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PM, HSBC Group CEO explore ways to boost financial ties



PM Diwan photo

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah holds talks with the visiting HSBC Group CEO Georges Elhedery.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received HSBC Group CEO Georges Elhedery and his accompanying delegation on Wednesday, during their visit to Kuwait.

The meeting discussed ways to enhance financial, banking and investment cooperation, and explore opportunities to expand the partnership, support economic development and

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Call to settle disputes by peaceful means

Kuwait raps Iran use of proxies in attacks

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (KUNA): Kuwait has affirmed its unwavering commitment to respecting diplomatic and consular missions and preserving their safety and their representatives, in accordance with the UN Charter and international law, particularly the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961) and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (1963), said a Kuwaiti official.

Second Secretary at Kuwait's Permanent Mission to the United Nations Jassem Al-Amri made the statement early Wednesday while delivering the country's speech before the UN Sixth Committee during the discussion of item 82.

International rules related to the protection of missions ensure that they can perform their duties independently and safely and constitute one of the main foundations of sound relations among countries, he stated.

Host countries fulfill their commitments, under Article 22 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, to taking all appropriate procedures to safeguard missions from any incursion or damage, and prevent undermining their security by any means, he said.

Article 29 of the convention calls for respecting and safeguarding the diplomatic envoy, while Article 31 ensures the protection of consular headquarters, he noted.

He underlined the necessity for countries to bear international responsibility for internationally

wrongful acts attributable to them that include the halt of violations, compensating for damage caused by them and providing guarantees to avoid their re-occurrence.

Meanwhile, Al-Amri reiterated Kuwait's strong condemnation of Iran's blatant drone attack that targeted the US Embassy's headquarters in March.

The attack constitutes a violation of Kuwait's sovereignty and the sanctity of the mission, and poses a threat to workers, civilians and civilian facilities surrounding to the embassy as well as undermines the rules which ensure the continuation of diplomatic relations among countries, Al-Amri pointed out.

Al-Amri further expressed Kuwait's condemnation of the Iranian assaults that targeted, and jeopardized, the diplomatic and consular headquarters in the GCC states, particularly Saudi Arabia.

He reiterated Kuwait's full solidarity with the sisterly countries and its rejection of any acts that target missions or turn them into arenas of confrontation or places for settling military scores.

He called on Iran to immediately comply with the UN Security Council Resolution 2817 of 2026 and halt its attacks against, and threats to, the region's states.

Al-Amri also demanded stopping attacks launched by Iran's proxies and putting an end to support for armed groups which pose threats to the

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Kuwait vows to tackle cross-border IT crimes

TUNIS, Oct 21, (KUNA): Assistant Director of the Cybercrime Department at the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior Colonel Hamad Al-Hamoud reiterated Wednesday Kuwait's commitment to developing its security system in fighting cybercrime and enhancing cooperation with Arab countries to tackle cross-border cybercrimes.

Al-Hamoud is also the head of Kuwait's delegation participating in the 3rd Conference of Officials Responsible for Combatting IT Crimes in Arab Interior Ministries.

He explained to KUNA that the Cybercrime Department has specialized human resources trained in the latest methods of investigation, research, digital evidence collection, criminal monitoring, and analysis, as well as dealing with various types of cybercrime through continuous training.

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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

How did one man bring down the greatest caliphate in history?

Ibn al-Alqami orchestrated one of the most vile acts of treachery the nation had ever known

He persuaded the Caliph to disband parts of the army, which fragmented the military forces

He wrote to Hulagu, informing that the gates of Baghdad were unprotected

Seven hundred scholars and notables were slaughtered at the hands of the Mongols

The Tigris River turned black with ink, then red with the blood of the slain

The traitor received nothing from the Mongols but humiliation and disgrace

The Indian man did not retreat. He returned the blow and brought the officer to the ground

The commander said firmly, "This is a military order. Carry it out without question."

The man fell to the ground, but, to everyone's surprise, he did not strike back

The man remarked, "In my dream, I was a sultan with grand palaces and immense wealth."

The sultan said, "Can anyone truly claim ownership of what appears in a dream? It is merely a passing illusion."

TIES BUILT ON TRUST, COOPERATION IN MANY CHALLENGES

US will always stand by Kuwait

American Embassy marks 250th 'versary of founding

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Chargé d'Affaires ad interim at the American Embassy in Kuwait Steven Butler said his country is keen on strengthening its relations with Kuwait and support the latter's move to defend its security and sovereignty.

Butler made the statement at a celebration hosted by the embassy on the occasion of 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America (USA), with the theme, "Freedom 250".

Foreign Affairs Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad, ambassadors, members of the diplomatic corps, and representatives of companies and brands attended the event.

According to Butler, the American-Kuwaiti relations "transcend diplomatic partnership, thus, embodying a deep-rooted friendship built on trust, cooperation, and concerted efforts to overcome common challenges."

He revealed that this year is also the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations, which began in 1961. He asserted that the ties between the two peoples date back even further, to 1911, when the American Mission Hospital in Kuwait was established.

He indicated that USA stood by Kuwait during the 1990 Iraqi invasion and led the international coalition that contrib-



Photo by Rizk Taufiq

Chargé d'Affaires ad interim at the American Embassy in Kuwait Steven Butler and Kuwait's Foreign Affairs Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad during the cake-cutting ceremony.

uted to its liberation in 1991. He stated that in recent months, the two countries continued to stand together to maintain the security of Kuwait and its people. He said challenging his-

torical junctures have proven the strength of the relationship between the two nations.

He disclosed that the embassy resumed operations in June, after the suspension of activities for about four months due to security concerns. He expressed his pride in leading the team that returned to Kuwait to reopen the embassy, describing it as "one of the proudest moment" in his life.

He said the visit of US Secretary of State Marco Rubio to Kuwait on June 24 and his meetings with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Minister of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed the commitment of the USA to strengthen its relationship with Kuwait and underscored the importance of the partnership of the two nations.

He considers the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States a chance to celebrate the values upon which his country was built, such as freedom, right to self-governance and liberty. He then reaffirmed the commitment to build a stronger, more secure, and more prosperous nation for the future generations. He added that American innovation and creativity propelled the global economy and technological advancement for decades.

He stated that this occasion is significant as it coincides with the 65th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Kuwait and America—a period during which the two nations deepened ties in education, medicine, business and culture, along with a lasting friendship.

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Kuwait in oil coop. talks with UK, France envoys

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Oil and Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Board Chairman Tariq Al-Roumi tackled ways to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation with the ambassadors of the United Kingdom, France and Japan to Kuwait in separate meetings on Wednesday.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Oil said Al-Roumi discussed bilateral relations and prospects for expanding cooperation with British Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rashid, highlighting the longstanding ties between the two friendly countries.

Al-Roumi also met French Ambassador Olivier Gauvin, in the presence of the embassy's cultural attache Bernhard

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Boosting economy, diversifying income

Oil production makes steady progress

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The local refining industry, led by the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), continues to make steady progress towards its strategic objectives by enhancing the operational capabilities of the country's refineries.

These efforts align with the development initiatives aimed at strengthening the national economy and diversifying income sources.

Official statistics indicate a significant improvement in the operational and production efficiency of local refineries, highlighting the substantial investments made in this vital sector, which plays a key role in safeguarding the nation's wealth.

Recent data show that the combined refining capacity of the Mina Al-Ahmadi and Mina Abdullah refineries has risen to 830,000 barrels per day, up from approximately 800,000 barrels per day in recent years.

According to an informed source, the achievement reflects the success of recent expansion and modernization efforts, which have enhanced refining efficiency and enabled the sector to meet growing local and international demand for high-quality petroleum products that comply with stringent global environmental standards.

These developments further strengthen Kuwait's position as a key global supplier of cleaner energy.

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Constitutional Court dismisses petitions filed in two lawsuits

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Constitutional Court, under the presidency of Justice Adel Al-Bahwah, dismissed the petition filed by several citizens regarding the unconstitutionality of Article One of Decree-Law No. 83/2025 that repealed Article 29bis of the Housing Welfare Law, and ordered the forfeiture of the legal deposit.

In its reasoning, the court explained that a constitutional petition is accepted only if the petitioner proves to have personal interest and the application of the challenged legislative provision harmed the petitioner, rather than the challenge being based solely on an allegation that the provision violates the Constitution.

The court pointed out that the challenge was limited to the repeal of Article 29bis of Housing Welfare Law No. 47/1993, it did not contain provisions regulating the status of beneficiaries for whom the article was previously applied, and it did not address the status of pending applications or housing units handed over to beneficiaries.

It added that the issues raised by the petitioners, such as the administrative authorities' decision to archive previously accepted applications and the notification sent to certain beneficiaries to vacate the housing units they received, are not based on the text of the law itself, but rather on how the administrative authority implemented it.

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IICO, UNICEF ink deals for Gaza water & food

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): The International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) signed two partnership agreements with UNICEF worth USD 500,000 to support water and nutrition services in Gaza, benefiting approximately 223,000 people, including children.

IICO Deputy Director General for Corporate Communications Abdulrahman Al-Mutawa told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that the agreements reflect the organization's commitment to supporting Palestinians and addressing urgent humanitarian needs, particularly those affecting children and vulnerable families.

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Day by Day

SOME enterprises have unresolved financial claims against the government; nevertheless, state authorities insist that these same firms meet their own liabilities, threatening to shut down their operations if they default.

An equitable middle ground must be found.

Although the state is rightfully owed penalties and fees, the current circumstances are exceptionally demanding. Acquiring basic goods has become increasingly difficult amid ongoing regional volatility.

A more considerate approach would serve far better - allowing delinquent entities the flexibility to maintain their business operations and advance their enterprise goals.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



KUNA photo

KFAED Acting Director General Rashid Al-Bader and ICARDA Director General Dr. Nizar Haddad after signing the agreement.

KFAED, ICARDA sign \$2.56m grant deal

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed a USD 2.56 million grant agreement on Wednesday with the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) to support the development and dissemination of improved crop varieties using smart solutions.

In a statement to KUNA, KFAED said the grant supports efforts to en-

hance food security and promote sustainable agricultural development in Arab countries.

The project aims to modernize and accelerate crop breeding programs by developing improved varieties adapted to climate change and environmental conditions in arid and semi-arid regions, boosting food security and agricultural productivity.

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Fajr	04:35	Asr	14:46
Sunrise ..	05:54	Maghrib ..	17:11
Zohr	11:33	Isha	18:31

Kuwait aims to modernize govt operations through AI



Minister of Communications and acting Minister of Information and Culture Omar Al-Omar and Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait Kenichiro Mukai in- augurate event.



Robot welcomes officials.



Dignitaries gather for AI and digital transformation forum.

‘AI is not technological luxury, but necessity for enhancing competitiveness’

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Minister of Communications and acting Minister of Information and Culture Omar Al-Omar stated that Kuwait is moving toward strengthening integration among government entities and facilitating data exchange.

In a press statement on the sidelines of the International Forum on Artificial Intelligence and Digitization with the theme, “Crisis Management, Innovation and the Future of Institutions,” held Wednesday, Al-Omar explained that enhancing government integration aims to fortify inter-institutional cooperation and utilize technological advancements in order to maximize the benefits of modern technologies, focusing on artificial intelligence (AI).

He affirmed the readiness of the state to advance the digitization of government archives towards a ‘paperless government’. He pointed out that digital transformation and the provision of electronic services give the state a distinct advantage under current circumstances.

He clarified that the Ministry of Communications is in charge of providing the infrastructure for digital transformation in ministries to support the development of government services, strengthen connectivity between entities, and reduce the need for the public to visit government

offices to complete their transactions.

On concerns over possible internet service disruption due to cable problems, he admitted that such an incident will affect the entire region, hoping the appropriate alternatives will be available. “We do not want to assume the worst, but we must always be prepared,” he stressed.

About the possibility of relying on satellites as an alternative to terrestrial and submarine cables, he explained that current technologies do not yet offer the same capacity as cables. “While satellites could be utilized to a certain extent as a supplementary option, they cannot serve as an equivalent replacement for the existing infrastructure,” he elaborated.

He confirmed that Kuwait is open to various partnerships, including co-operation with Japan, hence, welcoming projects that deliver added value to the country and strengthen its capabilities in digital transformation and technology.

He pointed out that the current phase of AI adoption requires accelerating digital transformation and embedding the use of modern solutions and tools in Gulf states. He said this is essential to keep pace with the impact of these technologies on all aspects of life, while promoting innovation and remote connectivity in different sectors. He added that AI is no longer a distant promise, but a reality that is



An official tests device.

Photos by Rezk Tawfeq

reshaping economies, government operations and labor markets. He stressed that AI is not a technological luxury, but a necessity for enhancing competitiveness, improving services and increasing the accuracy of decision-making.

He highlighted several national initiatives led by the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT), specifically the accelerated transition to digital computing and the development of a platform to interconnect government systems. He said these efforts aim to raise service efficiency, strengthen information security, and ease data exchange.

On the other hand, Dr. Khalid Al-

Zamil, Director of the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), asserted that the integration of AI into the workplace expands an organization’s capacity to analyze information, support staff, refine planning and operational mechanisms, and ease knowledge sharing. He clarified that the real value of these technologies is realized by first understanding the problem and clearly defining the desired outcomes.

He pointed out that the systematic analysis of available data enables more accurate results and supports decision-making based on clear and reliable information.

Kuwait, Palestine reaffirm bilateral relations



KUNA photo
Kuwait FM Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives letter from Palestinian counterpart on bilateral ties.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Wednesday a letter from Palestinian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Dr. Varsen Aghabekian Shahin on bilateral relations

and regional and international developments.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement, that the letter was delivered during the minister’s meeting with Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub.

Bahrain, Kuwait discuss housing cooperation



KUNA photo
Bahrain housing minister Amna Al-Rumaihi meets Kuwait ambassador Jassem Al-Najem.

MANAMA, Oct 21, (KUNA): Bahrain’s Housing Minister Amna Al-Rumaihi and Kuwait’s Ambassador Jassem Al-Najem stressed the importance of strengthening housing cooperation and exchanging expertise to support sustainable development and bilateral relations.

During their meeting, Al-Rumaihi praised Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development’s support for Bahrain’s housing projects, high-

lighting Al-Hidd Housing City as a successful cooperation model.

She reviewed Bahrain’s efforts to develop housing policies and expand private-sector partnerships, while Al-Najem reaffirmed Kuwait’s commitment to exchanging expertise and supporting joint housing projects.

The meeting was attended by Kuwaiti Embassy Counselor Yousef Al-Banwan and Second Secretary Lujain Abu Alyan.

Assistance reflects deep-rooted ties

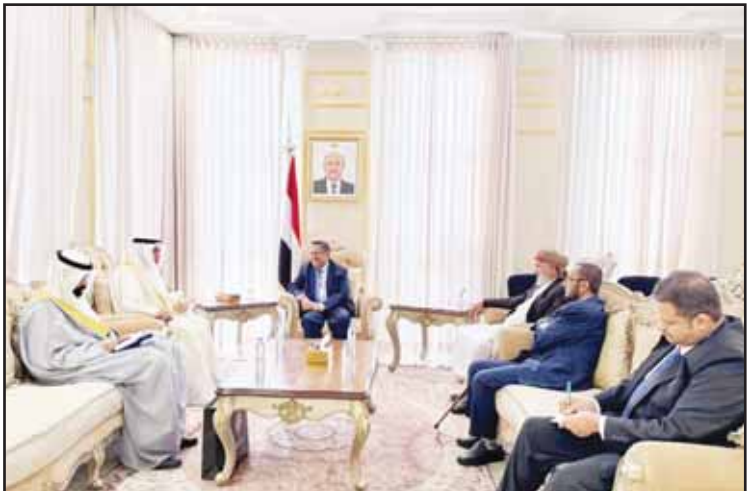
Yemeni parliamentary leaders commend Kuwait’s diplomatic, humanitarian support

ADEN, Oct 21, (KUNA): Yemeni parliamentary leaders have expressed deep appreciation for the State of Kuwait’s steadfast fraternal stance, highlighting its extensive humanitarian, relief, and developmental support across multiple sectors in Yemen.

According to the official Yemeni news agency (SABA), Speaker of the Yemeni Shura Council Ahmad bin Dagher commended Kuwait’s historic contributions during a meeting with Kuwaiti Ambassador to Yemen Falah Al-Mutairi in Aden.

Bin Dagher noted that Kuwait’s assistance reflects the deep-rooted ties between the two nations and praised the Saudi-led Coalition to Restore Legitimacy for assisting the legitimate government in countering the Houthi coup and restoring state institutions.

He strongly condemned Houthi attacks targeting civilian infrastructure and airports in Saudi Arabia, as well as recent military violations includ-



KUNA photo
Speaker of the Yemeni Shura Council Ahmad bin Dagher with Kuwaiti Ambassador to Yemen Falah Al-Mutairi in Aden.

ing the targeting of a training center in Shabwa Governorate.

Bin Dagher called on Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member

states to bolster solidarity against the Houthi militia, describing its actions as part of an expansionist regional agenda.

Japan envoy promotes trustworthy AI

Japan highlights AI’s role in shaping global economies

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait Kenichiro Mukai said “artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming economies and societies around the world,” reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In his speech at the International Forum on Artificial Intelligence and Digitization with the theme, “Crisis Management, Innovation and the Future of Institutions,” on Wednesday, Mukai indicated that “AI has great potential in any fields such as healthcare, agriculture, education and infrastructure, and its benefits should reach every country and every person. Based on this belief, Japan has placed ‘the co-creation of a safe, secure and trustworthy AI’ ecosystem at the heart of its AI policy. We aim to achieve this together with all nations. We are truly honored that Japanese cars are known and trusted worldwide for their safety and performance. A car functions because it has both an accelerator and brakes. I can say that Japan takes the same approach to AI. The accelerator drives AI innovation and social development. The brakes minimize its risks. Through building AI governance and developing both hard and soft infrastructure, Japan will co-create ‘a safe, secure, and trustworthy AI’ ecosystem, just like Japanese cars.”

He pointed out that “to achieve trustworthy AI, international rulemaking must keep pace with technology. At the G7 Hiroshima Summit in 2023, Japan proposed the ‘Hiroshima AI Process.’ This was the first international norms for generative AI. It was our important first step. Today, we have the Friends Group of about 70 countries and regions, and the Partners Community of about 50 companies and organizations. We are shaping and advancing international norms for trustworthy AI with these groups.”

He disclosed that “in March this year, the second Friends Group meeting was held in Japan and the ‘Action Plan 2026’ was adopted. This Japan-led framework allows countries including the Global South to participate in AI rulemaking as equals. Alongside gover-

nance, Japan also focuses on forming concrete cooperation projects. We hope that every country actively uses AI as a driver of its own development.”

He added “we are working together on infrastructure, AI model development and capacity building. Firstly, AI infrastructure is the foundation of all AI development. For instance, a Japanese company is building and operating data centers in India as Japan provided approximately 177 million US dollars in support for this project. By building such a foundation together, we help each country develop its AI industry autonomously. Also, Japan will support the co-development of a Khmer-language LLM together with Cambodia. Supporting the development of each country’s AI is a sign of our respect for its own language and culture. Furthermore, capacity building is what Japan has put a significance on in its foreign policy, and this is true of AI. We draw on our knowledge and experience from various sectors in various fields to invest in people and capacity building. For example, we are expanding an AI and data science training program to Africa developed with Professor Yutaka Matsuo’s laboratory at the University of Tokyo. We hope that the graduates can go on to join joint research and pilot projects with Japanese companies while turning learning into practice. Japan believes that nurturing AI talent in every country is the key to co-creating a sustainable AI ecosystem.”

He went on to reveal that “in May this year, Japan announced the updated ‘Free and Open Indo-Pacific’ — FOIP. It promotes autonomy and resilience so that every country can shape its own future. Japan is convinced that a safe, secure and trustworthy AI ecosystem for them is essential in the age of AI. We envision a future where all countries including the Global South can equally benefit from AI for its own development. Under FOIP, Japan will continue to walk alongside you as a partner in AI pathways for stronger and more prosperous future.”

KPC changes employment terms for former citizens

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries have taken measures to adjust the employment status of those whose Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the official directive issued by the chief executive officer of the company, indicating this action is based on the correspondence from the secretary general of the Council of Ministers to the oil minister.

The correspondence references Cabinet Decision No. 1188 on entitlements for individuals whose nationality was withdrawn

pursuant to Article 13 (Paragraph Four), covering cases under Article Eight, those cited for significant achievements, participants in the 1965 census and offspring of Kuwaiti mothers.

Under the directive, the affected personnel may remain in service through public or private contractual arrangements, but they are ineligible for leadership or managerial posts.

The protocols require reclassifying these workers under fixed-sum employment agreements designated for non-Kuwaiti personnel, with retroactive contractual validity starting from the day immediately after the issuance of the decree revoking their citizenship.

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



How did one man bring down the greatest caliphate in history?

BETRAYAL knows no particular faith or homeland... a traitor serves only personal gain. Blind to the consequences of their actions, those who commit treason sink to the depths of disgrace, eventually ending up in forgotten graves, abandoned even by those for whom they betrayed their country.

Throughout history, we encounter countless examples of individuals who forsake their principles, heritage, and fellow citizens. The consequences of their dishonor often continue to inflict harm long past their lifetimes.

The following account tells the story of a high-ranking official who traded his prestigious position for lasting disgrace. Decades after his betrayal, a woman confronted him in the street and asked, “Is this the stature you once enjoyed under the Abbasids?”

In 656 AH, the city of Baghdad was protected by a formidable force of 100,000 cavalrymen.

However, the vizier Mu’ayyad al-Din ibn al-Alqami al-Asadi secretly carried out one of the most notorious acts of treason in history.

Through deceptive tactics disguised as fiscal austerity, he persuaded Caliph al-Musta’im billah to reduce military spending and cut soldiers’ wages, leading to the dismantling of much of the army. As the troops dispersed, only 10,000 soldiers remained to defend the capital when catastrophe struck.

What is the story of this infamous traitor?

In 656 AH, Baghdad was defended by a formidable cavalry force of 100,000 men. Yet the grand vizier, Mu’ayyad al-Din ibn al-Alqami al-Asadi, secretly orchestrated what would become one of the most infamous acts of treachery in the nation’s history.

By persuading the Caliph to reduce troop numbers in the name of cutting state expenses, he slashed military salaries and weakened the army, leaving only 10,000 men to defend Baghdad.

He then secretly sent correspondence to Hulagu, revealing that Baghdad’s defenses had been compromised and its gates left unprotected.

When the Mongol forces arrived, he deceived the Caliph into leaving the city under the pretext of negotiating a peace treaty and arranging a dynastic marriage.

The Caliph was accompanied by 700 prominent dignitaries and scholars, all of whom were mercilessly slaughtered by the Mongols.

With the fall of Baghdad, the legendary library of the House of Wisdom (Bayt al-Hikmah) was said to have

- Ibn al-Alqami orchestrated one of the most vile acts of treachery the nation had ever known
- He persuaded the Caliph to disband parts of the army, which fragmented the military forces
- He wrote to Hulagu, informing that the gates of Baghdad were unprotected
- Seven hundred scholars and notables were slaughtered at the hands of the Mongols
- The Tigris River turned black with ink, then red with the blood of the slain
- The traitor received nothing from the Mongols but humiliation and disgrace
- The Indian man did not retreat. He returned the blow and brought the officer to the ground
- The commander said firmly, “This is a military order. Carry it out without question.”
- The man fell to the ground, but, to everyone’s surprise, he did not strike back
- The man remarked, “In my dream, I was a sultan with grand palaces and immense wealth.”
- The sultan said, “Can anyone truly claim ownership of what appears in a dream? It is merely a passing illusion.”

been set ablaze. The waters of the Tigris ran black with the ink of destroyed manuscripts before turning red with the blood of the slain.

In return for his betrayal, Ibn al-Alqami received only humiliation and contempt from the Mongol conquerors.

As he rode through the ruined streets of Baghdad, a local woman, witnessing his pitiful state, called out in scornful mockery, “Is this the stature you once enjoyed under the Abbasids?”

A few months later, the traitor died in shame and sor-

row, leaving behind a lasting reminder that treason can ultimately destroy the traitor himself.

The British officer’s slap

During the era of British colonial rule in India, a dispute arose between a poor Indian man and a British officer.

The officer raised his hand and slapped the man in public. Rather than backing down, the Indian man struck him back with such force that the officer fell to the ground.

Stunned, the Briton struggled to comprehend how a poor man could dare to strike an officer of the British Empire’s army.

He hurried back to his commander, reported the incident, and demanded that the man be punished.

Contrary to his expectations, the commander did not become angry. Instead, he smiled calmly, opened a safe filled with money, took out a sum, and said, “Take these 50,000 rupees, go to the man, apologize to him, and give him the money.”

The officer was outraged. “Apologize to him?” he exclaimed. “He insulted me and the British Army!”

The commander replied firmly, “This is a military order. Carry it out without further discussion.”

The officer approached the man, offered an apology, and handed him the money - a sum that represented a considerable fortune at the time.

The man’s life changed completely. Yet he failed to realize that, by accepting the money, he had effectively suffered another slap on his own homeland’s soil, and had surrendered his dignity.

He bought a house and invested the remainder of his money in business. His enterprises flourished, and he eventually became a wealthy man, surrounded by servants and guards.

Years passed, until one day the commander summoned the same officer and asked, “Do you remember the Indian man who slapped you?”

“Of course,” the officer replied. “How could I ever forget?”

The commander said, “Go to him now, and strike him in front of everyone.”

The officer hesitated. “Sir,” he said, “back then, he was poor and alone—yet he still returned the blow and knocked me to the ground. Today, he is a wealthy man, surrounded by his own men and guards; he might even kill me if I try to strike him.”

Al-Barjas inspects training courses at Sumoud Camp

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: National Guard Deputy Chief Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas conducted an inspection tour of the training ground at Al-Sumoud Camp to review the progress of two military training courses, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Lt. Colonel Al-Barjas was received by Brigadier General Abdullah Saleh Abdullah, Commander of Military and Security Affairs, during his visit to the “New Senior Sergeants Course No. 12” and the “New Recruits Course No. 65.”

During the tour, Lt. Colonel Al-Barjas stressed the importance of maintaining military discipline and order, making the most of the courses’ curricula and practical training, and acquiring the essential skills required to carry out their duties effectively after graduation.



Hamad Al-Barjas

Kuwait to build three missile-strike vessels

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Commander of the Kuwait Naval Force, Rear Admiral Saif Al-Hamlan attended the launch of construction for three missile-strike vessels under Al-Dorra Project, in partnership with the UAE’s EDGE Group.

The ceremony was attended by Kuwaiti Ambassador to Singapore Sheikh Jaber Duaij Al-Sabah.

A statement by the Kuwaiti Army on Wednesday said the project aims to strengthen the Kuwaiti Naval Force’s capabilities, boost combat readiness and maritime security, and protect the country’s strategic maritime interests.

Student promoted as MoE appeal dismissed

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Sixth Circuit in the Administrative Court of Appeals dismissed the appeal of the Ministry of Education, upholding the decision of a lower court that reversed the failing grade of a female student—previously attributed to absenteeism, and mandated the ministry to confirm her advancement to Grade Eight, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Attorney Bader Mohammad Al-Dalk indicated that his client was unable to attend remote classes in the second term of the 2025/2026 academic year, as she faced difficulties accessing the Teams educational platform for nearly two months due to technical problems beyond her control.

He revealed that the student was enrolled in an intermediate school for girls in Ahmadi Educational District, and that the ministry implemented the remote learning system at the time due to regional circumstances. He added that the platform became operational for the student only in April, at which point she promptly began to meet her academic obligations. He stressed that her absence was not deliberate, and that exceptional circumstances hindered her from reporting the technical difficulties she encountered then.

Suicide, mishaps claim five deaths

Body found near Jaber Bridge

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) announced that rescue teams recovered the body of a person who jumped from Sheikh Jaber Bridge in a suspected suicide attempt on Tuesday evening, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to an official statement issued by KFF, firefighting and rescue teams from the Al-Joun Marine and Shuwaikh Marine centers responded to a report concerning the incident.

The teams subsequently located and recovered the missing person’s body before handing it over to the relevant authorities for further procedures.

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Biker perishes: A young man born in 1993 died after the motorcycle he was riding overturned in Al-Mutlaa, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the Operations Room of the Ministry of Interior received a report of a death at a hospital. According to information received, the man had sustained fatal injuries in a motorcycle rollover accident involving a black, German-made motorcycle.

Authorities are following up on the circumstances of the incident in accordance with the applicable legal procedures.

□ □ □

Worker killed: A 1984-born Egyptian worker was killed, and another Egyptian national born in 1973 was injured after a concrete block fell on them at a worksite in Jahra Governorate, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the Operations Room of Ministry of Interior received information that two injured expatriates had been taken to a hospital by ambulance. Medical personnel confirmed that one of the men had died from his injuries, while the other received treatment.

Security personnel subsequently visited the hospital and interviewed the surviving worker, who stated that a concrete block had fallen on him and his colleague while they were carrying out their duties at the worksite.

Based on his statement, authorities identified the location of the incident and proceeded to the site to investigate the circumstances surrounding the accident.

A case has been registered, and the relevant authorities are continuing the necessary legal procedures.

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Expat dies in crash: An Egyptian expatriate born in 1991 was killed in a three-vehicle collision on Al-Ghazali Road, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the Ministry of Interior’s Operations Room received information about a traffic accident on Al-Ghazali Road, prompting the relevant authorities to respond to the scene.

Upon arrival, they discovered that the collision involved three vehicles. The first was a white 2023 Nissan Sunny driven by an Indian expatriate born in 1967. The second was a silver Mercedes driven by a Jordanian expatriate.

The third vehicle, a Honda, was driven by the Egyptian expatriate, who died from injuries sustained in the collision.

Authorities are handling the incident in accordance with the applicable procedures.

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Boy run over, dies: A Kuwaiti man in his thirties has been detained in connection with a pedestrian accident that claimed the life of an eight-year-old Kuwaiti boy in Salwa, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the Operations Room of the Ministry of Interior received a report of a young pedestrian being struck by a vehicle on an internal street in Salwa. Security personnel and emergency medical teams were dispatched to the scene, where they found a child who had succumbed to his injuries.

The driver, a Kuwaiti national, explained to authorities that he had been driving at a moderate speed when the child crossed in front of his vehicle. He attempted to avoid the collision but was unable to do so.

The driver was subsequently detained as authorities initiated the necessary legal procedures to investigate the circumstances surrounding the accident.

Reckless driver hiding car in stables

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: General Traffic Department, represented by the Security Monitoring Department, arrested an individual accused of reckless driving in the Jahra stables area and concealing his vehicle inside a stable in an attempt to evade authorities, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the department

explained that the arrest followed a report received by the Operations Room of Ministry of Interior about a driver engaging in reckless and dangerous driving.

Patrol teams from Security Monitoring Department launched search and investigation operations and eventually located the vehicle inside one of the stables.

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MC peruses regular, urban, heritage matters in session

‘Al-Ghazir’ dhow relocation prime on agenda

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Eng. Munira Al-Amir, Chairperson of the Technical Committee at the Municipal Council, announced that the committee talked about the regulatory, urban and heritage matters during its meeting on Tuesday.

These matters include the reorganization of plots in Siddiq, construction of a ‘diwaniya’ (traditional reception hall) in Faiha, formalization of boundaries for the oil complex in Shuwaikh, and establishment of a maritime base to house the Al-Ghazir dhow as part of a heritage museum.

The committee granted final approval for reorganizing 23 residential plots in Siddiq into a single plot measuring 10,067 square meters, following the completion of public notification procedures and providing an opportunity for the concerned parties to submit comments or objections. The approval is contingent upon compliance with utility service providers’ requirements, with the applicant bearing the costs of relocating or modifying existing services. The relevant departments are authorized to make necessary adjustments if the proposal conflicts with infrastructure or regulatory requirements.

The committee also provided technical approval for the construction of a ‘diwaniya’ in Faiha, measuring 1,000 square meters. This



Munira Al-Amir

is subject to the condition that the plot is officially designated for this specific use, structure is limited to a basement, a ground floor and a first floor, and the project adheres to prescribed height and setback regulations, with final approval required for the architectural plans.

Regarding oil facilities, the committee approved the boundaries of the existing oil complex in Shuwaikh, which measures 64,591.94 square meters, in accordance with the attached plan and in coordination with the State Property Contracts Department in the Ministry of Finance. The concerned departments are authorized to adjust the dimensions or total area—within the specified overall limit—should conflict arise with existing infrastructure or regulatory requirements.

The committee referred the request of Al-Oula Hotels Company to construct a concrete base in the sea for the ‘boom’ (traditional Kuwaiti dhow) known as ‘Al-Ghazir’ to the executive branch of the Kuwait Municipality, requesting a detailed technical study. The ‘boom’, owned by the Radisson Blu Hotel, is intended to be part of a maritime heritage museum located in front of the hotel.

According to the proposal, the vessel was retired from service more than 35 years after its construction. The request is to restore and preserve it as a piece of the maritime heritage of the country by putting it on a concrete base measuring 15 by 50 meters.

Al-Amir emphasized that in reviewing such files, the committee considered land-use regulations, planning requirements, preservation of heritage landmarks, and the oversight of service-oriented and strategic sites.

CAPT to forward bids to Health Ministry

Plan to build homes for nurses in various areas

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) opened the bids for the tender for the study, design and construction supervision of the accommodations for nurses in various health districts.

This is the confirmation of a report published by the newspaper on Oct 4, under the headline,

“Ministry of Health begins studying the implementation of housing for nurses.”

The bid opening occurred during a meeting held two days ago that included four pre-qualified consulting firms.

Recently, CAPT approved the technical evaluation results for this project.

The bids will now be forwarded to the Ministry of Health, the entity responsible for preparing a technical recommendation

within 30 days, in line with the Public Tenders Law.

The project is in line with the commitment of the ministry to provide appropriate housing for nurses in the health districts in order to reduce the time, effort and expenses associated with renting accommodations for nurses, while recognizing their invaluable humanitarian contributions to patient care in all healthcare facilities.



KUNA photo
KRCSC Chairman Khaled Al-Mughames with KOTC Public Relations and Administrative Services Group Manager Abdulrahman Al-Olayan, Public Relations and Media Team Head Abdulwahab Al-Qatami and Senior Public Relations Control.

KRCS eyes partnership with oil sector in charitable work

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Chairman Khaled Al-Mughames affirmed the society’s keenness to strengthen strategic partnerships with national institutions and the oil sector to support humanitarian work, develop community initiatives and coordinate efforts to serve all segments of society.

Al-Mughames made the remarks while receiving Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) Public Relations and Administrative Services Group Manager Abdulrahman Al-Olayan, Public Relations and Media Team Head Abdulwahab Al-Qatami and Senior Public Relations Controller Mariam Al-Samhan.

The meeting discussed prospects for cooperation and introduced the society’s humanitarian and relief programs and activities.

Speaking to KUNA, Al-Mughames

said the society was committed to building sustainable institutional relations with national entities, driven by its belief in the importance of complementary roles and the use of available resources and expertise to develop humanitarian work and enhance its capacity to respond to community needs.

Cooperation with oil-sector institutions offers an opportunity to expand humanitarian and volunteer initiatives and draw on institutional expertise to implement quality programs with tangible impact, while promoting solidarity and social cohesion, he added.

He noted that social responsibility was a key pillar of partnerships between national institutions and humanitarian organizations, stressing the society’s keenness to use such partnerships to improve its services and ensure the sustainability of its programs inside and outside Kuwait.

Biogas use eyed to make electricity

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) referred tender no. 1/2025-2026 for conducting consultancy studies on the public offering and transfer of shares allocated for citizens in Umm Al-Hayman Wastewater Treatment Company (K.S.C.C.) to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for review, verification and presentation of an official opinion on the contract’s approval.

KAPP launched this tender -- a procurement method that includes competitive negotiation or proposal solicitation -- in line with Article 17 of Public Tenders

Law No. 49/ 2016.

The project is the largest of its kind in the southern region and beyond. It is the first in Kuwait to utilize integrated renewable energy, with biogas produced by the facility supplying 50 percent of the electrical power needed for its operations.

Currently, the plant processes 500,000 cubic meters of wastewater daily, with potential expansion capacity to 700,000 cubic meters per day, making it the largest treatment facility in Kuwait and the region.

The project has so far won several awards, such as Best Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Deal in 2020 and Best Subsea Tunneling in 2022.

Other Voices

Me and the counsellor (judge)

By Ahmad alsarraf

A well-known figure frequently records his views on a particular subject and shares his audio and video recordings on social media. He also regularly speaks at social gatherings, encouraging attendees to film his talks and share them online.

He is keen to remind his listeners that he is a judge or counsellor and a member of the judiciary. However, our enquiries revealed that he is not a member of the judicial authority and has never officially served as a judge, despite having held important administrative positions within the judiciary.

His statements reminded me of a personal experience I had forty years ago.

In the 1980s, I lived in London, where I owned and managed several companies with business partners, primarily in the real estate sector.

Our offices were located near the Churchill Hotel, in what had once been the private residence of the wealthy Portman family, who still own all the properties surrounding the square that bears their name.

The building had four floors. My late friend Yaqoub Al-Ghunaim and I occupied the ground floor and invested in the remaining floors.

One day, a tenant renting office space in the building asked to see me. He complained about the lack of toilet paper and soap in the office restrooms. I explained that I had been away from the UK and that the cleaning company might have overlooked the matter during my absence.

I explained to the complainant: Mr. Gold, that we were serious businessmen who had come to the UK as investors and established companies with a capital of three million pounds. Mr. Gold apologized, assuring me that he had never intended to offend me or question my credibility.

About a week later, a Value Added Tax (VAT) inspector visited our office to review our records and assess our tax compliance. I reiterated that we were serious businessmen, that our company operated in real estate with a capital of three million pounds, and that we were not subject to VAT. He left the office satisfied.



alsarraf

Before the end of the month, a general tax inspector visited the office. I repeated the same explanation and provided him with all the accounting records. Fortunately, he did not examine them. Instead, he simply had a cup of coffee and left, saying he would return at the beginning of the new year.

A few weeks later, a general meeting of the company was scheduled, and the partners, most of whom were Kuwaitis, arrived in London to attend.

I asked the company’s accountant, Philip, who was Jewish, to prepare the annual budget and other reports and leave them on my desk for review when I returned from lunch.

It was almost 5:00 pm when I was shocked to discover a serious error in the company’s financial statements. The company’s capital was listed as £1.5 million rather than £3 million. I immediately called the accountant, but he did not answer. I then called his wife and asked to speak with him about an urgent matter.

She explained that Philip was a devout Jew and that using the telephone on the Sabbath was forbidden. I outlined the problem and asked her to speak with him and get back to me.

Half an hour later, his wife called and briefly explained each partner’s share, confirming that the company’s capital was indeed £1.5 million, not £3 million.

I realized the seriousness of my mistake, which could have landed me in trouble with the tax inspector. In an attempt to project an image of credibility and professionalism, I had inadvertently told the building’s tenant, the VAT inspector, and the tax inspector that we were serious investors, repeatedly citing a capital of “three million pounds” to impress them.

It seems I had come to believe my own claim, and I could have found myself in a very difficult situation had any of the inspectors asked to examine the company’s records.

Perhaps our consultant found himself in a similar predicament. With good intentions, he may have adopted the title of “judge” to create a favorable impression on his listeners. Through repeatedly presenting himself in this way, he may eventually have come to believe his own claim, just as I had come to believe, forty years ago, that our company’s capital was three million pounds.

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LA Mayor Bass fights for second term against Raman

Senate Dems launch first ad in Mississippi as midterm optimism spreads in South

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): US Senate Democrats' top campaign spending group is wading into Mississippi's US Senate race for the first time this year, an aggressive move in a deep-red state that signals a party on the offensive as Republicans look to protect a slim majority.

The Senate Majority PAC, aligned with Democratic Senate Leader Chuck Schumer of New York, will spend \$1.2 million on a new television advertisement to boost Scott Colom, a district attorney, in his campaign against Republican Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith. The ad, first disclosed to The Associated Press, is set to start Wednesday and run through Election Day.

"Senate Majority PAC has been watching this race closely, and it is clear Colom is running a competitive race that has put Hyde-Smith on her heels," group spokesperson Lauren French said in a statement.

With just two weeks to go in the race, it's unclear what impact the ad will have in a matchup that's been set since Colom won a March primary. Still, it's a substantial investment in a race that's seen only about \$8 million in total spending, with Colom outspending Hyde-Smith nearly \$4.6 million to \$3.2 million, according to AdImpact.

Jake Monssen, campaign manager for Hyde-Smith, noted that the spending was coming late in the race.

"Team Cindy is confident that voters will reject this radical agenda at the ballot box on November 3rd," he said.

Hyde-Smith, first appointed and then elected in 2018, is running for reelection in a state Republicans have long dominated. In the 2024 presidential race, Republican Donald Trump won Mississippi by nearly 23 percentage points over Democrat Kamala Harris, and a Democrat hasn't won a Senate race in the state since 1982.

However, some Democrats believe Hyde-Smith is vulnerable, and she underperformed Trump by 6 percentage points in 2020, the year he lost his White House reelection bid to Democrat Joe Biden.

The television ad touts Colom's time as district attorney, while labeling Hyde-Smith a "do-nothing" senator.

"A decade in power, Hyde-Smith hasn't passed one piece of legislation, but she did vote to kick people off Medicaid," a narrator says in the ad, which will run on television stations statewide alongside a digital campaign.

Colom's campaign manager, Gerard Henderson, said that the contest against an incumbent senator is competitive because "thousands of Mississippians volunteered and chipped in."

"We clearly have the resources and momentum to win," Henderson said in a statement.



Mississippi Democratic US Senate candidate Scott Colom listens during a maternal health roundtable at the Capital Club in Jackson, Miss on Aug 1. (AP)

Colom has raised Democratic hopes in a year when electoral winds are at their backs. Georgia Sen. Raphael Warnock was the latest high-profile Democrat to campaign with Colom last week, and Harris, who was Biden's vice president, is set to rally with Colom on Thursday.

Republicans currently hold a 53-47 majority in the Senate and were expected to face a friendlier map this year with fewer seats to defend. But high costs and gas prices amid an unpopular war in Iran under a Republican president have made Democrats optimistic, with the Senate Majority PAC spending its final weeks investing in conservative territory. It's already announced spending in Kansas, where megachurch pastor and Democratic nominee Adam Hamilton is trying to unseat Republican Sen. Roger Marshall.

Colom would be his state's first Black senator since Reconstruction, the 12-year period after the U.S. Civil War when the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments were adopted.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: To voter Roy Lyons, Los Angeles has been losing luster for years. A homeless crisis endures despite billions of dollars of spending. City Hall's budget keeps swelling - as do the taxes needed to support it.

As the retired insurance broker from the Sherman Oaks neighborhood ponders his pick in the upcoming mayoral election, he's leaning toward the unpopular incumbent, Mayor Karen Bass, over her fellow progressive Democrat Nithya

Raman, a little-known city council member who is backed by the Democratic Socialists of America. She endorsed Bass before changing her mind and entering the race.

Neither choice gives him confidence about the future.

"Is this the best we can do?" asked Lyons, a Democrat, who attended a recent candidate forum. "I don't think either one shines."

If Bass wins the Nov. 3 election, it will be because she was able to persuade voters like Lyons to give her a second chance after a rough first term that included the deadly Palisades Fire, which ignited when she was out of the country and caught the fire department unprepared.

Nearly three weeks into mail voting, only 5% of ballots have been returned, according to ballot tracking firm Political Data Inc.

On a recent sunny afternoon as he dropped of his ballot in the Studio City neighborhood, Kim Hansen said his vote for Raman represented what he considered the "least worst" option.

"I don't like either of them," said Hansen, a piano player who isn't registered with a party. "I still wish there was somebody really good to vote for."

Kagan warns top court rulings fueling polarization, undermining democracy

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): Justice Elena Kagan on Tuesday said voting and elections decisions from her conservative Supreme Court colleagues have helped make the country more politically polarized and less democratic.

In a speech two weeks before the pivotal midterm elections for control of Congress, the liberal-leaning justice sharply criticized how the majority's rulings have affected the nation's political environment.

"The court has kind of blinded itself to the very deleterious effect of their rulings on how the political system works and has created a democracy that does not work as well as it should," she said during a talk before students and professors at Catholic University's law school in Washington, D.C.

She blasted rulings that weakened the Voting Rights Act and campaign finance regulations while opening the door for more partisan gerrymandering. She dissented from those decisions.

"Over the last couple of years especially, both political parties have been engaged in a race to the bottom in terms of doing these partisan gerrymanders, ... making what I think is unfortunately a too polarized country even more so," she said.



The Supreme Court is pictured on Oct 5, in Washington. (AP)

"The people of America look around and think that all this money chasing all these political candidates is a nightmare, and they're right."

The court's majority, for its part, said in a 2019 ruling that courts drawing voting districts for maximum advantage is a political dispute and federal courts can't step in. Conservatives have separately ruled that key campaign finance regulations violate the freedom of speech. This year, the court further narrowed protections in the Voting Rights Act, which had helped increase minority representation.

That helped feed a redistricting frenzy touched off by President Donald Trump, who is trying to hold on to the Republicans' slim House majorities in the November election.

Still, Kagan said it's unfair to say the majority reflexively supports the president. She pointed to key areas where the court has pushed back against Trump, including tariffs, birthright citizenship and mail ballots.

Trump envoy meets Putin in St Petersburg for Ukraine war talks

WARSAW, Oct 21, (AP): US envoy Steve Witkoff held talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin in St. Petersburg on Wednesday about Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, as US President Donald Trump pushes Kyiv to make a deal that stops the fighting.

Witkoff said in televised remarks at the start of the meeting that he hoped to discuss the resumption of the trilateral talks involving the US, Russia and Ukraine that would allow the technical teams to discuss the next steps toward a peace settlement.

Putin thanked Trump and Witkoff for their efforts to end the war.

The visit came a day after Witkoff met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and some European leaders in the Norwegian capital, Oslo.

Witkoff's meetings suggested leaders are keen to bring new momentum to US-led peace efforts, more than 4 ½ years after Russia's army invaded. Efforts by the Trump administration since early last year to end the war have made no significant progress, and there was no suggestion of an imminent breakthrough.

Russia and Ukraine are still far apart in their terms for a settlement, as their armies remain locked on the battlefield and they pummel each other with daily long-range strikes.

However, Finnish President Alexander Stubb said late Tuesday that the Oslo meeting, which he attended, "made genuine progress."

Witkoff and Putin met at St. Petersburg's Constantine Palace, with Russian presidential envoy Kirill Dmitriev and Putin's foreign affairs adviser Yuri Ushakov also at the table. Witkoff said Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner would join the discussion via a video link.



Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and U.S. President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff shake hands prior to the talks at the Konstantin Palace in Strelna, outside St. Petersburg, Russia, on Oct. 21. (AP)

Italy OKs tougher measures to crack down on violent protests

MILAN, Oct 21, (AP): Italy announced new security measures on Tuesday aimed at tackling the kind of violent protests that caused damage to Milan's central shopping district when weekend rioters, many of them minors, looted stores and set fire to property.

A government decree calls for the deployment of an additional 500 soldiers to Milan through the end of the year, requiring parents to pay for damage caused by minors and making it easier to prosecute minors over 14.

In a video posted on social media, Premier Giorgia Meloni said the presence of so many young rioters was "painful and frightening."

"Young people ... came to the square to smash things, steal and film themselves doing it," Meloni said. "This is a phenomenon that we must address seriously, also to prevent those images from becoming a model for others to imitate."



Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni speaks with the media at the end of the EU summit in Brussels on Oct 16. (AP)

The decree also creates a new criminal offense of violent participation in a demonstration, punishable by up to five years in prison and a fine of up to 20,000 euros (\$22,500). Penalties increase if offenders cover their faces or someone is injured.

Protesters will be responsible for paying for property damage, with parents liable for damage caused by minors, Meloni said.

The decree, which must be converted to law by parliament within 60 days, also automatically presumes that anyone over age 14 is capable of understanding their own actions, unless proven otherwise. That until now was up to a judge to determine.

Meloni also said the government would add new beds to detention facilities and judges to the juvenile justice system.



Romanian Prime Minister designate Luca Niculescu addresses a joint parliament session called to give a vote of confidence for the new government team, in Bucharest, Romania on Oct 20. (AP)

Magyar vows accountability for Orbán era while holding firm on migration

BUDAPEST, Hungary, Oct 21, (AP): For Hungarian Prime Minister Péter Magyar, defeating Viktor Orbán in a landslide election was only the beginning. Less than six months into his term, his new government is pursuing former officials he accuses of corruption and abuses of power.

In an exclusive interview with The Associated Press on Tuesday, Magyar, 45, said efforts to recover assets that were allegedly misused under his predecessor were underway, but that the push for accountability must follow the rule of law that Orbán's government often flouted.

"The Hungarian people obviously want to see results in holding those responsible accountable, punishing them and recovering stolen property," Magyar said from his central Budapest office.

During Orbán's rule, he said, Hungarians "experienced that this wonderful country, which was a high achiever when we joined the European Union in 2004, became one of the poorest and most corrupt member states in Europe."

Magyar's center-right, pro-European Tisza party defeated Orbán's far-right Fidesz in April, ending 16 years of rule admired by the global nationalist right for its antagonistic approach to the EU and strong stance against immigration and the "liberal mainstream."



Hungary Prime Minister Peter Magyar, (left), speaks during an interview with The Associated Press correspondent Justin Spike in Budapest on Oct 20. (AP)

Europe

Romania lawmakers back minority gov: Romanian lawmakers sought Tuesday to end a monthslong political impasse by voting for a minority government led by an independent diplomat, who now faces the challenge of securing support in a fragmented Parliament while tackling a large budget deficit.

Prime Minister Luca Niculescu won 280 votes for his proposed Cabinet in the parliamentary vote, with 58 voting against.

"It is an important moment for Romania," Niculescu told lawmakers after the vote. "We are coming out of six months of crisis, we are getting down to work immediately."

"Starting this evening, we will organize the first government meeting. The priorities are known. Romania cannot wait any longer." (AP)

Albanian police clash with protesters: Police fired tear gas and used water cannons to push back protesters Tuesday on the eighth straight day of violent anti-government demonstrations in the Albanian capital, Tirana.

High school and university students demanding lower tuition fees, greater state investment in education and protesting corruption in the education system have joined a broader anti-government movement calling for the resignation of Socialist Prime Minister Edi Rama.

For days, protesters have hurled rocks, flares, fire-

bombs and fireworks at police who have used batons, water cannons and tear gas in clashes in the city center.

Albania is one of a number of European countries experiencing protests over rising fuel costs, discontent with the state of schools, declining public services and a housing crisis, including France and Italy. In Spain and Portugal, tent camps have sprung up to protest unaffordable housing, while a rally and a protest were also being planned in Greece on Tuesday evening and Wednesday.

In Albania, the latest protests follow months of rallies organized by the so-called Flamingo movement, launched in opposition to a major luxury tourism development on Albania's southern coast linked to an investment firm founded by Jared Kushner, U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law. (AP)

France fighter jet crash kills 1: A fighter jet crashed in eastern France, leaving at least one person dead, the French armed forces said on Wednesday.

The Mirage 2000D combat aircraft was returning from a mission when it crashed late Tuesday evening, according to the armed forces ministry.

The plane's crew consisted of a fighter pilot and a weapons systems officer from the French Air and Space Force. One body has been recovered and a search for the second crew member is ongoing.

The accident happened near the town of Rogeville, about 18 kilometers (11 miles) northwest of the city of Nancy. Local prefect Yves Seguy told reporters that a wooded area where the plane crashed was searched overnight in adverse weather. (AP)

N.Korean leader’s sister inspects border fortifications: state media

SEOUL, South Korea, Oct 21, (AP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s sister visited frontline areas where soldiers are reinforcing the heavily armed border with South Korea and renewed a threat to retaliate against any South Korean provocation targeting the fortification work, state media said Wednesday.

Tensions between the war-divided rivals have risen since three South Korean soldiers were injured last month in land mine blasts that the South’s military blamed on North Korean devices planted south of the countries’ military demarcation line.

Pyongyang’s official Korean Central News Agency said Kim Yo Jong toured the areas Tuesday with Korean People’s Army Marshal Pak Jong Chon, one of her brother’s top military officials. She called the North’s fortification efforts a “sacred and great undertaking” supporting the leader’s policy of permanently severing ties with South Korea, which he has declared his most hostile adversary amid a broader stalemate in diplomacy with Washington.

“Our military leadership underlined the need to make those rogues aware



In this photo provided Oct 21, 2026, by the North Korean government, Kim Yo Jong, (center), sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, visits front-line areas, with military officials, in North Korea on Oct 20. (AP)

that our new firepower units have taken their firing positions,” she said, while reminding soldiers of her brother’s order to make the border with the “enemy ... eternally impregnable.”

Following an inspection with the US-led United Nations Command, Seoul earlier this month formally

blamed North Korean-planted mines for the Sept 21 border blasts and urged the North to apologize and clear its remaining mines. That announcement came after North Korea denied responsibility for the explosions and warned of strong retaliation if provoked.

Asia

‘Australian politician lost both legs’: Doctors have amputated both of Australian federal lawmaker Helen Haines’ legs as she remains in critical condition after being repeatedly hit by a car in an apparent act of political violence, her husband said Wednesday.

The 65-year-old independent politician is receiving treatment in a Melbourne hospital where she was flown by helicopter.

Phil Haines, her husband, gave the family’s first public comments on her condition since she was hit by a Toyota Land Cruiser SUV in her hometown of Wangaratta on Monday, speaking hours after a man accused of running her over made an initial appearance in court.

Haines’ husband said her left leg was amputated on Monday and her right leg was amputated on Wednesday after doctors abandoned hope of saving it.

“The good news in all this is that Helen is alive and she’s stable. That is the most important thing for our family,” the husband told reporters in Melbourne. (AP)



Phil Haines, husband of independent member of parliament Helen Haines, speaks to the media at The Alfred hospital in Melbourne, Australia on Oct 21. (AP)

NZ was quoted as saying. (Xinhua)

New Zealand raises volcanic alert: Earth Sciences New Zealand has raised the volcanic alert level for the White Island after the volcano began continuously emitting small amounts of volcanic ash.

The agency said there was no threat to mainland New Zealand beyond the possibility of a noticeable sulfur smell and light ashfall, Radio New Zealand reported on Wednesday.

The aviation color code for the volcano has been raised to orange, the report said.

“The discharge was weak, with no evidence that any explosive eruption had occurred,” Earth Sciences

Japan’s ruling coalition to discuss year-end security policy revision

Takaichi govt faces growing criticism over military buildup and security policy shift

TOKYO, Oct 21, (Xinhua): As Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi marks one year in office, criticism is growing over her push to expand the country’s military capabilities, revise its pacifist Constitution and consider introducing nuclear-powered submarines, with politicians, protesters and nuclear experts warning that the moves could heighten regional tensions and undermine Japan’s postwar pacifist principles.

Former Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba recently expressed concern over Takaichi’s political course in a television program, criticizing her government and right-wing forces for a lack of honesty in addressing Japan’s wartime history.

In the program aired by BS-TBS on Monday, Ishiba said that Japan launched wars that resulted in tens of millions of deaths, questioning whether a country that failed to fully acknowledge these historical facts could establish solid diplomatic rela-

tions.

Ishiba also questioned Takaichi’s pledge to make Japan “strong and prosperous,” noting that the country’s gross domestic product could fall to sixth place globally next year; in other words, the so-called “Sanae-nomics” has failed to bring prosperity to the country, adding that Takaichi’s political course “will not make people happy.”

On Monday evening, Japanese citizens gathered in front of the National Diet in Tokyo to protest against the government’s military buildup and moves to revise the Constitution, calling for the preservation of peace.

Taku Yamazoe, policy chief of the Japanese Communist Party, said the government’s continued deployment of missiles and pursuit of increasingly advanced weapons had not brought peace, warning that Japanese politics is now showing signs of a dangerous, full-scale revival of militarism.

Mizuho Fukushima, leader of the Social Democratic Party, called for



Japan’s Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi speaks during a news conference at the prime minister’s office in Tokyo on Sept 17. (AP)

efforts to prevent the House of Representatives from beginning work on drafting proposed constitutional amendments. She also criticized attempts by the Takaichi government

to pave the way for constitutional revision by reducing the number of seats allocated through proportional representation.

Pointing to the large-scale Japan-

US joint military exercises that began Monday, Fukushima said they demonstrated the continued advance of Japan’s militarization, stressing that what the country truly needed was peace.

Concerns have also mounted over the Takaichi government’s consideration of introducing nuclear-powered submarines, as it prepares to revise Japan’s three key security documents by the end of this year. Nuclear experts and peace advocates warn that the move could undermine Japan’s longstanding exclusively defense-oriented policy and weaken the international nuclear nonproliferation regime.

At a seminar held in Tokyo on Monday, participants highlighted policy, financial and nuclear safety challenges associated with introducing such submarines, warning that the move could aggravate regional tensions and increase the risk of nuclear conflict.

Tatsujiro Suzuki, a visiting professor at Nagasaki University, said

Japan’s move could encourage other countries to follow suit, undermining international nuclear nonproliferation efforts, warning that such a trend could intensify regional tensions and ultimately increase the risk of nuclear war.

Sumiko Hatakeyama, co-representative of the Japanese nongovernmental organization Peace Boat, said Japan must not abandon its postwar principles of exclusively defense-oriented policy and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, stressing that the government should not introduce nuclear-powered submarines.

Meanwhile, Japan’s ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and its coalition partner, the Japan Innovation Party (JIP), plan to begin working-level consultations in November on revising the country’s three key security documents by the end of the year, with nuclear-powered submarines and a possible review of the Three Non-Nuclear Principles expected to be among the main issues, Kyodo News reported Tuesday.



Dredges used for illegal mining sit near the Malinowski River in the Tambopata National Reserve in Puerto Maldonado, Peru on Aug 11. (AP)

REDESCA urges oversight of technology used in Lat-Am environmental crime

BOGOTA, Colombia, Oct 21, (AP): A human rights commission called for stronger oversight of technologies being used by criminal organizations in Latin America, saying satellite internet, drones and online platforms are helping support illegal mining and other activities threatening forests and remote communities.

The call came Tuesday from the Office of the Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights, known as REDESCA, which is part of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. It reflects growing concerns about how criminal networks are using technology to coordinate operations, monitor territories and expand their reach into remote areas.

The office urged governments to tighten controls on the transfer and use of these technologies and called on companies to assess whether their products and services could be diverted to criminal groups.

The statement coincides with a U.N. conference on transnational organized crime in Vienna, where governments are considering launching negotiations on an agreement targeting environmental crimes, including illegal mining, logging and wildlife trafficking. More than a dozen Indigenous representatives from Amazon countries are attending the Oct. 19-23 gathering, calling for stronger international action against criminal networks threatening their forests and communities.

REDESCA said satellite internet, like that provided by services such as Elon Musk’s Starlink, has been used in illegal mining operations to coordinate logistics, payments and movements in remote areas without traditional communications infrastructure.

Drones are also being used by armed and criminal groups for surveillance and territorial control around areas linked to illicit economies, it said.

The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, which tracks political violence worldwide, recorded about 670 incidents involving weaponized drones across

Latin America since 2018. More than 72% occurred between January 2025 and August 2026, according to an August report by the organization.

The figures reflect the wider spread of armed drones across the region and are not limited to environmental crimes.

The office also highlighted the use of social media to market mercury, a toxic metal used in illegal gold mining that can contaminate waterways and accumulate in fish consumed by local communities.

Public prosecutors documented 108 TikTok posts advertising mercury for illegal gold mining that accumulated more than 5.8 million views, according to REDESCA. The office did not identify the country or investigation involved in its response to The Associated Press.

REDESCA said publicly documented cases also include drones flown over Indigenous communities amid disputes involving illegal logging, as well as weaponized drones used to intimidate Indigenous civilians. However, it cautioned that the evidence does not always establish a direct connection between those incidents and environmental protection activities.

The same technologies being exploited by criminal groups can help Indigenous communities defend their territories.

Satellite imagery, GPS mapping and drones can detect deforestation and illegal mining, allowing communities to collect evidence of incursions while potentially reducing their exposure to armed groups.

REDESCA urged governments to strengthen oversight of technology transfers and investigate their illicit use, while calling on technology and telecommunications companies to assess whether their products and services could be diverted to criminal organizations.

The office also warned that developing and operating advanced technologies carries environmental costs, including energy and water consumption, mineral extraction and electronic waste.

48 civilians dead in Mali attack

Drone strike in Abyei kills 153

JUBA, South Sudan, Oct 21, (Agencies): A drone strike on a market in Abyei, a border region disputed by Sudan and South Sudan, hit a nearby fuel depot, killing at least 153 people and igniting a fire that was still burning Tuesday, a local official said.

Yohanna Akol Ngor, the Abyei administration’s caretaker information minister, blamed Sudan’s military for Monday’s attack on Amiet Market, north of Abyei town.

Ngor told The Associated Press by phone Tuesday that the death toll was continuing to rise as the fire burned.

A senior Sudanese military officer said the army carried out a drone strike Monday targeting fuel tankers arriving from South Sudan that he said were bound for the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the press.

The officer said those killed were RSF members and people involved in fuel smuggling. “We do not target civilians,” he said. The AP could not independently verify his account of the targets or the identities of those killed.

The officer said the strike took place outside the demilitarized zone along the border with South Sudan.

In a statement Tuesday, the UN secretary-general condemned drone attacks near Amiet Market and Todach, saying dozens of civilians, including women and children, had



A man walks on his home debris following a strike in Imtidad Nasser, a neighborhood east of Khartoum’s airport, Sudan on Oct 20. (AP)

been killed and many others injured. The statement did not identify who carried out the attacks.

The UN said many people remained missing and the toll was expected to rise as the U.N. Interim Security Force for Abyei, known as UNISFA, continued verifying casualties.

Also:

BAMAKO, Mali: A weekend attack by militants affiliated to the Islamic State group killed 48 people in the Ménaka region of eastern Mali, a lawmaker told the Associated Press

Tuesday.

Fighters from Islamic State in Sahel Province, or ISSP, attacked on Sunday night into Monday morning and casualties included children and elderly, Moussa Ag Acharatoumane, a Tuareg leader and member of the National Transitional Council, said.

According to Moussa Ag Acharatoumane, the armed group attacked civilians, accusing them of revealing ISSP positions to the Malian army who had been conducting a drone strike on the group.

Subcontinent

8 dead as bus overturns in Pakistan: At least eight people were killed and 32 others injured when a passenger bus overturned on a highway in Pakistan’s eastern Punjab province early on Wednesday, said a rescue official.

An official from the state-owned Rescue 1122 told Xinhua that the accident occurred near Bangla Hidayat in Rajanpur district, where a bus travelling from the southern port city of Karachi to the Dera Ghazi Khan district of Punjab collided with a road divider before overturning.

Rescue teams rushed to the site and launched an operation to evacuate passengers from the damaged vehicle.

The official said the bodies and the injured, including women and children, were shifted to nearby hospitals, where some of the wounded were in critical condition.

Police have registered a case and launched an investigation to identify those responsible for failing to install warning signs or markings to alert motorists to the concrete road divider. (Xinhua)

India bus accident kills 2: At least two people died and around 15 were injured when the private bus they were traveling in fell into a nearly 100-foot-deep

gorge in Indian-controlled Kashmir on Wednesday, said the local police.

The injured were admitted to a nearby government hospital, with some said to be in a critical condition, said an employee at the hospital.

The ill-fated bus was moving from Panchound area to Ramnagar when it skidded off the road and plunged into the deep gorge, said the police. (Xinhua)

Child rescued, 3 arrested in Afghanistan: Afghan security personnel have rescued an abducted schoolchild from the clutches of kidnappers in southern Afghanistan’s Kandahar province, provincial police spokesman Asadullah Jamshidi announced on Wednesday.

The child was abducted while en route from home to school in Police District 7 of Kandahar city, the provincial capital. The perpetrators subsequently issued a substantial ransom demand for his release, Jamshidi said.

Acting on intelligence pinpointing the kidnappers’ hideout, security forces carried out an operation, rescuing the child unharmed and apprehending three suspected kidnappers, the official added.

The suspected kidnappers have been handed over to judicial authorities for further investigation and legal proceedings.

This marks the third such incident in recent days in Afghanistan. (Xinhua)

Oil price up \$3.47 to \$107.69 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Kuwait oil price rose by USD 3.47 to reach USD 107.69 per barrel (pb) in Tuesday's trading, compared with USD 104.22 in the previous day, according to the Kuwait Petroleum Cor-

poration (KPC) on Wednesday. In global markets, Brent crude fell by 76 cents to reach USD 108.79 pb, and US West Texas Intermediate crude also dropped by 72 cents to stand at USD 97.82 pb.

Business

Alarbeed: Strong alignment between Islamic finance and sustainability principles

KFH showcases sustainable finance leadership at Forbes Sustainability Leaders Summit 2026

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in the Forbes Sustainability Leaders Summit 2026, held in Abu Dhabi, UAE, under the theme "Resilience for a Sustainable Future." Convened under the patronage of H.E. Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment, the summit brought together global thought leaders, policymakers, and industry experts to discuss strategies for navigating disruption, accelerating innovation, and driving sustainable growth across key sectors, including energy, artificial intelligence, investment, natural capital, and workforce readiness.

KFH's participation, represented by KFH Head of Group Compliance and Governance, Meshal Alshayee, and Executive Manager Governance and Sustainability at KFH, Mohammad Alarbeed, reflects its commitment to sustainable finance and responsible growth, while highlighting the role of Islamic finance in supporting sustainable development through Sharia-compliant solutions. The summit also provided an opportunity for KFH to exchange best practices with industry leaders, strengthen its ESG approach, and reinforce its position as a pioneer in sustainable finance and long-term value creation.

Executive Manager Governance and Sustainability at KFH, Moham-



Meshal Alshayee and Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment

mad Alarbeed, participated as a speaker in a panel discussion titled "Sustainable Finance Exchange: From Commitments to Capital." The session explored how purpose-driven capital can accelerate climate innovation, empower SMEs, and generate long-term economic and social value.

During the discussion, Alarbeed emphasized the vital role of banks in bridging capital and the real economy by directing financing toward sustainable development initiatives. He noted that financial institutions in the GCC are well positioned to sup-

port large-scale sustainable growth through investments in renewable energy, infrastructure, low-carbon technologies, and other projects that strengthen economic resilience and environmental stewardship.

Alarbeed highlighted the strong alignment between Islamic finance and sustainability principles, noting that the asset-backed nature of Sharia-compliant financing encourages responsible investment and links funding to real economic activity. He added that KFH continues to integrate sustainability across its products and services, leveraging Is-



Mohammad Alarbeed and the speakers in the panel discussion.

lamic finance as an effective catalyst for long-term value creation and sustainable development.

He further stressed that robust governance and transparency are essential to building trust and advancing sustainable finance. Strengthening governance frameworks and disclosure practices, he said, will play a key role in accelerating sustainable finance across the region.

Alarbeed added that KFH Group increased its sustainability sukuk exposure to nearly \$2.38 billion in 2025. This growth underscores its

leading role in sustainable finance across Islamic finance markets.

He noted that KFH's portfolio of green and sustainable sukuk expanded to nearly \$1.2 billion in 2025, representing a 30.7% year-on-year increase compared to 2024. The total investment was allocated as 44% in sustainable sukuk and 56% in green sukuk.

Alarbeed emphasized that KFH remains on track with the implementation of its ESG strategy, aimed at achieving net-zero operational emissions by 2060, backed by an executive roadmap for 2025-2030.

KFH continues to achieve significant milestones in sustainability and ESG performance. The Group holds an MSCI ESG Rating of "A" and is included in the FTSE4Good Index Series in recognition of its commitment to environmental, social, and governance best practices and sustainable finance. KFH Auto showroom also received the GSAS Gold Level Sustainability Assessment Certificate, becoming the first environmentally friendly automotive showroom in Kuwait to fully comply with sustainability standards.

As part of its efforts to advance sustainability, KFH signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and launched the first Sustainable Business Program for SMEs, designed to help businesses enhance competitiveness and achieve sustainable growth.

The bank also continues its flagship "Keep It Green" initiative, which supports environmental conservation and carbon emissions reduction. KFH was the first institution in Kuwait to issue impact measurement reports and remains a pioneer in sustainability reporting through the publication of its annual Sustainability Report and Carbon Footprint Report, outlining its environmental performance, progress, and roadmap toward a lower-carbon future.

Recognition underscores progress in governance

KIPCO named Forbes Middle East Sustainability Leader for 4th year

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: KIPCO's - Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - Group CEO, Sheikha Dana Naser Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, has been named one of Forbes Middle East's Sustainability Leaders for the fourth consecutive year, recognizing the Group's continued efforts to embed sustainability and strengthen governance across its portfolio companies.

The recognition was in the investment and holding companies category and took place during the fourth Forbes Middle East Sustainability Leaders Summit, held in Abu Dhabi on October 19-20 under the theme "Resilience for a Sustainable Future". The event was held under the auspices of the UAE's Minister of Climate Change and Environment, HE Dr Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak Al Shamsi. The award was received on behalf of KIPCO by Mr Meshari Al Duhaim, Senior Manager - Corporate Communications and Investor Relations.

The recognition reflects KIPCO's efforts to advance a coordinated approach to sustainability across its diversified portfolio. Through its Sustainability Working Group, KIPCO brings together representatives from its Group companies to share knowledge, align practices and strengthen sustainability reporting, environmental responsibility and governance.

These efforts were reflected in KIPCO's fifth annual Sustainability Report, published earlier this year under the theme "Growth with Purpose: Advancing as One", highlighting the



KIPCO's representative Meshari Al Duhaim receiving the award from UAE's Minister of Climate Change and Environment, H.E. Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak Al Shamsi.

Group's collective progress towards shared sustainability objectives.

Commenting on the recognition, Ms Eman Al Awadhi, Group Senior Vice President - Corporate Communications and Investor Relations at KIPCO, said:

"Being recognized by Forbes Middle East for the fourth consecutive year is a testament to the progress we are making as a Group. For KIPCO, sustainability is not simply about reporting on our commitments. It is about translating them into action, strengthening governance and embedding

responsible practices into the way we do business. By bringing our Group companies together around shared priorities, we are building a more resilient organization, better equipped to navigate change and create long-term value for our shareholders and the communities we serve."

The summit brought together public and private sector leaders to explore sustainability challenges, emerging opportunities and the role of resilient institutions in shaping a more sustainable future.

Boursa Kuwait ends lower on Wed

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Wednesday's session in negative territory, with the general index falling 69.28 points, or 0.82 percent, to 8,330 points.

Trading activity saw 209.9 million shares change hands across 22,232 cash transactions, generating a total value of KD 59.14 million, equivalent to approximately USD 182.15 million.

The main market index declined 127.60 points, or 1.51 percent, to 8,313.22 points. It recorded turnover of 100 million shares through 11,062 transactions, worth KD 17.6 mil-

lion, or around USD 54.2 million.

The premier market index also lost ground, easing 60.47 points, or 0.69 percent, to 8,765.87 points. Investors traded 109.8 million shares in 11,170 cash transactions valued at KD 41.5 million, approximately USD 127.8 million.

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index dropped 220.29 points, or 2.36 percent, to close at 9,099.84 points. It saw 85.4 million shares traded in 9,023 transactions, with a value of KD 15.2 million, or about USD 46.8 million.

Enhancing pilot training for fleet expansion

Jazeera Airways partners with BAA Training to build future pilot talent

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: BAA Training has entered a partnership with Kuwait's leading low-cost carrier (LCC) Jazeera Airways, to provide Airline Transport Pilot License (ATPL) Integrated pilot training, helping the airline meet its pilot training demands.

BAA Training is set to deliver an 18-month ATPL Integrated training course with Multi-Crew Cooperation (MCC) for two groups of cadets. The first group began their training in August 2026 at BAA Training's facilities in Lleida-Alguaire, Spain.

The partnership comes as Jazeera Airways prepares for its next phase of growth, supported by an expanding fleet and network. With new narrowbody aircraft joining the fleet as part of the airline's growth plan, demand for highly skilled and qualified pilots is expected to increase significantly in the years ahead.

"As Jazeera Airways enters its next phase of growth, developing the next generation of skilled, airline-ready pilots is a key priority," said Capt. Ayman Alshammari, Chief Operating Officer of Jazeera Airways. "Our partnership with BAA Training strengthens the pipeline of talent we need to support our expanding fleet and network, while giving our cadets access to high-quality, airline-focused training. It is an investment not only in our future operational capability, but in the people who will play an important role in Jazeera Airways' continued growth."

The ATPL Integrated program is designed to deliver competency-based pilot training, ensuring cadets master both technical skills and the core competencies required for safe and proficient operations. The training pathway includes theoretical instruction, single- and multi-engine flight training, and the MCC course on the Airbus A320 Level 2 Flight Training Device (FTD). It helps to bridge the gap between initial pilot training and advanced training, such as Type Rating.

"Airlines like Jazeera Airways are showcasing strong growth in the region, and with that, the need for qualified pilots is growing just as quickly," said Marijus Ravoitis, BAA Training's CEO. "We are very happy to take part as an official training partner for Kuwait's largest private LCC and support the airline during this growth period. It is a strong step in positioning ourselves as a trusted pilot training provider in the GCC countries."

"Selecting the right training partners is critical to building the strong pipeline of skilled, airline-ready pilots Jazeera Airways needs for the future," said Captain Abdulnaser Almutairi, Head of Training at Jazeera Airways. "BAA Training's ATPL Integrated program, supported by a strong MCC component, provides our cadets with the structured, airline-focused foundation they need from the outset. Through this 18-month program, we are developing pilots with the technical capabilities, professional



Jazeera and BAA Training

mindset and operational competencies required to meet Jazeera Airways' rigorous standards for safety and operational excellence."

Based on Boeing's projection and typical flight training requirements of around 200 hours per pilot, training more than 23,000 new pilots in the GCC would require approximately 5 million flight training hours. This means that the demand for large-scale pilot training requires support from independent pilot training academies.

This agreement further solidifies BAA Training as a trusted global partner in preparing future airline First Officers, and underscores both organizations' commitment to meeting the growing demand for world-class flight crews in the years ahead.

KIBS hosts Corporate Reception celebrating its partnerships and legacy in talent development

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS) hosted its Corporate Reception on Tuesday, October 20, 2026, at The St. Regis Kuwait, bringing together representatives from Kuwaiti banks, corporate organizations, and leading local, regional, and international training and educational institutions. The reception celebrated the partnerships that have shaped KIBS' journey and contributed to its growth and continued development.

The event provided an opportunity to reflect on the Institute's achievements, recognize the contributions of its partners, and share its vision for the future of professional development in Kuwait's banking and financial sectors and the wider business community.

Since its establishment more than 50 years ago, KIBS has evolved from an institution primarily serving Kuwait's banking sector into a provider of professional training, executive education, assessment, and development services for a growing range of organizations across the public and private sectors.

Supported by the Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwaiti banks, the Institute has continued to expand its offerings, strengthen its international collaborations, and respond to changing industry needs.

During the reception, Ms. Rana Al-Nibari, Director General of KIBS, reflected on the Institute's evolution, highlighting key milestones, achievements, and growth indicators that demonstrate its expanding reach and impact. She emphasized the importance of longstanding partnerships in supporting this progress and outlined KIBS' priorities for the years ahead, particularly in adapting to technological advancements, artificial intelligence, and the changing skills requirements of the workforce.

Ms. Al-Nibari also highlighted the Institute's continued focus on quality and international standards, noting its recent recognition among the top 5% of educational institutions worldwide through the MTM platform, as well as its receipt of the Gold Award for Excellence in Learning.

A key highlight of the reception was the recognition of Kuwaiti banks for their longstanding support and contribution to KIBS' mission of developing national talent and strengthening the capabilities of the banking sector. The Institute also honored a number of local and international training and educational partners and experts whose expertise and collaboration have enriched its programs, facilitated knowledge exchange, and helped introduce international perspectives and best practices to Kuwait's professional development landscape.

Looking ahead, KIBS remains focused on strengthening its role as a center of banking knowledge and professional development, building on its established relationships while exploring new opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and growth. Through its programs, services, and partnerships, the Institute aims to continue supporting individuals and organizations in developing the knowledge and capabilities needed to navigate an increasingly complex and rapidly evolving business environment.



Group photo with the heads of HR of Kuwaiti banks.



Group photo with training partner institutions.

Strengthening banking ties, exchanging international expertise, and keeping pace with global trends and industry developments

KIB concludes its participation in the Annual Meetings of IMF and World Bank Group in Bangkok

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) concluded its participation in the 2026 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (WBG), held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 12 to 18 October. The meetings brought together central bank governors, finance ministers, development officials, policymakers, leaders from financial institutions and the private sector, academics, and representatives of international organizations from around the world.

The KIB delegation was headed by Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, and included KIB Board Members Marzook Khaled Al-Marzook and Abdulrazzaq Salah Al-Mutawa, KIB Invest Board Member Ahmad Bader Al-Farsi, General Manager of International Banking and Financial Institutions Ma'ab Al-Qassem, General Manager of Treasury Mohammad Al-Duwailah, and Executive Manager of the Office of the Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Fahad Al-Sarhan.

On the sidelines of the Annual Meetings, the KIB delegation participated in several events organized by Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), including the Gulf-Asia Economic Forum, held in Bangkok under the theme "Banking, Investment, and Digital Infrastructure." The forum was supported by the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in the Kingdom of Thailand and organized in partnership with the Asian Bankers Association, The Business Year, and the Kuwait Business Council in Dubai and the Northern Emirates.

The forum brought together government officials, central bank governors, and leaders from banking, investment, and technology institutions across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Asia. Discussions focused on strengthening banking cooperation and cross-border investment, developing digital infrastructure for



KIB - IMF participation 2026

financial services, and exploring applications of artificial intelligence in the financial sector.

This year's Annual Meetings addressed a range of key issues affecting the global economy and financial markets, including financial stability, artificial intelligence, the future of financial infrastructure, cross-border payments, cybersecurity, and sovereign risks. KIB's participation provided the delegation with an opportunity to stay abreast of the latest developments in the banking industry, exchange views with policymakers and leaders of financial institutions, and explore opportunities for cooperation in financing, investment, digital transformation, and risk management.

Kuwaiti Banking Presence and Opportunities for Enhanced Cooperation

KIB also participated in a reception hosted by Kuwait Banking Association for Kuwaiti banks at Capella Bangkok, attended by senior representatives from the banking and investment sectors and participating delegations. The reception provided an opportunity to engage directly with representatives of participating financial institutions, exchange views, and explore potential areas of cooperation and partnership.

The Annual Meetings concluded with the issuance of final statements by the International Monetary and Financial Committee and the Development Committee, outlining

ing the outcomes of their discussions on developments in the global economy, financial markets, and development issues.

KIB's participation in the Annual Meetings reflects its continued presence at local and international banking and economic forums, as well as its commitment to keeping pace with developments in the financial industry and strengthening relationships with leading financial institutions worldwide. These efforts aim to support opportunities for cooperation and enhance the Bank's contribution to the banking sector and the national economy.

About KIB
Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a next-level customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

Through a network of branches spread across the State of Kuwait, KIB offers a broad range of banking products and services, as well as innovative digital banking solutions in line with international best standards. As part of its duty towards the community, the Bank also encompasses a leading social responsibility program that aims at positively impacting all members of the community through a wide range of impactful initiatives and activities.

Today, KIB has taken concrete steps in implementing its new strategic objectives. The Bank has cemented its role as a key player in the local banking industry and has continued to maintain its strong financial performance; enabling it to be globally recognized for its strong credit rating and financial position.

UK inflation reaches near 1-year high on fuel costs

LONDON, Oct 21, (AP): Inflation in the U.K. rose to its highest rate in almost a year as the Iran war continues to ratchet up fuel prices, official figures showed Wednesday, cementing market expectations that the Bank of England will raise interest rates next month.

The Office for National Statistics said consumer prices rose by 3.5% in the year to September, up from 3.1% in August. That's the highest reading since October last year, and above the 3.4% that most economists had been expecting for the month.

The increase takes inflation further above the Bank of England's target rate of 2%.

Prices across the transport industry were the biggest contributor to higher inflation last month, particularly at the pump. Overall, motor fuels soared by 30% in the year to September, up from a 23% annual rise in August.

Fuel costs have been soaring because of the Iran war and the ensuing bottlenecks in the Strait of Hormuz, which have squeezed global oil and gas supplies.

plies.

Treasury chief John Healey said his budget statement next week will aim to give businesses and families "some breathing space" from the upward march in the cost of living.

Whatever measures he comes up with to keep a lid on rising prices, economists expect the Bank of England to increase interest rates at its next meeting on Nov. 5. Last month, rate-setters held the bank's main rate at 3.75% but gave a big hint that they were ready to hike soon.

"With inflation increasing, the pieces are falling firmly into place for a November rate rise," said Suren Thiru, chief economist at ICAEW.

Most economists expect an increase in the bank's main rate to 4%. Other central banks, including the U.S. Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank, have raised rates recently.

Interest rates in the U.K. had been trending downward from a 15-year high of 5.25% until the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran in late February.

Jackdaw gas project gets UK government approval

LONDON, Oct 21, (AP): The U.K. government approved a natural gas project off the coast of Scotland over the objections of environmental groups on Wednesday, saying it would improve energy security even as the country transitions to renewable sources of energy.

Gas from the Jackdaw field east of Aberdeen, which was stalled by a court ruling in 2024, is expected to start flowing into Britain's gas distribution network later this year. The government said it will reduce reliance on foreign energy threatened by conflict in the Middle East and Ukraine.

Authorities have yet to rule on the Rosebank project west of the Shetland Islands, which is expected to produce mainly crude oil.

Jackdaw and Rosebank have been the subject of intense debate in Britain and beyond, with U.S. President Donald Trump among those who have piled pressure on British Prime Minister Andy Burnham to approve them.

Supporters say Britain will continue to need oil and gas to power industry and heat homes during the transition, and it is better to use local sources than rely on foreign supplies.

The government said Jackdaw would make a "small but meaningful" contribution to the nation's energy security, accounting for about 5% of U.K. gas production during the 11-year life of the project. But it acknowledged that the project wouldn't eliminate Britain's need for imported gas or reduce prices, which are set by international markets.

Environmental activists and some members of the ruling Labour party argue that the projects are at odds with efforts to reduce the use of fossil fuels and combat climate change.

They warn that approving the project would breach the United Kingdom's national and international climate commitments and generate more carbon emissions

while bringing little benefit to the public.

"The truth is that this decision will only support a tiny number of jobs, do nothing to lower prices, barely move the needle on growth, and undermine the U.K.'s climate leadership," said Kate Norgrove, chief impact officer of the nonprofit WWF-UK.

While Jackdaw was approved by a previous Conservative-led government in 2022, that decision was stalled by legal challenges. The Court of Session in Edinburgh last year ruled that both Jackdaw and Rosebank had been unlawfully approved because the government had failed to consider the carbon emissions generated by burning gas from the projects when it assessed their environmental impact.

After further review, Energy Minister Miatta Fahnbulleh approved the project on Wednesday.

"This decision will support the country's energy security with homegrown gas this winter and help minimize the U.K.'s use of imported higher emission fuels as we continue our transition to renewables and nuclear," Fahnbulleh said in a statement.

Fahnbulleh said the government remains committed to eliminating net carbon emissions by 2050 and ending the approval of new oil and gas licenses.

Both Jackdaw and Rosebank are being developed by Adura, a joint venture of U.K.-based energy giant Shell and Norway's Equinor.

Neil McCulloch, Adura's chief executive, said the decision on Jackdaw was a matter of urgency because the project was ready to come on line this winter. Government officials have more time to rule on Rosebank because it won't be ready to begin production until next year.

"We anticipate that the decision will be made positively, and we continue with development of the field," he told the BBC.

Empowering youth to shape Kuwait's future

Zain renews support for KAFO Forum

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Zain Kuwait announced the continuation of its partnership with the KAFO platform and its support for the KAFO Forum 2026, held this year under the theme From Resilience to Development: Kuwait's Youth Shaping the Future. The forum will take place on 26 October at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center, under the patronage of the Minister of State for Youth and Sports Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma, bringing together young leaders, industry experts, decision-makers, entrepreneurs, and representatives from the public and private sectors.

The announcement was made at the Zain Innovation Campus (ZINC) in the company's headquarters in Shuwaikh, joined by Zain Kuwait's Community Partnerships and Youth Empowerment Team Leader Faisal Al-Duwaihees, KAFO CEO Dr. Fatima Al-Mousawi, and members of the Zain team.

The partnership reflects Zain's longstanding commitment to empowering Kuwaiti youth and strengthening their role in shaping the country's future through innovation and entrepreneurship. By supporting national platforms that connect young talent with industry experts and decision makers, Zain aims to create new opportunities for meaningful dialogue, knowledge exchange, and the transformation of ambitious ideas into practical initiatives that contribute to a more sustainable and prosperous future for Kuwait.

KAFO Forum serves as a platform connecting young people with leaders and experts to explore the key issues and challenges shaping Kuwait's future. This year's edition features a diverse agenda covering water, energy, and food security; sports, health, and nutrition; the empowerment of youth, women, and people with disabilities; artificial intelligence and cyber resilience; economic development and business continuity; as well as education, arts, and culture.

As part of its participation, Zain will join a dedicated panel discussion on AI and cyber resilience, sharing its expertise in leveraging advanced technologies and strengthening cybersecurity. The discussion will highlight the importance of keeping pace with rapid technological advancements while balancing innovation with digital security, helping organizations build resilience against emerging challenges and capitalize on the opportunities presented by new technologies.

Zain's participation reflects its strategic focus on



Faisal Al-Duwaihees and Dr. Fatima Al-Mousawi with the Zain team.

- Held under the patronage of the Minister of Youth and Sports, the forum will explore key issues shaping Kuwait's future, from innovation to emerging technologies
- Zain to share its AI and cybersecurity expertise during the forum's panel discussions

accelerating digital transformation and embracing AI-driven innovation, alongside its continued investment in developing national capabilities and equipping young people with essential digital skills. The company believes that preparing a generation with the knowledge and tools to navigate emerging technologies is fundamental to strengthening Kuwait's economic competitiveness and advancing sustainable development.

This participation also builds on a broader collaboration between Zain and KAFO to support youth-led initiatives that deliver lasting, sustainable impact. The partnership has supported a range of projects and initiatives designed to encourage social innovation and inspire young people to develop practical solutions to environmental and development challenges, including the Sustainability Challenge and initiatives focused on reducing waste and promoting environ-

mental awareness.

Zain believes that youth empowerment extends beyond education and training opportunities to actively engaging young people in developing solutions and contributing to decision-making. The company continues to promote stronger collaboration between the private sector, national institutions, and civil society to foster an environment that encourages creativity and entrepreneurship, in line with Kuwait Vision 2035's objectives of building a diversified, knowledge-based economy driven by innovation.

KAFO Forum 2026 will run from 5:00 PM to 9:30 PM, featuring a series of panel discussions and keynote presentations, alongside highlights of KAFO's key projects and initiatives throughout the year. The forum will also showcase experiences and ideas that encourage greater youth participation in Kuwait's national development journey.

Gulf Bank receives LEED Platinum certification

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Reinforcing its commitment to environmental sustainability and responsible banking, Gulf Bank has achieved Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certification for its branch in Sabah Al Ahmad Residential City, marking another milestone in the Bank's efforts to integrate sustainable practices across its operations.

Awarded through the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI), LEED Platinum represents the highest level of certification under one of the world's most widely recognized green building rating systems. The achievement reflects Gulf Bank's commitment to adopting international sustainability standards, improving resource efficiency, and minimizing the environmental impact of its facilities.

LEED certification evaluates buildings against a comprehensive set of environmental performance criteria, including energy and water efficiency, indoor environmental quality, sustainable materials, responsible facility management, and the reduction of environmental impacts associated with building operations.

The achievement supports Gulf Bank's Sustainability Strategy 2030, which places environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations at the heart of its business practices and operational priorities. Aligned with international best practices and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the strategy reflects the Bank's ambition to create long-term value while contributing to a more sustainable future for Kuwait.

As part of this commitment, Gulf Bank continues to invest in modernizing its infrastructure and enhancing the efficiency of its facilities through innovative solutions that promote the responsible use of natural resources and reduce environmental impact.

Commenting on the achievement, Eng. Khaled Abdulwahab Al Awadhi, Deputy General Manager of Facilities Management at Gulf Bank, said:

"Achieving LEED Platinum certification for our Sabah Al Ahmad Residential City branch is an important recognition of Gulf Bank's ongoing efforts to advance environmental sustainability across our facilities. For us, sustainability is not a short-term initiative. It is an integral part of how we operate, make decisions, and plan for the future."

He added:

"We are committed to adopting international best practices in facility management and building operations, while creating modern, comfortable, and efficient banking environments for our customers and employees. Our responsibility extends beyond pro-



Khaled Al Awadhi

■ **Khaled Al Awadhi:** The certification reflects Gulf Bank's continued commitment to environmental sustainability across its facilities and operations



viding quality banking services to ensuring that the spaces in which we operate contribute to conserving natural resources and reducing our environmental footprint. LEED standards provide a valuable framework for translating this commitment into measurable improvements."

Al Awadhi emphasized that Gulf Bank continues to invest in modern technologies and systems designed to improve energy and water efficiency and enhance the overall environmental performance of its branches and operational facilities. These investments support the objectives of the Bank's Sustainability Strategy 2030 and its vision for responsible, sustainable growth.

Building a More Sustainable Banking Environment

Beyond this certification, Gulf Bank continues to implement a comprehensive branch network modernization plan, incorporating international environmental and operational standards to improve building performance while enhancing the customer and employee experience.

The Bank is also undertaking carefully planned improvements to its headquarters, one of Kuwait's distinguished historic buildings. These initiatives aim to preserve the building's architectural and heritage value while improving its operational and environmental efficiency in line with international sustainability and facility management practices.

Al Awadhi concluded:

"Every improvement we make to our facilities is an investment in the future. This certification represents another important step in our sustainability journey, and we remain committed to extending green building practices across our facilities. Through these efforts, we aim to strengthen Gulf Bank's role as a responsible financial institution and contribute meaningfully to Kuwait's sustainable development."

With sustainability increasingly embedded in its operations and long-term planning, Gulf Bank remains committed to creating banking environments that are more efficient, resource-conscious, and aligned with the evolving needs of its customers, employees, and the wider community.

CNBC interview highlights the strength of NBK’s diversified business model

Shaikha Al-Bahar: Diversification underpins National Bank of Kuwait’s resilient performance amid regional challenges

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group CEO of National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), highlighted the Group’s strong financial results in the first nine months of 2026, driven primarily by its core banking business despite heightened geopolitical tensions across the region.

Speaking in an interview with CNBC, Al-Bahar said the Group recorded net profits of KD 481.7 million (USD 1.6 billion) in the first nine months of the year, representing an increase of more than 3% compared with the corresponding period last year. Total assets increased by 4.5%, while the loan portfolio expanded by more than 8%, reflecting the resilience of NBK’s business model and its ability to adapt to evolving economic and geopolitical conditions.

Al-Bahar attributed profit growth during the first nine months of 2026 to a 4% year-on-year increase in revenues, improved operating cost trends and lower provisioning charges. She noted that the Group’s strong balance sheet, asset growth and quality, diversified funding base and robust capital ratios collectively underpinned its financial performance.

Al-Bahar emphasized that NBK continues to deliver balanced growth across its key business lines and geographic markets, supported by a regional and international diversification strategy that has proven effective in strengthening the Group’s resilience against geopolitical challenges.

Diversified Business Model

Al-Bahar explained that the Group continued to navigate heightened geopolitical uncertainty, supported by its diversified business model, prudent risk management and governance framework, and disciplined execution of its strategy.

She noted that since the outbreak of the war, NBK has remained focused on maintaining operational resilience and has been exceptionally successful in supporting its clients and monitoring credit and operational risks across all its markets. She highlighted the Bank’s diversified business portfolio, long-standing client relationships and access to funding across multiple geographies as key strengths in navigating the challenges and evolving conditions of the current operating environment.

Al-Bahar emphasized that diversification will remain a cornerstone of NBK’s growth strategy in the period ahead, noting that the Bank has significant opportunities for expansion across international markets, extending beyond its domestic market.

She affirmed that NBK will continue to focus on diversifying revenue streams and growing fee and commission income to reduce earnings sensitivity to interest rate movements. The Bank will also seek to further leverage its international operations and strengthen cross-selling of products and services across its markets to create new growth opportunities. She pointed to NBK’s strong positions in consumer banking, wealth management and non-funded business activities, including letters of



Shaikha Al-Bahar on CNBC.

- NBK delivered strong financial results in the first nine months of 2026, driven by its core banking business
- Revenues rose 4% year-on-year, along with improved operating cost trends and lower provisioning charges
- Our strong balance sheet, asset growth, diversified funding base and robust capital ratios underpinned financial performance
- Significant growth opportunities lie ahead for NBK across international markets, extending beyond Kuwait
- Sovereign debt issuances provide opportunities for banks to deploy liquidity into high-quality assets, supporting net interest margin resilience
- The real estate financing law presents significant medium- to long-term growth opportunities for consumer banking
- The government’s KD 10 billion project pipeline offers substantial opportunities for the banking sector
- We remain focused on diversifying our revenue streams to reduce earnings sensitivity to interest rate movements
- We see a strong government commitment to accelerating project implementation and mitigating the economic impact of geopolitical tensions
- Our medium-term outlook for Kuwait’s economy remains positive, supported by strong economic fundamentals and substantial financial buffers
- Growth prospects are expected to strengthen as geopolitical tensions ease and development projects and economic reforms advance

credit and letters of guarantee.

Al-Bahar also anticipates continued progress in optimizing the Group’s asset mix, with government debt issuances under the new public debt law providing additional opportunities to deploy liquidity

into high-quality assets, supporting net interest margin stability.

Geopolitical Challenges

Commenting on the impact of geopolitical challenges on Kuwait’s economy and banking sector, Al-Bahar noted that while the pace of growth has naturally slowed compared with the period before regional geopolitical tensions escalated, economic activity continues to demonstrate healthy levels. She highlighted that NBK Group’s international presence has provided valuable opportunities to support clients and facilitate their expansion across multiple markets.

Al-Bahar also highlighted the healthy momentum in project awards in Kuwait, noting that the value of projects awarded since the beginning of the year reached approximately KD 3 billion (USD 9.7 billion), representing a 36% year-on-year increase. Meanwhile, the pipeline of projects expected to be tendered in the coming period stands at approximately KD 10 billion (USD 32 billion), presenting significant opportunities for the banking sector to finance projects and support economic growth.

“We see a clear commitment from the government to sustaining this momentum and accelerating project execution through stronger governance, accountability and transparency, alongside closer monitoring of implementation progress and project milestones, helping to mitigate the impact of geopolitical tensions on the national economy,” she said.

Real Estate Financing

Turning to the approval of the real estate financing law, Al-Bahar described the development as a positive step, noting that its implementation in the coming period is expected to bring about a fundamental shift and create significant medium- to long-term growth opportunities for consumer banking, benefiting both NBK and the wider Kuwaiti banking sector.

Kuwait’s Economic Outlook

Commenting on the outlook for Kuwait’s economy, Al-Bahar explained that while the near-term outlook remains affected by regional geopolitical tensions, the medium-term outlook is positive, supported by Kuwait’s strong economic fundamentals, substantial financial buffers and the pivotal role of its sovereign wealth fund, all of which reinforce the resilience of the national economy and its ability to withstand challenges.

She noted that a return to normal operating conditions would gradually strengthen economic momentum and support investment and financing activity. Over the medium term, as shipping traffic along maritime routes returns to normal, Kuwait’s oil production is expected to recover, potentially exceeding pre-conflict levels. Meanwhile, continued demand for inventory replenishment is likely to support oil prices, even as GCC supplies return to the market.

Al-Bahar expressed optimism about Kuwait’s economic prospects, noting that growth opportunities would improve as regional political tensions ease and the implementation of development projects and economic reforms progresses, with positive implications for the banking sector.

Dollar softens as Warsh tempers hike bets despite hotter US inflation

By National Bank of Kuwait

GLOBAL markets spent the week digesting a fresh round of energy-driven inflation data and a busy run of central bank commentary from the IMF annual meetings in Bangkok. In the US, headline CPI rose 0.6% m/m in September, while core CPI came in at 0.3% against expectations of 0.2% and producer prices jumped 1.3%, the sharpest monthly rise since March 2022. The hotter core print pushed 2-year Treasury yields up about 14 bp within the hour and lifted the dollar index to 102.95 on Wednesday, but the greenback gave back that gain over Thursday and Friday. Fed Chair Warsh’s speech on Friday morning, in which he kept the October decision open and stressed data dependence, added to the dollar’s slide. As of Friday midday, the dollar index stood near 101.7, down 0.4% on the week. NZD led the majors (+1.3%), ahead of NOK (+1.0%), CHF (+0.9%), GBP (+0.8%) and SEK (+0.8%), while CAD (+0.4%) and EUR (+0.4%) lagged, with EUR/USD dipping to 1.1113 after the CPI release before recovering to around 1.1255. AUD finished broadly flat (+0.1%) in a week that saw Australian unemployment hold at a four-year high, after touching a marginal new low of 0.6894 on Thursday and rebounding to about 0.6960. The yen was the only major to weaken against the dollar (-0.1%), with USD/JPY pinned near 158 and barely reacting to BoJ board member Koeda’s remark that the BoJ should not be too cautious about raising rates. Gold fell hardest immediately after the CPI print but is still up 1.4% on the week, trading near \$4,190.

United States

US Inflation Accelerates in September as Energy Prices Surge

US consumer prices rose by 0.6% month-on-month in September 2026, accelerating from 0.4% in August and marking the largest increase since April, in line with market expectations. The rise was primarily driven by a 5.2% surge in energy prices, with gasoline prices jumping 9.1% and accounting for more than half of the overall CPI increase. Meanwhile, core CPI, excluding food and energy, increased by 0.3% month-on-month, exceeding expectations of 0.2%, while annual core inflation accelerated to 2.6% from 2.4% in August, above forecasts of 2.5%. Shelter costs rose 0.4% during the month, while transportation services increased 0.6%, reflecting the impact of higher energy costs. Medical care services also rebounded by 0.3%, while food prices remained unchanged. Overall, the data highlighted renewed inflationary pressures across the US economy, potentially reinforcing expectations that the Federal Reserve will maintain a cautious monetary policy stance.

US Producer Prices Surge in September

US producer prices surged 1.3% month-over-month in September 2026, marking the sharpest increase since March 2022 and significantly exceeding market expectations of 0.5%. The rise was primarily driven by a 10.8% jump in energy costs amid the ongoing Middle East conflict, pushing transportation and warehousing costs up 3.4% and trade costs up 1.4%. Meanwhile, food prices increased 1.2% due to geopolitical tensions and adverse weather conditions. Core PPI, excluding food and energy, rose 0.7%, highlighting broader inflationary pressures. On an annual basis, headline PPI accelerated to 6.3%, its highest level since December 2022, reinforcing concerns over persistent inflation.

US Retail Sales Rise More Than Expected in September

US retail sales rose 0.8% month-over-month in September 2026, following an upwardly revised 1.3% increase in August and exceeding market expectations of 0.3%. The increase was largely driven by a 6.4% surge in gasoline station sales due to higher fuel prices, while sales excluding gasoline rose just 0.2%. Other notable gains were recorded in furniture stores (+1.3%), food

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week’s Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.1197	1.1112	1.1269	1.1239	1.1150	1.1325	1.1280
GBP	1.3233	1.3132	1.3371	1.3328	1.3250	1.3400	1.3333
JPY	158.12	157.53	158.94	157.99	156.40	158.95	156.80
CHF	0.8286	0.8215	0.8394	0.8239	0.8140	0.8395	0.8145

services and drinking places (+1.1%), and health and personal care stores (+0.7%). Meanwhile, sales declined at miscellaneous retailers (-3.0%), building materials (-0.6%), and sporting goods (-0.5%). The GDP-related retail sales control group edged up just 0.1%, slowing sharply from August’s 1.2% gain, suggesting that underlying consumer spending momentum weakened despite the stronger-than-expected headline figure.

Fed Chair Warsh Keeps October Rate Decision Open

Fed Chair Kevin Warsh avoided signalling the outcome of October’s FOMC meeting, stating that stronger-than-expected inflation had not changed his outlook for the US economy. Speaking at an IMF summit in Bangkok, Warsh emphasized that future policy decisions would remain data-dependent, prompting markets to further reduce expectations of an October rate hike. He also reiterated concerns over persistently elevated inflation in the US and globally. The Fed raised interest rates by 25 basis points to 3.75%-4.00% in September, its first hike since 2023, with all 19 policymakers supporting the decision and a majority projecting another increase before year-end. The Greenback was last seen trading at 101.837.

United Kingdom

UK Economic Growth Slows but Beats Expectations

The UK economy expanded by 0.1% month-on-month in August 2026, slowing from 0.4% growth in July and June but exceeding expectations of a 0.1% contraction. Growth was primarily driven by a 0.8% increase in industrial production, supported by gains in manufacturing (+1.2%) and mining and quarrying (+1.4%). Meanwhile, services output remained flat, as stronger wholesale and retail activity was offset by declines in administrative services and food and beverage services. Construction contracted by 0.2%, marking its fourth consecutive monthly decline. On an annual basis, GDP growth accelerated to 2.1% from 1.8% in July, reaching its strongest pace since October 2022 and surpassing market expectations of 1.7%. The GBP/USD currency pair last seen trading at 1.3328.

Eurozone

Euro Area Industrial Production Declines for a Third Consecutive Month

Industrial production in the Euro Area contracted by 0.5% month-on-month in August 2026, following a 0.3% decline in July and missing market expectations of a flat reading. This marked the third consecutive monthly decline, driven by weaker output in intermediate goods (-0.8%), energy (-0.6%), and non-durable consumer goods (-2.7%). Meanwhile, growth in capital goods and durable consumer goods slowed to 0.4% and 0.2%, respectively. Among major economies, production declined in Italy (-1.3%), Spain (-0.8%), and France (-0.3%), while Germany recorded a modest increase of 0.4%. On an annual basis, industrial production fell 1.1%, extending the previous month’s 0.3% decline and highlighting continued weakness in the region’s industrial

sector.

ECB’s Lagarde Rules Out Bond Market Intervention as Inflation Risks Persist

On Wednesday, at CNN’s Global Perspectives event in Bangkok on the sidelines of the IMF annual meetings, ECB President Christine Lagarde played down speculation that the ECB would intervene in the bond market to help France. She said the first and main solution has to come from Paris through fiscal policy, while noting that rising bond yields are not unique to France. On inflation, she said the current high euro-area rate has been driven mainly, though not entirely, by the energy-price surge from the Iran war. She added that it has not yet fed into the wider economy, and the ECB is assessing how indirect effects are spreading so it can anticipate any second-round effects. She flagged large wage increases as the main emerging risk because they could trigger a wage-price spiral, warning that such effects are already too late to act on by the time they become visible, and she said the ECB remains focused on its treaty mandate of price stability. On growth, she called the IMF’s projected 1.1% euro-zone expansion this year not brilliant but not a bad outcome and said German government spending on infrastructure and the military should keep supporting the economy.

The EUR/USD currency pair last seen trading at 1.1239.

Asia-Pacific

China Inflation Rises as Producer Prices Reach a Four-Year High

China’s inflationary pressures strengthened in September 2026, with annual consumer price inflation edging up to 0.9% from 0.8% in August, slightly below market expectations of 1.0%, while producer price inflation accelerated sharply to 5.0% from 3.8%, exceeding forecasts of 4.5% and reaching its highest level since June 2022. The increase was primarily driven by higher fuel and raw material costs, with producer prices for mining rising 25.4%, raw materials 9.4%, and processing 3.4%. Meanwhile, non-food consumer inflation accelerated to 1.5% from 1.2%, supported by rising transportation costs (+4.3%) amid higher gasoline prices and stronger travel demand ahead of the Golden Week holiday. However, food prices declined 1.7%, marking their sixth consecutive monthly decline, largely due to falling pork prices amid abundant supply and weak demand. Core consumer inflation remained unchanged at 1.0% annually, highlighting subdued underlying consumer price pressures despite rising production costs. On a monthly basis, producer prices increased 1.2%, accelerating from 0.4% in August, while consumer prices rose just 0.2%, slowing from 0.4% in the previous month. The USD/CNY currency pair last seen trading at 6.6861.

Australia’s Unemployment Rate Holds at a Four-Year High

Australia’s unemployment rate remained at 4.7% in September, its highest since October 2021 and above market expectations of 4.6%. The number of unemployed increased by 8,900 to 732,000, while employment unexpectedly declined by 39,300, compared to expectations of a 20,000 increase. The decline was driven by a sharp loss of 73,700 part-time jobs, partially offset by a gain of 34,400 full-time positions. Meanwhile, the participation rate fell to 66.8% from 67.0%, its lowest in four months, while underemployment edged up to 6.3% from 6.2%. Despite weaker employment figures, total monthly hours worked increased slightly to 2.011 billion, highlighting mixed signals in Australia’s labor market. The AUD/USD currency pair last seen trading at 0.6944.

Kuwait

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30815.

Safe Harbour MENA connects relocated filmmakers with industry experts

Egypt's film festival launches initiative to support displaced filmmakers

EL GOUNA, Egypt, Oct. 21, (Xinhua): Safe Harbour MENA, a CineGouna initiative at the ongoing El Gouna Film Festival (GFF), is helping displaced filmmakers from the Middle East and North Africa develop their projects and reconnect with the film industry.

Launched in partnership with the International Film Festival Rotterdam and the International Emerging Film Talent Fund, it's the program's first region-focused edition and tar-

gets filmmakers displaced within the region who face barriers to professional networks, funding and project development.

GFF opened its ninth edition on Oct. 15 in the Red Sea resort city of El Gouna, running until Oct. 23. The festival features 77 films from around the world alongside screenings, discussions and industry events.

Safe Harbour MENA selected four filmmakers, including Syrian filmmaker Ezel Manay and Suda-

nese Ahmed Nagm Eldin. Through online preparation and an intensive in-person program in El Gouna, participants receive training, individual project guidance and meetings with producers, distributors and festival representatives.

Manay, who moved to Türkiye after the war in Syria, said the program gave him his first chance to pitch Temporary Protection, a story rooted in his refugee experience and centered on his father.

"I thought that the matter was limited to funding, but I was surprised that there were people I wanted to meet before and found them here," he said.

Manay added that a producer had emerged as a potential collaborator and described such connections as a form of funding in themselves.

Eldin left Sudan several months after the war broke out and is now based in the United Arab Emirates, developing Sabary, his first feature fiction film.

It follows a young man from the eastern Red Sea Mountains who journeys with a retired wrestler from the Nuba Mountains in Sudan. Rather than depicting fighting directly, the film explores the conflict's effects on people and places, identity, cultural memory, and the psychological tensions carried by Sudanese men, using traditional songs, dances, folklore, and magical realism.

Ahmed Shawky, head of CineGouna Funding, said the festival

had supported filmmakers at different career stages since its founding, and Safe Harbour MENA extends that commitment to filmmakers displaced within the region.

Shawky called the results "very fruitful," noting that participants pitched to industry guests and began discussions with producers, distributors and festival delegates. Certificates are due to be handed out, and he said all indicators point to a "distinguished" first edition.

Staggering documentary event

'Once Upon a Time in Harlem' reclaims rich cultural history

LOS ANGELES, Oct 21, (AP): We've had "Once Upon a Time" in the West, in America, in Hollywood. It's a classic kind of movie title phrase, and a good way to start a fairytale or burnish a myth.

But "Once Upon a Time in Harlem" is a staggering documentary event, and has a different relationship with the past. It takes place over one day about half a century ago, in 1972. It's about remembering the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, yet another half-century leap in time.

In that way, "Once Upon a Time in Harlem" stretches over more than a century of time. It doesn't merely resurrect the Harlem Renaissance. It's more about the act of resurrecting the Harlem Renaissance: the need to remember it, to argue over it and to cherish it. The film is less an act of preservation than a lively and dynamic reminder that history is an ever-unfolding continuum.

It's also just a cocktail party - a really, really amazing cocktail party. In August 1972, the filmmaker William Greaves invited luminaries of the Harlem Renaissance to gather at Duke Ellington's townhouse and reflect on its legacy. Greaves, with a small camera crew including his son, David, planned to shoot the event on 16 mm for a film called "From These Roots."

But Greaves ultimately made that 1974 documentary largely with archival photographs. He spent years debating what to do with the footage from the townhouse in 1972, but never found a home for it. After Greaves' death in 2014 at the age of 87, his widow, Louise Aarchambault Greaves, resolved to have the footage restored. David Greaves stepped forward to direct the project to the finish line.

"Once Upon a Time in Harlem," a miracle of a movie, thus has an intoxicating time-capsule feel, like a '70s documentary classic that time somehow forgot. We occasionally hear Greaves' voice from behind the camera or catch him in a mirror. But the film is largely observational, floating between conversations as the attendees discuss the meaning and nature of the intellectual, artistic and cultural movement known as the Harlem Renaissance.

On a surface level, there's a lot to look at. The weathered but handsome faces. The vibrancy of the overflowing townhouse rooms. The turtle-necks and cocktail dresses.

But the conversation is stimulating and charged. What, exactly, was the Harlem Renaissance? For those assembled on this day, there's no clear answer. Remembering it requires arguing over where to place the most emphasis. Is it a matter of recalling certain individuals, and if so, who? Or was it a flourishing brought on by something more communal and harder to define? The writer George Schuyler terms it "an awakening of people who wrote and thought." The poet Arna Bontemps calls it "a prism reflecting all of the Black experience from the beginnings to the present."

Bontemps' definition is shared by the spirit of "Once Upon a Time in Harlem." The movie could hardly be more specifically set, on a single day. In dialogue and breadth, the documentary stretches across the years that lead up to the Harlem Renaissance and reverberates across both its contemporary '70s time and today, when Black history is under considerable threat. The film's final images are of children outside in the street, a parting glance that propels "Once Upon a Time in Harlem" into the future.

Some of those in attendance include Ida Mae Cullen, widow of the poet Countee Cullen; the writer-artist Richard Bruce Nugent; the painter Aaron Douglas; the socialist and bookstore owner Richard B. Moore; Lee Whipper, actor and founder of the Negro Actors Guild; pianist Eubie Blake; and the scholar John Henrik Clarke. (Ellington was sick and absent, though his presence is felt all around.)

"Once Upon a Time In Harlem" is most moving when the swirl of the party momentarily retreats and the excerpted words of the poets and the writers including Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston and Cullen speak with a depth of meaning that the free-flowing conversation of the gathering - for all its thoughtfulness - can't match. This is also dazzlingly true of Whipper, a grand and eloquent presence then in his mid-90s who eagerly recites, from memory, his speech from the 1943 film "Mission to Moscow."

It's in these moments when any definition between past and present slips away. In "Once Upon a Time in Harlem," a documentary shared by father and son, the collective spirit and enduring sound of the Harlem Renaissance come thundering into now.

"Once Upon a Time in Harlem," a Neon release in select theaters Friday, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association for some disturbing images, strong racial language, smoking and brief partial nudity. Running time: 100 minutes. Four stars out of four.



This image released by Neon shows, seated from left, Thomas Harvey, William Patterson, John Henrik Clarke, Mrs. J.B. Matthews, and Louise Patterson, standing from left, Ernest Crichlow, Romare Bearden, and Ida Mae Cullen in a scene from the documentary "Once Upon a Time in Harlem." (AP)

CNN warns of new legal action over Air Force One press access

WASHINGTON, Oct. 21, (AP): Already embroiled in a tense legal standoff with the White House, CNN is threatening further action in the courts if its journalists continue to be denied access to Air Force One and the "pool" of journalists who accompany President Donald Trump when he travels.

The network has been entangled in legal action with Trump's administration ever since the president issued its reporters a sudden ban from White House grounds a month ago, along with those from MS NOW and Politico, calling their content "fake news." Last week, a federal judge granted the news outlets their request for a preliminary injunction against the government ban as the case moves through the legal system.

But that only addresses part of the problem.

The White House has continued to bar CNN from taking its place in TV pool coverage of Trump's travel on Air Force One. And so the network may need to take additional action, said Theodore J. Boutsous Jr., an attorney for CNN, in a letter to Justice Department attorney Michael K. Velchik.

Boutsous noted in the letter late Monday that CNN has traditionally had "uninterrupted access to the Oval Office and Air Force One for 45 years. That is because those spaces belong not to any particular president or administration but to all Americans, and CNN and other members of the press serve as surrogates for the public when covering the White House."

Now, though, the White House is engaging in "what appears to be a new unstated policy to interfere with CNN's ability to fulfill its duties" as part of the video pool. The pool consists of the five major U.S. networks: ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN and Fox, who alternate assignments and share video.

Film



This image released by LAIKA Studios shows characters Prue McKeel, voiced by Peyton Elizabeth Lee, right, and Mac, voiced by Arthur Knight, in a scene from the film "Wildwood." (AP)

Film adapts Meloy's fantasy novel for young readers

'Wildwood's' stop-start craft builds world its story can't match

LOS ANGELES, Oct 21, (AP): Everything about "Wildwood" is ambitious. It's a stop-motion animated movie that stretches over two hours, with 230 hand-controlled puppets across 132 sets, shot frame by frame by frame. It sounds exhausting to make and that's also sometimes what it feels like to watch it.

Wildly industrious, terribly quirky and technically dazzling, "Wildwood" is also overly violent and uses labor-intensive world-building to only slightly tweak fairy tale conventions. It's a movie in which individual toes curl and feathers rustle gloriously but the message is a wan, "Don't be in a hurry to grow up." The technology outstrips the story.

"Wildwood" is based on a 2011 middle-grade fantasy novel written by Colin Meloy, frontman for The Decemberists, and illustrated by his wife, Carson Ellis. The movie has a screenplay by Chris Butler, direction by Travis Knight and a new stomping song by The Decemberists, "The Better Part of Bravery."

It centers on a sullen teenager, Prue McKeel, who lives in Portland, Oregon, with her overprotective parents - weirdly, her dad totally looks like Post Malone without facial tattoos - and baby brother, Mac. It's VERY Portland, with nice nods to Powell's City of Books and Voodoo

Doughnut. At one point, the filmmakers embrace the weird with a passing image of what looks like a guy on a unicycle playing flaming bagpipes wearing a Darth Vader mask.

Prue doesn't believe in anything but the world she can see outside her window - "I'm not buying it. I don't want any part of your fairy tale," she says - despite her parents' embrace of spirituality. "There's magic in you," says dad.

When Prue is looking after Mac one day at the playground, crows snatch him and fly away to a place called the Impassable Wilderness. Prue, nicely voiced by Peyton Elizabeth Lee, naturally pursues, along with a reluctant companion, Curtis, an awkward gamer with a schoolyard crush.

In the wild, there is, of course, a massive data center - no, it's just a fantastically realized forest protected by magic, with light bouncing off ferns and glorious waterfalls. It also has talking animals, bandits, soldiers, farmers, fussy bureaucrats and a stern Dowager Governess (Carey Mulligan), who sounds friendly but may be hiding a nefarious plan. There's a K9 police officer in a tie and a leather jacket who seems pretty smart but nonetheless chases his own tail.

"I don't know whether this is ter-

rifying or adorable," Prue says, as she encounters rams in suits and tortoises carrying mail on their backs. "Wildwood" is a bit of both; the terrifying includes a beheading, bloody hand-to-hand combat, eyes being gouged out, animals in chains, prisoners shot in cages and a crying baby with a dagger plunging toward his abdomen.

Prue must band together the good humans and animals in this land to defeat the baddies and rescue her brother, uncovering a shocking family secret along the way (and it's not, apparently, that her dad is Post Malone). It's all pretty standard stuff. One thing that isn't standard is the film's hatred for invasive English ivy, but that gets lost in the weeds.

Take a pause for the work that's gone into this: More than 142,000 3D faces were printed for the puppets, 3,800 feathers were crafted for one giant eagle, and the whole thing took so long to make that 85 production babies were born. Some puppets were built with imbedded devices that make them look like they're breathing.

Some of the celebrity voices really stand out, especially a rat by Awkwafina, Jacob Tremblay's Curtis and an owl by Richard E. Grant. But others make little impression. Only at the credits did I learn Tom Waits voiced a coyote.

The filmmakers have been faithful to the world Meloy and Ellis originally created, but it takes a while to get used to. There's an army of snarling coyotes - they're suddenly having a moment thanks to this and "Coyote vs. Acme" - who wear what look like 18th century military uniforms with tall black hats and gold brocade epaulettes. Why is not clear. This forest has muskets and rusty mail gasoline-powered trucks. It's all very twee, not very organic.

The filmmakers use this fantastical world to try to talk about grief, growing up, environmentalism and unity in the face of fascism, but none convincingly. Why Curtis has to show he's finally a hero only with violence is a sad way to come of age. And what Prue has learned after all this mayhem is unclear. Even so, the sheer amount of labor in this labor of love has to be applauded. One of the best lines appears after the credits: "This film was handmade in Oregon."

"Wildwood," a Fathom Entertainment release that opens in theaters Friday, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association for "strong fantasy violence/bloody images, thematic material, suicide-related material, brief partial nudity and language." Running time: 132 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

'I'm back to square one'

Applegate says she was misdiagnosed with MS

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): Christina Applegate, who has candidly shared raw details about her journey with multiple sclerosis for years, revealed Monday her doctor says she doesn't have the autoimmune disease and was misdiagnosed.

"I'm back at square one where I don't know what's going on with me," the actor said on the latest edition of her podcast "MeSsy," along with co-host Jamie-Lynn Sigler, who has been public about her own battle with MS.

Applegate first publicly announced in 2021 that she had been diagnosed with the disorder that causes the immune system to attack the cells in the central nervous system.

On Monday's podcast, Applegate revealed that despite the misdiagnosis, she still has "every symptom of someone with MS," adding, "I still have to use wheelchairs when I go to the doctor's office. I can't walk from the car to the room."

There is no single test for MS, and a diagnosis usually involves ruling out other causes. It can take years and seeing multiple doctors before one puts the clues together.

Dr. Benjamin Greenberg, a neurologist who specializes in multiple sclerosis and autoimmune neurological disorders at the UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, said the most reputable studies put the MS misdiagnosis rate at 10%.



Christina Applegate arrives at the 25th annual Critics' Choice Awards on Jan. 12, 2020, in Santa Monica, Calif. (AP)

"We rely on the clinical symptoms, the history, the MRI, often spinal fluid, and then a series of tests to rule out potential mimics. And unfortunately, those tests are not universally codified," he said.

Greenberg said Applegate's experience has lessons for both medical providers and patients. For doctors, it's a reminder to ensure a single diagnosis doesn't lead to a system-wide bias toward that conclusion.

"If I put 'multiple sclerosis' as a diagnosis on an

MRI, a radiologist is far less likely to say, 'Well, this isn't multiple sclerosis. You really should consider something else.' It can permeate the system," he said.

"For patients and families, my general recommendation is whenever receiving a significant serious or chronic diagnosis, if feasible, there is never a harm in getting second opinions."

Applegate said the news had put her in an odd place since she and Sigler have become prominent advocates for people with MS.

"It's weird because I feel like I let everybody down," she said. "It's very unnerving, and it's really confusing for me."

Most autoimmune diseases, especially in adults, aren't caused by a specific gene defect. Instead, a variety of genes that affect immune functions can make people susceptible. Scientists say it then takes an "environmental" trigger, such as an infection, smoking or pollutants, to set the disease in motion.

On the podcast and earlier this year while promoting her memoir, "You with the Sad Eyes," the Emmy-winning Applegate has been candid about unpredictable symptoms that have forced her to use diapers and scoot down stairs on her butt.

"My life has in some ways shrunk to the size of my California king," she writes in her book.

Gardening

Peonies, hostas and daylilies can flourish year after year

Fall planting tips for perennials that can live for generations

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): When plants die, we automatically assume we're responsible. Sometimes, we are. But what we might not realize is that, like all living things, plants have a lifespan, and sometimes their time is simply up.

Annuals, of course, complete their entire lifecycles, from seed to death, in one year. Biennials live two years, although they often self-seed. Perennials are those expected to live for two or more years.

Some perennials (delphiniums come to mind) are short-lived. Others, like coneflowers, have moderate lifespans. But some can outlive their gardeners, surviving under the right conditions for 20, 50 or even 100 years. And fall is a great time to plant them.

Peonies (Paeonia spp.) are the super agers of the group. The woody shrubs with large, showy spring-time blossoms often take a while to

take off, but once they do, they're in it for the long haul, easily living 50-100 years and sometimes even longer. These are heirloom plants, often passed down from generation to generation. Plant them in early fall in a sunny spot (with some afternoon shade in the south) in zones 3-9 for a lifetime of blooms.

Bearded iris can also live for generations. In fact, with proper care, they can literally live forever. Grown from rhizomes planted in late summer or early fall, their roots produce an endless supply of underground offshoots that continually sprout new life. Dig up and divide clumps every three to five years to prevent crowding, which can lead to root rot and decline, and discard old or dead rhizomes before replanting the newer roots in another sunny spot.

Hostas can live for more than 50 years in zones 3-9. For the best results, plant them in spring or fall in



Bearded irises appear in bloom in a front yard on Long Island, N.Y., on May 19, 2024. (AP)

rich, slightly acidic soil in a shady spot that gets a bit of morning sun, monitor and protect them from pests

like slugs, and divide them every three to five years after their first decade.



A peony garden appears in bloom at the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx borough of New York on May 19, 2026. (AP)

Although each daylily (Hemero-

callis spp.) flower lasts for just one day, the plants often endure 50 years with little care. Plant them in rich, well-draining soil in a sunny spot. Plant them in rich, well-draining soil in a sunny spot in zones 2, 3-9 or 11, depending on variety. Plant them in early spring or late summer to early fall, and divide clumps every three to five years to rejuvenate the plant (and make more!).

False indigo (Baptisia) can easily exceed 50 years in your zone 3-9 garden. The plants are slow to establish, taking up to five years to reach maturity, but once established, their long, woody taproot helps them resist drought, frost and just about anything nature can throw their way. They do not, however, like to be disturbed, so select a sunny garden spot carefully and leave them be. Then decide who their next caretaker should be and write them into your will.



Staff members produce micro-dramas with the assistance of AI at the Dazhi Film and Television Base in Zhengzhou, central China's Henan Province, on April 9, 2026. (Xinhua)

AI is changing the math

AI filmmaking transforms China's film & TV industry

BEIJING, Oct. 21, (Xinhua): At a film and television industry park in Suzhou, east China's Jiangsu Province, Qin Wenshan sits glued to his computer screen, watching as visuals, sound effects, subtitles and special effects fall into place on a video timeline.

With a single press of the Enter key, a team of AI agents springs into action, analyzing the script, designing characters and building scenes frame by frame.

Qin entered the field in late 2023, after stumbling across AI-generated content (AIGC), leading him to experiment with AI video production in his spare time. Before that, he had worked as a safety management officer in the local rail transit sector.

After his short-video series racked up hundreds of millions of views, Qin turned his hobby into a business, putting together a team focused on AI-powered content production.

His journey offers a glimpse into a broader transformation sweeping China's film and TV industry, where advances in AIGC video technology are changing not only how content is made, but also who can make it and at what cost.

Production gets a reshuffle

Making a film or TV series used to require large teams of screenwriters, directors, cinematographers, production designers, editors, and visual effects artists, with all hands on deck. A crew could range from a few dozen people to several hundred and beyond.

The bigger the spectacle, the higher the bill. Productions involving animation, sci-fi or fantasy often come with high costs, particularly when they feature complex settings and elaborate visual effects.

AI is changing the math.

Qin's team put AI to work on "PandaPawz," a sci-fi animated short featuring futuristic settings and intense fight scenes, completing the film in just 28 days at a cost of around 30,000 yuan (about 4,464 U.S. dollars).

Industry data shows that AI can dramatically shorten production schedules, cutting timelines that once stretched over months or even years to just days. Some short-form drama episodes can now be produced in just hours, while efficiency in visual effects and previsualization has increased threefold to tenfold.

Yet AI's role goes far beyond generating images. Li Nan, a creator of AI-generated animated dramas, said the process begins with refining the story outline and developing detailed storyboards. AI tools then generate frames with consistent visual styles and character designs, which are turned into videos and combined with AI voice-overs

and automated editing to create finished episodes.

This streamlined workflow enables small teams to handle work that once required extensive collaboration. In April, Li formed a two-person team dedicated to AI-generated animated dramas. Since then, its account has amassed more than 140,000 followers.

"Film and TV production used to be a massive team effort. Now, one person can do the work of an entire department, with AI as the backbone," Qin said.

Growing demand

The rapid expansion of AI-generated dramas is evident in both output figures and market projections. Official data released in September showed that 430,000 micro-dramas had been released nationwide in the first eight months of this year -- 13 times the total for all of 2025 -- with AI-made productions accounting for more than 90 percent.

The country now has more than 800 million viewers of micro-dramas -- series whose episodes run for less than 20 minutes. The market was worth more than 100 billion yuan in 2025.

The demand is expected to grow further. According to a report by DataEye, an industry data platform, China's AI-generated drama and animation market alone is projected to reach 40 billion yuan in 2026, a year-on-year increase of 138 percent.

The boom, however, also raises questions about content quality and the protection of rights and interests. The National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA) has acknowledged that AI is creating new opportunities for creative expression and more cost-efficient micro-drama production, while also highlighting the challenges the technology poses.

"Our position is clear: live-action dramas are the mainstay of quality productions and should receive strong support," said Wang Xiaoliang, an official with the NRTA, at a September news conference on the development of radio, television, and the online audio and video sector over the next five years.

At the same time, the administration said it will guide and regulate the innovative use of AI across the entire production process of audiovisual content in the coming years.

For industry leaders, the future may lie not in choosing between AI and traditional filmmaking, but in combining the two. Gong Yu, founder and CEO of iQIYI, a leading online entertainment platform, believes the use of AI in film and drama production will be common in the future, and that a hybrid approach combining live-action filming with AI may be the way forward.

Film

'I don't look like Robert Redford'

John Turturro stars in 'The Only Living Pickpocket'

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): John Turturro grew up in Hollis, Queens, and has lived in Park Slope, Brooklyn, since 1988. Through his life as a New Yorker, his most reliable reservoir of inspiration has been the sidewalks and subway cars around him.

"You see the variety and diversity," Turturro says. "It's always around you. When I'm on the train, there are so many different kinds of people. Especially the 7 train. I get a lot of things from the 7 train."

Turturro's Pino, the racist pizzeria worker of "Do The Right Thing," came from guys Turturro grew up around. His Brooklyn-born trash-talking bowler Jesus Quintana from "The Big Lebowski" was based on a Lower East Side man Turturro met just after the man got out of jail. Turturro liked his voice.

"I interview a lot of people and I take things from them. They know I'm going to," Turturro says. "Sometimes I keep in touch with certain people, but sometimes you feel kind of bad about that. Like a thief in the night."

Sitting outside at a cafe around the corner from his Park Slope brownstone, Turturro chuckles. The symmetry with his latest New York character is almost too perfect. In "The Only Living Pickpocket in New York," Turturro stars as Harry Lehman, an aging pickpocket in an increasingly cashless and digital New York.

The film, which Sony Pictures Classics releases in select theaters Friday, is a fitting capstone for the 69-year-old Turturro, a shape-shifting character actor who has always worked best when you don't see him working.

"The whole skill of it is that the person doesn't know," Turturro says of pickpockets. "I used to make a list of everything I had in common and everything I didn't have in common with a character. A lot of things resonated with me. People don't look at you anymore."

"The Only Living Pickpocket in New York," written and directed by Noah Segal, is an elegiac ode not just to a bygone, analog New York but to a rich generation of New York actors. Steve Buscemi co-stars as



John Turturro poses for a portrait on Friday, Oct. 9, 2026, in New York. (AP)

a pawnshop owner and Giancarlo Esposito plays a police detective. A lot of the movie's joy is seeing such archetypal New York performers on their home turf.

Turturro's soulful performance has brought him something rare for the much-loved but relatively seldom-honored actor: Oscar buzz. "The Only Living Pickpocket in New York" could land him his first nomination.

"I worked so hard and long before that it's wonderful when things actually come together," says Turturro. "It's rarer than people think, you know what I mean?"

Turturro could just as easily be talking about the New York Knicks, whose championship he's still basking in. "Miraculous," he says, smiling. The sun was also shining on Turturro on a recent bright autumn day in Brooklyn. "The Only Living Pickpocket" had just played at the New York Film Festival, where many of

Turturro's longtime friends and collaborators, like Joel and Ethan Coen, came to support him. The moment has made him reflective.

"When I first started, I thought: I don't know if I'm going to work. I feel like I have the ability, but I don't look like Robert Redford," says Turturro.

Ironically, it was a film with Redford, 1994's "Quiz Show," that Turturro attributes to him and his wife of 40 years, Katherine Borowitz, being able to stay in New York.

"I got 'Quiz Show' and I was going to get paid," recalls Turturro. "I said, 'Well, maybe we have enough.' So we stayed here."

Since then, Turturro has played street-wise New York hustlers, high-minded intellectuals and world-weary schlubs. He's played a corner store owner ("Jungle Fever"), an NYPD hostage negotiator ("The Taking of Pelham 123"), a court-appointed defense attorney ("The Night Of"), a

mob boss ("The Batman"), a script-writing playwright ("Barton Fink") and a gigolo ("Fading Gigolo," which he directed). Like few actors, he has captured the city, from Broadway to the Bowery to Bayside.

The kinds of characters Turturro has made a living capturing can feel like an endangered species in a more sanitized, high-priced New York. Turturro grants that the city has changed. Cab drivers, he notes, no longer tell you their life story while barely keeping an eye on the road. But regardless of the number of pickpockets left, Turturro finds the same spirit is alive.

"There are different people now in New York. But if you go to certain pockets, you can find them," he says. "We were in neighborhoods for this and I was like, 'Wow, this is a whole other world.' We shot way out past Coney Island. Sometimes I had a dressing room in a hair salon. I'd watch the clientele."

Buried in 79 AD, the house has been closed since 1980

Pompeii's grandest house gets \$1.6 million restoration

MILAN, Oct 21, (AP): An ancient residence believed to be the grandest in the Pompeii archaeological site is being restored with the entire 1.4 million euros (\$1.6 million) cost being covered by a private sponsor, officials announced Tuesday.

The house of Marcus Fabius Rufus, modeled after Rome's imperial palaces and buried in the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius that destroyed the ancient city in 79 A.D., has been inaccessible to the public since 1980. Originally built on Pompeii's city walls, it features four floors connected by a maze of corridors and staircases.

Part of it is expected to open to guided groups by Christmas, officials for the Archaeological Park of Pompeii said.

The renovation is being paid for by a German entrepreneur, Frank Hoefler, who contacted the archaeological park after reading superintendent Gabriel Zuchtriegel's 2023 book: "Pompeii: The Enchanted City."

"Restoring the spectacular residence of Marcus Fabius Rufus ... is a project I find exciting," Hoefler said in a release. "I also have the impression that Pompeii is very open to innovative approaches to preservation and public access."



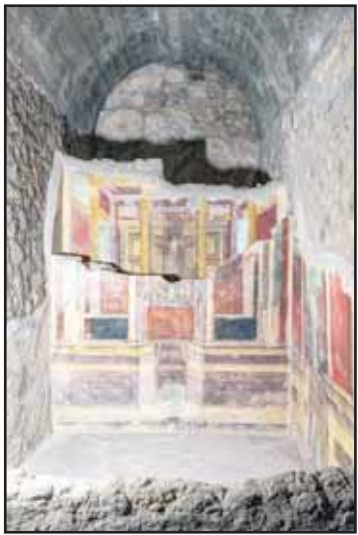
In this undated handout photo provided on Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2026, by the Pompeii Archaeological Park, restorers work inside the house of Marcus Fabius Rufus in Pompeii, near Naples, Italy. (AP)

Zuchtriegel said the goal is to expand such sponsorships.

"This does not mean that from tomorrow on if we had 50 such sponsors we would be able to abolish the entrance ticket, putting it at just a symbolic one-euro price, but it is a perspective towards which we have to work to develop the site," Zuchtriegel said in a video statement.

Structural work was carried out on the house from 2021-2023, and current renovations are focused on the frescoes, including the famous Venus of Pompeii located in a chapel within the residence. The owner was believed to be a magistrate or a freedman of the imperial household.

Zuchtriegel said work was also being done to make the complex more



This undated handout photo provided on Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2026, by the Pompeii Archaeological Park, shows the house of Marcus Fabius Rufus in Pompeii, near Naples, Italy. (AP)

accessible, and digital technology was being developed to help people grasp the "incredible labyrinth" that makes up the house.

"At times, you feel like you are in a 19th-century palace in Naples, yet this is a Roman house from 2,000 years ago," Zuchtriegel said.

Global summit on children’s well-being opens in Samarkand

By Marlon Aquino Malinao
Managing Editor, Arab Times

SAMARKAND, Uzbekistan, Oct 21: The Global Summit on Investing in Children’s Well-being opened in Samarkand on Wednesday, bringing together more than 600 participants from over 100 countries, including political leaders, ministers, experts, representatives of international organizations, civil society groups, the private sector, and children and adolescents.

Held under the theme “Investing in Children’s Well-being: A Path Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development for Future Generations,” the two-day summit focuses on strengthening international efforts to protect children’s rights and promote their well-being as a foundation for sustainable and equitable development.

The main sessions address key challenges facing children worldwide, including strengthening social protection systems for vulnerable children and families, reducing poverty, and developing integrated child protection services.

Discussions also cover improving healthcare and early childhood development from birth, expanding access to inclusive education for children with special needs, and promoting their integration into society. Participants are exchanging experiences and best practices in supporting children and families.

Uzbekistan is hosting the summit through the National Agency for Social

Protection under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Preschool and School Education, and the Zamin International Public Foundation.

The summit is supported by a global advisory committee comprising the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Bank.

The proceedings are taking place at the Silk Road Complex in Samarkand, with participants also scheduled to visit social facilities in Uzbekistan to learn about local experiences in supporting children and families.

Running concurrently with the summit is the Second International Conference on Pediatric Oncology and Hematology, bringing together several First Ladies, including Emine Erdoğan of Türkiye, Aygül Japarova of Kyrgyzstan, Tamara Vučić of Serbia, and Nemat Aoun of Lebanon.

The conference aims to launch joint medical initiatives supporting childhood cancer treatment worldwide and facilitate the exchange of expertise in diagnosis and treatment.

The summit will conclude with the adoption of the Samarkand Declaration on Investing in Children’s Well-being, intended to provide a practical roadmap for sustainable policies that safeguard children’s rights and translate international commitments into concrete action for future generations.



‘More dangerous heat waves, more destructive floods’

World losing ground in fight to curb climate change, faulting US a bit: UN projections

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): Losing more ground in the fight against climate change, humanity is heading for a hotter world than experts projected last year - and the United States is a big reason for that, a new United Nations report says.

If all the countries do what they promise to reduce heat-trapping emissions, Earth will likely still warm another 2.2 degrees Fahrenheit (1.2 degrees Celsius) above current temperatures, according to Wednesday’s update of climate calculations by the United Nations Environment Programme. That’s about two-tenths of a degree Fahrenheit (0.1 degrees Celsius) more than last year’s projections by the same science team.

“This is a worse outcome than expected last year, as a result of the formal withdrawal of the United States of America from the Paris Agreement and revised estimates of historical emissions,” the report said. The report also blames the United States for increased emissions last year, saying all the other top 20 major economies reduced their carbon pollution or at least slowed the growth in how much carbon dioxide was spewed from the burning of coal, oil and gas.

“In terms of magnitude, the increase in the United States of America (133 megatons of CO2 equivalent) far exceeded that of all other countries and was driven by increased electricity demand and a rebound of coal power generation,” the report said. The 124 countries that increased emissions - not counting the 63 that decreased like most European nations - added 189 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2025, and 70% of that increase came from the US, according to the report.

The United States is going “hell-for-leather trying to block renewables while actively promoting and subsidizing dirty coal - and its diplomacy is trying to make other countries also pull back on action. It is looking at the fire, denying there is a fire, and then pouring more petrol on it,” said Australian climate scientist Bill Hare, CEO of Climate Analytics that measures countries’ climate fighting plans. He wasn’t part of the U.N. report but like several other outside scientists said it was scientifically sound.

The new calculations say that if countries do all they promise in the climate fighting plans they submitted to the United Nations, by 2100 the globe will be 2.6 degrees Celsius (4.7 degrees Fahrenheit) hotter than pre-industrial times. If the world continues on its current path - without national promises - it will be 2.8 degrees Celsius (5 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the last half of the 19th century, the same as last year’s projection.



The coal-fired Mountaineer Power Plant, near New Haven, W.Va., operates across the Ohio River from the Lock 24 RV Park and Campground in Racine, Ohio on March 13. (AP)

Both of those temperatures blow far past the goal of less than 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) and preferably 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) adopted by the 2015 Paris climate pact. The world is now at about 1.4 degrees Celsius (2.5 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times and earlier this year - and again in this report - United Nations officials conceded that there is no way of limiting warming to the 1.5-degree goal that they had embraced. Instead, officials are pinning their hopes of limiting warming to about 1.8 degrees Celsius (3.2 degrees Fahrenheit) and then somehow pulling enough carbon dioxide out of the air to lower temperatures back down to 1.5 degrees.

The world is falling “dangerously short” of even those goals, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said, “but we have the tools to change course and pull back from the brink.”

Drastically cutting global carbon emissions - by 18% by 2030 and 69% by 2040 - “is the only way that we can get back to a semblance of a reality that is still largely manageable without major impacts and therefore that makes every sense,” said UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen.

“The report’s message is clear,” said climate scientist Adelle Thomas, vice chair of a United Nations scientific assessment on climate impacts. She wasn’t part of this study. “We know what needs to be done. We have the tools to do it. And delay only makes the challenge more dangerous and more expensive for all.”

Report lead author Anne Olhoff, director of UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre, said the US policy change will likely add one-tenth of a degree Celsius (nearly two-tenths of a degree Fahrenheit) to global temperatures by the end of the century.

“This report shows that America’s retreat isn’t just a political embarrassment. It has real consequences for the planet and for millions of people around the world,” said Mohamed Adow, director of Power Shift Africa, a climate organization. “An extra tenth of a degree might sound insignificant, but in climate terms it is enormous. It means more dangerous heat waves, more destructive floods, more failed harvests and more lives lost. For vulnerable communities in Africa, already living on the front lines of the climate crisis, every fraction of a degree matters. These are not abstract numbers. They are human lives.”

Hare said that extra one-tenth of a degree pushes an additional 140 million people “into dangerously hot conditions” and increases the odds of the collapse of the Amazon rain forest or ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica. It also would cost the world and shave about \$1.2 trillion from the global economy, said University of Pennsylvania climate scientist Michael Mann.

And the US effect is probably even bigger than what the United Nations calculates because if the world’s largest historical climate polluter doesn’t do much to fight global warming other nations ease off in their efforts too, said Johan Rockstrom, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impacts Research in Germany.

“The rest of the world is exhausted when it comes to counting the damage that the US is willingly doing to allies, multilateral structures, economic cooperation, disaster relief,” Australian climate scientist Malte Meinshausen said. “The rest of the world should probably continue to focus even less on the US.”

Health

Nigeria confirms Ebola case: Nigeria confirmed an Ebola case in its capital, Abuja, on Tuesday after a woman who arrived from Uganda tested positive for the virus, the Health Ministry said.

The woman began showing symptoms on Oct 7 and was admitted to a private hospital in Abuja on Oct. 11, where she was later diagnosed with Ebola. It is unclear when she arrived in Nigeria.

Health Minister **Muhammad Pate** said authorities had begun tracing 44 people identified as contacts of the patient. “We are doing everything possible to contain this case by tracing all the contacts the individual may have had,” he said.

Uganda had previously reported Ebola cases, but it later declared itself free of the virus.

Uganda’s Ministry of Health said the patient had only transited through Uganda and that she is a Nigerian woman who had been on a business trip to Congo’s eastern region. The Nigerian authorities have not disclosed her nationality.

“Travel through Uganda does not establish that infection occurred here. The location of exposure remains under investigation,” the ministry said in a statement. The ministry insisted Uganda has “no confirmed active Ebola cases.” (AP)

Flu cases continue to climb in Russia: Influenza cases in Russia continue to rise, Russia’s Federal Service for the Oversight of Consumer Protection and Welfare (Rospotrebnadzor) said on Tuesday.

More than 635,000 cases of acute respiratory viral infections, influenza and COVID-19 were registered across the country during epidemiological week 42 of 2026, according to Rospotrebnadzor. Non-influenza respiratory viruses predominate among circulating respiratory pathogens, accounting for 96.6 percent of all reported infections, it added. Among these, rhinoviruses represent 45.1 percent and parainfluenza viruses 19.8 percent.

Influenza vaccination campaigns are underway across Russia, with more than 25.7 million people having been vaccinated as of Oct 20. (Xinhua)

Pate

How US organ transplant system works and what to ask to improve your chances

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): It’s not always patience and luck that get patients off the organ transplant waiting list and into the operating room.

Unlike in many areas of medicine, experts say there’s a lot of variation in the U.S. transplant system. Knowing there are differences and what to ask might help.

“I had to ask a lot of questions to figure out what it was that I could do to move the needle,” said Katherine Screws of Phoenix, who got a rare intestine transplant after she decided to get on the waiting list at more than one hospital to increase her chances.

It can be difficult to learn how to navigate that search, but there’s publicly available information about which hospitals perform the most of each type of transplant, plus their waiting times and outcomes. Long used by experts analyzing the transplant system, the Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients, or SRTR, database has new patient-friendly tools developed in the hopes that more would-be transplant recipients will use it.

“People are making these really high-stakes decisions without understanding the options,” said Dr. Allyson Hart of Minnesota’s Hennepin Healthcare Research Institute, who helped design the tools.

Here are some things to know.

There are about 100,000 people on the U.S. transplant list at any given time, the vast majority of whom need a kidney. With just over 49,000 transplants performed in the US last year, more people than ever are getting new organs. It’s mostly thanks to over a decade of increases in donations from the deceased, which are recovered by organ procurement organizations, or OPOs.

But more organs are needed to meet the demand, and different transplant

hospitals have different criteria for who they’ll accept on their waiting list.

Sometimes, “if a patient receives a ‘no’ at one place, they can go somewhere else and be successfully transplanted,” said Dr. Syed Ali Husain, a kidney specialist at NYU Langone Health.

Each transplant program’s waiting list is linked to a national automated matching system. OPOs enter information about viable organs into that system, which generates lists of possible matches at multiple hospitals in order of priority. When the OPO offers an organ, the transplant team must quickly decide if it’s a good choice for that patient or the offer moves to the hospital with the next-in-line candidate.

Some hospitals are more conservative than others about which organs they’ll accept, said Husain, who studies such differences.

One large study of kidney transplants found “there’s about a 16-fold variation in how quickly a patient will get transplanted at one center versus another,” he said. That’s partly because some surgeons have more experience than others using kidneys with complex anatomy such as extra arteries, or those from older, sicker donors that still may be better than dialysis for the right patient.

Typically, a doctor or other health worker points patients to the nearest hospital offering the kind of transplant they need. But the SRTR database allows people to compare transplant centers around the country in multiple ways.

Search for a particular organ and a list of the highest-to-lowest-volume centers pops up, with dials to show how they perform on such measures as getting a transplant faster, survival on the waiting list and the new organ’s survival. Click on those of interest for more data.

In this photo provided by Katherine Screws, Screws poses in the pre-op room with her husband, Stephen Gerrish, before her intestine transplant surgery at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital on June 1, 2025, in Washington. (AP)



The CERES-1 Y8 carrier rocket carrying a new satellite blasts off from the waters near the city of Rizhao, east China’s Shandong Province, Oct 21. (AP)

Orionid meteor shower coming

China’s CERES-1 launches sat from sea

RIZHAO, Shandong, Oct 21, (Agencies): China launched a rocket from the ocean waters near the city of Rizhao in east China’s Shandong Province on Wednesday, placing a new satellite into designated orbit.

The CERES-1 Y8 carrier rocket blasted off at 11:39 a.m. (Beijing Time).

The Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center carried out this offshore launch.

This new satellite will be mainly used for commercial remote sensing, providing services to the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, south China, and the low-latitude regions along the Maritime Silk Road, according to the Science and Technology Daily.

The launch marked the seventh sea-based mission of the CERES-1 sea-launched carrier rocket series.

As of now, the rocket’s developer Galactic Energy has successfully conducted 23 orbital launches and placed a total of 90 commercial satellites into their designated orbits, the report noted.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: NASA on Tuesday provided an update on the development of crewed and robotic lunar rovers to support its planned Moon Base initiative, highlighting efforts to develop the surface mobility capabilities needed for future exploration and sustained human operations on the Moon.

NASA’s Volatiles Investigating Polar Exploration Rover is scheduled to embark on a mission to the lunar South Pole region in 2027 to explore permanently shadowed craters in search of water and other potentially valuable resources that could support sustainable lunar exploration.

The rover will be delivered to the lunar surface by Blue Origin’s Blue Moon Mark 1 lander and is expected to travel more than 30 kilometers, collecting data on local temperatures, lighting conditions and terrain.

NASA said the data could help scientists better understand the origin and distribution of water on the Moon and assess how lunar resources might be used to support future exploration.

Meanwhile, NASA has awarded task orders to Astrolab and Lunar Outpost to build the first phase of Moon Base rovers capable of carrying crew, called lunar terrain vehicles (LTVs), which are intended to reach the Moon ahead of crewed Artemis missions.

Blue Origin has been tasked with delivering the rovers to the lunar South Pole region by 2028 through NASA’s Commercial Lunar Payload Services initiative.

The LTVs will allow astronauts to explore geologically diverse areas near the lunar South Pole, collect samples and transport equipment. They will also be remotely operated from Earth to map the lunar surface before astronauts arrive, NASA said.

According to NASA, the LTVs are designed to travel up to 10 kilometers on a single battery charge, support up to three moonwalks per Artemis mission, and carry up to 80 kilograms of lunar samples and tools.

“Lunar rovers are central to our surface mobility strategy,” said Robert Pickle, director of NASA’s Surface Mobility Office within the Moon Base Program.

Their performance will help lay the groundwork for the mobility systems needed to build, operate and expand infrastructure for long-duration lunar exploration, he said. Enditem

WASHINGTON: The Orionids - one of two major meteor showers caused by remnants from Halley’s comet - will peak this week, though a large moon will dim visibility until after it sets late at night.

During the peak Wednesday night into Thursday morning, it will be possible to see up to 20 meteors per hour in ideal viewing conditions, according to the American Meteor Society. Meteors are still visible for a few weeks before and after the peak.

The Orionids are viewable in the northern and southern hemispheres after midnight. While they get their name from the Orion constellation, they are visible across the night sky, according to NASA.

Orionids can be especially bright and fast, and can leave glowing trains that can last for several seconds. Here’s what to know about the Orionids and other meteor showers.

As the Earth orbits the sun, several times a year it passes through debris left by passing comets and the occasional asteroid. The source of the Orionids is debris from Halley’s comet, which passes near Earth every 75 years.

‘There are some really interesting things beginning to happen in African sport now’

What F1’s return to Africa means for continent long overlooked by global sports

KIGALI, Oct 21, (AP): Though human rights groups call it sportswashing, analysts say Formula 1’s choice of Rwanda to host its first African race since the 1990s can become a watershed moment for the continent’s sports industry - if it can deliver lasting development.

Rwanda President Paul Kagame last week announced the 10-year deal for an African Grand Prix from the early 2030s, a milestone he said could serve as a catalyst for sports across Africa.

Besides South Africa, which has hosted World Cups in soccer, rugby and cricket - and the last F1 race on African soil in 1993 - the continent historically has been overlooked as a global sports destination.

That’s starting to change.

Rwanda last year hosted the road cycling world championships. In less than two weeks, Senegal will host the Youth Olympic Games - the first ever Olympic event in Africa. And in 2030 Morocco will co-host the men’s World Cup with Spain and Portugal.

“There are some really interesting things beginning to happen in African sport now,” said Simon Chadwick, a business management director at the African School of Economics. “Investors are showing an interest; governments are showing an interest. And what’s significant as well, I think, is that we’re actually beginning to get competition between African nations to be leaders.”

Rwanda saw off competition from South Africa to land the F1 prize. Morocco and Nigeria were also reportedly interested.

The Grand Prix announcement made clear that F1 views Africa, with its population of more than 1.5 billion people, as an untapped market. F1 President Stefano Domenicali said there were more than 100 million F1 fans on the continent, “people who have waited a long time to see our sport return.”

Kagame said it was high time to integrate African markets with global sports franchises and competitions.

“For decades African athletes have been a pillar of the global sports economy, adding significant commercial value to top leagues, with the continent receiving almost nothing in return,” he said. “Partnerships like the one we are building help break the cycle because they serve as a catalyst for sports infrastructure development.”

Abi Ijasanmi, the CEO of African Sports Investor, called the F1 announcement “really significant” for Africa because it connects the continent to global

sports and “combines things like sport and technology and tourism and investment. And the continent really needs the boost in all of those things.”

African countries considering bids to host major sporting events have been faced with one overriding criticism: That spending millions or even billions of dollars on a sports event is unwise considering the continent of mainly middle- and low-income nations has pressing concerns like a lack of housing, frail healthcare systems and widespread poverty.

Rwanda’s policy of committing money to sports to burnish its reputation comes right from the top, but it’s largely an outlier, and the majority of African nations may never have the money to host a big-time sports event. Even the government in South Africa, the biggest economy in Africa, has not made the financial guarantees to host an F1 race again, and has been mulling over the cost of a possible Olympics bid for nearly 20 years.

U.S. professional sports have also started taking a greater interest in Africa. The NFL has opened an American football developmental camp in Ghana and the NBA in 2021 launched the Basketball Africa League together with FIBA, the international basketball federation. Rwanda’s capital, Kigali, has hosted five of the six finals so far.

The basketball league “made other countries sit up and appreciate what’s possible,” Ijasanmi said.

Similarly, other countries have been inspired by Morocco’s developments in soccer, by far the most popular sport in Africa, said Ijasanmi, who previously worked as chief operational officer of the Confederation of African Football.

Morocco hopes to host the 2030 World Cup final in a 115,000-capacity stadium under construction near Casablanca and has been lauded for its player development through its Mohamed VI Academy, an advanced training complex.

“It was really interesting and very positive to hear other presidents and federations sit talking about how they were going to be the next ones to do that,” Ijasanmi said. “So, it can be short-lived, but I think the more that it happens, the more it makes others look and say, ‘OK, well, this is really possible and look what it’s doing for the economy.’”

Corruption and delivery of infrastructure are potential stumbling blocks for African sports projects.

Rwanda has not yet built the F1 circuit in Bugesera, about 40 kilometers (25 miles) from Kigali, and will be keen to avoid the infrastructure setbacks that

have plagued many other sports events, including the Africa Cup of Nations, the continental soccer championship.

Every men’s Africa Cup since 2013 has been moved because of construction delays, security problems or public health issues in the original host countries. There are concerns the next edition in 2027 could be moved from co-hosts Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda due to infrastructure projects reportedly lagging behind.

“The instability in the global markets is kind of forcing some of those countries, they’re not able to advance or proceed as fast as they want,” said Maher Mezahi, a journalist and contributing editor at Africa Is a Country.

Morocco hosted the last men’s Africa Cup and the last three editions of the women’s tournament. It has invested heavily in sports infrastructure and often hosts “home” games for other African nations whose stadiums don’t meet the same standards.

Egypt also hosts international matches for other African countries. It recently built a stadium with more than 90,000 seats as part of a sports complex known as Egypt International Olympic City east of Cairo.

However, pointing to Morocco, Mezahi said grassroots initiatives, rather than showcase stadiums, can be a more significant factor in developing sports in Africa.

“The reason why they’ve had success producing talent instead of just hosting events is because they built thousands of what they call ‘proximity pitches’ ... artificial turf, small pitch, five-a-side, and it’s really open to the public. It’s really just take your ball and go and play,” Mezahi told The AP from Algiers.

It is too early to tell whether Rwanda’s F1 race will be a game changer for sports in Africa, but it was met with optimism far beyond Kigali.

South Africa Sports Minister Gayton McKenzie pointed to Rwanda as an inspiration and said there’s room for more than one grand prix on the continent, noting that a single European country like Italy has two.

All eyes are now on Rwanda to see how it follows up with the racetrack construction and other infrastructure needed to make the African Grand Prix a lasting success.

“In some ways the F1 grand prix is almost like an acid test,” Chadwick said. “Does Rwanda have what it takes? Or is it going to fall foul of what has beset African sport before?”

Kuwait’s junior taekwondo team makes mark at Doha champ’ship

DOHA, Oct 21, (KUNA): Kuwait taekwondo trio claim bronze at Qatar International Championship

Three members of Kuwait’s national taekwondo team won bronze medals in the junior category at the sixth Qatar International Taekwondo Championship in Doha .

Ghala Al-Assaf took bronze in the under-69kg category, while Al-

Misk Al-Salem finished third in the under-68kg division and Luluwa Al-Mahboub secured bronze in the over-68kg category.

National team coach Waleed Al-Mershad told KUNA he was pleased with the three-medal tally, particularly given the high level of competition and the participation of athletes from around the world.

He said the achievement added to Kuwait’s medal record in taekwondo, stressing that participation in international tournaments gives athletes valuable experience and helps them improve their skills and competitiveness.

Organized by the Qatar Taekwondo, Judo and Karate Federation, the championship began Sunday and runs through Wednesday. It features around 1,152 male and female athletes from more than 46 countries competing in four categories: children, juniors, youth and seniors.

Japan retains men’s team title at worlds, China takes bronze



Silver medalists Russia, left, gold medalists Japan and bronze medalists China pose after the men’s team final at the Artistic Gymnastics World Championships in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. (AP)

‘Cadillac project requires more time’

Pérez considers early retirement

MEXICO CITY, Oct 21, (AP): Sergio “Checo” Pérez has been back in Formula 1 for less than a season and is already contemplating retirement.

The Mexican driver said Tuesday that bringing Cadillac into a leading role in the sport’s top tier will take time, but he does not plan on competing with the team for much longer.

“It’s a project that requires more time than I initially thought,” Pérez said in an interview with Televisa network. “I think giving a specific number (of years) is difficult, but it won’t be much longer.”

The 36-year-old Pérez missed last season when Red Bull dropped him, but returned with Cadillac as it made its debut in the top category.

His best results this season are a pair of 14th-place finishes. In addition, he has retired from five races due to various issues.

“People who understand Formula 1 know the level I am driving at. It brought me great satisfaction to prove to myself that the circumstances of recent years were what kept me from showing my full talent,” he added.

Cadillac, which also has Valtteri Bottas driving for the team, is bottom of the constructors’ championship, having yet to score a single point.

“I’m aware that we are much closer to the end than the beginning, but that’s why I want to fully enjoy these Grands Prix - they are a dream,” Pérez said.

Pérez explained that a key reason for considering retirement is wanting to spend more time with his wife, Carola Martínez, and their four children.

“What really holds me back (from continuing) is my kids. I would love to stay as long as Fernando (Alonso), for example, but my children are at an age where I want to be around more,” he added.

For now, Pérez is gearing up to compete in the United States Grand Prix later this week before heading to his home race, the Mexican Grand Prix, where he will reach 300 Formula 1 starts.

“I’m excited about projects outside of motorsport,” he said. “I want to finish my time in Formula 1 on a high note, and all I can say is that we will know when (I retire) soon.”



Cadillac driver Sergio Perez of Mexico arrives at the track ahead of the Bahrain Grand Prix in Sepang, Malaysia. (AP)

Resurgent Russia marks comeback with silver

ROTTERDAM, Oct 21, (AP): Japan surged to win gold in the men’s team final at the world gymnastics championships, using excellent routines over the last two rotations to move past Great Britain and China and hold off Russia.

Two years after winning a thrilling final at the 2024 Paris Olympics, the Japanese remained on top by posting a total of 251.928, well clear of a resurgent Russia, which won silver in its first major international team appearance since the 2020 Olympics.

The Russians, competing officially as “World Gymnastics 2” after World Gymnastics - the sport’s governing body - lifted a ban against Russian athletes stemming from the country’s war with Ukraine, edged China for second place at 250.329.

China won bronze at 249.193.

Great Britain, which was in the lead going through four of the six rotations, slipped to fourth. The Brits ran into trouble during the fifth rotation



Daiki Hashimoto, of Japan, competes in the parallel bars during the men’s team final at the Artistic Gymnastics World Championships in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. (AP)

when Courtney Tulloch fell during his parallel bar routine, a no-no during the three-up/three-count finals.

Japan used a stellar 14.566 on parallel bars by Shohel Kawakami to move into the lead. Kawakami then fell while leading off on high bar in the final routine, but teammates Fusuke Maeda and reigning world and Olympic all-around champion Daiki Hashimoto followed with nearly flawless routines. Hashimoto punctuated Japan’s third straight world team title by drilling his high bar dismount. His score of 14.866 was more than enough to keep the Japanese atop the podium.

Switzerland was a surprising fifth at 246.497, over a point clear of the United States in sixth.

The Americans, who won bronze in Paris two years ago, struggled to generate any momentum and fell out of medal contention in the fourth rotation when Danila Leykin fell on a release and then later stalled during the middle of his routine.

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with the publication requirement and pursuant to the ORG Memorandum Circular No. 2013-1. Guidelines in the Implementation of the Administrative Order No. 1 Series of 2012 (IRR o n R.A. 10172), a notice is hereby served to the public that ROSALIE URPILLA VALDEZ has filed with this office a petition for correction in the gender from FEMALE to MALE in the birth certificate of ISSA URPILLA VALDEZ, who was born on JANUARY 7, 2022 at State of Kuwait and whose parents are ORLANDO P. VALDEZ and ROSALIE U. VALDEZ. Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his written opposition with this Office not later than fourteen (14) days from the date of this notice.

Infantino travels across Asia

Japan FA president pushes Premier League pipeline for Japanese talent

TOKYO, Oct 21, (AP): The best place to develop Japanese talent is in the English Premier League, the president of the Japan Football Association told continental soccer delegates Wednesday.

Tsuneysu Miyamoto, speaking at an Asian Football Confederation seminar and regional meeting, emphasized the goal of getting more Japanese players to sign in Europe - particularly England.

“We have nine players who are playing for Premier League clubs and also eight players are playing for second division clubs,” he told the seminar. “But still, we would like to send more players to the English Premier League because the league offers the players the best environment

to become top-class players. That’s our aim.”

Miyamoto was a defender and led Japan’s 2002 and 2006 World Cup teams.

Gianni Infantino, the president of soccer’s global governing body FIFA, is seeking his fourth term and has been globetrotting in search of votes from FIFA’s 211 member federations.

The AFC has 47 member associations that could provide crucial swing votes with Europe largely opposing Infantino and Africa offering wide support.

Infantino is traveling in Asia and was expected to appear at the two-day meeting of the AFC in Tokyo. FIFA has promoted his presence recently in Bhutan and Bangladesh, small federations that each have one vote - the same as powerful soccer nations such as Spain or France.

The FIFA presidential election is in March and opposition candidates have until Nov. 18 to declare. None has so far filed.

Infantino apologized last week in Zurich, Switzerland, to FIFA’s 37-member ruling council - which he chairs - for “mistakes” he made in assembling a now-scraped \$4.2 billion sell-

off plan for the World Cup.

An Associated Press tally shows 87 of the 211 federations have indicated support for Infantino - either in individual comments or by endorsing statements

of support by their regional confederations. Asia appears split. Qatar, the host of the 2022 World Cup, has come out in support of Infantino and Jordan has declared its opposition.

Change Name

I, NAFISA YUSUF BAKRIWALA, holder of Indian Passport number U0750016, having permanent address 302 FALAK APPARTMENTS, Main Road, Khatiwala Tank, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, 452014, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Nafisa Yusuf (given name) Ezzy (surname)

Change Name

I, HABEEB (Old Name), S/O. BASHEER, R/O 1/77, Piler Road,T Sundupalli, Annamayya Dt. AP. I Have Changed My Name To PATAN HABEEB KHAN (New Name) S/O BASHEER

KOC honors athletes for winning medals at Asian Games



The honored athletes pose with officials.



Officials pose for a group photo.



The honoring ceremony in progress.



Sheik Mubarak Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah delivers a speech.

Sheik Mubarak Faisal commends athletes for dedication and perseverance

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): The Kuwait Olympic Committee honored athletes who won nine medals at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya 2026.

Sheik Mubarak Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Vice President of the Kuwait Olympic Committee, commended the athletes for their dedication and perseverance.

He also acknowledged the contributions of the Public Authority for Youth and Sports, as well as the Kuwaiti delegation's technical and administrative staff. The Games, which began on September 19, drew over 11,000 athletes representing 45 countries. He also thanked corpo-

rate sponsors for supporting Kuwaiti sports.

He expressed optimism that these accomplishments would inspire future success and emphasized the presence of significant Kuwaiti talent. He reiterated his appreciation to the staff, sponsors, and the Public Authority for Youth and Sports for their continued support. Athlete Abdullah Shaaban emphasized the Committee's ongoing support and commitment to developing sports in Kuwait.

Kuwait secured four gold, one silver, and four bronze medals. Gold medalists included Abdullah Shaaban in karate and the men's kata team, comprising Mohammad Hussain and Mohammad Al-Mousawi.

The men's trap shooting team, consisting of Talal Al-Rashidi, Khaled Al-Mudhaf, and Abdulrahman Al-Faihan, as well as Khaled Al-Mudhaf in the individual trap event, also earned gold medals.

Shooters Abdullah Al-Rashidi, Mohammad Al-Daihani, and Mohammad Al-Awad won silver in teams skeet shooting. Bronze medals were awarded to Mohammad Al-Mousawi in karate; Basel Ahmad and Abdulwahab Al-Qattan in teqball; the women's trap shooting team, comprising Hajar Abdulmalik, Sarah Al-Hawal, and Shahad Al-Hawal; and Hajar Abdulmalik in the individual women's trap event. Kuwait was represented by 120 athletes competing in 16 sports.

Kuwaiti students compete in final of ‘With the Students’ TV program for Amir’s Cup

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21, (KUNA): Kuwaiti high school teams competed on Wednesday in the final of the second season of the television program “With the Students” for the Cup of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, held under his patronage.

The final was attended by Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei and Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology and Acting Minister of Information and Culture Omar Al-Omar, following 13 episodes featuring Grade 12 students.

Minister Al-Tabtabaei told KUNA that reaching the final was an achievement in itself, praising the students' performance and the cooperation between the Ministries of Education and Information in reviving the longstanding program. Al-Omar also welcomed its return,

stressing the importance of supporting and encouraging students through educational initiatives.

Hosted by Abdullah Malallah, the competition featured questions across various fields. Each student on the winning team will receive KD 4,000, while each member of the runner-up

team will receive KD 1,000.

The program is supervised by the Ministries of Education and Information and implemented by the non-profit FOO platform. It is strategically sponsored by the Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award, with support from several corporate

sponsors.

First launched in 1975 with broadcaster Khaled Al-Harban, the program has returned with a renewed vision focused on supporting students and showcasing their talents. It airs on Kuwait Television and the 51 platform.

SGA, Thunder roll past Spurs

76ers spoil Knicks’ banner-raising night

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): The Philadelphia 76ers sent an opening-night message they'll be a contender for the New York Knicks' NBA title after adding LeBron James and Jaylen Brown, rallying for a 106-100 victory.

Tyrese Maxey scored 28 points and Brown had 19 points, eight rebounds and six assists in his first game since being acquired from Boston. James began his NBA-record 24th season by finishing with 14 points, nine rebounds and six assists.

The 76ers got three 3-pointers from Anfernee Simons and two from fellow newcomer Kentavious Caldwell-Pope, as the reserves took advantage of the open looks they got when the Knicks were caught focusing too much on the bigger names.

Jalen Brunson scored 21 points but the NBA Finals MVP shot just 6 for 19 from the field.

Brunson told fans inside Madison Square Garden in a pregame ceremony when the Knicks raised their NBA championship banner and received their rings that: "The joy that this city had this summer, we would love to replicate that again."

Maybe they can, but they will have to play a lot better than they did



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (2) goes to the basket against San Antonio Spurs players Stephon Castle (5) and Victor Wembanyama during the second half of an NBA basketball game in San Antonio. (AP)

Tuesday in shooting 37% overall and 33.3% on 3s. Karl-Anthony Towns had 19 points and 12 rebounds.

The Knicks dominated the 76ers in a second-round sweep, early on during their streak of 13 straight victories as part of a 16-3 finish with the highest point differential in NBA postseason history.

Philadelphia then went out and traded for Brown and signed James after the NBA's career scoring leader decided to leave the Los Angeles Lakers, setting the 76ers up with the potential to be one of the best teams in the league.

They certainly didn't have a smooth start but played better as the game went on. The Sixers closed the third quarter with an 11-0 run, capped by Brown's second straight 3-pointer that came at the buzzer and gave Philadelphia an 83-76 lead.

Maxey's three-point play early in the fourth made it 87-78. The Knicks cut it to 96-95 when Towns made a 3-pointer, but Joel Embiid answered with one and the Sixers stayed ahead.

Embiid finished with 13 points,

11 rebounds and six assists.

Thunder 116, Spurs 104

In San Antonio, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 32 points and the Oklahoma City Thunder opened their season with victory over the San Antonio Spurs, the team that ended their dreams of a title defense last season.

San Antonio star Victor Wembanyama had 12 points but was 1 for 13 from the field. It was his fewest field goals since going 2 for 5 against Minnesota on May 10. Wembanyama's lone field goal came on an alley-oop pass from De'Aaron Fox as time expired in the third quarter. Wembanyama missed his first 12 shots, including having an alley-oop attempt blocked by 7-foot-3 rookie Aday Mara.

Jared McCain added 20 points on 6-for-8 shooting on 3-pointers as Oklahoma City led for all but the opening five minutes of the game.

The Spurs beat the Thunder 111-103 in Oklahoma City in Game 7 of the Western Conference Finals on May 30 in their previous matchup.

Nearly five months apart did not cool this heated rivalry.

Three minutes into the second quarter Fox received a Flagrant Foul 1 for tossing Chet Holmgren to the court after they became entangled in the paint. The body slam led to a huge scrum with Wembanyama and Jaylin Williams having to be separated after pushing each other. Wembanyama, Williams, Jalen Williams and Kenrich Williams each received a technical for the dust up.

Oklahoma City went on a 9-0 run after the scuffle with Jalen and Kenrich Williams accounting for five points. Harrison Barnes' 3-pointer ended the run, but the Thunder responded by scoring 13 straight capped by Cason Wallace's 3-pointer for a 59-33 lead.

Oklahoma City outscored San Antonio 31-16 in the second quarter in taking a 65-44 lead at the half.

The Spurs opened the second half on a 23-9 run to pull within single digits after trailing by 26 in the first half.

Gilgeous-Alexander and McCain stepped up when San Antonio pulled close, combining for 25 points in the second half.

AC Milan backs fan boycott over high away ticket prices

MILAN, Oct 21, (AP): AC Milan came out firmly in support of its fans protesting against excessive away ticket prices, threatening to retaliate against clubs it believes are unfairly charging Rossoneri supporters.

Milan fans are boycotting Sunday night's match at Udinese because the home club is charging 65 euros (\$73), more than double the 30 euros (\$34) traveling supporters pay on average at the Bluenergy Stadium.

In a lengthy statement on Wednesday, Milan says it "understands (the fans') frustration and fully supports their position" - especially as away trips come with many additional costs - and that fans should be treated the same regardless of which club they follow.

"The global appeal of Italian football depends heavily on the loyalty and passion of supporters of clubs like AC Milan," the club said.



Philadelphia 76ers forward LeBron James (23) drives against New York Knicks forward Og Anunoby during the second half of an NBA basketball game in New York. (AP)

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Liverpool's Alexis Mac Allister, centre, scores his side's opening goal during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Liverpool and Villarreal in Liverpool, England. (AP)

Sports

Qadsia closes in on Challenge League quarters

Al-Rawahi scores the decisive goal

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Qadsia moved to the brink of the AFC Challenge League quarter-finals after securing a second successive victory, edging Tajikistan's Regar-TadAZ 1-0 in their Group C clash.

Nasser Al-Rawahi scored the decisive goal in the first minute of first-half stoppage time in the match played at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium.

Both teams created attacking opportunities, with Regar-TadAZ pressing for an equalizer. The encounter also featured several physical challenges by the Tajik side, prompting Omani referee Mahmoud Al-Majrafi to issue several yellow cards.

The victory lifted Qadsia to six points from two matches, putting it three points clear at the top of the group ahead of India's Goa. Qadsia now needs only a draw against Goa in Thursday's final group match to secure qualification for the quarter-finals.

Regar-TadAZ occupies third place with three points, while Bangladesh's Fortis remains bottom without a point.

The winners of the three West Asia groups, along with the best second-placed team, will advance to the quarter-finals.

Qadsia coach Mohammed Ibrahim praised his players for their performance across both halves, saying they deserved to win by a wider margin but were let down by missed opportunities.

Speaking at the post-match press conference, Ibrahim stressed that qualification was not yet assured and said his side would approach the decisive encounter with Goa with the same determination to secure all three points.

He explained that bruises and fatigue among several players had forced him to make substitutions to preserve the team's winning momentum. Ibrahim also confirmed that Athbi Shehab would be sidelined for up to 40 days.

Commenting on the introduction of midfielder Abdulaziz Wadi, Ibrahim, known as "The General," said the move was not intended to make the team sit back defensively. Instead, it was designed to strengthen the midfield and



Al-Rawahi's shot heads towards Regar-TadAZ goal.

improve control of the game.

"Securing the midfield gives our attackers and wingers greater freedom to move forward without worrying about counterattacks," he said.

Ibrahim voiced hope that Qadsia would maintain their strong form and progress further in the competition, while urging supporters to turn out in force for tomorrow's decisive match against Goa.

Liverpool completes rousing comeback

PSG edges Barcelona in 6-goal Champs League thriller

PARIS, Oct 21, (AP): Paris Saint-Germain was too powerful for even Lamine Yamal's magic as it ended Barcelona's 11-game winning run to top the Champions League table.

A thrilling end to the game with four goals in the last 20 minutes delivered a statement win for PSG, which is joined Liverpool as the only teams with three victories after Alexis Mac Allister led a rousing 4-3 comeback triumph over Villarreal.

Yamal had just displayed stunning skill to level the score at 2-2 from a narrow angle when PSG took the lead again through Vitinha, before Fabian Ruiz added another for a 4-2 victory.

"We never feel like we're powerless, or that we're beaten in any way," PSG forward Désiré Doué said. "We always know there's an opportunity as long as the final whistle hasn't gone."

Injuries to stars Ousmane Dembélé and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia took some of the shine off the win for PSG, which could now face having to cope without two of its biggest difference-makers in attack.

Barcelona needs to bounce back quickly ahead of a Clasico against Real Madrid on Sunday, now that its run of wins to start the season has ended. Defending champion PSG equalled a club record by going 13 Champions League games unbeaten.

Doué and Lucas Hernandez also scored for PSG. Xavi Espart struck Barcelona's other goal.

"We made too many mistakes in this game, with the ball possession,



Barcelona's Lamine Yamal, left, is challenged by PSG's Lucas Hernandez during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and FC Barcelona in Paris. (AP)

easy ball losses," Barcelona coach Hansi Flick said. "This was a great test for us, you saw today in which areas we have to improve to make things better."

Flick added Rodri would play Sunday against Madrid after coming off the bench for the last half-hour.

The game took place with a visible police presence outside, against the backdrop of violent unrest across France.

What began in France as protests against school conditions has expanded to include a wide range of other groups and causes. There have been violent clashes, fires and looting.

Eighteen-year-old Rio Ngunmoh

played a starring role in Liverpool's comeback, setting up goals for Ronald Araujo, Mac Allister and Florian Wirtz.

Liverpool had been 2-0 down after an erratic start, which included captain Virgil van Dijk holding up his hands in apology after his wayward header allowed Georges Mikautadze to score the opener for Villarreal.

Manchester City bounced back from defeat to PSG with a slick 5-1 win against AEK Athens, with top scorer Erling Haaland on the bench. Phil Foden scored a hat trick, with his second goal the pick of the bunch coming at the end of a sweeping attack.

Atletico Madrid held on with 10

men for a 1-1 draw with Stuttgart, foiling the German underdog's bid to join PSG and Liverpool on nine points.

Julian Alvarez's goal for Atletico had canceled out Jamie Leweling's opener when midfielder Morten Hjulman made a reckless sliding tackle from behind on Angelo Stiller to leave Atletico clinging on.

Scott McTominay scored his first two goals of the season to help Napoli beat Bodø/Glimt 4-3 and relieve pressure on coach Massimiliano Allegri.

McTominay, who also hit the post, missed a month of the season after undergoing a surgical procedure in early September to treat an irregular heartbeat.

Serhou Guirassy scored twice but Borussia Dortmund wasted plenty more chances in a 2-1 win over Azerbaijan's Sabah.

It wasn't the sort of convincing victory the German team was hoping for, after last week saw a loss to Bodø/Glimt before a draw at Union Berlin which allowed Bayern Munich to take the Bundesliga top spot off Dortmund.

Pavel Kacor's leaping volley in the 90th minute earned Slavia Prague a 2-2 draw with Fenerbahce, which had been leading 2-0 early on before a defensive blunder by Matéo Guendouzi let the Czech side back into the game.

PSV won 1-0 against Porto, which slumped to a third loss. Roma cruised to a 4-0 win over Slovan Bratislava.

Kuwait suffers 3-0 defeat to Egypt in Gulf U-17 Cup



Kuwaiti and Egyptian players vie for the ball.

CAIRO, Oct 21: Kuwait's U-17 national team suffered a 3-0 loss to Egypt, while Saudi Arabia was held to a 1-1 draw by Yemen in the latest Group B matches of the Gulf U-17 Cup at Saoud bin Abdulrahman Stadium.

Egypt took control with two goals from Mohamed Attia in the 40th and 47th minutes before Amir Abdelmageed sealed the victory with a third in the 74th minute.

The result followed Egypt's emphatic 5-0 win over Saudi Arabia in their opening match last Saturday. Kuwait, meanwhile, was making its first appearance in the tournament.

In the other Group B fixture at Hamad bin Khalifa Stadium, Yemen took the lead through Mohamed Aziz in the 31st minute. Saudi Arabia salvaged a point when Mishari Al-Shahrani equalized in second-half stoppage time.

Ten teams are competing in this year's tournament, with Egypt and China participating as guest teams alongside Qatar, the UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Yemen.

Burgan reclaims second spot with narrow victory

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Burgan edged Sulaibikhat 28-27 in a thrilling encounter on Wednesday, scoring a crucial victory in the closing seconds to reclaim second place in the 2025-2026 Premier Handball League after 18 rounds.

The match remained fiercely contested until the final moments, when Burgan managed to secure a one-goal victory and collect two valuable points in the battle for the runners-up position.

In another match, Kuwait Club cruised to a comfortable 28-15 victory over Kazma, maintaining its dominance at the top of the standings and strengthening its position as league leader.

Kuwait Club leads the standings with 21 points, followed by Burgan on 17 and Al-Arabi on 16. Kazma occupies fourth place with 14 points, while Sulaibikhat has six and Nasr remains bottom with two.

Week 19 action continues Friday with two matches. Leaders Kuwait Club face Sulaibikhat, looking to claim another win and consolidate their position at the summit.

The other fixture features a key



Players in action during the league match.

showdown between Burgan and Al-Arabi, with the two sides separated by just one point in the standings.

Burgan will seek to strengthen its hold on second place and open a three-point gap over Al-Arabi. The latter, however, will be determined to reclaim the runner-up spot, knowing a victory would lift it one point above their rivals.

With both teams targeting a vital win in a closely contested race for second place, Friday's encounter promises to be an intense battle.

Kuwait ambassador welcomes tennis team in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Oct 21: Kuwait's Ambassador to Pakistan Nassar Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi received Kuwait Tennis Federation President Abdulredha Jassim Al-Gharib and the national women's tennis delegation participating in the Billie Jean King Cup Asia/Oceania Group III qualifiers in Islamabad, which run until Oct 26.

The tournament marks Kuwait's first participation in the prestigious women's team competition. The delegation comprises Coach Sarah Behbehani and players Huda Al-Dabbous and Sumo Al-Dabbous.

Al-Mutairi hosted a dinner in honor of the delegation, welcoming its members and commending Kuwait's maiden appearance in the competition. He affirmed that the embassy would provide all possible support to facilitate the team's participation and wished the players success in representing Kuwait and achieving positive results.



Kuwait's Ambassador to Pakistan Nassar Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi receives Kuwait Tennis Federation President Abdulredha Jassim Al-Gharib and the national women's tennis delegation.