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Amir, Macron set for high-level talks

Kuwait hosts French president Monday



His Highness the Amir of Kuwait



French President Emmanuel Macron

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): French President Emmanuel Macron will arrive in Kuwait on Monday for an official visit, accompanied by an official delegation.

He will hold official talks with His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Separately, Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah discussed matters of mutual interest with French Ambassador to Kuwait Olivier Gauvin on Sunday.

The Ministry of Defense said in a press statement that the meeting addressed ways to enhance military cooperation between Kuwait and France.

Crown Prince receives US Naval Commander



HH the Crown Prince receives Vice Admiral Curt A. Renshaw.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday Vice Admiral Curt A. Renshaw, commander of US Naval Forces Central Command, the Fifth Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces, and his accompanying delegation during a visit to Kuwait.

The meeting was attended by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah and Chief of the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Director General of the General Department of Coast Guard Commodore Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, along with senior officials.

AMIR CONDOLES SAUDI KING OVER FATAL HELICOPTER CRASH

GCC sounds alarm over Houthi threats

Houthi projectile hits Saudi homes, injures 6



GCC foreign ministers during the 168th GCC Ministerial Council meeting.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud over the deaths of two National Guard officers in a helicopter crash in Najran.

His Highness expressed sincere condolences and sympathy, praying for God's mercy upon the deceased, patience for their families, and continued safety for Saudi Arabia.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud over the deaths of two National Guard officers in a helicopter crash in Najran.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of condolences to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud over the deaths of two National Guard officers in a helicopter crash in Najran.

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Justice Minister, you nailed it

WE are witnessing a truly tragic situation. Its full extent requires a closer examination of the details.

The recent social media post by a Kuwaiti citizen sheds light on a troubling pattern, as he shared his ordeal with an expatriate contractor. He said "after years of waiting for state housing support, I received a plot in Mutlaa and took a loan to build a home for my family. I finalized an agreement with a contractor, but the moment he collected the payment, he disappeared. When I inquired about his whereabouts, I found out that he returned to his native country on the same day. Left in distress by this scam, I have

Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

even contemplated living in a tent with my children."

Police records indicate that this scenario has evolved into a prevalent pattern in Mutlaa residential area, which remains heavily burdened by ongoing contractual conflicts and legal claims. This is an alarming development.

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12 stripped of citizenship

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The official gazette "Kuwait Al-Yaum" published four Amiri decrees on Sunday concerning the revocation of the Kuwaiti citizenship of 12 individuals, including those who acquired citizenship through dependency, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Decree No. 165/2024 revokes the citizenship of three individuals, Decree No. 166 covers seven individuals, while Decrees No. 167 and 168 revoke the citizenship of one individual each. The decrees are based on the Con-

stitution, the Amiri Order issued on May 10, 2024, and Kuwaiti Nationality Law No. 15/1959, as amended.

They were issued upon the recommendation of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and with the approval of the Council of Ministers.

It is worth highlighting that the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior is responsible for implementing the decrees, which take effect upon issuance and are to be published in the official gazette.

Kuwait drives paper off road

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Insurance Regulatory Unit (IRU) has ordered insurance companies to stop issuing paper documents for compulsory vehicle insurance, making the digital "Bima" system the exclusive channel for issuing civil liability insurance policies arising from traffic accidents.

In a circular issued on Sunday to insurance companies authorised to issue such policies, the

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Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Sunday expressed Kuwait's solidarity with **Turkiye** following floods that swept through Istanbul, claiming several lives, leaving others missing and causing extensive material damage.

In a statement, the ministry extended Kuwait's sincere condolences to the Turkish government and people, as well as the families of the victims, wishing the injured a speedy recovery. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait expressed solidarity with **Indonesia** following fires in the **East Java** province that left several people dead and injured.

In a statement on Sunday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs extended Kuwait's sincere condolences to the Indonesian government and people, as well as the families of the victims, wishing those injured a speedy recovery. (KUNA)

GCC-Russia talks seek stronger 'strategic' ties

MANAMA, Oct 18, (KUNA): GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi stressed on Sunday the importance of strengthening ties with Russia, citing shared interests and a mutual desire to expand cooperation.

Addressing the ninth GCC-Russia Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue, chaired by Bahraini Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullatif Al-Zayani and attended by GCC foreign ministers, including Kuwait's Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Al-Budaiwi said the meeting came amid highly sensitive regional circumstances.

He said GCC states were facing unprecedented attacks threatening their security and sovereignty, while maritime navigation and en-

ergy supplies were exposed to direct threats, underscoring the need for intensified consultations on regional and international issues and for resolving disputes peacefully in accordance with the UN Charter and international law.

Al-Budaiwi said Iranian attacks against GCC states since February 28, 2026, had involved more than 7,000 ballistic missiles and drones targeting airports, ports, power stations, desalination plants, and oil and gas facilities, killing civilians.

He stressed that GCC states had not been party to the war and had made extensive efforts to prevent its dangerous repercussions, despite violations of their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

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KUNA photo
Kuwait Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at the ninth GCC-Russia Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue.

Pricey streak continues

Oil turmoil spurs Kuwait to 'rethink' export routes

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Global energy markets have recently experienced intense volatility, highlighting the need to reshape the international

economic landscape, where political and security dynamics are deeply intertwined and directly affect supply chains and prices.

Against this backdrop, Kuwaiti oil expert Kamel Al-Harami provided an in-depth analysis of the outlook for oil markets and the future of Kuwait's logistical strategies amid these challenges.

He emphasized that current geopolitical developments in the region, coupled with ongoing reciprocal attacks targeting Russian oil refineries and affecting their production capacity, will play a significant role in keeping global oil prices elevated in the coming period.

Al-Harami explained that persistent political and security tensions continue to fuel uncertainty across international shipping lanes and major production hubs. This directly contributes to keeping oil prices above \$100 per barrel for extended periods, compelling producing nations to adopt flexible policies that ensure uninterrupted exports and maintain access to global markets, even under the most challenging circumstances.

Regarding local initiatives to address these developments, Al-Harami highlighted the Kuwait Petroleum

Corporation's (KPC) efforts to study and implement strategic projects aimed at diversifying export routes and reducing reliance on traditional waterways that may be vulnerable to security threats.

In this context, he described the KPC's plan to construct a new pipeline for Kuwaiti oil, extending directly to Saudi Arabia or the Gulf of Oman, as a highly positive strategic step. Such a move would strengthen Kuwait's national oil security and provide a safer, more stable export route to the open ocean.

Al-Harami expressed hope that KPC would announce the details of the comprehensive executive and engineering plan for this vital pipeline in due course.

He outlined several key regulatory and logistical aspects that require careful study and prior coordination with regional stakeholders. In particular, the pipeline project would require the consent of the countries through which it would pass.

Al-Harami also stressed the need to establish clear legal and financial mechanisms governing transit arrangements, including whether transit countries would receive financial compensation or economic benefits in exchange for allowing the pipeline to cross their territories. These considerations underscore the crucial role of oil diplomacy in ensuring the success of such cross-border projects.

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Al-Jarallah: Use of treated water by farmers will boost agricultural output



Warba Bank builds ties at IMF-World Bank meetings



NBK launches 'Founder' program to empower female entrepreneurs & support women-led businesses growth

Zain highlights women empowerment as key driver of economic growth



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince

Amir receives Crown Prince, Prime Minister & Ministers

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, and Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali

Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

Crown Prince audiences

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness also received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah and Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdul-

WHEEL LOCKS FOR VEHICLES PARKED HAPHAZARDLY ON ROADS

Result-oriented plan on anvil

Staff using public sector cars to face fines

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Major General Fawaz Al-Roumi, Assistant Undersecretary for Support Security Services at the Ministry of Interior, emphasized that effective planning goes beyond setting goals, as it begins with them and focuses on achieving clear, measurable results that make a tangible difference in people's lives.

He said this is the objective of the ministry's General Strategic Plan for 2030, titled "Shield of the Nation" (Dira' Al-Watan).

In a video released by the Ministry of Interior on X platform, Major General Al-Roumi explained that the plan aims to direct the ministry's efforts and resources towards priorities that deliver the greatest impact on security, institutional performance, and society as a whole.

"We aspire to enhance operational efficiency, improve service quality, strengthen integration across the ministry's sectors, and make more effective use of our capabilities," he said.

He indicated that the ministry intends to link its objectives to clear performance indicators to monitor progress, identify achievements, and pinpoint areas requiring further development and improvement.

Major General Al-Roumi stressed that the ultimate goal is to ensure that the plan's outcomes are reflected in security performance, the quality of services provided, and public confidence in the ministry's work.



Wheel locks in wrong parking: Assistant Director for Traffic Awareness at the General Traffic Department (GTD) in the Interior Ministry Lieutenant Colonel Abdullah Bu Hassan affirmed that the measures taken against the owners of vehicles parked in prohibited areas, such as putting a wheel clamp, are in accordance with the law.



Al-Roumi



Al-Wuhaib

In a telephone interview with Kuwait Radio, Bu Hassan explained that these measures aim to ensure the smooth flow of traffic and the safety of all road users, as public roads belong to everyone and are not the exclusive domain of any individual or group.

Commenting on the photos that went viral on social media showing vehicles with wheel clamps due to illegal parking, he pointed out that this manner of parking obstructs traffic flow and it is considered encroachment on a public roadway, hence, the use of a wheel clamp is a valid traffic enforcement measure. He said this is based on Article One of the Traffic Law, which states "the provisions of this law, along with its implementing regulations and decisions, apply to all types of vehicles, as well as to the movement of pedestrians and animals on public roads." He added that the law regulates traffic on public roads and defines the obligations of all road users.

He also disclosed that GTD deals with reports on this violation round the clock, and responds to complaints received by the Operations Unit at the ministry and those submitted through the specified WhatsApp number.

He emphasized that public roads are shared facilities, so they must not be used in a manner that hinders others or compromises traffic safety. He reiterated that parking in prohibited areas obstructs the flow of traffic and negatively affects other road users, thus, the need to take legal action against violators.

He revealed that the main objective of issuing traffic violation citations is to modify driver behavior, raise public awareness, rectify erroneous

driving habits, prevent the repetition of errors and violations, and ensure compliance with the law and respect for the rights of others.

He then urged motorists to fully abide by the law and refrain from parking in prohibited areas to ensure the smooth flow of traffic and to better serve the public.



Fines planned for ministry cars: As part of the Ministry of Interior's efforts to collect outstanding traffic fines and address potential observations by regulatory authorities, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Major General Abdulwahab Al-Wuhaib has issued Circular No. 134 concerning traffic violations committed using ministry-owned vehicles assigned to officials and employees, reports Al-Anba daily.

The circular directs all sectors and departments within the ministry to provide the General Department of Supplies and Logistics, specifically the Vehicles Department, with the names and civil ID numbers of all individuals using ministry vehicles, enabling the necessary procedures to register traffic violations.

The circular stipulates that, effective from the date of its issuance, all traffic violations involving Ministry of Interior's vehicles will be registered in the names of the individuals using them and linked to their respective civil identification numbers.

It also directs Assistant Undersecretaries, sector heads, Directors General, department directors, and all ministry units to inform their staff of these requirements and ensure strict compliance.

The measure aims to facilitate the monitoring of traffic violations involving ministry vehicles and ensure that violations and their associated fines are attributed to the actual users in accordance with established procedures.

The initiative is intended to regulate the use of ministry vehicles, promote compliance with traffic laws, improve the monitoring of violations and collection of fines, and prevent cases in which traffic violations involving ministry vehicles cannot be attributed to an identified user.

'Charitable work boosts social cohesion, unity and stability'

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Sayyida Nafisa Charitable Foundation (Mabrat Sayyida Nafisa) recently launched a book titled, "Charitable Work and National Unity", at the Ibrahim Taher Al-Baghli Events Hall.

The event was held under the patronage of Assistant Undersecretary for Social Care and Development at the Ministry of Social Affairs Iman Al-Enezi, with Director of the Charitable Societies and Foundations Department Abdulmohsen Al-Mukhayal in attendance.

The book is about the Kuwaiti experience and role of charitable organizations in promoting social solidarity, national unity, and passing the values of giving and volunteerism to the next generations.

In a speech he delivered on behalf of Chairman of the foundation Ibrahim Al-Baghli, Vice Chairman Mortada Al-Jaddi indicated that charitable work is a humanitarian mission and national pillar, as it strengthens social cohesion and stability. He said this is an essential contribution, taking into consideration the current security challenges and exceptional circumstances in the region.

He stated that Kuwait is a model of charitable work under the guidance of its leadership, and based on the generosity of its people and the initiatives of its institutions, stressing that such efforts reached those in need in and outside the country.

He added that acts of giving and solidarity nurture the sense of responsibility and belonging. He disclosed that the book illustrates how charitable foundations support government efforts and serve society, while introducing future generations to the values of volunteerism and engagement.

He expressed his appreciation to Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah for supporting charitable foundations and societies.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): The KUNA Center for Development of Media launched its training program, "Fundamentals of Photography," on Sunday with the participation of several KUNA staff members, the Ministry of Interior, and the Kuwait Fire Force.

The program, which runs until October 22, was led by led by photographer Abdullah Al-Muhareb and aims to develop participants' photography skills and introduce them to the technical and artistic principles required to produce high-quality,

professional images.

It covers an introduction to the world of photography, types of cameras and lenses, and the basics of camera settings including aperture, shutter speed, and ISO sensitivity, as well as practical exercises on adjusting these settings to achieve desired photographic results.

The program explores the fundamentals of image composition and lighting, various genres of photography, and color theory, teaching participants how to apply these elements to enhance the aesthetic and expressive value of their work, which includes practical training on selecting appropriate color palettes based on the nature and subject of the photograph.

It also addresses image editing, highlighting its importance in improving quality and accentuating artistic elements, and the difference in various image file formats and how these choices impact image quality throughout the editing and post-processing stages.

Editor-in-Chief visits Al-Rattam, Al-Haifi family farms

Al-Jarallah: Use of treated water by farmers will boost agricultural output



Editor-in-Chief Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Mansour Al-Ajmi and Ali Al-Hussaini



Editor-in-Chief Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Dr. Amir Al-Rattam and Eng. Rashed Al-Rattam



Editor-in-Chief with Saad Al-Rattam and his sons Engineers Hamad and Khalid.



Ali Fadhel with friends at the Al-Haifi farm.



Editor-in-Chief with Khaled and Mesaed Al-Haifi.



Editor-in-Chief admires the watermelons growing in Al-Haifi farms.

By Adnan Makkawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah embarked on a field inspection tour in North Kuwait, exploring the Abdaly Agricultural Area, which is known for its green produce and dew-dusted fruits, where he visited the estates of the Al-Rattam and Al-Haifi families.

During the visit, Al-Jarallah keenly observed a wide range of crops like tomato, cucumber, pepper, pumpkin, zucchini, okra, eggplant and corn, as well as the open-field and greenhouse cultivations of watermelon and cantaloupe.

At the Al-Rattam diwaniya, Al-Jarallah was welcomed by Eng. Rashid Al-Rattam, Saad Al-Rattam, former minister Dr. Amer Al-Rattam, their sons, their nephew Mohammad, and some Abdaly farmers.

The group conducted a walk through of the surrounding fields, fruit greenhouses, and ornamental plant nurseries, engaging in conversations regarding the operational hurdles of border-area farming, particularly the continuous supply of irrigation water.

During the tour of the fruit greenhouse, which houses a variety of fruit-bearing shrubs and ornamental plants, and the expansive green fields, farmer Saad Mohammad Al-Rattam and his son, Dr. Ali, pointed out the importance of using treated water for agriculture in border areas like Abdaly and Wafra. They said these areas lack natural irrigation sources, such as rainfall, river or groundwater. They explained that relying on freshwater tankers purchased from distribution stations in agricultural areas is not economically viable, as it fails to yield the expected profit for Kuwaiti farmers despite their arduous labor along the northern and southern borders.

Al-Jarallah suggested that providing irrigation water for farms should begin with quaternary treatment of wastewater, followed by the delivery of the necessary volumes to productive agricultural plots. He stated that the use of treated water is a common practice in many countries—even those with abundant rainfall and rivers—as a means to conserve water resources and protect rivers from wastewater pollution.

Citing his experience at his family's farm in Block Six, Saad Mohammad Al-Rattam revealed that the insufficient supply of treated water, particularly during summer, is a difficult challenge for farmers in Abdaly and Wafra. He disclosed that water usually reaches their farm in small and intermittent quantities, sometimes stopping for days at a time, which prevented them from cultivating bigger plots.

With the return of the water supply, albeit in limited quantities, at the start of the current agricultural season, the family planted different crops like corn, pumpkin, zucchini and eggplant, in addition to various leafy greens. They also expanded the cultivation of ornamental plants and fruit trees within a climate-controlled (cooled) greenhouse.

Al-Rattam pointed out that the absence of natural irrigation sources in border agricultural areas makes treated water the most cost-effective option for most field and greenhouse crops, especially when compared to the alternative of purchasing fresh water and transporting it through tankers.

He emphasized that the provision of treated water, specifically water that underwent quaternary treatment, will increase the agricultural output of the country and allow the supply of fresh produce at a lower cost.

During the tour, Al-Jarallah and Al-Rattam agreed that a model farm in Kuwait should measure at least 50,000 square meters and incorporate a variety of agricultural activities, including the raising of sheep and camels. He

indicated that keeping sheep on a spacious farm is a valuable asset, while camels provide both meat and milk. He said purebred Arabian horses offer an opportunity for children to learn horsemanship. He added that the benefits of such a farm extend beyond production and economic returns, as it encourages family members to engage in agricultural work and brings them together in a single location to spend their leisure time.

He then visited the farm of Khalid Rashid Al-Haifi in Plot Six, where he and agricultural journalist Adnan Makawi inspected watermelon and cantaloupe crops.

The farm owners disclosed that they are cultivating these crops on a commercial scale for the first time. The high quality of the produce encouraged other farmers and interested individuals, who visited the farm to purchase the harvest—including farmer Ali Fadel, along with several of his relatives and acquaintances, who were visiting for the third time in a single week.

Khalid Al-Haifi and his son, Musaed, stated that access to treated water will allow them to expand their cultivated area. However, despite the farm's proximity to the main treated-water reservoir on Nazzal Al-Musab Street, the water does not reach their property.

Consequently, they are forced to rely on fresh-water tankers arriving from the Qashaniyah station, which significantly increases production costs.

Al-Haifi indicated that watermelons and cantaloupes require daily irrigation with fresh water to grow large and sweet, their water requirements exceed those of other crops, such as tomato, cucumber, zucchini and eggplant.

He said the watermelon patch at the farm measures around 300 square meters and requires five water tankers daily—at a cost of about KD5 per tanker—an expense that is difficult to recoup from the sale of the harvest.

Al-Haifi and his son confirmed their success in producing delicious red watermelons and cantaloupes on their farm in Abdaly, exclaiming, "Long live Kuwait!"

AI detrimental to future of youth despite benefit

“DESPITE the billions being invested in artificial intelligence, the real story lies not simply in how quickly organizations adopt the technology, but in how little of that investment translates into tangible business value.” Academic researcher and Assistant Dean at the College of Business Administration **Dr. Randa Diab-Bahman** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

“Recent international reports reveal a striking trend across sectors. While most organizations acknowledge that AI enhances productivity and supports decision-making, the financial returns remain far less evident. This gap between AI’s promise, individual user experiences, and the actual outcomes organizations achieve raises a more fundamental question - does the value of AI lie in the technology itself, or in how effectively organizations integrate it into their surrounding human and organizational systems?”



Dr. Randa Bahman

“This does not necessarily mean that AI is failing. Rather, it may indicate that we are measuring its value through too narrow a lens. For instance, if an employee completes a task in two hours instead of four, the benefit may not immediately translate into profit. Instead, it may take the form of improved customer service, faster product development, fewer errors, greater employee capacity, or simply more time for reflection and strategic thinking.”

“These aspects should arguably be recognized as returns on AI investment, even when they do not have an immediate or direct impact on the bottom line. Nevertheless, there are more concerning dimensions to this productivity narrative. Artificial intelligence is increasingly encroaching on the very space that has traditionally served as a training ground for young employees to learn how organizations operate. Many tasks that once gave entry-level employees their first opportunities to analyze information, develop professional judgment, and learn from experienced colleagues can now be automated using AI.”

“Recent research highlights this shift in workforce dynamics, showing that job opportunities increasingly favor experienced professionals, while prospects for entry-level candidates are shrinking and becoming less predictable. The problem is not simply a shortage of entry-level jobs, but also the diminishing opportunities for newcomers to gain the experience they need to develop into seasoned professionals.”

“Moreover, recent reports from global firms such as Deloitte and PwC have highlighted the particular vulnerability of younger workers as technology reshapes the tasks, skills, and responsibilities associated with entry-level positions. Much of the work that has traditionally served as a training ground for early-career employees is becoming increasingly susceptible to automation.”

“Consequently, the return on investment in artificial intelligence should not be measured solely by figures on an income statement. Value can also be realized through enhanced skills, better decision-making, greater workforce mobility, and more time for tasks that require human judgment.”

“Ultimately, the greatest return may not be the profit generated today, but the institutional capabilities built for the future. The real test lies in how effectively companies harness technology to strengthen these capabilities while continuing to nurture the talent that will lead their organizations in the years to come.”

Also:

“Today, the Middle East faces one of its most difficult tests in years. Political crises are converging with security tensions, while regional interests intersect with the calculations of major powers, placing the region’s stability under serious strain,” Kuwaiti writer and lawyer **Abdullah Falah Al-Hajri** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

“Rapid developments leave little room for respite, amid growing fears that any further escalation could reshape the regional landscape in unpredictable ways. Stability is no longer merely a political aspiration; it has become an essential requirement for safeguarding national security and protecting the future of the region’s peoples. Successive crises have demonstrated that the consequences of war extend far beyond the borders of the countries involved, affecting economies, energy security, trade flows, investment, and even food security.”

“Consequently, any new regional upheaval would have far-reaching repercussions for the global economy and international markets. The situation is further complicated by the multiple challenges facing the region, ranging from ongoing conflicts and arms races to competing international interests. Under these circumstances, maintaining stability becomes a shared responsibility that demands wisdom, restraint, and the ability to manage disputes without resorting to escalation or confrontation.”

“Experience has shown that security cannot be achieved through military might alone, nor can peace be imposed by force. Rather, lasting peace is built through dialogue, respect for international law and state sovereignty, and the pursuit of political solutions that address the root causes of crises rather than merely managing their consequences. The longer conflicts persist, the higher the cost

for all parties involved and the more difficult it becomes to return to the negotiating table.

“In this context, the role of states that pursue a policy of moderation and seek to bridge differences is crucial. Today, the region needs not further polarization, but initiatives that build trust and open new avenues for understanding. Stability is not the sole responsibility of any one state; it is a shared interest closely tied to the security of the Gulf, economic prosperity, and the future of generations to come.”

“The region is facing a critical test of stability, the outcome of which will depend on the ability of all parties to prioritize wisdom over impulse, diplomacy over escalation, and shared interests over narrow calculations. They will either succeed in navigating this phase with minimal losses or risk being drawn into another prolonged and intractable cycle of crises. There is still hope that all parties will recognize that stability is not a political gain for one side at the expense of another, but rather the foundation of development and prosperity - and the surest guarantee of the security of peoples and the future of the entire region.”

□ □ □

“Responsible citizenship is the first line of defense in protecting state property and national assets,” columnist Major General (Rtd.) **Faisal Musaed Al-Jazzaf** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

“In any society striving for prosperity and sustainable development, public property and facilities serve as vital arteries, ensuring the stability and well-being essential to everyday life. From public parks and schools to roads, hospitals, land, and natural resources, these are national assets established for the benefit of all and intended to serve the public.”

“The crucial question today is - Who is responsible for protecting these assets from waste and neglect? The answer lies not solely in laws or executive authorities, but in the awareness and everyday conduct of each individual citizen. True citizenship is more than an emotional attachment to the nation or a slogan; it is reflected in concrete actions and represents both a moral and legal responsibility. It makes every individual a genuine partner in safeguarding the nation’s resources.”

“State property must be protected as a collective asset, not treated as something ‘up for grabs.’ Encroachments on or damage to state property can take many forms, ranging from acts of vandalism in public parks and on streets to the unlawful occupation of government land and the excessive consumption of resources such as water and electricity. Sociologists and economists emphasize that the root of the problem lies in a common misconception: the belief that ‘public property belongs to no one.’”

“In reality, public property belongs to everyone, and any infringement upon it directly undermines the right of every citizen and resident to enjoy a high quality of life. How does active citizenship contribute to protecting public property? True citizenship is reflected in the preservation of state assets through four key pillars. The first is social awareness and self-regulation. Protecting public property begins with an individual’s own sense of responsibility. Maintaining public cleanliness, observing traffic safety rules, and caring for public facilities all reflect the culture and ethical values of society.”

“Protecting public property is no longer the sole responsibility of security personnel and inspectors. Taking the initiative to report encroachments, theft, or damage to public facilities through government applications and official channels has become a national duty, embodying the principle of the ‘citizen as guardian.’ This responsibility begins at home and in the classroom, where families and schools instill the values of citizenship by teaching children the importance of contributing to their communities.”

“Voluntary initiatives, such as cleaning beaches and parks or maintaining public facilities, are prime examples of citizenship in action. They foster a sense of belonging and strengthen collective responsibility. The economic and social benefits are equally significant. When citizens take responsibility for protecting public property, they contribute directly to the national economy. Such efforts reduce public spending by minimizing the need for costly repairs and restoration following acts of vandalism, allowing these funds to be re-directed toward new development projects.”

“They also help sustain a high quality of life by ensuring that public services and facilities remain efficient, accessible, and well maintained for everyone, without disruption or deterioration in standards. The nation is a trust entrusted to everyone, and safeguarding state property is not a secondary concern but a national, moral, and religious obligation. Every tree preserved, every public facility maintained, and every report filed concerning an encroachment contributes to building a strong and sustainable nation.”

“True citizenship does not end with demanding rights; it begins with fulfilling duties, foremost among them protecting the nation’s assets and ensuring that it remains a thriving home for its people and for generations to come. The Ministry of Public Works’ efforts to resurface and repave roads, upgrade infrastructure, and ensure continuous follow-up are truly deserving of thanks and appreciation.”

– Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi meets with acting CEO of Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company.



Jahra Governorate photos

Population growth pushes flour mill expansion

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi had a meeting with acting CEO of Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company Eng. Hisham Al-Sanousi and Director of the Public Relations, Coordination and Follow Up Department Basel Al-Ali at the headquarters of Jahra Governorate, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

They discussed ways to intensify con-

certed efforts and improve services for the residents of the governorate, plans of the company including its expansion in Mutlaa Residential City in light of the ongoing urban development and population growth in the city, increasing the number of sales outlets for the products of the company, easing the access of residents to these products, and ensuring the needs of those residing in the

city are met.

The governor called for keeping pace with the urban expansion in Mutlaa City by developing services and establishing additional outlets to better serve the residents.

He affirmed the commitment of the governorate to strengthen coordination with all concerned authorities to improve the services offered to the residents.



Mol photo

Traffic police conduct massive crackdown on traffic violators.

26 caught using private car for ‘transportation’

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The General Traffic Department (GTD) in the Ministry of Interior conducted an intensive security campaign targeting public buses.

GTD Director General Brigadier General Rashid Hamoud and Assistant Director of the Traffic Regulation Affairs Department Ayoub Al-Ayoub spearheaded the campaign, which resulted in the issuance of citations for 338 traffic violations and 26 violations for using a motor vehicle for transportation.

This is in addition to the impoundment of 27 vehicles and referral of 27 people to the traffic police.

According to GTD, legal measures will be taken against all those proven to have committed violations and campaigns continue throughout the country to guarantee a safer traffic environment for everyone.



Mol photo

The ‘drifter’ with his vehicle just before the car was crushed.

Clip on media leads to showoff drifter’s arrest

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The General Traffic Department, represented by the Security Oversight Department, apprehended an individual for reckless and dangerous driving in the Wafra agricultural area, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

The arrest followed the discovery of video footage documenting the violations on social media.

In an official statement, GTD explained that the operation was part of ongoing efforts to monitor vehicles involved in reckless driving, as identified through social media platforms.

Authorities identified a vehicle previously recorded engaging in such dangerous behavior and set a carefully planned trap that led to the driver’s arrest and the vehicle’s seizure.

The necessary legal measures were taken against the individual, who was referred to the Central Prison, and the vehicle was crushed.

The authorities reaffirmed their commitment to monitoring and pursuing individuals who engage in reckless and dangerous driving, emphasizing that strict legal action will be taken to safeguard road users and protect lives and property.

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KFF launches raids: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) launched an inspection campaign in Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City and the Wafra agricultural areas, resulting in the closure of eight facilities and the issuance of notices and warnings to 90 others for violating fire safety and prevention regulations, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

In a press release issued on Thursday, KFF explained that specialized teams conducted the campaign to identify buildings and facilities that fail to meet fire safety standards and ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

The campaign covered various commercial establishments and shops, leading to the administrative closure of eight businesses and the issuance of notices and warnings to 90 others for failing to meet KFF’s safety requirements.

Tow truck driver assaults Indian expat in traffic row

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: A dispute near a hospital in Mahbula escalated into an assault and property damage incident after an Indian expatriate filed a complaint against an unidentified tow truck driver, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

According to security sources, the complainant revealed that the driver assaulted him and damaged part of the vehicle he was driving.

He said the incident occurred near the hospital and he did not know the driver’s identity.

Victim of near perfect ‘scam’

Fake doctor says he was ‘joking’

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The General Department of Criminal Investigation, represented by the Cybercrime Combating Department, has urged citizens and residents to avoid clicking on untrusted links received through WhatsApp or social media platforms, reports Al-Anba daily.

In an awareness bulletin published on its official account recently, the department warned that many such links are malicious and designed to steal money or sensitive personal information.

In a recent incident, a Lebanese resident fell victim to an online scam after receiving a call from an unknown individual who had detailed personal information about him, including his occupation and details of his parents’ visit to the country.

The caller claimed there was a problem with his parents’ application and persuaded the resident to approve an authentication request through the “Kuwait Mobile ID” application.

According to the resident, the call was received at 8:30 am last Tuesday.

The caller asked whether the resident was arranging a visit visa for his parents to come to Kuwait. After the resident confirmed, the caller claimed the application had been rejected because his parents’ biometric data had not been updated.

When the resident asked how to resolve the issue, the caller promised to send an authentication request to schedule an appointment for the biometric update.

The resident subsequently received a request through the “Kuwait Mobile ID” app,

which he assumed was part of an official procedure, and approved it.

Moments later, he began receiving a series of notifications indicating that money had been withdrawn from his bank account.

Upon checking his bank account, he discovered that his password had been changed and his entire balance had been drained, leaving only 900 fils.

The victim maintained that he had not provided the caller with any banking details or verification codes.

When he contacted the bank to inquire about the transactions, he was informed that he had fallen victim to a scam.

According to the victim, the fraudster was well-informed about his occupation and the details of his parents’ visit to Kuwait. This led him to believe that the call was related to an official transaction or that someone close to him might have shared his personal information with the scammers.

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‘I was just joking’: Security personnel at Jahra Hospital referred an illegal resident to Al-Naeem Police Station after he claimed to be a doctor while speaking to nursing staff, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

According to security sources, a report was filed regarding the incident, prompting security personnel to proceed to the lounge area where the individual was located.

Upon checking his identification, officers discovered that the man, born in 1983, was residing in the country illegally and was not employed by the Ministry of Health or any other medical facility.

When questioned about claiming to be a doctor, the individual said he had been joking.

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Consulate updates services

ID card, insurance policy introduced for Egyptians

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Consulate of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Kuwait has introduced new procedures and services for the Egyptian community.

These updates include the resumption of national identification card issuance and launching an insurance policy for Egyptians working abroad in line with the government's commitment to protect the welfare of its citizens living overseas.

Head of the Consular Mission Consul Sherif Bedair announced that the Civil Status Committee started its 10-day operations on Saturday, including the weekend holidays, to process applications for new national identification cards, as well as the renewal and replacement of lost cards.

The consulate presented two service options: a standard service that costs KD18 with the card printed in Egypt, and an express service for those who previously obtained the card through it, offering a three-day turnaround for KD32.

Applicants must book an appointment through the mobile application of the consulate and payments must be made in cash only.

The consulate provided a list of required documents as follows:

1- The original and a copy of a valid passport or an expired national identification card. For applicants aged 15 and above applying for their first card, a birth certificate is neces-

sary and a first-degree relative, such as a parent or sibling, must be present and present their own national identification card.

2- To confirm marriage or divorce, the original and a copy of the Egyptian marriage certificate or the original digitized divorce decree, duly attested by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Egyptian Consulate, must be presented.

3- Verify the address through a valid passport or a recent utility bill. Document the profession with a letter from the employer (if a government entity) or a professional syndicate, attested by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Students must present a certificate of enrollment for the current academic year (2026/2027).

4- Foreign academic qualifications must be officially recognized by the Egyptian Supreme Council of Universities.

In a related development, the consulate shared information about the new personal accident insurance plan for Egyptians employed abroad. A memorandum of understanding was established between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Financial Regulatory Authority to improve this plan's advantages.

The insurance provides coverage for wrongful termination, permanent total disability resulting from an accident, death and the repatriation of remains. It is available for an annual premium of 400 EGP, payable through the Egyptian Travel Insurance Pool (ETPI) website (<http://epti-egypt.org>) or the EPTI Egypt mobile application.

The consulate revealed that these efforts are in compliance with the directives of the political leadership to ensure comprehensive social and legal protection for Egyptian citizens living abroad.



Sherif Bedair

Amiri Decree appoints new heads of Cassation, Appeals courts

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Amiri Decree No. 169/2026 was published on Sunday in the official gazette, Kuwait Al-Yaum, announcing new judicial appointments, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decree appoints Senior Counselor Hani Mohammed Ahmed Al-Hamdan as President of the Court of Cassation,

Dhirar Abdullah Suleiman Al-Waqyan as Deputy President of the Court of Cassation, and Tariq Abdullatif Ramadan Al-Jaber as President of the Court of Appeals.

The appointments follow the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council at its session No. 25/2026, held on September 30, 2026. The decree was issued upon the

recommendation of the Minister of Justice and with the approval of the Council of Ministers.

The decree stipulates that the Minister of Justice is responsible for its implementation. It takes effect from the date of issuance and is to be published in the official gazette.

Mother gets custody of 4 kids, father to pay support: court

Ruling overturned as Kuwaiti's master's degree recognized

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Ahmadi Family Court has granted a Kuwaiti woman custody of her four children and ordered their father to pay spousal and child support, along with housing, domestic worker, and transportation allowances, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ruling followed a lawsuit filed by the wife, represented by Lawyer Mohammad Safar.

The court ordered the father to pay KD 100 per month in spousal support and KD 200 in monthly child support for the four children, amounting to KD 50 per child.

He was also ordered to pay KD 200 per month for housing, KD 80 for a domestic worker, and KD 60 for the children's transportation, bringing his total monthly obligations to KD 640.

In addition, the court ordered one-time payments of KD 800 to furnish the residence and KD 750 to cover the costs of bringing in a domestic worker. The father was also ordered to pay KD 50 in actual legal fees, in addition to court costs.

In its reasoning, the court stated that providing suitable housing for the children is a fundamental requirement of custody. It took into account the number of children, their ages, and their father's financial circumstances in determining the housing allowance and furnishing costs.



Safar



Haidar

The court also considered the assistance of a domestic worker essential to the children's care and well-being, given their number, ages, and their father's financial capacity.

In addition, the court emphasized that the children's transportation to school, healthcare facilities, and social institutions is an essential part of their daily lives, justifying the allocation of a monthly transportation allowance.

However, the court rejected the request to require the father to purchase a vehicle, hire a private driver, and cover the driver's wages, ruling that these expenses would be disproportionate to his remaining net income.

The judgment upheld the mother's custody of the children and ordered the father not to interfere with her decisions concerning their upbringing, care, and personal affairs.

The court further ruled that spousal support, child maintenance, housing costs, and

transportation allowances would take effect from the date the lawsuit was filed, April 27, 2026. The entitlement to the domestic worker's wages, however, would begin on the date the judgment was issued.

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Degree recognized: The Court of First Instance has overturned a decision by the Ministry of Higher Education's Committee for the Equivalency of Academic Degrees, which had refused to recognize a Kuwaiti graduate's master's degree in finance from the Miami Herbert Business School at the University of Miami, citing the student's completion of several courses through distance learning, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ruling follows a lawsuit filed by attorney Inam Haidar on behalf of the graduate, who had received a scholarship from the Ministry of Higher Education to pursue his master's degree abroad. However, upon his return to Kuwait, the ministry refused to recognize the degree's equivalency.

The case began when the student received an unconditional admission offer from the University of Miami on December 20, 2023. On March 11, 2024, the Ministry of Higher Education issued Decision No. 843 of 2024, awarding him a scholarship to pursue a master's degree for one academic year, beginning in the spring 2024 semester.

He completed his studies on December 12, 2024, with a GPA of 3.674 out of 4.0. In February 2025, he applied for degree equivalency.

Continued from Page 1

GCC sounds

Kuwait expressed its solidarity with Saudi Arabia following the crash of a National Guard helicopter in the Najran region, which claimed the lives of its two crew members, both officers.

In a statement on Sunday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs extended Kuwait's sincere condolences to Saudi Arabia and the families of the deceased.

In a latest development, at least six Saudi citizens were injured after a projectile launched by Yemen's Houthi militia struck a residential area in Najran on Sunday, causing material damage to three houses and three vehicles.

The Saudi Civil Defense spokesperson, cited by the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), said the relevant authorities had responded to the incident and taken the required measures.

Attempts to target civilian facilities constitute a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, the spokesperson stressed.

Meanwhile, the Saudi-led Coalition to Restore Legitimacy in Yemen said its air defense forces intercepted and destroyed a hostile drone in Riyadh Region and another one in the Eastern Region.

Coalition Spokesperson Major-General Staff Turki Al-Maliki confirmed the successful interceptions in a brief statement in the small hours of Sunday.

In Manama, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi on Sunday condemned Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia as deliberate criminal acts threatening regional security and stability, rejecting continued targeting of airports, civilian facilities and energy installations.

Al-Budaiwi made the remarks during the 168th GCC Ministerial Council meeting, chaired by Bahrain's Foreign Minister Abdullatif Al-Zayani and attended by GCC foreign ministers, including Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

He called for effective international action to halt the attacks, hold those responsible accountable and prevent further threats to regional security, while expressing condolences to the families of victims.

Al-Budaiwi condemned Iranian attacks on GCC states and warned against threats to navigation in the Strait of Hormuz and risks to international trade and global energy supplies.

He urged Iran to comply with international law and the UN Charter, fully implement UN Security Council Resolution 2817, and guarantee freedom of navigation and safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz.

The GCC secretary-general said the council's General Secretariat continued coordinating with member states to implement leaders' directives on regional integration, joint infrastructure projects, strategic storage, water connectivity and electricity interconnection.

He highlighted efforts to expand regional and international partnerships, noting the signing of memoranda of understanding with Italy, Portugal and

Thailand, as well as an agreement with the World Customs Organization.

He also welcomed the conclusion of negotiations on a free trade agreement between the GCC and the United Kingdom, describing it as a significant development in relations between the two sides.

Al-Budaiwi reaffirmed the General Secretariat's commitment to advancing cooperation among member states and strengthening the GCC's regional and international role.

Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Sunday headed Kuwait's delegation to the 168th GCC Ministerial Council meeting held in Bahrain.

The Foreign Ministry said in a statement that ministers discussed strengthening joint Gulf cooperation and advancing integration across various fields.

They also reviewed regional developments and their regional and international implications, stressing continued coordination amid current challenges, based on shared history and common destiny.

Kuwait on Sunday reiterated its vehement condemnation of a spate of "terrorist" attacks perpetrated by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi group against Saudi Arabia, vowing to stand firmly alongside its larger neighbor amid the onslaught.

Kuwait stands in total solidarity with Saudi Arabia and backs all measures taken by Riyadh to protect its security, stability and sovereignty, Kuwait's permanent delegate to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and Consul General in Jeddah Yousef Al-Tenib told a bloc-wide gathering of foreign ministers in the Iraqi capital.

The talks come at a critical juncture in which a sharp escalation in violence has plagued the region, he said, referring to the Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia and the "atrocities" committed by Israeli Occupation forces against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, which include efforts to "enforce a new status quo," across Palestinian territories, the Kuwaiti diplomat underlined.

On the situation in the Gaza Strip, he highlighted the need to put in place a stringent "ceasefire there that would allow the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian enclave, calling on the international community to recognize an independent Palestinian state based on 1967 border lines, with East Jerusalem as its capital, he said.

The Kuwaiti diplomat went on to emphasize Kuwait's "firm commitment" towards the security and stability of OIC member states, in addition to the non-interference in the internal affairs of these countries, in line with relevant international laws and principles, he said.

He urged Islamic nations to ratchet up cooperation as part of efforts to keep "common challenges" at bay, saying it would be instrumental in bringing the Jeddah-based bloc's core objectives and goals to fruition, citing the gathering in Baghdad as an opportunity to take a "united stand" in defense of the Islamic world, he said.





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Kuwait honors entities behind Mishref station renovation

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan stressed that cooperation among government entities is in the interest of the public, particularly regarding services that directly affect citizens, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Mashaan made the statement on Sunday when she honored the government entities that contributed to the renovation of the Mishref sewage pumping station, thus, enhancing its operational readiness.

She explained that this is in recognition of the efforts exerted by the entities and their full cooperation with the Ministry of Public Works in completing the necessary work and resumption of operations of the station.

These entities include the Logistics and Supply Authority at Kuwait Army, Ministry of Interior (Civil Defense), Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Kuwait Fire Force (Firefighting Sector), and Kuwait Oil Company.



Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, Minister of Public Works, joins representatives of government agencies for a group photo following their recognition for supporting the Mishref sewage pumping station renovation.

Continued from Page 1

Justice Minister,

Since court procedures are slow, victims are stripped of their savings long before a legal solution is reached, while the rogue contractors already escaped overseas. Enforcing court rulings is almost impossible, as these fraudsters take measures in advance to conceal their acts and ensure immediate escape.

Recent figures revealed that around 2,000 fraudulent contractor cases are currently bogged down in the court system. Most of these lawsuits are against ‘shell’ companies that lack the financial backing to finish their projects. These businesses usually utilize stalling tactics before walking away from the entire work, allowing their partners to flee quickly.

In response to these growing concerns, Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait is preparing new legislation to close contractual loopholes between citizens and builders in order to prevent scams. Sources close to the minister revealed that holding a commercial license will no longer be enough.

Going forward, the proposed regulations will mandate verified financial solvency, substantial performance guarantees to cover project costs, and supervision by accredited engineering firms. Building contractors must present proof of a fully operational workforce or demonstrate that the subcontractors they engage with hold a valid license, along with a documented history of completed projects. The enforcement of such regulatory protections prevents fraudulent

operators from abandoning projects and dodging accountability.

Although property owners should exercise due diligence when undertaking construction works, most citizens lack legal expertise and proceed with customary local practices in good faith. This vulnerability was unveiled by the victim of a scam who shared his ordeal on social media, sparking public calls for decisive legislative action.

The Minister of Justice deserves commendation for his swift intervention in drafting statutory measures to eliminate the legal loopholes. Other government officials must adopt a similar approach by monitoring public grievances on social media and news outlets, interacting directly with citizens, and resolving issues.

This administrative awareness is exemplified in the famous historical account of an Arab prime minister who commissioned daily intelligence briefings on political satire and jokes circulating about his administration. By analyzing public humor, he accurately assessed the sentiment of the people, economic stability and societal satisfaction. He used such insights to effectively address the grievances.

Oil turmoil

As part of a broader vision to shield Kuwait's oil sector from external shocks, Al-Harami addressed the expansion of oil storage projects in key international consumer markets.

He described overseas storage as a

positive and prudent strategic move that brings Kuwaiti oil closer to end-users while establishing reserves near major global markets.

However, Al-Harami emphasized that the initiative's ultimate success and effectiveness depend on the clarity of the agreements reached with host countries.

He stressed the importance of ensuring that these countries permit the sale of stored Kuwaiti oil during emergencies or facilitate its re-export and shipment back to Kuwait if force majeure events disrupt supplies from primary sources.

Kuwait drives

unit stipulated that any insurance document issued outside the electronic system will not be considered valid.

The measure is part of Kuwait's efforts to accelerate digital transformation, regulate insurance document issuance and strengthen oversight of the insurance sector.

The unit explained that the updated system allows insurance companies to authorize their contracted insurance brokers to issue policies in the name of the insurer through sub-user accounts on the Bima system, subject to the controls and procedures specified in the circular.

However, the change does not affect the existing channels through which customers apply for insurance. Applicants can continue to approach insurance companies or their contracted brokerage firms directly to request policies under the established procedures.

The change applies exclusively to the mechanism used by insurance companies and brokers to issue the documents, which must now be processed through the electronic Bima platform.

The unit also instructed insurance companies to organize introductory workshops during the trial period to familiarise their contracted brokers with the system. Companies must maintain records of the trainees' names and provide them to the unit upon request.

It further stressed that payments for insurance policies must be made exclusively through electronic payment methods, with cash payments not accepted.

Hamad Tifouni, acting director of the Information Systems Department at the unit, said the regulator aims to strengthen oversight of companies under its supervision by employing modern technology to improve regulatory tools and advance digital transformation across the insurance sector.

He said the new measure would help curb attempts to forge insurance documents and manipulate prices, while improving the security and transparency of the policy issuance process.

Tifouni described the Bima electronic system as a unified central platform for compulsory vehicle insurance documents. The platform is expected to facilitate access to insurance data, improve the accuracy and quality of statistical information, and provide more reliable data for regulatory monitoring and informed decision-making.

He added that the development of the electronic insurance system reflects the unit's commitment to establishing a

more efficient and transparent insurance environment based on accurate data and modern technology, while supporting the continued development of Kuwait's insurance market.

GCC-Russia

He added that the attacks had extended beyond direct Iranian strikes to include escalating assaults by Houthi militias against Saudi Arabia, targeting airports, civilian facilities and energy installations. He cited the attack on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh on October 10, which, according to his remarks, killed 12 citizens and residents of various nationalities and injured more than 300 people.

The GCC secretary-general reaffirmed the council's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and support for all measures it takes to protect its security, sovereignty and the safety of citizens and residents.

He called on the international community to take a firm and deterrent stance against attacks threatening the Kingdom and regional stability, and to condemn violations of relevant UN Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolution 2722.

Al-Budaiwi also condemned the disruption of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz and attempts to impose restrictions or fees on transit passage.

He warned that threats by Iran's proxies to shipping in the Bab Al-Mandab Strait and Red Sea also endangered

global energy and food security and supply chains.

He stressed the need to restore maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz to the situation before February 28, 2026, and called for full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2817 (2026), which condemned Iranian attacks on GCC states and Jordan and demanded an immediate halt to all such attacks.

He said the GCC expected Russia, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to play an active role in urging Iran to comply with the resolution, cease its attacks, respect freedom of navigation and engage in serious dialogue with GCC states based on good-neighborly relations, respect for sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs.

On Palestine, Al-Budaiwi reiterated the GCC's support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among them the establishment of an independent state on the June 4, 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in line with international legitimacy resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

He welcomed Russia's longstanding support for Palestinian statehood and its recognition of the state in 1988.

He called for consolidating the ceasefire in Gaza and advancing the second phase of the agreement to ensure a full Israeli occupation withdrawal, unimpeded humanitarian aid, recovery and reconstruction, and the reunification of Gaza and the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority.

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America

2 dead after truck drives thru Kansas game: A woman drove a truck through a soccer field during a youth game in Kansas on Saturday, killing two people and sending 11 other victims to the hospital, authorities said.

A 6-year-old boy and a 35-year-old man were killed, Wichita Police Capt. Aaron Moses said. The ages of the injured people ranged from 5 to 68.

Moses said the driver, a 34-year-old, was in custody. He did not say whether authorities believe it was intentional.

“We are still working to determine how this happened and why this happened,” he said.

Two children were also in the truck, Moses said.

Police Chief Joe Sullivan said that immediately after the incident, and before first responders arrived at the scene, people “sprang into action” to provide lifesaving assistance to the victims. (AP)

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Fisherman, 71, killed by alligator: A 71-year-old man fishing on the shore of a Florida lake was killed Friday by a nearly 12-foot alligator, the second fatal attack reported this year.

Steven Hamilton of Winter Garden was standing on the shore of Lake Apopka at Dr. Bradford Memorial Park, 15 miles (24 kilometers) northwest of Orlando, when he was attacked around 5 p.m., the Winter Garden Police Department said.

The presence of other active alligators in the water complicated any chance of rescuing Hamilton, whose body was recovered about two hours later, Winter Garden Fire Chief Jose Gainza told FOX35.

Police Capt. Michael Mason said authorities were



An alligator peers from the water's surface at the Circle B Bar Reserve on Oct 21, 2025, in Polk County, Fla. (AP)

not alerted in advance that an alligator was near the lake's shore, possibly because it “has tons of alligators in it.” He said police launched a joint investigation with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, whose trappers captured and killed the alligator. (AP)

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Fire crews gain ground on S.Calif blaze: Fire crews in Southern California gained ground Saturday on a wind-driven blaze that charred hills and damaged or destroyed at least six large coastal homes, allowing evacuation orders to be lifted and thousands of people to return home.

The fast-moving Norte Fire sparked the previous day in San Clemente amid hot, strong Santa Ana winds that drove it into San Juan Capistrano, prompting the evacuation of about 16,000 residents. (AP)

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Major fire breaks out in Alberta after deadly incident at Canada army base

EDMONTON, Alberta, Oct 18, (AP): Canada's defense minister said Saturday that people were killed and injured in an incident at a military base in Alberta that caused a major fire, while reports said that large numbers of injured people were being transported to hospitals.

Fire crews scrambled late into the night as fierce winds whipped flames beyond Canadian Forces Base Wainwright and into the surrounding rural area.

It was not immediately clear how many people were killed or injured, but a doctor at a hospital in the city of Edmonton, 180 km (120 miles) northwest, told Canada's national broadcaster that patients were being brought to hospitals across the city as health-care facilities around the base became “completely overwhelmed” by the number of people needing care.

“This number of patients would overwhelm the city of Edmonton,” Dr. Warren Thirsk, an emergency department physician at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, told CBC News. “It is more patients than any of us want to count right now. It's a disaster. It's a one in every 15- to 25-year



Paramedics load an injured person into an ambulance at the Wainwright Health center after a fire at Canadian Forces Base Wainwright, outside of Wainwright, Alberta on Oct 17. (AP)

disaster.”

The town of Wainwright, near the base, has about 7,000 residents.

Defense Minister David McGuinty said the Royal Canadian Mounted Police were involved in investigating the incident and described the situation as “very, very

active and delicate.” He said authorities were still working to determine what happened and expected to provide further information.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said officers were called shortly after 4 p.m. Saturday following reports of a fire in a training area at the base.

Vance faces tough questions on Iran war, immigration and more in CBS town hall

No Kings rallies across US urge voters to cast ballots early ahead of midterms

WASHINGTON, Oct 18, (AP): Rallies organized by the No Kings network opposed to President Donald Trump were held Saturday in cities and communities across the U.S., with an aim of getting people out to vote early in the midterm elections.

The hundreds of planned events were billed as nonpartisan, though they sought to build on nearly two years' worth of No Kings marches and demonstrations by people upset with Trump's presidency.

A band entertained what appeared to be a few hundred people in caps and coats at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. Despite the chilly weather, many in the crowd danced to the tunes, “VOTE EARLY” and “HANDS OFF MY VOTE!” were among the many signs held aloft.

At an Atlanta rally, City Councilman Michael Julian Bond told the crowd to urge others to vote ahead of the Nov. 3 general election.

“The Constitution gives you one power, right? That is the power to vote. Are you gonna use that power?” he said.

“You don't see Superman giving up his power,” Bond continued. “You don't see Black Panther giving up his power. You don't see Wonder Woman giving up her magic lasso. So why would you give up your right, your power, your obligation to vote? Be a super hero, use your power. Go to the polls and vote.”

Trump has long been suspicious of mail voting and has claimed without evidence that voting fraud cost him the 2020 presidential election.

His administration sued California election officials Thursday, asking a judge to bar the state from counting

mail-in ballots for the midterm elections from people whom the federal government has identified as “likely” noncitizens until their immigration status can be confirmed.

On Friday the Justice Department warned that local officials who process and tabulate ballots submitted by suspected noncitizen voters are putting themselves at risk of criminal investigation and potential prosecution.

Earlier that day Democratic Sens. Alex Padilla of California, Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island and Dick Durbin of Illinois wrote to Attorney General Todd Blanche demanding that the Justice Department commit to not seizing ballots or other election materials before the midterm elections are certified.

Meanwhile, US Vice President JD Vance faced tough questions from voters about the Trump administration's policies on data centers, high costs, immigration and his own rhetoric in a town hall on CBS News that aired Saturday night.

The string of sharp queries, some from voters who said they had supported him and President Donald Trump, previewed the rocky path he may face trying to answer for the administration's record if he runs for president himself in 2028.

Vance, who said during the town hall there's “of course” a chance he doesn't run for president, faced an especially pointed question about “a failure of leadership” posted by the widow of one of six U.S. soldiers killed by an Iranian drone strike in Kuwait, which occurred the day after Trump started the war with Iran.

“This literally is the first time



Demonstrators hold up banners as they march across the Memorial Bridge during a “No Kings” protest in Washington on Oct 17. (AP)

I've heard of this,” Vance said in response.

As he went on, he said, “This job is an amazing honor, but you live in a bit of a bubble and sometimes information doesn't filter up.”

After telling the vice president about his late wife, Master Sgt. Nicole Amor, who was killed on March 1, Joey Amor asked about mistakes and fundamental failures that led up to the deaths of those soldiers and how leaders would be held accountable.

Vance seemed taken aback by Amor's questions, saying, “This literally is the first time I've heard of this,” and said he wanted to talk with Amor to learn more after.

But as Vance went on, he acknowledged mistakes were made and said, “there were issues with where troops

were located that we realized was a huge mistake that we could do better on, and we have changed that.”

A Michigan man who said he voted for Trump and Vance in 2024 but now plans to vote for Democratic Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed pressed Vance about the high gasoline prices resulting from the war.

In response, Vance said he recognized that gas prices were too high, and said, “I think it's important to be honest about why they're so elevated.”

He said it was because of “what's happening in the Middle East” and said the administration was taking steps to try to lower prices.

“We've never had a situation like this where you have effectively, the largest state sponsor of terrorism that's trying to choke off world energy supply,” Vance said, without acknowledging that situation occurred because of the war Trump launched.

He also blamed former President Joe Biden, saying that during his tenure, America's refining capacity was diminished.

But when Vance was pressed on the Trump administration owning the current situation, the vice president suggested that looking backward for blame was not the way.

“Fundamentally, we are where we are, and you have to, in my view, I'd like to know what is Abdul El-Sayed's solution for the problem that we have right now,” Vance said. “It's easy to criticize something that happened seven months ago.”

A nun who spoke to Vance about their shared Catholic faith questioned the administration's hardline immigration enforcement tactics, including children who are separated from their parents when the adults are swept up in sweeps, and how that squared with their values.

“We're trying to strike the right balance,” Vance said. When moderator Tony Dokoupil asked Vance if the administration is not striking that balance, Vance replied, “I think that is constantly a work in progress.”

He admitted that, “Sometimes you have some people who made mistakes. Sometimes you have some people who really screw up.”

When Dokoupil asked for specific examples, Vance said there are a number of cases the administration has investigated that resulted in further training or discipline for immigration enforcement officers, but said they don't advertise it publicly in order to let investigations play out.

Another voter, who said she became an immigrant five years ago and voted for Vance after becoming a U.S. citizen, asked him pointedly about his recent remarks referring to H1-B visa holders as, “foreign indentured servants,” and accused him of “scapegoating immigrants for the issues you're supposed to be solving.”

“To the extent that my rhetoric has been imperfect here, that's on me,” Vance said, before explaining that he was trying to criticize the companies that bring in the workers, not the immigrant workers themselves.

Dokoupil pressed Vance on whether Trump and others in his administration were profiting off the presidency, including the nearly \$1.2 billion the president took in from his crypto businesses last year, according to a federal filing. When asked if he'd seen anything in the White House that made him squeamish, Vance said, “I've never seen anything like that from the president.”

He said, though, that there is evidence of corruption in Washington, but he doesn't see evidence of it from the president or the administration.

Vance said he's read articles about allegations, but said he goes to investigate claims himself and finds that they are not true.

Dokoupil asked Vance about the president's crypto profits, along with the recent resignation of his ambassador to Greece, Kimberly Guilfoyle, over allegations she denies that she was leveraging her position for benefits.

“If somebody's selling access to the White House, that's disgusting and despicable and they should suffer consequences,” Vance said.

Pope Leo XIV to gradually resume duties after cancer surgery

VATICAN CITY, Oct 18, (AP): Pope Leo XIV thanked thousands of faithful in St. Peter's Square on Sunday for their prayers while he was hospitalized for an operation to remove a malignant tumor, and said he plans to gradually return to his usual duties.

The crowd erupted in cheers when the pontiff showed himself in the window overlooking the square, where a week ago on the same occasion of the traditional Angelus blessing he revealed that a nodule had been located on his lung, and that it would be surgically removed.

“Now that this delicate phase is behind me, I will gradually resume my activities, always with God's help and your prayers,” Leo said, his voice sounding strong four days after the lower lobe of his right lung was removed.

The pontiff said the experience of the last week “has made me feel especially close to those facing illness



Pope Leo XIV appears at the window of his study in the Apostolic Palace overlooking St Peter's Square at the Vatican for the traditional noon blessing after praying the Angelus on Oct 18, a day after he returned from the hospital, where he had lung cancer removed on Tuesday. (AP)

and infirmity.” He told the faithful that he had “truly felt your support,” and expressed “particular gratitude to the doctors, nurses and all the staff at Gemelli hospital” where he was treated.

The pope paused for a moment and waved to the crowd before re-treating into his apartment in the Apostolic Palace.

A delegation from Africa in Rome for a congress danced and ululated after the pope's blessing.

“He was always in our prayers when he was sick, and we are happy to see him today,” said Alain Kalembo of the Democratic Republic of Congo. “This is an expression of our joy.”

The 71-year-old pontiff had the lower lobe of his right lung removed on Tuesday in the first major health event of his 17-month pontificate. The surgery confirmed he had adenocarcinoma, the most common type of lung cancer.



A car burns after a Russian airstrike on a residential neighborhood in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine on Oct 17. (AP)

Blaze at St Petersburg oil sites as Kyiv launches over 1,000 drones at Russia

KYIV, Oct 18, (AP): Ukrainian attacks set an oil export terminal ablaze in St. Petersburg on Sunday, as Kyiv launched more than 1,000 drones across Russia in one of its largest ever aerial bombardments.

The attack comes amid deepening tensions between Ukraine and Washington, with US President Donald Trump criticizing Kyiv for its strikes on Russian oil infrastructure.

One person was killed and five more were wounded in the attack, which sparked fires at both the Petersburg Oil Terminal and the city's Ruchi oil depot, said local Gov. Alexander Beglov. A logistics center belonging to Russian retailer Ozon and a data center for local tech giant VK were also targeted, both companies confirmed.

Russia's Ministry of Defense said Sunday that its forces had destroyed 1,015 Ukrainian drones over 15 Russian regions, as well as the annexed Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea and the Black Sea.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told Russian state news agency Tass that Kyiv was “resisting” Moscow's invasion, but that Ukraine could not “change the current course of events.”

Meanwhile, a woman died and at least two other people were wounded, including a 6-year-old girl, after Russia launched two attacks on the southern Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia, local officials said.

Two apartment buildings, 18 cars and an educational institution were damaged as a result of the attack, head of the Zaporizhzhia Regional Military Administration Mykhailo Semikin said.

US President Donald Trump announced on Oct. 11 that Russia and Ukraine had agreed to an “energy ceasefire” in the 4 1/2-year-old war, but offered no details on it and Kyiv reported attacks by Moscow on energy sites after his statement.

Ukraine confirmed Thursday it had resumed attacks on Russian oil after a three-day hiatus.

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

In a post on X Sunday, Zelenskyy said that in the week since Trump's announcement of an energy ceasefire, Russia had attacked Ukraine's energy, oil and gas sectors 76 times.

Rubio heads to C.Asia as some wonder if US secretary of state keeping most pressing matters at a distance

WASHINGTON, Oct 18, (AP): For the 31st time as US secretary of state, Marco Rubio has left on a trip abroad, flying to Uzbekistan and later India amid rumblings that America's top diplomat is ignoring pressing matters in favor of politically safer visits and meetings.

This tour is intended to promote US economic and security ties with Central and South Asia. But it has only tangential links to the Trump administration's current main foreign policy dilemmas in the Middle East and with the Russia-Ukraine war.

Rubio has been unapologetic about his role as both President Donald Trump's chief diplomat and national security adviser and has brushed aside suggestions that he is eschewing the most difficult issues in favor of taking on lower-hanging diplomatic fruit with less risk of failure and political damage.

"It's an important relationship," Rubio told reporters Saturday before departing Washington, noting that he selected a time when the Central Asian leaders would be able to meet. "One of the things that suffers is the strategic visits - you're always visiting someplace where there's a crisis or there's a problem, or you're going because there's a conference, but there's countries you'd like to get to because we want to build our relationships with them."

The State Department pushed back on any criticism of Rubio's schedule. It says Rubio's "responsibility is not to generate a public profile around every challenge; it is to help the president develop and execute a strategy that advances American interests. Some of the most consequential diplomatic work takes place outside the public spotlight."

In both roles, Rubio must also "look at these challenges as part of a larger strategic picture," the department said in a lengthy emailed reply to queries from The Associated Press. "The Iran, Gaza, and the Russia-Ukraine conflicts each demand serious attention, but they cannot be approached in isolation from the president's broader national security objectives. The right question is not whether the secretary is visible enough on a particular issue."

Rubio is involved in behind-the-scenes discussions on Iran, Lebanon, Gaza, Russia-Ukraine and China, although he has not been the public face of any of them. The Republican president's special envoys such as Steve Witkoff, Jared Kushner and Tom Barrack have taken the lead on those matters.

The State Department says there is nothing unusual about this and maintains that Rubio "hasn't shied away from any issue."

"He's directly involved and serves as a trusted and capable adviser to the president on what matters most," the department said. "While he has multiple jobs, he isn't the White House press secretary and his job isn't to be in the press 24/7."

Rubio has concentrated on Latin America, particularly Venezuela and Cuba, bolstering ties with a new generation of Trump-friendly conservative leaders and shoring up relations with NATO allies nervous about the administration's intentions toward Europe, especially in the Arctic.

Delegating onerous and particu-

larly time-consuming challenges is not new for secretaries of state. When Hillary Clinton was in office during Democratic President Barack Obama's first term, she appointed former Sen. George Mitchell, D-Maine, to handle the Israeli-Palestinian file and veteran diplomat Richard Holbrooke to steer the Afghanistan-Pakistan portfolio.

Both Clinton and Rubio had made runs for their parties' respective presidential nominations before becoming secretary of state, and both had and have clear political ambitions for their post-diplomatic careers. Rubio, however, bristles at any discussion of his political intentions. He has refused to discuss speculation about the subject or on the more delicate topic of a rivalry with Vice President JD Vance over who might succeed Trump at the helm of the "Make America Great Again" movement.

Rubio's most recent foreign travels have avoided the world's main hot spots, although they have focused on areas in which the administration has shown particular interest.



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio speaks at the Pnyx hill, where ancient Athenians held democratic assemblies, with the ancient Parthenon temple atop the Acropolis in the background, in Athens on Oct 7. (AP)



Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic meets with visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, in Zagreb, Croatia on Oct 17. (AP)

Croatian PM meets Chinese FM

Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic met with visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi here on Saturday, expressing Croatia's willingness to further expand cooperation with China.

During the meeting, Plenkovic asked Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, to convey his sincere greetings to the Chinese leadership, saying that he looks forward to visiting China at an early date and meeting with the leadership.

Relations between Croatia and China have continued to improve, underpinned by mutual respect and sincere cooperation, Plenkovic said. Chinese enterprises have participated in infrastructure projects in Croatia, including roads, bridges and tunnels, he said, noting that the Peljesac Bridge has played a significant role in improving connectivity between different parts of the country. (AP)

No UN chief candidate wins backing of all five key powers

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 18, (AP): The latest straw poll in the selection of the next UN secretary-general on Friday showed that none of the seven candidates has the support of all five permanent members of the UN Security Council, all of whom have veto power.

This leaves the door open for new candidates if none of the current candidates is able to win over the veto-wielding members - the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France - in the race to succeed António Guterres, who has led the United Nations for almost 10 years.

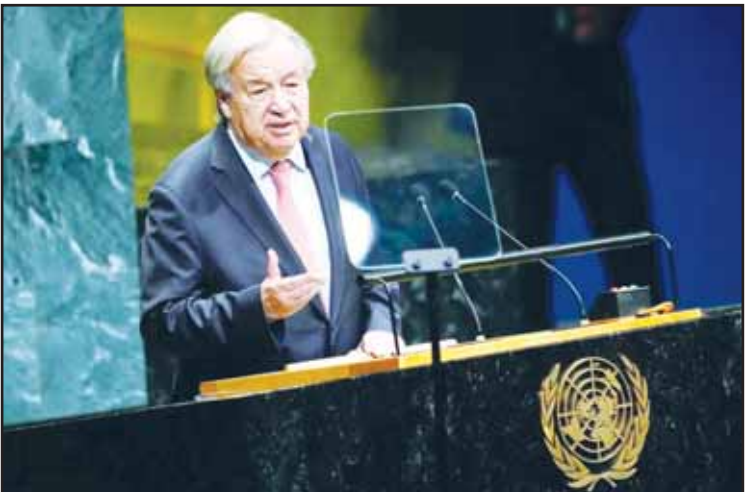
As in five previous straw polls, the 15 council members voted to "encourage" or "discourage" the seven candidates or express "no opinion," but this secret poll was the first to use red ballots to distinguish votes from the five powers.

The three leading candidates - UN trade chief Rebeca Grynspan of Costa Rica, UN nuclear chief Rafael Grossi of Argentina, and Guyana's U.N. ambassador, Carolyn Rodrigues Birkett - all received two red "discourage" votes, according to two diplomats who spoke on condition of anonymity because the poll was private.

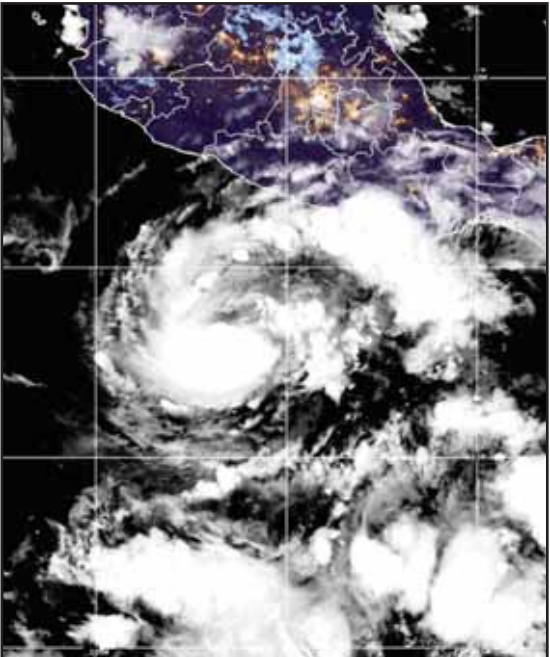
Grynspan, a former Costa Rican vice president, remained at the top of the polling with nine "encourage" votes.

While it was not known how each council member voted, numerous US officials have made clear for the past several weeks that none of the candidates is ideal from the perspective of the Trump administration. It has focused on radical reform of the global body and the withdrawal, or planned withdrawal, of the United States from multiple U.N. agencies.

However, despite the administration's differences with the UN, its bureaucracy, and reservations about who the next secretary-general should be, the officials have not ruled out supporting one of the announced candidates.



The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres speaks during the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly at United Nations headquarters, on Sept 22. (AP)



This GOES-19 GeoColor satellite image provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and taken on, Oct 15, shows Hurricane Trudy in the Pacific. (AP)

Trudy brings heavy rain to Mexico's Pacific coast

MIAMI, Oct 18, (AP): Hurricane Trudy lashed parts of Mexico's Pacific coast with heavy rain and strong winds Sunday as the US National Hurricane Center warned of potentially life-threatening flooding and mudslides.

A hurricane warning remained in effect from Manzanillo in Colima state to Cabo Corrientes in Jalisco. The latest NHC data showed the Category 2 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 100 mph (155 kph) about 135 miles (215 kilometers) south of Cabo Corrientes in Jalisco state and 115 miles (185 kilometers) west-southwest of Manzanillo, moving northwest at 9 mph (15 kph).

Meanwhile, Typhoon Champi strengthened into a Category 4 super typhoon as it moved past Guam.

Trudy's center was expected to remain near the Mexican coast through Sunday evening before moving south of the Baja California Peninsula. A tropical storm warning remained in effect for Las Islas Marias. A warning for the coast east of Punta San Telmo to Lazaro Cardenas had been discontinued.

The Mexican navy urged mariners and coastal residents to exercise extreme caution because of high waves, heavy rain and the risk of rising rivers, flooding and landslides in vulnerable areas.



People gather outside as police officers set up a barricade at the entrance to a worship venue for the festival of Durga Puja following a stampede, in Kolkata, India on Oct 17. (AP)

India's stampede kills 19, police detain event organizers

The death toll in Saturday's stampede in India's eastern city of Kolkata rose to 19, with 25 injured people receiving treatment in different hospitals and one in a critical condition, confirmed West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Sunday.

Most among the dead were women and children, he said while admitting that there were "some shortcomings" in the arrangements made by the organizers. Kolkata is the capital city of India's eastern state of West Bengal.

The stampede occurred at a religious event, locally called "Durga Puja", amid the ongoing annual festive season in the country. Thousands of people had gathered to take part in the celebrations when the stampede occurred. The mishap was partly blamed on heavy rains. (Xinhua)

Militants attempt to infiltrate northwestern border

Pakistani forces, Afghan Taleban exchange fire

ISLAMABAD, Oct 18, (AP): Pakistani forces and Afghan Taleban personnel exchanged fire at several locations along Pakistan's northwestern border Saturday, with Pakistani security officials and state-run media saying troops backed by artillery destroyed Taleban posts.

The officials also said Pakistani troops killed an unspecified number of Pakistani Taliban militants trying to cross into Pakistan from a remote area of eastern Afghanistan during the clashes.

The fighting lasted for hours along the border in Kurram district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, according to three Pakistani security officials. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media. There was no immediate comment from Afghanistan's Taleban government.

Tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan have escalated under repeated border clashes and Pakistani airstrikes in Afghanistan this year, deepening a longstanding dispute over militant activity.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan said in September that it had documented more than 1,100 civilian deaths and injuries from cross-border violence in



Muhammad Murtaza, center, who was injured in Thursday's roof collapse at a private school, stands with other children outside his home, in Peshawar, Pakistan on Oct 16. (AP)

Afghanistan this year.

Also:

PESHAWAR, Pakistan: Pakistani authorities ordered inspections of all private schools in the northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after a school roof collapsed and killed 34 children and a teacher, as some victims' relatives said the structure previously was reported to be weak.

The provincial government announced an investigation into the cause of Thursday's collapse at Al-Khair school as victims' families demanded justice. At least one family member said he had warned the school owner about leaks.

Police on Thursday arrested the school's owner, **Mohammad Khan**. Peshawar Police Chief **Saeed Ahmed** said the building was structurally weak and Khan told officers that recent rains had weakened one of the roofs.

Africa

Mauritius proposes law amendment: The Mauritian government has approved a proposal to amend the Police Act to allow curfews to be imposed across the entire country, according to the Highlights of Cabinet Meeting published on Friday.

According to the document, the proposed amendment will be submitted to the National Assembly.

During a televised address on Friday evening, Mauritian Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam said that "a return to calm" had been observed in most parts of the country on Thursday evening, with the exceptions of a sugarcane field fire and an incident in which a motorist allegedly drove at residents who were keeping watch over their neighborhood. (Xinhua)

S.African police chief to return to work: South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has lifted the suspension of the country's national police chief, Fannie Masemola, his office announced on Friday.

Masemola is expected to resume his duties on Monday after he was suspended in April when he was charged with breaking finance laws related to an allegedly corrupt police contract.

He was charged alongside other senior officers who are suspected of fraud, corruption and money laundering in connection with the contract, but those charges were dropped by the country's National Pros-



South Africa's national police commissioner Fannie Masemola appears in the Pretoria Magistrates Court in Pretoria, South Africa on April 21. (AP)

Angolan prez reviews achievements: Angolan President Joao Lourenco has reviewed the government's achievements since 2017 and outlined economic and social challenges ahead of the 2027 general elections.

He delivered his State of the Nation address on Thursday at the opening of the National Assembly's fifth legislative session, the final parliamentary year before the 2027 general elections.

According to figures presented by the president, Angola's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 3 percent in 2025 and 5.3 percent in the first quarter of 2026. (Xinhua)

UAE to host IMF-World Bank meetings in 2029

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 18, (KUNA): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group signed an agreement with the United Arab Emirates on Sunday to hold their annual meetings in Abu Dhabi in October 2029.

The signing ceremony took place in Bangkok

at the conclusion of the 2026 annual meetings, attended by World Bank Group President Ajay Banga, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, UAE Minister of State for Financial Affairs Mohammad Al-Hussaini and Central Bank Governor Khaled Mohamed Balama.

Business

Reinforcing global banking presence

Warba Bank builds ties at IMF-World Bank meetings

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Warba Bank participated in a reception for Kuwaiti banks held in Bangkok, Thailand, on the sidelines of the 2026 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group. The participation reflects the bank’s commitment to engaging in international economic and banking forums and strengthening dialogue with financial institutions worldwide.

The reception brought together representatives of Kuwait’s banking sector, providing an opportunity to exchange views and expertise, build relationships with international counterparts, and highlight the active presence of Kuwaiti banks at major global economic gatherings.

A Platform for International Banking and Financial Relations

The reception highlighted the development and capabilities of Kuwait’s banking sector and its role in supporting the national economy while adapting to ongoing changes in global finance.

It also provided an opportunity for participants to meet senior financial officials and industry specialists, discuss international market developments, and strengthen long-term professional relationships with global institutions.

Al-Mudhaf: An Opportunity to Strengthen Kuwait’s Banking Presence

May Mehalhal Al-Mudhaf, Board Member and Head of Warba Bank’s Delegation to the Conference, affirmed that the Kuwaiti banks’ reception in Bangkok offered an important opportunity to reinforce the presence of Kuwait’s banking sector and deepen relations with international financial and economic institutions. She noted that participating in the event reflects Kuwaiti banks’ dedication to continuous communication, knowledge sharing, and keeping pace with developments in the global banking industry.



Minister of Finance, Dr. Yaqoub Al-Refaei; Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Kingdom of Thailand, Dr. Meshal Al-Mansour; Ms. May Al-Mudhaf, a member of the Warba Bank Board of Directors; and Ayman Al-Mutairi from Warba Bank.



Minister of Finance, Dr. Yaqoub Al-Refaei; Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait, Mr. Basel Al-Haroon; Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Kingdom of Thailand, Dr. Meshal Al-Mansour; and a delegation from Warba Bank, led by Ms. May Al-Mudhaf, a member of the Warba Bank Board of Directors.

Al-Mudhaf added that such gatherings open new avenues for cooperation, strengthen strategic partnerships, and showcase the capabilities of Kuwait’s banking sec-

■ **Al-Mudhaf:** Participation highlights Kuwait’s banking sector and strengthens ties with international financial institutions

tor, supporting economic growth and reinforcing Kuwait’s standing as a promising regional financial hub.

Strengthening International

Banking Relationships

Al-Mudhaf pointed out that Warba Bank’s participation in international forums aligns with its strategy to strengthen relationships with financial institutions worldwide and exchange expertise on market developments. She added that events held alongside the IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings provide opportunities to engage directly with banking leaders and learn about key global economic and financial developments and trends.

Navigating Rapid Shifts in the Global Banking Industry

The participation comes as the global banking sector continues to evolve through digital transformation, changing customer expectations, and advances in financial technology. International forums provide opportunities for banks to exchange expertise, explore emerging industry practices, and keep pace with developments in the global financial sector.

Building Future Strategic Partnerships

The reception provided an opportunity to highlight the development and expertise of Kuwait’s banking sector while strengthening communication with international financial institutions. Warba Bank said its participation reflects its commitment to strengthening institutional relationships, exchanging expertise, and exploring opportunities for future cooperation across regional and international financial markets.

About Warba Bank:

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

Strengthening engagement with international investors in the United Kingdom

Boursa Kuwait promotes investment opportunities in Kuwaiti capital market

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Boursa Kuwait organized its eleventh roadshow in the United Kingdom in collaboration with Jefferies Financial Group and with the participation of the Capital Markets Authority (CMA). Held from October 19 to 21, 2026, the roadshow aims to showcase investment opportunities in Kuwait, strengthen engagement with international institutional investors and asset managers and gain a deeper understanding of their priorities, supporting ongoing efforts to attract investment and facilitate access to the Kuwaiti capital market.

The roadshow facilitated direct engagement with prominent international investment institutions, providing a platform to highlight recent developments, emerging opportunities and ongoing regulatory and operational enhancements, alongside the expansion of available investment products.

The meetings also enable Boursa Kuwait to gather insights into the considerations shaping global investors’ assessments of Kuwait and their capital allocation decisions as well as provide valuable perspectives to inform future development priorities, enhance the investor experience and strengthen Kuwait’s competitiveness as an investment destination.

The collaboration with Jefferies Financial Group reflects Boursa Kuwait’s commitment to leveraging the expertise and extensive networks of leading international financial institutions to engage directly with asset managers and institutional investors.

The partnership supports greater awareness of Kuwait’s investment landscape and facilitates substantive discussions with key decision-makers on opportunities for participation and the country’s positioning within regional and emerging market investment strategies.

CMA participation provides investors with greater regulatory clarity and confidence

The participation of the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) adds an important regulatory dimension to the roadshow, providing international institutional investors with direct access to the authority responsible for overseeing securities activities and developing Kuwait’s capital market regulatory framework.

This engagement enables investors to gain first-hand insights into regulatory developments, disclosure requirements and investor protection mechanisms, helping them assess compliance obligations, manage regulatory risks and make more informed investment decisions.

The CMA’s participation also underscores its role alongside Boursa Kuwait in advancing capital market development and strengthening Kuwait’s investment appeal. While the exchange highlights investment opportunities, operational enhancements and mechanisms for market access, the CMA provides clarity on the regulatory frameworks underpinning these developments.

Together, these perspectives give international institutions a more comprehensive understanding of Kuwait’s investment environment, helping reduce uncertainty, strengthen investor confidence and facilitate informed capital allocation decisions.

Investor engagement: a key driver of capital market development

“Boursa Kuwait’s international roadshows provide a valuable platform to showcase investment opportunities in Kuwait and highlight the progress made in developing its capital market. More importantly, they enable us to engage directly with leading global institutions, understand the factors influencing their investment decisions and identify potential barriers to participation,” said Noura Al-Abdulkareem, Head of Markets at Boursa Kuwait.

“The feedback gathered helps shape our development priorities and informs our efforts to improve accessibility, enhance efficiency and strengthen Kuwait’s competitiveness as an investment destination,” she added.

Al-Abdulkareem emphasized that the CMA’s participation further underscores the roadshow’s significance, reflecting coordinated efforts by key stakeholders to advance the



- Boursa Kuwait organizes its eleventh roadshow in collaboration with Jefferies Financial Group, with the participation of the Capital Markets Authority (CMA)
- The CMA’s participation facilitates direct dialogue on the legislative and regulatory framework, investor protection and market developments
- **Al-Abdulkareem:** “Engaging with institutional investors and understanding their perspectives is integral to support market development initiatives and facilitate access to investment opportunities”



Boursa Kuwait organizes its eleventh roadshow in the United Kingdom in collaboration with Jefferies Financial Group.

Kuwaiti capital market and strengthen its investment appeal.

“This collaboration provides international institutional investors with a more comprehensive understanding of ongoing regulatory and operational developments, while highlighting the complementary roles of the entities driving market development. It also offers greater clarity on Kuwait’s investment environment and the foundations supporting its efficiency and long-term competitiveness,” she said.

New investment products and advanced infrastructure expand investor opportunities

During the meetings, participating entities highlighted significant developments introduced under Kuwait’s Market Development Program(MD), including enhancements to regulatory and operational infrastructure and improvements to clearing and settlement mechanisms. Beyond strengthening market efficiency, these advancements are designed to improve the investment experience by facilitating access, supporting a broader range of financial instruments and creating a more diversified environment for domestic and international investors.

Among the key developments discussed was the launch of the bonds and sukuk trading platform, establishing the infrastructure for listing and trading fixed-income instruments within regulatory and operational frameworks tailored to their characteristics and disclosure requirements.

For investors, this expands opportunities beyond equities, providing access to instruments with different risk and return characteristics and supporting more diversified portfolio strategies. For issuers, it creates additional financing channels, advancing Boursa Kuwait’s ambition to develop a multi-asset market that accommodates a wider range of investment and capital-raising needs.

The roadshow also addressed the introduction of the regulatory framework for exchange-traded funds (ETFs), paving the way for the listing and trading of funds tracking a range of indices. Once listed, these products can provide investors with a more accessible and transparent means of gaining diversified exposure to different markets, sectors and asset classes through a single exchange-traded instrument.

The framework also creates opportunities for asset managers, fund providers and financial intermediaries to introduce new products tailored to different investment objectives, further expanding the choices available to market participants.

Complementing this expansion in investment products, discussions highlighted ongoing efforts to modernize the trading system as part of Boursa Kuwait’s broader investment in technological infrastructure. While new instruments broaden what investors can access, modernized trading infrastructure is intended to improve how they participate, supporting more efficient execution, greater operational ca-

capacity and the introduction of additional services.

Together, these developments aim to create a more accessible and versatile trading environment that can accommodate the evolving requirements of institutional investors and other participants.

“The significance of these developments extends beyond introducing new products and upgrading infrastructure. They are intended to give investors greater choice, more effective access to opportunities and the flexibility to pursue different investment strategies within Kuwait’s capital market,” said Al-Abdulkareem.

“Our international roadshows allow us to demonstrate this progress while gaining valuable insights into how global institutions evaluate these opportunities and what further improvements could facilitate their participation. By incorporating these perspectives into our development priorities, we aim to broaden the investor base, strengthen institutional engagement and reinforce Kuwait’s long-term competitiveness as an investment destination,” she added.

Investor feedback helps improve market accessibility

Boursa Kuwait views engagement with institutional investors as an essential means of understanding their experience throughout the investment process, from accessing information and evaluating opportunities to market entry, trading and post-trade services. These discussions provide valuable insights into potential barriers to participation, areas requiring greater clarity and opportunities for improvement, helping the exchange identify practical measures that can be pursued in coordination with relevant authorities and other participants across the capital market apparatus.

International roadshows also provide an opportunity to better understand how factors such as product diversity, transparency and infrastructure efficiency influence institutional investment strategies and capital allocation decisions.

By incorporating these perspectives into its assessment of future initiatives, Boursa Kuwait seeks to ensure that its development priorities remain aligned with investor requirements while supporting greater accessibility, operational efficiency and competitiveness within the established regulatory framework.

Importantly, this engagement extends beyond the roadshows themselves as Boursa Kuwait maintains ongoing communication with international institutions to share relevant developments, address inquiries and facilitate access to information.

This sustained dialogue enables investors to monitor Kuwait’s progress and reassess emerging opportunities, while providing the exchange with a deeper understanding of evolving institutional expectations and the improvements needed to support long-term participation.

Extending investor engagement to listed companies

Boursa Kuwait’s international roadshows complement its Corporate Days, creating a coordinated approach to investor engagement. While roadshows provide international institutions with insights into the Kuwaiti capital market, its regulatory environment and investment opportunities, Corporate Days facilitate direct interaction with listed companies, enabling them to present their financial performance, growth strategies and future outlook to analysts and portfolio managers.

Together, these initiatives give investors a more comprehensive understanding of both the broader investment environment and individual companies, while helping issuers better understand institutional expectations regarding disclosure, transparency and corporate performance.

The roadshow forms part of Boursa Kuwait’s broader strategy to modernize market infrastructure, enhance liquidity and transparency, diversify investment products and expand investor participation.

These efforts are advanced in collaboration with the Capital Markets Authority, Kuwait Clearing Company and other stakeholders across the capital market apparatus, reinforcing a coordinated approach to Kuwait’s continued capital market development.



Jazeera Airways receives new A320neo.

Eyeing 100 destinations by 2030

Jazeera Airways receives 1st of 26 Airbus aircraft

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Jazeera Airways has welcomed its newest Airbus A320neo aircraft, from a landmark orderbook of 26 Airbus aircraft. The new aircraft ushers in an exciting new phase of fleet expansion and long-term growth for the airline. Barathan Pasupathi, Chief Executive Officer accompanied the aircraft on its inaugural flight J921, highlighting Jazeera Airways’ 21 anniversary of operations, from the Airbus headquarters in Toulouse, France to Kuwait.

At a celebratory event welcoming the aircraft to Kuwait, Mohammad Almousa, Vice Chairman joined dignitaries from the Kuwait Civil Aviation Authority and Ministry of Interior, Jazeera management and proud team members.

Mohammad Almousa, Vice Chairman, Jazeera Airways, highlighted: “Taking this aircraft on time, in a year when Kuwait’s airport was closed for two months, was a deliberate decision by the Board. It is the first of 26 new aircraft. It is owned by Jazeera, financed by Kuwaiti banks, and burns around 20 percent less fuel per seat than the previous generation. The credit belongs to the people who kept this airline flying through the hardest year since our first flight in 2005. This delivery is our statement of confidence in Kuwait, and in them.”

Barathan Pasupathi, Chief Executive Officer, Jazeera Airways, said: “Today marks a defining moment in Jazeera Airways’ growth journey as we celebrate 21 years of flying. The arrival of the first aircraft under our 26-aircraft order is much more than a fleet addition. It represents a significant investment in our future, our confidence in Kuwait’s aviation market and our ambition to take Jazeera Airways to the next level. This milestone is particularly meaningful following the extraordinary challenges faced by the aviation industry and our region. Our teams have demonstrated exceptional resilience, agility and determination, and today we are looking firmly ahead. With modern, more efficient aircraft, an enhanced customer experience and an expanding network, we are building a stronger, more competitive airline positioned for sustainable growth.”

The new aircraft, fully owned by

Jazeera Airways, represents a significant milestone in the airline’s investment in its future, strengthening its fleet capabilities while delivering an enhanced onboard experience for customers. Designed with both passenger comfort and operational efficiency in mind, the new aircraft features lightweight and ergonomically designed RECARO seats, offering enhanced comfort and a modern cabin experience. Larger overhead baggage compartments provide increased storage space for customers’ cabin baggage, making boarding and the overall travel experience more convenient. The aircraft also incorporates the latest Airbus A320neo technology, with increased fuel efficiency, lower emissions and reduced noise compared with previous-generation aircraft.

The airline is targeting a fleet of 50 aircraft by 2030, supporting its plans to expand its network to 100 destinations, strengthen existing routes and increase capacity.

The delivery of this aircraft comes at a pivotal time for the airline as it builds on its operational recovery and resilience following unprecedented regional aviation disruptions earlier this year. Jazeera Airways is focused on accelerating its next phase of development through fleet expansion, network growth, digital innovation and continued investment in its people and infrastructure.

Pasupathi added: “Every aircraft we welcome creates new opportunities to connect people, communities and markets. This first delivery is the beginning of a much larger journey, one that will see us introduce new aircraft, enhance our product and expand our reach. It also reflects the dedication of our people, who have worked tirelessly to keep Jazeera Airways moving forward. We are proud of what we have achieved and even more excited about what lies ahead.”

Operating a network of more than 50 destinations across the Middle East, Asia, Europe and Africa, Jazeera Airways continues to invest in a modern, efficient fleet and an accessible, customer-focused travel experience. The latest delivery reinforces its commitment to sustainable, disciplined growth and its contribution to the development of Kuwait’s aviation sector.

Iran war pushes up fuel, travel and shipping costs

NEW YORK, Oct 18, (AP): More than seven months into the U.S. war with Iran, sharply higher fuel prices are making it more expensive to drive and fly and adding to the cost of some goods, prolonging the strain on American households as the midterm elections approach.

Motorists and airline passengers have borne the clearest consequences as the fighting disrupts Middle East oil shipments. Some companies have raised delivery charges or prices on selected products. Yet the higher cost of making and moving goods has not translated into across-the-board price increases at stores.

Shoppers may not be spared indefinitely, though. Many companies have absorbed at least part of their higher production and transportation costs. A September jump in wholesale prices suggests some businesses may eventually charge more if fuel prices stay elevated.

The chief economist at Moody’s Analytics, Mark Zandi, estimated this week that the war has cost the average U.S. household the equivalent of almost \$2,000, including \$1,100 in higher energy prices, \$540 in higher interest rates and \$360 in military costs. The energy portion is growing by \$50 a week at current fuel prices, Zandi said.

Here’s a look at price changes since the war began and which goods and services could be most susceptible to increases in the months ahead:

BEFORE THE WAR: Regular gasoline averaged \$2.98 a gallon nationwide and diesel \$3.76 almost eight months ago, according to AAA. Gas peaked at \$4.56 in May, below its 2022 record, while diesel reached a record \$6.53 in September.

WHAT’S REACHED CONSUMERS: On Friday, the national average stood at \$4.33 a gallon for gasoline, or 45% above its prewar level, and was up 68% for diesel at \$6.33, AAA reported. Gas typically costs less in the fall, and this is the first October

a gallon of regular gas has cost more than \$4 on average, it said.

Expensive diesel is less apparent to most U.S. residents but contributes to overall inflation by raising the cost of moving goods.

WHAT COULD COME NEXT: Shipping through the Strait of Hormuz remains dangerous and constrained, prolonging uncertainty over oil supplies and fuel prices. The Energy Information Administration said this month that it expected winter heating costs to be 21% higher for the roughly 3% of households that rely on heating oil, most of them in the Northeast, assuming the weather is mild.

BEFORE THE WAR: Jet fuel averaged \$99 a barrel worldwide before the war, doubled to \$209 in April and climbed back to nearly \$195 in September after a spring decline, according to the International Air Transport Association.

WHAT’S REACHED CONSUMERS: Airlines have raised ticket prices and fees, trimmed schedules and shelved plans to add flights. Airfares cost about 22% more in September than they did a year earlier, the consumer price index showed. Average domestic airfares rose from \$405 in late 2025 to \$445 in the April through June period of this year, excluding optional fees, according to the U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

WHAT COULD COME NEXT: Fuel price volatility makes it harder for airlines to plan and could discourage them from lowering fares even when fuel prices start to fall, analysts said. United Airlines pulled some December flights and warned of further possible cuts in 2027. Fewer available seats could mean less pressure to hold ticket prices down.

Higher fares have covered substantial portions of higher fuel costs for domestic airlines but not enough to prevent a squeeze on their third-quarter profits, according to consensus estimates.

Program empowers women entrepreneurs to scale businesses

NBK launches ‘FoundHER’ program to empower female entrepreneurs & support women-led businesses growth

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Building on its longstanding commitment to empowering women and economic inclusion, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) is launching FoundHER Program; a transformative initiative designed to equip women entrepreneurs with the skills, networks, and opportunities needed to grow and scale their business.

This new program stems from NBK’s belief that women are key partners in building a more diversified, innovative and sustainable economy. By supporting women-led businesses, NBK aims to strengthen the private sector’s contribution to economic development and foster a more inclusive and dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem in Kuwait.

FoundHER offers a comprehensive development platform that combines capacity-building, practical mentorship, and access to industry experts and specialists. The program also provides guidance on funding opportunities and business growth strategies, helping female entrepreneurs navigate the challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises and advance their businesses to the next stage of sustainable growth.

An Integrated Platform for Growth and Development

On this occasion, Manal Al Mattar,EVP - Head of Group Corporate Communications at NBK commented: “The program is designed to provide a comprehensive development experience that meets the needs of female entrepreneurs at various stages of their businesses’ growth. Participants will have the opportunity to benefit from specialized training programs, developing business models, and enhancing readiness for growth and expansion. In addition, the program provides a valuable platform for participants to connect with fellow entrepreneurs, industry experts, and specialists, further facilitating the exchange of experiences, meaningful collaborations, and professional networks that can support long-term business success and sustainability.”

“FoundHER reflects NBK’s commitment to empowering women entrepreneurs by equipping them with the skills, resources, and connections needed to navigate business challenges, seize growth opportunities, and build competitive, sustainable enterprises.” Al Mattar added: “The initiative aligns with the Bank’s social responsibility and ESG strategy, particularly its focus on advancing financial inclusion, supporting women’s economic empowerment, and contributing to sustainable economic development in Kuwait.”

Applications Open in Late October 2026

The FoundHER program is scheduled to open applications in late October 2026 targeting startups led by Kuwaiti women, either as founders or business partners, provided they hold a minimum ownership stake of 50%.

To be eligible, businesses must have been operating for at least one year and hold a valid commercial registration or business license. Eligible ventures may be at the pre-revenue stage or in the early stages of generating revenue.



Maryam Al-Nassrallah speaking about the initiative.



FoundHer program.



Maryam Al-Nassrallah during the announcement of the initiative's launch.

The program also welcomes businesses with a clear vision for addressing an existing need or challenge and demonstrates promising potential to generate sustainable economic or social value. Participants will benefit from a comprehensive support system, including training, networking with experts and entrepreneurs, and the opportunity for eligible projects to receive a final grant to help them continue growing and developing their businesses.

Training, Final Presentations and Financial Grant Recognition

Throughout the program, participants will take part in a comprehensive training phase designed to strengthen their business capabilities covering a range of essential business topics, including finance, marketing, legal fundamentals, business growth, customer engagement, and presentation skills. Through a combination of practical workshops, expert-led sessions, and interactive learning experiences, participants will gain valuable knowledge and tools to enhance their operations, improve decision-making, identify growth opportunities, and build more resilient and competitive businesses.

At the conclusion of the program, participants will have the opportunity to present their projects to a specialized panel of judges through presentations. Entrepreneurs will showcase their business models, growth plans, and the challenges facing their busi-

nesses, while demonstrating how their proposed solutions address the identified business challenges.

The program will conclude with a special ceremony to recognize the participating teams and announce the projects selected to receive financial grants, in accordance with the business challenge evaluation criteria and the program’s terms and conditions.

These grants are designed to support promising projects and enable selected entrepreneurs to advance their business objectives, accelerate growth, and translate their acquired skills and development plans into tangible, sustainable outcomes.

Women’s Economic Empowerment

The launch of the FoundHER Program underscores the Bank’s commitment to supporting initiatives that foster women’s economic participation, driven by the belief that investing in women is an investment in the future of the national economy and its capacity to achieve more inclusive and sustainable growth.

Through this initiative, NBK aims to empower female entrepreneurs to scale their businesses, unlock new growth opportunities, and create sustainable economic value. By supporting women-led enterprises, the Bank seeks to foster innovation, drive economic inclusion, and contribute to the development of a more competitive and resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem in Kuwait, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable development and women’s economic empowerment.

Conference explores technology, finance & policies

NBK sponsors ‘Women and the Economy Conference’ & showcases its experience in empowering female talent

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: As part of its longstanding commitment to supporting women’s empowerment and advancing sustainable economic development, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) sponsored Women & the Economy Conference, held under the patronage and in the presence of H.E. Abdulaziz Nasser Al Marzuq, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment.

The conference explored ways to expand women’s economic participation and examined the role of technology, finance, and policy in supporting their advancement.

NBK participated in a key panel discussion titled “The Future of Women in the Economy: How Fintech, Artificial Intelligence, and Public Policy Will Shape a More Inclusive Economy”. The session was moderated by the British Ambassador to Kuwait, Qudsi Rasheed, and featured Amal Al-Duwaisan, Head of Weyay Bank, representing NBK.

Weyay also participated in the conference’s dedicated Youth & Children panel, represented by Alya Al-Sane, Vice President - Marketing.

The Women & the Economy Conference brought together policymakers, business leaders, academics, and industry experts to explore ways to strengthen women’s economic participation and support a more inclusive and sustainable economy. NBK’s participation reflects its ongoing commitment to empowering national talent, advancing financial inclusion, and driving responsible digital transformation in line with Kuwait’s economic development goals.

Women at the Forefront of Economic and Digital Transformation

NBK’s participation in “The Future of Women in the Economy” panel highlighted the Bank’s continued efforts to promote women’s leadership across the financial and technology sectors. Through its people-first strategy, NBK remains committed to creating opportunities for women to take on leadership roles and contribute meaningfully to Kuwait’s evolving digital economy.

During the discussion, Al-Duwaisan addressed the rapid changes reshaping the workforce, noting the growing demand for skills in artificial intelligence, data analytics, cybersecurity, and emerging technologies. She also highlighted the success of female leaders within NBK Group who have played a key role in advancing the organization’s digital transformation journey.

Al-Duwaisan emphasized that women are increasingly becoming key drivers of innovation and decision-making across industries and stressed the importance of creating an enabling environment that allows them to capitalize on opportunities created by the digital economy.

Fintech as a Catalyst for Financial Inclusion and Economic Growth

NBK’s participation in the confer-



Amal Al-Duwaisan speaking during the session.



Alya Al-Sane during her participation in the panel discussion.



Amal Al-Duwaisan during the panel discussion.

ence also underscored its commitment to leveraging innovation and technology to expand access to financial services and enhance customer experiences.

As part of the discussion, Al-Duwaisan highlighted the growing role of fintech in broadening financial access and supporting entrepreneurs as well as small and medium-sized enterprises. She noted that digital solutions have simplified financial transactions, reduced barriers to entry, and created more accessible and efficient banking experiences.

She also emphasized the importance of building a digital financial ecosystem that not only promotes innovation but also encourages financial literacy, responsible money management, and long-term financial wellbeing.

Flexible Regulation and Trust: Foundations of Sustainable Innovation

As digital transformation continues to reshape industries, NBK believes that fostering innovation requires regulatory frameworks capable of adapting to rapidly evolving technologies while maintaining strong standards of governance and customer protection.

During the session, Al-Duwaisan pointed to the importance of principles-based regulation focused on transparency, consumer protection, privacy, cybersecurity, and financial stability. She noted that such frameworks create an environment where innovation can thrive responsibly while preserving

public trust.

This approach aligns with NBK’s broader strategy of developing customer-centric digital solutions built on accountability, transparency, and long-term trust.

Investing in Women and Youth to Build the Economy of the Future

NBK’s participation in the conference reflects its belief that people remain at the heart of sustainable development. The Bank continues to invest in empowering women and equipping young talent with the skills needed to succeed in a rapidly changing economic landscape.

Al-Duwaisan stressed that the accelerating pace of innovation in artificial intelligence and fintech makes continuous learning, upskilling, and financial literacy more important than ever. She noted that building a more inclusive and sustainable economy begins with empowering individuals and preparing them for future opportunities.

She further emphasized that organizations able to balance innovation with trust, and technology with human capital, will be best positioned to create lasting value for both society and the economy.

Commenting on this, Al-Duwaisan said: “At NBK, we view technology as a tool to empower people, expand opportunities, and drive financial inclusion, rather than an end in itself. The future belongs to institutions that successfully balance innovation and trust,

and technology and human connection, creating a positive and sustainable impact on both society and the economy.”

Weyay Highlights the Future of Banking at the Youth & Children Panel

As part of its commitment to empowering future generations and promoting financial literacy among young people, Weyay, Kuwait’s leading digital bank, participated in the Youth & Children Panel through an interactive discussion led by Alya Al-Sane. In a unique reflection of the conference’s focus on youth engagement, the session was moderated by one of the participating children.

The session brought together students, young innovators, and aspiring entrepreneurs, including members of the Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity.

Al-Sane shared Weyay’s vision for the future of digital banking, highlighting the increasing demand among younger generations for smarter, more seamless, and fully integrated banking experiences that align with their digital lifestyles.

She also showcased Weyay’s efforts to encourage saving habits and early financial planning through innovative digital tools, including savings features, spending management solutions, and the Bank’s “Jeel” initiative, which aims to strengthen financial awareness and promote healthy financial habits among young people.

Zain highlights women empowerment as key driver of economic growth

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Zain Kuwait's partnership and participation in the inaugural Women & the Economy Conference brought together prominent government and business leaders, economists, experts, and professionals from various sectors, reflecting the company's continued commitment to empowering women and strengthening their contribution to economic development.

Held under the patronage and presence of the Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Abdulaziz Al-Marzouq, the conference was also attended by Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, British Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rasheed, founder of the 'Lei Walakom' initiative Taiba Al-Humaidhi, members of Zain's executive management, and senior representatives from the public and private sectors.

The conference was organized by 'Lei Walakom', a nonprofit initiative dedicated to empowering individuals through financial awareness, knowledge-sharing, and community development. The event aimed to highlight the importance of women's economic participation, explore opportunities to expand their contributions, and strengthen their role in driving growth, innovation, and competitiveness, in line with Kuwait's New Kuwait 2035 vision.

Zain's participation reflects its belief that empowering women represents a strategic investment in human capital and a key driver of sustainable economic growth. By expanding opportunities for women across different sec-



Jumanah Al-Mutawa represents Zain in the panel discussion.

tors and strengthening their presence in leadership and decision-making positions, the company believes organizations can unlock greater national talent potential and contribute to building a more diverse, productive, and competitive economy.

On the sidelines of the conference, Jumanah Al-Mutawa, Director of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity at Zain Group, participated in the opening panel discussion, titled Present-Day Realities. The session explored the current state of women's economic participation in Kuwait, the challenges they face, and opportunities to strengthen their contribution to economic growth. Discussions emphasized the importance of moving beyond traditional definitions of participation centered

on employment to encompass career progression, entrepreneurship, economic value creation, and meaningful involvement in decision-making.

During the discussion, Al-Mutawa outlined Zain's vision for creating sustainable pathways for women to advance into leadership and technology roles across the Group, emphasizing that increasing women's workforce representation is only the starting point. Meaningful progress also requires sustained investment in skills development, addressing barriers to career advancement, and creating greater opportunities for women to contribute to innovation and strategic decision-making.

Al-Mutawa also highlighted the importance of measuring the tangible im-



Ministers Abdulaziz Al-Marzouq and Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan with Zain officials and senior attendees.

pact of women's empowerment initiatives through indicators such as career progression, promotions, and leadership readiness, ensuring that organizational commitments translate into measurable and sustainable outcomes.

Zain Group continues its ongoing efforts to advance women through its WE 2030 strategy, which aims to increase women's representation in both leadership and middle management positions to 30% by 2030. This ambition is supported by an integrated ecosystem of initiatives and development programs designed to strengthen women's capabilities, prepare them for greater responsibilities, and enhance their contribution to the Group's strategic objectives.

Among these initiatives is WE SUC-

CEED, Zain's flagship women's leadership development program, which supports high-potential female talent through a comprehensive three-year journey combining specialized training, professional coaching, and leadership development in collaboration with leading international institutions. The program has already delivered tangible results, with nine participants earning promotions since its launch, including three who advanced to Executive Director level and above. These achievements demonstrate the impact of sustained investment in developing the next generation of women leaders.

Zain also continues to invest in its NOVA program, which focuses on developing female talent in functions where women remain underrepresent-

ed, particularly technical and digital fields. Through specialized development pathways, the program strengthens participants' professional and leadership capabilities while expanding their opportunities for advancement in areas that will shape the future of the digital economy. NOVA forms part of Zain's broader efforts to build a sustainable pipeline of female talent equipped to contribute to technological transformation and innovation across the Group.

These efforts align with Zain's purpose-driven '4WARD - Progress with Purpose' strategy, which places investment in people and the advancement of inclusion among its strategic priorities. As a regional technology company, Zain remains committed to fostering a more diverse workplace and developing the skills and capabilities needed to navigate accelerating economic and digital transformation.

Zain's participation in the Women & the Economy Conference further reinforces its commitment to supporting platforms that bring together government entities, businesses, academic institutions, and financial organizations to exchange knowledge and develop practical solutions that expand women's economic opportunities. Through such engagements, the company continues to champion women's role as essential contributors to economic development, recognizing that investing in women's empowerment is an investment in a more innovative, prosperous, and sustainable future for Kuwait and the wider region.

Campus turns pink

AU launches annual breast cancer awareness campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Australian University (AU) organized its annual "AU Goes Pink" campaign in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October, reaffirming its commitment to promoting health awareness and encouraging early detection within the university community.

As part of the initiative, the AU campus was decorated in pink to highlight the importance of breast cancer awareness and demonstrate solidarity with individuals affected by the disease. Pink ribbon pins, a universal symbol of breast cancer awareness, were also distributed across campus to encourage participation and spread the campaign's message.

The initiative extended to AU's social media platforms, where awareness posts emphasized the importance of early detection, regular screenings, and proactive healthcare practices. Through these efforts, the university aimed to encourage greater awareness of breast cancer and the role of early diagnosis in improving treatment outcomes.

Commenting on the initiative, Ms. May Al Musallam, Senior Manager of Public Relations and Marketing,



May Al Musallam – Senior Manager PR & Marketing

stated: "Through our annual AU Goes Pink campaign, we aim to remind our community that awareness and early detection can make a life-changing difference. By continuing to spread this message, we hope to encourage individuals to prioritize their health and inspire greater collective support for those affected by breast cancer."

General index declines 33.87 pts

Boursa Kuwait closes lower

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Sunday's session lower, with its general index declining 33.87 points, or 0.40 percent, to 8,442.06 points. Total trading volume reached 149.6 million shares across 14,300 cash transactions, valued at KD 38.9 million (about USD 126.4 million).

The Main Market index fell 101.45 points, or 1.18 percent, to 8,486.51 points. Investors traded 75.3 million shares through 7,855 cash transactions worth KD 15.3 million (approximately USD 49.7 million).

The Premier Market index also declined, losing 21.25 points, or 0.24 percent, to close at 8,870.72 points. Trading in the market totaled 74.3 million shares in 6,445 cash transactions, valued at KD 23.6 million (about USD 76.7 million).

The Main 50 Index dropped 101.70 points, or 1.06 percent, to finish at 9,455.05 points. Some 64.6 million shares changed hands through 5,821 cash transactions, with a value of KD 12.8 million (approximately USD 41.6 million).

Women & the Economy Conference concludes with Kuwait's next generation in the spotlight

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Lei Wa Lakom, a Kuwait-based nonprofit initiative dedicated to empowering individuals through financial awareness, knowledge-sharing, and community development, today announced the conclusion of the inaugural Women & the Economy Conference, highlighted by its Youth & Children Conference, "Our Future in the Economy," held in collaboration with the Sabah Al-Ahmad Centre for Giftedness and Creativity.

The conference was 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).

The Youth & Children Conference was designed as a conversation between generations, giving children and young people a seat at the table to explore how today's economic decisions shape tomorrow's opportunities, and how money, technology, and heritage fit together in the future they will build.

The program included an interactive game-design workshop led by Dr. Bedour Al-Saqabi, Faculty Member at the College of Basic Education, Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), in collaboration with the Sabah Al-Ahmad Centre for Giftedness and Creativity, as well as a conversation in which Manal AlGharabally, Presenter and Co-Producer of the Youth & Children Conference, asked young Abdulaziz Ahmad Al-Jahouri how he sees the future. Abdulaziz then turned the questions to "Muneerah," a humanoid robot from the future, in a lighthearted conversation about what lies ahead for children, work, and learning. It also featured short presentations by Weyay Bank on technology and the future of financial services, and by Sadu House and MADE51, made possible by UNHCR, on craft, identity, and handmade traditions, as well as a closing panel with Alya Al-Sane, Vice President of Marketing at Weyay Bank, and Masirah Al-Enezi of Sadu House and MADE51 on how money and technology, and craft and identity, will shape the next generation's future.

Taiba Alhumaidhi, Founder of Lei Wa Lakom, said: "From the Youth & Children Conference to today's talk with Kuwait University students, we wanted the Women & the Economy Conference to speak to the generation that will shape Kuwait's economic future, because everything we build today, from policies to investments and opportunities, is ultimately for them. The high-level attendance and rich discussions of this first edition show how much this conversation matters, and why it must continue. Our sincere thanks go to the Sabah Al-Ahmad Centre for Giftedness and Creativity, Kuwait University, and all our sponsors and partners for helping make it a success."



From right: Masirah Al-Enezi, Sadu House – MADE51, Alya Al-Sane, Vice President of Marketing at Weyay Bank, Manal AlGharabally, Host, and Abdulaziz Al-Jahouri



Interactive Workshops with KAFO

In partnership with KAFO, the first day featured three interactive workshops that equipped participants with practical skills. Ahmad Aloun, a computer engineer and certified trainer in agentic AI for business, led "From Generative AI to AI Agents: An Introduction." Ghalia Al-Nuwaif, an accountant with more than twelve years of experience in personal budgeting, debt restructuring, and asset management, led "Personal Financial Diagnosis and Treatment." Hafsa Almuhamna, IT Director and Founder of Codera, led "Engineering Trust: AI and Cybersecurity for Sustainable Growth in Kuwait."

Closing the Conference: From Decision-Makers to Students

The conference concluded today at Kuwait University with a conversation between several of the conference speakers and students, held in collaboration with the Women's Studies Unit under the title "Your Future, Your



Muneerah, the robot at the Youth & Children Conference

Money, Your Move: Jobs, AI, Money & the Decisions That Will Shape Your Next 10 Years." The talk brought the conference's discussions directly to the generation preparing to enter the workforce, exploring how artificial intelligence is reshaping jobs, how to manage money from the start of a career, and the decisions that will define the decade ahead.

Earlier in the day, a closed high-level roundtable, "From Participation to Economic Contribution: Unlocking Women's Economic Potential in Kuwait," was held at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry in collaboration with the Union of Investment Companies, with the aim of turning the first day's insights into actionable strategies.

Embassy of Japan hosts reception honoring Ms. MUTOH Keiko, Food Supply Co. CEO, & KEI Japanese restaurant owner, on the conferment of 'the Order of the Rising Sun'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Embassy of Japan in the State of Kuwait held a reception to celebrate the Conferment of 'the Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Rays', bestowed by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan upon Ms. MUTOH Keiko, CEO of Food Supply Co. WLL. and Owner of Kei Japanese Restaurant.

This decoration was in recognition of Ms. KEIKO's outstanding contributions to promoting Japanese cuisine, as well as Japanese food culture and food products in Kuwait.

The reception brought together over 60 guests, including her close associates and prominent representatives from major companies in Kuwait's business and hospitality sector.

In his speech, H.E. Mr. MUKAI Kenichiro, Ambassador of Japan to the State of Kuwait, highlighted Ms. KEIKO's distinguished achievements. The Ambassador emphasized her pivotal role as a key partner for the Embassy in promoting Japanese food culture in Kuwait.

He noted recent successful collaborations, such as the Japanese Wagyu Beef Seminar held in February 2026, where Ms. KEIKO's insights as a Goodwill Ambassador directly contributed to the growing appreciation of premium Japanese products in the local market.

Furthermore, the Ambassador commended her deep community spirit, demonstrated through her active support to the Japanese Community. He emphasized that this Imperial Decoration recognizes her decades of dedication to fostering bilateral ties, as well as her hospitality and commitment to connecting people of Japan



Photos during the event.



and Kuwait.

In her remarks, Ms. KEIKO expressed her deep gratitude for the Imperial recognition of her efforts to promote Japanese food culture. She noted that through her work, she hopes to foster a deeper understand-

ing of Japanese culture among the local community in Kuwait. As she stated: "Food has a wonderful ability to bring people together. It crosses language and cultural barriers". She also emphasized that sharing Japanese cuisine means sharing a part of

Japanese culture: "Our traditions, our values, our respect for ingredients, and the spirit behind Japanese cuisine, also perhaps even what makes Japanese people tick".

About KEI Japanese Restaurant

In 1980, Kei Japanese Restaurant

was established by Ms. KEIKO's father as Kuwait's first Japanese restaurant.

In 2004, Ms. KEIKO took over the business and has since devoted herself to carrying forward her father's vision of introducing Japanese cui-

sine to the people of Kuwait. Through her dedication, she has preserved his legacy by continuing to serve authentic Japanese cuisine. Today, she successfully oversees KEI's operations in both Kuwait and Bahrain.

Thanks to Ms. KEIKO's tireless efforts over the decades, Japanese cuisine has steadily grown in popularity in Kuwait. From a time when only a handful of Japanese restaurants existed in the country, Kuwait now has more than 100 establishments of various sizes. Amid this remarkable growth, KEI Japanese Restaurant continues to be widely recognized as a pioneer of authentic Japanese dining in Kuwait.

About KEIKO's achievements

Ms. KEIKO's efforts to promoting Japanese cuisine and food culture have greatly deepened the Kuwaiti people's understanding of Japan, while also fostering stronger ties of friendship between the two countries.

She has also worked diligently to expand the demand for Japanese cuisine through various initiatives. For example, she launched a premium Japanese food kiosk as part of the Japanese government's campaign to promote food exports.

Having been appointed as a Japanese Cuisine Goodwill Ambassador in 2021, and then awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays in May 2026, Ms. KEIKO continues to play an active role in spreading Japanese food and dietary culture. Through her continuous dedication, there is great hope and excitement for the further flourishing of Japanese culinary traditions across the region.



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Tom Rhys Harries in a scene from "Clayface." (AP)

Batman villain ready to steal the show

DC's 'Clayface' blends horror with superheroes

NEW YORK, Oct. 18, (AP) — The dominant movie genres of the past decade, superhero films and horror, have usually stayed, like bashful teenagers on the dance floor, on separate sides of the multiplex.

But when James Gunn and Peter Safran were plotting the projects with which they wanted to launch their era of DC Studios, writer-director Mike Flanagan came in with a pitch that would fuse both genres.

Neither Safran nor Gunn were looking for a standalone movie about Clayface, a lesser-known villain from the Batman comics. But they were won over by Flanagan's vision, which eventually became a script by Flanagan and Hossein Amini.

"It fit within the broader framework of how James and I saw the broad spectrum of film and television shows we want to make," says Safran. "But it really was Mike Flanagan's passion and pitch. You always look for volunteers and not recruits."

Not many studios would push "Clayface" to the front of the pack, but Gunn, who started in horror, and Safran, who helped launch "The Conjuring" franchise, made "Clayface" — with James Watkins eventually coming on to direct — part of their first wave of DCU films, following "Superman" and "Supergirl."

"Clayface" is a darker detour for DC. And, if it proves successful, it just might open up a darker frontier for comic book movies.



Left: This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Naomi Ackie, right, and Tom Rhys Harries in a scene from "Clayface." Right: This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Tom Rhys Harries in a scene from "Clayface." (AP)

"From the get-go, this was not designed to be a traditional superhero movie," Safran says. "It was always supposed to be a character-driven story that uses the DC mythology. If you took the DC elements out of it, it would just be a great horror movie."

That makes "Clayface" something unusual in the normally calculated realm of superhero movies. It's R-rated. It's modestly budgeted at \$40 million. And it stars the relatively unknown Tom Rhys Harries as a little-known DC villain.

"A lot of people wouldn't neces-

sarily know who Clayface is, but they wouldn't need to," says Watkins, the Welsh filmmaker of "Speak No Evil" and "The Woman in Black." "It's its own movie."

That, Safran says, is by design. He and Gunn have emphasized filmmaker-first projects at DC, carving a more idiosyncratic, multigenre path that has won them fans but also added some degree of risk.

"Clayface," which opens in theaters Oct. 22, will debut shortly after Skydance and David Ellison's takeover of Warner Bros. Ellison is keeping Gunn and Safran to lead DC, even though they're coming off a



misfire in the box-office disappointment of "Supergirl." That puts more pressure on "Clayface" to perform.

"If you look at the cumulative choices that we've made, I think it's pretty clear we're trying to do things differently," says Safran. "Not everything is going to work. The pressure we feel for 'Clayface' is honestly the pressure we feel for everything we put into the world."

There have been a few movies to meld horror and superheroes together, including Wes Craven's "Swamp Thing" (1982), Sam Raimi's "Darkman" (1990) and "Brightburn" (2019), a sinister twist on the "Su-

perman" origin story that Gunn produced.

But Clayface, a Batman villain created in 1940 by Bill Finger and Bob Kane, is still an unlikely character to put center stage. In the comics, he began as Basil Karlo, a B-list actor who, furious that he wasn't cast in a horror remake he had previously starred in, wears the movie's Clayface costume to kill the film's actors.

Some fan skepticism has followed "Clayface." Last week, Gunn defended the choice on the social media platform Threads after a user asked, "Who the (expletive) asked for a 'Clayface' movie?"

Gunn replied: "Although it may seem like it, Hollywood isn't a place where the only way to make a movie is the public voting on what IP they want to see that they've seen countless times before."

Watkins' film, taking inspiration from the two-part episode "Feat of Clay" from "Batman: The Animated Series," twists the original Clayface story slightly. Rising movie star Matt Hagen (Harries) is disfigured by a mob boss (Eddie Marsan) and rapidly falls out of Hollywood. After numerous unsuccessful surgeries, he resorts to an experimental process created by the scientist Dr. Caitlyn Corr (Naomi Ackie) that uses an untested, claylike living organism to rehabilitate his face.

"Part of the joy was being surprised at what's looking back at me in the mirror every day," says Harries, smiling.

To a large degree, "Clayface" progresses as a character study, one of an actor whose livelihood falls away from him and whose attempts to get back on the red carpet turn increasingly dark. His journey, though, hinges less on vanity than on his relationship with Caitlyn.

"I was approaching it the whole time like: Matt thinks he's in a romantic comedy," says Harries. "The fulcrum of the whole thing is his relationship with Caitlyn Corr. Without that, you don't get the propulsion for Matt to be doing what he decides he needs to."

All punch, no plot as chaos mode activated

'Street Fighter' revisits the 90s, repeats old mistakes

Since we're going back to the 1990s in "Street Fighter," let's use a "Seinfeld" episode to describe how it felt coming out of Kitao Sakurai's adaptation of the vintage arcade game.

When Cosmo Kramer starts showing up at a corporate office despite never being hired, his boss looks over his first report and, befuddled, says "I don't know what this is supposed to be."

That's a fair reaction to Sakurai's very enthusiastic, weirdly convoluted and jumbled mess of a movie. As much as you might think a "Street Fighter" movie, good or bad, would at least offer up some bluntly entertaining hand-to-hand combat, it's so messily plotted and chaotically conceived that it makes a game with six buttons seem comparatively artful.

Capcom released the first "Street Fighter" in 1987. Many iterations have followed, but the 1991 sequel, "Street Fighter II," is the most famous. In the first "Street Fighter," you could play as either martial artist Ryu or the American Ken Masters. But "Street Fighter II" was one

of the first to craft a basic setup: You choose from a bunch of fighters and enter a martial arts tournament.

This background is notable because "Street Fighter" doesn't know who its main characters are, or at least frequently forgets. Noah Centineo plays Ken and Andrew Koji

is Ryu, but there are many more in the mix, including Callina Liang (the movie's most kinetic performer) as Chun-Li, Jason Momoa as the green, CGI-enabled meanie Blanka, Cody Rhodes as the flat-topped Guile and Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson as the boxer Balrog.

"Street Fighter" begins with an anime flashback to 1987, and you immediately sense that animation probably is the best format for the story. The backstory sketches the death of Ken and Ryu's master and their subsequent falling out. Then the movie shifts to 1993, when the

World Warrior Tournament draws Ryu, Ken and a clown car's worth of fighters.

"Street Fighter" is going for a goofy good time, full of kitschy '90s nostalgia and stuffed with songs like "Who Let the Dogs Out?" and "2 Legit 2 Quit." If video game adaptations have come a long way in the last decade, "Street Fighter" feels like a throwback to when they were campy, almost intentionally bad and not much more than a chance to see actors cosplay as video game characters. (With a meta wink, the masked country musician Orville Peck plays the masked henchman Vega.)

The movie's retrograde vibe — complete with leering shots of Liang's body — feels all the more out of step coming on the heels of more ambitious video game adaptations like Zach Cregger's "Resident Evil." This "Street Fighter" feels perilously on par with the first "Street Fighter" movie, the 1994 action film with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

Sakurai, a regular collaborator with comedian Eric André (who appears as a TV commentator),

films every scene like a fight scene. To be fair, many of the scenes are fight scenes, even if we have only a vague sense of why everyone's so angry with each other. The script by Sakurai and T.J. Fixman curiously focuses less on the tournament itself than the testosterone-amped drama surrounding it.

The marquee melee is a scheme by M. Bison (David Dastmalchian, trying to inject some comic life into the movie), a fascist dictator who's seeking to enhance his power with Ryu's. Roman Reigns, one of several professional wrestlers trying to make a mark in "Street Fighter," co-stars as the antihero Akuma.

But the scenes clash together as much as the fighters do. As the movie draws to a close without a finale, the clipped dialogue and confused pacing suggest considerable post-production cutting and pasting. Ending with some overly optimistic sequel baiting, "Street Fighter" feels almost designed to be the straw man in the "Digger" discourse: If you don't embrace artistic gambles, movies like this are what you might get instead. (AP)



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson, standing, and Noah Centineo in a scene from "Street Fighter." (AP)

From chips to invisible AI: Taiwan's TSRI builds the foundations of tomorrow

Taiwan's innovation advantage: Turning semiconductor research into global opportunities

By John C. Fernandes
Online Media & IT Manager
Arab Times

TAIPEI, Oct 18: The Taiwan Semiconductor Research Institute (TSRI) is strengthening Taiwan's semiconductor industry by connecting universities, research institutions and businesses to accelerate chip innovation and train skilled engineers.

TSRI provides advanced fabrication facilities, chip-design tools and specialised training to turn academic research into practical industrial applications. Its three main services cover fabrication and prototyping, chip design and verification, and semiconductor talent development.

Its 3,200-square-metre clean-room offers 24-hour access to research teams, supporting more than 250 teams annually. TSRI also provides over 100 commercial electronic design automation (EDA) tools, supports more than 2,000 academic chip tape-outs and conducts approximately 7,000 analytical measurements each year.

These facilities help researchers develop and test new semiconductor technologies, moving innovations from laboratory concepts towards commercial applications.

Taiwan will continue to expand its international semiconductor partnerships while keeping core research and advanced manufacturing capabilities at home, as the global chip industry faces growing geopolitical pressures and efforts to diversify supply chains, according to Chien-Nan (Jimmy) Liu, Director General of the Taiwan Semiconductor Research Institute (TSRI).

In an interview with Arab Times and other international media representatives, Liu said Taiwan's competitive advantage rested on a comprehensive semiconductor ecosystem built over decades through close cooperation among government, universities, research institutions and private companies.

He said Taiwan was upgrading its semiconductor strategy through the National Science and Technology Council's Chip-based Industrial Innovation Program (CBI), with the next phase focusing on advanced packaging, heterogeneous integration, artificial intelligence computing and silicon photonics.

These technologies are becoming increasingly important as demand for AI computing grows and industry seeks more efficient ways to integrate chips, sensors and other components.

Liu said Taiwan's research institutions were also working to address the challenges posed by limited water and electricity resources and the rising energy requirements of AI computing.

While industry is pursuing energy-saving manufacturing processes, TSRI provides advanced research platforms to help universities and research teams explore next-generation semiconductor devices and heterogeneous integration technologies.

The aim is to develop scientific solutions that could reduce computing energy consumption at the hardware level, helping the industry manage growing computational demands and resource constraints.

Advanced packaging, AI chips and silicon photonics to drive next phase

Liu said Taiwan's comprehensive semiconductor ecosystem remains the foundation of its competitive advantage. To respond to global competition, Taiwan is upgrading its technological capabilities through the National Science and Technology Council's (NSTC) Chip-based Industrial Innovation (CBI) Program.

The next phase will place particular emphasis on advanced packaging, heterogeneous integration, AI computing and silicon photonics.

These technologies are becoming increasingly important as AI applications demand greater computing power, faster data transfer and improved energy efficiency.

Addressing concerns over talent shortages, water and electricity supplies, and rising computing demand, Liu said TSRI, under the National Institutes of Applied Research (NIAR), supports research teams by providing advanced research and development plat-



Taiwan Semiconductor Research Institute (TSRI) officials in a group photo.

forms for semiconductor devices and heterogeneous integration technologies.

The objective is to develop early-stage scientific solutions that could eventually help the semiconductor industry reduce computing power consumption at the hardware level.

On talent development, he said international students and researchers are encouraged to enter Taiwan through domestic universities and academic collaboration programmes before participating in NIAR's International Internships Program and other training initiatives.

Through a dual-mentor system, international students receive guidance from both university professors and institute experts, helping prepare them for advanced research and development roles.

Taiwan's research model offers lessons for AI and drone industries

Liu identified industry-academia-research collaboration and hardware-software integration as two of the most important lessons from Taiwan's semiconductor development.

He said emerging sectors such as AI and drones also depend on the close integration of sensors, communications systems, power management and computing chips.

TSRI has promoted its Shared-facility Service Organization (SSO) model, which provides shared integrated circuit (IC) design and fabrication platforms. The approach reduces research and development barriers for universities, academic researchers and startups that may otherwise struggle to access expensive equipment.

The institute is extending this model to emerging technologies through AI system-on-chip (SoC) design and verification platforms, as well as research services for advanced packaging and heterogeneous integration.

Liu said TSRI assists research teams in the early exploration and prototype design of technologies that integrate AI algorithms and sensors into microchips, including Edge AI.

Such technologies could enable low-power, high-efficiency autonomous computing in applications such as drones and other intelligent devices.

Saudi Arabia cooperation possible through universities and research training

Outlining TSRI's priorities for the next five years, Liu said the TSRI 2.0 strategy will focus on semiconductor research platforms, support for Taiwanese universities conducting frontier research and international talent development in Taiwan.

Priority research areas include early-stage AI chip development, silicon photonics and advanced packaging.

He said Taiwanese research teams have established deep aca-

democratic research partnerships with institutions in Europe, the United States and Japan.

TSRI would also welcome discussions on potential cooperation with countries such as Saudi Arabia, particularly through programmes encouraging talented students to enrol at Taiwanese universities.

After establishing university links, international students could use TSRI's research platforms and internship programmes to develop expertise in semiconductor technologies, IC design and basic AI.

Asked about possible cooperation with resource-rich countries such as Sudan in areas related to critical minerals, Liu acknowledged the importance of such resources to semiconductor supply chains.

However, he said critical-mineral development involves broader industrial supply chains and commercial considerations that require comprehensive assessment by the relevant authorities.

TSRI's principal contribution to international cooperation, he added, would remain the provision of research platforms and support for advanced talent development.

Invisible AI will depend on smaller, more energy-efficient hardware

Looking ahead, Liu said the development of increasingly integrated and less visible AI technologies is already underway.

Future applications could allow smartphones, vehicles, medical devices, homes and urban infrastructure to respond more intelligently to human needs. Achieving this vision, however, will require not only advanced AI models but also highly miniaturised, low-power sensing and computing hardware.

TSRI's role, he said, is to establish research platforms, support academic research, advance frontier science and technology, and cultivate high-tech talent.

The institute is upgrading research capabilities in areas including high-frequency measurement and quantum computing while supporting early-stage investigations into smart sensing, AI chips, silicon photonics and co-packaged optics (CPO).

By providing open research platforms covering IC design through system integration, TSRI aims to help research teams establish the scientific and hardware foundations required for more widespread AI applications.

Government, universities and industry form the backbone of Taiwan's ecosystem

Liu said the most important institutional arrangement behind Taiwan's semiconductor success is the vertical integration of government, academia, research institutions and industry, supported by shared research infrastructure.

Under the leadership of NSTC Minister and NIAR Chairperson Cheng-Wen Wu and President Hung-Yin Tsai, NIAR serves

as a bridge connecting different stages of research and development.

Because advanced semiconductor research equipment is extremely expensive, TSRI provides an open research environment that allows universities and researchers to access facilities and technologies that would otherwise be difficult to obtain.

Under its TSRI 2.0 strategic upgrade, the institute aims to become a global semiconductor industry-academia-research value co-creation hub.

The initiative includes opening advanced cloud-based electronic design automation (EDA) platforms and research-grade fabrication equipment to domestic academic institutions.

Liu said the model allows public investment to absorb some of the initial costs of innovation, helping researchers develop basic scientific findings and proof-of-concept technologies that can subsequently be transferred to industry.

He described this mechanism as a continuing pillar of Taiwan's semiconductor ecosystem, with applications extending to AI and silicon photonics.

International research cooperation requires trust and technology safeguards

As semiconductor research becomes increasingly international and strategically sensitive, Liu said Taiwan supports cooperation based on trust and reciprocity while maintaining strict safeguards for critical technologies and intellectual property.

TSRI encourages basic research collaboration between Taiwanese and international research teams. However, cooperation arrangements clearly define research scope, data usage and ownership of results.

Non-disclosure agreements, intellectual property-sharing frameworks within joint research centres and compliance with national guidelines for protecting critical technologies form part of the institute's approach.

Liu said international cooperation and technology protection should not be viewed as opposing objectives.

Instead, he advocated appropriate levels of openness and protection based on the stage and nature of each research project, allowing scientific collaboration to continue while reducing the risk of sensitive technology leakage.

Taiwan open to semiconductor research and talent cooperation with Eswatini

Liu said, TSRI is open to potential cooperation with the University of Eswatini and the Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP), particularly in semiconductor education, talent development, IC design and sensing technologies.

He noted that semiconductor development does not necessarily have to begin with wafer fabrication.

■ TSRI Director General Jimmy Liu says AI chips, advanced packaging, silicon photonics and international talent development will shape Taiwan's next phase of semiconductor growth

ment and weaken the efficiencies created by specialised industrial clusters.

Taiwan's approach is to globalise its semiconductor ecosystem while retaining core research and advanced manufacturing capabilities at home.

Liu said companies can establish overseas operations and cooperate with international partners to distribute risks across key parts of the supply chain.

He added that resilience must extend beyond chip manufacturing to encompass equipment, materials, electronic design automation and packaging.

The objective, he said, is to strike a balance between global supply-chain security and the efficiency of an interconnected semiconductor industry.

India can build on software talent and IC design strengths

Commenting on India's expanding semiconductor ambitions, Liu said the country possesses world-class software talent and a large domestic market, giving it significant advantages in developing its semiconductor ecosystem.

However, he identified manufacturing yield improvement and the development of cross-disciplinary hardware talent as two of the most difficult capabilities to establish.

Manufacturing yield — the proportion of chips that meet required specifications — depends on extensive practical experience, rigorous engineering discipline and effective coordination between chip design, manufacturing and packaging.

Liu suggested that India could accelerate its development by combining its strengths in IC design and AI software with Taiwan's manufacturing expertise.

He also recommended that India consider a national-level semiconductor training model similar to TSRI's shared-facility approach.

Under such a model, university students and researchers could gain practical experience using industry-standard design tools and fabrication technologies while conducting academic research.

This would help narrow the gap between university education and industrial requirements.

Liu said India did not need to replicate Taiwan's entire semiconductor ecosystem. By adapting lessons from Taiwan to its own capabilities and market conditions, India could develop an industrial structure suited to its strengths.

Taiwan positions research and talent at the centre of its next phase

Liu's remarks highlight Taiwan's strategy of extending its semiconductor leadership beyond manufacturing capacity to include advanced research, international talent development, AI hardware and collaborative innovation.

Through shared research infrastructure, university partnerships and cooperation with international institutions, TSRI aims to help researchers develop technologies that could support the next generation of AI systems and intelligent devices.

The institute's approach also reflects a broader recognition that semiconductor competitiveness depends on an integrated combination of scientific research, engineering expertise, industrial coordination and international collaboration.

For countries seeking to strengthen their own semiconductor capabilities, Liu said Taiwan's experience offers a practical lesson: building sustainable technological capacity requires long-term investment in people, research infrastructure and partnerships rather than simply acquiring equipment or establishing fabrication facilities.



Students and faculty members from Eswatini could first enrol at Taiwanese universities or establish academic collaborations, subsequently applying for NIAR's International Internships Program and using cloud-based IC design training platforms alongside Taiwanese research teams.

Initial cooperation could focus on talent training, IC design, embedded systems and sensing technologies.

Liu said professionals trained through such programmes could eventually apply smart sensing and power-management technologies to Eswatini's industrial development and smart city projects, with solutions adapted to local infrastructure requirements.

The approach could provide a foundation for long-term academic exchanges while helping emerging technology sectors develop local expertise.

Taiwan's semiconductor ecosystem difficult for other countries to replicate, Liu said Taiwan's technological leadership rests on the efficiency and speed of its integrated semiconductor ecosystem, which connects academic research, chip design, manufacturing and packaging.

Close geographical proximity and strong coordination between these sectors allow research findings to progress rapidly from proof-of-concept to industrial development, accelerating technological innovation.

Replicating the model is difficult because it requires more than investment, equipment and infrastructure. Decades of accumulated manufacturing experience, specialised engineering knowledge, industrial culture and trusted relationships between academia and industry are also essential.

Liu said other countries need not reproduce Taiwan's entire supply chain to establish competitive semiconductor industries.

Instead, they could identify areas that match their existing strengths, such as IC design or advanced packaging, and build complementary partnerships with Taiwan's research institutions and industrial ecosystem.

Supply-chain diversification must balance resilience and efficiency

Amid US-China tensions and efforts to diversify semiconductor production, Liu said geographic diversification can make global supply chains more resilient by reducing dependence on individual locations exposed to natural disasters or geopolitical disruptions.

However, excessive diversification or attempts to establish completely independent semiconductor supply chains could increase costs, duplicate invest-

Breast cancer screenings exceed 46,000 in Kuwait: Ministry of Health

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Official spokesperson of the Health Ministry Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad revealed that the number of screenings conducted under the breast cancer awareness program has exceeded 46,000.

Al-Sanad made announcement on the sidelines of an awareness event organized by the Council of Radiology and Radiation Oncology Departments, in collaboration with the National Program for Early Detection of Breast Diseases, at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital, coinciding with the Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

He asserted that the abovementioned figure proves the rising public awareness and an increased uptake of the program's services. He stressed the importance of awareness and early detection of the disease before it progresses, which paves the way for timely intervention and increases the



Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad

chance of recovery.

He pointed out that breast cancer is one of the most common types of cancer among women, with about 2.3 to 2.4 million cases recorded annually around the world. He said the recovery rates could reach 95 to 100 percent when the disease is detected early.

He disclosed that early detection efforts in Kuwait began in 2013 with a single unit at one hospital, and have since evolved into a national program that provides

awareness and diagnostic services through public hospitals and primary healthcare centers. He added that women can book screening appointments through the 'Sahel' and 'Salem' (formerly 'Kuwait Seha') mobile applications.

He encouraged women over the age of 40 to undergo regular screenings, explaining that the assessment process might require additional tests, such as ultrasound, MRI or biopsy, depending on clinical indications.

He went on to say that the event included a lecture for medical staff at the hospitals in the country.

Meanwhile, the ministry is monitoring the demand for mammography services and appointment availability, affirming that additional centers will be opened in case the waiting period increases.

Some women are able to secure an appointment and undergo the screening within a day or two of booking.

US measles cases top 4,400 as Pennsylvania outbreak worsens

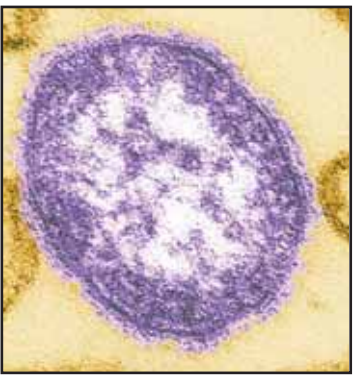
LOS ANGELES, Oct 18, (Xinhua): The United States reported 4,410 confirmed measles cases in 2026 as of Thursday, nearly double the 2,289 cases reported for all of 2025, putting the country on track for its highest annual total since 1991, according to the latest data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Of the confirmed cases, 4,392 were reported by 47 jurisdictions, while 18 cases were reported among international visitors to the United States, the CDC said.

Children and adolescents aged 5 to 19 accounted for the largest share of cases, with 1,856 infections, or 42 percent of the total.

A total of 451 patients, or about 10 percent of all confirmed cases, have been hospitalized. About 96 percent of cases were among people who were unvaccinated or whose vaccination status was unknown, according to CDC data.

Meanwhile, the outbreak in the US state of Pennsylvania continues to grow. The Pennsylvania Department of Health said on Friday that 1,260 measles cases have been confirmed across 43 counties in the state so far this year, including 238 hospitalizations and five confirmed measles-associated deaths.



This undated image made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Feb 4, 2015, shows an electron microscope image of a measles virus particle. (AP)

The state reported 38 new cases since Wednesday. It is also investigating a recently reported death in Franklin County, the department said.

The CDC plans to send one of its scientists to Pennsylvania to help respond to the outbreak, NBC News reported Thursday, citing a CDC spokesperson. The scientist, an officer with the agency's Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS), is expected to arrive later this week. EIS officers are often referred to as "disease detectives" because of their work investigating disease outbreaks.

"CDC will continue working closely with Pennsylvania health officials to provide the expertise and support needed to respond to the outbreak and protect public health," the CDC spokesperson was quoted as saying.

The CDC recommends two doses of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine as the best protection against measles. The agency says that when more than 95 percent of people in a community are vaccinated, community immunity, also known as herd immunity, helps protect more people from the disease.

Equatorial Guinea expands ambitious malaria elimination plan

Tanzania tightens health screening for int'l travelers amid Ebola concerns

DAR ES SALAAM, Oct 18, (Agencies): Tanzania has strengthened health screening and surveillance measures for international travelers following an Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and a recent case in neighboring Kenya involving a patient who traveled from the DRC.

The measures, effective immediately, require all incoming travelers to complete an online health surveillance form before departure for Tanzania or upon arrival, according to Travel Advisory No. 18 issued by the Ministry of Health on Saturday.

Travelers are required to provide accurate information through the ministry's online portal and retain a confirmation QR code or reference number for verification by port health authorities, said the travel advisory.

The advisory, signed by Permanent Secretary Grace Magembe, said all travelers entering the country through airports, land borders and seaports would undergo health screening, including temperature checks.

Individuals suspected of having EVD symptoms or other infectious diseases will be managed in accordance with national screening procedures, it said.

High-risk travelers will be subject

to daily health monitoring for 21 days through automated messages or other communication channels, said the advisory, adding that they must cooperate with the follow-up process and respond to messages even after leaving Tanzania.

The ministry also urged travelers and transport operators to observe infection prevention measures, including hand hygiene, the use of sanitizers and avoiding unnecessary physical contact.

Any transport vehicle or vessel contaminated by a suspected case, cargo or human remains associated with EVD or another infectious disease will be decontaminated at the point of entry, said the advisory.

It said travelers are advised to report suspected symptoms to the nearest health facility or relevant authorities through the toll-free number 199 or email poe@afya.go.tz.

The ministry said the advisory would be reviewed as necessary and urged travelers leaving Tanzania to comply with the entry requirements of their destination or transit countries. Enditem

Meanwhile, Three Kenyan health workers have tested positive for Ebola after caring for the country's first confirmed case, the Health Ministry said Saturday.

Another person linked to the first Ebola case also tested positive while



A health care worker reacts while receiving a dose of Ervebo vaccine against the Ebola virus in Beni, North Kivu province, eastern Congo on Oct 16. (AP)

in quarantine, bringing the total number of infections in Kenya to seven.

The ministry said the four new patients were in isolation and receiving care. The other two patients were in stable condition. The first patient died on Oct. 5, days after he arrived in Kenya from Congo, where an outbreak has killed at least 4,300 people since May, accounting for nearly half of all confirmed cases there.

The outbreak involves the rare

128 were in quarantine and two were being traced, it said.

Kenya has strengthened screening and established an emergency hotline for anyone who suspects they may have been in contact with an Ebola patient or develops symptoms.

Also:
MALABO, Equatorial Guinea: With its torrential rains, tropical forests and omnipresent humidity, Equatorial Guinea provides the perfect conditions for mosquitoes to breed. For centuries, mosquito-borne diseases, in particular malaria, have dictated the fate of residents of this central African nation, impacting how they lived, worked and died.

But **Bioko** island, off mainland Equatorial Guinea, has managed to sharply reduce malaria infections and deaths.

Bioko, roughly half the size of Rhode Island, has used familiar tools: indoor spraying, mosquito nets and keeping control of the larvae population. Its success, however, has depended on something less easily replicated: two decades of painstaking data collection, sustained funding and workers going door to door to win residents' trust.

Now the tiny, oil-rich country wants to bring that approach to its mainland and eliminate malaria altogether. But the expansion of Bioko's

strategy presents formidable challenges, from porous international borders to the sheer scale of the territory.

In Malabo, Bioko's biggest city, a team of men and women equipped with insecticide sprayers squeezed between low-rise cement buildings on a recent morning, as heavy rain drummed on aluminum roofs.

"We are here to give key messages so that the population understands the importance of our interventions," said **Cristina Ngui Otogo**, the program coordinator. "Today it will be hard to convince people to get out of their homes."

Around 610,000 people died in 2024 from malaria, according to the last available data from the WHO, and African countries accounted for 95% of global cases and deaths.

Despite technological advances, such as new vaccines for children, the fight against malaria in Africa has stalled, making it unlikely the continent can achieve its goal of eliminating the disease by 2030. Only two countries in sub-Saharan Africa have been certified malaria free by the World Health Organization: **Mauritius** and **Cabo Verde**, both of them island nations.

Africa CDC experts say one key element of Bioko's strategy is meticulously collecting data about the population and where people live.

Japan to launch spacecraft on mission to get samples from Martian moon

TOKYO, Oct 18, (Agencies): Japan is set to launch a spacecraft on the world's first mission to bring back samples from Phobos, one of the two small, potato-shaped moons orbiting Mars.

Scientists hope the mission, which is expected to take five years, will provide clues to how Phobos and its smaller sibling Deimos formed, and hopefully even shed light on the origins of life in the solar system.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's launch of the spacecraft Tuesday on a new Japanese mainstay H-3 rocket comes as the United States, China and others consider sending astronauts to Mars.

Samples from Phobos will provide useful data for scientists to consider using a Martian moon as a base for a future manned mission to the planet, said MMX project manager Yasuhiro Kawakatsu.

"Despite their potential importance, Martian moons have never been fully investigated," Kawakatsu said. "They are known as the most important unclimbed mountains in the solar system."

Japan leads the international mission that includes equipment and communications support from NASA and other national space agencies.

Since the 1960s, dozens of missions have been sent to Mars, but its moons largely remain a mystery. Phobos and Deimos take their names from the Greek mythological personifications of fear and terror, sons of the war god Ares, whose Roman counterpart is Mars.

Multiple Russian attempts to land on Phobos, including one in 2011, have failed.

A key question will be how they formed and what they are made of. Some scientists think the two irregular crater-pocked bodies could be remnants of debris formed after a large celestial object crashed into Mars. Others say the moons could be asteroids that have come from elsewhere.

JAXA officials think samples from Phobos will provide answers.

"We can almost certainly come to a conclusion by analyzing (Phobos) soil samples," MMX principal investigator Kiyoshi Kuramoto said.

Scientists chose to collect samples from Phobos mainly because the

moon is closer to Mars than Deimos and therefore may have more information about the planet. Material from Mars is expected to make up about 0.1% of the material collected from Phobos, JAXA officials say.

Phobos, about 20 to 30 kilometers (10 to 20 miles) in diameter, orbits Mars at a distance of about 6,000 kilometers (3,700 miles) three times a day.

Samples from Phobos could also shed light on the origin of Deimos as the two moons are believed to have similar roots, Kuramoto said. The mission also includes plans to fly by Deimos and collect observations.

It will be a long journey to reach the red planet, 55 million kilometers (34 million miles) away from Earth at their closest point. The actual flight distance will be 500-600 million kilometers (310-370 miles), said MMX project manager Yasuhiro Kawakatsu.

After launching on the H3 rocket, the spacecraft will arrive at the Mars region in around August, 2027. Then it will fly near and around Phobos for three years to collect data and gather samples from the moon before returning home in 2031.

MMX is made up of three modules - for propulsion, exploration and return - and weighs about 5 tons. Only the third module will return home, with the samples stored in a capsule.

The spacecraft will carry 13 instruments, including a rover jointly developed by France and Germany that will land on the moon, as well as

a NASA sampling device and instrument to measure gamma rays, and the European Space Agency's deep space communication device. A Japanese radiation monitor will collect data that can help a future manned Mars exploration.

The French-German rover Idefix lands on Phobos first. During a 100-day mission in around 2029, it will explore the surface of the moon to help the subsequent Japanese soil-sampling.

Once the MMX lands some time later, JAXA scientists aim to collect at least 10 grams (0.35 ounces) of soil from the moon from two sampling attempts using U.S. and Japanese methods.

NASA's sampling device uses pressurized gas to lift surface dust into a container, and JAXA's coring method will collect samples from a depth of about 2 centimeters (less than 1 inch).

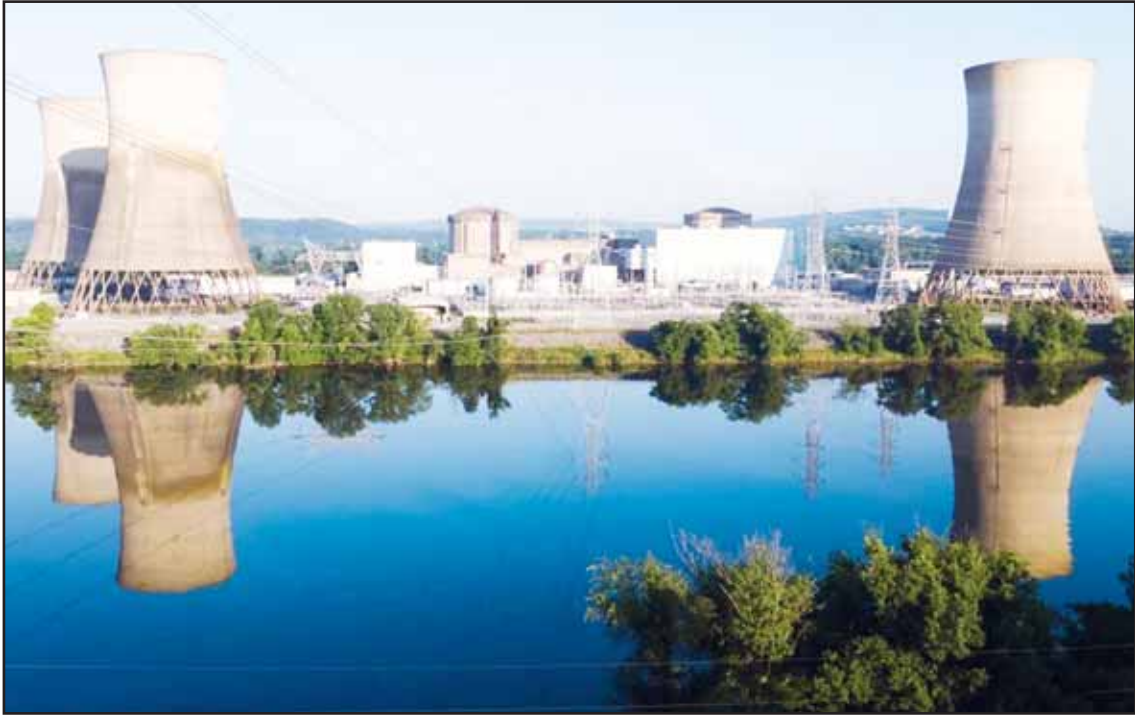
In the first attempt, the MMX will collect surface and underground samples using both devices, and take additional underground samples in the second landing.

Scientists say collecting samples from multiple locations increases the chances of obtaining any potential traces of past microbial life from Mars.

The samples will be stored in a heat-protected capsule designed to survive reentry into Earth's atmosphere. It's expected to land in Australia before being sent back to Japan.



The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency unveils a spacecraft for its Martian Moons exploration mission at the Tanegashima Space Center in Minamitanabe, southwestern Japan on Aug 13. (AP)



At Constellation's nuclear power plant on Three Mile Island, called the Crane Clean Energy Center, near Middletown, Pa., the cooling towers are reflected in the Susquehanna River on June 25. (AP)

US revives shuttered nuclear plants to meet growing electricity demand

WASHINGTON, Oct 18, (AP): The United States is making an unprecedented attempt to revive three shuttered nuclear plants to meet rising energy demand, including from large-scale data centers.

No commercial nuclear reactor is known to have resumed generating electricity after beginning the decommissioning process that takes one out of service, though some reactors have restarted after long outages.

The Department of Energy is lending as much as \$4.4 billion to restart the Palisades Power Plant in Michigan, the Crane Clean Energy Center on Pennsylvania's Three Mile Island and the Duane Arnold Energy Center in Iowa to restore a combined 2.25 gigawatts of electricity, which can power roughly 2 million homes and businesses. All three of the plants closed before their licenses expired, largely because the electricity they produced was considered too expensive.

Not anymore. Two of the plants have contracts with Big Tech companies that will pay a premium to get large amounts of carbon-free energy for data centers. President Donald

Trump's administration is pushing hard to deploy nuclear power for artificial intelligence and manufacturing. It's also lending billions of dollars for upgrades to produce more electricity from currently operating nuclear plants.

Restarting a reactor is a fairly quick way to get a lot of electricity, and it's cheaper than building a new, large reactor, said nuclear engineering expert Todd Allen.

"There's a demand in the country for more power," he said. "You have these assets that were previously hooked up. They were previously operable, and you can relatively quickly get them generating electricity again, compared to your other possibilities. For anyone who wants zero carbon, nuclear provides that. For the Trump administration, which really wants nuclear, this fits that story also."

Allen compared restarting a decommissioned nuclear plant to restarting a car that sat idle for a few years. The driver still needs a valid license and all the parts need to work correctly.

"That's what they're trying to do with these nuclear plants, but it's a

much bigger, complicated system," said Allen, associate dean for research at the University of Michigan's College of Engineering.

With a nuclear plant, the owner has to bring nuclear workers back and ensure their training is current, make sure everything is working and that maintenance is up to date, ensure they have enough fuel and ask regulators to restore their operating license, he added.

Allen said it's a lot to track, but it's relatively straightforward.

Edwin Lyman, at the Union of Concerned Scientists, said the taxpayer money being used should go toward addressing safety risks. For example, most U.S. plants were built between 1970 and 1990 and designed to withstand natural disasters of that era, said Lyman, director of nuclear power safety at UCS. But climate change is making extreme weather events more frequent and severe.

"It's possible, if they set the right level of safety and spend the necessary funds to meet that, they could restore these plants to operable condition," he said. "That's not happening at this point."

Fundora knocks out Hadribeaj to keep undisputed hopes alive

Dubois retains WBO heavyweight title after brutal Wardley stoppage

LONDON, Oct 18, (AP): Daniel Dubois retained his WBO heavyweight title with a brutal second-round stoppage of Fabio Wardley on Saturday as their fight of the year rematch at the O2 Arena in London ended in a furious assault from the champion.

There were 39 seconds of the round left when referee Steve Gray waved off the contest at the same time as the towel was thrown into the ring by Wardley's trainer Ben Davison.

Dubois was also punishing in the first round - he needed just 17 seconds to put fellow British boxer Wardley on the canvas with an over-hand right.

Resuming hostilities just five months after their first slugfest, Dubois (24-3, 23 KOs) launched an all-out assault from the first bell and was rewarded with a destructive victory that issued a statement to his rivals in the division.

Dubois had bloodied Wardley in an 11th-round stoppage victory in May to become a two-time heavyweight champion. Wardley dropped

the former IBF champion just seconds into that fight in Manchester but never looked a threat to Dubois on Saturday.

It was the second professional loss for Wardley (20-2-1, 19 KOs).

"It's never fun to lose, but it is what it is. The game is the game," Wardley said. "I have always thrown myself in with the best competitors out there - the best in the business, the biggest, hardest, meanest guys around - so there's no shame in a loss when you're testing yourself against the best."

Meanwhile, Sebastian Fundora kept his pursuit of an undisputed championship on track with a second to spare.

Fundora stopped Ermal Hadribeaj with a left hand at 2:59 of the 12th round at The Chelsea at The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas to retain his WBC super welterweight title.

Fundora (25-1-1, 17 KOs) had his fourth successful title defense and handed Hadribeaj (23-1-1) his first professional loss.



Boxers Daniel Dubois, left, and Fabio Wardley battle during their WBO world heavyweight bout, Saturday, Oct. 17, 2025, in London. (Nick Potts/PA via AP)

Fundora entered the bout looking toward a chance to unify the 154-pound division, but first had to get past a stubborn mandatory challenger.

Hadribeaj attacked the body early, crouching beneath Fundora's punches and landing looping shots over the top. Fundora caught him in the second round, and Hadribeaj increasingly turned to holding to disrupt the

champion's offense.

Hadribeaj lost points for holding in the third and 11th rounds. Fundora found room for uppercuts inside and applied pressure through the middle rounds before delivering the decisive left in the final second.

"I told the ref in the fourth round that I was hurting him," Fundora said. "I kept landing body shots and was looking for that special shot to get him out of there."

Fundora, 28, has won five straight since Brian Mendoza knocked him out in April 2023. The 6-foot-5 southpaw from Coachella, California, captured the WBC and WBO titles against Tim Tszyu in March 2024, then stopped Chordale Booker, Tszyu and Keith Thurman in successive defenses.

Hadribeaj, an Albanian fighter based in Miami, earned his title opportunity with a victory over previously unbeaten Bakary Samake earlier this year.

In the co-main event, Armando Resendiz (17-3) outlasted Austra-

lia's Koen Mazoudier (16-5-1) by unanimous decision in a 10-round super middleweight bout. The judges scored it 98-92, 97-93 and 97-93.

Resendiz landed punishing left hands through the middle rounds, but Mazoudier kept trading inside and rallied late. Resendiz finished strongly, sending Mazoudier stumbling backward in the final minute.

"We pulled this off because we had great preparation," Resendiz said. "This was the kind of fight that I expected. I had to change my game plan and box and move a little bit because this was a very tough fight."

Marco Romero (16-0, 14 KOs) stopped Matias Ferreira (8-4) with a crushing right hand at 1:54 of the first round in their scheduled eight-round super middleweight bout.

Jaime Osuna (12-0) remained unbeaten with a majority decision over Cristian Cangelosi (13-1-1) in an eight-round middleweight bout.

"It was a fight that took everything I had from beginning to end," Osuna said.

Ethiopians sweep podium

Olympic champion Tola breaks Beijing Marathon course record

BEIJING, Oct 18, (Xinhua): Olympic champion Tamirat Tola of Ethiopia won the 2026 Beijing Marathon in two hours three minutes and 10 seconds on Sunday, cutting the previous course record by nearly four minutes.

The previous course mark of 2:07:06 was set by Kenyan runner Mathew Kipkoech Kisorio in 2019.

Ethiopian runners swept the podium, and the second and third placed Muktar Edris and Adane Kebede Gebre also broke the previous course record in 2:04:34 and 2:05:10, respectively.

The 35-year-old Tola showed good form in recent years with a personal best of 2:02:59 in marathon. He triumphed in the marathon event at the 2022 Oregon World Athletics Championships and the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

Another Ethiopian runner Anchinu Dessie Genaneh retained her Beijing Marathon women's title in 2:20:36.

According to organizers, more than 265,000 runners signed up for the Beijing Marathon this year



Tamirat Tola of Ethiopia crosses the finish line to win the first place of the men's marathon event at the 2026 Beijing Marathon & National Marathon Championships in Beijing, capital of China. (Xinhua)

despite a cap of 32,000. The race started from the Tiananmen Square and finished at the Beijing Olympic Park.

Thitikul shoots 69, finishes 3-under

China's Yin beats Choi to capture Shanghai crown

SHANGHAI, Oct 18, (AP): Ruoning Yin made a four-foot birdie putt on the 16th hole to break out of a back-nine tie with third-round leader Hye-Jin Choi and win the LPGA Shanghai tournament by one stroke.

Choi and Yin tied for the lead after 10 holes and remained level through the 15th hole at Sheshan Golf Club. Yin missed a 10-foot birdie putt on 15 but made no mistake a hole later to move to 10-under, a stroke ahead of Choi with two holes to go.

It was the seventh LPGA tournament win for China's Yin, who won the Shanghai event in 2024 and a major at the Women's PGA Championship in 2023.

Yin finished with a 72-hole total of 11-under 277, while Choi had a 71 Sunday. Amy Yang finished in third after a 68, three strokes behind Yin.

Choi was looking for her first win on the LPGA Tour since joining in 2022 and after more than 100 starts. She led by three strokes after the first round, two after the second and one after 54 holes.

Defending champion Jeeno Thitikul, who won in a five-hole playoff over Minami Katsu here in 2025, shot 69 Sunday and was at 3-under. Thitikul won the LOTTE Championship in Hawaii earlier this month for her fourth LPGA victory of the season and 11th overall.

The late-season Asian Swing on the LPGA Tour continues in South Korea, where the BMW Ladies Championship will be played at Pine Beach Golf Links in Haenam-gun beginning Thursday. Later tournaments are scheduled in Malaysia and Japan.

Griezmann nets brace

Messi leads Inter Miami to victory over Atlanta

WASHINGTON, Oct. 17, (Xinhua): Lionel Messi scored twice as Inter Miami cruised to a 3-1 away MLS win over Atlanta United on Saturday.

German Berterame put the visitors ahead on the stroke of halftime by meeting Luis Suarez's cross with a header at the far post.

Miami doubled the lead in the 56th minute and this time Berterame was the provider, playing a slick one-two with Messi, who skipped around his marker and drilled a shot past goalkeeper Lucas Hoyos.

Messi struck again four minutes later when he ran onto Suarez's pass and dribbled around Junior Alonso before finishing clinically into the far corner.

The hosts pulled a goal back through Fafa Picault's 89th-minute penalty but the Florida outfit held on to secure its 15th win of the campaign.

The result leaves Inter Miami second in the Eastern Conference with 55 points from 30 games while Atlanta is 14th in the 15-team group with 30 points.

Meanwhile, Antoine Griezmann had two goals and an assist, Martin

Ojeda added a goal and an assist, and Orlando City beat D.C. United 3-1 on Saturday night.

Griezmann has 12 goals and seven assists in 14 MLS appearances and is the first player in league history with a goal contribution in 12 of his first 14 career games.

Marco Pasalic scored a stoppage-time goal for Orlando (12-13-5). Maxime Crepeau had three saves.

Tai Baribo converted from the penalty spot in first-half stoppage time for D.C. (7-10-12).

Ojeda, just inside the top of the 18-yard box, chipped a first-touch pass over four defenders to a charging Griezmann on the give-and-go for a first-touch finish from 7 yards out to make it 1-0 in the 15th minute.

Ojeda flicked a back-heel volley, off a feed from Griezmann, past goalkeeper Sean Johnson and inside the left post to give Orlando a two-goal lead in the 22nd.

Griezmann intercepted a mis-played pass by Kye Rowles in D.C.'s defensive third, took two dribbles and rolled a shot into the net to make it 3-1 in the 50th minute.

Johnson finished with three saves. Also, Gabriel Pirani scored the

Williams leads way as Valkyries draw first blood in WNBA Finals

Atlanta suffers first playoff loss

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct 18, (AP): Gabby Williams so believes in Golden State's poise in crunch time because of the way the Valkyries have won all along with their defense.

They believe in each other to make the play in the biggest of moments.

Williams converted two free throws with 1:18 left to put Golden State ahead, two more with 4.1 seconds to go on the way to scoring 26 points while facing constant pressure from Atlanta's stingy defense, and the Valkyries held off the Dream 68-64 in Game 1 of the WNBA Finals on Saturday.

"Even though we were down with a few minutes left I think we had the game right where we wanted it because it just came down to getting stops," Williams said. "That's been our bread and butter all season. That's why we harp on it so much because we've built great defensive habits for these moments."

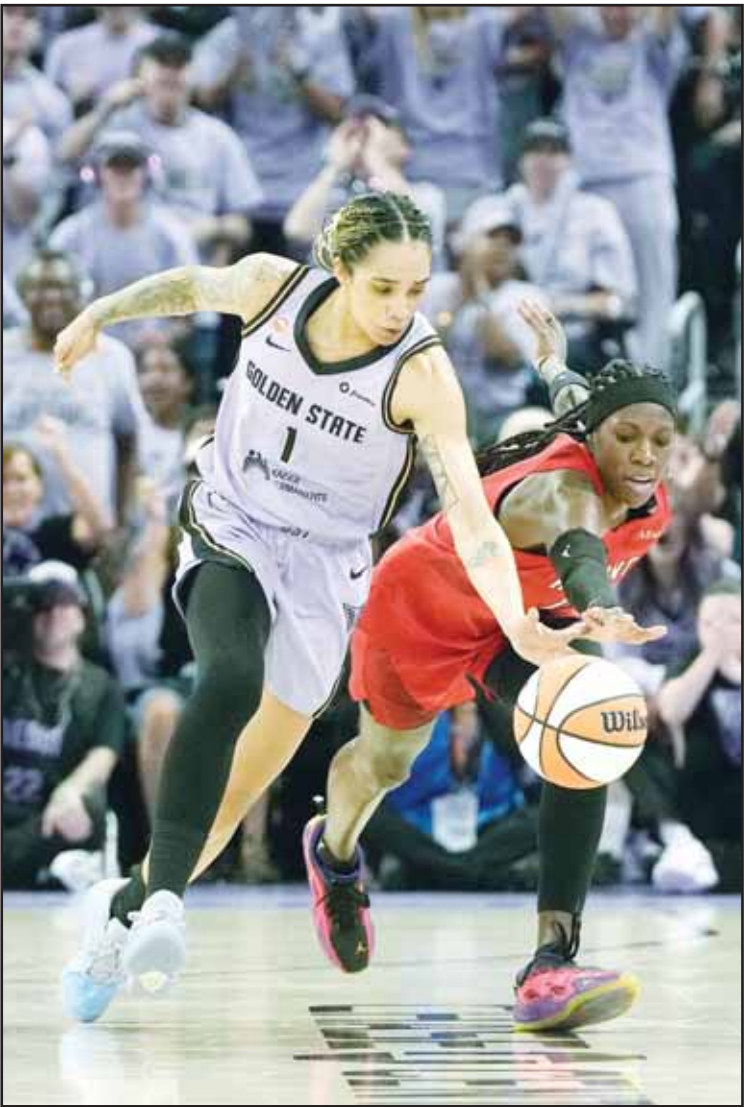
It was the first loss all postseason for Atlanta, snapping a 10-game winning streak overall. And coach Karl Smesko was ready to get right back to work watching film to figure out what to do better in Game 2. The Dream are still yet to win a finals game, swept in each of their previous three trips.

"We were right there, right there, so that's why it hurts a little bit but it also motivates us," he said. "We know what we're capable of doing so we'll have one day to get ourselves as ready as possible and then I think we'll play even better."

Finding a way to slow down Williams - and all of her capable supporting cast - is going to be a challenge.

After a quiet first quarter, she scored 16 of her points in the second and no other Valkyries finished in double figures as they shot 32.1% and 7 of 33 from 3-point range.

"We always knew we were going to find a way somehow," Williams



Golden State Valkyries forward Gabby Williams (1) reaches for the ball against Atlanta Dream guard Rhyné Howard during the first half of Game 1 of the WNBA basketball finals, Saturday in San Francisco. (AP)

said on the microphone postgame as fans chanted "Gabby! Gabby!"

Rhyné Howard missed a 3-point try with 1:09 left but Angel Reese made a steal moments later. Naz Hillmon also missed from deep. Kiah Stokes gave the Dream another chance she missed the first of two free throws

with 23.8 seconds left. Then Allisha Gray couldn't knock down a 3 with 9 seconds left.

Williams converted two free throws with just over 4 seconds left to seal it.

Game 2 in the best-of-seven series is Monday night back at Chase

Center, where the ear-piercing noise from a raucous "Ballhalla" crowd made for the exact hostile environment Valkyries coach Natalie Nakase requested from the home fans.

One of these two franchises will capture its first championship, and if the first game is any indication it's going to be an all-out defensive fight.

Gray returned from injury to score 19 points, while Reese added 14 points and 12 rebounds. Jordin Canada contributed eight points, seven assists and five rebounds for the Dream, hitting a timely 13-foot jumper with 4:23 remaining.

Williams made a driving layup with 3:22 to play that pulled Golden State within 62-61. Canada banged awkwardly into Williams' knee on a box out during her late free throws and the Valkyries star was being cared for by an athletic trainer on the bench in the waning moments.

"I'm OK, it was a long, physical game," she said afterward.

Gray was in the starting lineup and had gone through a light practice Friday after missing the last two games of Atlanta's sweep of the New York Liberty in the best-of-three semifinal series with an injured left ring finger - on her shooting hand.

Golden State guard Tiffany Hayes hit her face hard on the floor trying to make a steal in the closing minutes and was down with 2:38 remaining before walking off the court on her own to the locker room.

Nakase said "so far" her indication was Hayes would be good for Game 2, "so I'll know when the medical tells me." She was undergoing her normal treatment.

The 37-year-old Hayes spent her first 10 WNBA seasons with Atlanta.

"It was a physical game, we understand, it's playoffs, that's just part of it. Tip's OK, I just gave her a little hug," Nakase said. "I'll tell you what, she's a fighter. I don't think there's someone more, maybe our whole team, but she wants this. And I can I say I'm going to put a little bit more energy tonight in film because I want to win this for Tip."

Winners crowned across 11 categories

Inspire Kuwait Championship wraps up first round



Motorcycle racing highlights from the Inspire Kuwait International Open Roll Race Championship.

KUWAIT, Oct 18, (KUNA): The opening round of the Inspire Kuwait International Open Roll Race Championship concluded Saturday at Kuwait Motor Town in Arifjan, south of the country, with winners crowned across 11 distinct categories.

Organized by the Kuwaiti Inspire Club for Cars and Motorcycles as part of the Kuwait Youth and Sports Season, the event featured acceleration and roll racing competitions featuring 301 drivers and riders from Kuwait and fellow Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations.

In the speed-bracketed car categories, Omar Al-Hamoud secured first place in the 180 KM class, while Adnan Al-Zaid claimed victory in the 200 KM category.

Ibrahim Al-Otaibi took first place in the 220 KM category, Abdullah Al-Shaheen won the 240 KM class, and Abdulaziz Al-Mutairi captured top honors in the 270 KM category.

In the specialized vehicle divisions, Omar Al-Shammari placed first in the SUV category, while Rashed Al-Maliki claimed victory in the Extreme Car category.

The motorcycle divisions saw Bader bin Eidan



Lamborghini Huracán Super Trofeo in action at the Inspire Kuwait International Open Roll Race Championship.

take first place in the Extreme Bike category, Ahmad Al-Attar win the 1000CC Bike class, Mohammad Al-Mualla finish first in the 1300CC Bike category, and Mohammad Al-Otaibi claim victory in the Bike 260 category.

The second round of the international championship is scheduled to take place from October 22 to 24 at the Kuwait Motor Town facility.

The Kuwaiti Inspire Club for Cars and Motorcycles organizes and participates in diverse motorsport disciplines locally and regionally to foster national sports talent and regional competition.

Celebration of sporting excellence, teamwork and camaraderie

Pegasus and Gryphons claim titles at IDAK–KDD Sports Championship

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Indian Dentists’ Alliance in Kuwait (IDAK), in association with KDD, continued its IDAK–KDD Sports Championship 2026–27 with an action-packed basketball event featuring Team Pegasus, Team Sphinx and Team Gryphons. Players, families and supporters came together in a celebration of sporting excellence, teamwork and camaraderie.

The event opened with the men’s basketball clash between Team Pegasus and Team Sphinx, setting the stage for an afternoon of spirited competition. The excitement continued with the Ladies’ Basketball Free-Throw competition, where participants demonstrated accuracy, focus and composure through successive rounds.

The men’s final rekindled the rivalry between Pegasus and Sphinx. Delivering a dominant performance, Team Pegasus led by Dr. Bobby Joseph Thomas secured the title with a convincing victory over Team Sphinx captained by Dr. Faraaz Khan, who finished as runners-up. In the ladies’ free-throw category, Team Gryphons, led by Dr. Amrita Geevarghese, took the championship, with Team Pegasus, led by Dr. Anjana C Nair, securing the runners-up position.

The matches were officiated by Dr. Shyam, whose contribution ensured the smooth conduct of both competitions.

The prize distribution ceremony honoured the winning teams and standout performers. Dr. Shalin Anna Simon, President of IDAK,



Top and above: Photos from the tournament. presented the Men’s Basketball Winners’ Trophy to Team Pegasus captain Dr. Bobby Joseph Thomas. Dr. Thomas Thomas presented the

runners-up trophy to Team Sphinx captain Dr. Faraaz Khan, while Dr. Samit Mohanan presented the Men’s Best Player award to Dr. Neil Vincent Lewis.

In the Ladies’ Basketball Free-Throw category, Mr. Anand Harith, Manager – Business Systems at KDD, presented the Winners’ Trophy to Team Gryphons captain Dr. Amrita Geevarghese. Past President Dr. George P. Alex presented the runners-up trophy to Team Pegasus’s Dr. Anjana C Nair, and Dr. Asheel Mohammed presented the Women’s Best Player award to Evelyn Elizabeth Ninan.

Adding a family-friendly dimension to the event, the Kids’ Free-Throw competition gave young participants an opportunity to display their enthusiasm and basketball skills. Arnav Aneef emerged victorious and received the trophy from Dr. Rahul Puthalath.

With another successful event concluded, the IDAK–KDD Sports Championship 2026–27 continued to strengthen camaraderie among members and their families. The basketball court came alive with spirited competition and enthusiastic cheers, celebrating not only athletic achievement but also the values of teamwork, perseverance and sportsmanship. The event further highlighted IDAK’s commitment to promoting fitness, fellowship and a vibrant sporting culture, creating memorable experiences for all involved.

Al-Arabi snatches 2nd spot in Handball Premier League

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Al-Arabi moved into second place in the 2025–26 Handball Premier League after edging Sulaibikhat 24–23 in a thrilling encounter in the 17th round.

The two sides fought out a tight contest, but Al-Arabi managed to secure victory by a single goal, earning two valuable points to strengthen its position in the standings.

In another match, Burgan recorded a comfortable 30–13 win over Al-Nasr to maintain pressure on the teams above them and keep its title ambitions on track.

Kuwait Club continues to lead the standings with 19 points, followed by Al-Arabi on 16 and Burgan on 15. Kazma occupy fourth place with 14 points, while Sulaibikhat is fifth on six. Al-Nasr remains at the bottom with two points.



Al Arabi and Sulaibikhat players in action.

The standings have been adjusted following the removal of Qadsia and Salmiya from the competition. Both clubs disbanded their senior teams and withdrew from three consecutive matches, resulting in their exclusion from the 2025–26 season and the cancellation of their previous results.

Al-Attar selected to officiate at Asian Champ’ships in Pakistan

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Kuwaiti international referee Ashwaq Al-Attar will take charge of events at the second Asian Masters Weightlifting Championships in Islamabad, Pakistan, from October 20 to 25.

The competition will feature a distinguished lineup of male and female weightlifters from across Asia.

Al-Attar’s selection highlights the growing recognition of Kuwaiti refereeing expertise at the continental level and reflects the experience she has accumulated through officiating at numerous international competitions.

Her latest appointment follows her participation as a referee at the World Masters Weightlifting Championships in Athens, Greece, last September.

Al-Attar is looking to build on her international experience and



Kuwaiti international referee Ashwaq Al-Attar.

continue representing Kuwaiti refereeing at major continental and global events.

Kazma meets Qadsia

Kuwait Volleyball League resumes after long break

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: The Kuwait Volleyball Premier League resumes today after a lengthy break, with two matches marking the continuation of the preliminary round of the 2025–26 season at the Kuwait Volleyball Association Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Indoor Sports Complex.

Al-Sahel faces Al-Nasr in the opening match at 5 pm, while Kazma meets Qadsia in the evening’s second fixture at 7 pm.

The competition has been on hold since early March due to developments in the Gulf region, with clubs now

preparing to complete the remaining matches of the season.

The return to action will give teams an opportunity to regain their rhythm and match fitness after the extended interruption, while strengthening their bids for the league crown. Others will aim to improve their positions and secure a place among the top finishers.

The battle is expected to intensify in the coming rounds, not only for the championship but also for second and third place.

With the top three teams earning the right to represent Kuwait in international competitions, the stakes will be high as the league enters its decisive phase.



In this file photo Qadsia player spikes the ball as Kazma players defend.

Chwalinska makes history at Wuhan Open

Fokina wins Shanghai Masters for biggest career title

SHANGHAI, Oct 18, (Agencies): Alejandro Davidovich Fokina rallied from a set and a break down to beat Rafael Jodar 1-6, 7-6 (5), 6-4 and win the Shanghai Masters on Sunday, securing his third title of the year and biggest yet of his career.

The 25th-seeded Spaniard had lost the first five finals of his career, including the Monte Carlo Masters in 2022.

His other titles this year came on grass in Mallorca in June and at the Chengdu Open in China last month. Both were ATP 250 tournaments. He clutched the Shanghai trophy tightly and then kissed it.

Davidovich Fokina was close to going out of the tournament, saving a match point in the third round against three-time U.S. Open semifinalist Frances Tiafoe. He then rallied from a set down against future No. 1 Alexander Zverev in the semifinals.

The 20-year-old Spaniard Rafael Jodar, seeded No. 12, was also appearing in his first Masters 1000 final and looked set for a second career title following a dominant first set.



Maja Chwalinska of Poland celebrates with her trophy after defeating Sonay Kartal of Britain in the women’s singles final of the 2026 Wuhan Open tennis tournament in Wuhan in central China’s Hubei Province on Sunday, Oct. 18, 2026. (AP)

But like against Zverev, Davidovich Fokina fought back again.

No. 16 seed Maja Chwalinska of Poland came from a set down to defeat Britain’s Sonay Kartal 2-6, 6-4, 6-2 and claim her first WTA 1000 title, while top seeds Gabriela Dabrowski and Luisa Stefani won the doubles title with straight-set victory over third seeds Storm Hunter and Katriona Siniakova.

Kartal made a fast start in the opening set, winning four of the first five games before taking it 6-2. She broke first again in the second to lead 2-0, but Chwalinska recovered to level at 2-2 and broke late before serving out the set 6-4.

In the decider, after Kartal held the opening game, Chwalinska took control, winning five straight games with two breaks before closing out the set 6-2 to complete the comeback.

This season, Chwalinska made a breakthrough at the French Open, advancing all the way to the final after coming through qualifying. She then endured several first-round exits during the grass-court season and the North American swing before gradually rediscovering her form in Asia.

An extends streak to 43, reaches Denmark Open final

ODENSE, Denmark, Oct 18, (Xinhua): An Se-young extended her winning streak to 43 matches on Saturday, beating Nozomi Okuhara of Japan 21-16, 21-8 in 36 minutes to reach the Denmark Open final.

An, ranked world No. 1, is 60-1 this season and one win from defending her title at the BWF World Tour Super 750 event.

An will play third-seeded Akane Yamaguchi of Japan for the title Sunday, who beat second-seeded Wang Zhiyi of China 21-10, 21-19.

In men’s singles, seventh-seeded Alex Lanier of France, the reigning world champion, beat eighth-seeded Victor Lai of Canada 21-19, 21-10 in their third meeting this year.

He will play fifth-seeded Anders Antonsen of Denmark, who rallied past second-seeded Christo Popov of France 9-21, 21-16, 21-13 before the home crowd.

In men’s doubles, fourth-seeded Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik of Malaysia beat top-seeded Kim Won-ho and Seo Seung-

jae of South Korea 21-14, 21-18.

Chia and Soh will face third-seeded Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Shohibul Fikri of Indonesia, who beat second-seeded Liang Weikeng and Wang Chang of China 21-16, 16-21, 21-16.

In women’s doubles, second-seeded Pearly Tan and Thinaah Muralitharan of Malaysia beat sixth-seeded Bao Lijing and Cao Zihan of China 21-16, 21-14 to become the first Malaysian women’s doubles pair to reach the Denmark Open final in 18 years.

They will play Hinata Suzuki and Nao Yamakita of Japan, who beat seventh-seeded Sumire Nakade and Miyu Takahashi 21-18, 18-21, 21-18 in an all-Japanese semifinal.

China will have both pairs in the mixed doubles final. Top-seeded Feng Yanzhe and Huang Dongping beat Hoo Pang Ron and Lai Pei Jing of Malaysia 21-13, 21-13, and second-seeded Jiang Zhenbang and Wei Yaxin beat eighth-seeded Cheng Xing and Zhang Chi of China 17-21, 21-12, 21-13.

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NEWS



Mohammed Ibrahim with his technical staff.

Sports

Qadsia makes strong start in Challenge League

‘General’ hails display as Al-Arabi seeks response

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Qadsia coach Mohammed Ibrahim praised his players for delivering a strong performance in its 3-0 victory over Bangladesh’s Fortis in the opening round of the AFC Challenge League.

The Yellow Castle secured the win at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium in its Group C opener. In the other match, Tajikistan’s Regar-TadAZ defeated India’s Goa 2-1.

Ibrahim lauded the commitment shown by his entire squad, saying the club’s discreet approach to recruitment ahead of the new season had paid dividends, with the foreign signings making an immediate impact.

“Moroccan forward Ayoub Lakhdar was suffering from a health problem that forced him to miss the last two training sessions. Cedric Henry returned to the defensive line because of the circumstances of the match, as we had to make substitutions after two players’ sustained injuries,” Ibrahim said.

He stressed that he had full confidence in all his players and



KUNA photo

Qadsia and Bangladesh’s Fortis fighting for the ball during the opening match.

expressed particular satisfaction with the performances of Muath

Al-Dhafiri, Khaled Mohammed Ibrahim, Cedric and Khaled Sa-

bah.

Hamza Khabba gave Qadsia

the lead from the penalty spot in the 20th minute, before Lakh-

dar added a second in the 71st minute. Abdullah Matawa completed the scoring in the 90th minute.

Qadsia will take on Regar-TadAZ on Tuesday before concluding their group-stage campaign

Al-Arabi coach Mohammed Abdelnabi pointed to his side’s lack of attacking effectiveness and poor finishing, along with injuries and forced substitutions, as the main reasons for their opening defeat in the AFC Challenge League.

Al-Arabi lost 1-0 to Syria’s Homs Al-Fidaa on Thursday in its Group B opener, with the group matches being held in Tajikistan.

Abdelnabi said the injury to midfielder Khaled Al-Murshid in the 20th minute disrupted his team’s plans and forced tactical adjustments.

He added that Homs Al-Fida capitalized on its only clear opportunity before adopting a defensive approach and holding on to the lead until the final whistle.

Al-Arabi faces Tajikistan’s Istiklol tomorrow in a crucial second-round match. Istiklol also began its campaign with a 1-0 defeat, losing to Lebanon’s Al-Najma.

Unbeaten campaign

Kazma looks to get back to winning ways

Kuwaiti jiu-jitsu stars strike gold at the AJP Championship in Doha



Kuwaiti jiu-jitsu delegation.

DOHA, Oct 18: Kuwaiti jiu-jitsu athletes continued their impressive run on the international stage, collecting multiple gold medals at the latest AJP Championship held in Doha, Qatar.

Organized by the Abu Dhabi Jiu-Jitsu Pro (AJP), the tournament brought together more than 1,000 professional athletes from around the world, with competitors facing

strong challenges across various categories.

The Kuwaiti team enjoyed an unbeaten campaign, winning all its bouts. Ibrahim Al-Kandari, Ali Al-Marri, Faleh Al-Hajri and Obaid Al-Rufaidi each won two gold medals, claiming top honors in both the Gi and No-Gi divisions. Abdullah Al-Rufaidi added another gold medal in the Gi category.

The success was the result of in-

tensive preparation and consistent training under national coaches Abdullah Salim and Nasser Abdulkarim at Gracie Barra Ahmadi Club.

The coaches praised the athletes’ performances and expressed pride in their achievements, pledging to continue developing their skills and preparing them for international competitions as they seek to bring further honors to Kuwait’s jiu-jitsu community.

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 18: Kuwait Club will seek to extend its lead at the top of the Zain Premier League when it takes on Sulaibikhat at Jaber Al-Mubarak Stadium at 5:40 pm today in the fifth round. In the other fixture, Kazma faces Al-Jahra at Al-Tadamon Stadium at 7:55 pm.

League leader Kuwait Club, who has collected 10 points, will be eager to maintain its winning momentum and move a step closer to another league title.

Kuwait Club heads into the match buoyed by Wednesday’s 3-1 victory over Bahrain’s Khalidiya in the AFC Champions League Two. The result revived its hopes of progressing to the next stage after it opened its continental campaign with a 3-2 defeat to the UAE’s Al-Wahda.

Despite the gap in quality between the two sides and Kuwait Club’s emphatic 7-1 win over Al-Nasr in the previous league round, the defending champion will be wary of underestimating its opponent. Sulaibikhat, who occupies 11th place with three points, demonstrated its ability to challenge stronger teams by holding Al-Arabi to a 3-3 draw two rounds ago.

In the other match, second-



Kuwait Club player vies for the ball with an opponent.

placed Kazma will look to get back to winning ways after being held to a 1-1 draw by Al-Arabi in the previous round. With eight points, Kazma will be keen to keep the pressure on the leaders.

Al-Jahra, meanwhile, sits eighth with four points and will be targeting their second win of the season as they look to climb the table and close the gap on the leading teams.

Man United draws at Leeds and Brighton has 50-meter goal in rout of Palace

LONDON, Oct 18, (AP): Manchester United ended a challenging week by scrapping out a 1-1 draw at fierce rival Leeds in the Premier League, while Brighton had a goal from the halfway line in a 5-0 thrashing of Crystal Palace on Sunday.

Four days after his headline-grabbing outburst following a Champions League loss, Lisandro Martinez started for Man United but was substituted at halftime - by which time his team was leading thanks to Bryan Mbeumo’s 35th-minute strike.

Leeds equalized in the 51st through Dominic Calvert-Lewin, leaving Man United with just one win from its seven league games so far this season and just two victories from 10 games in all competitions.

Still, under-pressure United manager Michael Carrick regarded the hard-earned point as “a platform to build on, for sure.”

A famous goal from one of United’s great players, David Beckham, sprang to mind when



Manchester United’s Amad Diallo, right, and Leeds United’s Gabriel Gudmundsson battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Leeds United and Manchester United in Leeds, England. (AP)

Diego Gomez launched a 50-meter shot into the net during in-form Brighton’s rapid start against Palace.

That was the second of three goals in the opening 10 minutes for Brighton, which eased to its fifth - and biggest - victory of a campaign that has already seen the south-coast team overwhelm defending champion Arsenal 3-0.

As well as an own-goal, Brighton also had goals from Yasin Ayari, Charalampos Kostoulas and Jack Hinshelwood at Amex Stadium.

That’s 23 goals so far for Brighton and only three teams - Arsenal (2009-10), Man United (2011-12) and Manchester City (2019-20) - in Premier League history have scored more after seven matches, according to stat supplier Opta.

In the other early kickoff, Brazilian striker Evanilson scored one goal and set up the other in Bournemouth’s 2-0 win over Sunderland, which was a man down from the 17th minute after a red card for defender Kevin Danso.