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KFH wins 'World's Best Islamic Bank' award for 2026 from Global Finance Page 9

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KUWAIT WELCOMES U.N.S.C. REBUKE OF HOUTHI ATTACKS

Gulf financial buffers face test amid turmoil

Egypt ready to defend Saudi: El-Sisi

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17, (Agencies): Kuwait has welcomed a presidential statement by UN Security Council members condemning the continued and escalating Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia.

In a statement, the Foreign Ministry condemned attacks on civilians, civilian infrastructure and vital facilities, as well as threats to navigation in the Red Sea and Bab el-Mandab Strait. It stressed the need to

fully implement Security Council Resolution 2216 (2015) and prevent the Houthis from obtaining weapons or military support.

The ministry welcomed the Council's solidarity with the Kingdom and reaffirmed Saudi Arabia's right under international law to defend its security and protect its citizens and residents. It added that Saudi Arabia's security is an integral part of Kuwait's and the GCC's security.

Continued on Page 5

Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

This isn't the Houthi 'Dung Beetle' war

THE core struggle in the region is not truly against local proxies such as the Houthis, Lebanese Hezbollah, or Iraqi sectarian militias. Rather, these factions are extensions of the Iranian regime, the true epicenter of regional and global destabilization.

These proxy groups function like dung beetles, spreading disruption and instability wherever they expand.

As the Egyptian proverb advises, "Sever the root to stop the flow."

Nevertheless, certain global powers continue to tolerate this malevolent regime and its regional proxies in pursuit of short-term gains, failing to grasp the catastrophic long-term consequences of preserving the status quo.

Since 1979, the Khomeini regime has built its political doctrine on rigid sectarianism, elevating it to a foundational rule.

Under the guise of "liberating Jerusalem," the regime has effectively indoctrinated segments of various Arab populations, using an ostensibly noble slogan to obscure its underlying motives.

However, as previously highlighted, this righteous posture masks a profound falsehood.

Throughout the regional conflicts that have unfolded since 1979, particularly those involving Israel, the regime has consistently avoided direct confrontation. When the most

recent war erupted, its inherent vulnerabilities were laid bare.

Iran has unleashed a torrent of missiles and drones against neighboring countries while directing barely ten percent of that volume towards Israel - a mere fraction of the attacks it has launched against Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE, and Oman.

Is Iran genuinely committed to liberating Jerusalem, or is its true ambition to undermine the national security of the Gulf states as a stepping stone towards dominating the overall Arab national security?

This question exposes an uncomfortable truth - the Houthi movement abandoned its truce with the Gulf states only when Tehran deemed it necessary to reignite regional tensions, using Yemen as a strategic "back door."

Operating as instruments of Tehran, the Houthis rely on Iranian strategists who coordinate their military engagements, determining when, where, and against whom hostilities should intensify or subside.

Continued on Page 5

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Photo taken during the 9th Scientific Conference of the Amiri Hospital.

Research meets patient care

Kuwait, India boost medical ties

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi emphasized that medical conferences provide a valuable platform for experts to exchange knowledge, discuss scientific evidence, and bridge the gap between research findings and everyday clinical practice.

During the 9th Scientific Conference of the Amiri Hospital, which was held under the patronage and in the presence of Minister Al-Awadhi, he affirmed that these efforts enhance the quality of medical decision-making and ensure that the patient's best interests remain at the heart of healthcare.

Dr. Al-Awadhi welcomed the participating physicians, consultants, and researchers from Kuwait and abroad, along with guests from the Republic of India, wishing them a pleasant stay and a fruitful scientific exchange.

Continued on Page 5

E-system clears backlog

Penal orders surge sevenfold

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait announced that the number of penal orders issued since the electronic system was implemented—from July 12 to Oct 11—has reached 132,842.

Al-Sumait pointed out that this is around sevenfold increase compared to 17,903 orders recorded within the same period last year. He said the average daily output increased from 195 orders to 1,444 after the implementation of the system, proving its impact on accelerating case resolution and streamlining procedures.

He explained that a penal order is an expedited judicial pathway for handling misdemeanor and minor offenses punishable by fines, bypassing traditional trial procedures, while still giving the individual against whom the order is issued the right to appeal in accordance with the law.

He indicated that all the orders issued within three months pertain to the backlog of traffic cases. He said the Ministry of Interior electronically referred about 683,000 requests for penal orders to the Ministry of Jus-



Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait

tice concerning traffic violations dating back to the years prior to 2023.

He stated that the system—developed and implemented by the Ministry of Justice staff—digitizes the entire penal order process, from receiving and reviewing a request to issuing and electronically signing the order, and finally, serving it through legally approved channels. He affirmed that this reduces reliance on paper files and mitigates the risk of cases being dismissed due to the expiration of the statute of limitations.

Continued on Page 5



Left: Taiba Alhumaidhi, Founder of Lei Wa Lakom, delivers the opening keynote. Right: H.E. Abdulaziz Nasser Al-Marzouq, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, and Dr. Noura Al-Mashan, Minister of Public Works, flanked by officials, attend the opening of Lei Wa Lakom.

Lei Wa Lakom brings business leaders together

Conference puts women's economic power in focus

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Lei Wa Lakom, a Kuwait-based nonprofit initiative dedicated to empowering individuals through financial awareness, knowledge-sharing, and community development, today announced the opening of the inaugural Women & the Economy Conference at the Grand Hyatt Kuwait, held under the patronage and attendance of H.E. Abdulaziz Nasser Al-Marzouq, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, in collaboration with Kuwait University and the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS).

Taiba Alhumaidhi, Founder of Lei Wa Lakom, opened the conference with a keynote on why women's economic inclusion is a national imperative, followed by an address by H.E. the Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment. The conference brought together policymakers, CEOs, global experts, investors, academics, and emerging women leaders from Kuwait and abroad to discuss the state of women's economic participation and the

role of technology, finance, and policy in expanding it.

H.E. Abdulaziz Nasser Al-Marzouq, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, said: "Our patronage of the Women & the Economy Conference reflects the State's commitment to women's economic empowerment as a key pillar of a more competitive and diversified national economy, in line with New Kuwait Vision 2035. Kuwaiti women have proven their capability and their ability to contribute effectively across all sectors, and we are confident that dialogue bringing together government, the private sector, and academia will help create new opportunities that strengthen their role in Kuwait's development."

Taiba Alhumaidhi, Founder of Lei Wa Lakom, said: "Kuwaiti women have always been a cornerstone of the country's economic and development journey. Through the Women & the Economy Conference, we aim to bring together policymakers, investors, and business leaders

Continued on Page 5

Kuwaiti doctor wins global health medal

CAIRO, Oct 17, (KUNA): Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Qashaan of Kuwait on Saturday was awarded the World Health Medal from the World Health Organization (WHO), commending this as an honor for the State of Kuwait and recognition of the trust placed in it.

Al-Qashaan made the remarks to KUNA after receiving the medal in recognition of his role in coordinating Eastern Mediterranean countries' positions from 2024 to 2026 and building consensus on international health issues.

The medal was presented during the 73rd WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean session in Cairo, attended by regional health ministers, delegation heads and WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus.

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo

Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Qashaan of Kuwait receives the World Health Medal from the World Health Organization (WHO).

Reserve raiders busted

Capital sweep hauls in 232

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17, (Agencies): The Capital Security Directorate, in cooperation with Kuwait Municipality and the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN), conducted an extensive security campaign that resulted in the apprehension of 232 wanted individuals and violators and the execution of 775 security and traffic-related actions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The campaign forms part of ongoing efforts to strengthen security presence, apprehend offenders, and enforce the law.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that the campaign, carried out by the Security Directorates Sector through the Capital Security Directorate, resulted in the issuance of 454 traffic citations, the arrest of 111 wanted individuals, and the detention of 104 people for violating residency and labor laws.

The campaign also led to the

seizure of 32 vehicles wanted by judicial authorities, the apprehension of four illegal migrant workers, the arrest of four individuals found in possession of alcoholic substances, and the detention of four others for gambling.

In addition, the campaign resulted in the detention of two unlicensed street vendors and the arrest of two individuals for possessing narcotics.

Authorities also impounded one vehicle for traffic violations, placed one person in traffic detention, and issued two citations for parking in spaces designated for people with disabilities.

As part of the inter-agency cooperation, the ministry said Kuwait Municipality removed 51 abandoned vehicles, while PAFN issued three citations to a commercial establishment for selling spoiled meat.

Continued on Page 5

KD 312 million windfall

Health insurance revenue jumps on foreigners' fees

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: The general budget report for the current fiscal year revealed that the estimated revenues from health insurance, which is categorized under the 'social contributions' item in the budget, reached KD312 million.

This is an increase of KD192 million compared to the estimate of KD120 million in the previous fiscal year.

Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi approved Ministerial Resolution No. 306/2025, stipulating the executive regulations for the Health Insurance Law for Foreigners. This resolution, which took effect on Dec 23, 2025, is a regulatory step toward developing the health insur-

ance system, raising its efficiency and ensuring its sustainability.

On the other hand, the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) processed documentation for two tenders on behalf of the ministry.

One of the tenders is for the study, design and construction supervision of the building for the central sectors and departments of the ministry, while the other is for the study, design and construction supervision of the expansion of the Engineering Affairs and Projects Sector. Six companies submitted bids for the first tender and five companies for the second.

These tenders are in line with the commitment of the ministry to expand its facilities in order to accommodate the growing number of staff and visitors in various areas.



Alghanim Industries announces Board of Directors chaired by Kutayba Y. Alghanim



ABK concludes successful participation in the 'Watheetfi' career fair

Zain Kuwait brings talent, purpose & opportunity at 'Watheetfi' career fair



NBK reinforces its leadership in attracting National Talent at 'Watheetfi' 2026



NBK named Kuwait's Best Bank for 2026 by Global Finance



'Re-election chance to promote int'l role'

Kuwait potential to help solve global issues wins UN praise

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17, (KUNA): United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator in Kuwait Ghada Al-Tahir commended Saturday Kuwait's re-election to the Human Rights Council (HRC) for the 2027-2029 term as a renewed responsibility and a significant opportunity to keep contributing to the multilateral system.

The UN official said that thanks to its experience in humanitarian diplomacy and mediation, Kuwait can help build consensus on major international issues to nurture dialogue and cooperation, and back regional and global efforts aimed at safeguarding human rights and upholding human dignity.

The United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday elected 15 countries, including the State of Kuwait, to the HRC for a three-year term starting January 1, 2027. Kuwait secured 173 votes in the secret ballot under the Asia-Pacific Group, while Jordan received 171 votes.

In an exclusive interview with KUNA, Al-Tahir said that the 173 votes obtained by Kuwait signal its significant role within international institutions, noting that the move coincides with the 81st anniversary of the establishment of the UN and 63 years since the State of Kuwait joined the international organization (May 14, 1963).

The relationship between Kuwait and the

UN has developed over more than six decades, with Kuwait having moved from just a new member into an active partner within major multilateral institutions, she said.

Kuwait was elected as a HRC member from 2011 to 2014, then for the 2024 to 2026 term, and has recently been re-elected for the 2027 to 2029 term, she said.

She added that Kuwait's recent election to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors for the 2026-2028 term and its presidency of the Board for 2026-2027 prove its growing presence within international institutions tasked with such issues as human rights, peace and security, nuclear safety and security, non-proliferation, and peaceful technology uses.

Regarding human rights efforts, she underlined that Kuwait has recently taken significant legislative and institutional steps, mainly aimed at protecting women and families, promoting children's rights, raising the minimum marriage age to 18, and scrapping some legal provisions in this regard.

However, she said, progress should be made in some areas pertinent to consolidating the realization of fundamental rights and freedoms and ensuring their safeguards, empowering women and augmenting their participation in decision-making, protecting labor rights, integrating people with disabilities, ensuring equality and non-discrimination and nurturing community engagement and access to justice.

As for Kuwait's priorities for its new term at the UN human rights body, the UN official stressed that there is an unequivocal frame-



Ghada Al-Tahir

work for member states' obligations under international human rights law, including Universal Periodic Review outcomes, human rights treaty bodies' recommendations, and the HRC's special procedures.

She stressed the need to promote fundamental rights and freedoms, expand women's participation as partners and leaders in decision-making, supporting their role in peace, security, and humanitarian action.

Al-Tahir also called for boosting labor protections, expanding the actual inclusion of people with disabilities, investing in children and youth, and advancing equality and access to justice.

Asked about ongoing violations against the Palestinian people, Al-Tahir emphasized

that the Palestinian cause presents a central test of the credibility of the multilateral system and its capacity to uphold the UN principles.

In this regard, the UN official warned that the UN position is so clear that civilians must be protected, and international law and international humanitarian law must be respected.

She underlined that it is essential to ensure the safe, sustainable, and unconstrained delivery of humanitarian aid to those in need, while speaking highly of Kuwait's long-standing history of humanitarian engagement and its unwavering backing for the Palestinian cause and diplomatic solutions.

Furthermore, Kuwait's HRC membership enables it to keep advocating for the protection of civilians, supporting accountability, upholding international law, and promoting humanitarian action, she pointed out.

Asked what Kuwait can do to nurture international dialogue and consensus on human rights issues, Al-Tahir stated that the HRC, just like many other multilateral institutions, operates within an international environment marked by intense polarization.

Based on its engagement in mediation, preventive diplomacy, and humanitarian action, the State of Kuwait has significant tools to build bridges and foster consensus, reflecting an approach that aligns with its broader international responsibilities, she remarked.

Concerning Kuwait's presidency of the IAEA Board of Governors for the 2026-2027 term, she said it comes at a critical juncture, particularly amidst international issues of nuclear security and safety, non-proliferation,

and peaceful nuclear uses.

In this regard, she emphasized the need for dialogue, credibility, abidance by international law, and the capacity to build consensus, elements that have helped Kuwait cement its presence throughout decades of diplomatic engagement.

Regarding Kuwait-UN cooperation, Al-Tahir elaborated that the UN system in Kuwait works unceasingly with national institutions on issues of human rights and comprehensive development, covering women's empowerment, the rights of people with disabilities, the protection of children and youth, labor rights, and the promotion of equality and non-discrimination.

She pointed out cooperation between the UN and the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, and the Public Authority for Disability Affairs, together with national, governmental, academic, and civil society institutions.

Bilateral cooperation covers providing technical support, capacity-building, sharing expertise and international best practices, facilitating dialogue, and assisting in aligning national priorities with international commitments and standards, she added.

Asked about the Arab region's key human rights challenges, she believed that the region confronts intricate issues, involving conflicts, the protection of civilians, displacement, socio-economic disparities, unemployment and women's empowerment, not to mention climate change, technology, artificial intelligence, misinformation, and hate speech.

Over 500 persons taking part in 'Roll Race': Al-Jalahma

'Motorsports qualitative outlet to boost young talent'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17, (KUNA): Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs, Dr Tariq Al-Jalahma, stated on Friday that the "Inspire Kuwait International Open Roll Race" championship represents a qualitative addition to the sporting events hosted by Kuwait particularly in the field of motorsports, which enjoys significant interest among youth in Kuwait and the Gulf region.

In a statement to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the sidelines of the championship which he attended under his patronage Minister Al-Jalahma emphasised that Kuwait's hosting of diverse international sports tournaments reflects the states devotion to supporting various sports, providing an appropriate environment for young people to pursue their hobbies, improve their talents, and develop their capabilities.

He added that including this championship in the "Kuwait Youth and Sports Sea-

son" aligns with a broader effort to diversify sports and recreational activities and engage different segments of society.

This, in turn, supports community participation, advances a culture of sports, and highlights Kuwait as a top destination for hosting sporting events and championships.

The Minister noted that the high level of participation with over 500 individuals taking part in the "Roll Race" and "Custom Show" competitions underscores the growing popularity of motorsports.

It also highlights the importance of providing organised, safe environments where young enthusiasts can pursue their passion for the sport in compliance with established

technical requirements and safety standards.

Al-Jalahma praised the Kuwaiti "Inspire" Sports Club for Cars and Motorcycles and the championship organisers for their efforts. He reaffirmed his commitment to supporting sports initiatives and events that develop the sports sector and enhance Kuwait's standing on the regional and international sports map.

The "Inspire Kuwait International Open Roll Race Championship," organised by the Kuwaiti "Inspire" Sports Club for Cars and Motorcycles, will conclude tomorrow, Saturday, at the Kuwait Motor Town in the Arijan area, located in the southern part of the country.

The event features "roll races" (acceleration races for cars and motorcycles) and a "custom show" (an exhibition of modified vehicles).



Dr. Al-Jalahma



KUNA photo

Nouf Al-Behbehani (right) with her team at the United Nations Biodiversity Conference in Yerevan, Armenia.

Kuwait stresses commitment to global environment issues

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17, (KUNA): Representing the State of Kuwait, the Environment Public Authority (EPA) participated in the Leaders' Summit (COP 17), held on the sidelines of the United Nations Biodiversity Conference in Yerevan, Armenia, on Friday.

Speaking to KUNA on Saturday, Acting Director General of the EPA Nouf Behbehani said that this participation underscores Kuwait's interest in environment and sustainability issues, along with its commitment to maintaining an active presence in international forums that shape the future of global environmental action.

Behbehani said that she was proud of representing the State of Kuwait, delivering its vision and positions on priority

environmental issues, and contributing to international efforts aimed at protecting nature and safeguarding its resources for future generations.

Kuwait's participation in the one-day summit reflected its commitment to backing multilateral environmental action, she said, explaining that the gathering had discussed international commitments to protecting biodiversity, conserving ecosystems, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources, advancing cooperation, sharing expertise, and building capacity.

During its participation, the State of Kuwait underscored the significance of promoting international and regional partnerships and linking biodiversity protection with environmental security and sustainable development, she noted.

CAPT opens bids for T2 services, training, operation

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) on Thursday opened the three bids for operating, managing and improving training services, maintenance and development of the new passenger terminal (T2) at Kuwait International Airport, aircraft aprons, and institutional administration for the central operation and maintenance of the airport model.

This is a confirmation of the report that the newspaper published on Oct 12, headlined,

"A negotiation session on the 14th of this month to exercise the management and operation of the T2 building."

The bids will be referred to the Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) to study them and present the technical recommendations within 30 days.

The bid amounts are as follows: KD419,033,535, KD764,147,591 and KD959,476,430.

This tender is important as it is related to one of the air transport projects in the region, which will fall under the umbrella of PACA,

with a capacity of up to 25 million passengers annually.

It serves 51 aircraft and consists of a transit hotel connected to the Iron Passenger Building, a VIP reception hall, first class lounges for businesspersons, central station building and water tank building with service level A. It targets standards of leadership in renewable energy and golden environmental designs.

It is worth noting that the Ministry of Public Works is currently implementing the project in three phases.

Demolition, reconstruction app now on Sahel – PAHW

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) has launched an electronic service on the 'Sahel' application for citizens to submit requests for the demolition and reconstruction of government-provided homes currently mortgaged to the authority.

In a post on its Instagram account, the authority explained that the process begins by accessing the 'Sahel' app, then selecting 'Services', 'Public Authority for Housing Welfare', 'Distribution and Documentation Services', and 'Request to Demolish and Reconstruct a Home Service'.

Applicants must provide the required information, with the option to include notes and attach a copy of the property deed, before submitting the request to the relevant department for review.

Applicants will receive a notification confirming receipt of the request and its referral to the concerned department. They can also track the status of their application electronically.

Once approved, applicants will be notified of the authorization. They must visit the Real Estate Registration Department at a PAHW branch after two business days to complete the procedures for signing a debt acknowledgment document.

The authority stated that the new service is part of its ongoing efforts to develop digital services and streamline procedures in order to expedite request processing, reduce the need for in-person visits, and save the time and effort of citizens.



KUNA photo

Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei honors an outstanding student.

'Leadership support basic pillar in excellent education journey'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17, (KUNA): Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei said that the political leadership's support for the educational journey serves as a fundamental pillar for fostering excellence and advancing the educational system.

This came in a statement by Minister Al-Tabtabaei as reported in a press release from the Ministry of Education upon receiving and honoring two students who won bronze medals in the second edition of the Gulf States Poetry, Short Story, and Novel Competition for the 2025/2026 scholastic year.

The recognition was in appreciation of their outstanding literary achievement and their honorable representation of the State of Kuwait in Gulf-wide forums.

The statement noted that Khlaif Jaza, a 12th-grade science-track student at Al-Waha High School, won a bronze medal in the poetry category, while Shaikha Al-Saif, an 11th-grade science-track student at Al-Farwaniyah High School, secured a bronze medal in the short story category. The competition took place in person from October 6 to 8 in Sharjah, UAE.

World Food Day marked

IICO prioritizes food aid to those in need: Al-Mutawa

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Deputy Director General for Corporate Communication at the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) Abdulrahman Al-Mutawa disclosed that the organization implemented 4,513 projects in 55 countries in 2025 for the benefit of around 4.2 million people at a total cost of around \$38.6 million.

Al-Mutawa made the statement during the World Food Day celebration, which is observed on Oct 16 annually.

He affirmed that the organization prioritizes food security by providing food to those in need in Kuwait and abroad, and stopping food waste as a means of honoring and preserving the blessing of food. "Food security is a humanitarian priority that extends beyond the provision of food. It is about upholding human dignity," he asserted.

He indicated that IICO extended a helping hand to thousands of hungry individuals by distributing food baskets and providing meals, in addition

to reducing waste by salvaging surplus food, because preserving a blessing is a way of expressing gratitude for it.

He said the food projects of IICO in 2025 included the distribution of 15,814 food baskets in and outside Kuwait and the provision of 12,139 meals for the benefit of 102,318 people in 16 countries at a total cost of KD336,446. He added these projects were implemented in collaboration with 40 partner organizations, five volunteer teams and 10 field offices.

Regarding the sacrificial meat (Udh-yah) projects, he revealed that the organization facilitated 7,916 sacrifices for the benefit of 233,730 individuals at a cost of KD268,402.

He indicated that this was achieved in collaboration with 13 entities, five partner offices and four volunteer teams.

He went on to say that the 'Ni'mati' (My Blessing) project preserved around 4,600 tons of food from its launching in February 2021 until Sept 30, 2026.

He added that about 14,500 families in Kuwait benefited from this project, with the support of around 2,900 volunteers, and generated an estimated impact of KD33 million in terms of state resources and environmental costs.



Al-Mutawa

diwaniya

ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Domestic strife ... protection beyond bounds of complaint

“THE issuance of Decree-Law No. 11/2026 on Protection from Domestic Violence marks a significant legislative step toward strengthening family protection in the State of Kuwait,” Kuwaiti lawyer **Awatef Al-Dousari** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“The decree-law replaces Law No. 16/2020, addressing the need for more effective mechanisms for prevention, intervention, and protection, as identified through practical implementation. The new law adopts a comprehensive approach to protection that extends beyond responding to acts of violence after they occur. It encompasses prevention, early intervention, psychological and social support, and shelter, while establishing clear procedures for reporting, investigation, and protection.



Al-Dousari

“Key features of the decree-law include redefining domestic violence and specifying the forms of abuse covered by its provisions, including physical, psychological, sexual, and financial violence. It also precisely identifies the individuals and family relationships falling within its scope. These measures contribute to standardizing terminology, and clarifying the scope of application. Furthermore, the law establishes a National Committee for Protection from Domestic Violence, comprising representatives from various government and judicial bodies, as well as civil society organizations.

“The committee is responsible for formulating general policies, coordinating efforts among relevant entities, developing training and awareness programs, and issuing an annual report on domestic violence cases and complaints. In terms of prevention and response, the law provides for the establishment of shelters for victims and a fund to support them and those under their care or custody. It also empowers the competent authorities to take urgent protective measures, including transferring victims to hospitals or forensic medical facilities, providing shelter, and ensuring access to psychological support and rehabilitative services.

“The law also establishes a framework for protection orders as a key mechanism for rapid intervention, while providing for appeals against such orders and their modification. It further exempts applicants seeking protection from court fees and expenses. In addition, the law enables victims, when necessary, to access their place of residence and retrieve their personal belongings under police protection. Another significant development is the requirement to report domestic violence in circumstances specified by law, including cases where a person has knowledge of or witnesses an incident of domestic violence.

“The law also provides legal protection for those who report such incidents and safeguards their identities, while imposing stricter liability for failure to report violence committed against children or persons who lack or have limited legal capacity. The legislator has also addressed the confidentiality of proceedings, requiring privacy in all correspondence and procedures relating to domestic violence cases. The law prohibits the publication or broadcast of information that could reveal the identities of the parties involved and establishes penalties for violations.

“Finally, the Decree-Law prescribes penalties for various offenses, including coercing a victim to withdraw a complaint, filing a false report, and violating a protection order. Harsher penalties apply where a violation of a protection order is accompanied by an act of domestic violence. Overall, the new legislation moves beyond a complaint-based approach toward a comprehensive system encompassing prevention, urgent intervention, judicial protection, care and rehabilitation, and accountability. This reflects a legislative shift toward more comprehensive protection for family members while safeguarding the confidentiality of proceedings and the rights of all parties involved.”

Also:

“In this article, the term “moral hypotheses” refers to moral ideas and propositions that are subject to verification and may be either true or false,” Kuwaiti writer **Dr. Khaled Al-Janfawi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Such hypotheses often require repeated testing to establish their logical coherence, validity, and correspondence with reality. I believe that ordinary people frequently formulate these hypotheses when considering moral issues that have long been, and continue to be, the subject of controversy. A rational individual does not readily accept such ideas without scrutiny, but instead relies on reason to assess their accuracy, validity, and truth in light of events unfolding in the surrounding world.

“In today’s turbulent world, examples of what I consider hypotheses, rather than established moral axioms, include the following - the morally corrupt and the concept of “trial” (divine testing). I believe that it is the righteous, rather than the morally corrupt, who undergo trials and tests intended to strengthen their faith. This distinction stems from the fundamental difference between the nature of the righteous and the character of the corrupt. The righteous person possesses a pure inner essence, and their soul provides fertile ground for cultivating and reaping moral goodness.

“On the other hand, a person of cor-

rupt character possesses a fundamentally tainted inner nature. The calamities such individuals sometimes experience in life cannot necessarily be interpreted as divine trials. Rather, they may be understood as consequences or forms of retribution for their own misdeeds.

- Good always triumphs over evil - I believe the earth beneath our feet is filled with the bodies of innocent victims. If good always triumphed over evil, the bodies of the wicked would be overflowing both beneath the earth and across its surface. Good may indeed triumph over evil, but only when the righteous and virtuous have the power to defeat it.

- Kindness is always rewarding - Voluntary acts of kindness can foster positive human relationships and provide psychological benefits for all those involved. However, this moral premise cannot always be upheld. One need only consider the experiences of many people known for their kind hearts and observe how often they are exploited, dismissed, or met with a lack of appreciation.

- Kindness can curb envy and spite - Some believe that treating an envious and spiteful person with kindness, courtesy, and tactful disregard will diminish their envy and malice or automatically prevent them from causing harm.

“This is a highly idealistic moral assumption, rooted in the outlook of psychologically sound and morally upright individuals, that does not always align with the turbulent realities of human nature. And the Almighty knows best.”

□ □ □

“A review of developments at Kuwait University over the past several years, including the last two, reveals a complex institutional backdrop that is essential to understanding the current situation. Certain appointments, promotions, and administrative decisions continue to raise controversy, concern, and questions,” columnist **Khaled Ahmed Al-Tarrah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“We therefore urge the President of Kuwait University, Dr. Dina Al-Mailem, to expedite the formation of dean selection committees in all faculties, rather than limiting this process to a select few. The newly appointed deans should be formally tasked with conducting thorough and comprehensive reviews of previous decisions that have raised concerns or questions regarding academic, professional, administrative, or financial matters. In a spirit of support for the university administration and its president, rather than opposition, we call for an urgent review of the appointment process involving a faculty member in the Department of Sociology.

“Questions have been raised regarding the extent to which this individual’s academic background, qualifications, and area of specialization are relevant to sociology, either directly or indirectly, given that their specialization is in history. It would also be prudent to review the procedures followed by the department’s appointments committee and verify the validity of its decisions. This review is particularly important in light of allegations that the absence of certain committee members may have been used to facilitate the appointment, potentially disadvantaging another qualified applicant.

“Furthermore, decisions made during the tenures of previous acting university presidents warrant review, particularly the file concerning the secondment-for-appointment process at the Faculty of Public Health. Were the procedures followed sound and consistent with established regulations and published academic criteria?



Al-Tarrah

It is worth noting that the University Council, the College Council, and the relevant academic department had previously rejected repeated grievances submitted by the applicant.

“These developments preceded an acting university official’s approval of a “secondment” for the purpose of appointment, despite the academic reservations expressed by the department and the College Council, as well as the University Council’s earlier determination that the candidate did not meet the scientific and academic criteria announced by the college. This is just one of several cases that warrant review, arising during a period in which the university and the government were facing political and parliamentary pressures.

“This raises several questions. Did the university administration receive a diplomatic complaint regarding the book “History of the Saudi State”? Was a fact-finding committee formed to investigate the allegations and inaccuracies concerning the book, authored by a faculty member in the History Department? If so, what were the outcomes of the committee’s work, and what were its findings and recommendations? Furthermore, what measures did the university administration take in response to a complaint filed last September by a faculty member in the History Department? The complaint raised academic and political concerns regarding the Introduction 101 course and the book “History of Kuwait: Emirate and State”.

“According to the complaint, the faculty member identified what they described as “insults to state figures” and “incitement of tribal and sectarian tensions.” The complaint also raised questions about the procedures for approving university textbooks within the academic department.”

– Compiled by **Simi K. Kutty**



Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah meets with officials from Al-Dar Engineering Company.



Farwaniya Governorate photos

‘Maintaining roads vital for better services’

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah met with officials from Al-Dar Engineering Company, which was contracted for the comprehensive maintenance of roads and internal streets in Farwaniya Governorate, at the headquarters of the governorate on Thursday, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The officials included CEO of the company Eng. Mohammad Al-Sultan, General Manager for Government Relations Mohammad Al-Awadhi and Roads Department Director

Eng. Osama Hosni.

They talked about the status of ongoing projects, mechanisms for monitoring the progress of work, ways to strengthen coordination between the company and governorate, execution aspects of the maintenance work, and importance of adhering to technical specifications and standards for road projects.

The governor asserted that maintaining roads is vital in improving services in the governorate, because it is linked to road user safety and smooth traffic flow.

He stressed the necessity of intensifying field oversight, addressing technical concerns, and ensuring high-quality execution within the specified timelines to meet the needs of residential areas in the interest of the public.

Towards the end of the meeting, the company officials expressed their appreciation for the governor’s interest in the project and reaffirmed their commitment to maintain close coordination with the governorate to ensure that all maintenance works are carried out in accordance with the standards.

IRU refers 3 insurance brokers to probe, warns 4 companies

‘Protecting policyholder rights top priority’

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: The Insurance Regulatory Unit (IRU) announced that it had referred three insurance brokerage firms to the Public Prosecution to initiate legal proceedings over suspected violations, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The unit also issued warnings to four insurance companies for violating the provisions of Law No. 125 of 2019 on the Regulation of Insurance, its executive regulations and amendments, as well as related decisions.

IRU explained that the referral of the three brokerage firms is part of its regulatory and legal measures to protect the rights of policyholders, beneficiaries, and market participants, in accordance with the insurance regulation law and its executive regulations. The warnings issued to the four insurance companies aim to address and rectify their violations, thereby

helping them avoid potential suspension measures under the applicable legal framework.

The unit emphasized that all companies and entities under its supervision must comply with the law, regulations, and relevant decisions.

It reaffirmed its commitment to carrying out its regulatory role and taking the necessary legal action against any violations to protect stakeholders’ rights and strengthen compliance and discipline within the insurance market.

In this context, Talal Al-Muhareb, Director of the Legal Affairs Department at IRU, stated that protecting the rights of policyholders, beneficiaries, and market participants is a top priority for the unit.

He explained that this commitment is reflect-

ed in the continuous development of regulatory and supervisory frameworks, as well as the issuance of decisions and circulars aimed at safeguarding the rights of all parties and ensuring compliance with applicable legislation.

The unit would not hesitate to take the necessary legal measures against any entity found to be in violation of its legal obligations or to have jeopardized customers’ rights, in line with its responsibility to safeguard the sector’s integrity and strengthen confidence in the insurance system.

These measures are part of its ongoing efforts to establish a more disciplined and transparent insurance environment, enhance the effectiveness of supervision and compliance, and improve professional and regulatory practices in line with international best practices.

These actions aim to protect the rights of policyholders and beneficiaries while supporting the stability and sustainability of the insurance sector.



Al-Muhareb

Panel holds meeting to bolster AML/CFT framework

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17, (KUNA): The National Committee for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing convened a meeting recently chaired by Committee Chairman and Head of the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) Dr. Hamad Al-Makrad.

The session focused on evaluating ongoing national initiatives designed to bolster the domestic anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing (AML/CFT) framework and enhance cross-institutional synergy among competent government authorities.

Dr. Al-Makrad stated in a press release to KUNA that committee members and participating entities reviewed key operational milestones outlined in the national strategy, alongside evaluating recent regulatory and field developments in the AML/CFT domain.

He added that attendees examined mechanisms to optimize information exchange and expertise sharing across state bodies, aiming to raise operational efficacy and reinforce compliance with international standards and requirements.

Highlighting the necessity of sustained joint action, Dr. Al-Makrad underscored that developing robust AML/CFT systems remains essential to advancing national strategic priorities and maintaining the integrity of Kuwait’s financial ecosystem.

He reaffirmed the committee’s commitment to modernizing institutional cooperation frameworks in line with established protocols, ensuring national defenses remain adaptable and responsive to evolving illicit finance risks.

Worker dies in fall

324 citations for not using turn indicators

By **Munif Naif**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Officers from the General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry 324 citations for not using turn signals in the last 24 hours.

According to a security source, the recent series of traffic campaigns carried out in the governorates resulted in the issuance of citations for various traffic violations.

Traffic officials confirmed that such campaigns will continue throughout the country to nab those who violate traffic regulations.

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4 motorists arrested: Traffic investigation officers referred four motorists to the Traffic Detention Center for violating driving regulations, specifically gross negligence and recklessness in driving, in addition to engaging in a street race.

A security source stated that the officers took the necessary legal action against the arrested motorists and impounded their vehicles.

The source affirmed that traffic enforcement campaigns will continue, warning that the necessary measures will be taken against all reckless motorists.

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Worker perishes: A 1978-born Egyptian worker died after falling from the first floor into the basement of a house under construction in Surra, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to security sources, the Ministry of Interior’s Operations Room received a report that a worker had fallen inside the house. The relevant authorities rushed to the scene and determined that the worker had fallen from the first floor of the building under construction into the basement. Paramedics arrived and confirmed his death.

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KFF shuts 66 facilities: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) conducted an extensive inspection campaign in the Capital and Farwaniya governorates, closing 66 facilities and issuing notices and warnings to 126 others for failing to comply with fire safety and prevention regulations, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In an official statement, KFF explained that the campaign aimed to identify buildings and facilities that violate fire safety and prevention standards and ensure compliance with its regulations.

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Kuwait inspires world by humanitarian initiatives

Aid extends from Benin to Kyrgyzstan

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17, (KUNA): Kuwait continues to write inspiring chapters of compassion and generosity in the global humanitarian record through initiatives that restore hope to patients, open doors to education for future generations, and provide families in need with safe shelter and the means to live in dignity.

In a scene where compassion meets the prospects of construction and development, Kuwaiti charitable institutions and associations, supported by philanthropists and guided by the country's wise leadership, continue to translate the values of solidarity into comprehensive humanitarian projects under the "Kuwait Stands by You" campaign.

These efforts reflect the journey of a nation whose charitable hands



Parcels for food aid for needy in a village in Bangladesh.

have reached the most vulnerable communities, extending from Benin to Tanzania and Kyrgyzstan. These initiatives seek to ease the suffering of people in need, enlighten young minds and lay the foundations for more stable communities capable of confronting life's challenges.

In the Republic of Benin, where

low-income families face mounting living and healthcare costs, Ataa Humanitarian Association has delivered a message of Kuwaiti solidarity through relief initiatives benefiting around 1,000 people and healthcare assistance covering 400 patients. The association's delegation also inspected 46 mosques built by the associa-

tion and serving approximately 6,900 worshippers. The association's Director General Dr. Omar Al-Shaqraa told (KUNA) that relief assistance included the distribution of food baskets and the living burdens of poor families to help them secure their daily needs.

Furthermore, healthcare initiatives included providing medicines, nutritional supplements and essential medical supplies to around 400 beneficiaries, particularly those suffering from malnutrition, Al-Shaqraa added.

The initiative was carried out with the participation of the association's Resources Director, Ahmad Al-Buraiki, with the aim of alleviating their suffering, improving their health and enhancing their access to necessary care.

Kuwait's humanitarian mission has extended to Zanzibar in the United Republic of Tanzania, where Namaa Charity, affiliated with the Social Reform Society, in cooperation with Bahrain's KAF Humanitarian Foundation, inaugurated Namaa Secondary School.



Oman's new ambassador to Kuwait Ali bin Ahmad bin Salem Al-Shanfari presents his credentials to Kuwait Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Kuwait, Oman eye ways to enhance deep-rooted ties

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17, (KUNA): Kuwait Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received a copy of the credentials of Oman's new ambassador to Kuwait Ali bin Ahmad bin Salem Al-Shanfari.

During their meeting at the Foreign Ministry HQ, Sheikh Jarrah wished the Omani diplomat success in his new mission, according to a statement from the Ministry.

He voiced hope for even stronger relations, and more progress and prosperity for the two sisterly countries.

Iraq

Kuwait Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also received a copy of the credentials of Iraq's new ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Osama Abdul-Sabeh Mohsen Al-Nashi'e.

During their meeting at the Foreign Ministry HQ, Sheikh Jarrah wished the Iraqi diplomat success in strengthening the bilateral relations, according to a statement from the Ministry.

He voiced hope for more progress and prosperity for the two neighboring countries.

Ambassador to Austria Fawaz Boursli presented his credentials on Friday as Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Vienna to its Director-General and Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Monika Juma.

The Kuwaiti Embassy in Vienna said in a statement that Boursli praised the role of the United Nations and its agencies in advancing development worldwide, particularly technical bodies such as UNODC and the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

He reaffirmed Kuwait's support for the UN and its commitment to strengthening cooperation and partnership with the organization's offices in Vienna.

On Thursday, Boursli also presented his credentials to International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) Executive Secretary Drago Kos at a ceremony held at the academy's headquarters in Laxenburg, Austria.

The meeting underscored the importance of strengthening international cooperation and exchanging expertise and information in combating corruption.

Nod to Master's degrees for first cohort of 12 graduates

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 14: The Abdullah Al-Salem University Council approved recently the awarding of master's degrees to the first cohort of 12 postgraduate students who had fulfilled all graduation requirements, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The University President Dr. Mona Al-Ahmad chaired the

meeting and extended her heartfelt congratulations to the graduates from various colleges.

She expressed the university's pride in this distinguished group, marking a significant milestone as the first graduates of its postgraduate programs.

Dr. Al-Ahmad commended the efforts of the academic staff and

supervisors, whose dedication played a vital role in helping the students earn their master's degrees.

She wished the graduates continued success in their future professional and academic endeavors.

Dr. Al-Ahmad also highlighted the university's achievements during the current academic year, par-

ticularly the launch of the College of Medicine and Health Sciences and the enrollment of its inaugural cohort of students.

She noted that the college plays a pivotal role in the university's mission to achieve academic and research excellence while preparing qualified medical professionals to serve the community.

Other Voices

The persistence of the Arab-Iranian complex

By Ahmad alsarraf

Sadeh Zibakalam, an Iranian reformist intellectual at the University of Tehran, states, "It seems that we Iranians have not yet forgotten our historical defeat at the hands of the Arabs, nor have we forgotten the Battle of al-Qadisiyyah, which took place 1,400 years ago. We continue to harbor deep-seated resentment and hostility towards the Arabs. It is like a fire smoldering beneath the ashes, ready to flare up whenever an opportunity arises. Intellectuals despise the Arabs, and even religious people feel repelled by them. The animosity many Iranians feel towards Arab figures reflects a broader hostility toward Arabs."

Despite the widespread use of Arabic vocabulary in official correspondence and everyday conversation, this linguistic presence does not necessarily indicate cultural acceptance or a sense of belonging to the Arab world. Perhaps the opposite is true. Iranians appear to have retained Arabic words without attempting to "Persianize" them, i.e., replace them with Persian equivalents, as the Shah sought to do.

Although Iranians embraced Islam, they have not, even after 1,400 years, fully integrated it into the identity of the state.

To counter this perception, Iranians emphasize their historical role in shaping Islam's linguistic, religious, and cultural dimensions. They frequently point out that many of those who compiled canonical hadith collections, established Islamic schools of thought, and developed the rules of the Arabic language were of Persian origin.

The difficulty, however, lies in the fact that Iran's ruling class, perhaps unlike those in most other Islamic countries, derives much of its religious and sectarian legitimacy from the Arabic language and Islamic tradition.

Yet, for nationalist reasons, it is not inclined towards Arabs, viewing its own history and civilization as superior to those of the peoples who conquered Persia and ruled its lands for centuries.

This tension remains unresolved and may persist indefinitely. Efforts to reconcile these competing identities have so far failed. Iran has tried, and for a time succeeded, in governing several Arab countries, almost directly.

To achieve this balance, Mohammad Al-Rumaihi said, "The Iranian regime has pursued two parallel paths. The first seeks to amplify the

sectarian dimension beyond Iran's borders, particularly in certain Arab countries, to demonstrate that the Islamic Republic's influence extends through sectarian affiliations. Locally, this approach is presented as evidence of strength and expansion. The second path involves maintaining political and psychological distance from Arabs, even through the use of terms with negative connotations, such as 'Bedouins.' Although this term appears in the Quran in reference to a specific group of people who deviated from Islamic values, it has subsequently been used to refer to Arabs in ambiguous ways that serve Iranian political discourse and depart from its precise linguistic and religious meaning."

This duality suggests that Iran's crisis extends beyond foreign policy to the very question of state identity: Is Iran a Persian nationalist state, a transnational religious state, or a sectarian project seeking to expand its influence? The simultaneous pursuit of these three objectives has left official discourse marked by contradictions.

It is worth noting that large segments of Iranian society do not share this view. Educated and progressive groups played a role in the downfall of the previous regime, aspiring to build a modern state that could engage with the world and benefit from its achievements. However, the revolution took a different course, ultimately marginalizing these forces in favor of the religious establishment and security apparatus.

For these reasons, the Islamic Republic has failed to resolve its identity crisis. It has been unable to build a stable nation-state, present a religious model compatible with the modern age, or establish normal relations with its neighbors and the wider world.

Iran's external crises therefore appear to reflect a deeper internal crisis - the ruling elite's inability to answer a fundamental question: what is our identity?

Many of the conflicts plaguing the region cannot be understood without considering the profound ambiguity surrounding the identity of the Iranian state. This ambiguity leaves political decision-making caught between nationalism, religion, and revolution, preventing it from settling on a project capable of producing a balanced state at peace with itself before seeking reconciliation with others.

When a state fails to define its identity, those who disagree with its vision risk being treated as adversaries, and conflict becomes a means of asserting its authority.

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Such a fate awaits the Houthis, Hezbollah (the “Party of Satan”), Iranian-backed militias across Iraq, and the hostile Iranian regime itself.

Saudi Finance Minister Mohammed Al-Jadaan said most GCC states entered the crisis with stronger financial buffers after structural reforms. He warned that conflicts and trade disruptions threaten energy and food security, fuel inflation and heighten financial vulnerabilities, urging international cooperation and continued reforms.

"This is an entirely settled matter and will not be discussed," he added, referring to the end of his current term.

Environment police booked the two persons for breaking the law while traffic police seized the vehicle and destroyed it, the statement added.

He said the agreements reflected joint efforts by mem-

The conference saw National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announce the launch of NBK FoundHER, presented by Maryam Al-Nasralla, AVP – Talent Management at NBK. The program

The conference continues tomorrow with a closed high-level roundtable, "From Participation to Economic Contribution: Unlocking Women's Economic Potential in Kuwait," at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry in collaboration with the Union of Investment Companies, followed by a talk with students at Kuwait University titled "Your Future, Your Money, Your Move: Jobs, AI, Money & the Decisions That Will Shape Your Next 10 Years."

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Jackson tells Collins to ‘shut up’ during heated Maine Senate debate

Trump rallies with top Republicans in critical battleground state of Georgia

DALTON, Ga., Oct 17, (AP): US President Donald Trump took his midterm campaign blitz to the battleground Georgia on Friday and rallied with top Republicans in a state that’s long been the epicenter of his oft-repeated but false claims about 2020 election fraud.

In Dalton, the heart of conservative northwest Georgia, Trump praised Senate candidate Mike Collins and gubernatorial nominee Rick Jackson as part of a larger White House effort to boost GOP enthusiasm in an election that could reshape the final years of his second presidency.

“You have to pretend I’m on the ballot,” Trump said as at least one man in the crowd cried “Trump 2028.” Later, he predicted, “On election night, Georgia is going to prove that America does not belong to those who hate us.”

A critical swing state, Georgia is unlike many of the solidly Republican places that Trump has recently

visited, including Alabama, Montana and Tennessee. That means Jackson, a billionaire businessman, and Collins, a two-term congressman, will likely need more than Trump stalwarts to defeat their respective Democratic opponents, former Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms and Sen. Jon Ossoff.

When protesters decrying the Trump administration’s immigration policies interrupted his speech, the president suggested that “left-wing loser” Ossoff had paid the demonstrators to cause a scene.

Trump spent more of his speech decrying top Democrats, defending the war in Iran and promoting his U.S.-Mexico border policies rather than talking about Georgia Republicans.

He repeatedly called Ossoff “Pee-wee Herman” and mocked him for wearing makeup during public appearances. The president acknowledged that he himself also wears makeup but insisted it is “light”



US President Donald Trump listens as Georgia US Senate candidate Rep. Mike Collins speaks at a campaign rally at Dalton Municipal Airport on Oct 16, in Dalton Ga. (AP)

compared to the senator.

When Trump later invited Jackson to the stage, the gubernatorial candidate’s appearance was very brief

and featured him thanking Trump for his work on behalf of “all foster children” and “for caring about our vulnerable children.” That was a far cry from a promise Jackson made at an earlier rally when he pointed at the president and said he’d be “this guy’s favorite governor.”

The rally was the first time Jackson and Collins appeared at the same venue this fall. That’s a contrast to Ossoff’s and Bottoms’ multiple joint rallies.

Ossoff said he was “surprised Georgia Republicans want the president here,” saying it would remind voters that Trump and his party had pushed policies that have “driven the cost of groceries, fuel and healthcare to their all-time highs,” Ossoff said.

Bottoms also seemed thrilled.

“When Donald Trump says he wants people to imagine that he is on the ballot, I am asking the people of Georgia to do just that,” she said, pointing to Jackson’s promise to be Trump’s “favorite governor.”

The risks have been evident even in the deeply conservative part of Georgia where Trump spoke. The president won the district by about 37 points in 2024, but in an April special election to replace former Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, Republican Rep. Clay Fuller won by only 12 points.

Also:

PORTLAND, Maine: Democratic Senate candidate **Troy Jackson** told Republican Sen. **Susan Collins** to “shut up” during a heated final Maine U.S. Senate debate that also included an interruption from a data center protester.

Thursday night’s debate in a Bangor theater was the last of four meetings between Collins and Jackson, who are running for a seat that’s considered crucial in the fight for a Senate majority. The debate, like those that preceded it, included several testy exchanges over issues including the national debt, Collins’ relationship with President **Donald Trump**’s administration, and the candidates’ respective roles in worsening partisan divisions.

WH press secretary Zacharia leaves job after less than a week

WASHINGTON, Oct 17, (AP): Katie Zacharia is departing as White House press secretary, saying it “was an honor to work for” US President Donald Trump after a short and rocky tenure that was defined by questions about her professional background and lack of polish in fielding questions from journalists.

A person familiar with the matter, granted anonymity to discuss a personnel decision not yet made public, said earlier Friday that Zacharia would be transitioning out of the role. Trump had cast significant doubt on her future, telling reporters that he would have a discussion with her following his weekend travel - and that if he were her, he would reconsider the job.

In a post late Friday on social media, Zacharia appeared to refer to her job in the past tense and called Trump “a kind, wonderful, gracious, thoughtful, enthusiastic, and hard-working man.”

Zacharia had come under immediate scrutiny when she appeared uncomfortable during her inaugural briefing on Tuesday, delivering halting remarks touting the president and his accomplishments. Her 14-minute briefing was followed by criticism that the conservative commentator had long called herself a lawyer when she had not passed a bar exam



White House press secretary Katie Zacharia arrives with US President Donald Trump at Glacier Park International Airport on Oct 14, in Kalispell, Mont. (AP)

nor was otherwise credentialed to practice.

Zacharia was a surprise choice when Trump announced her appointment on Oct. 9, as the successor to Karoline Leavitt, the youngest-ever White House press secretary who had been part of Trump’s inner circle for years. The chaotic nature of

Zacharia’s appointment and subsequent downfall evoked some of the personnel messes of the president’s first term, which had largely been absent from his second.

In a lengthy exchange with reporters at the White House on Friday, Trump said he told Zacharia that she might want to change her mind about the job, and said he thought she had been treated unfairly by the press.

“I told her, ‘I think you’re better off being happy,’” Trump told reporters on the South Lawn as he left for a rally in Georgia. “I said, ‘Honestly, if I were you, I’d reconsider.’ I said, ‘You think about it, but I would reconsider.’”

Zacharia had dinner with Vice President JD Vance and his family on Friday evening, according to another person with knowledge of the meal who was granted anonymity to disclose it.

In his own comments, Trump said he told his press secretary, “‘Katie, do you need this? I don’t think you need this,’” and said he wanted “her to have a good life” and not be subjected to criticism, which he likened to being “brutalized by the media.”

The president was asked who might replace Zacharia, and said there were a lot of people who wanted the job.



Police tape is placed outside Silver Rail Elementary school, where a shooting took place, on Oct 15, 2026 in Bend, Ore. (AP)

4 killed, 2 injured in Oregon school shooting

Four people, including three children and a teacher, were killed and two others injured in a shooting on Thursday at an elementary school in Bend, Oregon, police said. The 16-year-old gunman was also fatally shot.

Bend Police Chief Mike Krantz told a news conference Thursday that the shooting occurred at around 1 p.m. local time (2000 GMT) at Silver Rail Elementary School.

The three children killed were aged 5, 8 and 11. A 7-year-old child and a 54-year-old teacher were wounded and taken to a hospital in critical condition, Krantz said.

Police identified the gunman as a 16-year-old male resident of Bend.

According to police, the first emergency call reported a person firing shots at a vehicle outside the school. Additional calls followed, reporting that an armed individual had entered the school and opened fire. (Xinhua)



A person holds a French national flag during a protest against under-resourced schools in Paris on Oct 8. (AP)

Protesters across France rally over rising living costs

Protesters across France called for street demonstrations Saturday against rising living costs, joining high school students’ grievances over education conditions after more than three weeks of school blockades.

Saturday’s mobilization follows calls on social media to revive the yellow vest movement, which emerged in 2018 against social injustice. Student groups protesting since mid-September have urged supporters to join.

The CGT, one of France’s major labor unions, also backs the protests, calling for “higher wages and pensions, lower prices and the protection of public services that meet people’s needs.”

President Emmanuel Macron appealed Friday for calm and respect for people and property as officials warned of possible violence. ((AP)

Canada’s PM Carney makes final appeal against Alberta separation

EDMONTON, Alberta, Oct 17, (AP): Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney made a final appeal to voters considering a path toward independence in his home province of Alberta on Friday, warning that a referendum is a dangerous gamble at a time of growing threats to Canada’s sovereignty.

With US President Donald Trump waging a trade war and threatening to make Canada the 51st state, Carney warned that the referendum comes at the “worst possible time” and urged Albertans not to take the outcome for granted.

“Don’t let anyone tell you this is already decided. Turnout will determine the outcome,” Carney told a pro-Canada rally in Edmonton, where he grew up.

“This is not a game. This is not poker. A vote against Canada is a dangerous bluff that will lead to years of deep uncertainty and lost opportunities for Albertans and Canadians,” he said.

Monday’s vote is not a direct referendum on independence. Alberta, home to most of Canada’s proven oil reserves - the fourth largest in the world - will decide whether to remain a province or instruct the government to begin the legal process toward a future referendum on separation.

Carney’s closing appeal came after two days of campaigning against separation in the province. Earlier Friday, the Liberal prime minister joined Alberta’s conservative premier Danielle Smith in a show of unity against independence.

Smith praised Carney for improving relations with a province that frequently clashed with his predecessor, Justin Trudeau, over his carbon tax and other energy policies.



Canada’s Prime Minister Mark Carney attends a national unity rally in Red Deer, Alberta, alongside, (from left), Monte Solberg, Alberta Premier Danielle Smith, and former Premier Ed Stelmach on Oct 16. (AP)

Ukraine’s Zelenskyy urges support for new United States sanctions on Russia

KYIV, Ukraine, Oct 17, (AP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged supporters Saturday to speak out in defense of new US sanctions against Russia, hours after President Donald Trump signed an executive order pausing a sweeping package of restrictions targeting the Russian economy.

The White House decision has further raised fears that Ukraine could be left exposed to Moscow’s escalating assaults with winter approaching.

Russian attacks overnight killed at least four people, including an ambulance driver, and injured dozens, officials said. Ukrainian drones killed a woman in a Russian border region and disrupted flights at Moscow’s airports, according to Russian authorities.

Zelenskyy described Trump’s move to put sanctions on hold as unfortunate, but did not directly criticize the U.S. leader despite deepening tensions between Ukraine and Washington in recent days.

“A decision was unfortunately made in America to completely disregard the Lindsey Graham Act, which was supposed to impose truly effective pressure on Russia to bring this war to an end,” Zelenskyy wrote.

He also expressed hope that the new sanctions could be revived. “This Act could have helped enormously - and still can! But it needs to actually work, and every voice in support of it matters,” he said.



Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy smiles while answering a journalist’s question during a media conference at the EU summit in Brussels on Oct 16. (AP)

Europe

Pope Leo released from hospital: Pope Leo XIV is being released from the hospital on Saturday, four days after lung cancer surgery, and will deliver the traditional noon blessing Sunday from a window overlooking St. Peter’s Square, the Vatican announced.

The 71-year-old Leo had the lower lobe of his right lung removed after doctors identified a suspected cancerous nodule. The surgery confirmed he had adenocarcinoma, the most common type of lung cancer.

His personal physician and surgeon said in a separate statement that Leo was “deemed fit for discharge from the hospital” based on blood test results and a chest X-ray performed Saturday morning, along with an assessment of his clinical condition. (AP)

Serbia leader Vucic back to Novi Sad: Serbia’s populist leader Aleksandar Vucic on Friday staged a pre-election rally in Novi Sad, the northern city where 16 people died in a train station tragedy almost two



Pope Leo XIV

years ago setting off a wave of mass anti-government protests.

Thousands of flag-waving supporters attended the gathering at a central square in Novi Sad, many bused in from other parts of the country. It was Vucic’s first big rally in the city since the protests started in November 2024.

The former Serbian president and his right-wing Serbian Progressive Party, or SNS, are facing a major test in the Oct. 25 election after 14 years in power in the Balkan country. The main challenger is the Students’ List candidates supported by Serbia’s protesting university students. (AP)

Norwegian teen gets 20 years in jail: A Norwegian teenager convicted of traveling to Britain to carry out a contract killing on behalf of an international crime gang linked to Iran was sentenced Friday to 20 years in prison.

Johannes Kongsnes Natland, 19, was found guilty in July of conspiracy to murder for agreeing to shoot an unknown target for 25,000 euros (21,500 pounds or \$28,000) last year.

He was arrested at a hotel in Huddersfield in northern England with two guns and ammunition two days after arriving in the U.K. Natland admitted to possessing the firearms and ammunition, but said that he didn’t want to go through with the plan. (AP)

Subcontinent

10 dead in Bangladesh resort fire: A fire gutted a beach resort in southeastern Bangladesh on Saturday, killing 10 people and injuring four, an official said.

The fire broke out at Tuptup Resto and Resort at Inani in Cox's Bazar district, a popular destination for domestic tourists, Syed Mohammad Morshed Hossain, deputy assistant director of Fire Service and Civil Defense in the district, said. The resort is located near the Bay of Bengal.

The blaze erupted in the morning and quickly spread through the three-story wooden resort, he said. Children were among the dead, he said, without giving details. (AP)

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S.Lanka hit by nationwide power outage: Sri Lanka experienced a nationwide power outage on Saturday following a total system failure caused by instability in the electricity transmission network, the National System Operator (NSO) said.

The outage was reported at around 11:45 a.m. local time. The NSO said the country's power grid suffered a complete system failure after instability developed in the transmission network. Electricity supplies were interrupted across the island, and restoration work was underway, it said. (Xinhua)

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Kohat suicide attack mastermind killed: Pakistani security forces killed the alleged mastermind of a suicide attack on the old Kohat Police Lines in a joint intelligence-based operation in the country's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, police said Friday.

The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of the



A firefighter tries to douse a fire at Tuptup Resto and Resort at Inani in Cox's Bazar district, Bangladesh on Oct 17. (AP)

police said Zahid Gul, a commander of the Gul Bahadur group, was killed in the operation in the frontier region of Lakki Marwat.

Gul had personally guided the explosive-laden vehicle used in the attack on Sept. 18, which had killed 17 policemen and six civilians, according to the statement. (Xinhua)

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4 killed in Afghanistan high-speed crash: At least four people were killed and three others seriously injured when two high-speed vehicles crashed in northern Afghanistan's Kunduz province on Friday evening, a police official reported.

The mishap occurred in the Dasht Abdan area when a Toyota 4Runner collided head-on with an oncoming Toyota Corolla, killing four passengers from both vehicles at the scene and injuring three others, the official said. (Xinhua)

North Korea tests new torpedo system with AI capabilities

SEOUL, South Korea, Oct 17, (Agencies): North Korea said Saturday it had successfully tested a new torpedo system that uses artificial intelligence for target detection and guidance.

The Korean Central News Agency said the weapon tested Thursday was a "super-speed, precisely guided" torpedo system named Zam-2.0. It didn't explain what was meant by artificial intelligence.

The report added that test verified the weapon's propulsion systems, which were developed through more than 180 tests over the past five years.

South Korea's military, which often accuses the North of exaggerating its military technologies, did not immediately comment on KCNA's report.

North Korea has been ramping up weapons demonstrations in recent weeks, including conducting its first underwater-launched missile tests in nearly three years, as leader Kim Jong Un shifts his focus to naval capabilities after years of ballistic missile development. Experts say the missile tests, carried out Wednesday, likely involved a yet-to-be-deployed sub-



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, its leader Kim Jong Un, (front left), his wife and their daughter tour a new defense museum called National Defence Revolution Museum at an undisclosed location in North Korea on Oct 11. (AP)

marine that Pyongyang has said is designed to launch nuclear weapons.

North Korea also tested hypersonic missile systems of various ranges on Sept. 20 and Oct. 3 as it seeks to expand its arsenal of weapons designed

to overwhelm missile defenses in South Korea and Japan. Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, claimed that the missiles tested on Oct. 3 also used artificial intelligence technology.

5 killed in blast at Gujarat chemical factory unit

Crowds throng New Delhi and wave Indian flags amid escalating protests

NEW DELHI, Oct 17, (Agencies): Thousands of Indians thronged a bustling thoroughfare in the heart of the capital, waving the national flag and demanding the resignation of the country's election chief, the latest show of public dissent against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.

The protesters rallied in Connaught Place, one of New Delhi's busiest commercial districts, responding to a call by the youth "Cockroach" movement, whose leader Abhijeet Dipke was detained by police ahead of the demonstration. Protesters spanning generations joined the rally, reflecting broad public anger and intensifying pressure on the country's top election official.

Protests by the youth and opposition parties have intensified over an ongoing review of voter lists that has removed more than 130 million names since last year. Critics say the exercise is politically motivated, threatens to disenfranchise millions more, and has disproportionately affected minorities, particularly Muslims. They have demanded the resignation of election chief Gyanesh Kumar.

The Election Commission and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration deny the allegations and say the revision is intended to remove duplicate and ineligible entries.

Friday's protest was part of a growing campaign that has put Modi's government under pressure and comes a week after a police crackdown on protesters in New Delhi.

The demonstrators vastly outnumbered the security personnel lining the road, while columns of riot police stood watch.

Police had earlier asked people not to join the rally and offered to let a small group gather to wave the national flag and sing the national anthem. In anticipation of the protests, authorities also closed Central Park, a green space surrounded by Connaught Place's white colonial-era buildings, on Friday and Saturday.

Modi has not publicly commented on the protests. Some of his party leaders have dismissed the demonstrators as "anarchists" and suggested, without offering evidence, that they are backed by foreign powers.

Police detained Dipke, the founder of the "Cockroach" movement, ahead of the demonstrations. He had urged supporters unable to travel to New Delhi to raise the flag and demonstrate in their own communities.



Prominent student leader Neha Bora, center, crouching, is detained by the police during a youth demonstration demanding the resignation of the country's election chief Gyanesh Kumar, in New Delhi, India on Oct 16. (AP)

A live video posted on the movement's Instagram account showed Dipke leaving a house and heading toward the street, where police officers intercepted him. After a brief exchange, officers hauled him into a police vehicle and drove away. "Waving the tricolor (Indian flag) is not a crime," he told reporters Thursday.

The "Cockroach" movement began as an online satirical campaign this summer after India's chief justice compared unemployed young people to parasites. Many young Indians embraced the remark, adopting the cockroach as a symbol of resilience. It has since expanded into a nationwide protest movement of young people. Protests led by the group forced the resignation of

Modi's education minister in July, a rare setback for the prime minister, who has been in power for more than 12 years.

It remains unclear whether the protests will grow into a wider political movement. Modi's government remains electorally strong, and anger over voter lists may not necessarily translate into support for the opposition, which has used the issue to criticize his Hindu nationalist government.

Many protesters, however, increasingly see the demonstrations as part of a broader struggle to safeguard India's democratic institutions.

"India is descending into fascism, and that is my biggest concern," said Nashid Khan, one of the protesters. Still, he said, the demonstrations "augur well for India's future."

Also:

NEW DELHI: At least five workers were killed and five others injured in an explosion at a pharmaceutical factory unit in the western Indian state of **Gujarat**, officials said Saturday.

The blast took place Friday night at the unit in a Sayakha Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation estate in **Bharuch** district, about 210 km south of **Gandhinagar**, the capital city of Gujarat.

The injured were immediately removed to the hospital, said a local government official at the district magistrate's office.

Reports said the blast also caused a leak of methylene dichloride gas.

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NEW DELHI: At least eight people died and nearly a dozen others were injured when the vehicle they were traveling in fell off the road in India's western state of **Rajasthan**, the local police confirmed on Saturday.

The road accident was reported from Rajasthan's Kota area on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway. Hailing from the central state of **Madhya Pradesh**, the victims were going to offer prayers at a temple situated in the state's Sikar district when they met with the accident.

According to the police, the driver apparently fell asleep as the vehicle veered off the road and fell into a 15-foot-deep ditch along the road. The dead bodies had been recovered, and those injured were admitted to a local hospital.

New torture allegations false, says ex-Venezuelan prez Maduro

NEW YORK, Oct 17, (AP): Former Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro insisted in court on Thursday that newly unsealed torture allegations against him and his wife were "false accusations."

Maduro and Cilia Flores, both shackled at the ankles, were brought to court to face a rewritten indictment that expands from an initial set of drug trafficking charges to accuse them of leading a state-sponsored repression campaign that tortured scores of victims, including three Americans.

Maduro twice defied a judge's request that he enter a plea to the charges, instead condemning them through a courtroom interpreter as "false accusations and false testimony." Irked, Judge Alvin K. Hellerstein took matters into his own hands, interjecting that "a plea of not guilty will be entered on behalf of Mr. Maduro."

Flores was less combative. After saying that she'd read through a



A motorcade transporting former Venezuela President Nicolas Maduro leaves federal court in New York on Oct 15. (AP)

version of the new indictment written in Spanish, she told the judge through the Spanish interpreter: "I am completely innocent. I am not guilty."

They were seized from their Caracas home by the US military in a nighttime raid in January. Their trial will begin June 14, 2027, two weeks later than previously set, according to a schedule approved by the judge Thursday.

As they have in the past, Maduro and Flores listened to the proceedings through headphones carrying the voice of a courtroom translator. At times, the bespectacled Maduro looked through papers in front of him.

When they entered the courtroom, Maduro waved to people in the gallery and shook hands with one of his lawyers, Barry Pollack, while Flores gave a peck on the cheek to Mark Donnelly, one of her attorneys.

Pollack said when the charges were announced last week that Maduro, 63, denies them and "looks forward to his day in court."

Pollack agreed with the government's request to move the trial to June 14.



Water cascades over the cliffs of Iguazu Falls in Foz de Iguacu, Brazil on Oct 16. (AP)

El Niño rains flood South America, sending residents fleeing

Rivers swollen by heavy rains linked to El Niño continued flooding swaths of Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay on Friday, forcing thousands of people from their homes and sending ranchers scrambling to move cattle to higher ground.

In Argentina's northeastern Corrientes province, the Paraná River rose to a dangerous 4.7 meters (15.4 feet) on

Thursday in the riverside town of Ituzaingó, prompting evacuations there and in other towns across the province. Herds of cows waded across flooded pastures as ranchers guided them toward dry land. The calves struggled against a current thick with floating clumps of river plants. Provincial officials said they were digging canals and installing drains to prepare

for more heavy rain.

The floodwaters come from three major rivers that start in Brazil and flow south through the region: the Paraná, the Uruguay and the Iguazú. Torrential rain has pushed all three waterways higher for days, spilling them over their banks in northeastern Argentina, southern Paraguay and western Uruguay. (AP)

Ethiopia sets up Tigray caretaker govt as ex-fighters seek return to civilian life

NAIROBI, Kenya, Oct 17, (AP): Ethiopia's government set up a six-month caretaker administration for Tigray following renewed fighting in the region, as hundreds of former combatants registered Friday for a program to help them return to civilian life.

The new administration is expected to restore public services, help displaced people return and prepare for an election within six months under federal oversight, according to the office of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

The announcement follows the withdrawal of the Tigray People's Liberation Front rebel group, or TPLF, from Mekelle and the entry of government-allied fighters into the regional capital on Oct. 4.

Renewed fighting in the northern region in recent weeks has effectively shattered a 2022 peace agreement that ended a devastating two-year war. Ethiopia also has accused Eritrean troops of occupying parts of its territory, while Eritrea con-



In this photo made with a smartphone, former Tigrayan fighters, some carrying documents, line up to register for a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration program in Mekelle, Ethiopia on Oct 15. (AP)

demned Ethiopia for what it called a declaration of war.

At Mekelle's Tigray Martyrs' Memorial Monument, former fighters lined up to register with the authorities, some carrying papers or sheltering under umbrellas. Registration began Wednesday. Authorities declined to say how many former fight-

ers had signed up.

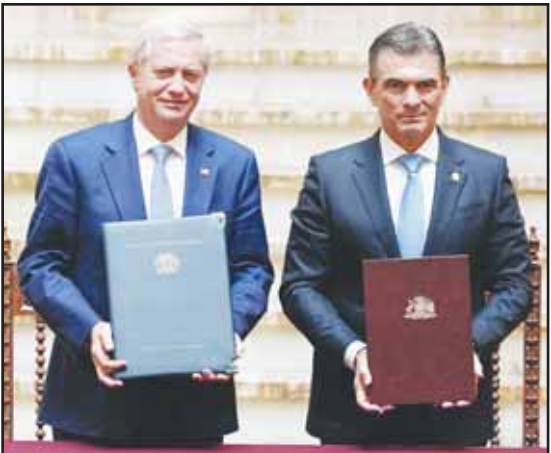
"We were called upon by the TPLF to rejoin our former comrades and units, and doing so was even considered mandatory," said Filmon Gebreselassie, a 33-year-old day laborer. "However, I did not want to return (to war). I decided instead to focus on raising my children."

Chile's president makes first state visit to Bolivia

LA PAZ, Bolivia, Oct 17, (AP): Chilean President José Antonio Kast met with his Bolivian counterpart, Rodrigo Paz, in La Paz on Friday in the first state visit by a Chilean leader in more than seven decades, as a rightward political shift in South America reshapes long-standing rivalries.

The two leaders, both recently elected conservatives allied with US President Donald Trump, are seeking to thaw relations strained since Bolivia lost its Pacific coastline to Chile in a 19th-century war. Both governments have joined the Trump administration's "Shield of the Americas" coalition against drug trafficking, part of a broader push by Washington to build security partnerships with like-minded leaders across Latin America.

The neighbors have not had ambassador-level relations since 1978, though they maintain consulates and cooperate on issues such as immigration and trade.



Bolivian President Rodrigo Paz, (right), and Chilean President Jose Antonio Kast pose after signing agreements at the government palace in La Paz, Bolivia on Oct 16. (AP)

Board combines local and international expertise to strengthen governance and drive growth

Alghanim Industries announces Board of Directors chaired by Kutayba Y. Alghanim



Kutayba Y. Alghanim

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Alghanim Industries (Kutayba Alghanim Group), one of the region’s largest privately owned companies, has announced the formation of its Board of Directors, chaired by Kutayba Y. Alghanim, Executive Chairman of the Group. The move is part of the Group’s efforts to strengthen corporate governance and develop its organizational structure in support of its growth and expansion plans.

The Board includes Hazem Shawki as Vice Chairman, alongside Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Nizar M. Al-Adsani, Waleed AIOsaimi, Ammar Alkhudairy and Iyad Malas.

The Board’s members bring extensive leadership experience across international affairs, energy, banking, investment, finance, business management and corporate governance. Working alongside executive management, the Board will support the Group’s strategic direction, strengthen governance and help inform decision-making, drawing on its members’ experience and perspectives as Alghanim Industries pursues its growth and expansion plans.

Commenting on the announcement, Kutayba Y. Alghanim, Executive Chairman of Alghanim Industries, said: “Establishing the Group’s Board of Directors is an important step as we continue to grow and develop our businesses. I am pleased to welcome leaders who bring a wealth of experience across different fields, and I am confident their perspectives will make a valuable contribution to the Group’s future. Alghanim Industries has grown and evolved over the years while staying true to its founding values. We intend to build on that legacy with the same ambition and long-term vision that have guided us throughout our history.”

Board of Directors – Member Profiles

Hazem Shawki – Vice Chairman of the Group’s Board of Directors

Hazem Shawki brings extensive international experience in banking and investment, having previously served as Head of the Investment Bank for the Middle East and North Africa at

UBS, alongside senior leadership roles at Credit Suisse and Goldman Sachs. Throughout his career, he has worked closely with leading groups and companies across the region, advising on strategic transactions and plans for growth and expansion.

Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

Sheikh Salem brings more than 37 years of diplomatic and international experience. He served as Kuwait’s Ambassador to the United States for more than two decades and as Minister of Foreign Affairs. He currently serves as Chairman of Sama X and holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in political science from the American University of Beirut.

Nizar M. Al-Adsani

Al-Adsani brings more than three decades of experience in the energy sector. He previously served as Deputy Chairman and CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and held senior leadership positions at Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC), Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC) and Al-Khafji Joint Operations. His experience spans energy, investment, strategy and governance.

Waleed AIOsaimi

AIOsaimi brings more than 45 years of experience in accounting, auditing, financial oversight and corporate governance. He spent nearly four decades at Ernst & Young Kuwait, serving as Partner and Managing Partner and working with major public and private sector organizations. He has also held senior finance roles at Kuwait Finance House and contributed to the development of the profession through leadership positions at the Kuwait Association of Accountants and Auditors.

Ammar Alkhudairy

Alkhudairy brings more than 35 years of experience in banking and investment, including corporate finance, mergers and acquisitions, asset management, private equity and venture capital. He previously chaired the Saudi National Bank and played a key role in the merger that created the Kingdom’s largest bank. He has also chaired Goldman Sachs Saudi Arabia, Morgan Stanley Saudi Arabia and Allianz Saudi Fransi. He is the Founding Partner and Chairman of Amwal Capital Partners.

Iyad Malas

Malas brings more than 30 years of international experience across investment, financial services, real estate, retail and leisure. He currently serves as Group CEO of Al Ghurair Group and previously served as Group CEO of Majid Al Futtaim Holding, where he led the company through a period of growth and strategic expansion. He has also held senior positions at the International Finance Corporation (IFC), EFG Hermes and Gateway Partners, and served on a number of corporate boards.



Hazem Shawki
Vice Chairman

Hazem Shawki most recently served as Head of the Investment Bank for the Middle East and North Africa at UBS AG from 2024 until the end of 2025.

Prior to UBS, Hazem was Head of the Private & Growth Markets Group in Investment Banking & Capital Markets at Credit Suisse with responsibility for Central

& Eastern Europe, Turkey and Central Asia, the Middle East and Africa, as well as the Mid-Market segment in Western Europe.

Hazem joined Credit Suisse in 2019 from Goldman Sachs where he was Head of Investment Banking in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) since 2011. Prior to that, Hazem spent three years as Head of Private Equity at EFG-Hermes between 2008 and 2011. Before joining EFG-Hermes, Ha-

zem was at Goldman Sachs from 1999 to 2008 in a variety of roles in the Telecom Media and Technology Group in London, Equity Capital Markets for the European New Markets area and covering the MENA region.

Hazem earned an MBA from Stanford Graduate School of Business in 1999 and a BA First Class Joint Honors in Economics and Finance from McGill University in 1995.



Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah
Board Member

Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah’s career spans more than three decades of distinguished diplomatic service, marked by strategic influence and

long-standing international relationships. He began his journey in Kuwait’s mission to the United Nations in New York, contributing to multilateral efforts during and after the Gulf War. During this formative period, he was involved in advancing Kuwait’s international positioning, supporting coalition-building efforts, and reinforcing the country’s sovereignty through diplomatic channels.

He later served as Ambassador to South Korea, strengthening bilateral relations during a period of rapid economic growth and expanding cooperation across energy, trade, and infrastructure. In 2001, he was appointed Ambassador to the United States. Over more than two decades in Washington, serving across four U.S. administrations, he became a central figure in shaping modern U.S.–Kuwait relations, reinforcing Kuwait’s position as a key strategic partner. His tenure coincided with significant regional

developments, including the Iraq War and its aftermath, supporting sustained security and regional stability. Beyond defense, he advanced economic and institutional ties, private sector engagement, and strengthened collaboration in education, culture, and innovation, while engaging policymakers, think tanks, and media to institutionalize the bilateral relationship.

In 2022, Sheikh Salem was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait. In this role, he led the country’s diplomatic strategy during a period of significant regional and international change. He oversaw Kuwait’s engagement with key global partners, participated in high-level international forums, and reinforced the country’s role in promoting dialogue, cooperation, and stability. His tenure further strengthened Kuwait’s position as a trusted and influential partner on the global stage, while maintaining its longstanding ap-

proach of balanced and constructive diplomacy.

Today, as Chairman of Sama X, Sheikh Salem brings this depth of experience into the private sector. His appointment reflects a strategic vision to leverage global relationships, geopolitical insight, and cross-border expertise to support the company’s international expansion. He plays a critical role in guiding Sama X’s efforts to build meaningful partnerships, navigate complex regulatory environments, and establish a strong presence across the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and beyond.

He holds both a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in political science from the American University of Beirut. He was born in Kuwait City in 1957 and is married with four sons. Fluent in Arabic, English, and French, he is widely recognized for his ability to navigate diverse cultural and political environments with diplomacy, credibility, and strategic foresight.



Nizar Mohammad Al-Adsani
Board Member

Nizar Al-Adsani is a distinguished energy executive with more than three decades of leadership experience in Kuwait’s oil and gas sector. He previously served as Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Kuwait Petro-

leum Corporation (KPC), where he led one of the world’s largest integrated energy organizations and oversaw major strategic, operational, and investment initiatives.

Throughout his career, he has held senior leadership positions at Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC),

Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC), and Al-Khafji Joint Operations. He brings extensive expertise in upstream oil and gas operations, international energy investments, corporate strategy, and governance.

Nizar holds a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of South Dakota, USA.



Waleed Abdulla Saud AIOsaimi
Board Member

Waleed Al-Osaimi is a leading accounting and financial advisory professional with more than 45 years of experience across audit,

financial oversight, and corporate governance. He spent nearly four decades with Ernst & Young Kuwait, serving as Partner and Managing Partner, where he advised leading public and private sector organizations on auditing, financial reporting, and business matters.

Earlier in his career, Waleed held senior finance leadership roles at Kuwait Finance House and has been an active contributor to the profession through leadership positions within the Kuwait Association of Accountants and Auditors.



Ammar Alkhudairy
Board Member

Ammar Alkhudairy is a distinguished banking and investment executive with more than 35 years of experience across corporate banking, mergers and acquisitions, corporate finance, asset management, private equity, and venture capital.

He previously served as Chairman of the Saudi National Bank, where he played a pivotal role in the landmark merger that created the Kingdom’s largest bank. Throughout his career, he has held numerous leadership positions, including Chairman of Goldman Sachs Saudi Arabia, Morgan Stanley Saudi Arabia, and Allianz Saudi Fransi. He is the Founding Partner and Chairman of Amwal Capital Partners and currently serves on several prominent public and private sector boards and advisory councils, bringing deep expertise in governance, investment, and strategic growth.

Ammar holds a Master’s degree in Engineering Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., United States.



Iyad Malas
Board Member

Iyad Malas is a highly accomplished business leader with more than 30 years of international experience across investment, financial services, real estate, retail, and leisure. He currently serves as Group Chief Executive Officer of Al Ghurair Group and previously served as Group Chief Executive Officer of Majid Al Futtaim Holding, where he led the organization through a period of significant growth, strategic expansion, and enhanced access to global capital markets, helping strengthen its position as one of the region’s leading consumer and lifestyle businesses.

Earlier in his career, he held senior leadership roles with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), EFG Hermes, and Gateway Partners. He currently serves on the boards of several prominent companies and brings extensive expertise in investment, corporate transformation, and corporate governance. Iyad holds a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from the American University of Beirut and a Master of Business Administration in Finance from The George Washington University, Washington, D.C. He is also a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA).

Boursa Kuwait wins Arab Federation of Capital Markets award for highest turnover ratio

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Boursa Kuwait received the award for “Arab Exchange with the Highest Turnover Ratio” for 2025 from the Arab Federation of Capital Markets (AFCM) at a ceremony held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

The award recognizes Boursa Kuwait for achieving the highest turnover ratio among the Arab exchanges assessed, reflecting the level of trading activity relative to the market’s capitalization during the period under review.

The exchange’s turnover ratio reached 50% in 2025, supported by a 79.26% increase in traded value to KD 26.58 billion, while market capitalization rose by 22.05% to KD 53.187 billion at year-end.

Boursa Kuwait’s performance in 2025 reflects sustained efforts to develop the Kuwaiti capital market through infrastructure modernization, improved operational efficiency and more advanced trading mechanisms, efforts which have also supported the diversification of investment products and instruments and expanded market access to a broader investor base.

The bourse continues to develop an efficient and transparent capital market that keeps pace with regional and global developments, enhances its appeal to investors and supports its contribution to Kuwait’s economy.

An ongoing commitment to market development

Boursa Kuwait continued to work closely with the Capital Markets Authority (CMA), Kuwait Clearing Company (KCC) and other stakeholders across the capital market apparatus to modernize market infrastructure, strengthen trading and post-trade operations and expand investment opportunities.

These efforts reached a significant milestone in July 2025 with the implementation of the second part of the third phase of the Market Development Program (MD 3.2). The initiative introduced the Central Counterparty (CCP) framework, upgraded brokerage firms to the Qualified Broker model, enabled cash settlements through local banks and the Central Bank of Kuwait’s KASSIP system and established sub-account identification within omnibus accounts.

Alongside these operational enhancements, MD 3.2 established the technical foundation for the subsequent introduction of exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and fixed-income instruments, including bonds and sukuk, supporting the continued diversification of Kuwait’s capital market.

Boursa Kuwait further strengthened its sustainability efforts with the release of an updated edition of its Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Reporting Guide, designed to help listed companies produce clearer, more consistent and internationally aligned sustainability disclosures.

Developed in accordance with Capital Markets Authority (CMA) requirements, the guide incorporates the IFRS S1 and IFRS S2 sustainability disclosure standards and provides expanded guidance on climate-related risks, emissions reporting and materiality assessments. The update also supports companies listed on the “Premier” Market in meeting CMA requirements to publish sustainability reports beginning in 2026, covering the 2025 financial year. This builds on Boursa Kuwait’s longstanding commitment to responsible market practices, dating back to its participation in the United Nations Sustainable Stock Exchanges (SSE) initiative in 2017, while advancing transparency and strengthening the market’s appeal to sustainability-focused investors.

These initiatives support Boursa Kuwait’s long-term strategy to connect the Kuwaiti capital market with its regional and global peers. They also aim to strengthen investor confidence, attract local and international institutional investment, support private sector financing and contribute to economic diversification in line with “Kuwait Vision 2035”.

Strengthening market activity and broadening the investor base

Boursa Kuwait’s recognition for achieving the highest turnover ratio among the Arab exchanges assessed underscores the strength of trading activity in the Kuwaiti capital market and its ability to attract sustained investor participation relative to its size. The distinction is particularly significant given the considerable growth recorded during 2025, when traded volume increased by 71.48% to 117.43 billion shares, accompanied by a 54.57% rise in the number of executed trades to more than 6.04 mil-



Boursa Kuwait wins Arab Federation of Capital Markets award.

lion. Together, these figures demonstrate that market performance was supported by substantial growth in both trading volumes and transaction activity, reinforcing the significance of the award as a measure of market activity relative to capitalization.

The “Premier” Market accounted for 56.32% of total traded value, equivalent to approximately KD 14.97 billion, while the “Main” Market represented 62.76% of total traded volume.

Market indices also recorded gains during the year, with the “Premier” Market Index rising by 21.17% and the “Main” Market Index by 20.20% and the All-Share Index by 20.99%, closing the year at 8908 points. The value of trading by market makers also increased by 88.63% to approximately KD 5.38 billion, reflecting their role in enhancing liquidity.

Broadening investor participation remains a key priority for Boursa Kuwait, with efforts focused on strengthening engagement among retail investors and local and international institutions.

In 2025, institutional investors accounted for 63.84% of total traded value, while foreign investors contributed 13.80%, with foreign ownership reaching 14.59% of total shares by year-end. This participation was accompanied by a significant expansion in the active investor base, as the number of active investor accounts more than doubled, rising by 111.52% to 47,670.

To build on this momentum, Boursa Kuwait continued to promote the market and its investment opportunities through international conferences, investor roadshows and strategic partnerships with financial and investment institutions. These efforts provided opportunities for direct engagement between listed companies and investors, increased the visibility of Kuwaiti companies among international institutions and highlighted ongoing improvements to the market’s infrastructure and investment environment.

Recognition for Kuwait’s capital market ecosystem

Boursa Kuwait’s recognition as the “Arab Exchange with the Highest Turnover Ratio” reflects the collective efforts of stakeholders across Kuwait’s capital market apparatus, whose continued collaboration has contributed to the development of market infrastructure, greater operational efficiency and improved market performance.

The award also underscores the importance of sustained coordination among regulators, market infrastructure providers, listed companies, brokerage firms, financial institutions and investors in advancing the development and competitiveness of the Kuwaiti capital market.

Building on this approach, the exchange continues to work with its partners to develop the market and provide an environment that responds to the changing needs of

investors and issuers, supporting its role in connecting capital with investment opportunities.

Building a deeper and more diversified market

The award comes as Boursa Kuwait advances its transition towards a multi-asset market, building on years of infrastructure development and regulatory reforms to introduce new investment products and broaden opportunities for investors and issuers.

This progress gained further momentum in 2026 with the launch of the exchange-traded funds (ETF) platform and the development and activation of trading infrastructure for fixed-income instruments, including bonds and sukuk. By expanding the market beyond equities, these developments provide investors with greater opportunities for portfolio diversification while creating additional financing channels for issuers.

Together, these initiatives mark an important step in Boursa Kuwait’s long-term strategy to deepen the market, strengthen its competitiveness and develop a more comprehensive investment environment capable of serving the evolving needs of market participants.

Boursa Kuwait also continues to develop the market’s technological infrastructure and invest in modern systems and solutions. These investments strengthen its capacity to accommodate additional products and services in the future and enhance operational readiness in line with the practices and standards of developed financial markets.

Strengthening regional and international engagement

Boursa Kuwait continues to strengthen the regional and international presence of Kuwait’s capital market through engagement with global investment institutions, asset managers and investors, and participation in specialist capital market conferences and events.

Through these efforts, the exchange highlights developments in the Kuwaiti market, promotes listed companies and investment opportunities and strengthens communication between the global investment community and stakeholders across the capital market ecosystem.

Boursa Kuwait places particular emphasis on financial literacy and investor education, recognizing the role of knowledge in supporting informed participation in capital markets and helping investors better understand investment instruments and trading mechanisms.

Appreciation for the Arab Federation of Capital Markets and Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange

Boursa Kuwait extends its appreciation to the Arab Federation of Capital Markets for this recognition and for its role in promoting cooperation and the exchange of knowledge and expertise among Arab exchanges and capital market institutions, supporting the development of markets across the region.

The exchange also extends its sincere appreciation to Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX) for hosting and organizing the event and for bringing together representatives of exchanges, capital market institutions and the region’s financial sector.

Boursa Kuwait recognizes the importance of continued cooperation among Arab exchanges in addressing shared challenges, exchanging technical expertise and identifying opportunities for market development.

Such engagement provides a valuable platform for strengthening regional coordination and advancing practices that respond to evolving investor expectations and developments in global capital markets.

The company is committed to building on the progress achieved through successive phases of market development, with a continued focus on modernizing infrastructure, diversifying investment products and broadening investor participation.

These priorities extend beyond enhancing market efficiency and competitiveness to strengthening Kuwait’s position as a regional investment destination, attracting domestic and international capital and expanding the capital market’s contribution to financing economic growth.

By translating its long-term development strategy into tangible improvements, Boursa Kuwait aims to reinforce the market’s role as a key driver of Kuwait’s economic diversification and the realization of Kuwait Vision 2035.

Global recognition at the awards ceremony held on the sidelines of IMF Meetings in Bangkok

KFH wins ‘World’s Best Islamic Bank’ award for 2026 from Global Finance



Ahmad Alsumait receiving the award.



Yousef Al-Ruwaieh receiving the award.



Ufuk Uyan receiving the Kuwait Finance House – Türkiye award.



Bassam Alali receiving the Kuwait Finance House – Bahrain award.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Group has been crowned with 7 prestigious awards by the international magazine Global Finance as part of the 19th annual awards for the World’s Best Islamic Financial Institutions for 2026, reaffirming the Group’s leadership and unique standing in the global Islamic finance sector.

- The awards are:
- World’s Best Islamic Bank
 - World’s Best Islamic Corporate Bank
 - World’s Best Islamic Bank for CSR
 - World’s Best Islamic Project Finance Provider
 - Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait
 - Best Islamic Bank in Bahrain (KFH - Bahrain)
 - Best Islamic Bank in Turkey (KFH - Turkey)

The awards reflect the success of a strategy anchored in AI-driven digital transformation, strengthening integration across the Group and maintaining a strong customer focus. They also drive KFH to achieve greater milestones and further strengthen its leading role in the global Islamic financial industry.

KFH Chief Treasury Officer - Kuwait Ahmad Eissa Alsumait, KFH Head of Group Public Relations and Media, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, Chief Executive Officer at KFH - Turkey Ufuk Uyan, and Deputy Group CEO – Treasury & Investments at KFH Bahrain, Bassam Alali received the awards during a ceremony held on the sidelines of the 2026 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group in Bangkok, Thailand.

The recognition reflects KFH’s continued efforts to advance sustainability, governance and digital innovation, while maintaining strong financial performance and balanced, sustainable growth across its various markets.

The World’s Best Islamic Bank 2026 award recognizes KFH’s leadership in Islamic banking and its excellence in providing innovative financial products and services that comply with Islamic Sharia principles. It also reflects the success of its strategy to achieve sustainable growth and its ability to adapt to changing economic conditions and operational challenges across its various markets, supporting its ambition to rank among the world’s top 100 banks.

The awards for Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait, Best Islamic Bank in Bahrain and Best Islamic Bank in Turkey highlight the strong performance and achievements of the Group’s subsidiaries in their respective markets, under a unified yet flexible strategy tailored to the characteristics of each market.

KFH holds a leading position as a global financial institution, operating through a network spanning 10 countries. It maintains strong financial strength and competitive performance, reflected in its highest-ever profits at the level of the banking sector and the Kuwaiti market, as well as its leading position among banks and private sector companies in Kuwait by market capitalization, which reached a record level exceeding KD 15 billion.

The World’s Best Islamic Corporate Bank award reflects growing global confidence in KFH’s capabilities and its excellence in developing long-term strategic partnerships with corporate clients and providing advanced financial solutions that support business expansion and strengthen competitiveness in local and international markets.

KFH continues to deliver strong performance in corporate banking, supported by strategic growth and an established leadership position, while continuing to innovate in Islamic finance solutions and lead several major financing transactions that have strengthened its role in supporting economic development.

The World’s Best Islamic Project Finance Provider award highlights KFH’s leading role in financing major projects and its significant contribution to the development of strategic sectors in Kuwait and across the region. The Bank is a key financing partner for the oil and gas sector, infrastructure, urban development,



Yousef Al-Ruwaieh, Ahmad Alsumait, Bassam Alali and Ufuk Uyan

- In addition to 6 prestigious global awards at the group level
- World’s Best Islamic Corporate Bank, and World’s Best Islamic Bank for CSR

services and other vital sectors.

KFH provides comprehensive corporate banking services supported by digital transformation and flexible financing solutions that address the needs of various economic sectors and contribute to sustainable development. It also delivers enhanced banking experience to corporate customers through the eCorp electronic platform, which has recorded strong adoption, particularly following the launch of its upgraded electronic services and mobile application.

KFH also plays a strategic role in supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), through initiatives launched with funding from the Bank.

KFH Head of Group Public Relations and Media, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, said the 2026 World’s Best Islamic Bank for CSR award reflects the success of KFH’s efforts in corporate social responsibility, highlights its strong presence and leadership in this area across the markets in which it operates, and embodies its vision of CSR as a strategic pillar of its business model. This approach reinforces KFH’s position as a leading financial institution that combines economic growth with sustainable community impact.

Al-Ruwaieh explained that winning the World’s Best Islamic Bank for CSR award reaffirms KFH’s leadership and excellence in integrating corporate social responsibility into its business model through impactful initiatives in community development, education and healthcare, youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, environmental protection, women’s empowerment, digital skills development among children and young people, and volunteer work. These efforts are complemented by the adoption of leading Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices and the implementation of awareness and community initiatives designed to deliver a sustainable impact aligned with development goals, further

strengthening KFH’s role as a leading institution and role model in social responsibility.

Al-Ruwaieh emphasized that the recognition adds to KFH’s track record of achievements and reinforces its commitment to developing community initiatives and building purposeful partnerships that contribute to creating sustainable value for society.

Al-Ruwaieh explained that KFH continues to play a pioneering national role in supporting social infrastructure and enhancing community welfare and quality of life through strategic initiatives and significant investment in corporate social responsibility. These long-term commitments reflect an approach that extends well beyond the traditional concept of CSR. Key strategic social initiatives include:

- Supporting the Kuwait Emergency Response Fund with a financial contribution of \$13 million, in addition to a further \$6 million to repair damaged power stations.
- Contributing more than KD 61 million to settle various debts owed by insolvent debtors.
- Contributing nearly KD 8 million to reconstruct the damaged area of Souq Al-Mubarakiya.
- Contributing KD 20 million to establish 15 ambulance centers.
- Making the largest contribution to the government effort support fund during the COVID-19 crisis, amounting to KD 10 million.
- Supporting a sustainable environmental initiative to develop Al-Wataniya Square.
- Establishing and equipping the tenth ward at the Addiction Treatment Center, completing the Bank’s initiative to establish the center in 2005.
- Providing \$20 million to the Kuwait Red Crescent Society to support relief efforts for earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria.
- Implementing various cooperation programs with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).
- Continuing its pioneering role in providing community contributions to the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), the Manpower Government Support Program, the Institute of Banking Studies and various other community initiatives that reinforce KFH’s leadership in social responsibility.

“As Islamic Finance continues its rapid growth, the leading organizations are focusing on digitalization, product innovation, and expanded commercial banking services,” said Joseph D. Giarraputo, founder and editorial director of Global Finance. “Global Finance’s annual World’s Best Islamic Financial Institutions awards honor the institutions that are improving efficiency, attracting new customers, and best serving their clients.”

Global Finance, founded in 1987, has a circulation of 50,000 readers in 185 countries, territories and districts. Global Finance’s audience includes senior corporate and financial officers responsible for making investment and strategic decisions at multinational companies and financial institutions. Its website — GFMag.com — offers analysis and articles that are the legacy of 39 years of experience in international financial markets.

Eligibility

Quantitative criteria included growth in assets, profitability, geographic reach, strategic relationships, new business development, and innovation in products. Among the subjective criteria considered were reputation, customer satisfaction, and the opinions of analysts and others involved in the industry.

All selections were made by the Global Finance editorial team after extensive consultations with bankers, corporate finance executives, and analysts worldwide. Entry submissions from Islamic Financial Institutions were also considered.

Excellence beyond banking

Award-winning performance driven by trust, innovation, and a commitment to shaping the future of Islamic finance.



World’s Best Islamic Financial Institution



World’s Best Islamic Corporate Bank



World’s Best Islamic Bank for CSR



World’s Best Islamic Project Finance Provider



Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait (KFH - Kuwait)



Best Islamic Bank in Bahrain (KFH - Bahrain)



Best Islamic Bank in Turkey (KFH - Turkey)

Based on Global Finance Magazine's Mechanism And Standard



ABK concludes successful participation in the ‘Watheefti’ career fair



Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs, Dr. Tariq Al-Jalahma and Afrah Alarbash with the bank team.



An overview of career opportunities within the bank.



Strong interest in the bank’s pavilion at the exhibition.



Inquiry regarding job openings at the bank.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) concluded its successful participation in the three-day Watheefti career fair, attracting significant interest from recent graduates and job seekers pursuing rewarding opportunities in the banking sector.

ABK’s participation holds particular significance as the fair is one of the largest comprehensive national platforms bringing decision-makers and young talent together under one roof. It showcases career opportunities and helps align academic outcomes with the requirements of the banking sector.

During the event, Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs, Dr. Tariq Al-Jalahma, visited ABK’s booth, where he

was introduced to the Bank’s innovative approaches to attracting Kuwaiti talent and its training programmes designed to develop young Kuwaitis’ potential and refine their skills. He commended ABK’s ongoing efforts to support the country’s vision for empowering national talent.

Commenting on the occasion, Afrah Alarbash, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, said, “Our participation in the fair reflects our steadfast commitment to attracting outstanding young talent and providing opportunities for them to contribute to the Bank’s success story. We were delighted by the strong turnout and the interest graduates expressed in joining our team.”

She continued, “Participating in national



Afrah Alarbash, GM of Human Resources at ABK

events such as this is a cornerstone of ABK’s approach to engaging directly with promising talent and identifying graduates whose capabilities align with the Bank’s future direction. This reflects our continued commitment to supporting their career aspirations and guiding them towards career paths that suit their fields of study and ambitions.”

Alarbash added, “Our presence at this annual event reflects our vision of investing in young people’s potential. The fair provides a dynamic platform to connect directly with promising talent and understand the aspirations of those eager to join the banking sector. We place the utmost importance on developing a new generation of banking leaders through a stimulat-

ing work environment and advanced training programmes that keep pace with the latest developments in the industry.”

She concluded, “We believe that our people are our greatest asset and the driving force behind innovation and progress. We will therefore spare no effort in providing an inspiring and inclusive work environment that develops our employees’ skills, reinforcing our commitment to advancing economic development in Kuwait.”

Throughout the fair, ABK’s booth witnessed strong engagement, with the Human Resources team interacting directly with visitors and answering their questions about working in banking, the Bank’s job application process, and opportunities across its various divisions.



Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma and Nawal Bourisli with Zain's HR team at the company's booth.

Zain Kuwait brings talent, purpose & opportunity at ‘Watheefti’ career fair

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Zain Kuwait has sponsored and participated in the fifth edition of ‘Watheefti’, Kuwait’s biggest career fair, bringing together more than 120 public and private sector organizations. The company’s participation reinforces its position as an employer of choice for Kuwaiti talent, reflecting its continued commitment to supporting young professionals and creating new career opportunities for the next generation.

The event was held at The Arena under the patronage of Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs, Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma. It was also attended by Zain Group Chief Purpose and Human Resources Officer, Nawal Bourisli, alongside Zain’s Human Resources team and senior representatives from participating organizations.

Throughout the exhibition, Zain welcomed visitors to its booth, offering insights into its human-centric workplace culture, career development pathways, and opportunities across the technology and telecommunications sectors. The company Zain also outlined its approach to attracting and developing Kuwaiti talent, with a focus on building the skills and experience needed to succeed in an increasingly digital economy.

Nawal Bourisli commented: “At Zain, we believe investing in people is the foundation of innovation and purpose-driven progress. Our continued participation in ‘Watheefti’ reflects this belief and our commitment to attracting and empowering Kuwaiti talent. By creating an environment where people can grow, develop their potential, and turn ideas into meaningful impact, we are building a stronger, more innovative organization. This becomes even more important as technology continues to reshape the future of work, creating new opportunities for young professionals to contribute to Kuwait’s digital economy.”

She added: “At Zain, we place people at the heart of our business. Our investment in talent goes beyond developing professional skills and capabilities. It is about fostering a workplace culture inspired by our purpose, ‘Better Lives. Lasting Connections.’, where our people are empowered to make a positive, lasting difference in the lives of the individuals and communities we serve, while driving innovation and strengthening the competitiveness of Kuwait’s digital economy.”

Zain’s participation this year carries particular significance, coinciding with Zain Group’s latest global recognition in the Forbes World’s Best Employers 2026 list, where it ranked as the world’s leading telecoms employer for the second consecutive year. The Group also secured the 72nd position globally across all industries, placing it among the world’s top 100 employers, while ranking second in the Middle East and North Africa and first in Kuwait.

The recognition further strengthens Zain’s position as a destination for leading talent, particularly as Forbes’ ranking is based primarily on employees’ own assessments of their employers. These evaluations cover key aspects of the employee experi-

■ Bourisli: “At Zain, investing in people is the foundation of innovation and purpose-driven progress”

■ Participation coincided with Zain ranking #1 in Kuwait across all industries in Forbes’ World’s Best Employers 2026

ence, including workplace culture, training and career development opportunities, job satisfaction, and employee engagement. The results underscore the importance of sustained investment in employee experience as a key driver of organizational performance and competitiveness.

This achievement also aligns with Zain’s broader strategic direction, which places human capital development, innovation, and digital transformation at the center of its growth priorities. The company firmly believes that the future of technology is shaped not only by infrastructure and technological solutions, but also by the people capable of developing these technologies and translating their potential into sustainable economic and social value.

During the exhibition, Zain highlighted career opportunities available to Kuwaiti professionals in rapidly growing technology fields, like AI, cybersecurity, data science, and digital innovation. The company also emphasized the importance of developing the professional and leadership capabilities young people need to succeed in an increasingly dynamic workplace.

Zain also showcased its ongoing efforts to attract and develop young Kuwaiti talent through a range of initiatives and training opportunities targeting fresh graduates and university students. These initiatives provide opportunities to gain practical experience, strengthen professional and leadership skills, and explore emerging career paths, helping young people prepare for the workforce and adapt to its evolving requirements.

Beyond recruitment, Zain’s approach to talent development focuses on continuous investment in its people, providing opportunities for learning and career progression while fostering a culture that encourages innovation, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. These efforts contribute to a stronger employee experience, empowering individuals to achieve their professional ambitions while supporting the company’s long-term growth and competitiveness.

Through these commitments, Zain continues to cultivate an inclusive workplace built on equal opportunities and talent empowerment, reflecting the aspirations of younger generations seeking careers that combine personal development with meaningful impact. This approach also strengthens the company’s ability to attract and retain Kuwaiti professionals amid growing competition for specialized skills.

For the 5th consecutive year at ‘Watheefti’ career fair

Al Mulla Group reaffirms commitment on developing & empowering national talent

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Al Mulla Group proudly participated in the “Watheefti” Career Fair for the fifth consecutive year, held from October 15 to 17, 2026, at The Arena, 360 Mall. Organized by Zone Company - a premier event and exhibition organizer in Kuwait - in partnership with the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) and the Public Authority for Youth and Sport (PAYSS), the event brought together private-sector employers and job seekers, providing the Group with a platform to introduce its diverse operations to aspiring Kuwaiti professionals and highlight employment prospects within its businesses.

Al Mulla Group’s eight business sectors were represented at the fair, each showcasing its operations and engaging directly with visitors and prospective candidates. Representatives introduced attendees to their respective businesses, highlighted available employment opportunities, and provided insights into the qualifications and skills required across various functions, offering aspiring Kuwaiti professionals a comprehensive overview of potential career paths within the Group.

Commenting on the occasion, Mr. Abdulla Najeeb Almulla, Chief Administrative Officer at Al Mulla Group, said: “Our continued participation in Watheefti reflects the importance we place on building a strong connection between Kuwaiti talent and the private sector. We recognize the value that skilled, motivated professionals bring to our businesses, and we are committed to providing an environment where individuals can ap-

ply their abilities, expand their experience, and contribute to our shared success. Developing national capabilities is an important part of our long-term vision for the Group and our contribution to Kuwait’s economic progress.”

This commitment extends beyond recruitment through training programs, internships, and professional development initiatives that equip Kuwaiti nationals with practical experience and industry-relevant skills. Integrated into the Group’s broader Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) framework, these initiatives support professional readiness and help prepare participants for the demands of a changing business environment.

Through its continued engagement with Kuwait’s employment community, Al Mulla Group reinforces its commitment to attracting, developing, and empowering Kuwaiti youth by creating pathways for professional growth, strengthening local capabilities, and equipping young people with the skills and experience needed to succeed in their chosen careers. By investing in the next generation of professionals, the Group aims to unlock the potential of young Kuwaitis, prepare them for evolving business needs, and enable them to play an active role in shaping the future of Kuwait’s private sector and contributing to the country’s sustainable development.

For more information about career opportunities at Al Mulla Group, please visit our careers page at: <https://www.almulla-group.com/career>



Al Mulla Group partakes in the ‘Watheefti’ career fair.

Concluding its participation amid strong visitor interest at its booth

NBK reinforces its leadership in attracting national talent at ‘Watheefti’ 2026



Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs, Dr. Tariq Al-Jalahma, Emad Al-Ablani, and Gadeer Al-Kooheji with the Human Resources team at the bank's pavilion during the exhibition.



Emad Al-Ablani and Gadeer Al-Kooheji with the Human Resources team at the NBK pavilion during the exhibition.



A photo featuring some members of the NBK human resources team during the exhibition.



Part of the human resources team at the bank's pavilion at the exhibition.



Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs, Dr. Tariq Al-Jalahma, Emad Al-Ablani, and Gadeer Al-Kooheji



High turnout at the bank's pavilion at the exhibition.



The NBK pavilion at the 'Watheefti' career fair.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) concluded its participation in Watheefti 2026, Kuwait's largest private-sector career fair, held from October 15 to 17 at The Arena Kuwait, with the participation of numerous leading institutions, companies and prominent brands.

Through its participation, NBK reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Kuwaiti talent and attracting young professionals, in line with its strategy of investing in human capital and further strengthening its position as one of the most attractive employers for Kuwaitis seeking promising career opportunities and sustainable career paths.

NBK's booth at the fair attracted significant interest from visitors, with the Group Human Resources team welcoming large numbers of graduates and job seekers. The team provided career guidance and information on available employment opportunities and career paths within the Bank, while addressing a wide range of inquiries about working in the banking sector and the requirements for career advancement.

The Bank also provided prospective candidates with the opportunity to apply for vacancies across its various departments and business divisions, reflecting its commitment to attracting outstanding Kuwaiti talent and empowering individuals to build successful careers in a world-class work environment.

The fair served as an effective platform for direct engagement with job seekers and for showcasing the diverse career opportunities and professional development paths available at NBK. It also enabled the Human Resources team to gain firsthand insights into the career aspirations and professional interests of recent graduates, as well as their skills and capabilities, providing valuable input to support the Bank's future plans for recruiting and developing Kuwaiti talent.

Commenting on the event, Emad Al-Ablani, Group Chief Human Resources Officer at NBK, said: "Our participation in Watheefti reflects NBK's continued commitment to its role as an active partner in supporting Kuwait's economic and human development by attracting young Kuwaiti talent and providing high-quality career opportunities that enable them to build promising futures in the banking sector. We view human capital development as a long-term investment that contributes to preparing qualified Kuwaiti professionals equipped with the skills and expertise needed to lead the future of the financial sector and actively contribute to achieving the objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035."

"Attracting and developing Kuwaiti talent is a key pillar of our human resources strategy. We are committed to providing a work environment that empowers employees to build sustainable careers and offers genuine opportunities for long-term growth and advancement," Al-Ablani added.

"Our strategy goes beyond attracting talent to investing in its development and professional growth through specialized training and professional training programs designed to equip employees with the capabilities needed to keep pace with the rapid transformation of the banking sector," he continued.

Al-Ablani noted that, over the years, NBK has successfully built a strong employer brand, reinforcing its position



National Bank of Kuwait is always present at major career fairs.



NBK attracts talent and skilled professionals.

- **Al-Ablani:**
- Our continued participation in career fairs reflects our role as an active partner in supporting the national economy
 - Attracting and developing Kuwaiti talent is a key pillar of NBK's human resources strategy
 - We continuously strive to enhance employee satisfaction by fostering a work environment built on innovation, diversity and equal opportunities
 - We have successfully built a strong employer brand, positioning NBK as a leading employer of choice for Kuwaiti talent
- **Al-Kooheji:**
- The career fair provides an ideal opportunity to engage directly with promising Kuwaiti talent and gain a better understanding of their career aspirations
 - We were keen to familiarize recent graduates with labor market requirements and help them chart their future career paths
 - NBK fosters a distinctive workplace culture that positions it as an employer of choice for talented individuals driven by ambition and a passion for excellence

tion as a leading employer of choice for Kuwaiti talent. This reflects the Bank's commitment to providing professional development opportunities and clearly defined career paths that enable employees to achieve their ambitions and progress into leadership positions.

He further emphasized that NBK continues to foster a work environment built on innovation, diversity and equal opportunities, contributing to higher levels of employee satisfaction while retaining and attract-

ing Kuwaiti talent. He noted that human capital will remain the key driver of the Bank's success and sustainable growth.

NBK places significant emphasis on developing Kuwaiti talent through structured career paths and advanced leadership development programs, alongside initiatives aimed at empowering young professionals and women and increasing their representation in leadership positions. These efforts further reinforce a workplace culture

founded on diversity, equity and equal opportunities.

As part of its ongoing efforts to advance Kuwaitization in line with the Central Bank of Kuwait's requirements and increase Kuwaiti participation in the private sector, NBK's Kuwaitization rate exceeded 77.4% at the end of 2025. Women accounted for 42.4% of the Bank's total workforce and held 27.2% of managerial positions, reflecting NBK's strong commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace.

The Bank's efforts to attract Kuwaiti talent were also reflected in its recruitment results during the previous year, when it received more than 9,000 CVs and recruited 306 new employees, the majority of whom were Kuwaiti nationals.

Meanwhile, Gadeer Al-Kooheji, Senior Vice President – Head of Talent Acquisition, Group Human Resources at NBK, said: "The career fair provided a valuable opportunity to engage directly with a large number of promising Kuwaiti professionals. We witnessed growing interest among young Kuwaitis in exploring career opportunities within the banking sector and learning about the diverse career paths available at NBK."

"Throughout the fair, our Human Resources team was committed to providing visitors with career guidance and addressing their inquiries, helping them better understand labor market requirements and make more informed decisions about their professional futures," Al-Kooheji added.

She noted that the fair also enabled the Talent Acquisition team to gain firsthand insights into job seekers' career aspirations and the fields of specialization that interest them, providing valuable input to further refine recruitment and talent acquisition strategies in line with the Bank's future needs.

Al-Kooheji emphasized that NBK fosters an exceptional and distinctive workplace culture under the motto "More Than Just a Workplace," centered on supporting employees and prioritizing their physical and mental well-being. This makes NBK an ideal employer for passionate and ambitious individuals seeking promising career opportunities and successful professional careers.

Reflecting its continued commitment to fostering a supportive workplace and promoting employee well-being, NBK provides a fully equipped gym featuring state-of-the-art fitness equipment, alongside a variety of recreational facilities. The Bank's headquarters also houses a medical clinic operated by Wara Hospital, offering medical examinations, laboratory testing and consultations with visiting specialist physicians. These facilities are complemented by regular health awareness sessions led by medical professionals, covering a broad range of topics related to physical and mental health.

NBK's efforts to attract Kuwaiti talent are closely aligned with its development and training initiatives, which focus on investing in national talent and preparing a promising new generation of banking professionals. The Bank also offers a wide range of specialized training courses and professional academic programs, building on its longstanding position as one of Kuwait's pioneering banking institutions in introducing training programs for young people.

Recognized on the global stage at the IMF Annual Meetings in Bangkok

NBK named Kuwait’s Best Bank for 2026 by Global Finance

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) was named “Best Bank in Kuwait for 2026” by the internationally renowned Global Finance magazine during an awards ceremony hosted by the publication in Bangkok, Thailand, on the sidelines of the 2026 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group.

Abdulmohsen Al-Rushaid, Head of Digital Communications at NBK, accepted the award on behalf of the Bank.

The recognition comes as part of Global Finance’s prestigious World’s Best Banks 2026 awards, an annual program celebrating banks that set the standard for performance, innovation, and customer service while keeping pace with the rapid evolution of the global financial landscape.

This achievement reflects NBK’s leading position in Kuwait’s banking sector and underscores the success of its strategy focused on achieving sustainable and balanced growth. It also highlights the Bank’s ability to maintain strong financial and operational performance while strengthening the trust of its customers, shareholders, and partners.

The award further demonstrates NBK’s outstanding performance and competitive edge in the market, underpinned by a resilient business model built on operational efficiency and the continuous enhancement of its products and services. It also reflects the Bank’s ability to deliver advanced banking solutions that meet evolving customer needs and align with the rapid transformations taking place across the financial sector.

This international recognition also underscores the Bank’s success in embedding innovation and digital transformation at the core of its approach through continued investment in technology infrastructure, the development of digital products and services, and improvements in service quality. These efforts support the growth of NBK’s business both locally and internationally while strengthening its ability to adapt to the rapidly evolving banking landscape.

In selecting the winning banks, Global Finance considered a range of quantitative and qualitative criteria, including financial performance, profitability, growth in assets, geographic reach, strategic relationships, new business development, and innovation in products and services, as well as banks’ ability to adapt to economic challenges, meet evolving customer needs, and keep pace with digital



Abdulmohsen Al-Rushaid receives the award.

- A testament to NBK’s exceptional performance and leadership in Kuwait’s banking sector
- Evaluation criteria span financial performance, growth in assets, geographic reach, innovation, and meeting customer needs

transformation. The evaluation process also took into account levels of investment in financial technology and artificial intelligence (AI), service quality, and support for sustainability initiatives and responsible finance.

Global Finance noted that NBK continued to expand its banking services by investing in advanced technological solutions and introducing innovative digital products and services, contributing to an enhanced customer experience and improved service quality. The magazine also highlighted the Bank’s commitment to developing its technology infrastructure to provide greater flexibility and scalability, support the modernization of its core systems

and digital platforms, accelerate the launch of new products, and strengthen their integration with existing services across its various markets.

The magazine further noted that, during 2025, NBK launched several significant initiatives, introduced more than 100 new features across its digital channels, enhanced operational efficiency, and streamlined digital onboarding processes through the use of facial recognition technology for automated identity verification.

In Consumer Banking, the magazine noted that NBK continued to deliver advanced banking solutions and experiences through strategic partnerships with international brands, including The Bicester Collection, Harrods, and Alshaya Group. The Bank also strengthened its support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by launching Kuwait’s first point-of-sale financing solution tailored to this segment, helping support business growth and promote financial inclusion.

Global Finance emphasized that these efforts align with Kuwait Vision 2035, which aims to accelerate the transition towards a digital economy and expand access to banking services through the adoption of advanced financial technologies.

The magazine also commended NBK’s progress in financial literacy and inclusion, in line with the Central Bank of Kuwait’s directives, alongside its efforts in sustainable finance. It highlighted the 23% year-on-year growth in the Bank’s sustainable assets portfolio, which reached USD 6.11 billion as of the end of December 2025, reflecting progress towards its strategic target of USD 10 billion by 2030.

This latest recognition adds to NBK’s extensive track record of international awards and accolades, reflecting the Bank’s success in executing its long-term strategy and strengthening its competitive capabilities through a continued focus on innovation, the advancement of digital banking services, and delivering added value to customers across its domestic and international network.

Global Finance’s awards are among the most prestigious international accolades in the banking industry and are widely respected by financial institutions and investors worldwide. This recognition stems from their comprehensive assessment of banks’ performance, ability to achieve sustainable growth, deliver added value to customers, and keep pace with rapid economic and technological developments.

Other Voices

Top crude oil producers are not OPEC members!

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

Of the world’s top six crude oil producers, four are outside OPEC, while the five largest producers are not all members of the organization. The top producers include the United States, Russia, Canada, and China, while Saudi Arabia ranks third and Iraq sixth among the largest oil producers. This suggests that several of the world’s leading crude oil producers operate outside OPEC, even though many OPEC members depend on oil for more than 80 percent of their national income.



Al-Harami

This may come as a surprise to many readers. Could OPEC production quotas be a contributing factor, requiring member countries to limit or reduce their production?

On the other hand, the countries with the largest crude oil reserves include Venezuela with approximately 300 billion barrels, Saudi Arabia with 268 billion, Iran with 209 billion, Canada with 170 billion, and Iraq with 145 billion barrels. Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates have reserves of approximately 100 billion to 110 billion barrels each.

Today’s leading oil producers may not retain their positions in the long term, as countries with the largest proven reserves could increase production and overtake them in the years to come.

Another factor is OPEC’s production quota system, which requires member countries to restrict their production to help maintain competitive oil prices and avoid disruptions to the global economy. Uncontrolled production could contribute to inflation, excessive price fluctuations, market uncertainty, and potentially damaging price wars.

Over the past month or so, oil prices appear to have remained relatively stable, fluctuating be-

tween \$106 and \$112 per barrel. They may remain within this range for the rest of the year, provided no unexpected events trigger another sharp increase. However, such developments remain difficult to predict.

Oil prices require stability and favorable economic growth across global economies to stimulate demand without disruption.

Oil-producing and exporting countries also need favorable economic conditions to support steady demand and maintain stable crude oil prices. Unforeseen events can trigger inflation and increase the cost of imported goods, including the materials and equipment required for oil production. This can, in turn, fuel domestic inflation and intensify calls for higher oil prices, potentially creating a cycle in which rising costs lead to further price increases.

Current oil prices are encouraging for Gulf producers, provided they remain at these levels through the end of the year. At around \$110 per barrel, crude oil prices appear to be approaching the level needed to balance budgets and reduce the need for additional borrowing.

Simply put, a balanced budget means that Kuwait’s oil revenues are sufficient to cover its expenditures, with an oil price of around \$110 per barrel. This is close to the crude oil price required to balance Kuwait’s budget for the current fiscal year, which ends in March 2027, although the required price may be slightly higher. Let us hope oil prices remain at current levels to help avoid budget shortfalls and deficits.

From our perspective, oil prices are likely to remain strong for the rest of the year, as current global developments are not conducive to price stability at lower levels. Most crude oil price indicators remain above \$106–\$110 per barrel, while Russian crude oil prices have exceeded \$122 per barrel.

Europe’s need to import some of its crude oil from Russia, subject to obtaining the necessary approval from the US administration, is another factor contributing to firm oil prices. These conditions could keep prices elevated through the remainder of the year.



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KFAED signs MoUs to boost development cooperation

Kuwait, IMF explore fiscal sustainability measures

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Finance Minister Yaqoub Al-Refai met with senior International Monetary Fund (IMF) officials to discuss enhancing technical and advisory support to Kuwait in financial and economic fields, in line with efforts to boost fiscal sustainability and improve public financial management.

A statement by the ministry on Friday said Minister Al-Refai held separate meetings with IMF’s Director of the Middle East and Central Asia Department Dr. Jihad Azour and IMF’s Executive Director for Arab States and the Maldives Dr. Mohammad Maait on the sidelines of the World Bank and IMF annual meetings in Bangkok, Thailand, held October 12-18.

The statement said Dr. Azour referenced his discussions with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah during his December visit to Kuwait on strengthening cooperation with the IMF in financial and economic policies.

Minister Al-Refai reaffirmed Kuwait’s strong ties with the IMF, praising its technical expertise and advisory support in developing financial and economic policies, the statement added.

The meeting discussed financial reforms to boost fiscal sustainability, diversify revenues and improve public spending efficiency, as well as priorities for the IMF mission to Kuwait on November 3-9 under Article IV consultations.

In a separate meeting, Minister Al-Refai and Dr. Maait emphasized the importance of strengthen-

ing bilateral cooperation and benefiting from the fund’s technical advice and capacity-building expertise in line with Kuwait’s economic and financial priorities.

Also, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) participated Friday in the plenary session of the annual meetings of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), held in Bangkok, Thailand, from October 12 to 18.

Separately, Finance Minister Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifaie participated in the Human Capital Conclave, held on the sidelines of the annual meetings.

Acting KFAED Director General and delegation head Rashed Al-Bader said the Fund’s participation aimed to strengthen cooperation with regional and international development and financial institutions, exchange views on global challenges, and explore partnerships supporting sustainable development.

He said the Fund continued to adopt flexible strategies to address evolving development needs, respond to global economic changes and contribute to sustainable economic growth.

The plenary session addressed global challenges, including energy shocks, geopolitical tensions, rising sovereign debt burdens and their impact on developing countries’ resources and job creation.

Discussions also covered the potential of artificial intelligence investments to accelerate digital development and the associated economic risks.

On the sidelines, the KFAED delegation held bilateral meetings with countries and regional and international institutions to explore cooperation opportunities.

The Fund signed memoranda of understanding with the Green Climate Fund to strengthen cooperation on climate change and with the Turkish Investment Fund (TURKIC) to enhance development cooperation.

The Fund also participated in a World Bank-organized roundtable on reconstruction partners in Syria, expressing readiness to resume development cooperation and contribute to reconstruction efforts in solidarity with the Syrian people, in line with Kuwait’s directives and in close coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Al-Rifaie participated in the Human Capital Conclave, held on the sidelines of the annual meetings of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank Group and the IMF.

The Finance Ministry said the forum brought together ministers from member countries of the Human Capital Project network, World Bank Group officials and international experts to discuss mobilizing private capital for skills development in the age of artificial intelligence.

Participants also examined ways to leverage private-sector investment and digital tools to expand access to high-quality skills development programs for students and workers, in line with evolving employer and labor market needs.

MoU aims to expand Kuwait’s petrochemical sector

KNPC, NCPI sign MoU to localize MAN production

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: In a strategic move that indicates a major transformation in oil investments and strengthens the partnership between the public and private sectors, Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the National Chemical and Petroleum Industries (NCPI), say reliable sources.

Sources disclosed that the MoU aims to localize the production of Maleic Anhydride (MAN) — a cornerstone for the new generation of downstream and petrochemical industries in the country.

Sources confirmed the attendance of several officials from the oil and industrial sectors at the signing ceremony. Sources said KNPC CEO Wadha Al-Khateeb NCPI Chairman Walid Ali Mahdi signed the MoU.

Sources added this signals the beginning of the new phase of coordination to maximize the utilization of local hydrocarbon resources and localizing modern industrial technology.

Meanwhile, an oil sector source informed the newspaper that the development of the MAN plant is a crucial step in the modernization of the local oil sector, propelling it toward new horizons of operational efficiency.

According to the source, the project will help transform refining infrastructure into an integrated platform for producing high-value chemical products by utilizing local hydrocarbon resources through innovative methods that ensure sustainable economic returns for the state.

The source pointed out that the development path of the plant entails integrating advanced global technologies into the butane oxidation process to increase production capacity and reduce carbon emissions in line with the stringent international environmental standards and the sustainability goals adopted by KNPC.

He asserted that these efforts follow major expansions and structural consolidations within the sector, which enhanced the reliability and continuity of feedstock supply to the plant.

He stated that from an economic and strategic perspective, the plant will serve as a vital artery for various downstream industries in Kuwait and the whole Arabian Gulf. “It will provide essential raw materials for producing fiberglass and polymers, which are used in construction, transport infrastructure and coatings, thereby, reducing reliance on imports and opening new export markets to push for the growth non-oil exports. It will create an environment conducive for knowledge transfer and the localization of engineering and technical

roles for young Kuwaiti professionals,” he added.

The source stressed that this approach is a qualitative leap in asset operational efficiency, particularly after the KIPIC-KNPC merger, which provides superior and dynamic flexibility in directing feedstock toward the most profitable downstream projects.

He affirmed that it offers Kuwait the golden opportunity to establish an integrated industrial base capable of meeting the demand for advanced plastic materials in the domestic and regional markets, in line with the 2040 goal of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) to diversify national income sources.

He thinks this kind of agreement with the private sector necessitates laying down strict criteria to ensure sustainable development. He asserted that the partnership requires private investors to introduce the latest globally recognized technologies for polymer production and environmental protection.

“It also necessitates an unwavering commitment to increase the number of Kuwaiti employees (Kuwaitization) and generate career opportunities for young Kuwaiti engineers and technical professionals. Therefore, the project is an integrated development model that yields economic and human capital returns for the nation,” the source concluded.

Kuwait Pharmaceutical Association holds 3rd confab on pharmaceutical advancement

KUWAIT, Oct 17, (KUNA): The Kuwait Pharmaceutical Association held its third “Kuwait Conference for Pharmaceutical Advancement” on Friday, with health officials and international experts in attendance.

Dr Ahmed Taqi, President of the Association, said the conference aims to exchange expertise, explore new pharmaceutical developments, and advance the field in Kuwait. He said the event helps professionals share experiences and stay updated on industry

developments.

He noted the conference began three years ago and has become an important regional and international scientific event.

This years program includes over 40 lectures and 15 workshops on topics like clinical pharmacy, AI, education, and regulation. Volunteers made the event possible.

This edition features broader participation from government, academia, and professional groups.

Health

Kenya confirms 3rd Ebola case: Kenya’s Ministry of Health on Friday confirmed the country’s third case of Ebola Bundibugyo virus disease.

The patient, a 65-year-old woman, is a primary contact and a close relative of the first and second cases. She had been in quarantine since Oct. 6 and had developed a fever, sore throat and malaise, the ministry said.

She later tested positive for Ebola at both the National Virology Reference Laboratory and the Kenya Medical Research Institute laboratory.

“Having been in quarantine, she was diagnosed early and is currently receiving supportive care, improving her chances of recovery while limiting the

risk of further spread of the disease,” the ministry said. (Xinhua)

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Zambia launches cholera vaccination: Zambia on Friday launched an oral cholera vaccination campaign targeting Lusaka, the capital and epicenter of the current outbreak, alongside Chibombo District in the country’s Central Province.

More than 500,000 vaccine doses are expected to be allocated to the two districts in the first phase of the campaign, with another 480,000 doses arriving soon for distribution to other affected areas.

Speaking at the launch, Minister of Health Roma Chilengi said the targeted campaign aims to protect people in the hardest-hit areas while making efficient use of limited global vaccine supplies. (Xinhua)

If you want more snow, look south

United States winter likely to be wetter and warmer, say forecasters

WASHINGTON, Oct 17, (Agencies): Winter in the United States looks like it will generally be wetter and warmer, but not necessarily snowier, according to the federal government’s seasonal outlook and other meteorologists’ forecasts. You can thank or blame El Niño.

El Niño is likely to shift weather patterns to bring more moisture, but with it higher temperatures. That should help erase persistent Western drought, but it won’t likely make Northern snow-lovers happy, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Thursday.

“This is going to be a winter that’s really difficult for them to find what they’re looking for,” said James Belanger, vice president of meteorology for the Weather Company.

El Niño, the natural but temporary warming in parts of the Pacific, generally warms the globe. Although it disrupts weather conditions around the world in dramatically different ways, its effects tend to follow predictable regional patterns, especially when El Niño is strong like it is right now. That gives forecasters greater confidence in what lies ahead.

All this is on top of a US winter that has warmed about 4 degrees (2.2 degrees Celsius) in the past 50 years, predominantly from human-caused climate change, according to NOAA.

While the weather service doesn’t make seasonal snowfall predictions, their meteorologists said much of the northern parts of the country - including the Northeast, Great Lakes, Upper Midwest and Northern Rockies - should expect below-normal snow. The Southern Rockies, parts of the Southeast and Southwest may get more than they usually do.

“Listen, even in the winter months, it doesn’t mean you’re not going to have snow. It doesn’t mean you might not have a snowstorm,” National Weather Service Director Ken Graham said in a media briefing presenting the three-month winter outlook. “So it doesn’t erase the risk.”

The Northern snow shrinkage is also predicted by private meteorology firms. Salt Lake City is the only big metro area where AccuWeather expects above-normal winter snow amounts. Chicago, Boston, New York and Philadelphia are forecast to get about half or less of their normal winter snow, the firm said.

And a White Christmas? Consider a plane ride to the Southern Rockies, Belanger said. Otherwise, “Santa’s gonna find a barren landscape when he returns in late December.”

Part or all of 41 of the Lower 48 states are forecast to be warmer than normal. No states - or even parts of states - are forecast to be cooler than average. Florida, Louisiana, southern Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi are forecast to be near normal. There’s equal chance of warm, cold or normal in Texas,



A person walks near the snow-covered sand at Lake Michigan in Chicago on Jan 28. (AP)

New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Southern California, Nevada, Wyoming, western Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska.

And the dreaded polar vortex with its icy blast of Arctic air escaping into the United States? That shouldn’t happen as much as most winters, but that doesn’t mean it won’t happen at all, said National Weather Service meteorologist and branch chief Jon Gottschalk.

“It only takes one storm to flip the script, especially for the East Coast cities,” said AccuWeather lead long-range forecaster Paul Pastelok, who said to especially watch for Eastern snowstorms in late January and February.

AccuWeather is more bullish than NOAA for snow in the Rockies regions, calling for Denver to have 10 to 18 days with at least 2 inches (5 centimeters) of snow, which is more than the historical average of 9 inches (23 centimeters). The company’s overall snow forecast for Denver is still around average, but considerably more than last winter.

NOAA is forecasting that parts of all of 39 states will see a wetter-than-usual winter, with much of Montana and parts of Oregon, Idaho, Wisconsin

AI offers new route to cancer vaccines: experts

LONDON, Oct 17, (Xinhua): British researchers are bringing artificial intelligence (AI), automated laboratories and supercomputing together to accelerate the development of personalized cancer vaccines. The effort aims to test whether a more connected research process can shorten the journey from identifying a tumor target to treating a patient.

The University of Oxford announced early this month that the Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA) was providing an additional eight million pounds (about 10.6 million U.S. dollars) for the university’s UK Cancer Vaccine AI Scientist and Supercomputing Project. The project combines AI tools for selecting vaccine targets with automated laboratory experiments and data analysis, under the guidance of oncologists.

“AI gives us an extraordinary opportunity to find vaccine targets faster and learn from every experiment,” said **Dr Lennard Lee** at Oxford’s Center for Immunology.

Personalized cancer vaccines aim to direct a patient’s immune system against their tumor. A central challenge is identifying tumor fragments that will trigger an effective immune response.

In a January article published in the European Medical Journal (EMJ), researchers including Lee argued that existing computational tools often address separate steps in this process. Current tools can help predict whether a tumor protein fragment will bind to a human leukocyte antigen (HLA) molecule, which helps display it to immune cells. But even strong binding does not necessarily trigger an immune response.

The researchers proposed that AI models trained on genetic information, protein data, tissue images and immune responses could help connect these biological processes and improve the selection of vaccine targets. This remains a research strategy whose benefits require testing, according to the article.

According to Oxford, early laboratory tests during its cancer vaccine project’s initial nine-month phase suggested that vaccine targets selected by AI could trigger measurable immune responses. But these findings do not establish that the approach improves survival or controls cancer in patients.

In the next phase, the team plans to develop automated systems to manufacture personalized mRNA cancer vaccines close to patients. A planned Phase I trial will assess the vaccines’ safety and feasibility and whether they trigger the intended immune response.

Brian Wang, an ARIA program director, said cancer vaccine discovery was slowed by the separation of ideas, experiments and analysis across different teams. Oxford’s project connects AI-generated targets, automated testing and clinical guidance in a single research loop, he added.

Progress also depends on access to reliable biological and clinical data that researchers can use to train and test AI models.

A policy report published in June by the Cancer Research UK identifies fragmented datasets and inconsistent interpretations of governance requirements across institutions as obstacles to AI research. Inconsistent interpretations of patient consent, ethics requirements and data-sharing rules can make it harder to combine data across institutions, slowing research. The report calls for clearer governance and data that meet shared standards.

Shivani Sinha, a policy adviser in science and research policy at Cancer Research UK, described the practical consequences in an article: researchers can spend months seeking permission across institutions, only to discover that the data they obtain lack essential information.

“It inherits the gaps in the data and infrastructure around it,” Sinha wrote of AI, warning that reuse across projects can reproduce those weaknesses at scale. She argued that datasets must represent the population more adequately and that their limitations must be made clear.

Trust also has a scientific dimension. Researchers need to establish when an AI prediction deserves further investigation and when its apparent precision exceeds the underlying evidence.

In their EMJ article, Lee and colleagues cautioned that AI foundation models can be difficult to interpret and may miss biological interactions important to cancer. They emphasized validation and benchmarking across diverse immune-system profiles, including populations underrepresented in existing datasets.

According to Cancer Research UK’s report, scientists need the judgment to assess AI’s limitations and recognize when its use is appropriate. Training should develop that critical capacity alongside technical skills.

Public confidence presents a related challenge. The report links trust to accountable governance and meaningful patient involvement in decisions about data access and research oversight. Concerns about privacy, security and unauthorized use of information could undermine the willingness to share data on which these projects depend.

For vaccine development, these challenges are closely connected: incomplete data can weaken predictions, while poorly explained or governed research can make the data needed to improve them harder to obtain.

Fundraising to protect oceans, forests and other key nature sites falling short ahead of UN summit

WASHINGTON, Oct 17, (AP): Efforts to raise hundreds of billions of dollars to preserve the world’s oceans, forests, rivers, lakes and other parts of the natural world have fallen short ahead of a key U.N. summit on biodiversity.

The yawning gap between the stated ambition of nations to protect biodiversity and what money has been raised will be a central topic in Yerevan, Armenia, when the biodiversity conference, known as COP17, gets started on Monday. The nearly two-week event, scheduled to end Oct. 30, is a chance for nearly 200 countries that are part of the treaty to take stock of their progress on 23 global targets after agreeing to a historic deal crafted in Montreal in 2022. The United States is not a party to the treaty.

Countries in Montreal committed to protect 30% of land and water considered important for biodiversity by 2030, a goal known as 30x30.

They also promised to raise \$200 billion a year by 2030 for biodiversity and begin phasing out or reforming subsidies that could provide another \$500 billion for nature. There were also commitments to increase to \$20 billion annually by 2025 money that went to poor countries. That number would increase to \$30 billion each year by 2030.

“We’re not moving fast enough,” convention executive secretary Astrid Schomaker told The Associated Press, before a U.N. progress report released Thursday found fewer than half of parties’ biodiversity targets are on track and that current commitments would only protect 26% of land and only 12% of sea by 2030.

Data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development showed countries were raising between \$75 billion and \$92 billion each year from 2023 to 2025 - less than half the 2030 goal. Commitments to reduce \$500 billion in harmful subsidies - government support and funding for sectors like fisheries and agriculture - have gained little traction, with few countries identifying which subsidies they would cut.

Countries were on track to provide the \$20 billion to poor countries by 2025. The latest data showed \$19 billion had been raised in 2024. But a drop in foreign aid raises questions over whether the upward trend will continue.

“Do we have enough money actually to finance the commitments that countries have made? And how do we get more finance to flow toward biodiversity positive outcomes?” Schomaker said. “That is the crucial question for the COP.”

The campaign to protect biodiversity, which first garnered global attention with the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, has often seemed like a losing battle.

In a bid to grow their economies and support increasing populations, countries have converted forests into

farm land, overfished their waters and reduced habitats of many plants and animals through unchecked development. Climate change, at the same time, has created the conditions for widespread wildfires and prolonged droughts that have decimated ecosystems.

As a result, three-quarters of the world’s land has been “severely altered” by humans and a million of the world’s plants and animals are threatened with extinction, according to a 2019 U.N. report. Wildlife populations have also plummeted, according to the WWF’s 2026 Living Planet Report released this month. They have declined on average by 73% between 1970 and 2022.

“We are losing everything that matters for us as humans on this planet,” Schomaker said.

Meanwhile, there are some signs that countries are protecting more biodiversity. Countries have announced over 5,000 initiatives tied to the treaty.

A report from the Campaign for Nature, a global initiative which has spearheaded the 30x30 effort, found that countries in Latin America have already committed to protecting 29% of their land while those in Oceania have promised to preserve 41% of their seas. Last year, the Philippines created a marine protected area where catching rays and sharks is prohibited, according to the Wildlife Conservation Society. In 2023, Cambodia set aside almost 100,000 acres (40,000 hectares) of flooded grassland habitat for protection while Argentina created a national park in 2024.

At the conference on Friday, a 17-nation coalition was launched to accelerate species recovery. It also would support one of the Conven-

and Michigan being drier.

“We anticipate drought conditions to improve or end for western portions of Oregon and western Washington state, the Southwest, the central and southern Rockies, the southern Great Plains, the lower Mississippi Valley, and areas in the East,” Gottschalk said.

Mike Bettes, a meteorologist at The Weather Channel, said it will likely be too much rain for California: “We’d anticipate numerous, high-impact atmospheric rivers that could bring extensive flooding and landslides this winter.”

Atmospheric rivers are long and relatively narrow bands of water vapor. They take water from oceans and flow through the sky, dumping rain in prodigious amounts.

Florida and parts of the Southeast should also be on guard for more tornadoes this winter and early spring because of El Niño, Gottschalk said.

Forecasters across the globe expect the current El Niño to reach record levels this fall or winter. Graham, the weather service chief, noted that a strong El Niño doesn’t mean its impacts are stronger, but it does make the weather easier to predict.

Winter weather expert Judah Cohen, an MIT research scientist, is waiting a couple more weeks before making his forecast. He says an unprecedented El Niño is “a reason not to be more confident, but less confident.”

“We have no real historical analog or precedent,” Cohen said. “When every meteorologist on the planet is on the same side, I get nervous. We’re not that good.”

Also:

QUITO: Ecuador is set to shore up its electric system to ensure service during the critical months of the El Nino weather phenomenon, forecast to run from late November through February, President **Daniel Noboa** said.

“We are facing a very harsh weather situation, especially along the coast, though highland areas are also being affected,” Noboa said in an interview with Radio Centro in the central city of Ambato.

According to Noboa, adverse weather conditions have led to an increase in disruptions in electricity, with incidents climbing from an average of “20-odd” times per day in a normal year to between 60 and 70 currently.

The government has added more than 400 megawatts of electricity generation capacity by granting permits and providing support to the private sector, with the goal of strengthening the system’s capacity, he said.

The announcement comes amid Ecuador’s dry season, marked by a lack of rainfall in the southern part of the country, home to the reservoirs that supply the Paute Hydroelectric Complex of the National Interconnected System.



Lee



Oceanic manta rays swim at the Manta Ridge dive site in Raja Ampat, Indonesia on March 7. (AP)

GR-WRT concludes the 2026 season with 12 victories from 13 rallies and all three championship titles

Toyota Gazoo Racing sweeps Rally Italia Sardegna podium as Evans and Martin claim world titles

CALGLIARI, Oct 17: Toyota Gazoo Racing World Rally Team (GR-WRT) concluded a remarkable 2026 FIA World Rally Championship season with a one-two-three finish at Rally Italia Sardegna, as Oliver Solberg and co-driver Elliott Edmondson claimed victory in the No. 99 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1. Sébastien Ogier and Vincent Landais followed in second place in the No. 1 car, while Sami Pajari and Marko Salminen completed the podium in third in the No. 5 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1.

The dramatic season finale also saw Elfyn Evans and Scott Martin secure their first FIA World Rally Championship drivers' and co-drivers' titles following an intense battle that went down to the final Power Stage. With GR-WRT having already secured the manufacturers' championship at the previous round in Chile, the result completes a sweep of all three WRC titles for the team in 2026.

Akio Toyoda, GR-WRT Chairman, commented: "Since joining the TOYOTA GAZOO Racing family in 2020, Elfyn has finished just one place short of the championship five times. After so many seasons of coming painfully close, he has finally achieved the title he has worked so hard for. Congratulations, Elfyn. You really deserve it. Oliver and Elliott also fought incredibly hard right to the very end. Let's keep pushing together next year!

This rally marks the end of the GR YARIS Rally1's journey. It is a car that has continued to win championships throughout the five seasons since 2022. This year, it became a car that any one of our five drivers could win with. I would like to sincerely thank everyone in the team for pursuing an ever-better, driver-first car."

Toyoda added: "I am sure the team is already hard at work preparing the next generation of cars. There will be many new challenges ahead. Things may not go perfectly from the start, and that's okay. Let's enjoy taking on a new challenge of making ever-better cars together once again. To Jari-Matti, Juha, everyone in the team, our partners, and all our fans: thank you very much for your support throughout this season."

Rally Italia Sardegna hosted the final round of the season for the first time, with the island's sandy and rough gravel roads once again providing a demanding challenge. The loose surface created a significant road-cleaning effect, particularly for championship contenders Evans, Pajari, and Solberg, who began the rally separated by just 21 points.

Solberg and Edmondson started strong, taking the initial lead in Thursday's opening super special before ending Friday in third overall. They then delivered an im-



TOYOTA GAZOO Racing World Rally Team (GR-WRT) celebrates on the podium after sweeping Rally Italia Sardegna.



Oliver Solberg and co-driver Elliott Edmondson celebrate their victory at Rally Italia Sardegna in the No. 99 Toyota GR Yaris Rally1.

pressive performance on Saturday, taking two stage wins during the morning to move into the rally lead and finishing the day 33.6 seconds clear of Ogier and Landais.

Pajari and Salminen also moved into podium contention as the rally progressed, ending Saturday third overall and keeping themselves firmly involved in the championship battle heading into the decisive final day.

With Solberg leading the rally and Evans holding a reduced advantage in the virtual champion-

ship standings, the title fight came down to Sunday's bonus points. Solberg strengthened his position with a stage win on the opening Osilo – Tergu test, while a puncture for Evans during the second pass of the stage left the Welsh driver heading into the season-ending Power Stage with a virtual championship lead of just one point.

The final stage therefore became a direct contest for the world title. Solberg was ahead of Evans on the split times during an all-out run



Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 tears through a gravel stage, kicking up a towering plume of sand as it powers out of a corner at Rally Italia Sardegna.

but went off the road in the closing section. He recovered to complete the stage and secure the rally victory, while Evans' faster Power Stage time was enough to seal the championship.

The title represents a hard-earned reward for Evans and Martin after seven seasons consistently fighting at the front with GR-WRT. Their 2026 campaign combined victories in Sweden and Japan with strong consistency throughout the year, allowing them to finish the season on 243 points, five ahead of Sol-

berg and six clear of Pajari.

Solberg and Edmondson's Sardinia victory completed an outstanding first full season at the highest level. Following wins at Rallye Monte-Carlo and Chile, the pair ended the year with back-to-back victories and second place in the championship on 238 points.

Ogier and Landais secured second place in Sardinia, 57.6 seconds behind the winners. The result marked Ogier's record 121st WRC podium and came on his record 214th WRC start, further adding

- Oliver Solberg and Elliott Edmondson lead an all-Toyota podium with victory in the No. 99 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1
- Sébastien Ogier and Vincent Landais finish second, with Sami Pajari and Marko Salminen completing the podium in third
- Elfyn Evans and Scott Martin secure their first FIA World Rally Championship drivers' and co-drivers' titles

to the nine-time world champion's remarkable career achievements.

Pajari and Salminen completed the all-Toyota podium in third, 1 minute and 37.4 seconds behind the winners. Their ninth podium of the season was more than any other crew achieved in 2026 and helped them finish third in the championship on 237 points following a breakthrough campaign that also included three victories.

The result gave the Toyota GR YARIS Rally1 its 12th victory from 13 rallies during the 2026 season, equalling the record for wins in a single campaign. It also marked the car's record-extending 48th WRC victory overall as it completed its fifth and final season under the current homologation cycle ahead of new technical regulations for 2027.

GR-WRT concludes the season with 662 points, clinching its sixth successive manufacturers' championship title. The team has now produced the drivers' and co-drivers' world champions in seven of the past eight seasons and has completed a sweep of the drivers', co-drivers', and manufacturers' championships five times in the past six years.

Toyota's motorsports history dates back over 60 years. Reflecting the concept that 'the roads build the people, and the people build the cars,' Toyota has competed in a wide range of motorsport disciplines worldwide. Its major successes, achieved under the most extreme conditions, together with the hard-won knowledge and technical insights they have yielded, continue to serve as the foundation for building 'ever-better' cars.

Reform targets greater flexibility

IOC replaces commissions with working groups in major reform

LAUSANNE, Oct. 17, (Xinhua): The International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced that it will transition its stakeholder engagement model from a commission-based approach to a working group approach.

Over the past 15 months, several working groups have already been established to address key "Fit for the Future" topics, demonstrating the value of the approach. As part of the review, the IOC paused its non-institutional commissions in February while assessing future engagement models.

Following that assessment, the IOC has decided to discontinue 12 commissions: Athletes' Entourage; Culture and Olympic Heritage; Digital Engagement and Marketing Communications; Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; the IOC Advisory Committee on Human Rights; Olympic Education; Olympic Programme; Olympism365; Public Affairs and Corporate Communications; Revenues and Commercial Partnerships; Sustainability and Legacy; and Technology and Technical Innovation.

The change stems from the ongoing "Fit for the Future" reform process and follows more than a year of consultation and review, including discussions with commission members, the IOC said. The organization concluded that working groups with clearly defined mandates offer a more effective and flexible mechanism for shaping policy and supporting decision-making.

The IOC says the shift will enable more targeted engagement on key strategic priorities and policy development across the Olympic Movement.



In this file photo, Olympic Rings are pictured in front of The Olympic House, headquarters of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) at the opening of the executive board meeting of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Lausanne, Switzerland. (AP)

A number of institutional bodies will continue their work unchanged. These include the Athletes' Commission, the Audit Committee, the Coordination Commissions for the Olympic Games and Youth Olympic Games, the Ethics Commission, the Finance Commission, the Future Host Commissions for both the Summer and Winter Games, the Health, Medicine and Science Commission, the Human Resources Committee, the IOC Members Election Commission, the IOC Television and Marketing Services Board of Directors, the Legal Affairs Commission, the Olympic Broadcasting Services Board of Directors, the Olympic Channel Services Board of Directors, the Olympic Refugee Foundation Board and the Olympic Solidarity Commission.

The IOC said the transition "is designed to provide greater flexibility in engaging subject-matter expertise while strengthening its ability to address specific opportunities and challenges through focused, purpose-driven collaboration."

All Blacks crush Wallabies to sweep Bledisloe Cup

SYDNEY, Oct 17, (AP): The high-tempo, breadth-of-the-field game New Zealand hoped to produce in a losing effort in South Africa came to life in Australia on Saturday when the All Blacks beat the Wallabies 43-21 to sweep the Bledisloe Cup rugby series 2-0.

After the first 12 minutes were frenetic but scoreless, New Zealand scored six tries and conceded one to lead 36-7 by halftime and to take the match away from Australia.

New Zealand, which lost the test series in South Africa 3-1, also scored the first try of the second half but the Wallabies fought back strongly and created a momentum shift which saw them score two tries to one after the break.

"The way we came out in that first half was great," All Blacks captain Codie Taylor said. "It was a real challenge for us to make sure we backed up a really good performance last week.

"I thought we were awesome in that first 40, backing ourselves and playing what was in front, but that second 40 was a bit different."

In the first half, scrumhalf Cam Roigard conducted the All Blacks' superbly, switching the attack left and right to twist and bend the Wallabies' defense while Damian McKenzie picked out runners with short passes to create line breaks.

When the line was broken, the New Zealand support game kicked in with ruthless efficiency and multiple passes led to tries that dizzied defenders. Hooker Codie Taylor and backrowers Peter Lakai and Wallace Sititi were strong runners with the ball and fullback Beauden Barrett regularly inserted himself into the backline and had two tries by halftime.

Lakai and Rieko Ioane also scored first-half tries and lock Fabian Holland put in a huge shift with 21 tackles.

The Wallabies' attacking efforts generally were enveloped in swarming All Blacks defense or undone by errors of handling or passing. But they scored tries through lock Jeremy Williams in the first half and fullback Tom Wright and Filipo Daugunu in the second.

Williams made a detour to the sin-bin shortly after his try and the All Blacks exploited the numerical advantage when Sititi scored from the back of a dominant scrum.

'The way we came out in that first half was great'



New Zealand's Wallace Sititi, right, is tackled by Australia's Ryan Loneran during the Bledisloe Cup rugby union test in Sydney. (AP)

Barrett completed his double with an intercept try on the tick of halftime and winger Josh Moorby who scored New Zealand's first try, also scored the first try of the second half after only two minutes, making the score 43-7.

New Zealand then seemed on the verge of consecutive 50-point scorelines against Australia after winning the first test 50-19 in Auckland last weekend. But there was significant shift in the second half.

The All Blacks had been forced to make a late backline change when influential center Jordie Barrett suffered a calf injury short before the match. They then lost Barrett's midfield partner Quinn Tupaea to a failed head injury after only four minutes.

Those setbacks didn't affect the fluency of the All Blacks' attack in the first half but their combination become less easy in the second half as re-

placements took the field and injuries and fatigue took their toll.

Winger Max Jorgensen again was Australia's best back and his elusive run along the right touch led to Wright's try. Daugunu's length of the field effort completed a 14-7 second half for Australia.

"I'm gutted. When you give a team like the All Blacks a head start it's tough and it's not good enough from this group," Wallabies captain Harry Wilson said. "We've got to be a lot better."

The men's game was part of a four-match day for spectators at the former Olympic stadium in Sydney. In a women's 15-a-side match, Australia beat Scotland 56-12 as part of the WXV Global Series. The Australian men's sevens team drew 19-19 with two-time Olympic champions Fiji and the Australian women's sevens side lost 21-12 to New Zealand.

Strong turnout and positive customer engagement

KIB concludes successful Auto World Show participation and strong launch of ‘DriveNow’ app

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 17: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) successfully concluded its participation in Auto World Show, which drew strong public turnout and broad engagement from customers and visitors, culminating in the official launch of its new digital app, “DriveNow.” The Bank’s booths attracted significant attention throughout the exhibition, providing visitors with advisory services and integrated financing and insurance solutions.

Throughout the event, KIB welcomed visitors across three dedicated booths, each designed to showcase a different dimension of the Bank’s offering. One booth was dedicated to KIB Takaful Insurance, while another was focused on providing visitors with the opportunity to learn more about KIB’s financing solutions and showcased the Nissan X-Trail from Al-Babtain Group. The Bank’s third and largest exhibition space featured several cars, including two Toyota Land Cruiser vehicles from ALSAYER Group, the GAC GS8 from Mutawa AlKazi, and the Avatr 07 from Adel Alghanim Automotive, creating an interactive setting.

A key highlight of KIB’s participation was the debut of DriveNow, the Bank’s new digital application that brings car discovery and vehicle financing together in one place. The application enables users to browse available vehicles, compare specifications and prices, calculate financing, select suitable payment options, apply for vehicle financing, and track their applications through completion.

During the event, Eng. Ahmed Al-Mutairi, Director of the General Services Department at the Kuwait Ministry of Commerce and Industry visited KIB’s booths, where he was briefed on the Bank’s participation, its automotive financing solutions, and the capabilities of the newly launched DriveNow application. The visit also provided an opportunity to showcase KIB’s approach to combining digital innovation with direct customer engagement at one of Kuwait’s major automotive events.

The launch attracted strong interest from Auto World Show visitors, who were introduced to how DriveNow



The official launch of new digital app, ‘DriveNow’.

can simplify the journey from considering a vehicle to arranging its financing. The app was developed to serve customers whether they already have a specific car in mind or are still comparing their options, while bringing the main stages of the process together within a single digital platform.

Commenting on KIB’s participation, Othman Tawfeq, General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said: “The success of our participation in Auto World Show reflects the value of meeting customers where their interests and financial needs come together. For us, the launch of DriveNow represents a broader shift in how we continue to design retail banking experiences around important decisions in our customers’ lives.”

Tawfeq added: “The level of engagement we saw dur-



Officials pose for a group photo.

ing the event reinforces our belief that customers increasingly expect banking solutions to be integrated into their wider lifestyle journey. By combining a strong physical presence at Auto World Show with a new digital proposition, we were able to introduce customers to a more connected way of exploring their automotive and financing options.”

From his side, Abdulaziz Al-Shammari, Assistant General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said: “What stood out during Auto World Show was how quickly customers understood the practical value of DriveNow. Visitors were able to see a vehicle, discuss financing with our teams, and at the same time explore how the application allows them to compare cars, calculate their financing and follow their application from

one place.”

Al-Shammari added: “The event also gave us valuable direct interaction with customers as they experienced the application for the first time. Together with our dedicated booths and banking solutions and offers, our participation at Auto World Show helped us create a complete experience rather than simply presenting a financing product.”

It is worth noting that KIB remains keen on maintaining an active presence at specialized events that bring the Bank closer to different segments of society and provide opportunities to better understand their evolving needs. Through these efforts, KIB continues to reinforce its role as a trusted financial partner and its commitment to delivering an elevated banking experience under its main slogan, “Bank for Life.”

Davidovich ‘upsets’ Zverev to reach Shanghai Masters final against Jodar



Spain's Alejandro Davidovich Fokina returns a ball to Germany's Alexander Zverev during the men's singles semifinal match at the Shanghai Masters tennis tournament in Shanghai, China. (AP)

Sonay Kartal continues her winning run at Wuhan Open

SHANGHAI, Oct 17, (AP): Alejandro Davidovich Fokina upset future No. 1 Alexander Zverev 5-7, 6-4, 6-3 to reach the Shanghai Masters final on Saturday.

The 25th-seeded Spaniard, who won the ATP 250 Chengdu Open in China last month, reached the second Masters final of his career after losing on clay at Monte Carlo in 2022.

He will try for his third title of the year - and of his career - against 20-year-old Spaniard Rafael Jodar, who also secured a big win by toppling 2019 champion Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 6-4 to reach his first Masters final.

Medvedev saved three match points serving at 5-3 down and then held serve. But Jodar sealed the victory on his own serve, clipping a forehand winner down the line after Medvedev’s tame smash at the net sat up nicely for him.

The No. 12-seeded Jodar is looking for his second career title after winning on clay at the Grand Prix Hassan II in Marrakech, Morocco in April.

Earlier Saturday, the top-seeded Zverev, who recently clinched the



Sonay Kartal of Britain serves the ball against Jelena Ostapenko of Latvia in a women's singles semifinal match during the 2026 Wuhan Open tennis tournament in Wuhan in central China's Hubei Province. (AP)

year-end No. 1 ranking, served out the first set with an ace.

But the imposing German soon found himself under pressure, saving two break points in the fourth game of the second set.

Davidovich Fokina broke Zverev with a brilliant two-handed backhand down the line to level the match, and an ace put him 4-1 up in the deciding set.

“Today I was flat. Even in the

first set, even though I won the set,” Zverev said. “I was not reacting so well. I was returning quite badly.”

At 15-40 down on serve in the eighth game, Zverev saved two match points. But Davidovich Fokina held his nerve and clinched victory on his third match point when Zverev could not return his sliced serve on forehand.

“I feel like I’ve actually, in a way, maybe overachieved this week because of how much tennis I played,” Zverev added. “I carried fatigue into the tournament, and I’m okay to lose to a player like this today.”

Zverev is scheduled to play the ATP 500 in Vienna, which begins Oct. 26 and could see him face seven-time Grand Slam champion Carlos Alcaraz.

British player Sonay Kartal continued her fine run by beating former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko 7-6 (9), 7-6 (5) to reach the Wuhan Open final.

Kartal’s victory over the 2017 Roland Garros winner added to previous big wins over Elina Svitolina and two-time Grand Slam finalist Jasmine Paolini.

“That was probably one of the toughest matches I’ve ever played,” Kartal said after beating the Latvian. “At times she is un-

playable and you have to ride that wave. Mentally, this is one of the best performances of my career.”

She faces another Grand Slam finalist in the final, after French Open runner-up Maja Chwalinska beat six-time major winner Iga Swiatek 7-5, 6-1 in an all-Polish semifinal.

The No. 7-seeded Swiatek mixed 37 winners with 33 unforced errors while 16th-seeded Chwalinska had only 19 winners but made just seven unforced errors.

Chwalinska, who reached the French Open final as a qualifier, will aim for a first career title against the No. 170-ranked Kartal. She is bidding for her second career title.

The 24-year-old Kartal, who has a career high ranking of 44 and one singles title, missed more than six months with a stress fracture in her back earlier this year.

Swiatek is looking to gain ground in the Race to the WTA Finals rankings ahead of the season-ending event next month in Indian Wells.

The former No.1-ranked Swiatek is 10th in the race with the top eight qualifying.

Svitolina secured the seventh spot on Saturday, leaving one place remaining. The Ukrainian won it in 2018 without losing a match.

Best of the Rest

Mourinho backs suspended Vinicius: Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho defended Vinicius Jr. on Saturday as the Brazilian forward prepares to serve a four-match suspension following his dismissal against Villarreal last weekend.

Vinicius was banned for pulling the hair of Villarreal midfielder Nathan Saliba during Real Madrid’s 1-0 win, receiving a two-match suspension for the incident and a further two matches for protesting the referee’s decision.

The Portuguese coach also played down suggestions that Vinicius’ substitution had been decisive in Real Madrid’s dramatic 4-3 Champions League victory over Roma on Wednesday.

Madrid scored three late goals to complete the comeback after Vinicius was replaced by Endrick, who played a key role in the turnaround. (Xinhua)

Kuwait fields 18 players at Arab Tennis Veterans Championship

AMMAN, Oct 17: The Arab Tennis Federation, headed by Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, has launched the seventh Arab Tennis Veterans Championship, held in cooperation with the Jordan Tennis Federation from October 16 to 23, with sponsorship from Kuwait Airways and Ananas.

The competition is taking place at the Jordan Tennis Federation courts in Amman, featuring 175 male and female players from 14 Arab countries, including 18

representatives from Kuwait.

Arab Tennis Federation Secretary-General Ali Lafi Al-Mutairi said the latest edition builds on the success of previous tournaments and underscores the federation’s commitment to keeping the championship as a regular fixture on its sporting calendar.

He stressed that the federation places considerable importance on veteran players, recognizing their years of dedication and valuable contributions to the development of tennis across the Arab world.



The Kuwaiti delegation.

Canada ends England’s 41-match unbeaten streak

TORONTO, Oct 17, (AP): England’s unprecedented 41-game unbeaten run was broken by Canada 24-21 and witnessed by the biggest crowd in North American women’s rugby.

Canada, unable to handle England’s scrum, trailed 14-5 at halftime and 21-12 after more than an hour and didn’t settle a compelling WXV contest until a 78th-minute try by Shoshanah Seumanutafa.

“We really had to grind it out and find a way,” Canada captain Sophie de Goede said. “That’s kind of the DNA of our team.”

England suffered its first loss since the 2022 Women’s Rugby World Cup final, its only previous defeat in 72 matches since 2019.

“Sometimes the flipped coin doesn’t go on the side you want it to go,” England captain Meg Jones said. “It’s just the nature of the beast.”

England showed vulnerability last month at home where it drew with Canada 26-26, ending its 39-match winning streak.

That effort gave Canada confidence for the return match at home, including the availability of world player of the year De Goede, rested from its last match, a loss in France, and wings Asia Hogan-Rochester and Alysha Corrigan after injuries. The hope drew 18,621 spectators, 7,000 more than the previous biggest crowd for a standalone women’s match in North America.

England should have scored first but Claudia Moloney-MacDonald dropped the ball over the tryline. Then Canada used numbers after a Zoe Harrison yellow card for fullback Savannah Bauder to score in a three-on-one.

England stumbles continued with three turnovers in the Canada 22, two on the tryline. But after Canada lock Laetitia Royer was sin-binned, England powered ahead with tries by Maddie Feaunati and Harrison before halftime.

Canada closed to 14-12 in the second half when Corrigan collected her own grubber kick and celebrated before scoring. But England moved further ahead 21-12 after 12 phases when prop Sarah Bern smashed over.

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Brentford's goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher saves a ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Brentford and Liverpool in London. (AP)

Sports

Al-Arabi stumbles in AFC Challenge League

Fahaheel plays Al-Shabab in league

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

HISOR, Tajikistan, Oct 17: Al-Arabi suffered a 1-0 defeat to Syria's Homs Al-Fidaa at Hisor Central Stadium in Tajikistan in their opening Group B match of the AFC Challenge League.

The Kuwaiti side will look to bounce back when it faces Tajikistan's Istiklol in their second group-stage fixture, before wrapping up their campaign against Lebanon's Nejme next Friday.

Meanwhile, the fifth round of the Zain Premier League gets underway today with two matches.

Fahaheel takes on Al-Shabab in the "Tenth District Derby" at Nayef Al-Dabbous Stadium at 5:40 pm, before Al-Nasr hosts Al-Tadamon in the "Farwaniya Derby" at Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium at 7:55 pm.

The round continues on Monday with Kuwait Club facing Al-Sulaibikhat and Al-Jahra meeting Kazma. The matches between Al-Salmiya and Al-Arabi, and Qadsia and Al-Sahel, have been postponed because of Al-Arabi's and Qadsia's participation in the AFC Challenge League.

Fahaheel, sixth in the standings with six points, will aim to extend its winning run and secure a third consecutive victory. However, it faces a tough test against fourth-placed Al-Shabab, who has seven points and head into the match on the back of a 2-0 win over Al-Salmiya in the previous round.

In the second fixture, fifth-placed Al-Nasr, also on six points, will seek to return to winning ways after dropping points in its last two outings. Coach Dhafer Al-Adwani will be eager to halt the slide and guide his side to a victory that would strengthen its position in the standings.

Al-Tadamon, meanwhile, will be determined to claim its first win of the season and move away from the foot of the table.



Al-Arabi player challenges an opponent for the ball during Al-Arabi match against Homs.

Salil, Safaa Al-Abdullah shine

Kuwait wins six medals at UAE Freestyle Skiing Championships

DUBAI, Oct 17, KUNA): Kuwait's national ski team claimed three gold and three silver medals at the UAE Freestyle Skiing (Freestyle FIS) Championships, held in Dubai from October 14 to 16 under the auspices of the International Ski and Snowboard Federation (FIS).

Salil Al-Abdullah and Safaa Al-Abdullah secured two gold and two silver medals in the Style category, before adding another gold and silver in the Street Style category to complete Kuwait's six-medal haul.

Speaking to KUNA, Safaa Al-Abdullah said the women's competition featured a high level of performance and intense competition, with female athletes from several countries, including France, Iran and the UAE.

She praised national coach Abdulrahman Al-Wuhaib for his role in preparing the team for the championship, expressing delight at the results and confidence that the achievement would inspire Kuwaiti athletes to pursue further success in upcoming competitions.

Al-Abdullah also thanked the Kuwait Winter Games Club and the Public Authority for Youth for their support and efforts to facilitate the team's participation.

She commended the UAE organizing committee for its excellent arrangements, noting that the championship featured numerous competitions across different disciplines.

Al-Abdullah dedicated the achievement to Kuwait, its leadership and people, as well as everyone involved in the sport at the Kuwait Winter Games Club.



KUNA photo
Salil Al-Abdullah and Safaa Al-Abdullah pose with an official.

Organizers eye world-class experience

Saudi Arabia says 2027 Asian Cup preparations on schedule

SEOUL, Oct 17, (AP): Asian Cup organizers insisted that the continental soccer championship set to be held in Saudi Arabia in early 2027 remains on track despite a wave of missile and drone attacks on the host country in recent days.

The Saudi organizing committee issued a statement saying it is continuing to coordinate closely with the Asian Football Confederation. The tournament is scheduled for Jan. 7-Feb. 5.

"Preparations across all organizational and operational areas are progressing according to the approved schedule, including work on venues, facilities and supporting services," Saudi organizers said. "The focus remains on delivering a world-class tournament experience for participating teams, fans and media from across Asia, while bringing the continent together through football."

South Korea's Professional Footballers' Association had earlier expressed concerns following a series of attacks on the Asian

Cup host country by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels.

"The continued military tensions and security instability in the Middle East are issues that can never be taken lightly," Lee Keun-ho, head of the South Korean player union, said in a statement. "The safety of our national team, as well as all players participating in the Asian Cup, is a serious concern."

South Korea, a World Cup semifinalist in 2002, is set to open against Yemen on Jan. 10 but only if, Lee added, it was deemed safe to do so.

"No competition's value can take precedence over the lives and safety of players and football fans," he said. "If safety cannot be sufficiently guaranteed, all possibilities - including whether the tournament should be held - must be carefully reviewed."

An AFC Champions League game between Cristiano Ronaldo's Al-Nassr and Uzbekistan's Neftchi Fergana was delayed on Monday in Riyadh after Saudi

Arabia's Civil Defense issued a security alert.

Asian Football Confederation President Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa told media in Zurich this week that - if necessary - the Asian Cup could be postponed by one year.

"We can wait until the end of November" to make a decision, Salman said. "Things can change very quickly for better or worse in the region, and it is a question of seeing what happens."

"If we need to make a decision, then we will, but we could move it back a year to 2028 if we need to."

Several sports events that were set to be held in Saudi Arabia this year have been moved or canceled. The WTA Finals, the season-ending event in women's tennis, was moved from Riyadh to Indian Wells, California.

On Friday, a BMX cycling qualifying event in Saudi Arabia for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics was canceled, the International Cycling Union said.

Chelsea edges Everton amid head-injury concern for Martinez

Another Premier League win for Man City as Haaland keeps scoring

LONDON, Oct 17, (AP): The on-going financial scandal enveloping Manchester City isn't affecting the team's results in the Premier League.

Or Erling Haaland's appetite for scoring goals.

City secured a seventh straight win to open the league by beating Ipswich 3-2 at home on Saturday, with Haaland netting twice to move to a competition-high eight goals for a campaign being played under a cloud of controversy.

It made it back-to-back victories in the league for City - either side of a 4-2 loss to Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League - since being found guilty of large-scale financial wrongdoing in the Premier League for nearly a decade. The seismic verdict threatens the club's place in England's lucrative top flight, though City continues to protest its innocence and has appealed.

City manager Enzo Maresca believes the saga has galvanized the squad and the defiance among the fanbase continued, with many supporters bringing along inflatable bananas - a throwback to an item that fans brought to games in the 1980s for fun amid tough times for the team

- for Ipswich's visit.

"Going down with the City," was the chant by some home fans in the first half at Etihad Stadium as they watched their team extend their lead in the league to six points. Second-place Arsenal will visit Nottingham Forest on Sunday.

Haaland and second-half substitute Antoine Semenyo were seen hobbling off the field at the end of the game, which finished with Ipswich grabbing its second goal in stoppage time and piling on the pressure in the final minutes.

Liverpool came from behind to win 2-1 at nine-man Brentford but lost two more players to injury in a busy stretch of fixtures.

Trailing to Keane Lewis-Potter's 44th-minute header, Liverpool found itself with a man advantage when Brentford midfielder Yehor Yarmoliuk was shown a red card in first-half stoppage time for aiming a head-butt at Jeremy Jacquet.

Liverpool took advantage, with Victor Munoz and Alexander Isak scoring after the break to consign Brentford to its first league defeat this season.

Vitaly Janelt became the second

Brentford player sent off after getting a second yellow card in second-half stoppage time.

Isak has just returned from an injury sustained on international duty with Sweden but two players are back on the treatment table, with Dominik Szoboszlai and Jeremie Frimpong - a halftime substitute - forced off with injuries.

Pedro Neto scored early and late in the second half to lead Chelsea to a 2-0 win at Everton in a match marred by a serious-looking head injury to Chelsea goalkeeper Emi Martinez.

Neto slotted home the opening goal 44 seconds after the resumption and then added the second in the 90th minute after pouncing on the loose ball following a blocked free kick.

Chelsea handed Everton a first loss of the season after seven rounds, keeping a first clean sheet in nine months in the process.

Martinez was conscious and in the hospital, Chelsea manager Xabi Alonso said, after receiving 10 minutes of treatment on the field and then being carried off on a stretcher following a head-on-head collision with Everton defender Jarrad Branthwaite at a free kick.

Martinez, Argentina's World Cup-winning goalie from 2022, was moving his arms as he was taken off the field. Branthwaite carried on playing after a concussion test.

Fulham eased the pressure on manager Alvaro Arbeloa by beating Hull 1-0 for its first league win of the season.

son.

Alex Iwobi scored the goal in the 33rd minute, helping Fulham climb off the bottom of the table - much to the relief of Arbeloa, the former Real Madrid coach who arrived in the off-season.

Napoli slumped to another de-



Ipswich Town's Issa Diop blocks an attempt to score by Manchester City's Antoine Semenyo during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and Ipswich Town, in Manchester, England. (AP)

feat with Akor Adams' strike giving Venezia a 1-0 win for its first Serie A points of the season.

Kevin De Bruyne saw his penalty saved by Venezia goalkeeper Filip Stanković as Massimiliano Allegri's team suffered its second straight loss - after its Champions League defeat to Villarreal - and a third loss from seven games in the Italian league.

Adams chased Simon Sohm's hopeful punt forward and capitalized on a mistake from Napoli defender Amir Rrahmani to win the ball and shoot past goalkeeper Alex Meret with the aid of a deflection from Rrahmani's desperate challenge just after the break.

De Bruyne should have scored after Matias Moreno brought down Rasmus Højlund, but Stanković saved the Belgian's spot kick in the 68th.

It gave new Venezia coach Davide Nicola a winning start after replacing Giovanni Stroppa on Wednesday.

Inter Milan visited Bologna later Saturday, and Roma welcomed Genoa.

Alex Baena scored late for Atlético Madrid to beat Espanyol 1-0 away in La Liga.