central News Agency said Thursday the military tested two types of strategic cruise missiles in the country's eastern waters. It said the tests were aimed at assessing the readiness of North Korea's underwater combat systems and demonstrating the reliability of its nuclear deterrent.

KCNA didn't say what launch platform was used. But the agency's photos of the launch suggested the country mobilized the "Hero Kim Kun Ok" submarine that was unveiled in 2023 with great fanfare but drew outside skepticism about its claimed capabilities.

If confirmed, Wednesday's missile launches were the first public weapons tests from that submarine, which implies North Korea began testing weapons systems for the vessel before its deployment in what would be a major threat to South Korea and the US, experts say.

North Korea for years has been developing various missiles designed to be fired from underwater, which was a worrying development for its rivals because such launches would be difficult to detect in advance.

Before Wednesday's tests, all North Korean underwater launches were made from a 2,000-ton-class submarine with a single launch tube. Many experts call it a test platform rather than an operational submarine



An opening ceremony is held for a new bridge across the Yalu River, the border river of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), on Oct 15. (Xinhua)

in active service.

In September 2023, North Korea launched the "Hero Kim Kun Ok,"

saying the submarine was capable of launching tactical nuclear weapons from underwater. State media photos

showed the submarine has at least 10 missile launch tubes in addition to its torpedo tubes.

At the time, many foreign experts were skeptical the submarine would work as North Korea described, saying it was likely a modification of an existing, aging diesel-fueled submarine.

A lack of known weapons tests from the submarine in the past three years signaled it had some technical issues including an ability to right itself. But Wednesday's tests indicated North Korea had resolved those issues and started testing the weapons to be carried by the submarine, according to analyst Shin Jong-woo at South Korea's Defense and Security Forum.

Also:

SHENYANG: The new China-DPRK **Yalu River** bridge officially opened to traffic on Thursday, with both sides jointly holding an opening ceremony on this cross-border artery.

The cable-stayed bridge over the Yalu River serves as a cross-border transport link between the city of Dandong in northeast China's **Liaoning Province** and the city of **Sinuiju** in North **Pyongan Province** in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

The double-pylon and double-cable-plane bridge features a 28.5-meter-wide deck designed with four lanes for two-way traffic, while its water navigation clearance is designed for vessels of up to the 3,000-tonne class.

The new bridge will further facilitate trade and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson **Mao Ning** said on Wednesday.

China and the DPRK are friendly neighbors connected by mountains and rivers, and the new bridge is an important facility for connectivity between the two countries, Mao noted at a regular press briefing.

School roof collapse kills 29 and injures more than 50 in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Oct 15, (AP): The roof of a private school collapsed in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar on Thursday, killing at least 28 children and a teacher and injuring more than 50 other people, authorities and a hospital official said.

All of the children killed or injured at Al-Khair school were age 13 or younger, Lady Reading Hospital spokesman Mohammad Asim said. Some of the injured were in critical condition, he said. The hospital declared an emergency as medical staff treated the wounded.

Hours after the collapse in Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, rescue officials said that everyone trapped beneath the rubble had been pulled out and crews were clearing the debris.

Mahwish Zaman, an injured teacher speaking from a hospital bed, said that the three-story school had an estimated 1,200 students enrolled in nursery through fifth grade. She

told The Associated Press that she was in her classroom when the roof collapsed and felt as if the sky had fallen. She regained consciousness in the hospital.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Gov. Faisal Karim Kundi expressed sorrow over the collapse and sought a report from the relevant authorities about the cause. He directed officials to provide the best possible medical care to the injured children.

According to witnesses, residents were among the first to reach the school in a congested neighborhood in central Peshawar. Rescue workers arrived within minutes of being alerted, according to accounts from the scene.

A resident, Samiullah Khan, said that he rushed to the school after learning of the collapse and helped rescue three girls. Khan said his son, who attends the school, survived because he had stepped out of his classroom to drink water.

A resident, Mohammad Khan, said

that rescuers carefully removed debris, trying to reach children and staff feared trapped beneath the collapsed roof. Outside the school and at the state-run Lady Reading Hospital, anguished parents sought information about their children, unsure whether they had survived.

Peshawar police chief Saeed Ahmed said that the school's owner had been arrested. He said that the building was structurally weak.

The provincial government said that the school occupied a three-story building and that a committee had been formed to investigate the cause of the roof collapse.

The provincial government spokeswoman, Samar Haroon Bilour, said that the government directed hospital officials to provide prompt medical care to the injured children and praised rescue workers for their swift response. She said that the government was using all available resources to bring those trapped beneath the rubble to safety.



A rescue worker carries an injured child after rescuing him from the rubble of a roof collapse at a private school, in Peshawar, Pakistan on Oct 15. (AP)

Country to incarcerate its most dangerous criminals in H-CCOC

Costa Rica opens El Salvador's Bukele-style mega-prison

SAN JOSÉ, Costa Rica, Oct 15, (AP): Costa Rica, considered for decades a peaceful enclave in turbulent Central America, has now made fighting drug trafficking one of its main goals. And it is turning to one of its Central American neighbors for inspiration in its headline crackdown.

On Wednesday, President Laura Fernández inaugurated a mega-prison that emulates the Terrorism Confinement Center (CECOT) that has become a symbol of Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele's security strategy.

Bukele has managed to reduce murders to a historic low in El Salvador but faces accusations of abuses during the state of emergency that began in 2022 and has imprisoned more than 91,000 people.

Costa Rica is not the first to turn its attention to the man who has proclaimed himself the "coolest dictator in the world." Ecuador has done it. So have the new presidents of Peru and Colombia. From Honduras to the Southern Cone, these countries are joining the headline security strategy also endorsed by US President Donald Trump.

Now, Costa Rica says it will incarcerate its most dangerous criminals in the High-Containment Center

against Organized Crime (H-CCOC), with a capacity for 5,100 inmates and a cost of \$35 million.

For decades, Costa Rica was a "passive" transit zone for drugs from South America, according to the organization Insight Crime. But without an army, and with extensive jungle and ports on both coasts, it began to attract Mexican and Colombian cartels.

At the end of the last decade, a new cargo terminal transformed the Caribbean port of Limón into a storage and transshipment point for cocaine destined for Europe, according to the US State Department, which, in a 2025 report, also detected fentanyl distribution in the Central American country.

Now, the two major Mexican cartels, Sinaloa and Jalisco, are present in the country, as are the Colombian Clan del Golfo, the Venezuelan Tren de Aragua - all considered terrorist organizations by the United States - and Italian mafias, while local cartels proliferate, explained Vanda Felbab-Brown, an organized crime researcher at the Brookings Institution.

The cartels' interest in new routes and the rivalry between the two major Mexican cartels "pushed local proxies to fight with each other and

then drove homicides up" in Costa Rica, Felbab-Brown noted. Payments to these gangs in drugs developed local markets that further increased the violence, and the authorities felt overwhelmed.

The alarm was raised in 2023 when the country registered a record 907 homicides - a figure that has decreased, but only slightly - and the government acknowledged that they were mostly due to organized crime.

Insecurity, although far from that of Ecuador or Mexico, became the biggest concern for Costa Ricans and was a key factor in Fernández's election.

It was then that Fernández's predecessor, Rodrigo Chaves, sought out Bukele, whose success in cutting down killings have led his counterparts in the region to turn to him for inspiration on security policy. Chaves bestowed him with a diplomatic honor, and sent his security minister to visit the CECOT. The Salvadoran president, in turn, donated the design for the prison to the Costa Rican government.

The CECOT has become a symbol of Bukele's security policy and is increasingly being imitated. Ecuador's Daniel Noboa opened a similar prison last year. Honduras planned something similar on an island, though it

has not yet been built. And Peru's Keiko Fujimori has just announced a trip to El Salvador in response to the rise in homicides and extortion.

The measures tend to be popular, and a large portion of the Costa Rican population supports the new mega-prison.

"Many people are afraid," said Carlos Avila, a business administrator. "I think it's good that they're building a prison and isolating the criminals."

But it remains to be seen how criminal gangs and society will react to Costa Rica's new prison, said Felbab-Brown.

"Orchestrating mass arrests at the scale that we see in El Salvador might be both politically unpopular (in Costa Rica) and opposed and challenged also in terms of intelligence," she said.

Chaves opted for another tool against crime: in 2025, he carried out a constitutional reform to allow Costa Ricans to be extradited for drug trafficking and terrorism offenses.

In March of this year, the first extraditions to the United States took place, including that of Celso Gamboa, former security minister and Supreme Court justice, accused of drug trafficking.



A police officer walks through a hallway during a press tour of a new high-security prison in Alajuela, Costa Rica on Oct 14. (AP)

Major win for Lula ahead of runoff

Brazil Senate OK's shorter workweek

SAO PAULO, Oct 15, (AP): Brazil's Senate approved a constitutional amendment Wednesday to reduce the country's maximum workweek from 44 to 40 hours without a salary cut, a move backed by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who hopes it will boost his standing against Flávio Bolsonaro in the Oct. 25 presidential runoff.

Lula is expected to sign the shorter workweek into law next week after the measure passed the Senate in two rounds of voting with the same result: 75 to 1 out of 81 members. The sole vote against it came from former Vice President Hamilton Mourao, who served under President Jair Bolsonaro.

Flávio Bolsonaro, who opposed the initiative until early this week, voted for it remotely as he campaigned in southern Brazil. Analysts and politicians say his allies in the Senate stopped blocking the popular move so he wouldn't be hurt in his neck-to-neck race against Lula.

The amendment gives businesses 14 months to adopt the shorter workweek, which was a key sticking point in the negotiations. Many business leaders and lawmakers wanted the changes to be made gradually over 10 years.

The constitutional amendment establishes a 40-hour weekly limit and two rest days without reducing pay. More than 37 million workers could benefit from the new rules, according to the government.

Brazil's president was quick to celebrate the decision.



Supporters of Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who is running for reelection, shout slogans during a rally ahead of the presidential runoff election, in Rio de Janeiro on Oct 14. (AP)

"Today is a day to celebrate a historic achievement for millions of workers," Lula said in a statement. "This means having more time to live, rest, be with family, watch your children grow up, take care of yourself, and enjoy life. Those who work so hard to build Brazil also deserve to have time to live."

Many senators chanted Lula's name after the vote, while Bolsonaro supporters quickly left the chamber.

"Didn't I say this was going to

work?" Davi Alcolumbre, the president of Brazil's Senate, told a leading senator of Lula's Workers' Party after the result. He timed the decision to take place between the first and the second round of the election, which benefits the incumbent.

Recent polls indicated widespread support for the measure, despite the opposition of many business owners. Many Bolsonaro allies said in their remarks they see the cost of living going up because of the new schedule.

Africa

Mauritius imposes curfew: Mauritius imposed an overnight curfew after a police shooting fueled rare civil unrest on the Indian Ocean island, better known as an idyllic holiday destination and one of Africa's most stable democracies.

Police said on Wednesday that the situation was under control and the curfew had been lifted after days of protests that intensified when an officer shot and wounded a woman on Friday.

Protesters clashed with police, blocked roads with burning tires and other debris, and damaged public buildings, according to local reports. Videos published by a Mauritian news outlet showed protesters firing what appeared to be fireworks at police officers.

The paramilitary Special Mobile Force police unit was mobilized.

The curfew required everyone in the capital, Port Louis, and several other towns to remain indoors from 8:30 pm Tuesday until 6 a.m. Wednesday.

The protests began last week over water shortages and the cost of living but escalated after the shooting in Beau Bassin-Rose Hill, southwest of Port Louis.

Financial services and tourism underpin Mauritius' economy. The island, known for its luxury beach resorts, last experienced similar unrest in 1999, when the death of a popular musician in police custody sparked days of rioting.

The wounded woman was taken to hospital. Police said they had arrested one officer, suspended three others and were investigating the shooting. The three were suspended for "failing to provide assistance to a person whose life was in danger," according to a police statement.

Prime Minister **Navin Ramgoolam**, who ordered the curfew, warned in a televised address Tuesday that protesters involved in violence and destruction would face



Ramgoolam

"very heavy consequences." (AP)

Killings in Cameroon spur protests: Geraldine Achiah, an elementary school teacher in her 30s, died barely two months into her marriage in September. Her relatives allege her husband beat her over a marital dispute and demand justice in what they say is a gender-based crime.

Her only child, Courage Abombi, 18, fondly remembers her support for his dreams of becoming a mechanical engineer. "My mom died an unexpected and painful death," said Abombi, who had to take a university entrance exam a day after his mother's burial.

Achiah, who died in September, is one of nearly 70 women who were killed in Cameroon this year for reasons related to their gender, the Ministry of Women's Affairs says. That's up from government estimates of at least 50 in 2023 and 67 in 2024. The rise in such killings has sparked protests and calls for government action as many of the killings remain unsolved while others go unreported.

Manfred Amambua, Achiah's husband, has denied killing his wife, the police said. He has been charged with murder and is in jail awaiting trial.

Femicide - the killing of women and girls for gender-related reasons - in Cameroon is mostly driven by economic dependence, unequal control over family property and lack of adequate laws in what's widely viewed as a patriarchal society, activists say. The crisis reflects a global pattern with an estimated 50,000 women and girls killed by intimate partners or relatives in 2024, UN data shows.

Femicide cases in Cameroon have reached a "cruel" and "alarming" proportion, Women's Affairs Minister Marie-Thérèse Abena Ondoa recently told the state broadcaster as she promised more action from the government.

"The current economic situation in the country is not helping matters. With limited resources, many women tend to endure violence in their marriages, hoping that their men will change, which is not usually the case," she added. (AP)

Oil price up 16 cents to \$106.23 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up 16 cents to USD 106.23 per barrel (pb) in Wednesday’s trading, compared to USD 106.07 pb on Tuesday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC)

said Thursday. On global markets, Brent crude rose 37 cents to USD 106.06 pb, while US West Texas Intermediate increased 95 cents to USD 95.09 pb.

Business

Mustafa Al-Shemari wins the KD 125,000 prize

National Bank of Kuwait announces 12 new winners in the monthly draw for ‘Al Jawhara’ and ‘Al Jawhara Junior’ accounts

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announced the results of the monthly draw for the “Al Jawhara” and “Al Jawhara Junior” accounts during an event held at its headquarters and attended by bank officials. The draw proceedings were broadcast live via the Bank’s digital channels and social media platforms, underscoring its commitment to transparency and the strengthening of trust with customers.

The event saw the announcement of a new group of winners under the “Al Jawhara” account, which continues to offer the largest savings prize scheme of its kind in Kuwait, featuring a diverse range of draws and cash prizes that provide customers with ongoing opportunities to win throughout the year.

The draw results saw NBK customer Mustafa Raheef Jaber AL-Shemari win the “Al Jawhara” monthly prize of KD 125,000, while customers Kraidi Hadi Kraidi AL-Ajmi, Hanan Saoud Bader AL-Bader, Mona Mousa Abdo, and Moudhi Sofian Saud AL-Deweesh won the weekly draw prizes of KD 20,000 each.

During the event, the monthly



Photos during the draw.



draw for the “Al-Jawhara Junior” account was also held, announcing seven winners: Razan Mohammad Hashem AL-Saffar, Hanan Hasan Abdulhadi Qasem AL-Sarraf, and Badriyah Nawwaf Yousef AL-Mnaifeach received a cash prize of KD 1,000, while Abdalwahab Jameel Abdalrasoul Abdalrasoul, Narjes Ali Ahmad AL-Shammaa, Salwa Ahmad Hussain AL-Saleh, and Lana Hamad Eissa AL-Hamad each won a cash prize of KD 500.

All procedures were conducted in the presence and under the supervision of representatives from the



Hisham Al-Nusif

■ **Al-Nusif:** The “Al Jawhara” combines the benefits of saving with opportunities to win rewarding cash prizes.

■ **We focus on delivering a comprehensive banking experience that aligns with customers’ aspirations and supports their financial goals.**

global auditing firms Deloitte and Grant Thornton, ensuring the highest levels of transparency, impartiality, and equal opportunity for all participants.

On this occasion, Hisham Al-Nusif, Chief, Consumer Banking at the National Bank of Kuwait, commented: “The Al-Jawhara account continues to achieve successive successes thanks to the added value it offers customers. By combining the benefits of saving with the chance to win rewarding cash prizes, it has become a preferred choice for a wide segment of customers seeking sav-

ings solutions that are both innovative and rewarding”.

Al-Nusif added: “We focus on delivering a comprehensive banking experience that aligns with customers’ aspirations and supports their financial goals. Therefore, we continuously enhance our savings products and offer programs that provide genuine rewards, while maintaining an unwavering commitment to the highest standards of integrity and transparency in all prize draws”.

Al-Nusif noted that the continued popularity of the “Al-Jawhara” account reflects the immense trust that customers place in NBK and its services, further emphasizing that the account fosters a culture of saving and offers customers exceptional opportunities to win, all within a sophisticated banking experience.

The “Al-Jawhara” account offers customers the chance to win cash prizes throughout the year, including weekly and monthly draws, a grand prize of KD 1 million (drawn three times annually), and “Al-Jawhara Junior” prizes. With a total annual prize pool of KD 5 million, it stands as the largest prize draw program of its kind in Kuwait.

Kuwait, World Bank discuss skills and capacity building

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Refaei met on Wednesday with senior officials from international financial institutions on the sidelines of the annual meetings of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), held in Bangkok from October 12 to 18.

The Ministry of Finance said in a statement that Al-Refaei met World Bank Vice President for the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Ousmane Dione, to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation in developing national workforce skills, building capacities and providing technical and advisory support.

Al-Refaei stressed the importance of increasing the recruitment of Kuwaitis at the World Bank, both at its headquarters and its affiliated offices.

The meeting also highlighted talks held on the sidelines of the 81st UN General Assembly in New York between His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, representing His Highness the Amir, and World Bank

Group President Ajay Banga.

Both sides underscored the importance of building on the discussions and following up on areas of cooperation.

Al-Refaei also met the Managing Director of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), Tsutomu Yamamoto, to discuss strengthening cooperation and expanding guarantee services and insurance against geopolitical risks.

The talks addressed MIGA’s role in encouraging Kuwaiti banks and companies to expand investments in emerging and developing markets, as well as opportunities to broaden partnerships with Kuwaiti financial institutions, particularly in trade finance guarantees and enhancing financing capacity.

Al-Refaei emphasized the importance of expanding MIGA’s role in providing guarantees and suitable financial solutions for Kuwaiti investors to boost their confidence and diversify investments across international markets.

World Bank Group Executive Director Abdulaziz Al-Mulla and several Ministry of Finance officials attended the meetings.

Empowering Kuwait’s banking sector

KIBS launches 2026–2027 Annual Training Calendar

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS) announced the launch of the 2026–2027 KIBS Annual Training Calendar, designed to support the continuous development of professionals and institutions across Kuwait’s banking and financial sector.

Developed in alignment with the evolving needs of the banking and financial industry, the new calendar provides a comprehensive portfolio of training and development opportunities aimed at strengthening professional capabilities, enhancing technical expertise, developing leadership skills, and preparing the workforce to meet emerging industry requirements.

As part of its comprehensive approach to learning and professional development, KIBS has developed a structured Learning Framework designed to address the evolving needs of the banking and financial sector, support workforce development, and strengthen institutional readiness for the future.

The KIBS Learning Ecosystem is built around three drivers: Enable, Protect, and Grow, creating structured learning pathways that extend from foundational capabilities to specialized and advanced professional development, and prepare professionals for Senior leadership responsibilities.

KIBS continues to strengthen its partnerships and relationships with international accreditation bodies and integrate international standards into its programs and curricula, supporting the delivery of globally competitive learning and training experiences. The Institute also continues to provide a range

of specialized professional certification programs that combine academic knowledge with practical application, aiming to equip professionals with recognized qualifications and practical expertise aligned with the evolving requirements of the banking and financial sector. Through these offerings, KIBS provides structured and integrated learning pathways that enable professionals to develop their capabilities in line with their career stages and learning needs, supporting continuous professional development and contributing to preparing a banking and financial workforce that is better equipped for the future.

The 2026–2027 calendar offers a diverse range of learning formats designed to accommodate the changing needs of professionals and organizations. These include in-person training, virtual training, dual delivery, hybrid programs, and on-demand e-learning, providing greater flexibility and accessibility while maintaining quality and engagement.

With more than 50 years of experience, KIBS continues to play a key role in developing Kuwait’s banking and financial sectors through training, professional certifications, executive development, e-learning, assessments, and research. Its comprehensive learning ecosystem is designed to support professionals at different stages of their careers and contribute to the long-term resilience and competitiveness of the sector.

The 2026–2027 KIBS Annual Training Calendar is available through the KIBS website www.kibs.edu.kw.

For inquiries: Cs@kibs.edu.kw

MENA to rebound 6.6% in 2027

IMF sees Mideast oil exporters contracting in 2026

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 15, (KUNA): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects oil-exporting economies directly affected by energy and trade disruptions stemming from the war in the Middle East to contract significantly in 2026 before rebounding in 2027 as production and trade gradually normalize.

Speaking at a press conference during the IMF and World Bank Group Annual Meetings in Bangkok, IMF Middle East and Central Asia Department Director Jihad Azour said higher oil prices

offered some support to fiscal and external positions, but output would remain below pre-war medium-term projections.

The IMF projects the economies of the Middle East, North Africa and Pakistan to contract by 1.3 percent in 2026, following growth of 3.3 percent in 2025, before expanding by 6.6 percent in 2027.

Azour said oil-importing economies had shown resilience, supported by remittances, tourism revenues and government measures, while warning that prolonged conflict and disruptions to energy produc-

tion, shipping routes and critical infrastructure posed major risks to regional growth and inflation.

He called for prioritizing price stability and fiscal sustainability, rebuilding financial buffers, providing targeted temporary cash assistance and strengthening trade diversification and regional integration.

The IMF and World Bank Group Annual Meetings are being held in Bangkok from October 12 to 18, with participation from Kuwait and other countries.

Bangkok protests target IMF, World Bank meetings

BANGKOK, Oct 15, (AP): Dozens of people marched in Bangkok on Thursday, seeking to draw the attention of world financial leaders to poverty, pollution and other grievances during a meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

Protesters, some wearing masks of U.S. President Donald Trump, IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva and other leaders, dragged a float of a big pink pig with dollar signs for eyes toward the venue, briefly blocking traffic near the rigorously guarded convention center where more than 15,000 officials and experts were gathered for the IMF’s autumn meeting.

The protesters were also demonstrating against financial institutions and against what they said were the “vile abuses” of the Thai government and financial institutions.

“Our country is facing a crisis of household debt. Our people are growing poorer. Our environment is deteriorating. Climate disasters are intensifying,” the People’s Network Against the World Bank and IMF said in a written declaration.

Thailand has used the meetings as an opportunity to showcase its capital city, where luxury hotels and other trappings of extreme wealth contrast with shantytowns, fetid canals and people sleeping rough along major thoroughfares.

Recent severe floods have wrecked crops and damaged millions of homes and businesses, adding to the hardships for many Thais.

Apart from a minor scuffle with police on a pedestrian bridge, the peaceful protesters marched from the nearby Khlong Toei slum toward the convention center and then disbanded.

Growing inequality and the challenges posed by climate-related disasters and war are among the many problems leaders are discussing during their weeklong meetings.

Thailand is among many low- and middle-in-



Protesters march to a meeting venue during a demonstration against International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group in Bangkok, Thailand, Thursday, Oct. 15, 2026. (AP Photo/Sakchai Lalit)

come countries, especially net energy importers, that have struggled as the Iran war has pushed oil prices past \$100 a barrel for much of this year. It also is the most income-unequal country in the region, according to the World Bank.

In its latest forecasts, the IMF has warned that rising prices and debt are worsening inequality in many of its 191 member economies.

In Asia, regional economic growth is projected to slow to 4.8% this year from 5% in 2025, and

then to 4.4% in 2027, dragged lower by the back-to-back shocks of the pandemic, the Ukraine war, the Iran war and higher tariffs and other trade barriers, IMF economists say.

The IMF chief and other top economic experts have emphasized the need for countries, including Thailand, to ensure they control debt by focusing their government spending on helping their most vulnerable people with targeted and temporary assistance.

Critical minerals offer Africa growth chance

Africa resilient, but aid cuts raise risks: IMF

BANGKOK, Oct 15, (AP): African economies have managed to weather fairly well the energy crisis brought on by the Iran war, but a decline in aid has left the continent vulnerable to future shocks, the head of the International Monetary Fund’s Africa department said Thursday.

The IMF forecasts growth in Africa at 4.5% this year, slightly higher than its earlier estimate, recovering to 5% in 2027. But development assistance for the continent fell sharply last year and is forecast to fall another 12% this year, Zeine Zeidane said at a meeting of the IMF and World Bank in Bangkok.

“That leaves the region with little room to absorb another shock. Renewed disruption to energy supplies, a sharp increase in global risk aversion, or a strong El Nino could all intensify pressures,” he told reporters.

Persisting conflict and insecurity are other drags on the regional economy, posing a threat to food security in some regions.

“Overall risks remain firmly tilted to the downside and the challenges are significant, but so is the region’s ability to adapt and move forward,” Zeidane said.

Many African nations have enacted reforms to improve their economic resilience, and some are benefiting from surging prices for their exports of

critical minerals used in advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence.

The IMF has urged those countries to use those windfalls wisely and adopt AI to improve their competitiveness.

Some African finance ministers attending the Bangkok meetings outlined strategies for fostering job creation and sustainable growth.

Mariama Cire Sylla, the minister of Economy, Finance and Budget for the Republic of Guinea, said a railway project linking mines in Simandou to the coast was part of a long-term economic transformation program.

Guinea has rich mineral resources, but half its people live in poverty. The government is banking on the Simandou iron ore project to boost the economy.

“How can we leverage mining to really develop other sectors and diversify the economy,” Sylla said. “It’s really critical because financial resources are scarce. We need to create enclaves of investment. We need to create growth poles.”

Ensuring African countries benefit more from their valuable strategic resources such as gold, cobalt and copper is vital, said Aboubakar Nacanabo, finance minister of Burkina Faso.

Burkina Faso, a major gold exporter, has opened

its first gold refinery as its military-led government seeks greater economic sovereignty after severing ties with traditional Western partners.

Governments across West Africa have been moving to reclaim control over their natural resources by rewriting mining codes, banning exports of raw produce and boosting government ownership. Guinea and Ghana recently restricted gold exports. Mali said it was building a gold refinery together with Russia’s Yadrin Group and Ivory Coast has announced it will open one next year.

“The first step is to create the value chain,” Nacanabo said, “to create opportunity for our youth.”

The long-term impacts of AI on African economies, both direct and indirect, remain to be seen. But in the coming decade, the IMF estimates that “adoption, adaptation and scaling of AI” could increase economic growth by more than 4% over 10 years, Zeidane said.

“So, it’s not only about who benefits from AI, but the use of AI can actually make a big difference and in particular in sectors like agriculture where you have low productivity today, low yields compared to international yields, but also in education, health, government services,” he said.



Al-Marzouq and Alshamlan in a group photo with the forum participants.

Participated in GCC–Asia Economic Forum on the sidelines of 2026 IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings

Al-Marzouq: GCC and Asia poised to build a stronger economic corridor backed by banking, investment and digital connectivity

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Chairman of the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), and Chairman of Kuwait Finance House Group (KFH Group), Hamad Abdulmohsen Al-Marzouq, emphasized the growing strategic importance of GCC-Asia relations and the pivotal role of the banking sector in strengthening economic integration between the two regions. He made these remarks in his opening address at the GCC-Asia Economic Forum: Banking, Investment and Digital Infrastructure, held in Bangkok on the sidelines of the 2026 IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings.

The forum was attended by a distinguished group of officials, including H.E. Jassem Mohamed Al-Budaiwi, Secretary General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, H.E. Dr. Yaqoub Yousef Al-Refaei, Minister of Finance of the State of Kuwait, H.E. Suphatee Suthumpun, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Commerce of the Kingdom of Thailand, H.E. Basel Ahmed Al Haron, Governor, Central bank of Kuwait; and their Excellencies, the Governors and Ambassadors of the GCC Member States, together with industry leaders, bank executives, asset managers, and technology innovators from across the GCC and Asia.

In his remarks, Al-Marzouq emphasized that the long-standing relationship between the GCC and Asia



Hamad Al-Marzouq speaking.

continues to evolve into deeper partnerships that drive investment, trade, and economic growth. He noted that both regions are increasingly contributing to global stability and resilience while adapting to ongoing economic challenges.

Highlighting the strength of economic ties between the two regions, Al-Marzouq noted that, according to GCC-Stat, total GCC merchandise trade reached approximately US\$1.59 trillion in 2024. China, India, Japan and

South Korea accounted for approximately US\$659 billion of that trade. China was the GCC's largest trading partner at approximately US\$299 billion, followed by India at US\$158 billion, Japan at US\$114 billion, and South Korea at US\$88 billion. Collectively, these four Asian economies represented around 41.5% of the GCC's total external merchandise trade in 2024.

He stressed that the GCC's relationship with Asia remains a strategic pri-

ority, supported by growing trade volumes, increasing investment flows, and the active role of financial institutions in financing large-scale infrastructure, energy, and connectivity projects that will underpin future economic growth.

Al-Marzouq also highlighted the strength of the GCC banking sector, noting that GCC-Stat reported total assets of commercial banks across the GCC at approximately US\$3.9 trillion in 2025, while net foreign assets stood at approximately US\$837 billion.

These figures, he said, demonstrate the significant capacity available to support trade, investment, and financial connectivity with Asian markets.

He further noted that GCC financial institutions benefit from strong balance sheets, sound regulatory frameworks, and high levels of liquidity, positioning them to act as key catalysts in advancing the GCC–Asia partnership through support for cross-border investment, trade finance, and financial innovation.

Discussing the complementary

strengths of both regions, Al-Marzouq stated that Asia offers significant opportunities in technology and infrastructure, while the GCC contributes long-term capital, strong risk management capabilities, and global expertise in Islamic finance. Together, these strengths create substantial opportunities to promote cross-border growth, unlock new investments, and generate shared prosperity.

Looking ahead, Al-Marzouq emphasized that the objective extends beyond facilitating individual transactions toward building long-term partnerships. He stressed the need for enhanced collaboration across financial sectors, including project financing, expansion of sukuk markets, support for new investment opportunities, and development of digital systems that strengthen economic connectivity.

He added that combining the GCC's strong capital base with Asia's technological innovation can help establish a seamless economic corridor that encourages investment, drives innovation, and supports sustainable growth across both regions.

Concluding his remarks, Al-Marzouq noted that the gathering of leaders and decision-makers at the forum provides a valuable opportunity to deepen cooperation, increase investment, and create lasting economic benefits for both the GCC and Asia.

KFH participated in GCC-Asia Economic Forum in Bangkok at the IMF Meetings

Alshamlan: GCC-Asia banking cooperation has moved beyond dialogue to tangible partnerships and growth opportunities

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Group Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef Alshamlan, participated in the GCC–Asia Economic Forum in a panel discussion titled “Core Banking and Balance Sheet Partnerships” held at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, Thailand at the 2026 IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings.

During his participation, Alshamlan affirmed that banking cooperation between the GCC and Asia has evolved into a tangible reality driven by successful partnerships, expanding trade flows, growing capital market connectivity, and increasing demand for Sharia-compliant financing solutions.

Strong Evidence of GCC-Asia Banking Integration

Alshamlan highlighted KFH's experience as a leading example of the growing financial integration between the two regions. He said that KFH's successful issuance of a US\$1 billion five-year sukuk in January 2026 stands as a clear example of effective GCC-Asia banking cooperation.

He noted that leading Asian financial institutions, including Bank of China and Mizuho, participated as Joint Lead Managers alongside Gulf-based institutions. The issuance attracted strong investor demand from both Asia and the Middle East and was more than twice oversubscribed, reflecting growing appetite for cross-border Islamic capital market opportunities.

“The sukuk not only enabled KFH to diversify its funding sources, but also provided Asian institutions with greater access to international Islamic capital markets. This demonstrates that GCC-Asia capital market integration is already a reality,” he said.

Strategic Expansion Strengthens Growth

Addressing KFH's international growth strategy, Alshamlan explained that the Group's overseas expansion has been guided by the Board's vision to be in the top 100 banks Worldwide, while building a more diversified and resilient financial group.

He highlighted the strategic acquisition of formerly Ahli United Bank Bahrain, which significantly expanded KFH's international footprint across 10 countries, including Bahrain, Turkey, Germany, the United Kingdom and Egypt.

“The acquisition has strengthened the balance between corporate and retail banking activities, diversified income sources beyond the GCC region, reduced concentration risk, and enhanced earnings resilience,” Alshamlan said.

He added that KFH's market capi-



Khaled Alshamlan participating in the forum.

talization has reached approximately US\$50 billion, while the Group continues to deliver strong financial performance by recording the highest net profit in the Kuwaiti banking sector and all listed companies in Boursa Kuwait.

Sharia Governance Facilitates International Growth

Alshamlan stressed that varying Sharia governance frameworks across jurisdictions do not represent a barrier to deeper GCC-Asia financial integration.

“Sharia governance is an integral component of our operating model. KFH has successfully operated for many years across diverse regulatory environments, including the United Kingdom, Germany, Egypt and Turkey,” he said.

He explained that AAOIFI and IFSB help establish internationally recognized Sharia standards. Combined with KFH Group's extensive experience in

- KFH's \$1 billion Sukuk demonstrates strong GCC-Asia capital market integration
- International expansion strengthened KFH's resilience and diversified income sources
- Islamic finance governance supports cross-border growth

converting conventional banking operations into Islamic banking models, these frameworks have enabled the Group to successfully operate across diverse regulatory environments and effectively navigate cross-border regulatory requirements.

Alshamlan also pointed to the growing global significance of Islamic finance, where total industry assets exceeded US\$4.3 trillion in 2024 and are expected to reach US\$6.9 trillion by 2029, while the GCC region accounts for nearly 40% of global Islamic banking assets.

Expanding Opportunities Beyond Gulf and Asian Markets

Commenting on future cooperation opportunities, Alshamlan noted that trade between the GCC and Asia exceeds US\$516 billion annually, underlining the importance of stronger banking partnerships.

He explained that Asian banks provide access to fast-growing trade flows, manufacturing ecosystems and supply-chain financing opportunities, while Gulf banks offer attractive regional investment opportunities, deep local market knowledge and growing

capital markets.

“The economic linkages between the two regions continue to strengthen. Chinese bank financing to Gulf markets has increased significantly in recent years, while remittance and trade corridors remain key drivers of financial cooperation,” he said.

Building a Gateway for Islamic Finance

Alshamlan emphasized that creating a genuine Islamic finance gateway requires more than facilitating capital flows. It requires two-way market access that enables clients on both sides to access investment opportunities, financing solutions and institutional investor bases.

He noted that sukuk markets can serve as a strategic bridge linking Asian sovereign and corporate issuers with Gulf investors, while simultaneously connecting Gulf issuers with large pools of Asian capital.

“KFH's international network uniquely positions the Group to connect GCC businesses with Asian suppliers and growth opportunities through efficient cross-border banking and financing solutions,” he said.

Advancing Liquidity Connectivity

On the prospect of linking regional payment and liquidity systems across the GCC and Asia, Alshamlan described a coordinated liquidity network as a realistic next step.

He explained that enhanced connectivity would facilitate trade, improve cross-border capital flows, reduce transaction costs and strengthen regional financial stability.

As an example, he highlighted the success of the AFAQ payment system, which connects all six GCC central banks and dozens of participating financial institutions, providing a strong foundation.

Sovereign Sukuk Law Opens New Opportunities

Alshamlan welcomed Kuwait's sovereign sukuk law, describing it as a significant development for both domestic capital markets and regional financial cooperation.

He said the framework will support funding diversification, establish a sovereign benchmark yield curve, improve pricing transparency, enhance market liquidity and create additional Sharia-compliant investment opportunities for investors across the GCC and Asia.

“It will support cross-border investment flows and strengthen liquidity management capabilities within the Islamic finance ecosystem,” he added.

Measuring Success Through Real Economic Outcomes

Looking ahead, Alshamlan said the success of GCC-Asia banking cooperation should ultimately be measured through tangible economic outcomes rather than the number of agreements signed.

“In five years, I would like to see stronger trade volumes, deeper financial relationships and greater levels of joint financing activity between Gulf and Asian banks,” he said.

He indicated that Asian markets are growing fast and Gulf Asia Trade is over \$516 Billion a year.

Alshamlan noted that the GCC's estimated US\$1.7 trillion infrastructure pipeline through 2030 presents substantial opportunities for collaboration in sectors such as energy, logistics, transportation, digital infrastructure and data centers.

“The true measure of success will be an increase in jointly financed projects, stronger capital market connectivity and deeper economic integration between the GCC and Asia,” Alshamlan concluded.



Hamad Al-Marzouq and Khaled Alshamlan with the Kuwait Finance House delegation participating in the International Monetary Fund meetings.

Dedicated drive-through service opens for senior citizens and people with disabilities in Jahra

Al-Qasr Citizen Service Center opens with Warba Bank support

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: A dedicated drive-through service for senior citizens and people with disabilities was inaugurated at the Al-Qasr Citizen Service Center in Jahra Governorate, under the patronage of Governor Hamad Jassim Al-Habashi. The opening was attended by Ahmed Faisal Al-Qatami, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Warba Bank, alongside officials and representatives of participating entities.

The service allows eligible visitors to complete official transactions from their vehicles, providing greater accessibility and convenience. The initiative reflects cooperation between government entities and private institutions to improve public services for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

Warba Bank: A Partner in Community Services

Warba Bank supports the initiative as an official sponsor of the center, contributing services, equipment, and logistical support to improve operations and enhance the visitor experience.

The sponsorship forms part of Warba Bank's corporate social responsibility strategy, supporting initiatives that improve accessibility and quality of life, particularly for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

Governor of Jahra Highlights Importance of Accessible Public Services

On this occasion, Hamad Jassim Al-Habashi, Governor of Jahra, expressed his appreciation for the collective efforts behind launching the dedicated service at the Al-Qasr Center, emphasizing that serving senior citizens and individuals with disabilities is a national and social responsibility aimed at providing comfort and seamless service delivery.

"Developing government and community facilities must address the diverse needs of all citizens, giving particular priority to senior citizens and people with disabilities in recognition of their standing in society. We commend the continued cooperation between public agencies and private institutions in supporting initiatives that benefit the community."



A group photo taken at the launch of services at the center, attended by His Excellency Governor Hamad Al-Habashi and Ahmed Al-Qatami.



A glimpse of the external inspection tour of the center.



A glimpse of the inspection tour of the center.

Al-Habashi added: "Providing tailored services reflects our commitment to meeting citizens' everyday needs and ensuring that everyone can access public services in a comfortable and convenient environment."

The Governor commended Warba Bank's sponsorship and its contribution to the center's operations, noting that cooperation between public and private institutions can help improve services and benefit the community.

Al-Qatami: Supporting Senior

Citizens and People with Disabilities Is a Key Part of Our Social Responsibility

Commenting on the opening, Ahmed Faisal Al-Qatami, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Warba Bank, stated:

"Warba Bank is proud to participate in launching this specialized service at the Al-Qasr Citizen Service Center. This initiative is an example of effective cooperation between the public and private sectors to provide more accessible and efficient services."

Al-Qatami added: "At Warba Bank, we believe social responsibility extends beyond conventional initiatives to direct engagement in projects that make a practical difference in people's lives. Our sponsorship of the center, including the provision of equipment and support services, aims to make transactions easier and more convenient for visitors."

Al-Qatami emphasized that prioritizing senior citizens and individuals with disabilities recognizes their contributions to society while reflecting Kuwait's core values of solidarity and respect. He affirmed that Warba Bank remains committed to advancing specialized initiatives aligned with its CSR and sustainability framework, acting as a national financial institution actively engaged in social welfare.

Improving Accessibility and Convenience

The dedicated drive-through service at Al-Qasr Citizen Service Center allows senior citizens and people with disabilities to complete official transactions without leaving their vehicles, reducing physical effort and making the process more convenient.

The initiative supports efforts to improve accessibility and service delivery at government facilities across Jahra Governorate.

Partnership Driving Sustainable Social Impact

Warba Bank said its participation reflects its continued commitment to supporting community initiatives that improve public services and contribute to the well-being of different segments of society, in line with its brand promise, "Own the Future."

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.

Cook rejects Nov. 5 hearing

Trump's effort to oust Fed's Cook faces new hurdle

WASHINGTON, Oct 15, (AP): Federal Reserve governor Lisa Cook's lawyers say that a committee set up by the White House last week to investigate an accusation against her is "demonstrably biased," though they did not close the door on the possibility that she would appear before the panel.

Lawyer Abbe Lowell also said in a letter Tuesday that Cook would not be able to participate in a hearing Nov. 5 because she "will be executing her official duties as Governor at financial and monetary policy meetings in Europe."

The earliest that Cook could appear before a "committee of inquiry" that the White House set up last Friday would be after the Fed's policy meeting Dec. 8-9, the letter said. The letter was sent to William Scharf, a counsel to President Donald Trump.

Lowell's comments are the latest turn in the Trump administration's extended efforts to fire Cook from her position as one of seven members of the Fed's board of governors. Trump has accused Cook of committing mortgage fraud in 2021, before she joined the board, a claim she has denied. No criminal charges have been filed.

No president has fired a Fed governor before, a reflection of the Fed's traditional independence from politics. Yet Trump, who has repeatedly demanded that the central bank lower its key interest rate, has taken numerous steps that economists say have threatened that independence. The Justice Department earlier this year sought to investigate then-Chair Jerome Powell over brief testimony he



Federal Reserve Board of Governors member Lisa Cook leaves the Supreme Court in Washington, Jan. 21, 2026. (AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein, File)

had given about an extensive building renovation, though a judge threw out subpoenas in the case and it was later dropped.

Cook was appointed by former President Joe Biden and is the first Black woman on the Fed's board.

Trump first tried to fire Cook in August 2025, but the Supreme Court ruled earlier this year she

could remain in her position while litigation continued. The court also suggested, in a footnote to the ruling, that Trump could try again to fire her if the administration provided her adequate notice and an opportunity to respond. The committee of inquiry announced by the White House last Friday is an effort to meet those conditions.

Under the law governing the Fed, the president can only fire a Fed governor "for cause," but the Supreme Court didn't address whether Cook's actions met that standard. The committee of inquiry will ultimately recommend whether there is cause to fire Cook, a White House memo last week said.

Lowell also said in the Tuesday letter that "we have significant concerns regarding the objectivity and fitness of the committee for its assigned purpose."

One of its three members, Kevin Hassett, a top economic adviser to Trump, has already said the president has "cause" to fire Cook, the letter noted. The other two members - Labor Secretary Keith Sonderling and chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Andrea Rich - are also Trump appointees.

"A hearing with demonstrably biased members, unspecified additional allegations, and an unclear schedule for the disclosure of any additional evidence - with no explanation for why it was not previously produced - is not a process that respects the appearance or history of independence," Lowell's letter said.



From left, European Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas, European Council President Antonio Costa, Slovenia's Prime Minister Janez Jansa and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen during a round table meeting at the EU summit in Brussels, Thursday, Oct. 15, 2026. (AP Photo/Geert Vanden Wijngaert)

EU leaders push back on a major budget proposal

BRUSSELS, Oct 15, (AP): European Union leaders voiced strong opposition on Thursday to a new proposal for the bloc's long-term budget, raising serious doubt about whether the key spending package will be agreed by the end of year.

"This is far too big, far too expensive," Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson told reporters at an EU summit focused, in part, on trying to narrow down agreement on the seven-year budget, known as the multiannual financial framework.

"It would increase the Swedish net contribution (by) almost 60%. That is simply totally unacceptable," Kristersson said. Sweden is one of about 10 net contributing countries paying more into the EU budget than they get back in allocations.

The 2028-2034 budget is likely to amount to between 1% and 1.2% of the 27-nation bloc's gross national income. The MFF is financed mostly by the member countries based on the size of their economies, with net contributors paying almost half.

The spending package is a statement about the EU's ambitions. It's being negotiated as the bloc deals with outside challenges such as supporting Ukraine as it fights off the Russian invasion and remaining competitive in the face of high energy prices and trade tensions with the United States and China.

But Chancellor Friedrich Merz of Germany, Europe's biggest economy and a major net budget contributor, said "no member state in the EU can afford to pay contributions into the Union on such a level."

Merz said he doubts the leaders can "reach a conclusion these days, this weekend."

Ireland, which holds the EU's rotating presidency, last weekend proposed to set the budget at 1.62 trillion euros (\$1.81 trillion), skimming 141 billion euros (\$158 billion) off an opening offer made by the European Commission.

Ireland's plan has been widely criticized by the net contributors and 17 other countries known as the "Friends

of Cohesion" who want to protect farm subsidies and funds for poorer regions. Those policies make up about two thirds of the entire budget.

The commission, the EU's powerful executive branch, is unhappy too.

"The proposed cuts risk leaving us with less capacity to act together at a time where, because of the developments around us, we need to act more together than ever before," EU Budget Commissioner Piotr Sierafin said Tuesday.

"We were never going to please everybody on this one," Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin conceded to reporters. "It's a very difficult balancing exercise."

Ultimately, if countries aren't willing to stump up more cash, then either farm or cohesion spending must shrink or Europe's ambitions on defense, competitiveness and other priorities be scaled back. Unless money can be found elsewhere.

Time is of the essence though, and with no clear path to a quick deal in sight, European Council President António Costa will take over from Ireland to try to chaperone an agreement through at leaders' level.

"We need to deliver by the end of this year," Costa said ahead of the summit. "We must reach an agreement in time to have the new budget operational ... with no disruption in funding for farmers, workers, researchers, businesses, cities and regions across Europe."

Complicating things is a series of elections in France, Italy and Poland in 2027 and Spain in November. The hard right is leading in surveys in France and results in Poland and Spain are difficult to predict. New governments could try to unpick the spending package.

Whatever happens, missing the end of December target does not mean that money runs out. Nations have another year, but much time is needed to adopt legislation on spending programs and approve it all so money can be flowing by January 2028. All 27 member countries and the European Parliament must endorse it.

The number of Americans filing for jobless aid remains at historically low levels below 200,000

WASHINGTON, Oct 15, (AP): U.S. applications for unemployment benefits inched up last week as layoffs remain historically low and most American workers enjoy job security.

Initial jobless claims for the week ending October 10 ticked up by 1,000 to 199,000 from the week before, the Labor Department said Thursday. The four-week average of claims, which smooths out week-to-week volatility, rose by 250 to 198,500.

Claims for jobless benefits are a proxy for layoffs, and economists watch them closely because they can provide signs of where the job market is headed. So far this year, claims have remained at a historically low level below 220,000.

The weekly report continues to suggest that most companies are confident

enough in the economy and their sales to hold onto their workers. At the same time, hiring has been sluggish, resulting in a "low-hire, low-fire" job market. Last month, the unemployment rate ticked up to a still-low 4.2%.

Earlier this month the government said that businesses and other employers added just 29,000 jobs in September, down from 133,000 in August and below what economists had forecast.

Yet with population growth slowing and immigration into the United States dropping, the economy doesn't need to generate as many jobs every month to keep the unemployment rate low.

Despite a broadly healthy labor market, there are concerns that higher borrowing costs and persistent inflation caused by rising energy prices could cause businesses to slash jobs to reduce costs.

US election campaigns serve up a political food fight

WASHINGTON, Oct 15, (AP): In the midterm elections, meat is on the menu.

As Democrats and Republicans argue over high prices and the Iran war, they're also having a food fight over who's the most red-blooded carnivore.

The latest example came this week in Mississippi, where Democratic Senate candidate Scott Colom released a video with a snippet of Republican Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith saying that if consumers are upset over high beef prices, "you know you have so many proteins to choose from."

The video cuts to a man grilling burgers who says, "Pick another protein? I'd rather pick another senator instead."

The Mississippi race is somewhat unusual because it's the Democrat hammering the Republican over beef. Elsewhere, Republicans have branded Democrats as vegans or otherwise opposed to meat, trying to show that they're culturally out of step with voters, hostile to local cattle

industries or just not manly enough.

In Texas, Republicans seized on an old interview in which Democratic Senate nominee James Talarico boasted that his campaign, then for the Texas statehouse, was going vegan. Talarico has since been publicly scarfing down barbecue to rebut allegations that his dietary choices mean he's not a real Texan.

In Colorado, Republicans have gone after Democratic congressional candidate Manny Rutinel for his activism against meat production and factory farming. In college, he was photographed shirtless with a banner for the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals around his chest. In 2021, Rutinel founded Climate Reform, which advocated for cutting down on the use of meat and has signed onto letters advocating for raising taxes on meat and dairy. He also supported a 2024 ballot measure to ban a lamb slaughterhouse in Denver, which failed.

Rutinel, 31, is now running against Republican Rep.

Gabe Evans in Colorado's 8th district, which includes a vast swath of the northeastern part of the state dotted with ranches, dairy farms and meat processing facilities, including the headquarters of beef production titan JBS Swift. Republicans have hammered Rutinel over advocating veganism, to the point that the conservative media group Daily Wire this week released an undercover video of a campaign official saying Rutinel eats meat "as little as possible."

Rutinel, who's made a point of publicly eating steak tacos on the campaign trail, scoffed at such arguments. "I don't think Coloradans care about what's on my plate, I think they care more about what's on their," Rutinel said in an interview after a recent campaign stop.

Evans said the issue goes beyond Rutinel's meal preferences. "I don't care what he eats personally," Evans said in an interview. "I care that he wants to use the power of the government to make everyone eat that way."

Hats off to Stanka's art

Millinery magic charms Kuwait

By Marlon Aquino Malinao
Managing Editor, Arab Times

Some people see a flower and admire its colors. Stanka Kostadinova sees a flower and wonders how it might look perched on someone's head.

A painting can become a sculptural hat. A frozen forest can inspire a queen's crown. Even Kuwait's blue and white water towers, admired from a coffee shop in Adailiya, can spark an idea for her next creation.

For Kostadinova, inspiration is everywhere. The trick is knowing how to turn it into something nobody has worn before.

Her adventure in millinery began in 2012, when she watched *The Great Gatsby* and found herself longing for the glamour of another era.

"I realized that what I was missing in my life in Kuwait was glamour," she told Arab Times.

A family wedding soon provided the perfect excuse to experiment. She made feathered fascinators for herself, her sisters and the bride. The headpieces attracted so much attention that the occasion became a sensation.

What began with a handful of fascinators opened the door to a world where fashion, sculpture, theatre and imagination could share the same stage.

"I have always been interested in art, design, architecture. I love beautiful houses, objects, art, nature, in general everything beautiful," she says. "Millinery became the expression of my artistic talent."

Fashion, after all, had been part of her life since childhood. At 10, she was already buying her own clothes. She also loved costumes, once preparing herself as Pippi Longstocking for a school Christmas carnival.

Years later, that childhood instinct for dressing up would find its most extraordinary expression in hats.

No two hats, no two stories

Kostadinova is not interested in making the same thing twice. While some designers build their reputations around recognizable shapes, she prefers to follow each idea wherever it leads.

During a class at London Hat Week, she remembers an American designer with 26 years of experience explaining that she had made six hat models for Walt Disney.

Kostadinova's reaction reveals much about her creative temperament.

"I barely make the same hat twice. I always make different hats!"

Her creations are not simply accessories designed to match an outfit. They are individual works of art, often with stories that begin far beyond the world of fashion.

Her hat *The Dancers*, inspired by Henri Matisse's painting of the same name, was selected among the five best entries at an exhibition at a major hat museum in France. It subsequently appeared in a ballet performance and was presented on French television.

Another masterpiece, *The Pillars of Creation*, drew inspiration from the immense beauty of a galaxy. Made for the London fashion show *To the Future and Back*, the hat combined impressive volume with an unexpectedly lightweight structure.

Even renowned milliner Philip Treacy was surprised by how light it was while retaining its dramatic form.

For Kostadinova, this balance between imagination and engineering is essential. A hat can be visually extravagant, but it must also stand properly, sit securely and remain comfortable enough to wear.

Her talent for sculpting wire structures allows her to create striking forms without weighing them down.

Then there is *Cactus You Crazy*, a wonderfully unconventional creation made for X Terrace's Flower Garden exhibition during London Hat Week. Selected among the 10 best pieces for a fashion show at Harrods, it later inspired a painting by German portrait artist Alice Rudolf.

Apparently, even a cactus can have a fashionable afterlife.

A forest fit for a queen

Of all her creations, *Elysara*, *The Queen of Snow and Ice* carries a particularly personal story.

Its inspiration came from a winter experience in the Bulgarian mountains. After a night of rain followed by freezing temperatures, the trees became encased in ice and snow. When the sun rose, the entire landscape glittered like an enchanted forest.

The memory stayed with her.

Years later, when Alison Shan Price asked her to create a hat representing a queen of a winter forest for Charles Dickens' *The Story of Scrooge*, Kostadinova immediately remembered that magical morning.

The result earned her recognition at the second edition of the Queen's Hat Exhibition organized by Le Salon de la Mode, attended by prominent figures from international fashion, including representatives of Dolce & Gabbana.

For Kostadinova, the recognition meant more than an award.

"It let me know I am good enough," she says.

The hat also proved unexpectedly popular with women who tried it on in Kuwait and Italy. Some even imagined



'Zaha' hat inspired from the architecture of Zaha Hadid on Alison Shan Price, MBE as Freya.



'Elysara' hat, 'The Queen of Snow' for Sara Al Saleh



With trophy as a winner of Queen's hat exhibition 2025 for 'Elysara' hat.

wearing it on their wedding day.

A creation born from a frozen forest had found admirers far beyond its original theatrical purpose.

Her work for the stage has offered similar moments of transformation. In Freya, Letters from Kuwait, directed by Abdulaziz Al Wazan, she designed hats for Alison Shan Price, who portrayed British traveller and writer Freya Stark during her time in Kuwait before the oil era.

The production's minimalist setting made the costumes and headpieces even more striking.

"When Alison as Freya appeared with all her beauty, energetic presence and the amazing hats, everything changed," Kostadinova recalls. "The projectors and our eyes were on her face and ... hats!"

For her, that is the magic of millinery. The right creation does not merely decorate a character. It helps bring the character to life.

The secrets stitched into every hat

Behind the feathers, flowers and dramatic silhouettes lies a craft that demands patience, precision and a considerable amount of handwork.

Kostadinova practices couture millinery using techniques she studied with experienced makers in London. Her hats are hand blocked and hand stitched, with minimal use of sewing machines and no glue guns.

Each commission begins with research. She studies an outfit's colors, textures and style, or explores the historical period and artistic references behind a theatrical creation.

Then comes the hunt for materials.

Specialist supplies are not always available in Kuwait, so she sometimes orders them from abroad. She dyes straw, feathers and silk to achieve the exact colors she needs.

"If you see me with colorful hands, this is the reason!" she says.

She shapes the materials over wooden blocks, adds wire for stability,

Millinery became
the expression of my
artistic talent



'Queen of Pearls' Headpiece: Stanka Kostadinova Model: Nadera

stitches in the sweatband and begins the intricate process of trimming. Silk flowers, velvet, lace, crystals, feathers and embroidery may all find their way into the final design.

Some hats take hours to complete. Others require days or weeks.

There is no assembly line, no rush to reproduce a best-seller and no guarantee that the next creation will resemble the last.

Kostadinova recalls advice from iconic British designer Stephen Jones, who once spoke about the importance of being in a good mood while making hats because the maker's thoughts can be transferred to the person wearing them.

She has embraced the idea.

"I always make happy hats!"

It is a charming philosophy for an art form whose purpose, at least in her hands, is to make people feel extraordinary.

Finding glamour in Kuwait

Kostadinova credits Kuwait with shaping her eye for color and detail.

The country's intense light, she says, makes colors look especially beautiful. Its markets offer an abundance of fabrics, trimmings and garments, while its many social occasions provide opportunities to experiment with complete looks.

She has become a collector of beautiful clothes and objects, often browsing vintage markets in Kuwait and abroad. Finding an unusual dress can lead to her favorite activity: creating a hat to complement it and styling the entire outfit.

Yet she recognizes that elaborate occasion hats remain relatively uncommon among local clients. Most bespoke

Stanka Kostadinova,
Bulgarian milliner



'Carmen' hat Model: Baigal

commissions are for ceremonies, weddings and other special events.

She has also designed couture turbans, Ramadan accessories, bridal headpieces and more practical creations, including velvet headbands and lightweight visors suited to Kuwait's climate.

She believes hats deserve a more prominent place in everyday fashion because their effects can be surprisingly powerful.

"They elevate tremendously our look," she says. "They can add class, status, create interest, make you taller, accentuate face features or cover them, make you mysterious."

She has seen that transformation happen firsthand.

At a British Ladies Society Kuwait patron afternoon tea at The Select restaurant in 360 Mall last January, she styled guests in her creations. The women emerged with different personalities and styles. One reminded her of Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, while others took on a polished royal elegance or a more dramatic look.

"We all changed. The whole atmosphere of the restaurant changed," she says.

That afternoon captured what she loves most about her craft. A hat can alter an outfit, but it can also change how a person carries herself.

For a few hours, someone can become more glamorous, more mysterious or more daring simply by trying on a different version of herself.

Dreams bigger than the brim

Kostadinova has little interest in fast fashion. Every creation is made using couture techniques, with individuality and craftsmanship taking precedence over quantity.

That commitment, however, comes with challenges. The market for elaborate hats in Kuwait is limited, specialist materials can be expensive to import, and uncertainty in the region makes long term planning difficult.

She dreams of having a dedicated atelier where she can organize her collection, store her materials properly and welcome clients into a space devoted to millinery.

She once spotted a shop with large windows at an event at Crown Plaza and immediately imagined a hat boutique, perhaps complemented by jewelry.

The idea remains a dream, but her imagination is already furnishing the windows.

Her creativity also extends beyond hats. She has made masks, fans, brooches, collars, gloves, belts and even lampshades. During the Covid 19 pandemic, she produced protective masks in nearly 100 shades, turning an everyday necessity into something colorful and personal.

She hopes to explore more collaborations with fashion designers, artists, theaters and cultural institutions. Teaching millinery is another possibility, allowing her to share the skills she acquired through years of study and experimentation.

Meanwhile, new ideas continue to emerge from the world around her. Her next inspiration could be a painting, a building or Kuwait's distinctive water towers.

At her first London Hat Week, Kostadinova recalls, Stephen Jones warned her that Kuwait was not a country where people commonly wore occasion hats.

She understood the challenge. She simply refused to let it define her.

After all, the woman who once watched *The Great Gatsby* and decided that life needed more glamour has spent years creating her own version of it.

Ask how she wants her work to be remembered, and she does not reach for complicated definitions.

As art. As fashion. As something stylish and beautiful.

And perhaps that is the point. In Kostadinova's world, a hat does not have to be practical, predictable or even entirely sensible.

Sometimes it simply has to make an entrance.

A world above the brim



'Sofia' hat Model: Nadera



'The Dancers' hat, inspired from the iconic Henry Matisse's painting.



'Ariane' hat Model: Nadera



'Pillars of Creation' Model: Nadera Photographer: Mada Neculai Styling: Yousef Al Taher Beauty by Danah make up

Four pioneers honored as global leaders gather

Takreem Foundation celebrates 15th anniversary in Paris

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Around 400 Arab and international personalities gathered in Paris, France to celebrate the 15th anniversary of Takreem Foundation, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The event was held at the InterContinental Paris Le Grand on Sept 22, during which four pioneers were honored and a charity auction was organized to support humanitarian projects.

The guest list included prominent figures in the fields of politics, diplomacy, business, culture and arts, such as former French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin, former French Minister of the Economy Bruno Le Maire, Jean-François Copé, Nicolas Forissier, Advisor to the Saudi Council of Ministers Fahd Al-Rasheed, Sheikh Mohammad Al Khalifa and his wife Noura, Sheikh Mohammad Al Thani, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah, Sheikhha Lulwa Al-Sabah, businessmen Michel Bernardaud, Jean Madar, Sidney Toledano and Akram Iskandar Safa, artists Nabil Nahas and Jean Boghossian, journalist Léa Salame, fashion designer Stéphane Rolland, parliament members Paula Yacoubian, William Tawk and Adib Abdel Massih, ambassadors, cultural figures, and members of the foundation's international network.

Journalist Ghida Fakhry hosted the event.

The foundation honored Chairman and CEO of the CMA CGM Group Rodolphe Saadé for his leadership and valuable contributions to the business and interna-



Sheikha Paula Al-Sabah honored at Takreem Foundation's 15th Anniversary Celebration at InterContinental Paris Le Grand on Sept. 22.



Patrick Chalhoub honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at Takreem Foundation's 15th Anniversary Gala in Paris.



A glimpse of the guests at InterContinental Paris Le Grand during Takreem Foundation's 15th Anniversary Celebration in Paris.



Moments from Takreem Foundation's 15th Anniversary Celebration in Paris.

Businessman and publisher Raja Sidawi received the Legacy Award in recognition of his career in stra-

tegic intelligence related to the global energy sector. Businessman Patrick Chalhoub received the Lifetime Achieve-

Stage

Saunders' novel comes to operatic stage

'Lincoln in the Bardo' makes Met Opera debut



This image released by the Metropolitan Opera shows a scene from a rehearsal of "Lincoln in the Bardo," an opera by composer Missy Mazzoli and librettist Royce Vavrek, at the Metropolitan Opera in New York on Oct. 8, 2026. (AP)

NEW YORK, Oct 15, (AP): The setting is a graveyard. Almost all the characters are dead. And then there's Abraham Lincoln, alive but paralyzed by grief over the death of his 11-year-old son.

If that capsule description makes "Lincoln in the Bardo" sound like a grim night at the opera, it's actually far from that, according to its creators.

"It does seem quite heavy," said Royce Vavrek, who crafted the libretto for composer Missy Mazzoli from George Saunders' Booker Prize-winning novel. "But it's also so effervescent, quite hilarious at times. There's such heartbreak, and such joy."

The inspiration behind both the novel and the opera is the concept of the bardo, which in Tibetan Buddhism is the period between physical death and rebirth.

The ghosts populating Georgetown's Oakhill Cemetery refuse to accept the circumstances - often abrupt or violent - that ended their lives.

They refer to their coffins as "sick-boxes," and only when they are able to acknowledge their true state can they find peace, vanishing in a spectacular explosion of fireworks for which Saunders (in what he calls "a little bit of a nod to James Joyce") invented the term "matterlightblooming."

Through the course of the opera we learn many of the characters' life stories, which range from inspiring to tragic to ridiculous.

"The opera honors that life is not all doom and gloom," said Lileana Blain-Cruz, who is directing the work for its world premiere at the Metropolitan

Opera. "People have desires and hungers, and we're silly and we're funny. There's something wonderful about encountering the fullness of life in all these characters."

Into this netherworld come Willie Lincoln, a victim of typhoid fever, and his distraught father, who pays a late-night visit to his son's crypt and cradles the boy's body in his arms. By the end of the opera, Willie has accepted the fact that he is dead, and Lincoln leaves the cemetery, ready to take up his burden guiding the nation through the Civil War.

For Mazzoli, the biggest challenge in composing the score was the fact that it deals with the death of a child.

"When I'm writing, there's a period of years where I'm alone with these characters," she said. "I really tried to inhabit the character of this boy, but it's hard to enter that place every day."

She solved the problem by focusing on the end of the story, when Willie realizes that since he is dead he is freed from earthly constraints.

"He sings this incredible aria where he says 'all is allowed me now,'" Mazzoli said. "'Now that I'm dead I can go down to the party, I can fly out the window, I can hang from the chandelier, I can drink rum.'"

"He's found this beautiful way of looking at it, and he sort of awakens the other dead people in the cemetery to this," she said. "I had to find this positive slant so I wouldn't be crushed by the sadder

parts of the story."

The opera opens Oct. 19 with Met music director Yannick Nezet-Seguin conducting and will run for nine performances. Baritone Peter Mattei stars as Lincoln, and, in a bit of gender-switching, soprano Christine Goerke is the Reverend and counter-tenor Anthony Roth Costanzo is Miss Elise Traynor.

Goerke, one of her generation's leading dramatic sopranos in operas by Wagner and Richard Strauss, said she was thrilled when Mazzoli told her she had her in mind to play the Reverend.

"I have waited my whole life to have a role written for me," she said. "It's the most meaty, spectacular role."

Vocally, it encompasses her full range ("There's a moment where I go from high C down two octaves!" she said.) And it's dramatically challenging as well. Unlike the other ghosts, the Reverend knows he is dead but resists his fate because he's had a vision that he's doomed to eternal damnation. In the end, he makes a heroic sacrifice that may redeem him.

Mazzoli's score has its moments of playfulness, starting with the prologue in which the chorus members blow into kazoo.

"I'm interested in non-virtuosic instruments in virtuosic settings," she said. "I'm sure there are people who are really good at the kazoo, but anybody can pick it up and blow into it and make a noise. And I like that in the context of the Met, and in combination with really skillful singing."

A film beyond categories

Fielder's 'You Can See Everything' offers singular look at Elizabeth

LOS ANGELES, Oct 15, (AP): Thirty-four days before the disgraced Theranos founder Elizabeth Holmes was due in federal prison to serve an 11-year sentence for conspiracy and fraud, she and her partner, Billy Evans, welcomed a film crew into their beachside cottage.

The idea, Holmes and Evans said, was to help the public understand who Holmes really is. The narrative was incorrect. The journalists and the television shows, like the Hulu miniseries "The Dropout," had gotten her wrong.

And so, in one of the many mysteries of this fascinating project, they chose Nathan Fielder, a comedian known for blurring fiction and reality in absurdist shows like "Nathan for You" and "The Rehearsal," to come into their rented home in Del Mar, California, and document their life with their two young children in her final days before prison. They even invited Fielder to stay with them - an offer that he declines at first but later accepts, about 20 days in.

The resulting film, "You Can See Everything," (in theaters Friday) defies categorization. In some ways, it is a staggering piece of performance art by everyone involved. It's also wildly entertaining, confounding and wholly unique. I'm not even sure an interest in Holmes is any sort of prerequisite for enjoyment. Besides, even after this nearly three-hour exercise, which somehow flies by, she remains as enigmatic as ever.

Fielder shares directing credits with Lance Oppenheim, who also directed the recent Robert Pattinson-as-Chris Hansen drama "Primer." As in Fielder's aforementioned television shows, he is as much a character in "You Can See Everything" as his subjects. At the beginning, he's even shot somewhat ominously, a voyeuristic creeper lurking in the corners or in the distance with his headphones and portable monitor almost always affixed to his person. He is our portal into this world and we're compelled to empathize with and trust him - what other choice do we have, really?

Though Fielder doesn't pretend to be a journalist, or a science expert, his questions are direct and perceptive. In polite conversation, when someone is telling you how they fell in love at first sight, you might just nod and accept their story. Fielder asks why and follows up again and

ment Award for his career in the luxury goods industry, while Sheikha Paula Al-Sabah was honored for her role in supporting culture, arts and humanitarian initiatives.

The evening featured testimonials and speeches that highlighted milestones in the careers of the awardees, as well as their experiences in leadership, entrepreneurship and humanitarian work.

Philanthropy was the central theme of the evening, with an auction organized by Takreem in collaboration with Christie's.

The auction included artworks by Nabil Nahas and Simone Fattal, along with exclusive experiences like the one offered by Kering Group during the Cannes Film Festival.

Those outside Paris were able to participate in the auction online. Proceeds were for supporting the Lebanese association AFEL (Association du Foyer de l'Enfant Libanais) and the professional mentorship and guidance program of Takreem.

The Takreem mentorship program connects talented young individuals with leaders, experts, previous awardees and members of the foundation's network, allowing them to benefit from the experts and opening doors for their professional and personal growth.

In his speech, Ricardo Karam, founder and CEO of Takreem, pondered the profound impact of those who support others and help open doors toward success for them.

again and again, either until something starts to make sense to him, or until he gives up (to his credit, it's usually due to some external interruption). He is never afraid to just let silence sit.

And these are not easy subjects. Holmes continues to maintain that she did nothing wrong, and that her invention - a device that was supposed to be able to detect a multitude of diseases and conditions from a few drops of blood - worked. At one point, she even tells Fielder that she's never told a lie. That teaser for the film (you know, the one where their faces are awkwardly close and she asks Fielder without blinking, "Why would I deceive you?") may not play out exactly how it was initially cut, but it feels spiritually true to the endeavor.

And then there is Evans, who emerges as perhaps the biggest puzzle. His early demeanor toward Fielder has a tinge of contention. Fielder homes in on oddities in the couple's relationship. He interrogates their first meeting - in which Evans claims to have not known who Holmes was for the first hour of their conversation - and Evans' tendency to step in and steamroll situations (even to correct the way Holmes is limply mixing raw eggs). This is a strange couple and observing them together is probably not the PR campaign they thought it would be.

One thing they are particularly obsessed with is a juicy quote that a 2023 New York Times profile attributes to Holmes: "They're not playing me. They're playing a character I created." She's ostensibly talking about fictionalized depictions, from Amanda Seyfried's Emmy-winning performance to a scrapped Jennifer Lawrence movie. Evans and Holmes say this doesn't sound like her.



This image released by A24 shows filmmaker Nathan Fielder, left, and Elizabeth Holmes, center, in a scene from "You Can See Everything." (AP)

Egyptian young actor hopes Chinese film gives voice to war children

CAIRO, Oct. 15, (Xinhua): For Egyptian young actor Omar Sherif, playing Seif in the Chinese film "Once Upon a Time in the Middle East" was more than an acting experience. It was an opportunity to draw attention to the suffering of children caught in war and remind the world that they deserve to live in peace and choose their own futures.

"When I read the script, what touched me the most was how it talked about children caught up in war and showed care for them," Sherif said in a recent interview with Xinhua.

At the time, the war in Gaza was raging, making the story particularly meaningful to him.

"I wanted to play this role to show people that children of war struggle just to survive and live their own lives," he said.

Against the backdrop of continuing conflicts across the Middle East, the film's message carries particular weight. Beyond the destruction and displacement that dominate news coverage, it draws attention to the ordinary needs of children whose lives have been disrupted by violence: food, safety, someone they can trust, and the freedom to decide who they want to become.

"I wish this film makes people care more about war children and stop seeing them as just numbers," he said.

In the film, Seif is a kind-hearted person who sometimes struggles with anger. For Sherif, however, the character's real strength lies not in his ability to fight, but in his capacity to control his anger and prevent it from destroying his future.

The character's needs, the actor said, are uni-



Egyptian young actor Omar Sherif in an interview with Xinhua in Cairo, Egypt, Sept. 22, 2026. (Xinhua)

versal, transcending nationality, language and political boundaries. His Egyptian background helped him connect emotionally with the story

of conflict in the Middle East, even though he had never personally experienced war in Egypt.

Much of his understanding of war came from television and social media. To portray Seif convincingly, he relied on the script and the director's guidance, drawing on his own emotional responses to the suffering he had witnessed from afar.

For Sherif, the film's most moving moment comes when Seif bids farewell to Xu Fu, a character who has become especially important to him.

Having lost his colleagues, Seif faces the departure of one of the few remaining connections in his life. The farewell captures the loneliness and emotional loss that accompany conflict, reminding audiences that the consequences of war extend far beyond physical destruction.

"It was the most emotional scene for me,"

Sherif recalled, adding that he cried so intensely that it took him some time to return to himself even after the director called "cut."

The experience also left a lasting impression on the young actor personally. After spending months working with the cast and crew in China, he found it difficult to say goodbye to the people with whom he had built close relationships and shared unforgettable memories.

His journey to China had begun long before the film. With Chinese roots on his father's side, he had grown up watching Chinese action films featuring actors such as Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan.

But his first visit to China came when he was barely a teenager, after he was selected for the role from a huge pool of young actors who auditioned for the film.

70% of cardiac arrests occur outside hospitals

Kuwait Heart Association calls for wider CPR training to save lives

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The Kuwait Heart Association organized a workshop titled, “Cardiac Resuscitation in Public Places,” in line with its efforts to raise public awareness on the importance of CPR.

The workshop aimed to encourage community members to acquire the skills needed to handle sudden cardiac arrest and to provide assistance during the critical minutes before the arrival of ambulance teams. It affirmed the importance of early intervention and the crucial role that community members play in saving lives.

Dr. Mohammad Zubeid, Vice President of the association and Professor of Cardiology at the College of Medicine, stressed the need to raise CPR awareness among all segments of society.

He encouraged individuals to learn the fundamental steps for managing sudden cardiac arrest, indicating that such incidents can occur anywhere -- in homes, on the streets, in shopping malls and other public spaces.

He explained that knowing how to respond to an emergency is a societal necessity, as rapid intervention can make the difference between life and death, particularly during the minutes preceding the arrival of an ambulance.

He also stressed the importance of making Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) available in public places like shopping malls, schools, clubs and airports. He said these devices provide voice prompts to guide the user through the necessary steps and determine whether an electric shock is required.



Photos by Rezk Tawfik

Meanwhile, Dr. Ismail Habash, an emergency medicine specialist at Adan Hospital, emphasized the necessity of expanding CPR training. He pointed out this is vital, given

that a significant number of cardiac arrests occur outside hospitals, where family members or bystanders are often the first who can intervene to save the victim.

Habash disclosed that around 70

percent of cardiac arrest cases happen outside hospitals, citing data presented during the workshop. He said the rate of bystander intervention for CPR in the country is about 8.7 percent, compared to 77 percent in San Francisco

and Norway, and 48 percent in Singapore.

He asserted that the speed of intervention is a critical factor for survival, as the brain begins to suffer the effects of oxygen deprivation within four to

six minutes of blood flow cessation, whereas ambulance arrival time ranges from eight to 12 minutes. “This makes intervention during the period prior to the arrival of paramedics important,” he added.

Some photos from the event.

Health

Nigeria Lassa fever death toll rises to 268: The death toll from Lassa fever in Nigeria has risen to 268, with 1,138 confirmed cases reported so far this year, public health authorities said on Monday.

The case fatality rate stood at 23.6 percent between Sept 21 and Oct. 4, up from 18.6 percent during the same period in 2025, the Nigeria Center for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) said in its latest situation report.

At least one confirmed case had been reported in 119 local government areas across 24 of Nigeria’s 36 states so far this year, the NCDC said, adding that people aged 21 to 30 remained the most affected age group during the reporting period.

The hardest-hit states were Edo and Ondo in the south, and Bauchi, Benue and Taraba in the north. Together, they accounted for 88 percent of all confirmed cases in the country, the NCDC said.

The NCDC said poor sanitation, limited awareness in heavily affected communities and delays in seeking treatment continued to worsen the outbreak.

Lassa fever is an acute viral hemorrhagic illness mainly transmitted through food or household items contaminated with rodent urine or feces. Human-to-human transmission can also occur through direct contact with the bodily fluids of infected people. (Xinhua)



This 2006 photo provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows a female Aedes aegypti mosquito in the process of acquiring a blood meal from a human host. (AP)

ticides against fleas in affected areas and their surroundings.

The ministry also urged the public to remain vigilant and follow plague prevention measures. (Xinhua)

Madagascar reports 4 plague cases: The Malagasy Ministry of Public Health on Tuesday reported four confirmed cases of plague and five suspected cases in the country.

According to an official statement, four confirmed cases were recorded in Ankazobe, Anjozorobe and Ambohimananarisoa, north of Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar, while the five suspected cases were detected in Midongy Atsimo District, located in the southeastern part of the country.

The ministry said 200 people who had been in contact with the patients were under close medical monitoring and had received preventive treatment.

The cases come as Madagascar has entered a period of increased plague activity that began in late July.

In response, health authorities have implemented several measures, including actively identifying new suspected cases, tracing contacts, and spraying insecticides against fleas in affected areas and their surroundings.

The ministry also urged the public to remain vigilant and follow plague prevention measures. (Xinhua)

Bangladesh dengue death toll rises to 316: Mosquito-borne dengue fever has claimed more than 300 lives and infected over 100,000 people across Bangladesh in less than 10 months this year.

According to the latest record from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), dengue prevalence has reached a worrying level this year, with 103,396 cases and 316 deaths recorded as of Oct. 13.

Dengue deaths this year included 71 in October, 148 in September, 43 in August, 36 in July and 13 in June.

The country recorded 9 more deaths and 1,954 more dengue infections in the 24 hours till 8:00 a.m. local time on Tuesday, DGHS data showed.

From Oct. 1 to 13, 23,776 new dengue cases were recorded, after 43,774 people were reported to be infected with the mosquito-borne disease last month, according to the DGHS.

Dengue fever, typically a monsoon-season illness in Bangladesh, is now spreading beyond its usual June-September period. Bangladeshi Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on Tuesday directed the authorities concerned to conduct public awareness campaigns using loudspeakers in neighborhoods to prevent dengue. (Xinhua)

Breast cancer survival rate in Kuwait reaches 90.1%, says Ministry of Health

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The Ministry of Health revealed that the age-standardized incidence rate of breast cancer reached 70.1 cases per 100,000 individuals among Kuwaiti women, compared to 45.7 cases among non-Kuwaiti women, while the survival rate for registered cases reached 90.1 percent.

Citing data from the National Breast Cancer Early Detection Program, the ministry stated that the average age at diagnosis is 56 years old for Kuwaiti women and 51 years old for non-Kuwaiti women.

Cases among women under the age of 40 accounted for 8.9 percent of the total among Kuwaitis and 13.1 percent among non-Kuwaitis.

These figures underscore the importance of raising awareness about the disease and not ignoring symptoms that may require medical examination.

These details were unveiled in a visual presentation at an event held at Jaber Hospital to promote early breast cancer detection.

The event, titled “Integrated Specialties... For Her... Together to Promote Early Breast Cancer Detection,” was inaugurated by Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Affairs at the ministry Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, with Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs Dr. Munther Al-Hassawi in attendance.

In an awareness lecture delivered during the event, Head of the Radiology Department at Amiri Hospital and Head of the National Breast Cancer Early Detection Program Dr. Asma Hussain Al-Failakawi indicated that



Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi stands among a group of doctors during the event.

breast cancer is the most common cancer among women globally. She said around 2.3 million new cases are recorded annually -- about 25 percent of all cancer cases among women. She added that according to the data presented in the lecture, the age-standardized incidence rate in Kuwait exceeds the global average.

She also disclosed that by the end of 2015, 12 radiologists and seven breast imaging technicians completed the six-month training program at Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital in New York, as part of efforts to develop medical and technical expertise in this field.

In a related development, Kuwait University, in collaboration with the Cancer Aware Nation (CAN) campaign, organized a breast cancer awareness day, which included a discussion panel and health awareness exhibition, aimed to transform awareness from information to daily habit that protects women.

Dr. Hessa Al-Shaheen, head of the breast cancer awareness initiative and board member at CAN, emphasized that the incidence of breast cancer relative to other cancer types has reached a

very high level—approaching 83.4 percent among Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti women—as per the 2022 statistics from Kuwait Cancer Control Center.

She asserted that the greatest success lies in detecting the disease in the first and second stages, which have very high recovery rates. She then explained that even if the disease reaches advanced stages, treatment no longer carries the same fear regarding surgery or aesthetic impact, thanks to significant advancements in science, technology and surgical techniques, the process has become far less daunting than it once was.

She highlighted smoking as a major risk factor, hence, a comprehensive smoking cessation clinic opened in 2024, encouraging people of all ages, not just the youths. She affirmed that free nicotine patches are provided to help lower blood nicotine levels, as well as a device that measures nicotine levels in the body to monitor progress. She said carbon monoxide levels are expected to gradually decrease after one week, and positive results are being achieved.

DR Congo outbreak slows

Kenya confirms second Ebola case

NAIROBI, Oct 15, (Xinhua): Kenya confirmed a second case of the Ebola disease caused by the Bundibugyo virus, which is linked to the first case, with no evidence of wider community transmission, the Ministry of Health said Wednesday.

“Kenya has now recorded two confirmed cases and one death,” said Patrick Amoth, director-general for health in Kenya’s Ministry of Health.

The patient, a 39-year-old male, is a close family contact of the index patient and was already undergoing mandatory quarantine and daily medical surveillance when he presented with symptoms on Tuesday, health officials said.

After he developed a fever, fatigue and joint pain, the quarantine response team isolated him and collected clinical specimens for laboratory testing.

According to the Ministry of Health, diagnostic evaluations returned matching positive results from both the National Virology Reference Laboratory and the Kenya Medical Research Institute-CDC facility, confirming the infection.

“He is now in a designated treatment center where trained teams are giving him supportive care. Because he was already in quarantine, his illness was detected early,” the ministry said in a statement issued in Nairobi.

“Early supportive care improves his chances of recovery, and isolating him at the first symptom limits the chance of passing the virus to others. This is the response working as designed,” it added.

The latest case comes after Kenya confirmed on Oct. 6 its first case of Ebola linked to the ongoing outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The index case, a Kenyan citizen who had resided in the DRC for seven years, recently returned to the country via regional transit routes.

Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) shows early signs of slowing, but new hotspots are complicating response efforts, authorities said Wednesday.

“For the past two weeks, we have seen the curve starting to decline,” said Jean Kaseya, director-general of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), at a press briefing in Kinshasa.

The outbreak’s epicenter was gradually shifting from Ituri Province, where the epidemic is believed to have first emerged in the country’s east, toward neighboring North Kivu Province, Kaseya noted.



Amoth

Study says global warming did more than El Niño to turbocharge Hurricane Polo

WASHINGTON, Oct 15, (AP): A new study finds that climate change and El Niño combined to rev up last month’s explosively intensifying Hurricane Polo, which was the longest-lasting Category 5 storm ever to churn in the Pacific.

Global warming caused by the burning of coal, oil and gas was the bigger of the two culprits, adding about 6 mph (nearly 10 kph) to its already monstrous strength, according to a joint study published Thursday by the science teams World Weather Attribution and Climate Central. El Niño contributed a bit less, about 5 mph (8 kph), a study co-author said.

Climate change made the conditions that fueled the hurricane 23 times more likely, while El Niño - the natural and temporary warming of parts of the Pacific - made it 14 times more likely, the study found. It all has to do with the 88-degree Fahrenheit (31.2 degrees Celsius) waters that were as much as 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit (2 degrees Celsius) warmer than normal, the study said.

This year, with a super strong El Niño, has set records for strength and longevity of Pacific storms. Polo set the record for time spent at Category 5 in the Pacific at two-and-a-half days.

“El Niño and climate change both made this hurricane stronger than it would have otherwise been, but the effect of climate change is even bigger than the one of El Niño,” said climate scientist and study co-author Friederike Otto, who coordinates the international science team behind World Weather Attribution.

“El Niño comes and goes, but climate change only gets worse. That means that now every hurricane that will occur in the East Pacific has at least this climate change signal making it stronger. And as long as we keep burning fossil fuels, that will only get bigger,” Otto added.

Researchers found that without climate change and El Niño, Polo would have been a monster storm anyway. But every bit of additional wind speed can dramatically increase the damage.

While Hurricane Polo ultimately weakened considerably before it hit a sparsely populated part of Mexico, scientists remain fascinated by how it turbocharged from a tropical storm to a top-of-the-chart Category 5 hurricane in about 24 hours.

The study puts the different atmospheric dangers in perspective, said Kristina Dahl, a climate scientist and vice president of science at Climate Central, a science and journalism nonprofit out of New Jersey.

“It’s a powerful reminder that even though El Niño right now is shifting hazards around the globe and changing where it’s flooding and getting dry, the really dominant signal behind all of this remains climate change,” she said.

The study looked at the warm water that fuels storms, using a measure of how strong they can get. But the study didn’t focus on the upper level wind

shear where El Niño has a huge footprint. El Niño usually increases those storm-decapitating high altitude winds in the Atlantic. However, in the Pacific because of changes in wind patterns, El Niño decreases the winds that weaken storms.

The two sets of researchers measured conditions slightly differently and used different techniques but came to the same general conclusion, making them more confident in the result. However, the rapid study has not had time to be peer-reviewed, which is the gold standard of science.

To calculate the impact of climate change on Polo, both teams used the scientifically accepted method of comparing what happened in our warmer real world to a hypothetical world that hasn’t warmed by 2.5 degrees (1.4 degrees Celsius) since pre-industrial times.

Study co-author Daniel Gilford, a Climate Central scientist, said the process they looked at was similar to cars on a road. Wind shear from El Niño can be a red light, as it is in the Atlantic, or a green light, as it is in the Pacific. In the Pacific that green light says go, and then the water warmed by both climate change and El Niño acts like a driver flooring the accelerator.



Workers pull a boat to shore as Hurricane Polo approaches Puerto San Carlos, Baja California Sur state, Mexico on Sept 28. (AP)

‘What is truly remarkable is how great our fans are’

Lacob’s faith in Valkyries pays off with remarkable WNBA finals run

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct 15, (AP): The moment Joe Lacob walks into the Chase Center and heads for his courtside seats, he and his family immediately feel the enormous energy and wholesome vibe that is the Golden State Valkyries’ “Ballhalla” home crowd game after game, sellout after violet-crazed sellout.

The women’s basketball franchise Lacob always envisioned while owning the Golden State Warriors has come together in no time, and in all the right ways - from relatable players other teams overlooked to leadership from the top down and smart branding complete with a beloved raven “bestie” Violet. Just don’t dare calling her a mascot.

On Saturday, Lacob will be there roaring with the rest of them as his Valkyries begin their quest for a WNBA championship in just their second year of existence. And whatever happens, he is immensely proud of the progress and the loyal support from everyone representing all walks of life who contributes to one of the best home-court advantages anywhere.

“What is truly remarkable is how great our fans are. Our players love it, we love it,” Lacob said. “It’s great, it’s a cohesion, it’s everybody coming together all at the same time and rooting for something that is new and fresh and it’s timely. And people see it and feel it. What’s going on in that arena is fantastic, it’s remarkable, it’s incredibly fun.

“I love walking in there, my wife, my family, we all love walking in there to the tremendous feeling of camaraderie and togetherness. We all as a team of people, fans, players, organization, together we’re making history and we all feel it.”

For decades, Lacob has loved women’s basketball and when he brought a WNBA franchise to the Bay Area at last, the owner had no hesitations about making bold predictions.

He promised a championship within the first five years. And now in the second year the Valkyries are playing for one.

“I’m telling you right now, we will win a WNBA championship in the first five years of this franchise,” Lacob declared on Oct. 5, 2023, when the WNBA announced Lacob’s ownership group had been awarded an expansion franchise.

“I think it just goes to show that with a new team, (you can have success) with a clear vision of what you want and the identity that you want,” center Kiah Stokes said. “Shoutout to the Valkyries organization, because they had this vision from the start, and to be able to see it come to fruition already in year two is pretty amazing and pretty special. We have a great group, it’s really special, and we’re looking forward to the finals.”

Lacob had followed his prediction with the same statement to now-coach Natalie Nakase when he interviewed her to be the sideline leader. She was all in from that moment.

“It’s just a perfect confluence of events and people and experience and timing. It’s just a lot of things that have all come together at the right time,” Lacob said. “I’m not going to sit here and tell you that I am shocked by this, I’m not. I think all the ingredients were there and I made that prediction knowingly and understood what I was saying, now to do it in two years, no one could sit here and tell you that would be something they would predict. No one, not even me.”

Under Lacob’s leadership and the hiring of President Jess Smith and her staff, Golden State has built a roster of understated stars. Veronica Burton got cut by Dallas two years ago, while her backup point guard Kaitlyn Chen was briefly let go by the Valkyries last season before she

returned. Kayla Thornton is a 33-year-old undrafted forward out of the University of Texas El Paso who became an All-Star in 2025. Gabby Williams had something to prove in the WNBA after sensing others didn’t believe in her ability.

That’s not the case anymore.

“It feels special because this is a special group,” Williams said. “All we need is each other. We just need to believe in each other, we know we weren’t a team that was talked about, but just the culture and going to work every day, we felt that we had something worth fighting for. That’s how we’re going into the finals, with that same mentality - staying together and staying unselfish.”

Lacob is into it, yelling from courtside in his Valkyries violet gear.

But this goes back decades for him. He supported Stanford and followed along when Hall of Fame Cardinal coach Tara VanDerveer led the Americans’ gold-medal dominance at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and Lacob became a founding owner of the San Jose Lasers in the former ABL. He is thrilled with the WNBA’s recent strides and the rise of women’s sports.

Count Warriors coach Steve Kerr as a huge fan of these Valkyries.

“They’re so fun to watch, they’re so unselfish, they’re so tough, smart, well coached,” Kerr said. “And having watched this thing unfold over two years, I can’t imagine that there’s ever been a better expansion team in terms of the unveiling of everything - the brand, the colors, the name, the logo, the mascot, the vibe in the building. It’s incredible. We’re really proud of the team, excited for Natalie and her staff. We can’t wait for the finals.”

It certainly helps to have Stephen Curry, Draymond Green, Brandin Podziemski and Gui Santos showing up in support.



Golden State Valkyries guard Tiffany Hayes (15) kisses the hand of Valkyries guard Veronica Burton (22) after Burton recovered the loose ball in the final minute of the fourth quarter during Game 2 of the WNBA Semifinals at Chase Center in San Francisco. (AP)

World Gymnastics regrets confusion

Russian stars denied visas for World Championships

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands, Oct 15, (AP): World Gymnastics says it regrets “confusion” ahead of the world championships starting on Saturday after three top Russians were denied visas to enter the Netherlands for the event.

Former Olympic champions Angelina Melnikova and Viktoria Listunova, along with teammate Anna Kalmykova, were not allowed to travel to Rotterdam for the week-long worlds that are a team qualifying event for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics, the Russian team has said.

Other members of the Russian team have been given visas.

“The issuance of visas to all participants is a process determined solely by the Dutch authorities,” World Gymnastics said Wednesday. “World Gymnastics is not in a position to explain why a select number of application requests have been refused.

“World Gymnastics remains in ongoing dialogue with the Dutch authorities, the Local Organizing Committee, and the Russian Gymnastics Federation. World Gymnastics fully regrets the negative impact on the preparations of the Russian delegation and the confusion felt among the wider Artistic Gymnastics World Championships community.”

The cases illustrate how efforts in the sports world to lift many restrictions on Russian athletes and teams don’t always mean host governments allow them to travel for events.

It also comes a year after the world championships went ahead in Indonesia without the Israeli team after authorities in the host country refused to issue visas.

Melnikova won the European all-around title in August in Croatia after being issued a visa following an initial refusal, the Russian team said at the time. Listunova was refused on that occasion.

Russia planned to demand the world championships be stripped of their



In this file photo, Individual Neutral Athlete Angelina Melnikova competes in the women's uneven bars final during the 53rd Artistic Gymnastics World Championships in Jakarta, Indonesia. (AP)

Zverev advances to Shanghai semis with win over de Minaur

SHANGHAI, Oct 15, (AP): Top-ranked Alexander Zverev said he felt good on-court after beating Alex de Minaur 6-4, 6-4 at the Shanghai Masters on Thursday.

Zverev made 80% of his first serves and saved all five of the break points he faced as he set up a semifinal meeting with Alejandro Davidovich Fokina.

“I felt both of us were playing really, really well. I was a lot of times out-hitting Alex, which is difficult to do from the baseline because he is so fast and he loves this kind of court speed here,” said Zverev, who secured the year-end No. 1 ranking earlier this week.

“I felt good and I’m happy with the step up from the last couple of matches.”

Davidovich Fokina was handed a semifinal spot when Arthur Gea retired while trailing 4-1 in the first set after having had on-court treatment.

“Sad to end the tournament like this, but I’ll be back,” Gea wrote on Instagram. The French player has had a breakout 2026, rising from 244th in the world to 56th and winning his first tour-level title at the Los Cabos Open in August.

Zverev has a 6-1 career head-to-head record against Davidovich Fokina.

Friday’s quarterfinals pit fast-rising Spanish youngster Rafael Jódar against Casper Ruud before fifth-seeded Russian Daniil Medvedev plays Tommy Paul of the United States.

Meanwhile, fifth-seeded Elina Svitolina broke Guo Hanyu’s serve in the opening and final games of the match and beat the Chinese wild-card entry 6-1, 6-4 Thursday to advance to the quarterfinals at the Wuhan Open.

Svitolina lost in the quarterfinals at the China Open last week to eventual champion Zheng Qinwen.

Svitolina reaches Wuhan Open quarters



Germany’s Alexander Zverev returns a ball to Australia’s Alex De Minaur during the men’s singles quarterfinals match at the Shanghai Masters tennis tournament in Shanghai, China. (AP)

Guo had her first career top-20 win in the first round of the WTA 1,000-level tournament in Wuhan, rallying from 6-1, 4-0 down and saving triple match point in the second-set tiebreaker to upset 12th-seeded Sorana Cirstea 1-6, 7-6 (6), 7-5. Guo, ranked 240th, trailed 5-3 in the third set.

Wimbledon finalist and sixth-seeded Karolina Muchova lost 7-5, 6-3 to 11th-seeded Diana Shnaider in an earlier result.

On Wednesday, top-seeded Aryna Sabalenka and second-seeded Jessica Pegula lost their second-round matches. It marked two straight losses for Sabalenka, who was beaten by Nikola Bartunkova in the third round at the China Open last week and had a bye in the opening round at Wuhan.

Also, French tennis player Gael

Monfils has entered retirement, a move that came a bit earlier than what was expected.

The 40-year-old Monfils, who had planned to retire at the end of the season, is being listed by the sport’s drug-testing organization among the players who have declared themselves retired, with his career officially over from Oct. 5.

The former No. 6-ranked player had received a wild card for a tournament in Lyon next week and was widely expected to end his career in front of his home fans at the Paris Masters from Oct. 31. He is currently ranked 254th.

Lyon organizers said on Wednesday that Monfils won’t be playing, citing “personal reasons.”

Monfils has not publicly confirmed he has retired. But someone

on the International Tennis Integrity Agency’s list needs to be available for testing for six months before they are allowed to return to competition, making the possibility of a comeback unlikely.

Monfils bid adieu to Grand Slam tennis with a hard-fought loss to Learner Tien in the second round of the U.S. Open in September. Before bowing out, he became the oldest man to win a match at the tournament since Jimmy Connors in 1992, who also did so on his 40th birthday.

Monfils has won 13 titles. His best results at Grand Slam tournaments are two semifinals, at the 2008 French Open and 2016 U.S. Open.

Monfils previously said he was at peace with the decision to retire and has signed on with a Swiss company to work in wealth management.



Alpine driver Franco Colapinto, left, of Argentina walks away during the sprint qualifying session ahead of the Singapore Formula One Grand Prix in Singapore. (AP)

Colapinto urges F1 fans to stop online abuse of rivals

ENSTONE, England, Oct 15, (AP): Formula 1 driver Franco Colapinto has called on his fans to stop social media campaigns attacking other drivers and his Alpine team staff, saying they’re holding back his career.

Since the Argentine driver’s F1 debut in 2024, fans have sent negative and sometimes abusive comments on social media targeting drivers who clashed with him on the track. Among them were champion Lando Norris and FIA race stewards who penalized Colapinto.

Alpine also stepped in this year to condemn online abuse and deny claims it was trying to “sabotage” Colapinto to favor teammate Pierre Gasly.

“I know it makes you feel very proud when things go well for me, when I score points, for me and for the whole team, and I’ll always be very grateful for that,” Colapinto said in a video on Instagram late Wednesday.

“But there are times when we go over the line, when instead of supporting me we end up criticizing, we end up attacking other drivers, other colleagues, my teammates, my mechanics, my engineers, people I work with day in and day out.

“I know you’re thinking that you’re defending me, but you’re actually doing the opposite. You don’t help me or my future, and I really want you to understand that this is what we have to change, all of us together.”

NEW YORK, Oct 15, (AP): The NBA has six divisions, and five sent at least one team to the second round of last season’s playoffs.

The exception: the Southeast Division.

For the third consecutive year, none of the Southeast clubs - Atlanta, Charlotte, Miami, Orlando and Washington - found a way out of the first round. Atlanta and Orlando both lost in the Eastern Conference quarterfinals, Miami and Charlotte lost in the play-in tournament and Washington was the NBA’s worst team.

But there is hope for change in the Southeast, which has more star power.

Giannis Antetokounmpo and Klay Thompson have joined Miami, while Anthony Davis (who technically joined Washington in February but didn’t play any games) is set to team up alongside Trae Young with the Wizards for the first time. The Hawks added a big-time stopper in Lu Dort to an already strong defensive lineup, the Hornets brought former Duke guard Grayson Allen back to North Carolina and Orlando’s big move was

landing Sean Sweeney off of San Antonio’s staff and making him the new Magic coach.

All that said, it seems like oddsmakers aren’t expecting big win totals from anyone in the Southeast, with projected win totals according to most sportsbooks ranging around 35.5 (Washington), 37.5 (Charlotte), 43.5 (Orlando and Atlanta) and 46.5 (Miami). That would be on brand, since the Southeast has had only one 50-win team - Miami, 53-29 in 2021-22 - in the last 11 seasons.

A rundown of each Southeast Division team, in projected order of finish:

The Heat got the superstar they wanted in Giannis Antetokounmpo, surrounded him and Bam Adebayo with elite shooters like Klay Thompson and Tim Hardaway Jr., plus added Bobby Portis Jr. for toughness and versatility. Even after missing out on LeBron James, who considered a return, it was still an elite offseason for Miami. The Heat were No. 2 in the NBA in scoring last season and should get back to their airtight de-



Miami Heat forward Giannis Antetokounmpo reacts after being called for a foul during the first half of an NBA preseason basketball game against the Brooklyn Nets in Miami. (AP)

Sweeney to replace Jamahl Mosley. Sweeney, who was Mitch Johnson’s top assistant with the Western Conference champion Spurs last season, is tasked with leading the team to its first playoff series victory since 2010. The Magic have a talented starting five led by forwards Franz Wagner and Paolo Banchero. Desmond Bane is a dynamic shooter, Jalen Suggs is a dogged defender and center Wendell Carter Jr. made big strides. The Magic ran it back; we’ll see if it works.

Not only did the Hawks get back to the playoffs last season for the first time in three years, but they had a 2-1 lead in Round 1 against a New York Knicks team that went on to win the NBA title (and would win 15 of their next 16 games to close out that crown). Quin Snyder always gets his teams to play hard and the Hawks certainly seem to have the potential to be very tough on both ends of the floor. CJ McCollum’s leadership can’t be understated, and Jalen Johnson Jr. only seems to get better. This team is going to shoot a lot of 3-pointers, and not give up a lot of open ones.

Inter Miami clinches MLS playoff berth



New York City FC defender Nico Cavallo, left, defends Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi, right, during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Miami. (AP)



St. Louis City's Simon Becher (11) shoots as Vancouver Whitecaps' Ralph Priso defends during the second half of an MLS soccer match in St. Louis. (AP)

St. Louis extends unbeaten streak to MLS-record 21 games

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla., Oct 15, (AP): Rodrigo De Paul scored on an assist from Lionel Messi and Germán Berterame added a goal to send reigning champion Inter Miami back to the MLS playoffs with a 2-0 win over New York City FC.

Luis Suárez also assisted for Inter Miami, which has won back-to-back matches for the first time since July. Miami missed the postseason when Messi arrived in 2023, but has reached the playoffs the past three seasons, losing in the first round to Atlanta United in 2024 then beating Vancouver last year to win the club's first MLS Cup. Wednesday's victory came after Miami routed DC United 4-0 last Saturday on a pair of goals from Messi and Suárez, and it was the second league win for new coach Cristian "Kily" González, who took over Sept. 16. Roman Bürki had his fourth shutout this season in a 0-0 tie with the Vancouver Whitecaps and St. Louis City extended its unbeaten streak in all competitions to an MLS-record 21 consecutive games. St. Louis (14-6-9), which broke the mark set by the New York Red Bulls in 2016, clinched a berth in the 2026 MLS Cup Playoffs. The club is unbeaten in 19 straight regular-season games, tying the MLS record held by Columbus and Dallas. Marco Reus had a goal and an assist to back JT Marcinkowski and the Los Angeles Galaxy beat the Portland Timbers 2-0. Reus staked the Galaxy (10-11-9) to a 1-0 lead in the 17th minute when he used assists from Robert Taylor and Pablo Ruiz to score his eighth goal of the campaign.

That's where the score stood until Reus set up up Justin Haak in the 80th minute for his second goal this season and his fourth in 110 career matches. It was the career-high 11th assist for Reus. Denis Bouanga and Son Heung-min both contributed to all three goals for Los Angeles FC in a 3-1 victory over Austin FC. Neither team found the net until Bouanga took a pass from Son seven minutes into the second half and scored to give LAFC (12-9-9) the lead. Brandon Vázquez scored for the second time this season - using an assist from Myrto Uzuni to knot the score in the 66th minute. Bouanga answered the following minute with his 17th netter off another assist from Son - his league-leading 15th of the season - and LAFC went back in front 2-1. Brad Stuver stopped 10 shots - one off his career high - for Austin (7-11-11), which has lost two straight following an eight-match unbeaten streak. Hany Mukhtar and Andy Najar each had a goal and an assist, Sam Surridge also scored a goal Wednesday night and Nashville SC beat Sporting Kansas City 3-0 for their fourth consecutive win. Bruno Damiani netted two goals after Milan Iloski scored - all with a man advantage - and Cavan Sullivan set a record for teenagers as the Philadelphia Union beat the Chicago Fire 3-1 for their eighth straight victory in a club-record 14-match unbeaten streak. Giuliano Galoppo had his first MLS goal and assist to back Lucas Hoyos and Atlanta United cruised to a 3-0 victory over CF Montreal. Atlanta United (8-15-6) took a 1-0 lead in the 22nd minute when Miguel Almiron used assists from 21-year-old rookie defender Elías Báez and Galoppo to score his sixth goal of the season. Baez has five assists and Galoppo

snagged his first in his fourth MLS appearance. Dor Turgeman scored two goals, Joshua Wynder added a goal and an assist, and the New England Revolution beat FC Cincinnati 3-2 to clinch a berth in the 2026 MLS Cup Playoffs. Tai Baribo scored on a penalty kick then added an assist to lead D.C. United to a 2-1 victory over the New York Red Bulls. DC United (7-9-12) took a 1-0 lead in the 5th minute on Baribo's PK. His 15th goal of the season came after he was fouled by Red Bulls midfielder Adri Mehmeti. Brais Méndez, Anass Zaroury and Taha Habroune each scored a goal to help the Columbus Crew beat Charlotte FC 3-1. Matheus Pereira scored his first career MLS goal in the 90th minute for Toronto FC in a 3-3 tie with Orlando City. Antoine Griezmann had a goal and an assist for Orlando (11-13-5). Griezmann became the first player in MLS history with a goal contribution in 11 of his first 13 games. The 35-year-old forward has 10 goals and six assists since joining Orlando City following the World Cup break. Gabriel Pirani scored in the 86th minute for San Diego FC in a 3-3 tie with the Houston Dynamo. Anders Dreyer and Cédric Bakambu each added a goal for San Diego (8-12-9), which is winless in seven straight. Kelvin Yeboah scored his career-high 16th goal this season Wednesday night for Minnesota United in a 2-2 tie with the Colorado Rapids. Defender Jack Jasinski subbed in and scored during second-half stoppage time after Real Salt Lake took a late lead, and the San Jose Earthquakes rallied for a 1-1 draw to extend their unbeaten streak to eight.

No suggestion Carrick's position in danger

Man U troubles deepen with player outbursts after poor start to season

MANCHESTER, England, Oct 15, (AP): A player revolt was about the last thing Manchester United needed in another troubled start to a season. Lisandro Martínez's outburst following Tuesday's Champions League defeat against Atletico Madrid added more unwanted focus on the club as manager Michael Carrick attempted to turn its ailing campaign around. The Argentina defender called out United's hierarchy over its offseason recruitment, with director of football Jason Wilcox the apparent target of his criticism. In January, Ruben Amorim had a fallout with Wilcox which swiftly led to the manager being fired after just 14 months in the job. Martínez's comments have put United's leadership in the spotlight again and have broken the sense of calm at Old Trafford that Carrick had overseen since succeeding Amorim. They suggest an underlying unrest in the face of another season that looks in danger of going badly wrong. Forward Amad Diallo also posted an expletive on social media following defeat in Madrid, describing it a "disgrace." It is already 13 years since United last won the Premier League title and, six games into the season, it is languishing 13th



Manchester United's Leny Yoro, right, fouls Atletico Madrid's Jonathan David during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Atletico Madrid and Manchester United in Madrid. (AP)

in the standings, 12 points adrift of leader Manchester City. United has only one league win, against promoted Ipswich, and two overall, the other one against Azerbaijani team Sabah in the Champions League. The club also crashed out of the English League Cup at the first stage. There have been boos from fans, most recently following the home draw against winless Tottenham on Saturday. "I'm not happy with the amount of points we've had so far, for sure," Carrick said.

"You know, I'm not hiding that. There's no hiding from that. "I understand the reaction at times. It hurts a lot. It's not nice to go through. Sometimes you have to go through it." There is no suggestion Carrick's position is in danger after he became United's seventh permanent manager since club great Alex Ferguson retired following that title win in 2013. But he is facing familiar problems that were seen under predecessors Amorim, Erik ten Hag, Ole Gunnar Solskjær and Jose Mourinho, who all endured poor

runs before losing their jobs. Six points from six games represents United's worst start in the Premier League era, and on Sunday comes a clash with fierce rival Leeds at Elland Road, coincidentally the setting for Amorim's final game. The trip to Leeds is another daunting assignment for United in what is usually a hostile atmosphere. City can extend its 100% start to the season when it hosts Ipswich. Defending champion Arsenal travels to Nottingham Forest. Bradley Barcola is up and running at Liverpool after scoring a hat trick in the Champions League on Wednesday. Then, of course, there is Martínez. Will Carrick stick with the defender after his outburst or drop him? Liverpool's Ryan Gravenberch is suspended after being sent off against City, while Dominik Szoboszlai, Cody Gakpo and Alexander Isak missed the last two games with injuries. Luke Shaw and Kobbie Mainoo missed United's defeat to Atletico. Arsenal will be without Piero Hincapié for several weeks, according to manager Mikel Arteta, after he picked up an injury in training. Martin Zubimendi is also a doubt following a separate training injury.

Mineiro eyes Sudamericana final

RIO DE JANEIRO, Oct. 15, (Agencies): Atletico Mineiro took a step toward qualifying for the Copa Sudamericana final with a 3-0 home win over Montevideo City Torque. Former Real Madrid midfielder Reinier Jesus opened the scoring in the 37th minute by side-footing home after Victor Hugo's pass. The hosts doubled the advantage five minutes later when former Everton winger Bernard dribbled 25 yards before lashing a low drive that beat goalkeeper Franco Torgnascioli at his near post. Thiago Borbas put the result beyond doubt 10 minutes from time with a sliding first-time effort from eight yards after Renan Lodi's cross. The decisive second leg will be played in Montevideo next Wednesday, with the winner to meet either Boca Juniors or Vasco da Gama in the final. Striker José López and Marlon Freitas each scored a goal to lead Palmeiras to a 2-1 away victory over Fluminense in an all-Brazilian match during the first leg of the Copa Libertadores semifinals. "Flaco" López - who was selected by Argentina for the last World Cup - scored the first goal in the 45th minute, finishing off a counterattack, while Freitas secured



Agustin Giay of Brazil's Palmeiras, left, and Agustin Canobbio of Brazil's Fluminense battle for the ball during the first leg of a Copa Libertadores semifinal soccer match in Rio de Janeiro. (AP)

the win with a low shot from inside the box in the 85th minute at Maracana Stadium.. Palmeiras, which reached the final four after defeating Liga de Quito on penalties, is appearing in the Copa Libertadores semifinals for the sixth time in seven years.

At showdown meeting, Infantino apologizes for WC furor

ZURICH, Oct 15, (AP): Gianni Infantino gave an apology to his toughest critics but no new details or documents on FIFA issues that most concern them at a showdown meeting of its ruling council Thursday. No documents about the \$4.2 billion World Cup sell-off plan he launched and dropped in July. No details about the Folarin Balogun red-card case at the World Cup and how U.S. President Donald Trump intervened to help the national team forward. World soccer's ruling body FIFA will, however, review whether to continue awarding the peace prize that was created to give to Trump last December. Pressed by European soccer officials for written evidence about his secretive private equity plan for the World Cup that provoked a global rift, Infantino asked them to submit

written questions, FIFA vice president Deb-bie Hewitt said after the 3 1/2-hour meeting. "The man has to answer those questions. If he doesn't answer those questions, no, he is not fit to be the FIFA president," said Hewitt, who leads the English Football Association. European soccer's ruling body UEFA is leading attempts to remove Infantino before or at the FIFA presidential election in March and heard to little to change that view Thursday. "No satisfactory answers were provided," said German soccer leader Bernd Neuendorf, one of eight UEFA delegates in the 37-member FIFA Council that Infantino chairs. It had not met since Infantino provoked the crisis. "We need a person of integrity, someone who can be expected to restore the reputation of the association, which has undoubtedly

been lost," Neuendorf told reporters. Infantino did start the meeting by apologizing to his Council colleagues for blindsiding them and creating a furor over his private investor plan with Joshua Kushner that was revealed in media reports nine days after the World Cup final in July. "He said that with some contrition," Hewitt said. UEFA also has asked courts in the United States for the right to get evidence for a criminal complaint against Infantino in Switzerland. The court filings allege possible mismanagement of FIFA finances in the value he put on the intended subsidiary running tournament commercial rights. It was to be at least 20% owned by investors led by Joshua Kushner, the brother of Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner.

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Australia's Isaah Yeo, right, reaches for the ball during the opening game of the Rugby League World Cup between Australia and New Zealand in Sydney. Australia won 24-22. (AP)

Sports

Qadsia hosts Fortis in Hawally

Al-Arabi and Qadsia target winning starts in AFC Challenge League

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Kuwait's Al-Arabi and Qadsia launch their AFC Challenge League campaigns on Saturday, with both sides aiming to make strong starts and secure progress to the knockout stage. Al-Arabi faces Syria's Homs Al-Fida at 2 pm at Hisor Central Stadium in Tajikistan in their Group B opener. At the same time, Qadsia hosts Bangladesh's Fortis in the opening round of Group C.

The West Asia zone features three groups; the winners of each group and the best runner-up advance to the quarterfinals. Al-Arabi's group also includes Tajikistan's Istiklol and Lebanon's Al-Najma, who are scheduled to meet on Saturday. The Green team will take on Istiklol next Tuesday before wrapping up their group campaign against Al-Najma on October 23.

Interim coach Mohamed Abdelnabi has named a 23-player squad for the tournament. Four players — Yousif Majed, Yousif Sabah, Abdulrahman Ajaj and Ayed Majed — joined the delegation on Wednesday. Abdelnabi took charge after



Bader Mutawa

Croatian coach Goran Sablic was dismissed last Saturday following Al-Arabi's disappointing start to the domestic season.



Al Arabi player controls the ball.

The Green team will be eager to start its continental campaign under its new leadership with a positive result and leave its

domestic struggles behind.

Al-Arabi has managed just three points from four rounds of the Zain Premier

League, drawing 1-1 with Kuwait Club, 3-3 with Sulaibikhat, and 1-1 with Kazma before losing 2-1 to Al-Jahra. It also failed to qualify for the AFC Champions League Two after losing 4-1 to India's East Bengal in the playoff round in August. Qadsia, meanwhile, will seek to make the most of home advantage and its supporters' backing as it targets a quarterfinal spot. The Yellow team returns to the AFC Challenge League after two seasons in the Gulf Club Champions League. It finished runner-up in that competition two seasons ago and reached the semifinals in the latest edition.

Qadsia head into these tournaments on the back of an encouraging domestic run, having won three of its four league matches and lost only one. Its nine-point tally puts it second in the Zain Premier League, just one point behind leaders Kuwait Club. Coach Mohamed Ibrahim, nicknamed "The General," hopes to guide Qadsia back to continental glory. The club won the AFC Cup in 2014, and Ibrahim will look to build on the team's promising league form while relying on the home crowd to inspire his players in their campaign.

Al-Nasr emerges victorious in Youth Boxing Championship



Al-Dhafiri presents awards to the top finishers.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: Al-Nasr Club emerged as champion of the Youth Boxing Championship after an intense battle for the title that remained undecided until the final day. Sulaibikhat finished runner-up, while Al-Qurain secured third place as the competition concluded.

Kuwait Boxing Federation Assistant Treasurer Abdulrahman Al-Tairi and Assistant Secretary Abdullah Al-Dhafiri presented the trophies and medals to the top three teams and their athletes, bringing the tournament to a close after a series of competitive bouts.

The gold medalists across the different weight categories were Athbi Jassem and Ali Abbas of Sulaibikhat; Abdulwahab Mohammed, Ali Yousuf, Adnan Ali, Abdullah Salem and Shehab Ahmed of Al-Nasr; Ahmed Salman, Saleh Mohammed and Abdullah Talal of Al-Qurain; Abbas Hussein of Qadsia; and Mishaal Musaed and Mohammed Marzouq of Sulaibikhat.

Al-Nasr coach Abdulrahman Bashir was named Best Coach in recognition of his role in leading the team to the overall title.

Al-Tairi congratulated the podium finishers and all the boxers who won medals, while wishing the other participating clubs and athletes' success in their upcoming competitions.

He said the championship featured a high standard of boxing and fierce competition, with the outcome only settled on the final day. This, he noted, demonstrated the clubs' readiness and commitment to challenging for the top honours.

Al-Tairi also praised the clubs for their cooperation and continued support for boxing, saying their efforts would strengthen Kuwait's national teams, expand the talent pool and help prepare boxers to represent the country in future international competitions.

PSG 'piles' more woe on Man City

Madrid leaves it late in Rome

LONDON, Oct 15, (AP): Paris Saint-Germain piled more misery upon scandal-hit Manchester City with a 4-2 win while Real Madrid struck three late goals to defeat Roma 4-3 in the Champions League.

PSG, the two-time defending champion, produced an impervious first-half performance with three first-half goals to leave the home fans - including former City coach Pep Guardiola - stunned at the break.

Désiré Doué fired in the opener in the 13th, then provided a brilliant lobbed cross for Ousmane Dembélé to get the second within two minutes after that.

PSG fans celebrated with their backs turned - emulating City supporters' trademark celebration - after Vitinha got the visitors' third goal in the 32nd, and the home fans appeared to be in shock. The players' shouts could be heard for the rest of the first half as the stadium was silenced.

Erling Haaland provided some reason to cheer by heading in City's response in the 53rd, prompting Guardiola to celebrate, but Maghnes Aklouché stopped the home team's momentum with PSG's fourth 10 minutes later.

Haaland's second goal in the 75th gave City hope again.

Ferran Torres' penalty should have sealed it for PSG, but Gianluigi Donnarumma stopped the poorly taken spot kick in stoppage time.

It was City's first European game since being charged with financial rule-breaking over nearly a decade in the Premier League.

Antonio Rüdiger was Real Madrid's unlikely hero with a last-minute winner at Roma.

The home fans paid tribute to returning coach José Mourinho, then celebrated wildly as their team took a 3-1 lead.

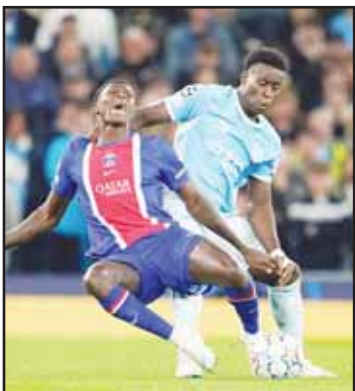
Marten de Roon scored Roma's opener with a well-struck effort from distance in the 20th, before Kylian Mbappé equalized with a deflected shot in the 25th on his 100th appearance in the competition. At 27, he's the youngest player to reach the 100 mark.

Donyell Malen answered twice - restoring Roma's lead in the 51st and getting his second six minutes later.

But Madrid substitutes Carlos Espí and Endrick scored within three minutes from the 85th to tie the game, then Rüdiger scored from close range after a corner.

Isco scored the winner and Abde Ezzalzouli netted a contender for goal of the day as Real Betis defeated Porto 3-2 in a bad-tempered game in Seville. Ezzalzouli struck the ball from the corner of the penalty area inside the top corner at the far post after the break.

Gabriel Veiga equalized with a fine free kick in the 55th and set off a kerfuffle between rival players with his celebration. Three players were booked.



PSG's Nuno Mendes battles for the ball with Manchester City's Marc Guehi during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Manchester City and Paris Saint-Germain in Manchester, England. (AP)



Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe controls the ball during a Champions League opening phase soccer match between Roma and Real Madrid, in Rome. (AP)

Porto substitute Samu - a Spanish international - scored just two minutes after coming on, only for Cucho Hernández - another substitute - to equalize in the 74th.

Isco got the winner late with a penalty.

Bradley Barcola scored a hat trick as Liverpool coasted to a 6-3 win at Austria's LASK earlier.

They were his first goals for the club since joining from European champion Paris Saint-Germain in the offseason.

Ronald Araújo also got his first Liverpool goal as he broke the deadlock with a header from a corner, less than two minutes before Barcola scored in the 24th from a lay-off by Lewis Koumas.

Ryan Gravenberch struck the post before Barcola got his second in the 37th, finishing with aplomb after being played through by Florian Wirtz. Jeremie Frimpong, one of the smallest players on the field, headed Liverpool's fourth in off the right post in the 51st.

Robert Ljubičić pulled a goal back in the 63rd, a minute after going on as a substitute, before Frimpong gave Barcola a simple tap-in to complete his hat trick in the 66th.

Koumas was left free to get Liverpool's sixth six minutes later - it was the 21-year-old forward's first Liverpool goal.

But Florian Flecker - another LASK substitute - got the biggest cheer when he scored his team's second with a diving header in the 74th, four minutes before he got another to complete the scoring.

The clubs face financial penalties

Qadsia, Salmiya removed from handball league

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15: The Kuwait Handball Association has officially removed Qadsia and Salmiya from the senior competitions after both clubs recorded their third consecutive withdrawal since the resumption of the 2025-2026 season.

Under the association's regulations, the clubs face financial penalties of KD 1,000 for the first withdrawal, KD 2,000 for the second and KD 3,000 for the third. Both teams have been struck from the league standings after completing their third withdrawals.

Qadsia withdrew from its match against Kuwait Club on Thursday, while Salmiya pulled out of its fixture against Burgan. The decisions follow earlier announcements by both clubs that they would discontinue their first-team handball activities.

Elsewhere, Sulaibikhat recorded an impressive 31-25 victory over Kazma, adding to the



Sulaibikhat player attempts a shot on goal against Kazma.

latter's difficulties. Sulaibikhat dominated key stages of the encounter to secure both points and raise its tally to 11.

Al-Arabi also enjoyed a successful outing, defeating Al-Nasr 24-18 to move to 18 points and draw level with second-placed Burgan.

Kuwait Club remains clear at the top of the Premier League standings with 27 points. Burgan sit second on 18 points, ahead of Al-Arabi on goal difference, while Kazma occupy fourth place with 16 points. Qadsia had 14 points before their removal, followed by Sulaibikhat on 11, Salmiya on 10 and Al-Nasr on two.

Following the exclusion of Qadsia and Salmiya, the association adjusted the standings in line with the regulations and issued a revised schedule for the Premier League.

Two matches are scheduled for Saturday in the 17th round of the 2025-2026 season. Burgan face Al-Nasr at 5 pm, while Al-Arabi meets Sulaibikhat at 6:30 pm.