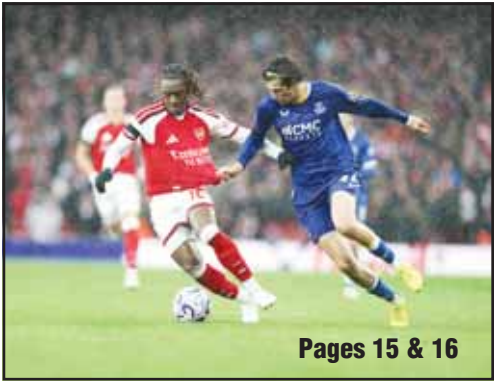




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Amiri Diwan photo

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Friday, in the presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Sabah, the Prime Minister of the friendly Republic of Italy, Giorgia Meloni, and her accompanying delegation, on the occasion of her official visit to the country.

Kuwait, Italy ink MoUs on defense, military and industrial cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24, (KUNA): Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and her delegation left Kuwait on Friday evening after an official visit to the country. They were seen off at the airport by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Acting Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister's Diwan Sheikh Khaled Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and Ambassador to the Italian Republic Nasser Al-Qahtani.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Friday, in the presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Prime Minister of the friendly Italian Republic, Giorgia Meloni, and her accompanying delegation, on the occasion of her official visit to the country.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed strong bilateral relations, noting their continuous development across various

sectors. They also discussed ways to further strengthen and expand the horizons of bilateral cooperation, particularly in the economic and defense fields, in a manner that serves their mutual interests.

Furthermore, the two sides addressed a number of issues of common concern, as well as latest regional and international developments.

The meeting was attended by Minister of Amiri Diwan Af-fair, Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah; Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah; Director of the Office of His Highness the Amir, Lieu. Gen. (retd.) Jamal Theyab; Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Abdulaziz Meshal Mubarak Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah; Director General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs at the Amiri Diwan Mazen Al-Issa; Managing Director of Kuwait

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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Mr. Sisi, the perspective of a Gulf citizen

EVERY political faction in a sovereign state has the legitimate right to voice its perspective through its constitutional framework.

In the same manner, certain political groups in Egypt have the right to convey to President Abdul Fattah El-Sisi their opposition to accepting assistance from the Gulf nations or even to express preference for alignment with Iran. While these groups have their own stance, there are alternative viewpoints regarding the diplomatic ties between our nations that are equally deserving of consideration. If a certain segment opts to decline Gulf support, which is extended amidst the ongoing conflict driven by Iran and its regional proxies, it remains their sovereign choice.

Consequently, President El-Sisi should not be blamed for his position, as he acted strictly within the constitutional parameters of his nation. It is important

to recognize that ties between Egypt and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states are not governed by fleeting reactions. This partnership is anchored on the shared strategic imperatives regarding Egyptian and Gulf national security. This relationship remains exceptionally strong and deeply rooted.

Our societies have grown closely connected through a rich history of cultural exchange—shaped by the Egyptians who relocated to the Gulf for employment and educational contributions, as well as Gulf students who pursued their

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‘Empowering Kuwaitis main pillar in hi-tech health care’

Al-Adan Hospital serving patients since 1980: Dr. Al-Awadhi

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi affirmed that developing specialized services, modernizing healthcare infrastructure, and promoting collaboration across medical specialties are fundamental pillars for improving the quality of healthcare in the country.

He emphasized the importance of investing in the national workforce and empowering its members to keep pace with scientific advancements and modern medical technologies.

In his speech at the opening of the second conference of the Internal Medicine Department at Al-Adan Hospital, Dr. Al-Awadhi explained that scientific conferences provide a vital platform for exchanging knowledge and expertise among physicians and specialists. Such events help foster a culture of scientific research and continuous medical education, ultimately advancing clinical practice and improving patient outcomes.

Al-Adan Hospital has a long-standing history of serving patients and the community. The hospital began providing healthcare services in 1980 and was officially inaugurated in 1988. The hospital has gradually developed its facilities, services, and medical specialties over the years.

Throughout this process, the Department of In-



KUNA photo

Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi addressing the conference.

ternal Medicine has been a core component, playing a pivotal role in patient care, the training of medical professionals, and the integration of scientific advancements.

The department has made significant progress in its services and sub-specialties, thanks to the efforts of its medical, nursing, and technical staff.

These advancements include enhancing hematology and nephrology services, developing care

for neurological conditions, strokes, and movement disorders, and establishing specialized clinics for obesity and weight-related disorders, gastroenterology, respiratory medicine, and geriatrics.

The minister highlighted the department's contributions to developing clinical guidelines and protocols, as well as its participation in early detection and disease prevention programs, all of which support patient safety and improve the quality of healthcare services.

Dr. Al-Awadhi emphasized that progress in healthcare institutions is measured not by buildings alone, but by the qualitative advances achieved in patient care and clinical outcomes.

He underscored that developing and empowering the national workforce, both scientifically and professionally, remains a priority in the strategy to advance healthcare services.

The minister went on to explain that holding the second edition of the conference, following its inaugural edition in January of last year, reflects the organizers' commitment to promoting scientific research and continuing medical education, while providing a professional platform to discuss the latest developments in the diagnosis and treatment of internal medicine conditions.

Rapid advancements in fields such as precision medicine, digital technologies, and artificial intelligence highlight the vital role of scientific conferences in bridging the gap between knowledge and clinical practice.

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Amir's royal pardon frees 94 inmates

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The Ministry of Interior announced the release of 94 inmates participating in a rehabilitation program for individuals who had shown remorse, following a royal pardon granted by His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The release is based on the high direc-

tives of His Highness the Amir.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that the Special Security Affairs and Correctional Institutions Sector completed the release procedures on Monday, Oct 19 for those covered by the royal pardon.

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All co-ops officials must declare assets: minister

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Dr. Amthal Hadi Al-Huwaila, Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, reiterated the ministry's commitment to ensuring that all individuals involved in cooperative societies, whether appointed or elected, submit their financial disclosure statements, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This initiative aims to promote integrity and transparency while protecting shareholders' funds.

Dr. Al-Huwaila noted that the ministry ensures all concerned parties are aware of the requirement to contact the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) immediately upon assuming their roles to complete the required financial disclosure procedures in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

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Kuwait bags KD 312m from health insurance

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The general budget report for the current fiscal year projects KD 312 million in revenue from health insurance, an increase of KD 192 million compared with the KD 120 million estimated for the same category in the previous fiscal year.

In the budget, health insurance revenue is classified under "social contributions."

Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi approved Ministerial Resolution No. 306/2025 concerning the executive regulations for the Health Insurance Law for Foreigners. The resolution, which took effect on December 23, represents a regulatory step toward developing the health insurance system and enhancing its efficiency and sustainability.

Meanwhile, the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has processed documentation for two tenders on behalf of the Ministry of Health.

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Global peace efforts win support

Kuwait: UN must do more to tackle crises

NEW YORK, Oct 24, (KUNA): Kuwait said Saturday that the 81st anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations comes amid serious developments in the Middle East, stressing that the organizations effectiveness depends on the consistent and fair application of its principles without double standards.

Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Tareq Al-Banai, made the remarks to KUNA on the occasion of United Nations Day, observed annually on October 24.

Al-Banai called for continued reform of the UN system, including the Security Council, to ensure fairer representation and strengthen its ability to address contemporary crises. He emphasized the need to balance the organizations

pillars of peace and security, development and human rights, while giving due consideration to the priorities of developing countries.

He condemned Iranian attacks on Kuwait and other Gulf states, describing them as violations of sovereignty, territorial integrity and international law. He called for the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2817 (2026), which demands that Iran immediately and unconditionally cease its attacks and provocations against Gulf states and Jordan.

He also stressed the Security Councils responsibility to ensure compliance with its resolutions, prevent further attacks and safeguard regional peace and security.

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PAM: 8,849 files flagged for non-payment of pay

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) revealed that 8,849 employer files are currently flagged for salary payment issues, while 39,559 files are in compliance.

This concerns companies with five or more employees out of 48,408 files.

PAM stated that the total number of files registered in its wage-payment

Continued on Page 4

‘Al-Simak’ season to usher in cooler nights, increased rainfall chances

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The Ojeiri Scientific Center has announced that the second phase of the Al-Wasm season, known as Al-Simak, will begin on Thursday, October 29, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This period, which lasts 13 days, marks the onset of cooler nighttime temperatures.

In a press release, the center explained that this phase is characterized by cold nights, humid winds at sunrise, and longer nights. Notably, it also marks the earliest Dhuhr (noon) prayer time of the year.

One of the key characteristics of Al-Simak is that water feels colder, particularly in the morning. Historically, people recognized the arrival of this phase by an increase in the births of lambs. It is also a period during which the likelihood of rainfall increases.

Furthermore, the center noted that nights grow significantly longer during this phase, with sunset occurring earlier.

It encouraged the public to follow prayer times and schedules through the Al-Ojeiri application.

Jahra extended raids net illegals, criminals

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The Jahra Security Directorate conducted a comprehensive security and traffic campaign in the Jahra Industrial Area, resulting in 204 enforcement actions, including the issuance of 110 traffic citations and the apprehension of several offenders and individuals wanted by the authorities.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Interior announced that the operation was conducted under the supervision of Head of the Security

Directorates Sector Brigadier General Abdulaziz Badr Al-Omar and Director-General of the Jahra Security Directorate Brigadier General Abdullah Hamoud Al-Mutairi.

The campaign aimed to apprehend lawbreakers, curb illicit activities, and strengthen security discipline in the area.

The operation resulted in the detention of 33 individuals wanted by the law or reported as absconding, 21 individuals without identification documents, 13 violators of residency

and labor laws, 10 individuals with expired residency permits, 10 undocumented workers, and four uncensed street vendors.

Also, two individuals with expired visas and one person subject to an entry ban were apprehended. The campaign also resulted in the issuance of 110 traffic citations.

The ministry confirmed that the necessary legal procedures have been initiated against those detained or cited and that they have been referred to the competent authorities.



8

KFH partners with Ordable/ for e-commerce & online ordering solutions



9

KIB Group reports net profit of KD 26.6 million in the nine months of 2026



Fajr 04:36 Asr 14:43
Sunrise .. 05:56 Maghrib . 17:09
Zohr 11:32 Isha 18:28



HH the Amir



King Abdullah II

Amir consoles King Abdullah II over church shooting victims

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to King Abdullah II of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, expressing sincere condolences and deepest sympathy for the victims of the attack that targeted a church in Karak Governorate, which resulted in a number of casualties and injuries. His Highness also wished the injured a speedy recovery.

Crown Prince condoles

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to

King Abdullah II of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, expressing sincere condolences and deepest sympathy for the victims of the attack that targeted a church in Karak Governorate, which resulted in several casualties.

Prime Minister condoles

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to King Abdullah II of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, expressing sincere condolences and deepest sympathy for the victims of the attack that targeted a church in Karak Governorate.

PACA: Inclusion of Kuwait airport fees to tickets aims to promote transparency

KUWAIT, Oct 24, (KUNA): Public Authority of Civil Aviation (PACA) said the Circular 58 (2026), issued on October 19, concerning the inclusion of Kuwait International Airport fees to airline tickets, fell in the framework of efforts to promote transparency.

“The circular standardizes the mechanism of disclosure and transparency, thus helping passengers know the details of fees they have to pay while booking,” PACA spokesman Abdullah Al-Rajhi told KUNA on Thursday.

It regulates the relationship between

passengers on one hand, and airlines and travel agencies on the other, and provides reference points for passengers to use in case they need to cancel their tickets, he explained.

“Not all the fee codes, outlined in the circular, are new,” Al-Rajhi affirmed, noting that some of them already existed before the issuance of the circular.

He stressed the importance of airlines’ and travel agencies’ commitment to the circular and the specified fee codes in order to avoid confusion and provide passengers with clear information.



a View of the Kuwait Airport

Bahrain and Kuwait seek to strengthen tourism co-op

MANAMA, Oct 24, (KUNA): Bahrain’s Minister of Tourism Fatima Al-Sairafi re-affirmed commitment to further developing tourism cooperation and strengthening partnership with Kuwait in a manner that serves mutual interests and aspirations of both nations.

The remarks were made during her meeting with Kuwait’s Ambassador to Bahrain Jassem Al-Najem on Saturday, praising the deep-rooted relations between Bahrain and Kuwait.

In a statement received by Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), the Kuwaiti embassy in Bahrain stated that the meeting addressed ways to enhance tourism cooperation and facilitate the exchange of expertise and experience between the two nations.

It added that Al-Najem emphasized the importance of exchanging experiences and expertise in developing the tourism sector, diversifying tourism products, and promoting the tourism assets of both countries.

The statement indicated that the meeting also addressed opportunities to activate joint tourism cooperation, develop shared initiatives, and bolster intra-Gulf tourism.

Kuwait embassy in Bahrain representatives Counselor Abdulaziz Al-Falah and Second Secretary Lujain Abu-Alian attended the meeting.



KUNA photo Bahrain's Tourism Minister Fatima Al-Sairafi during her meeting with Kuwait's Ambassador to Bahrain Jassem Al-Najem.

Al-Jazzaf: Commercial Concealment Law marks turning point for Kuwait

Expert calls for awareness campaign ahead of implementation

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Economic expert and member of the Kuwait Economic Society Sultan Al-Jazzaf affirmed that enacting Commercial Concealment Law No. 78/2026 is a step taken at a critical period, considering it marks the transition from diagnosing crises to implementing rigorous legislative and regulatory measures.

Al-Jazzaf indicated that the law, which will take effect in February 2027, will contribute to the creation of a fair and stable competitive environment. He said the law is expected to positively influence the Kuwaiti market’s credit rating and its attractiveness to investors, relative to other economies in the region.

He views the new law as an indispensable pillar of the government’s comprehensive vision for financial and institutional reform, aimed at purging the commercial sector of the disorder that has persisted for many years.

He pointed out that ‘cleansing’ the market restores credibility for serious investors and opens doors for national talent—individuals who have long suffered from an uneven playing field against entities operating in the shadows under aliases. He said such entities do not provide added value to the national economy, as they exploit government facilities without contributing to sustainable development or generating a meaningful impact on the gross domestic product (GDP).

He asserted that the success of this radical transformation depends on the competence and readiness of the executive and regulatory bodies in charge of implementing the law. He indicated that strict legislation alone cannot change a business culture entrenched for decades, so it must be supported by sophisticated regulatory mechanisms for detecting financial manipulation and untangling the complex relationships between license holders and the ultimate beneficial owners. He added it is vital to move away from traditional bureaucracy, replacing it with full digital transformation and automated integration in all state ministries and institutions involved in the business sector.

On curbing illegal practices, he stressed the need to impose a total ban on conducting economic activities on behalf of others, along with stringent penalties like prison sentences, heavy financial fines, and decisive supplementary measures, such as confiscating funds and facilities, as well as permanently re-

voking business licenses.

He stated that this legislative rigor must be balanced with procedural flexibility to avoid sudden disruptions to supply chains or shortages of the technical labor force upon which some vital market sectors depend.

He underscored the need to establish smart mechanisms to ease the transition of business sectors and establishments currently operating under informal arrangements or ‘concealment’ schemes into a fully legal status. He said this could be achieved by offering incentives and streamlining procedures for the transfer of ownership and the formal incorporation of businesses for those already involved. He believes this approach will guarantee business continuity and protect the local market from artificial inflationary pressure or sudden spikes in the prices of goods and services that might arise from the haphazard and disorganized exit of certain entities from the market.

He also affirmed the importance of launching massive awareness campaigns, in collaboration with the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry and public interest associations, to clarify the implications and benefits of Law No. 78/2026 and to ensure that all parties fully understand their rights and obligations before the February 2027 implementation. He added that this will lead to genuine public-private partnership and lay the foundation for a robust national economy capable of overcoming challenges with confidence and competence.

Meeting focuses on regional, int’l developments

Kuwait attends ‘Dragon 10’ meeting in UK

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24, (KUNA): Kuwait participated in the “Dragon 10” group meeting held in the United Kingdom to discuss regional and international developments, the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army said on Saturday.

In a press statement, the General Staff said that Brigadier Raed Al-Sakran, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, attended the meeting on behalf of the Chief of the Army General Staff, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian.

The meeting addressed military matters, the latest regional and international developments and challenges, as well as mechanisms for countering future threats.

Chiefs of army staff from Gulf and Middle Eastern countries were also present at the meeting.



KUNA photo Brigadier General Raed Al-Sakran, Chief of Operations and Plans Authority, participates in the Dragon 10 Group meeting in the United Kingdom.

Kuwait seeks consensus on IAEA’s annual report

Kuwait-led IAEA draft wins historic UNGA support

NEW YORK, Oct 24, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait submitted to the United Nations General Assembly a draft resolution on the “Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency,” that received sponsorship from 111 countries.

The unprecedented backing for draft reflects a historic diplomatic achievement for Kuwait - the chair of IAEA Board of Governors for the 2026-2027 term, and a growing international support for IAEA role in promoting world peace and security, and harnessing nuclear technology for development.

Addressing the UNGA, Kuwait’s Permanent Representative to the UN Tareq Al-Banai said the draft is based on the IAEA Statute and the 1957 Agreement governing relations between the Agency and the United Nations, within the framework of institutional cooperation between the two organizations.

Consideration of the Agency’s annual report provides an opportunity to reaffirm the General Assembly’s support for its contributions to maintaining international peace and security, as well as its efforts to harness nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes and development, he said.

Al-Banai noted that the draft is based on last year’s General Assembly resolution, with updates reflecting resolutions and decisions adopted during the 70th session of the IAEA General Conference, as well as the Conference President’s statement concerning five



KUNA photo Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Tareq Al-Banai.

agenda items.

One member state expressed the same reservation regarding the Agency’s 2025 annual report as it had previously expressed regarding its 2022 annual report, while some member states pointed out that three resolutions referenced in the draft’s second footnote had been adopted by vote, he said.

President of the 70th session of the General Conference expressed his understanding that the Agency would continue implementing the decisions concerning the five agenda items in the form adopted

at previous sessions of the General Conference, and that IAEA Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi would continue submitting reports on them until new relevant decisions are adopted, he pointed out.

Al-Banai affirmed that the draft renews strong support for the Agency’s indispensable role in promoting and facilitating the development of atomic energy and its practical applications for peaceful purposes, transferring technology to developing countries, and advancing nuclear safety, security and verification.

He added that the draft calls on member states to continue supporting the Agency’s activities to enable it to fulfill its responsibilities and respond to the needs of member states within its mandate.

He stressed that the importance of such support is growing amid current challenges, underscoring the need to preserve the Agency’s technical role, independence, professionalism and impartiality, while enhancing international cooperation to ensure the benefits of peaceful nuclear applications and strengthen confidence in the verification and safeguards system.

The draft was the outcome of comprehensive and constructive consultations in Vienna, following which its submission to the UNGA received consensus support, Al-Banai said, expressing Kuwait’s appreciation to all delegations that contributed to the consultations in a spirit of cooperation and to all countries that sponsored the draft.

Other Voices

The Iran relationship, hostility

By Ahmad alsarraf

THE peoples of the Middle East embraced Islam and its culture, but each society adapted certain aspects of the faith to its own traditions and outlook, moving away from the harshness and rigidity associated with desert life. This cultural adaptation can be observed in Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Iran, Turkey, and among Muslim communities in India, Indonesia, and elsewhere. These societies incorporated their own customs and cultural nuances into religious practices, particularly those associated with marriage and death.

Iran continues to have a Sunni minority, particularly in the southeastern province of Balochistan, as well as Jewish, Christian, and Zoroastrian minorities.

At the beginning of Arab-Islamic rule, Persia was an advanced state in various aspects of life compared with the conquerors who came to rule it. The new rulers subordinated non-Muslims while favoring skilled and educated elites. Persians excelled not only in politics but also in Arabic linguistics, helping establish the rules of the Arabic language and making significant contributions to various fields of knowledge.

Many of the prominent compilers of the Prophet’s hadiths, as well as several imams of the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence, were of Persian origin. Persians made significant contributions to jurisprudence, philosophy, medicine, and administration. At the same time, Arab cultural influence on Persian society was profound and enduring.

Although Persian has its roots in Indo-Iranian and Indo-European languages, while Arabic has its roots in Semitic languages, this did not prevent Persian from borrowing more from Arabic than it contributed in return. Arabic is the language of religion, prayer, and governance. Thus, we find that more than 60 percent of scientific terms in Persian are derived from Arabic, including triangle, square, rectangle, multiplication, mark, zero, algebra, number, and enumeration, as well as physics, chemistry, arithmetic, and science. Persian has also borrowed more than 30 percent of its social terms from Arabic.

Despite the fame, eloquence, and global reach of Persian poetry, its foundations lie in Arabic in terms of poetic meters, rhythms, and rhyme.

This overwhelming influence was one of the causes of the conflict between national identity and religious loyalty.

This can be observed in the official stance on teaching Arabic. Iran currently permits the teaching of Arabic to non-Arab specialists to avoid demands from different ethnic groups to teach their own languages, particularly Iranian Arabs, Azerbaijani Turks, Kurds, and others. However, the country’s constitution mandates the teaching of Arabic in state schools.

This requirement applies to the teaching of Arabic from the end of elementary school through high school, across all academic streams. In 2023, a ban on teaching Arabic in primary schools was implemented, and the ban extended to all other languages, out of concern for the identity of Iranian children.

Iran is grappling with a strong trend among Iranians in the diaspora to prioritize Iranian national identity over religious or sectarian identity.

Even after nearly half a century abroad, these individuals remain a highly educated elite within Iranian society.

They live their lives largely free from religious conservatism, rejecting Islamic traditions and customs and preferring a pre-Khomeini, and even pre-Islamic, Iran. These Iranians in the diaspora are known for their less devout religious observance and their tendency to give their children pre-Islamic names rather than Arabic or Islamic ones.

They are deeply interested in celebrating pre-Islamic Persian national festivals, such as Nowruz, and in their efforts to purify the Persian language of Arabic vocabulary.

These attempts to “purify the language” began in the late 19th century and were later formally advanced during the reign of Reza Shah Pahlavi, who adopted a secular Iranian nationalism that glorified pre-Islamic history, drawing inspiration from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s experience and distancing himself from Arab and Islamic influences. In 1935, the Shah established the Persian Language Academy (Farhangestan-e Zaban-e Farsi) to develop Persian alternatives to Arabic and foreign words.

I conclude this series of articles on Arab-Persian relations with a personal impression that may not be entirely accurate. Persian hostility and resentment, whether overt or covert, appear to be directed specifically at the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula and do not seem to extend to Arabs elsewhere.

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Kuwait-Saudi unity in the face of challenges

“THE State of Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia share deep-rooted historical ties that extend beyond conventional diplomacy and normal neighborly relations,” columnist **Mohammad Nasser Al-Aleem** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Their relationship serves as an exceptional model of common destiny and fraternal solidarity, forged over generations and strengthened through challenging circumstances. Amid the numerous crises and challenges facing the region, Kuwait has maintained a steadfast position of unwavering solidarity with its “big sister” Saudi Arabia, particularly in the face of the blatant assaults and attacks carried out by the Houthi militia.

“Kuwait’s Council of Ministers has strongly condemned and denounced the persistent terrorist and criminal attacks launched by the Houthi militia against Saudi Arabia. These attacks, which targeted King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, King Fahd International Airport in Dammam, and Abha International Airport, resulted in casualties and injuries among innocent civilians, including travelers and airport staff of Saudi and other nationalities, in addition to causing material damage.

“The Council affirmed that these heinous acts constitute a flagrant violation of Saudi Arabia’s sovereignty and a grave breach of international and humanitarian law. It further emphasized that the continued targeting of civilian airports and vital infrastructure represents a dangerous escalation and a direct threat to air navigation, necessitating a firm international response to halt these attacks and hold those responsible accountable. Moreover, the Council reiterated Kuwait’s unwavering solidarity with and full support for Saudi Arabia in all measures it takes to safeguard its security and stability, affirming that Saudi Arabia’s security is an integral part of Kuwait’s security and that of the entire Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

“Through official statements and positions expressed in international forums, Kuwait has consistently reaffirmed its categorical rejection of terrorist attacks targeting vital infrastructure and populated areas. Kuwait maintains that such acts undermine international efforts to achieve peace in sisterly Yemen. This position is rooted in a firm security and strategic foundation: any threat to Saudi Arabia’s stability and cohesion is felt immediately in Kuwait as a direct threat to its own national security.

“Consequently, Kuwait has always affirmed its full support for Saudi Arabia, standing firmly by its side to protect its assets and economy, which are cornerstones of stability for both the region and the world. This solidarity extends beyond verbal declarations and is reflected in active diplomatic engagement through the GCC, the Arab League, and the United Nations. Through these channels, Kuwait has called for an end to the flow of arms and funding to these militias while urging all parties to engage with Saudi-led peace initiatives aimed at achieving a comprehensive political solution.

“Successive events have demonstrated that the relationship between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia is strengthened by shared history, geographical proximity, and the deep-rooted bonds of kinship between their peoples and leaderships. Kuwait’s steadfast solidarity stands as a clear testament to the unity of the Gulf states, which remain firmly united, like an unshakable structure, against any threat to their sovereignty. Guided by the wisdom of its leadership, supported by the strength of its people and armed forces, and backed by its sister nations, Saudi Arabia will remain a bastion of security and a vital pillar of regional stability in the face of all terrorist threats.”

Also:

“The concept of societal security is no longer merely a traditional security dossier managed exclusively by specialized authorities. It has become an urgent necessity and a vital lifeline for the stability and prosperity of nations,” columnist Major General (Rtd.) **Faisal Musaed Al-Jazzaf** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“It serves as a comprehensive framework that brings together individual awareness, family cohesion, and institutional responsibility, weaving them into a single fabric that promotes peace of mind and safeguards national achievements. Institutional integration and the active participation of civil society are essential to building a secure society, requiring genuine partnerships with state institutions.

“Non-governmental organizations and community initiatives play a pivotal role in bridging development gaps, promoting a culture of tolerance, and encouraging constructive

dialogue. Through awareness programs and social activities, these organizations help strengthen the intellectual and social resilience of various segments of society. Youth awareness serves as the first line of defense. With the rapid advancement of technology, a significant part of societal security has shifted into the digital realm.

“In this context, young people emerge as one of the most influential and dynamic forces. Enhancing their digital literacy can transform social media platforms from breeding grounds for rumors and destructive ideas into powerful tools for development, innovation, and constructive communication. Building a secure future is a shared responsibility. At its core, societal security is both a culture and a daily practice that begins with sound family upbringing, is strengthened by youth awareness, and is reinforced through systematic institutional efforts.

“When every individual recognizes their role in protecting their surroundings and society, we can create a safe and stable environment capable of overcoming challenges and achieving sustainable development for all. The Ministry of Electricity and Water’s launch of a national water conservation campaign is an important and necessary step. Water conservation is a shared social responsibility that requires everyone’s support and participation, as water is an essential and indispensable resource.”

□ □ □

“Much of the world’s population suffers from severe crises and hardships,” columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“In the Philippines, for example, people endure immense hardship. The archipelago, comprising 7,641 islands, is struck by approximately 22 typhoons annually and is home to active volcanoes. In Haiti, near Cuba, some people have resorted to making mud patties, shaping them like cakes and leaving them to dry on the ground. The poor consume these patties because food prices are prohibitively high, forcing them to eat mud simply to stave off hunger.

“In Guatemala, the situation has become so dire that even going to school is dangerous for students, while in West Africa, conditions have deteriorated because of armed terrorist groups. In Iran, economic pressures have contributed to the collapse of the currency, resulting in a declining standard of living for the population. In Australia, many retirees struggle financially and cannot afford to purchase a car. Meanwhile, half the world’s population lives on less than two dollars a day.

“Poverty persists even in wealthy nations. In Germany, 12.5 million people live in poverty, while in the United States, one in six people lives in poverty, with many left homeless on the streets. A similar situation exists in Great Britain. In Latin America,



Ahmad Al-Dawas

Columbia is notorious for the production and trafficking of narcotics. The situation has become so dangerous that judges fear for their lives, and assassinations have already taken place.

“In India, some people resort to suicide when their land fails to produce a harvest. Furthermore, the Indian rupee, once a strong currency, has depreciated more than 65-fold against the US dollar over the past 70 years. In Central America, Nicaragua has faced famine, prompting its government to urge the population to eat lizards. North Korea’s population endures immense hardship under its political system. Its leader has executed officials for trivial reasons, with nearly 70 put to death by 2015. Among them was a minister who was executed for dozing off during a meeting.

“In Japan, people living in poverty often conceal their financial circumstances from others because of the social stigma associated with poverty. In one case, an entire family died in their own home because they could not afford heating. Similarly, millions of people live in poverty in Russia, while conditions across the Arab world are also deteriorating. These are just a few examples of the hardships people face around the globe. Few countries are entirely free from challenges affecting living standards, even among the most developed nations.

“France, for instance, is currently experiencing its worst wave of internal unrest. What began as protests by high school students, sparked by teacher shortages, overcrowded classrooms, and deteriorating school buildings resulting from budget cuts, has escalated into widespread street protests over the rising costs. Prices for diesel, gasoline, and food have surged. Shops have been looted and vandalized, historic 19th-century buildings have been set ablaze, and unrest has spread to other European countries.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



KUNA photo

US Charge d’Affaires Steven Butler addresses the gathering of diplomats and dignitaries.

Military college eyes boost in officers strategic awareness

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24, (KUNA): The Mubarak Al-Abdullah Joint Command and Staff College hosted several ambassadors and experts as part of the curriculum for the 31st Joint Command and Staff Course.

The College stated on that the initiative aims to enhance the strategic awareness of student officers, enrich their knowledge base, and develop their analytical capabilities regarding regional and international developments.

The sessions featured lectures by British Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rasheed, Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Lorenzo Morini, US Charge d’Affaires Steven Butler, and Staff Col. Dr. Thafer Al-Ajmi (Rtd).

Four drug-runners arrested

Various kinds of narcotics apprehended

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The Criminal Security Sector, represented by **Drug Control General Department (DCGD)**, arrested four suspects in three separate cases in Farwaniya, Riqqa, and Al-Dhahir, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The suspects were found in possession of narcotic substances and psychotropic drugs intended for trafficking and personal consumption.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that the seizures included 1,010 Lyrica capsules, 307 A4-sized sheets saturated with a liquid synthetic drug known as “Chemical,” 100 grams of marijuana, 51 grams of shabu (crystal methamphetamine), and two precision scales.

The necessary legal measures were taken against the suspects, who were referred, along with the confiscated items, to the competent authorities.

thorities.

The operation forms part of ongoing security efforts to combat drug-related crimes and apprehend those involved.

□ □ □

Bank loan on forgery: The Court of Cassation acquitted a citizen of fraudulently obtaining KD60,000 bank loan by using a forged salary certificate, thereby, overturning the verdict of a lower court that sentenced the defendant to three years in prison, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The ruling is based on the argument of defense lawyer Hussain Al-Asfoor, who contended that his client is innocent, as he was unaware of the crime, particularly in terms of forging a document. He also questioned the credibility of the investigative results.

The defense asserted that the fundamental components of the charges were not satisfied and that there was inadequate evidence for a

conviction, stressing the importance of determining whether the defendant was aware of the forgery and establishing his link to the disputed document. Considering the arguments made, the Court of Cassation exonerated the citizen and annulled the three-year prison sentence.

□ □ □

‘Reimburse your brother’: The Court of Appeals ordered a citizen to pay KD 236,000 to his brother, overturning a lower court ruling that had dismissed the financial claim, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In doing so, the court established a legal precedent concerning the proof of debts between siblings.

The appellant’s lawyer, Musada Abdullah Awadh, stated that the court affirmed her client’s entitlement to the claimed amount, rejecting the argument that a written document was strictly required as evidence.

Egyptian duo jailed in funds embezzlement

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Al-Duwaihi Al-Duwaihi, with Judges Bader Al-Shehab and Ibrahim Khuraibet as members, and Court Clerk Mohammad Malallah—sentenced two Egyptians to seven years in prison and fined them KD5,520 each, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The court also imposed KD50,000 fine on two companies, ordered the publication of the verdict in the official gazette, ‘Kuwait Al-Youm’, and the confiscation of illicit funds, while a Kuwaiti citizen and another Egyptian were acquitted.

The Public Prosecution charged the defend-

dants with misappropriating funds from users of fraudulent websites that impersonated telecommunications companies and government entities.

The defendants allegedly transferred the proceeds to Egypt through the two aforementioned companies, as well as cryptocurrency platforms and various applications, in an effort to evade regulatory oversight.

Investigations by the Financial Crimes Department revealed that an unidentified individual created fake websites and promoted them through advertisements on social media platforms.

These sites were designed to lure victims and

seize their funds by executing banking transactions—each valued at less than KD25—which do not require one-time password (OTP).

The investigation revealed that the funds were processed through payment links associated with the two companies before being transferred abroad.

In some instances, portions of the money were returned to the victims after they filed complaints, a tactic intended to deflect suspicion.

The case also involved the falsification of shipping manifests, alteration of prices, and use of fictitious addresses to provide a veneer of legality to the illicit activities.

7 held as liquor factory busted in Wafra house

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The Ahmadi Security Directorate, represented by the Wafra Police Station, uncovered an illicit distillery producing locally made alcohol inside a house in the Wafra residential area. Seven individuals, including four Indian nationals and three Nepalese nationals, one of whom was a woman, were arrested, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that the operation began when a security patrol on duty near the Wafra Residential Cooperative Society stopped a driver who was traveling against the flow of traffic while entering the cooperative’s parking lot.

Officers noticed bags containing bottles inside the vehicle. When questioned, the driver admitted that they contained locally produced alcoholic beverages and disclosed that he had obtained them from a house in the Wafra Residential area. A security force was subsequently dispatched to the location.

According to the ministry, the operation resulted in the arrest of seven individuals and the seizure of 820 bottles of alcohol, 110 barrels of alcohol, two heating units, and two vehicles used to distribute the alcohol.

The suspects and confiscated items have been referred to the competent authorities for the necessary legal action.

22-day closure of road 207 for ‘maintenance’

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The General Traffic Department announced the closure of Mohammed bin Hamada Al-Ajmi Road (No. 207), opposite Al-Adan, Block 1, for 22 days, from Saturday, October 24 to Saturday, November 14, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The department stated that the closure will extend from the traffic signal intersection of Road 101 and Road 5 to Al-Ghawas Roundabout.

Court refrains from penalty on man posing as policeman

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The Court of First Instance decided not to impose a sentence on an individual accused of impersonating a police officer, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The accused faced trial after a security patrol got suspicious of him while he stood outside a gas station wearing a military uniform with the rank of colonel. When security personnel asked for his identification documents, he immediately fled from the scene.

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Humanitarian help has no boundaries ... hope is alive

Kuwait extending aid worldwide to needy countries

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24, (KUNA): Kuwait continues to build bridges of hope, to affirm that humanitarian giving knows no geographical boundaries and cannot be affected by challenges, based on its relentless commitment to boosting humanitarian values and helping afflicted populations all over the world.

This cumulative humanitarian legacy, built by successive generations of Kuwaitis, has turned into a major global relief and development approach, reaching the heart of stricken communities.

Backed by generous benefactors and guided by the country's wise leadership, Kuwaiti charitable foundations and charities are extending bridges of solidarity. Through the "Kuwait Is by Your Side" campaign, they are reaching out to Yemen, the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Djibouti, Sudan, Somalia, India, Bangladesh, and several African countries.

In Yemen, where the need for educational institutions is growing amid worsening living conditions, the Insan Charity Organization opened the "Insan 2" school in the Al-Matar neighborhood of Ma'rib Governorate, with a capacity of 2,200 students.

Speaking to KUNA, the Insan Charity Organization's Board Chairman Shaikh Dr. Othman Al-Khamis said that the opening



KUNA photo

Kuwaiti charity distributing aid to needy in one of the African countries.

of this school reflects the deep fraternal and humanitarian bonds between Kuwait and Yemen.

It also highlighted the commitment of the Kuwaiti people to supporting educational projects that contribute to human development and enable generations to continue their education, despite the challenges they face, he affirmed.

The school includes 12 classrooms, alongside its educational facilities, operating on a morning and evening system, allowing it to welcome 2,200 male and female students, he added.

In the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian anguish is worsening and the need for food and drinking water is growing, the Peace Association for Humanitarian and Charitable Activities continues to implement a food distribution project, providing food aid and clean drinking water to more than

70,000 beneficiaries.

Speaking to KUNA, the charity's Director General Hamad Al-Oun said the association's field teams handed out 4,000 food baskets, 10,000 meals and drinking water to over 70,000 beneficiaries.

In Jordan, Kuwaiti humanitarian support has reached out to orphans and underprivileged families through charitable projects carried out by Al-Najat Charity Society.

The Kuwaiti charity's initiatives benefitted 1,299 orphans, both Jordanian nationals and children of Syrian refugees, and included the distribution of food aid and winter supplies, as well as educational and social programs.

In a statement to KUNA, Ehab Al-Dabbous, director of Al-Najat Charity's Fahaheel Zakat Committee, said that caring for orphans is a humanitarian responsibility

that includes building a comprehensive system of educational, psychological, and social care.

Al-Dabbous added that the charity distributed humanitarian aid to 1,299 orphans, including both Jordanian children and children of Syrian refugees, along with school supplies, backpacks, stationery, and Eid clothing.

The aid also included the distribution of food aid and blankets to 200 families and winter clothing and heating equipment to 100 orphans, he pointed out.

In Djibouti, Al-Rahma International Society delivered aid to Yemeni families facing dire humanitarian conditions, providing food, clothing, healthcare, and drinking water, aiming to alleviate hardship and secure the necessities of life for families and children living in camps and other targeted areas.

Waleed Al-Suwailem, head of the society's delegation to Djibouti and director of the society's Relief and Rapid Response Unit, told KUNA that the charity had implemented a series of relief projects in Djibouti.

These included the distribution of 1,000 food baskets, 1,000 sets of clothing for children and adults, and 1,500 containers of infant formulas, in a bid to help meet the families' daily needs and ease the burdens they face due to limited resources and the difficulty of obtaining essential supplies, he added.

Furthermore, Al-Manaber Al-Qur'aniyah Association has carried out various humanitarian and projects across several countries.



KUNA photo

Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Senegal, Nayef Al-Mudhaf presents his credentials to President Bassirou Diomaye Diakhar Faye at the Presidential Palace in Dakar.

Kuwait, Senegal discuss ways to upgrade bilateral relations

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24, (KUNA): Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Senegal, Nayef Al-Mudhaf, presented his credentials as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to President Bassirou Diomaye Diakhar Faye at the Presidential Palace in Dakar.

The Embassy of the State of Kuwait in Dakar, in a press release received by KUNA, said that Ambassador Al-Mudhaf conveyed greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to President Faye.

Ambassador Al-Mudhaf emphasized the State of Kuwait's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations in a manner that

serves mutual interests, commending the pivotal role Senegal plays in West Africa.

On his part, the Senegalese President extended greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

He expressed his wishes for their continued good health and happiness, and for the people of Kuwait to enjoy further progress and prosperity.

He also expressed Senegal's pride in continuing to develop bilateral cooperation across various fields to serve the shared interests of both nations and their friendly peoples, wishing Ambassador Al-Mudhaf success in his mission.

News in Brief

Foul play suspected as two Sri Lankan women 'perish'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The bodies of two Sri Lankan women have been referred to the Department of Forensic Medicine following their deaths in separate incidents in the Ali Sabah Al-Salem and Al-Nahda areas, reports Al-Anba daily.

Investigations have been launched into the circumstances surrounding both deaths to determine whether criminal activity was involved.

In the first incident, a citizen reported the death of a Sri Lankan woman born in 1988 inside a room used for storage on the roof of a house in the Ali Sabah Al-Salem area.

After verifying the report, the Ahmadi Public Prosecutor was notified. He ordered the registration of a case involving a suspected criminal death, the referral of the body to the Department of Forensic Medicine, and an investigation by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to determine the circumstances of the incident.

In a separate incident in Al-Nahda, the body of another Sri Lankan woman, born in 1999, was referred to the Department of Forensic Medicine by order of the Jahra Public Prosecutor to determine the cause and circumstances of her death. A case was also registered as a suspected criminal death.

The operations room received a report about the incident from a citizen born in 1989.

Forensic experts, medical examiners, and Criminal Investigation Department (CID) officers were subsequently dispatched to the scene to carry out the

necessary procedures and establish the circumstances surrounding the death.

Violent traffic altercation: A traffic dispute near the entrance to Abu Halifa on the Fahaheel Expressway escalated into a physical altercation involving an assault and an attempted stabbing with a pen, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the incident began when one of the drivers claimed that another vehicle had suddenly pulled out in front of him, nearly causing a collision, prompting both drivers to stop. The other driver began using abusive and obscene language, deliberately struck the first driver's car door, and then got out of his vehicle.

He subsequently reached through the window of the first driver's car and attempted to stab him with a pen.

The source noted that the victim managed to grab the assailant's hand and avoid being stabbed. A case has been registered, and legal proceedings are underway.

E-parts stolen from truck: Forensic experts have been dispatched to Sharq to collect evidence from a truck that was broken into and stripped of several electronic components and interior parts, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a report filed at Sharq Police Station, a Pakistani expatriate born in 1982 explained that his 2011-model truck, parked on a dirt lot opposite the First Ring Road, had been broken into and several components stolen.

Continued from Page 1

World must

ensuring both exporting and importing states fulfill their international obligations without imposing unjustified restrictions on the inherent rights of sovereign nations.

He warned that the illicit flow of arms and ammunition reaching terrorist organizations and armed groups operating outside state authority prolongs conflicts, destabilizes state institutions, and severely hinders peacebuilding and sustainable development endeavors.

He reiterated Kuwait's unwavering support for the full and effective implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Furthermore, Al-Enezi highlighted the urgency of bolstering national capacities in marking, tracing, stockpile management, information sharing, and transfer monitoring to prevent weapons from leaking into illicit markets or unauthorized hands.

He noted Kuwait's active interest in the global framework for conventional ammunition throughout its life cycle, characterizing it as a milestone step toward mitigating risks associated with ammunition mismanagement, diversion, and unplanned depot explosions.

Al-Enezi expressed Kuwait's pride in its election as a Vice-Chair for the preparatory meeting, alongside the recommendation for its nomination as Vice-Chair for the upcoming 2027 session, a position that will allow Kuwait to contribute significantly to fostering international cooperation and capacity-building efforts.

Turning to regional affairs, Al-Enezi asserted that dangerous developments across the Middle East demonstrate that risks stemming from conventional weapons proliferation are no longer confined to internal disputes but pose a direct threat to state security and regional stability.

He pointed out that Iranian-led aggressions targeting Kuwait, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states,

and Jordan, including strikes executed by pro-Iranian militias operating out of Iraq, underscore the grave peril posed by missile and drone attacks against civilians, civilian facilities, and critical infrastructure.

In this context, Al-Enezi reaffirmed Kuwait's firm condemnation of these aggressions, demanding full compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 2817 (2026), an immediate cessation of direct and indirect attacks, and strict measures to block arms supplies to militias threatening state sovereignty.

He further stressed the imperative of respecting international humanitarian law across all conflict zones, including the Occupied Palestinian Territory, ensuring conventional weapons are never weaponized to commit severe violations against civilian populations.

In conclusion, Al-Enezi reaffirmed Kuwait's continued support for global initiatives designed to sever arms supply lines to illicit actors, curb civilian exposure to military strikes, and fortify state capacities to defend sovereignty, thereby consolidating international peace and security.

PAM: 8,849

monitoring system is 100,252 and 51,844 files belong to employers with less than five workers and 48,408 files belong to those with five or more workers.

It also announced 13 valid grounds for salary deductions like unpaid leave (whether taken locally or abroad), childcare leave, sick leave, partially paid leave, suspension from work, unauthorized departure from the workplace, refusal to work and absenteeism, among other reasons related to the professional status of employees.

The regulations mandate submitting documentation to substantiate the legality and justification for any deduction.

Furthermore, strict limits apply, such that the maximum amount to be deducted from an employee's salary in any month is 25 percent, provided documentation confirming the legitimacy of the deduction is attached.





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Continued from Page 1

Mr. Sisi,

academic endeavors in Egypt. Reinforced by widespread familial bond and intermarriage, these enduring ties created an unbreakable alliance that withstands any challenge. The historical trajectory of relations with Egypt maintains a steady and reliable rhythm.

Ties between Cairo and Gulf capitals have never suffered a complete breakdown. Even during the relocation of the Arab League headquarters to Tunis, the connection between the citizens of the Gulf and Egypt endured.

Whether or not the Egyptian Parliament endorses support for the Gulf states in this imposed conflict, our nations will remain fully capable of defending themselves, exercising the collective resolve of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries against aggressors, thereby, prevailing in the end. Everyone must fully understand this truth, particularly those who resist the assistance of our countries.

Furthermore, the enduring kinship connecting our populations to the Egyptian people far transcends the transient political maneuvers of certain Egyptian groups. It is equally necessary to recognize the significant milestones that President Abdul Fattah El-Sisi has delivered for Egypt over the past 12 years, specifically the modernization of national infrastructure and strengthening diplomatic ties. Locally, he put about 17 trillion Egyptian pounds in investments, hence, raising the living standards of the Egyptians. These development efforts include extensive upgrade of the transportation networks and roadways and construction of hundreds of thousands of residential units.

Looking ahead, the gross domestic product (GDP) growth of Egypt is on track to reach around 5.1 percent by the end of the 2025/2026 fiscal year. This expansion is a manifestation of the remarkable recovery of a country that previously endured years of widespread crises affecting every sector of the society. This remarkable progress was made through the continuous support that the Gulf nations provide to Egypt. In response, Cairo is keen on solidifying its ties with these countries. The military salute of the Egyptian Armed Forces to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations is a powerful symbol of how the leader of Egypt views the interconnected future of these seven states.

Moreover, one must realize that modern warfare has totally changed, moving away from the conventional mobilization of massive troop concentrations. In an era of drones, guided missiles and advanced systems, engagements are directed from computer terminals before blue monitors by personnel stationed anywhere from California and Washington to Riyadh

and Cairo. As a result, assistance can manifest as diplomatic or moral advocacy, or through the dispatch of a modest military contingent.

Any Arab who holds fast to the Quranic verse, “Indeed, God loves those who fight for His cause in a row, as though they are a structure joined firmly,” recognizes that the ongoing struggle will not remain contained within the boundaries of a single land. This truth ought to be fully evident to all Arab, Egyptian and Gulf citizens.

Those in Parliament—whether they backed or opposed President El-Sisi’s request—can take comfort in knowing that the destiny of nations and the deep ties connecting brotherly states are never determined by transient crises or isolated choices made by those who lacked the complete picture at the time. The relationship between Egypt and the Gulf remains remarkably resilient.

The revival and strength of Egypt are considered resurgence for the GCC nations, transcending the interests of the Egyptian public alone. For decades, Egypt endured severe hardships, including four wars initiated during Gamal Abdel Nasser’s tenure that resulted in defeat.

Without the late President Anwar Sadat’s leadership in achieving victory over Israel and establishing peace, the nation would have easily fallen into ruin. Therefore, the Gulf’s dedication to support Egypt is an investment in its own long-term interests.

Lastly, to President Abdul Fattah El-Sisi—who recently declared that he will step down by 2030—we offer our blessings. You serve your homeland faithfully, making Egypt fully equipped to overcome future challenges.

Regarding those who decline to stand with the Gulf states, that is entirely their prerogative and it has no weight. The peoples of the Gulf have the capability to accomplish remarkable feats and may not need support from Egypt.

President El-Sisi, the people of Egypt will not go hungry, but let us proceed with measured and steady steps. God is ever forbearing toward His servants.

‘Empowering Kuwaitis

Such forums enable physicians to benefit from the latest scientific developments, ultimately improving patient care and the quality of healthcare services.

A well-qualified physician, capable of sound clinical judgment and effective decision-making, is an indispensable cornerstone of healthcare. Investing in the scientific and professional capabilities of healthcare personnel is therefore fundamental to sustainable development.

In this spirit, the Ministry of Health

continues to support scientific initiatives and training programs that enhance the competence of the national workforce while reinforcing the principles of quality, patient safety, and evidence-based medical practice.

Dr. Khalil Al-Shuwaiker, Head of the Internal Medicine Department at Al-Adan Hospital and Chair of the 2nd Internal Medicine Conference, emphasized the importance of scientific conferences in promoting communication among physicians across various specialties.

He noted that such events facilitate the exchange of expertise and discussion of the latest medical developments, thus positively impacting the quality of healthcare provided to patients.

Dr. Al-Shuwaiker expressed his pleasure at organizing the conference for the second consecutive year, as well as his hope that it would become a regular scientific event bringing together physicians and experts while contributing to a culture of continuous learning and advancing medical practice.

He also expressed his gratitude to the Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, for his patronage and attendance, as well as his continued support for scientific activities and medical education programs.

He commended the administration of Al-Adan Hospital for its support and for providing the necessary resources to ensure the conference’s success.

Dr. Al-Shuwaiker explained that the initiative to organize the conference stemmed from the desire to create a platform where physicians from various specialties could exchange expertise, learn from professional experiences, and discuss the latest medical advancements.

He stressed that medical practice, regardless of a physician’s level of experience, requires continuous learning and keeping pace with scientific progress, as this directly improves patient care and enhances the quality of healthcare services.

Dr. Al-Shuwaiker noted that the value of such gatherings extends beyond lectures and scientific sessions to include strengthening professional connections, exchanging ideas, and benefiting from colleagues’ diverse experiences, all of which contribute to the continued development of medical practice.

He commended the efforts of the scientific and organizing committees, as well as the working groups involved in preparing the conference.

He expressed his gratitude to the Association for Medical Artificial Intelligence and Informatics, the Internal Medicine Association, and the Kuwait Medical Association for their cooperation and support of this scientific event.

Furthermore, Dr. Al-Shuwaiker acknowledged the support of the con-

ference’s sponsoring companies and thanked the speakers, session chairs, and participants for dedicating their time to sharing knowledge and engaging in discussions despite their daily responsibilities and commitments.

He expressed his hope that the conference sessions would be highly beneficial to participants and that the scientific discussions would enrich their expertise, generating new ideas and insights that could be applied in daily medical practice to better serve patients and improve the quality of healthcare in Kuwait.

Amir’s royal

This gesture reflects His Highness the Amir’s paternal care and commitment to providing beneficiaries with a fresh start, enabling them to reunite with their families, reintegrate into society as responsible individuals, and contribute to the nation’s development.

The ministry further affirmed its continued commitment to implementing reform and rehabilitation programs aimed at correcting inmates’ behavior, instilling positive values, and preparing them for reintegration into society, thereby contributing to the stability of families and the wider community.

All co-ops

She also highlighted that the ministry’s Department of Development and Cooperative Membership Affairs oversees compliance with these requirements, emphasizing that stronger oversight and the promotion of governance and accountability are essential to safeguarding the cooperative sector and protecting shareholders’ rights.

Kuwait bags

The first concerns the study, design, and construction supervision of a building for the ministry’s central sectors and departments, while the second involves the study, design, and construction supervision of a new facility to expand the Engineering Affairs and Projects Sector.

Six companies submitted bids for the first tender, while five companies submitted bids for the second.

The Ministry of Health aims to expand its facilities to accommodate the growing number of staff and visitors across all regions.

Kuwait, Italy

Investment Authority (KIA) Sheikh Saud Salem Abdulaziz Al-Sabah; and Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Italian Republic Nasser Al-Qahtani.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah hosted a dinner banquet on Friday evening in honor of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and her accompanying official delegation, on the occasion of her official visit to the country.

Kuwait, Italy sign MoUs

In the presence of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and visiting Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, the State of Kuwait and the Italian Republic signed two memoranda of understanding and a letter of intent on Friday, covering the promotion of direct investment, defense, and military and industrial cooperation.

The first MoU, concerning cooperation in the promotion of direct investment, was signed between the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) and the Italian Trade Agency. It was signed on behalf of the Government of the State of Kuwait by the Director General of KDIPA, Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and on behalf of the Italian Trade Agency, its President, Matteo Zoppas.

A letter of intent was also signed between the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense and the company Leonardo, focusing on the development of defense capabilities and industrial cooperation. This was signed on behalf of the Government of the State of Kuwait by Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense, Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Meshal Mubarak Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and on behalf of Leonardo by its CEO and General Manager, Lorenzo Mariani.

Furthermore, a second MoU on military cooperation in the areas of advisory services and training, was signed between the Kuwait National Guard and the Italian Carabinieri (under the Italian Ministry of Defense). It initiated on behalf of the Kuwait National Guard by its Undersecretary, Lieutenant General Hamad Salem Al-Barjas, and on behalf of the Carabinieri by Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Lorenzo Morini.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and an accompanied delegation arrived in the country on Friday on an official visit.

Upon her arrival, she was received by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shareeda Al-Maousherji, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Also among the audience were Acting Chief of the Prime Minister’s Diwan Sheikh Khaled Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and Ambassador to the Italian Republic Nasser Al-Qahtani.

Kuwait: UN

Al-Banai reaffirmed Kuwait’s support for diplomatic efforts to de-escalate tensions and settle disputes peacefully, stressing the importance of non-interference in states internal affairs and refraining from the use or threat of force.

Regarding the Palestinian issue, he reiterated Kuwait’s unwavering support for the Palestinian peoples inalienable rights, particularly self-determination and the establishment of an independent state on the June 4, 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. He called for protecting civilians, ending forced displacement and ensuring safe, and sustained humanitarian aid, while continuing support for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

Al-Banai reaffirmed Kuwait’s commitment to its longstanding partnership with the UN and its specialized agencies, highlighting the country’s contributions to humanitarian relief, development and assistance for people affected by conflicts and disasters.

He added that Kuwait would continue working with UN member states to uphold the principles of the UN Charter, promote sustainable development and strengthen international cooperation, stressing that translating these principles into action requires collective efforts to protect state sovereignty and human dignity. UN Day marks the anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter in 1945. Kuwait joined the organization on May 14, 1963, becoming its 111th member.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirmed Kuwait’s commitment to the UN Charter and its support for efforts to protect international peace and security and end conflicts through dialogue.

In a statement on Saturday, commemorating the United Nations Day, the ministry noted Kuwait’s strong relations with the UN since joining the organization in 1963. It renewed Kuwait’s support to resolve key issues including humanitarian crises, climate change, terrorism, arms embargo and sustainable development.

The ministry commended the role played by the UN, along with its various bodies and agencies, in coordinating the response to humanitarian and developmental needs, reaffirming commitment to continuing its contributions in the humanitarian and developmental spheres, as well as its active participation in various United Nations forums.

It also underscored the importance of developing multilateral mechanisms to enhance the United Nations’ capacity to keep pace with international changes, and to establish a just international order based on respect for international law, the sovereignty of states, and the preservation of their independence.

The ministry called for exerting further efforts to spread peace, dialogue and tolerance.

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DOJ orders some California counties to verify ballots in 48 hours

Immigrants seeking US citizenship targeted in illegal voting crackdown

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct 24, (AP): Most of the immigrants targeted by federal authorities in California this week for alleged voter fraud had applied for US citizenship and now face charges related to lying on forms or during interviews. Those charges could lead to years in prison and thwart their efforts to naturalize.

One of them is José Antonio Bañuelos-Díaz, 42, who applied for citizenship in October 2025 after living in the country for 40 years and spending his entire adult life as a legal permanent resident. The federal government has alleged in charging documents that he improperly claimed to be a citizen in 2007 when registering to vote, then later lied about it on his immigration paperwork. The government hasn't accused him of casting a ballot.

Bañuelos-Díaz told The Associated Press he had no idea he had registered to vote until he was arrested Monday outside his Los Angeles home, though he recalls getting a driver's license around 2007. In California, people are prompted to register to vote when applying for a driver's license.

"I have never voted because I know I can't vote," he said. "If there was a mistake, they should have called me out right away, not 20 years later."

He was released from custody after his arrest but faces up to five years in prison if convicted.

Federal authorities on Monday charged more than two dozen legal permanent residents in California in a crackdown on people accused of illegally voting or registering to do so. As of Thursday morning, the government had filed charging documents in 10 of the 28 cases, offering additional details about how authorities relied on voter registration data to pursue broader criminal charges around immigration status.

Most of the immigrants charged in California have lived in the country for at least five years, and some of them for decades. They registered as Republicans, Democrats and independents, according to voter data, and they could face deportation if they lied on their citizenship application.

Immigrants convicted of illegally voting in the United States face up to a year in prison. Those convicted of lying on applications to become American citizens face up to a decade.

The Justice Department said in a statement that six people would be charged with voting as a noncitizen, a misdemeanor. The 22 others were facing a combination of felony charges including lying on their naturalization application during interviews or on voter registration forms.

In one case, Homeland Security agents arrested Pamele Arbues Line immediately following her Oct. 15 naturalization interview in San Diego.

In charging documents, the federal government said Line had allegedly reg-



US Homeland Security Investigations task force officers escort a suspect accused of illegally registering to vote during a federal operation in Commerce, Calif on Oct 19. (AP)

istered to vote five times and had submitted ballots in several elections but said in her paperwork and in the interview that she had never voted or claimed to be a U.S. citizen. She later admitted to registering to vote while getting her driver's license renewed last year and said she voted once, according to the charging documents.

Line, who is from the Philippines, told authorities she thought she was a U.S. citizen because her mother had become naturalized after they moved to the United States more than four decades ago. But Line, now 56, was 19 at the time and not covered by her mother's citizenship, according to the government. She learned she was not a citizen in June when she went to get a renewed Social Security card, and she told agents she applied for naturalization the same day, according to the documents.

She faces at least 10 years in prison if convicted of two charges.

The cases are part of a Trump administration effort to root out noncitizen voting ahead of the midterm elections, even though data shows that the prob-

lem is incredibly rare, difficult to prove and has not been shown to change the outcome of races.

The Department of Justice has sued California for not complying with a request to verify the citizenship of roughly 20,000 registered voters it says may be noncitizens. California, which has more than 23 million registered voters, has argued the state complies with federal law and that the Trump administration's numbers are likely significantly inflated.

State election officials also noted once a ballot is mailed in, it is separated from any individual voter identification, making it impossible to separate based on the information provided by the federal government.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Federal prosecutors sent letters to county registrars across California on Friday demanding that local officials set aside and verify ballots that the Department of Justice said may belong to noncitizens, according to the Los Angeles County registrar and a letter obtained by The Associated Press.

The letters are the latest escalation in a legal battle between California and President Donald Trump's Department of Justice, which has recently focused on the state in its efforts to root out noncitizen voting ahead of the midterm elections. Data shows illegal voting by people who aren't U.S. citizens is incredibly rare, difficult to prove and has not been shown to change the outcome of races.

Earlier this month, the federal government targeted Los Angeles County and the California Secretary of State's office in a lawsuit that aimed to block them from counting the votes of roughly 20,000 people who are "likely" non-citizen voters. A hearing on the case is scheduled for Tuesday.

The Trump administration asked the 9th Circuit court of appeals to rule on the lawsuit barring a decision from the district judge assigned to the case. They set a deadline for Saturday.

Now, according to the LA County registrar's office, at least 18 counties across the state have received similar letters. They have been given a 48 hour deadline to provide identifying information corresponding with ballots that the federal government believes were sent to noncitizens illegally registered to vote. The letter requests that county officials also sequester any ballots where citizenship cannot be verified.

"Any election official who knowingly processes the ballot of a noncitizen is opening themselves to legal jeopardy," said First Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Essayli.

Canada's PM Carney rejects US election interference claims

TORONTO, Oct 24, (AP): Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said Friday there is "no merit" to US allegations that Canadian politicians are interfering in next month's US midterm elections, expressing disappointment with Washington's ambassador over the accusations.

Speaking to reporters in Istanbul, Turkey, Carney rejected a fact sheet issued Wednesday by the US Embassy in Canada accusing Canadian politicians of seeking to influence American politics.

"The Canadian government brushes off concerns about potential interference in US elections, even as its ministers and premiers openly describe plans to influence American politics in official documents and public appearances," the embassy said.

Carney said Canadian diplomats were careful to avoid even the appearance of election interference and expressed disappointment with US Ambassador Pete Hoekstra.

"There is no merit to these claims," Carney said. "I'm disappointed that their envoy sees that as his role, to



Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney sits on stage and listens during a joint news conference with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Ankara, Turkey on Oct 22. (AP)

make these suggestions."

The embassy singled out Industry Minister Melanie Joly for discussing retaliatory tariffs targeting Republican states, and Ontario Premier Doug Ford for airing a US advertisement featuring former President Ronald Reagan criticizing tariffs.

Trump canceled trade talks with Canada after the ad aired during the

World Series in October 2025.

The embassy also cited 11 Canadians charged with illegally voting in U.S. elections between 2012 and 2026, without linking the cases to Canada's government. The Trump administration has made investigating noncitizen voting a priority, although election experts say such cases are rare.

America

Flooding soaks Four Corners region: Severe flooding in the Four Corners region Friday led to rescues - some from rooftops - and impassable roads, with some residents told to evacuate low-lying areas of Colorado and New Mexico and others urged to stay where they are until water levels drop.

The flooding followed two months of heavy rains that ended a summer drought in the region where the boundaries of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah meet. Since Wednesday, a total of 4 inches (10 centimeters) had fallen in the already saturated area, with even more rain forecast for the weekend.

Hundreds of people along the San Juan River in the biggest city in the area, Farmington, New Mexico, were told to evacuate. Downstream, residents of the vast Navajo Nation braced for floodwaters not expected to peak until late Friday or early Saturday. (AP)



This image taken from video provided by Landon Christensen shows flooding in the Gould Wash drainage watercourse in Hurricane, Utah on Oct 22. (AP)

Two ex-FBI officials charged: Two former FBI officials were charged Friday with lying to Congress about their involvement in investigating Hunter Biden's laptop in the run-up to the 2020 presidential election, the latest in a series of splashy and politically charged actions the Justice Department has undertaken ahead of next month's midterm contests.

Nikki Floris and Bradley Benavides, former leaders of a since-disbanded task force set up to counter foreign election interference, appeared in federal court in Washington, where their lawyers pressed for a speedy hearing to contest allegations their clients lied to lawmakers by saying that they did not participate in FBI investigations of Biden. (AP)

'Mississippi police officer resigned': The police officer who shot and killed a 1-year-old boy in Mississippi when he fired into a moving vehicle while responding to a shoplifting call has resigned, the Senatobia mayor told The Associated Press Friday.

Sgt. Hunter Foster, 33, had been cleared of criminal wrongdoing by the Mississippi Attorney General's office earlier this week after its monthslong probe concluded his use of force had been justified.

On Thursday, the state released videos of the fatal shooting of Kohen Wiley, including Foster's body-worn camera footage of the June 14 encounter in a Walmart parking lot in Senatobia, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) south of Memphis, Tennessee. Senatobia Mayor Greg Graves confirmed Foster's resignation Friday.

Foster's attorney Martin Zummach declined to comment when reached Friday. Zummach has said Foster had 'no choice' but to fire his weapon at the vehicle because it was moving at him. (AP)

France mobilizes up to 70K police across country to maintain order

PARIS, Oct 24, (AP): France deployed thousands of police Saturday for fresh protests over school funding and soaring living costs, seeking to prevent another weekend of looting, burned cars and attacks on public buildings. In Paris, authorities restricted the main march to the city's southeastern edge, keeping it away from the center.

Thousands of people were already marching Saturday afternoon in Orleans, south of Paris, in a separate protest against the far right as Marine Le Pen's National Rally held a two-day congress in the city.

Interior Minister Laurent Nuñez said up to 70,000 officers would be deployed nationwide, backed by helicopters, armored vehicles and water cannons.

What began last month as a protest over staff shortages at one high school southeast of Paris has grown into a national movement. Students demanding better schools and workers seeking higher wages and pensions have brought anger over living standards into the final months of President Emmanuel Macron's presidency.

Macron met high school representatives Friday. They said he had promised to overhaul university admissions, but called for

protests to continue until concrete measures are announced.

More than half a million people took to the streets last Saturday. Some 3,000 shops across France were damaged or looted over the weekend.

Ahead of the new protests, Paris landmarks closed, shopkeepers boarded up storefronts and gendarmes stood guard beneath the Arc de Triomphe.

Gendarmes stood guard beneath the Arc de Triomphe as shopkeepers boarded up storefronts across Paris. Near the Saint-Lazare train station Saturday, Akram Ahmed, a 34-year-old contractor, was boarding up an optician's shop.

"I got the call last night," he said. "The owner seemed desperate. He said I was saving his life."

Major museums, including the Louvre, Orsay Museum, Picasso Museum and Grand Palais - where a major Cézanne exhibit is on display - were shuttered Saturday.

Art Basel, one of the world's most prestigious contemporary art fairs, opened to the public Friday, but only for the day, with the threat of unrest prompting organizers to cancel the weekend program.



A demonstrator holds a French flag during a protest on the sidelines of the far-right Rassemblement National (RN) congress in Orleans, France on Oct 24. (AP)

Ukraine, Russia eye peace talks – and Melania Trump's mission – but steep obstacles remain



US First Lady Melania Trump speaks in the Rose Garden of the White House on Oct 19, in Washington. (AP)

listic missiles and drones on Kyiv. Moscow on the same day said it had destroyed more than 800 Ukrainian drones heading toward its cities.

Here's a look at where the two countries stand as potential negotiations loom.

U.S. presidential envoy Steve Witkoff secured the latest commitment to talks after shuttling between Oslo, Norway, and St. Petersburg,

the United Arab Emirates, around mid-November. Western governments backing the peace initiative are seeking a new formula to break the impasse while acknowledging that territorial and security questions remain unresolved.

U.S. President Donald Trump's ties with Zelenskyy, meanwhile, have sunk to a new low. Moscow has been bolstered by Trump's deal for Russia to supply the U.S. with diesel and his recent rejection of new Russia sanctions.

Kyiv has been undermined by disruptions in satellite support for its drones after rejecting a call by the U.S. president to halt strikes on Russian oil infrastructure. Ukrainian leaders fear the moves will embolden Putin, giving him little incentive to compromise at the negotiating table.

As Trump increased pressure on Zelenskyy, accusing him of being an obstacle to peace, Witkoff secured the release of an American who had been jailed for more than four years on charges of fighting as a mercenary in Ukraine. The envoy described the Russian leader as a "humanitarian" at their meeting in St. Petersburg - a remark met with consternation in Ukraine.

Europe

Pope Leo XIV cancels Assisi trip: Pope Leo XIV will miss a planned trip to Assisi next week after doctors advised against the helicopter journey to the Italian town as he recovers from lung cancer surgery, the Vatican said Friday.

The pope had been due to attend a gathering on Tuesday marking the 40th anniversary of St. John Paul II's World Day of Prayer for Peace.

The Vatican said Leo, 71, was advised not to travel "to facilitate his recovery" from last week's operation. The pope will instead send a message to the organizers, interfaith leaders and guests attending the "Disarmed and Disarming Peace" event.

In a separate statement, the pope's doctors said a follow-up chest X-ray confirmed he's recovering well, but given the short time that has elapsed since the operation, they recommended as a precaution that he not make the helicopter trip.

The Vatican said Leo wants to express his closeness to participants and reaffirm his belief that the "spirit of Assisi," dialogue and the search for



Pope Leo XIV

words and gestures of peace remain valuable resources at a time of conflict. (AP)

Fire breaks out at Alpine retreat: A fire tore through the retreat built for Adolf Hitler in the Bavarian Alps known as the Eagle's Nest, and work to extinguish it was still in progress Saturday, authorities said. A person was detained in connection with the blaze.

The building was badly damaged by the fire and it's not yet clear whether parts of it can be preserved, the local tourism authority said.

A fire alarm at the building in the Berchtesgaden district in Germany's southeastern corner went off at about 9:15 p.m. on Friday, police said in a statement. Firefighters who went to the scene could see the flames as they approached the site, on a cliff 1,834 meters (6,017 feet) above sea level.

Getting fire engines to the site proved difficult because of its location, and work was still ongoing to put out the fire on Saturday morning, police said. The building and its immediate surroundings could only be accessed with respiratory protection equipment.

Firefighters found no one in the building and authorities believe at present that no one was injured.

Police said a person was detained as a possible suspect, but it has yet to be determined whether they had anything to do with the fire. (AP)



An aerial drone photo taken on Oct 23, 2026 shows emergency tents at an earthquake-hit village in Maru Township of Baqen County, Nagqu City, southwest China's Xizang Autonomous Region. (Xinhua)

China’s Xizang quake kills 16, injures 76

Sixteen people have been killed and 76 others are injured following a 7.0-magnitude earthquake that struck Baqen County of the city of Nagqu in southwest China's Xizang Autonomous Region at 10:33 pm on Thursday, local authorities said.

The quake has also damaged or

destroyed 339 homes and 20 livestock sheds, according to a press conference held on Friday afternoon by the information office of the Nagqu municipal government.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has ordered all-out search and rescue efforts for the missing and prompt medical treatment for the injured,

urging every effort to minimize casualties.

Xi also called for close monitoring of seismic activity and weather conditions to prevent secondary disasters, as well as proper accommodation for affected residents and swift repairs to damaged infrastructure. (Xinhua)

Philippines announces bounty on senator wanted by ICC

MANILA, Philippines, Oct 24, (AP): Philippine officials announced a bounty Friday for the capture of a senator who has been ordered arrested by the International Criminal Court for an alleged crime against humanity in connection with deadly anti-drugs crackdowns.

The court alleges that Sen. Ronald dela Rosa, 64, was an “indirect co-conspirator” of former President Rodrigo Duterte, who was arrested last year and now faces trial for alleged crimes linked to the so-called war on drugs he waged while in office.

Dela Rosa last appeared in public when he went to the Philippine Senate briefly in May but fled after the international court in The Hague, Netherlands, made public a warrant for his arrest.



Philippine Senator Ronald dela Rosa speaks to reporters at the Philippine Senate in Pasay, Philippines on May 13. (AP)

Dela Rosa was the first national police chief designated by Duterte to enforce the brutal crackdowns he launched after becoming president in 2016. After dela Rosa retired from the police force, he was appointed as a top prisons official before successfully running for a Senate seat in 2019.

Estimates of the death toll in the

crackdown on drugs during Duterte’s presidential term vary, from the more than 6,000 reported by the national police to up to 30,000 claimed by human rights groups.

Also:
MANILA, Philippines: Two Philippine air force planes collided during a training flight and crashed at an air

base south of Manila, killing all four pilots onboard, Philippine officials said Saturday.

The two SF-260 aircraft collided while flying at a low altitude Friday afternoon then crashed at Fernando Air Base in Lipa city in the coastal province of Batangas south of the capital. There were no injuries on the ground, the officials said.

‘We want the officials responsible to be held accountable’

Southeast Asia’s worst haze in over decade sparks student protests

JAKARTA, Indonesia, Oct 24, (AP): Thousands of students across Indonesia have protested for days over the government’s response to toxic haze that has blanketed multiple cities and spread across Southeast Asia in recent weeks.

On Friday, more than 500 protesters gathered outside the Central Kalimantan Governor’s Office in the provincial capital of Palangkaraya, demanding solutions to the haze. Some held signs that read “haze emergency” and “If we burn, you burn with us!”

Protests spread to more than half a dozen Indonesian cities this week, including on the island of Borneo, where many of the fires are burning.

Indonesia’s haze is primarily caused by forest and peatland fires, often started to clear land for farming. While such fires are common during dry season, which usually begins in April, this year’s are the worst on record.

The haze has triggered health concerns and ignited public backlash

from Singapore, Malaysia and others in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Student and civil society groups have demanded stronger action on the haze for months. Some called for Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto to declare a national emergency and take more aggressive steps to prevent the agricultural practices blamed for fueling the blazes.

Some student-led protests have merged with ongoing demonstrations over Indonesia’s struggling economy.

“In Indonesia, we’re so angry,” said Vincent Thomas, a student at Indonesia’s Universitas Padjadjaran, who joined protests in Bandung. “We want the officials responsible to be held accountable.”

Many demonstrators on Friday wore thick masks to protect themselves from the air pollution blanketing Palangkaraya in Central Kalimantan, which was tinged orange by the haze.

Volunteer firefighters extinguish-



People display a poster that reads ‘Declare the wildfires as national disaster,’ during a rally protesting the Indonesian government’s response to toxic haze from forest fires that has blanketed multiple cities, in Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia on Oct 23. (AP)

ing blazes around Palangkaraya told The Associated Press that they hoped that rain would come soon.

More than 333,470 residents have

suffered acute respiratory illnesses across the seven provinces affected by the haze since mid-August, ac-

cording to Indonesia’s Ministry of Health.

“We want the government to openly declare a national disaster emergency,” Thomas said. “Not just regarding Kalimantan, but regarding forest fires across the entire country, in every part of Indonesia.”

Jemilah Mahmood, executive director of the Sunway Centre for Planetary Health in the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur, said this is what happens when changing climate meeting damaged environments.

“The lungs of a child in Pontianak or Johor Bahr depend on the health of a peat swamp hundreds of kilometers away,” she said.

Indonesia’s forests were a tinderbox because there was less rain during the wet season.

Experts blame this on extreme heat, climate change and an intensifying El Niño that may be the strongest in living memory.

“The current haze crisis is a real symptom, a real example of how cli-

mate change affects our day-to-day lives,” said Syahdiva Moezbar, with the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air in Jakarta.

Singapore and Kuala Lumpur were ranked among the most polluted cities in the world this month by the global air quality monitoring platform IQAir, with many considering this the worst haze crisis to affect the region in over a decade.

Singaporean officials, who have warned the country’s air quality may deteriorate further, are taking legal action against seven companies in Indonesia that Singapore blames for causing the fires.

“For me, the part that does worry me is just the difficulty in getting N95 masks and air purifiers,” said Qiyun Woo, a Singaporean environmentalist. “You just can’t help but worry about your own health, especially when you might not have an air purifier.”

The haze has closed schools in East Timor and been detected in the Philippines.

Lula and Bolsonaro reach out to undecided voters in last debate

SAO PAULO, Oct 24, (AP): Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Sen Flávio Bolsonaro faced off Friday in their second and final debate ahead of Sunday’s presidential runoff election, but this time with cooler heads than a few days ago as they tried to reach out to the few undecided voters left in the tight race.

The debate on TV Globo, Brazil’s most popular broadcaster, lasted two hours and offered candidates a chance to talk about their plans in front of each other. Five days ago, the two exchanged barbs and accusations in a debate on TV Band.

Friday’s debate in Rio de Janeiro had three tense moments.

Flávio Bolsonaro, the son of former President Jair Bolsonaro, called Lula “nine fingers,” a pejorative nickname used by many of his supporters which references an accident the Brazilian president suffered during his time as a metal worker. The 80-year-old leader demanded an apology, which Bolsonaro gave him.

“He will have to apologize. Be-



Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva attend a televised presidential debate days before the presidential runoff election in Rio de Janeiro on Oct 23. (AP)

cause the working people are watching. Millions of workers suffer accidents due to employer irresponsibility. (They are) being forced to work shifts that we shouldn’t have to work,” said Lula. “I was underage

and I worked at night (when the accident happened).”

The 45-year-old Bolsonaro replied: “Lula, if I offended you by calling you ‘nine-fingers,’ I truly apologize. I didn’t mean to offend you.”

The second was when Lula, in response, called Flávio Bolsonaro a vigilante, in a reference to groups linked to policemen that are operating in poor communities in Rio de Janeiro. Bolsonaro said he would rename those groups, called militias, as narcoterrorists.

“I will not allow a vigilante to call me nine fingers,” Lula said. Bolsonaro was awarded more time by mediators to respond to the insult. But instead of answering the president’s accusation, he chose to talk about a different subject.

The third tense exchange was between Flávio Bolsonaro and the mother of a 5-year-old girl who was killed in a shootout that involved a policeman who had the presidential candidate as his lawyer. Bolsonaro said he doesn’t believe his client was guilty.



Security forces and civil defense work after a multi-story building collapsed in Nairobi, Kenya on Oct 23. (AP)

Many feared trapped as tall building collapses in Kenya

Many people were feared trapped as a tall building collapsed Friday in Kenya’s capital, leaving a huge mound of concrete and more than a dozen floors stacked like pancakes, with little space between them.

The building was under construction when it collapsed at about 1 p.m. along a busy com-

mercial street in Nairobi’s Eastleigh area, which is often crowded with thousands of traders and residents.

Nairobi police chief Issa Mohamud said the building had more than 10 upper floors under construction. Rescue operations were complicated, with police firing tear gas at people who had begun loot-

ing neighboring shops, as officers sought to clear the area and provide access to emergency response teams.

Joseph Kaula made it out just in time. A plasterer working on the fifth floor, he said he heard screams and spotted other workers rushing outside, shouting that the building was collapsing. (AP)

Commander vows to fight on

Ethiopia’s Tigray rebels urged to disarm

NAIROBI, Kenya, Oct 24, (AP) An official in Tigray’s new federal-backed administration urged rebel fighters to lay down their weapons Friday, hours after a rebel commander called for continued resistance despite losing the northern Ethiopian region’s capital.

The calls came nearly three weeks after rebels trying to overthrow the government lost control of Mekelle, Tigray’s capital. Government-allied fighters entered Mekelle on Oct. 4 after the Tigray People’s Liberation Front, or TPLF, withdrew.

Redae Halefom Woldeeslassie, the caretaker administration’s chief executive for political and public mobilization, said rebel forces were collapsing and urged fighters to enter a disarmament and reintegration program.

“This is not the time for settling scores, I call upon you to return to your homes and continue your civilian lives,” he said in Mekelle.

He dismissed the prospect of the rebels retaking the city and portrayed the conflict as serving a small group of leaders rather than the people of Tigray.

Hours earlier, Lt. Gen. Fisseha Kidanu, who was identified in a tele-



In this photo taken with a smartphone Getachew Reda, (center) a former Tigray leader and adviser to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, arrives at the airport in Mekelle, Ethiopia on Oct 11. (AP)

vision broadcast as commander of the Tigray army, pledged to reverse recent military setbacks.

“Local militias across the region - alongside all volunteers joining the resistance - are expected to engage the enemy,” he said Thursday on Ti-

gray Broadcast Media, a new rebel television station. His location was not disclosed.

Fisseha urged attacks on government-held positions despite his opponents’ advantages in drones and heavy weapons.

Subcontinent

12 dead in Pakistan vehicle collision: A speeding passenger bus collided with a van in southwestern Pakistan on Friday, killing at least 12 people and injuring about two dozen others, rescuers and local police said.

The crash happened in Lasbela, a district in Balochistan province, rescue official Mohammad Hakeem said.

Women and children were among the dead and injured, doctors at a local hospital said.

The bus was traveling from Lasbela to Karachi, the capital of southern Sindh province.

Road crashes are common in Pakistan, where poor road conditions, inadequate enforcement of traffic laws and unsafe driving practices contribute to frequent collisions.

In July, a bus plunged off a highway into a rocky ravine in Balochistan, killing 40 people. (Xinhua)

India firecracker store blast kills 8: At least eight people, including some women, died and many others were injured when a series of powerful blasts ripped apart the house where firecrackers were stored in India’s eastern state of Bihar on Friday evening, local police confirmed.

Multiple explosions reportedly continued for more than an hour before a huge fire erupted inside the house in the state’s Siwan district, and part of the house collapsed as a result.

Senior district officials rushed to the site to oversee the rescue operation. Police said the injured were admitted to a local hospital and the rescue operation was still ongoing.

The death toll was feared to rise as some among the injured were in a critical condition.

According to the police, a large quantity of firecrackers was stored inside the ill-fated house ahead of the Diwali festival, which falls on November 8. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

3 killed in Afghanistan road accident: Three passengers were killed and two others injured after their vehicle veered off the road and flipped over in western Afghanistan’s Farah province, a local police official announced on Friday.

The mishap occurred when a high-speed Lexus car turned turtle due to reckless driving on the outskirts of Farah Rod district of the province, killing three commuters on the spot and injuring two others, said Mullah Kalimullah Nangyal, a provincial police spokesman.

Security personnel transferred the injured to a nearby medical facility for treatment, the official added. (Xinhua)

Oil price up by \$1.76 to \$114.09 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti oil price rose by USD 1.76 to hit USD 114.09 per barrel (pb) in Friday's trading, compared with USD 112.33 on Thursday, the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC)

said on Saturday. In global markets, Brent crude went up by USD 3.55 to hit USD 116.72 pb, and the US West Texas Intermediate crude rose by USD 3.80 to reach USD 103.27 pb.

Business

Expanding Zaheb ecosystem & providing businesses with the latest smart & secure digital solutions

KFH partners with Ordable/ for e-commerce & online ordering solutions

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: As part of its continuous commitment to supporting innovation, digital transformation, and entrepreneurs, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the signing of a strategic partnership with Ordable/, a leading e-commerce and online ordering platform. The collaboration aims to support local business owners in expanding their online presence, managing operations more effectively, and accepting payments flexibly and securely.

KFH Deputy General Manager Cards, Talal AlArbeed said: "The partnership reflects KFH's commitment to supporting digital transformation for SMEs and reinforcing their competitiveness in a business environment that is witnessing rapid digital acceleration."

"This partnership represents an important milestone in KFH's vision to provide merchants and business customers with cutting-edge, secure digital solutions, helping them upgrade their e-channels, adapt to fast-evolving market trends, and achieve long-term growth," AlArbeed added.

He explained that the partnership reflects ongoing efforts to develop the Zaheb platform, which has established itself as a reliable solution for payment management and advanced digital financial services for merchants. Through this collaboration, customers can access exclusive benefits, including a 15% discount on their first-year Ordable/ subscription, ultimately boosting operational efficiency and enhancing the overall business experience.

AlArbeed pointed out that the partnership equips merchants with cutting-edge tools to simplify daily operations and optimize order and payment management. Leveraging Ordable/'s all-in-one platform designed to foster business growth, the solution features fully integrated online stores, smart QR menus, advanced POS solutions, and diverse digital sales channels.

AlArbeed highlighted KFH's ongoing strategy to drive digital transformation in banking and empower local entrepreneurs and national institutions through strategic tech partnerships. This reinforces KFH's role as a trusted partner, equipping corporate customers with advanced financial and digital tools that boost efficiency and competitiveness.

This collaboration aligns with KFH's strategy to build an integrated ecosystem of digital solutions tailored to diverse customer segments, supporting the growth of Ku-



Talal AlArbeed



Salem Marafi

AlArbeed: We continue to lead digital transformation in payments and support entrepreneurs and national entities

wait's business environment by providing innovative tools that accelerate digital transformation and achieve maximum operational flexibility and efficiency.

KFH's Zahab service is an innovative digital payment solution designed to help corporates collect payments quickly and securely through payment links. Tailored to modern commercial needs and sales channels, Zahab streamlines payment and collection processes and boosts overall operational efficiency.

Meanwhile, Co-Founder of Ordable/, Mona Al-Baker stated: "We are proud of our strategic partnership with KFH, which enables us to empower entrepreneurs



Zaheb ecosystem

and SMEs across Kuwait to launch online stores and scale their digital sales channels. True digital transformation starts with intuitive solutions that streamline daily operations, giving business owners the freedom to focus on serving customers and expanding their business."

Co-Founder of Ordable/, Salem Marafi added: "Ordable/ delivers integrated e-commerce and order management solutions, including online store creation, point-of-sale (POS) systems, and digital QR menus, to help restaurants, cafés, and retail outlets streamline ordering, improve efficiency, and elevate the customer experience. Through our collaboration with Zahab, we aim to broaden merchant access to e-commerce and electronic payments, empowering them to expand their reach and build scalable, sustainable businesses."

Strengthening financial & investment cooperation between GCC & UK

Markaz participates in UK-GCC strategic dialogue in London

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" highlighted the importance of strengthening capital markets connectivity and expanding cross-border investment opportunities between the GCC and the United Kingdom during the UK-GCC Strategic Dialogue, held on 20 October 2026 at Guildhall in London. Organized by The Business Year in collaboration with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the dialogue brought together senior policymakers, investors and business leaders to explore strategic economic partnerships and opportunities for sustainable growth.

Mr. Abdulatif Alnusif, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Markaz participated in the session titled "Finance, Capital Markets and Investments," alongside Mr. Haitham Al Salmi, Chief Executive Officer of Muscat Stock Exchange, Abdulmohsin Al-mukhaizeem, Permanent President & CEO of Kuwait Investment Office, Londonand Edward Prince, Director of Large Corporates & International, UK Export Finance (UKEF). The panel was moderated by Ms. Zahara Choudri, Chief Economist at Economy Middle East, the discussion explored opportunities to strengthen the GCC capital markets ecosystem, enhance financial connectivity and facilitate cross-border capital flows.

Commenting on the dialogue, Mr. Alnusif said: "The GCC and the United Kingdom share longstanding investment relationships, with considerable potential to expand cooperation across capital markets and alternative investments. As investors increasingly seek diversified opportunities, greater market connectivity, regulatory transparency and strong institutional partnerships will be essential to facilitating capital flows and supporting sustainable economic growth."

He added: "The continued development of GCC capital markets presents significant opportunities for international investors. Strengthening ties with established financial centres such as London can support greater access to investment opportunities, enhance market efficiency and encourage knowledge exchange. At Markaz, our approach is grounded in disciplined investment strategies, in-depth market



Markaz joins UK-GCC dialogue on investments.

research and a long-term perspective on value creation."

The dialogue also addressed key areas shaping UK-GCC economic cooperation, including trade and investment promotion, digital economies, infrastructure development, industrial transformation and the evolving framework for cross-border trade and

investment.

Markaz's engagement in the dialogue reinforced its commitment to leveraging its investment expertise during these critical times, and international relationships to contribute to capital markets development and facilitate investment opportunities between Kuwait, the GCC and global markets.

Recognized for connectivity & customer experience excellence

stc Kuwait clinches two telecom excellence awards

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a leader in enabling digital transformation and providing innovative services and platforms to customers in Kuwait, announced that it won two prestigious awards at the Telecom Review Excellence Awards 2026. The Company received "Best 5G-Advanced Commercial Success - Global" and "Best Digital Customer Experience - Middle East", recognizing its success in developing advanced connectivity services and placing customer experience at the center of its digital transformation. The awards recognize stc's ongoing commitment to progressively enhance its digital solutions to both individual and corporate customers.

The awards ceremony took place in Dubai on Wednesday, 21 October 2026, alongside the 20th edition of the Telecom Review Leaders' Summit. stc was represented by Haamed Al Fulaj, General Manager of Customer Experience, and Turki Al Qarefah, Director of Access Network Planning & Design. The recognitions reflected the Company's efforts to translate its network capabilities into services that respond to customers' needs, while strengthening its approach to proactive care and personalized service.

Differentiated commercial services through 5G-Advanced

The "Best 5G-Advanced Commercial Success - Global" award recognized stc's ability to turn its investment in advanced network technologies into differentiated commercial offerings. Its achievements extended across home broadband and smart security, alongside services designed around the interests of younger customers and Kuwait's gaming community.

Within its e-gaming portfolio, stc addressed growing demand from professional gamers and competitive gaming enthusiasts. Its tailored youth 5G-Advanced plans combined connectivity with digital lifestyle benefits and device offers, providing services relevant to how younger customers connect and spend their time online.

The award also recognized stc's position in fixed wireless access (FWA). With Kuwait's largest subscriber base for high-performance 5G outdoor units



stc wins two awards for '5G-Advanced Commercial Success' and 'Digital Customer Experience' at Telecom Review Excellence Awards 2026.

(ODUs), the Company brought wireless broadband with a fiber-like experience to more households. This demonstrated its success in converting network advantages into broad customer adoption and strengthening its position in the home broadband market.

Through baity 5G aman, stc also became the first operator in Kuwait to launch dedicated, integrated CCTV smart security plans. The service combined high-speed 5G connectivity with multi-camera monitoring, extending the role of home broadband to support smart home security. This approach created additional value for customers while opening new commercial opportunities for the Company.

Excellence in digital customer experience

The "Best Digital Customer Experience - Middle East" award recognized stc's efforts to connect net-

work development with improvements that customers could experience in their daily lives. Continuous software innovation and network optimization supported more reliable home connectivity, with benefits extending to smoother streaming and more responsive gaming.

The digital experience management platforms launched by stc helped detect and resolve potential customer issues before they occurred. The Company's team closely monitored customer preferences to support continuous improvements to the services provided to users.

In this regard, the Company relied on the expertise of its network teams and its technical resources to meet different customer needs and develop applications, while providing tiered service assurance. This supported more consistent experiences for premium services, including gaming and video, particularly during busy periods. Its use of artificial intelligence and intelligent network technologies further supported the development of more personalized digital services, including real-time call translation.

Innovation guided by customer needs

In a statement, stc said the awards reflected its commitment to ensuring that advances in its network delivered tangible benefits to customers. The Company emphasized that network development and customer experience were closely connected priorities, with its approach to innovation guided by how people used its services in their daily lives. It explained that the recognition highlighted the importance of combining advanced connectivity with services that were relevant to customers' needs, supported by proactive care and a more personalized experience.

The Company added that it would continue building on these achievements through the ongoing development of its digital services and 5G-Advanced capabilities. stc reaffirmed its commitment to responding to changing customer expectations and exploring technologies that could improve the way people connected at home and on the move. These efforts remained central to its role in enabling digital transformation in Kuwait and its ambition to deliver greater value through reliable connectivity and innovative digital solutions.



stc receives the award at The Ritz-Carlton, Dubai.



Haamed Al Fulaj and Turki Al Qarefah during the award presentation.

Other Voices

Oil is hovering above \$100 a barrel globally

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

ANY imminent escalation between the United States and Iran would almost certainly push oil prices above \$150 a barrel, with petroleum product prices exceeding \$250, particularly heating oil.

The current political situation in the Arabian Gulf region is highly volatile. This could lead to war and eventually result in the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

Global oil inventories are currently tight, and any further withdrawals from strategic oil reserves could place additional pressure on efforts to rebuild inventories worldwide. Concerns are growing over the possibility of a further decline in global crude oil inventories as a result of daily threats to close the Gulf.

The current oil market, both for crude oil and, more particularly, petroleum products, remains tight. This has led to an intense search for any available surplus oil to replenish inventories in consuming countries.

With oil prices already at elevated levels, Russian Urals crude is trading at \$133 a barrel. The United States is also importing more oil from Russia following the easing of restrictions, includ-

ing the resumption of Russian diesel imports during the winter months. These imports could continue for longer, depending on demand in the United States and its commitment to supplying Europe with finished petroleum products. The United States is also dependent on oil imports from Venezuela.

The United States has reached an agreement with Russia following the lifting of the boycott, allowing Russia to supply more than 300,000 tons of diesel fuel, with an additional 500,000 tons scheduled for November, followed by one million tons and up to three million tons thereafter.

Given the current oil market situation and the uncertainties surrounding global supplies, it would not be surprising to see oil prices rise further. Alternative sources of oil are limited, while daily threats to close the Strait of Hormuz remain a major concern. Any escalation or outbreak of war involving Iran could lead to the closure of the Arabian Gulf, bringing oil shipments from the Gulf to an almost complete halt.

The global oil supply situation is certainly on the brink, and any further disruption could trigger panic in an already tight market, pushing oil prices to significantly higher levels.

Consequently, oil prices reaching \$135- \$140 a barrel are entirely possible, triggering an explosive rise in global inflation. This is a scenario we sincerely hope to avoid.

email: nafikkuwaiti@yahoo.com



Al-Harami

Recording a growth of 30 percent

KIB Group reports net profit of KD 26.6 million in the nine months of 2026

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman of Kuwait International Bank (KIB), announced that KIB Group achieved net profit attributable to the Bank’s shareholders of KD 26.6 million for the nine months ended 30 September 2026, compared to KD 20.4 million in the same period in 2025, representing a growth of 30%. Earnings per share reached 13.51 fils, compared to 9.98 fils in the same period in 2025. Meanwhile, net profit attributable to shareholders for the third quarter alone reached approximately KD 9 million, representing a growth of 62%.

Commenting on the results, Al-Jarrah said: “KIB’s financial results for the first nine months of 2026 reflect the Bank’s continued success in sustaining growth and delivering balanced performance amid a regional environment marked by rapid developments and their broader impact on markets. Supported by our comprehensive strategy, we have effectively navigated these developments while maintaining our focus on business quality, diversifying income streams, enhancing operational efficiency, and managing risks prudently.”

He added: “During the period, KIB continued to advance its strategic priorities, building on the strength of its core business and its longstanding expertise in Islamic banking and capital markets. The progress achieved across the Bank’s operations during the year also demonstrated its ability to expand its range of innovative products and services, further diversify its revenue and funding sources, strengthen relationships with clients and investors, and broaden its presence in local and regional capital markets.”

Regarding the Group’s financial position, Al-Jarrah stated that KIB’s total assets grew by 8% to reach KD 4.74 billion as of 30 September 2026, compared to KD 4.37 billion as of 30 September 2025. This growth was driven by an increase in the financing portfolio, which rose by 8% or KD 269 million to reach KD 3.48 billion, compared to KD 3.21 billion for the same period of 2025. Meanwhile, its investment portfolio, which includes high-quality Sukuk, grew by 12% or KD 62 million, reaching approximately KD 582.7 million as of 30 September 2026, compared to KD 520.4 million as of 30 September 2025.

A more diversified and resilient business model
For his part, Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and CEO of KIB, stated: “KIB’s results for the first nine months of the year reflect our continued efforts to develop a more diversified and resilient business model, while maintaining a strong focus on enhancing operational efficiency and improving service quality. We also continued to invest in our human capital and technological capabilities, and to develop solutions that respond to evolving market dynamics and the changing needs of our customers.”

He added: “While we continue to strengthen our local business, the period also saw a notable expansion in KIB’s activity across regional capital markets. This reflects our ability to leverage our banking and investment expertise in new markets and reinforces our position as a trusted partner in Islamic



Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman



Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and CEO

finance.”

Growth across key financial indicators

Bukhamseen provided an overview of the key financial results for the first nine months of 2026 compared to the same period of last year. Net fee and commission income rose to KD 10.3 million from KD 7.7 million, representing a growth of 33%. Net investment income also increased to KD 4.5 million from KD 4.3 million, representing growth of 4%. These increases contributed to a 7% rise in total operating income compared to the first nine months of 2025, reaching KD 69 million.

Regarding the Group’s financial position, Bukhamseen said that KIB’s customers’ deposits grew by 2% to reach KD 3.08 billion as of 30 September 2026 compared to KD 3.03 billion as of 30 September 2025. In addition, the total shareholders equity grew 1% to reach KD 374 million as of 30 September 2026 compared to KD 371 million as of 30 September 2025. He noted that KIB continues to maintain high levels of total capital adequacy ratio, in accordance with Basel III requirements, reaching 20.32% as of 30 September 2026. The liquidity coverage ratio stood at 238.1% as at 30 September 2026, supporting the Bank’s ability to continue implementing its growth plans.

USD 500 Million Sukuk Issuance

In this context, Bukhamseen highlighted KIB’s successful pricing in September 2026 of its inaugural USD 500 million five-year senior unsecured Sukuk issuance, under the Bank’s USD 1.5 billion Sukuk Program.

Bukhamseen noted that the sukuk attracted strong investor demand, with the orderbook reaching ap-

proximately USD 1.2 billion, equivalent to 2.4 times the issuance size. The final spread was set at 95 basis points over the yield on US Treasury securities, with a profit rate of 5.502% per annum. He added that the issuance represents an important addition to KIB’s long-term funding base, providing greater flexibility in managing liquidity and liabilities. The strong demand also underscores investor confidence in the Bank’s ability to access international capital markets and leverage Sharia-compliant instruments to support its future growth plans.

Growing Presence in Regional Capital Markets, Achievements and Prestigious Awards

At the regional level, KIB, through its Islamic investment arm, KIB Invest, acted as a Joint Lead Manager in the pricing of the third international Sukuk issuance guaranteed by the Government of Saudi Arabia for the Saudi Real Estate Refinance Company, with a total value of USD 2.75 billion. This supports the Bank’s direction towards expanding its network of relationships with financial institutions and international investors, while further developing its activities across debt capital markets and Islamic finance.

KIB continued to earn prestigious regional and international awards, reflecting the strength of its business model and its leadership in the banking sector. The Bank was named “Best Bank for Real Estate Banking Services and Innovation in PropTech in Kuwait for 2026” by the World Union of Arab Bankers, in recognition of its leadership in delivering integrated real estate banking services and developing innovative digital solutions that enhance the experience of customers and investors. KIB received

the award during the Arab Banks Awards and Commendations of Excellence 2026 ceremony.

The Bank also received two prestigious awards from Islamic Finance News (IFN) for its USD 300 million Tier 2 Sukuk issuance: “IFN Kuwait Deal of the Year 2025” and “IFN Regulatory Deal of the Year 2025”. The recognition underscores the significance of the issuance and KIB’s strong standing in the Islamic capital markets. The awards were presented at the IFN Awards ceremony held in Dubai.

A continued strategy for growth and sustainability

Al-Jarrah and Bukhamseen affirmed that KIB’s results for the first nine months of 2026 demonstrate the Bank’s ability to continue executing its strategic plans amid an evolving regional environment, while maintaining a clear balance between growth, profitability, and risk management.

They added that the Bank’s priorities for the next phase include developing its core businesses, diversifying income sources, improving operational efficiency, continuing investment in technology and enhancing the customer experience, while maintaining a balanced approach to capital, liquidity and risk management.

In their concluding remarks, Al-Jarrah and Bukhamseen expressed their appreciation for the regulatory and supervisory role of the Central Bank of Kuwait and the pivotal role of the Capital Markets Authority in strengthening Kuwait’s investment environment. They also commended the efforts of the Board of Directors, Executive Management, and all KIB employees, noting that the achievements during the period reflect the collective efforts across the Bank and its continued focus on building a stronger, more sustainable foundation for growth.

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.

‘Let’s Be Aware’ campaign

ABK warns of AI-powered fraud risks

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: As part of its ongoing support for the ‘Let’s Be Aware’ (Diraya) campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in collaboration with the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) and local banks, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is raising awareness about emerging fraud risks associated with artificial intelligence (AI) technologies and the importance of remaining vigilant in an increasingly digital environment.

ABK highlighted that while AI offers numerous benefits across various industries, cybercriminals are increasingly leveraging advanced technologies to create more convincing scams designed to deceive individuals and obtain personal, financial, or banking information. As fraud techniques continue to evolve, awareness and verification remain critical tools in protecting customers from financial crime.

The Bank warned customers about the growing prevalence of deepfake voice scams, in which fraudsters use AI to generate realistic voice recordings that may imitate family members, colleagues, public figures, or representatives of trusted organizations. These scams are often designed to create a sense of urgency and persuade individuals to share sensitive information or transfer funds without conducting



proper verification.

ABK also highlighted the rise of AI-generated phishing messages, which are becoming increasingly sophisticated and difficult to distinguish from legitimate communications. Fraudulent emails, text messages, and online messages may appear highly convincing, using professional language and realistic branding to encourage recipients to click malicious links or disclose confidential information.

In addition, the Bank cautioned customers against fake customer service interactions conducted through social media platforms, messaging applications, or fraudulent websites. Scammers may impersonate banks, government entities, or well-known organizations and request personal information, passwords, one-time passwords (OTPs), or account details under the guise of providing assistance or resolving an issue.

ABK emphasized that customers should never rely solely on

the appearance of a message, phone call, or online interaction when determining its authenticity. Instead, individuals should independently verify any request involving financial information, account access, payments, or personal data by contacting the organization directly through its official channels.

The Bank further encouraged customers to remain cautious when faced with urgent requests, unexpected communications, or offers that appear too good to be true. Taking a few moments to verify information before responding can significantly reduce the risk of becoming a victim of fraud.

ABK noted that cybersecurity awareness must continue to evolve alongside technological advancements. While AI may enhance the sophistication of fraudulent schemes, maintaining strong security practices, exercising caution, and verifying information through trusted sources remain effective defenses against financial fraud.

Through its participation in the ‘Let’s Be Aware’ campaign, ABK remains committed to promoting financial literacy and cybersecurity awareness by equipping customers with the knowledge and tools needed to identify emerging threats and protect their personal and financial information.

IMF sees AI boosting Gulf, Central Asia growth

DUBAI, Oct 24, (Xinhua): Artificial intelligence (AI) adoption could boost annual economic growth in the Middle East and Central Asia by 0.1 to 0.6 percentage points over the medium term, depending on countries’ digital readiness and their ability to integrate the technology into productive activities, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said Thursday.

The assessment was presented at a joint press conference by the Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC) and the IMF in Dubai, highlighting findings from the fund’s October Regional Economic Outlook for the Middle

East and Central Asia.

The adoption of AI offers economies in the Middle East and Central Asia a unique opportunity to raise productivity and strengthen medium-term growth, the report said, adding that several Gulf Cooperation Council countries, including the United Arab Emirates (UAE), are making substantial investments to position themselves as global AI hubs.

The IMF raised its forecast for the UAE’s economic growth in 2027 to 7.7 percent, up 2.4 percentage points from its April projection, with AI investment estimated to add around 0.5 per-

centage points to the country’s annual economic growth.

The fund stressed the importance of continued investment in digital infrastructure, education, skills development and innovation to improve productivity and support economic diversification, according to the report.

In tandem with its policy guidance, the IMF noted that it had provided approximately 48 billion U.S. dollars in financing to countries in the Middle East and Central Asia since 2020 and implemented 437 technical assistance and capacity development projects across 31 countries during fiscal year 2026.



Key Financial Results
for the 9 months ended
in 30 September 2026

Profit attributable to shareholders

30%↑

	9M 2026	9M 2025	
Earnings per share	13.51 Fils	9.98 Fils	35% ↑
Operating income	69.0 Million KD	64.7 Million KD	7% ↑
Total assets	4.74 Billion KD	4.37 Billion KD	8% ↑
Financing receivables	3.48 Billion KD	3.21 Billion KD	8% ↑
Depositors’ accounts	3.08 Billion KD	3.03 Billion KD	2% ↑

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 KIBpage

Al-Othman joins Kuwait’s annual investment summit

NBK sponsors MoneyTech 2026 summit

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announced its strategic sponsorship of MoneyTech 2026, the leading annual summit bringing together prominent decision-makers and leaders in investment, business and technology from across the region. The summit is scheduled to take place on November 1, 2026, at The St. Regis Kuwait.

NBK’s participation in the event underscores its commitment to supporting initiatives and dialogue platforms that help shape the future of the financial sector and foster the exchange of expertise and perspectives on the rapid economic and technological transformations reshaping the global financial industry.

Mohammed Al-Othman, Chief Executive Officer, Consumer and Digital Banking at NBK, will participate in a panel discussion titled “How is digital banking reshaping customer experience and behavior?”, alongside a distinguished group of senior executives, experts and industry specialists. The discussion will explore key trends in financial markets, the future of wealth management and investment opportunities amid evolving global economic conditions, as well as the growing role of technology and innovation in advancing financial services and enhancing customer experience.

MoneyTech 2026, the fifth edition of Kuwait’s annual summit at the intersection of investment, business and technology, is organized by Aljarida, Kuwait’s leading news organization. This year’s summit turns its attention to the businesses and institutions that



Mohammed Al-Othman

have navigated extraordinary disruption in global markets, preserved business continuity and developed more resilient operating models capable of sustaining growth.

The summit brings together wealth managers, investors, venture capitalists, entrepreneurs and tech executives from across the Gulf to discuss key issues, including investing through uncertainty, the future of M&A, the case for bringing regional wealth home, and the opportunities presented by financial technology to drive economic growth.

In this context, NBK reaffirms its commitment to maintaining its leading role in driving digital transformation and developing innovative banking solutions that respond to customers’



evolving needs, in line with its strategy to foster innovation and leverage advanced technologies to deliver a more sophisticated and efficient banking experience.

NBK’s sponsorship of the summit reflects its continued commitment to supporting initiatives at the intersection of investment, technology and innovation, while contributing to discussions on the future of financial services and the opportunities that will shape the region’s digital economy in the years ahead.

Reinforcing commitment to women’s health

ALSAYER promotes early breast cancer detection



Photos during the campaign.



KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: ALSAYER Group, in collaboration with Badr Medical Center, organized a Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign at its KFTZ1 headquarters on 19 October, 2026, coinciding with Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The campaign featured an educational session addressing breast cancer prevention, risk factors, early warning signs, and the importance of regular screenings. Participants also had the opportunity to consult healthcare professionals and receive complimentary medical check-ups.

Eng. Nehad Al Haj Ali, Group Manager of the Corporate Excellence Department at ALSAYER Group, said the initiative aimed to empower women to make informed health decisions and encourage them to prioritize early detection and preventive care.

He added that employee health and wellbeing remain integral to ALSAYER Group’s sustainability and social responsibility priorities, reaffirming its commitment to supporting health awareness programs that enhance quality of life and contribute to sustainable social impact across Kuwait.

US designates helium as a critical material

WASHINGTON, Oct 24, (AP): The U.S. designated helium as a critical material on Friday because it’s indispensable for making semiconductors that are essential to energy generation, and the global supply is at risk of disruption, according to the Energy Department.

The designation by the Energy Department means that more federal financing will be available for helium producers and that the government will monitor it more closely. Helium is primarily produced as a byproduct of natural gas processing. The United States is the world’s largest producer of natural gas and of helium. Qatar and Russia are the other top helium producers.

Exports of Qatar’s helium supply have been severely curtailed by Iran’s closure of the Strait of Hormuz as a result of its war with Israel and the U.S. Iranian strikes on Qatar’s infrastructure have also impacted supply. Russia imposed temporary export controls on helium in April to protect its domestic supply.

Energy Secretary Chris Wright said the Trump administration is freeing America from reliance on foreign sources of critical materials, strengthening domestic manufacturing, supporting American jobs and securing the materials essential to U.S. economic and national security.

“President Trump is bringing back America’s manufacturing industry, and that means making sure we have the materials needed to build things in America again,” Wright said in a statement.

Metallurgical coal used for steelmaking was the last one to be added, in 2025. The only other gas on the list is fluorine.

To make the critical materials list, a non-fuel mineral element or substance must serve an essential function in one or more energy technologies and there must be a high risk of disruption to the supply chain.

Helium makes balloons rise, but that’s not why the DOE is interested in it. Helium plays an important role in wind, solar and nuclear energy production, space exploration, medical imaging and research.

Assistant Secretary of Energy Audrey Robertson said helium’s unique properties make it irreplaceable, such as the fact that it’s non-combustible and has the lowest boiling point of any gas. The nation needs an ample supply for semiconductors, quantum and super computing, and superconducting magnets, added Robertson, who oversees the Office of Critical Minerals and Energy Innovation.

“We need to make sure that we can build those here. And helium is one of those components that could be a single point of failure, where we cannot let that happen. That’s why we’re designating it within our statutory authority, but I think why it’s important is not necessarily for our birthday parties,” Robertson said in an interview. “It’s really towards the future of American competitiveness and energy security, which we believe is national security.”

David Isaacs, vice president of the Semiconductor Industry Association trade group, noted helium plays an essential role in the industry’s cooling, photolithography, leak detection and more.

“We look forward to continuing to work with government and industry leaders in the U.S. and across the world to strengthen semiconductor supply chain resilience,” Isaacs said.

The United States designates both critical minerals and critical materials, and there is some crossover between them. The U.S. Geological Survey included helium on a 2018 list of critical minerals, but later lists omitted it because the domestic supply of helium was considered secure.

Despite environmental concerns with recovering helium from natural gas, there are also opportunities, said Greeshma Gadikota, director of the Lenfest Center for Sustainable Energy at Columbia University.

“If we burn the natural gas, there are a lot of CO2 emissions associated with that,” Gadikota said. “But if you just extract the helium and use it, the uses of it don’t contribute necessarily to greenhouse gas emissions.

“So from a climate standpoint, if we are going to continue down the line of extracting natural gas

and recovering helium,” she added, “I would prefer to see natural gas being used in a form where we directly produce hydrogen and we produce solid carbon.” Hydrogen is a clean burning fuel, and solid carbon can provide permanent carbon sequestration and can be used widely in industrial applications, including rubber and pigments.

There used to be a strategic national stockpile in Texas for helium, much like America’s Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Congress mandated in 2013 that it be privatized. The Bureau of Land Management completed the sale of the federal helium system to the industrial gas company Messer in 2024.

The U.S. produced 81 million cubic meters of helium in 2025, or 43% of the global supply. Of that, 38 million cubic meters of helium was exported. The U.S. has produced roughly 80 million cubic meters of helium annually since 2021.

There are large helium reserves in Wyoming, Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado and Utah. Though there are abundant helium resources, helium extraction plants are at their limits and it takes years to permit and build new ones, which continues to constrain U.S. production, according to DOE.

The plants extracting the most helium, as of 2023, were located in Kansas, Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Oklahoma, according to federal data.

Some in the helium industry have urged the U.S. government to formally designate helium as a critical resource. The North American gas exploration company Avanti Helium Corp. says it’s urgent, and an increase in North American supply is needed to avoid becoming dependent on foreign sources.

“We are very pleased to have helium recognized as a critical material,” said Avanti Helium CEO Chris Bakker. “The U.S. has the potential to remain self-sufficient in helium. However, this will require investment in exploration for new reserves and inclusion on the critical materials list will bring significant support to these efforts.”

Eswatini ‘showcases’ stronger Kuwait economic partnership

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The International Women’s Group (IWG) Kuwait, in collaboration with the Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini in the State of Kuwait, hosted an Eswatini Cultural Evening on Sunday, October 18, 2026, at the Baraka Ballroom, Crowne Plaza Farwaniya Kuwait. Honored by the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Temaswati Dlamini and Her Royal Highness Senior Princess Tsandzile, the evening celebrated the Kingdom’s rich cultural heritage, traditions and spirit.

The event commenced with opening remarks by IWG Public Relations Coordinator Mrs. Leila Bulos, followed by a welcome address delivered by IWG President Mrs. Mona Haddad El Khoury, spouse of the Ambassador of the Republic of Lebanon.

„Discover, Connect, Empower,” she highlighted the opportunity to discover Eswatini’s rich cultural heritage, strengthen the bonds of friendship between Eswatini and Kuwait, and promote women’s leadership and empowerment. She acknowledged the inspiration offered by the Princess, an Eswatini senator and advocate for women who pursued her education in Kuwait.

H.E. Nkululeko Dlamini, Ambassador of Eswatini, then addressed the gathering, thanking the IWG for its unwavering support in celebrating the cultures and traditions of different countries. He noted that it was an honor for the Embassy to celebrate Eswatini’s cultural heritage in the presence of Their Royal Highnesses, particularly during the year marking the 40th anniversary of His Majesty King Mswati III’s accession to the throne. He also thanked his spouse, Mrs. Polina Dlamini, for making her dream of showcasing Eswatini’s rich, vibrant and unique culture with the IWG a reality.

A tourism presentation introduced members to Eswatini’s attractions, while Mrs. Aziza Khan shared a personal account of the IWG visit to the Kingdom in 2025.

In an informative address, Eswatini Senator and Member of Parliament Mrs. Lorraine Nxumalo highlighted the importance of women’s participation in parliament and their contribution to national development. She discussed women’s increasing role in combating gender-based violence and noted Eswatini’s steadily growing representation of women lawmakers. She emphasized that women’s development extends beyond leadership to include access to education, healthcare and economic opportunities, calling for stronger financial support for women entrepreneurs, particularly in rural communities. She also highlighted the shared aspirations of Eswatini and Kuwait to build inclusive societies in which women can thrive.

HRH Princess Temaswati Dlamini spoke warmly of the longstanding relationship between Kuwait and Eswatini, emphasizing their shared commitment to peace, stability and friendship despite their geographical distance. Having pursued her tertiary education in Kuwait, she described the country as her second home and expressed confidence that the bond between the two nations would continue to strengthen.

An interactive quiz encouraged members to test their knowledge of Eswatini, drawing on the presentations and displays around the ballroom, with gifts from the Kingdom awarded for correct answers. HRH Senior Princess Tsandzile then presented traditional Eswatini attire, explaining the individual garments and accessories worn by young maidens and women, both married and unmarried.

A captivating performance by the Eswatini Cultural Group brought the Kingdom’s traditions to life through music and dance. Led by HRH Princess Temaswati, the group delighted guests with its synchronized performances and a song composed especially for the occasion, expressing gratitude to Kuwait and celebrating the friendship and shared aspirations of the two nations. Members cheered, waved Eswatini flags and captured photographs and videos of the memorable performance.

The program also included a presentation on investment opportunities in Eswatini. Throughout the evening, the master of ceremonies encouraged members to explore the displays and discover more about the Kingdom’s culture, traditions and products. Pictures of Eswatini’s sugarcane, citrus fruits, timber products and striking landscapes completed the displays.

A raffle showcased a wide selection of Eswatini products and handicrafts, including Swazi Secrets marula products, Lulu hair and beauty products, Ngwenya Glass, Swazi Fire chili products and hot sauces, Gone Rural woven grass products, Swazi Candles, hand-painted ceramic plates, handmade earrings, designer clothing and jewelry.

A closing dance led by Their Royal Highnesses brought the audience together once more. Sung in siSwati, the accompanying song celebrated relations between Eswatini and Kuwait, as guests waved their flags in appreciation of the enduring friendship between the two countries.

The IWG also arranged a special birthday celebration for HRH Princess Temaswati, adding a personal and joyful moment to the evening.

Traditional singing and dancing continued as the buffet opened, featuring Swazi cuisine and bringing the evening to a close in a spirit of friendship and cultural exchange.



Photos during the event.

Trump eases Canadian tariffs ahead of midterms

WASHINGTON, Oct 24, (AP): President Donald Trump, seeking to help Republican Sen. Susan Collins in a tough reelection battle in Maine, is exempting some imports - including plywood sheets, packing crates and some machinery - from the 50% tariffs he slapped on \$20 billion worth of Canadian products over the summer. The changes will take effect Oct. 30.

The White House said the president was seeking to offset “the burden to U.S. commerce while better serving the public interest.”

Collins, locked in a tight race with Democratic challenger Troy Jackson, issued a statement saying she’d spoken with Trump’s top trade negotiator, Jamieson Greer, and Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick “about the toll tariffs are taking on Maine families, businesses, farmers, and growers.”

“Many of our farmers and growers rely on specialized equipment, packaging materials, and other products from Canada that are either unavailable from American suppliers or cannot be replaced without incurring significant expense,” Collins said.

She said she asked for tariff relief for such products “and stressed the burdens additional costs impose on Maine businesses and families.”

Collins said she’d seek “additional relief from tariffs and encourage a broader trade agreement with Canada, our neighbor, ally, and largest trading partner.”

Trump started a trade war with America’s longstanding ally and northern neighbor, reaching back to a Depression-era trade law to impose tariffs on Canadian imports. He charged that Canada discriminates against U.S. dairy, auto and alcoholic beverage producers. Canada promptly lashed back with tariffs of 15% to 50% on American products, matching Trump’s import taxes dollar for dollar.

Trump ratcheted the dispute up from there last month by imposing a flat-out ban on \$1 billion worth of Canadian imports, including alcoholic beverages, dairy products and motorcycles.

The U.S. president has claimed that foreign countries pay his tariffs. In fact, U.S. importers do. And they often face the tough choice of having to pass along the higher costs to their customers or absorb them.

What's On SPOTLIGHT



Vanguard Orchestra playing on Jazeera Airways.

Jazeera Airways organizes live orchestra performance in flight

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Jazeera Airways transformed a routine flight from Cairo to Kuwait into an extraordinary musical experience as members of the Vanguard Symphony Orchestra treated passengers to a special live performance, bringing the magic of orchestral music to the skies.

The musicians, travelling to Kuwait for a performance at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre (JACC), surprised fellow passengers with an impromptu musical interlude, creating a memorable experience that brought together the joy of travel and the universal language of music.

Jazeera Airways is one of the sponsors of the Vanguard Symphony Orchestra, performing in Kuwait under the musical direction of acclaimed Kuwaiti maestro Nawaf Gheraibeh, who composed and conducts the production. The performance at JACC celebrates musical creativity and artistic excellence, bringing together talented musicians for a unique cultural experience.

Barathan Paspupathi, Chief Executive Officer, Jazeera Airways, said: “At Jazeera Airways, we believe that travel is about more than reaching a destination. It is about connecting people, cultures and experiences. Having members of the Vanguard Symphony Orchestra flying to Kuwait and perform on board was a wonderful surprise for our passengers and a truly special moment for everyone on the flight. We are delighted to play a part in bringing talented musicians to Kuwait and supporting the country’s growing reputation as a vibrant destination for arts, culture and entertainment.”

The unique in-flight performance reflects Jazeera Airways’ commitment to creating memorable travel experiences while supporting Kuwait’s flourishing cultural and entertainment scene. Through its collaboration with Visit Kuwait, the airline continues to showcase the country’s growing calendar of world-class cultural, sporting and entertainment events, attracting visitors from across the region and beyond. By connecting artists, audiences and destinations, Jazeera Airways is playing an active role in promoting Kuwait as a vibrant tourism hub and a destination for unique experiences.

InterContinental Kuwait Al Thuraya City, a Jazeera Airways partner in promoting tourism to Kuwait is also sponsoring the Orchestra in Kuwait.

Elie Saliba, Cluster General Manager, IHG Hotels in Kuwait, highlighted: “InterContinental Kuwait Al Thuraya City, in partnership with Jazeera Airways to promote Kuwait as a distinguished destination, is proud to sponsor the Vanguard Symphony Orchestra. Ahead of its highly anticipated opening, this collaboration reflects the brand’s enduring appreciation for artistic excellence and its commitment to celebrating Kuwait’s rich cultural heritage, fostering meaningful connections, and embracing the spirit of cultural discovery that lies at the heart of the InterContinental experience.”

Connecting Kuwait with Cairo and destinations across the Middle East, Asia, Europe and Africa, Jazeera Airways continues to bring people together through experiences that go beyond the journey.

Expanding entertainment footprint into Saudi Arabia

Zain Play debut in Riyadh draws 32,600 attendees

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Zain Group, a leading regional TechCo, celebrated the resounding success of Zain Play’s debut in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where its musical production, ‘Zain, Queen of All Hearts,’ captivated over 32,600 attendees across a completely sold-out run of 12 shows. The achievement marks a significant expansion of Zain Play’s regional presence, bringing its beloved theatrical experience to audiences in the Kingdom for the first time.

Held at The Venue in Riyadh with two shows daily from September 27 to October 2, 2026, the production witnessed overwhelming demand, with every performance selling out. The musical quickly became one of the season’s most talked-about entertainment experiences, generating widespread engagement across social media platforms that saw over 57 million views with countless enthusiastic reactions from audiences, influencers, and critics.

The production’s success also reflects Zain Group’s TechCo transformation and focus on multiple new business verticals, including entertainment, complementing its groupwide Dizlee API content monetization platform. It also reaffirms the company’s commitment to bringing its purpose, “Better Lives. Lasting Connections.”, to life through memorable experiences that inspire joy, strengthen emotional connections, and bring communities together, extending its impact beyond traditional telecommunications services.

The production was led by Zain Group, with support from Zain KSA through local coordination and on-ground facilitation, in partnership with Joy Productions, webook, and Sela. The successful collaboration reflects Zain Group’s ability to deliver large-scale entertainment experiences across its regional footprint, bringing together creative talent and strategic partnerships to engage audiences in meaningful ways.

The Riyadh debut builds on the remarkable 15-year journey of Zain Play, which has established itself as one of the region’s leading theatrical initiatives for children and families. Over the years, its original musical productions have brought generations together through captivating storytelling, memorable music, and inspiring messages, creating shared experiences that extend well beyond the stage.

Through ‘Zain, Queen of All Hearts,’ audiences were immersed in a vibrant theatrical experience combining music, fantasy, elaborate stage designs, and visual effects. At the heart of the production was an inspiring story celebrating confidence, courage, kindness, hope, and perseverance, encouraging children to embrace their individuality, pursue their dreams, and discover their own potential.

The overwhelming response in Riyadh reflects the growing appeal of Zain Play beyond its home market, demonstrating the ability of meaningful



Cast and crew of the Zain Play in Riyadh.

creative content to resonate with audiences across different cultures and communities.

The success of Zain Play’s Riyadh debut further reinforces Zain’s standing as one of the region’s most recognizable and admired brands. Earlier this year, Brand Finance valued the Zain brand at a record USD 4.039 billion, reflecting a 16.1% year-on-year increase, while ranking it among the world’s 25 strongest telecom brands with an AAA-brand strength rating.

The expansion of Zain Play into Saudi Arabia reflects the Group’s continued investment in cre-

ativity, cultural experiences, and meaningful audience engagement, further strengthening brand affinity and emotional connections with communities across its regional footprint.

Zain Group extended its appreciation to the thousands of families and theatergoers who embraced the production, as well as the cast, creative teams, and partners whose dedication contributed to its success. The landmark Riyadh debut adds a new chapter to Zain Play’s legacy of bringing imagination to life and creating memorable experiences for families across the region.

Factsheet on Kazakhstan’s Republic Day & 35th Anniversary of Independence

Republic Day, celebrated on 25 October, commemorates Kazakhstan’s 1990 Declaration of State Sovereignty. On 16 December 2026, the country marks 35 years since declaring independence in 1991. Together, these milestones mark Kazakhstan’s path from the declaration of sovereignty to full independence. Over those 35 years, Kazakhstan has developed from a newly independent republic into a sovereign state with established national institutions, Central Asia’s largest economy and an active international diplomatic presence.

This factsheet outlines that progress through state-building, economic and social development, nuclear disarmament, international cooperation and technological modernisation. It also considers the country’s future priorities. The institutions, economic foundations, international relationships and human potential developed since independence provide a basis for the next stage: a more diversified economy, stronger innovation and further improvements in people’s lives.

Republic Day and the road to independence

- The 1990 Declaration asserted territorial integrity, the supremacy of republican law and independent decision-making within the Soviet Union, laying foundations for independence. Republic Day’s national holiday status was restored in 2022.

- The Constitutional Law on State Independence, adopted on 16 December 1991, established an independent republic, completing Kazakhstan’s transition from asserting sovereignty to full independence.

- Kazakh statehood has roots in the Kazakh Khanate, founded by Kerey and Zhanibek in the fifteenth century, conventionally dated to 1465–1466, and Eurasian steppe traditions.

- Kazakhstan joined the United Nations on 2 March 1992, adopted its flag and coat of arms on 4 June 1992, and introduced the tenge on 15 November 1993, creating its own monetary system.

Building a modern sovereign state

- Independence brought national government institutions, armed forces and a diplomatic service. The first post-independence Constitution was adopted in January 1993; the August 1995 Constitution guided development for three decades.

- The capital moved from Almaty to Akmola on 10 December 1997. Renamed Astana in 1998, the city developed into an administrative and diplomatic centre.

- Following the 2022 constitutional reforms, the Constitutional Court began operating in January 2023, allowing citizens to challenge legal provisions affecting their constitutional rights.

- The new Constitution, adopted by referendum on 15 March 2026 and in force from 1 July, retains a single seven-year presidential term and explicitly protects personal data, including in digital services.

- The new 145-member, single-chamber legislature, the Kurultai, was elected on 23 August 2026 and opened its first session on 28 August. The vice-presidential office introduced by the Constitution was filled on 31 August.

Economic transformation and global markets

- Since independence, Kazakhstan has become Central Asia’s largest economy and upper-middle-income status. GDP reached \$306 billion in 2025; the economy grew by 6.5% that year, adjusted for inflation.

- Foreign investment has supported energy, mining, manufacturing and services. By July 2026, Kazakhstan’s accumulated net foreign direct investment had exceeded US\$150 billion.

- Kazakhstan joined the World Trade Organization in November 2015, committing to internationally agreed trade rules.

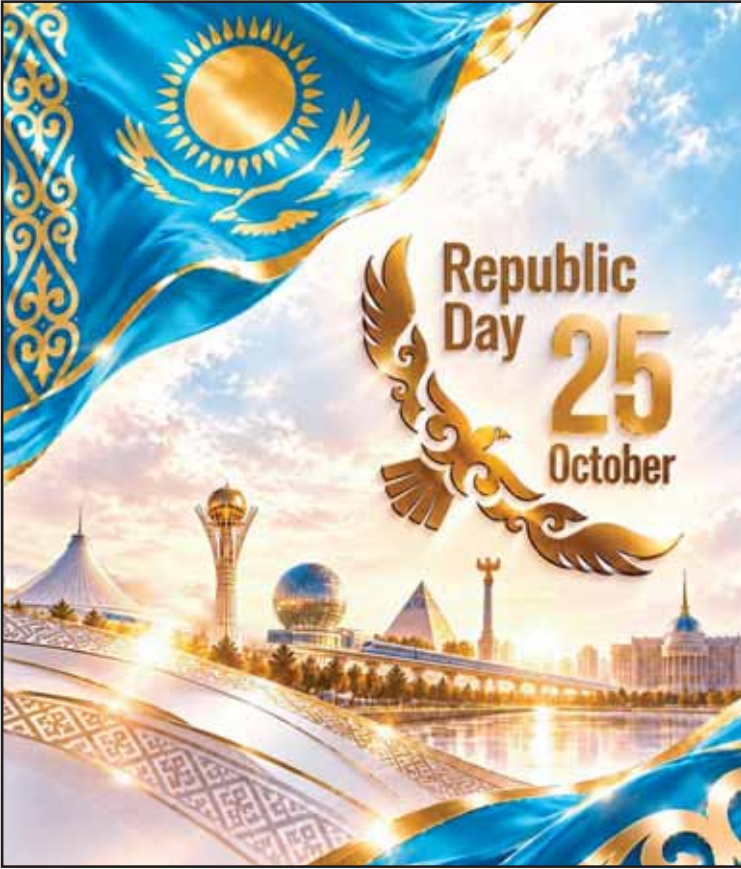
- Manufacturing contributed more to GDP than mining in 2025: 12.8%, compared with 11.7% for mining and quarrying. Manufacturing grew by 7% after adjusting for inflation, showing progress in diversification alongside continued reliance on natural resources.

- Kazakhstan is a major oil exporter and the world’s leading uranium producer, supplying roughly 40% of global uranium mine output in 2025. Copper, zinc and other minerals also support international industry and opportunities for further processing.

- Grain and flour exports reached 15.5 million tonnes, measured as grain equivalent, in the 2025–2026 marketing year. Supplies to Central Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and Europe contribute to food security beyond Kazakhstan’s borders.

International diplomacy and global security

- Kazakhstan closed the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site on 29 August 1991, before independence, and relinquished the inherited arsenal, then the world’s fourth largest. It joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon state in 1994; all nuclear warheads were removed by 1995.



- Kazakhstan helped establish the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. Since 2017, it has hosted the International Atomic Energy Agency’s Low Enriched Uranium Bank, a reserve of fuel for peaceful nuclear energy.

- Kazakhstan’s balanced and pragmatic foreign policy maintains partnerships with Russia, China, other Central Asian countries, the European Union, the United States and partners worldwide, balancing national interests with international cooperation. Kazakhstan is recognised as a responsible middle power and a bridge between regions, cultures and economic systems.

- Kazakhstan chaired the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and hosted its Astana Summit in 2010. In 2017–2018, Kazakhstan served as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, becoming the first Central Asian country to do so. Kazakhstan proposed the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia in 1992. Since 2017, Kazakhstan has hosted talks on Syria under the Astana Process. It also hosted talks between the Armenian–Azerbaijani foreign ministers in Almaty in May 2024.

- Its first independent national peacekeeping contingent deployed to the UN mission in the Golan Heights in 2024, contributing directly to international security.

- The UN Regional Centre for Sustainable Development Goals for Central Asia and Afghanistan, launched in Almaty in August 2025, strengthens regional development cooperation.

Connecting Europe and Asia

- Covering approximately 2.7 million square kilometres, Kazakhstan is the world’s ninth-largest country and largest landlocked state. Its position between China, Russia, Central Asia and the Caspian Sea makes it a strategic link in Eurasian trade.

- Investment in railways, roads, border terminals and the Caspian ports of Aktau and Kuryk improves international market access for Kazakhstan’s producers and supports goods moving through the country.

- The Middle Corridor links China and Europe through Kazakhstan, the Caspian Sea and the South Caucasus. This additional transport route helps businesses diversify supply chains and reduce dependence on a single corridor.

Society and human development

- Kazakhstan is home to more than 100 ethnic groups and 18 registered religious denominations. Kazakh is the state language; Russian is also used officially alongside Kazakh in state institutions and local self-government bodies.

- National culture combines steppe traditions with contemporary arts. UNESCO recognition of dombra music, yurt-making skills and the shared Nauryz spring festival highlights Kazakhstan’s living cultural heritage internationally.

- Astana has hosted the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions since 2003, providing an international platform for dialogue between faiths.

- Kazakhstan’s Human Development Index rose by 21.5%, from 0.689 in 1990 to 0.837 in 2023. The 2025 UNDP report ranks it 60th among 193 countries and territories, in the very high human development category.

- Life expectancy reached 75.97 years in 2025, reflecting progress in population health.

- Kazakhstan is expanding access to international higher education through the opening of foreign university campuses and branches. More than 30 foreign university branches operate in the country, including Cardiff University and Coventry University Kazakhstan. In the 2025–2026 academic year, Kazakhstan’s universities hosted 35,075 international students from 88 countries, an 11% increase on the previous year. These developments strengthen Kazakhstan’s role as a regional education hub, broaden access to international qualifications and support the development of skills for a modern economy.

- The Bolashak international scholarship programme, established in 1993, has trained more than 13,000 professionals abroad. University partnerships and research cooperation are helping develop skills for economic diversification.

Digital transformation and artificial intelligence

- Kazakhstan ranked 24th among 193 countries in the 2024 UN E-Government Development Index. Around 90% of public services were available online by the end of 2025, improving access.

- IT service exports rose from \$33.5 million in 2020 to \$1.142 billion in 2025. Astana Hub helps technology businesses grow through training, startup support and access to international markets.

- The Alem.ai international artificial intelligence centre opened in 2025. Together with the Alem.Cloud national supercomputing cluster, it supports AI education, research, startups and access to powerful computing.

Environmental recovery and sustainable development

- Soviet-era nuclear testing and river diversions that depleted the Aral Sea left severe damage. Environmental restoration, water security and climate adaptation remain long-term responsibilities.

- Completed in 2005 with World Bank support, the Kok-Aral dam helped restore Northern Aral Sea water levels, reduce salinity and revive fishing. This recovery shows what sustained environmental investment can achieve, although wider basin challenges remain.

- Renewable sources, excluding large hydropower, supplied 8.5% of electricity in the first nine months of 2026, compared with 7% in 2025. Kazakhstan’s strategy targets carbon neutrality by 2060, requiring further investment and changes to the energy system.

- In December 2025, President Tokayev proposed establishing an International Water Organisation as a specialised agency within the UN system. Kazakhstan argues that the fragmented global water architecture needs a coherent institution able to coordinate policy, science, finance and assistance. The first international consultations on the proposal took place at the Regional Ecological Summit in Astana in April 2026; the organisation remains a proposal under discussion.

Priorities for the next stage of development

- The economy and infrastructure developed since independence provide a platform for diversification. Kazakhstan aims to raise productivity and create skilled jobs by expanding manufacturing and agricultural processing, attracting investment and strengthening private enterprise and competition.

- Building on digital services and a growing technology sector, Kazakhstan seeks wider AI adoption, stronger research and more technology exports. Better education, healthcare and vocational training will help people benefit from this modernisation.

- Established institutions provide a basis for improving public administration and the rule of law. Implementation of the new constitutional framework remains a priority.

- International partnerships and experience in multilateral diplomacy support Kazakhstan’s ambition to act as a constructive middle power.

- Together with its economic resources and human potential, these foundations position the country to pursue further growth while deepening regional cooperation and international connectivity.

Theater stars honor legacy & support HIV/AIDS care

‘Rent’ musical marks 30 years on Broadway with star-studded show

NEW YORK, Oct 24, (AP): Jordan Fisher was in middle school when he first heard it. He was at his first cast party, gathering with fellow performers around his drama teacher’s piano after some community theater.

The song everyone was singing was about living life and measuring life, and there were a bunch of weird numbers - like 525,600. He wouldn’t be the same after hearing it.

“I was like, ‘What is this?’” recalls Fisher. “That shifted things for me. I don’t think I’ll ever really be able to put a finger on it other than the fact that it was something that was supposed to happen.”

That song was, of course, the barn-burning Act 2 opener “Seasons of Love” from the landmark rock musical “Rent,” now celebrating its 30th anniversary of storming Broadway.

“Rent” hit me. It just did,” says Fisher.

He’s joining an astonishing list of Broadway’s who’s-who to celebrate the milestone Monday with a benefit performance of the show from the Richard Rodgers Theatre.

Original cast members returning to their old roles include Tony-winner Idina Menzel, Tony-nominee Adam Pascal, Tony-nominee Daphne Rubin-Vega, Tony-winner Wilson Jermaine Heredia, Fredi Walker, Taye Diggs and Anthony Rapp.

Other “Rent” alumni include Tony-winner Natalie Venetia Belcon, Tony-nominee Nicholas Christopher, Tracie Thoms, Jose Llana, Tony-nominee Ephraim Sykes and Tony-winner Aaron Tveit.

Some Broadway celebs scheduled to take part include Tony-winner Neil Patrick Harris, Rachel Zegler, Tony-winner Norbert Leo Butz, Tony-nominee Will Chase, Telly Leung and Christopher J. Hanke. Fisher jokingly calls it “‘Rent’-cella,” after Coachella.

Seats have been snapped up, but \$30 livestream tickets are available. The stream will be accessible for 24



The original cast of “Rent” appears on stage at the 62nd Annual Tony Awards in New York, Sunday, June 15, 2008. (AP)

hours following the performance and proceeds go to Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

“It’s rare that a show has a life like this and is still exciting and inspirational enough to have a 30th festival, if you will. It’s a really, really special thing,” says Fisher.

Jonathan Larson’s tale of free-spirited artists and street people in New York’s gritty drug- and AIDS-

plagued East Village of the early 1990s was inspired by Puccini’s “La Boheme” and found a ready-made audience in young people, as it still does.

“He believed that going to musical theater didn’t just have to be an escape. It didn’t have to just be looking at phantoms and things that happened hundreds of years ago. It could be about the life we’re living

right now,” says Rapp.

Rapp says it’s appropriate that ticket sales will go to Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, which has been offering meals, medication and healthcare to artists since the 1980s. “They can help make a difference to help people get direct aid and direct support in communities around the country.”

Rapp, who originated the role

of the scarf-wearing Mark Cohen, was part of the workshop for the off-Broadway production and knew there was something special, if raw, in the fledgling show. “The soul of it was so powerfully there,” he recalls.

He also recalls hearing “Seasons of Love” - with its famous line “525,600 minutes/How do you measure a year in the life?” - for the first time when the cast, musical director

Tim Weil and director Michael Greif gathered around a piano.

“I’ve never heard a song like it and certainly not in theater,” Rapp says. “We all leaned forward. Every single element of it was so etched deeply into my soul and my memory.”

He predicted the show might make a splash, but a smallish one: “I meant like the way that off-Broadway things over in the corner could make a bit of a splash and have some energy around it, but certainly never anticipated mainstream and never anticipated Broadway.”

Rapp sees the rock and defiant snarl from “Rent” in the DNA of such shows as “Hadestown,” “Spring Awakening,” “Next to Normal,” “Dear Evan Hansen” and “Hamilton.”

“When you break a dam open, water rushes through. It’s like that,” he says. “Now, there’s a whole new universe of shows that have followed in our footsteps because we broke down the dam that seemed unbreakable.”

“Rent” won Tony Awards for best musical, score and book and a Pulitzer Prize. It lasted on Broadway for 12 years and more than 5,000 performances, launching the careers of its young original cast.

There was a 2005 film version, multiple tours, an off-Broadway revival, international productions, a Hollywood Bowl concert and a live staging on Fox in 2019, which starred Fisher in Rapp’s old role.

Larson never lived to see his triumph: He died at age 35 of an aortic aneurysm after its final off-Broadway dress rehearsal in January 1996.

“The torch has been passed and carried by so many incredible artists over the years,” says Rapp. “I think it would thrill Jonathan Larson so much to know that so many wonderful human beings came through and kept his work alive and that they want to come back and celebrate it.”

Music

Less touring, bigger spectacles

Why big music stars like Styles & Dion embrace residencies

NEW YORK, Oct 24, (AP): For Harry Styles’ dedicated audience, it is the can’t-miss event of the year: Tens of thousands have descended on New York City’s Madison Square Garden each night of his 30-date residency, rushing to catch the show before it concludes Halloween weekend.

The stint follows the artist’s 2022 blockbuster run, when he performed 15 consecutive nights at the famous arena. And he’s not the only one embracing the format. Residencies in Las Vegas, once viewed as the final stop at the end of a long career, have attracted younger performers like Usher, Katy Perry and Lady Gaga. In 2024, Adele embarked on a 10-date Munich residency. And last year, Bad Bunny’s 31-date residency in Puerto Rico single-handedly boosted the island’s fragile economy, generating over \$200 million while extending his efforts to elevate the U.S. territory’s global profile.

Celine Dion, who holds the record for the highest-grossing residency in Vegas, recently embarked on one just outside Paris. It’s her first concert series since revealing her diagnosis with stiff-person syndrome.

Industry insiders and artists alike say there are many reasons why residencies have taken hold in the music business, despite arguments that the format may shift costs to fans who could save money attending a tour in their hometown rather than spending the cash on travel.

Residencies aren’t exactly a novel concept, explains Mitch Rose, Creative Artists Agency’s head of North American touring, who represents artists including Styles and Perry.

“Go back in time to early Vegas, in the ‘60s when Frank Sinatra had a residency and Tony Bennett had a residency,” he said. “They played multiple shows across a year at a hotel. That was the birth of a residency.”

Over time, however, Vegas residencies became synonymous with a particular kind of artist: one close to retiring. That changed in the 2000s, when Dion revitalized the format with her yearslong “A New Day ...” and “Celine” runs. John Meglen, co-CEO of Concerts West, was instrumental in both the Vegas residencies and the one in France.

“Most people thought we were crazy,” he said, noting the expense. “It was 200 shows a year, 40 weeks a year. Five shows a week.”

But it worked. Across 16 years and 1,141 performances, Dion grossed \$681.3 million, according to Billboard.

Nowadays, residencies are commonplace. Rose says attendees treat them like festivals: destination experiences.

“Think of Coachella,” he says. “People from all around the world come to the desert mid-April to



Harry Styles performs during the Brit Awards 2026 in Manchester, England, on Feb. 28, 2026. (AP)

share an experience. And residencies are the same vibe. When we announced Harry’s residency, the Garden was the only place in America that we were playing in 2026. ... There’s a uniqueness.”

And often, residencies inspire artist pop-up shops and fan meetups, adding to the festival-like atmosphere.

R&B singer Usher hosted his popular “Usher: My Way The Vegas Residency” in 2022 and 2023, part of a high-profile run that included a 2024 Super Bowl halftime show. At the time, he told The Associated Press that part of the appeal was the consistency.

“I like the idea of what I’ve found in Las Vegas. It gives me an opportunity to settle. I have children now. I got a life,” he said.

There are clear financial benefits, too. Residencies save on the major expense of transporting production, people and equipment, Meglen said.

Another upside? “If you do a residency in one city, you’re not on an airplane or in a bus. It’s good mental healthcare for the artist,” Rose said.

Residencies also offer an opportunity to develop massive stage productions that don’t have to be hauled around the world. Nowhere is that more clear than at the 516-foot-wide (157-meter) Sphere in Las Vegas, with its state-of-the-art technological attractions and high-resolution LED screen that wraps halfway around a 17,500-seat audience.

In 2026, Carín León became the first Latino artist to hold a residency there. “It’s a venue that lets you express a lot of stuff because of all of the tools,” he said. “For me, it was

perfect.”

Styles’ New York audience spends anywhere from under \$100 to \$1,000 to attend, not counting the cost of travel for out-of-towners.

“I understand why residencies make sense for an artist and why it would be less stressful and make their lives easier. But as a fan, I don’t understand how they cost as much money as they do,” said Sara Feigin, a Styles fan and New York-based photographer. “You’re playing over



Singer Celine Dion performs during the opening concert of her “Celine Dion Paris 2026” residency at the Plénitude Arena in Nanterre, outside Paris, on Sept. 12, 2026. (AP)

30 days at the same venue, why is this \$300?”

She believes that if residencies are more affordable for talent, tickets should be cheaper too.

A representative for Styles declined to comment.

For Ticketmaster events like Styles’ residency, the base price for a ticket before various fees and taxes (or the “face value” cost) is determined by the event organizer.

Meglen says it’s crucial that traditional touring continue, but there’s room for both: Residencies give “all these other markets a breather,” as he puts it, in turn creating future demand. “I don’t know any artist that keeps touring over and over and over in the same markets that their ticket sales go up.”

Where a residency takes place depends on the artist. Consider Bad Bunny. “Nobody could do what he did in Puerto Rico, right?” said Rose. “Major markets are always going to be the first choices of residencies. ... And I don’t think every city works.”

As for Dion, “Paris is Celine’s biggest market in the world,” says Meglen.

Otherwise, entertainment capitals with many large venues like Los Angeles, Las Vegas and New York top the list. And fans who live far from these locations should expect to travel, because residencies don’t appear to be going anywhere.

“Everything is cyclical and the residencies are certainly having a moment,” said Rose. “And as long as there’s a Las Vegas or an act big enough to do multiple nights in arenas, it will never go away.”

‘Citizen Osama’ wins 2 honors

‘Safe Exit’ wins top prize at El Gouna Film Festival

CAIRO, Oct. 24, (Xinhua): Egypt’s ninth El Gouna Film Festival (GFF) concluded on Friday evening, with the Egyptian film “Safe Exit” winning the top prize at the closing ceremony.

Directed by Mohammed Hammad, “Safe Exit” received the Golden Star for Best Feature Film.

In the documentary competition, “Citizen Osama,” directed by Ahmed Hassouna, won the Golden Star for Best Documentary and Best Arab Documentary, while “Stolen Memories,” directed by Anders Davidsen, took the Golden Star for Best Short Film.

Other major awards went to “Yesterday the Eye Didn’t Sleep,” directed by Rakan Mayasi, which won Best Arab Feature Film, and “American Doctor,” directed by Poh Si Teng, which received the Cinema for Humanity Audience Award.

GFF artistic director Andrew Mohsen said audience numbers had grown from one edition to the next.

While the festival is often associated with crowded venues and red-carpet appearances, Mohsen said its focus remained on cinema itself.

“Its core lies in the films and cinematic activities inside the screening venues,” he told Xinhua.

Held in the Red Sea resort town of El Gouna from Oct. 15 to 23, the festival featured 77 films from around the world, alongside screenings, discussions and industry events.

CineGouna, the festival’s industry and funding platform, also supports connections among film professionals and the development of projects at different stages, Mohsen said.

Sofia completes Eleanor’s ‘Making Marie Antoinette’

LOS ANGELES, Oct 24, (AP): In 2005, Eleanor Coppola shot 80 hours of behind-the-scenes footage during the production of “Marie Antoinette.” It was her daughter Sofia Coppola’s third feature and a quite ambitious one at that, with unprecedented access to Versailles, a budget of \$40 million and 57 shooting days on the schedule.

Though Eleanor had made one of the great documentaries about the filmmaking process in “Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker’s Apocalypse,” capturing the chaos of her husband Francis Ford Coppola’s film “Apocalypse Now,” she hadn’t come to “Marie Antoinette” to make her own film. She was there to help capture moments for marketing.

“She loved to show how things are made,” Sofia told The Associated Press in a recent interview. “The truth of what’s really going on behind that was always interesting to her.”

The film’s release came and went, and life moved on, but it frustrated Eleanor that her work was never put together the way she wanted, that Milena Canonero’s beautiful costumes that she so lovingly captured were never highlighted. Then one day during the COVID-19 pandemic, Eleanor decided to revisit the footage and started dreaming a little bigger: Maybe there was something there after all.

Though Eleanor wouldn’t live to see it finished, she was right: There was something there. And Sofia would see it to completion: “Making Marie Antoinette,” a luminous and intimate look at the creative process, is now playing in select theaters. On



This image released by MUBI shows Eleanor Coppola on the set of “Marie Antoinette.” (AP)

Nov. 6, it’ll be available to stream on Mubi.

“I always loved Frederick Wiseman’s films that don’t have any plot. They’re just like fly on the wall,” Sofia said. “And I thought, oh, maybe it’s cool for the movie just to feel like what it was like on the set. So that was kind of the starting point.”

Eleanor and Sofia worried early on about the lack of drama. There were no “Hearts of Darkness” crises. Sofia even finished “Marie Antoinette” on time and on budget.

“It’s like the opposite of ‘Hearts of Darkness,’” Sofia said. “In a way it’s sort of a nice counterpoint because that movie’s so macho and masculine and this is so feminine.”

Samarkand Declaration calls for greater investment in children

By Marlon Aquino Malinao
Managing Editor, Arab Times

SAMARKAND, Oct 24: The Samarkand Declaration on Investing in Children’s Wellbeing was adopted on Oct 22 at the conclusion of a two-day World Summit in Uzbekistan, with participating countries pledging to strengthen child protection, improve access to essential services and mobilize greater resources to secure a better future for the next generation.

The summit, held on Oct 21-22 under the theme “Investing in Children’s Wellbeing: A Path Toward Sustainable and Just Development for Future Generations,” was organized by Uzbekistan in cooperation with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank.

It brought together First Ladies, ministers responsible for social protection, health, education and finance, government representatives, international organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector, alongside children and young people.

The declaration reaffirmed participants’ commitment to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the principle of prioritizing children’s best interests. Recognizing that children account for one-third of the global population, the document emphasized that investing in their wellbeing produces lasting benefits in health, education, productivity, social cohesion and peace.

Under the declaration, participating states committed to advancing child-focused policies in line with their national circumstances, priorities and capacities. These include strengthening social protection systems and expanding benefits for children and families, particularly during crises, as well as improving safeguards against violence, abuse and exploitation, including in the digital environment.

Other priorities include supporting early childhood development,



Left: Group photo. Right: Academy Award-winning actor Adrien Brody presents a painting he created to Shakhnoza Mirziyoyeva during the World Summit on Investing in Children’s Wellbeing in Samarkand.



expanding inclusive education and healthcare, and strengthening efforts to combat childhood cancer. The declaration also calls for greater support for parents and caregivers to prevent unnecessary separation of children from their families.

Preparing young people for the future economy is another key objective, with an emphasis on developing green and digital skills and promoting decent employment opportunities, including for young people with disabilities.

Financing emerged as a central pillar of the agreement. Participating states underscored the need to steadily increase public investment in children and make national budgets more transparent and responsive to their needs.

International financial institutions, development partners, philanthropic organizations and the private sector were urged to scale up funding, particularly for low- and middle-income countries and those affected by conflict, climate change and natural disasters.

sasters.

The declaration also recognizes children and adolescents as rights holders and agents of change, calling for their safe and meaningful participation in decision-making, including in implementing the commitments outlined in the document.

Implementation will be pursued through national policies and budgets, with each country determining its own timelines and providing regular progress reports. Participants also agreed to reconvene to assess progress, while the organizations that co-hosted the summit were invited to help countries translate the declaration into concrete action.

Expressing gratitude to the people and government of Uzbekistan for hosting the gathering in Samarkand, participants described the historic city as a “crossroads of civilizations.”

The summit’s outcomes were also highlighted by Academy Award-winning actor Adrien Brody, who presented Shakhnoza Mirziyoyeva

with a painting he had created himself.

Protecting children’s present

The declaration’s commitments were echoed in discussions on the immediate challenges facing children, with Shakhnoza Mirziyoyeva, First Deputy Director of Uzbekistan’s National Agency for Social Protection, stressing that safeguarding children must begin with ensuring their safety, dignity and access to protection.

Speaking at the summit on Wednesday, Mirziyoyeva said any discussion about protecting children should begin with a fundamental question: What happens to a child when there are no adults beside them to provide protection?

Every child, she emphasized, must have the right to seek help and feel that they are not alone. Achieving this requires society to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to violence against children and uphold their rights and dignity without compromise.

mise.

She also pointed to the growing challenges posed by the digital environment, global instability and other emerging risks affecting children and families.

No country can address these challenges in isolation, she said, underscoring the importance of cooperation among governments, businesses, civil society and international organizations.

Before discussing children’s future, Mirziyoyeva stressed, societies must protect their present, ensuring that every child can live with love, attention and safety.

Health systems in focus

Beyond protection and social welfare, the summit also placed particular emphasis on ensuring that children receive quality healthcare throughout their lives.

A high-level plenary session titled “Investing in Equitable and Resilient Child Health Systems that Deliver Measurable Outcomes across

the Life Course” brought together health leaders from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Belarus, alongside representatives of UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank and other international organizations.

Participants discussed ways to safeguard children’s health, ensure equitable access to quality medical services and strengthen the resilience of healthcare systems.

The discussions also examined the importance of sustained investment in children’s health at every stage of life, with participants exchanging international experiences, effective approaches and opportunities for closer cooperation.

Together, the declaration and the summit’s discussions underscored a common message: meaningful investment in children requires more than long-term promises. It demands coordinated action, adequate financing and effective systems that protect children’s rights, support their development and safeguard their wellbeing today and in the years ahead.

Ebola vaccine trial starts in DR Congo

KINSHASA, Oct 24, (Agencies): A major clinical trial to evaluate vaccines against the Bundibugyo Ebola virus began Friday in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), with the first participants vaccinated as the country battles the largest recorded outbreak of the virus.

The Phase 23 trial, known as Tumaini, was launched in Bunia, the capital of the hardest-hit Ituri Province, said the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, which is funding and supporting the study.

The trial comes amid a worsening Ebola crisis that has claimed more than 4,600 lives in the DRC since May. Despite the scale of the outbreak, no vaccine has yet been approved specifically against the Bundibugyo virus.

Tumaini, meaning “hope” in Swahili, aims to assess the safety, immune responses and effectiveness of several vaccine candidates, particularly among people who have been in contact with confirmed Ebola patients and face a high risk of infection.

The trial uses an adaptive platform design, allowing multiple vaccine candidates to be evaluated within a single study through a ring vaccination approach targeting contacts of confirmed cases.

The first vaccine entering the trial is Ervebo, which is already licensed to prevent disease caused by the Zaire Ebola virus but has not been proven effective against the Bundibugyo virus.

Two additional vaccines specifically developed against the Bundibugyo virus, one by Moderna and another by the University of Oxford in collaboration with the Serum Institute of India, are expected to join the trial “shortly.”

“The launch of the Tumaini trial marks a critical step towards establishing whether candidate vaccines can effectively protect people against the Bundibugyo virus,” said Chikwe Ihekweazu, executive director of the World Health Organization’s Health Emergencies Program.

WHO Regional Director for Africa Mohamed Janabi also welcomed the launch Friday, saying the trial would generate crucial evidence on candidate vaccines while strengthening the response to the ongoing outbreak and preparedness for future epidemics.

According to the latest figures released late Wednesday by the DRC’s health authorities, the country had recorded 9,704 confirmed Ebola cases, including 4,687 deaths, as of Oct. 20, with a case fatality rate of 48.3 percent.

The epidemic was declared in the DRC on May 15 and designated a public health emergency of international concern by the WHO two days later.

Capital Educational District highlights importance of early breast cancer detection in awareness campaign

By Tasneem A. Al-Muhanna

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: The Capital Educational District organized its second annual breast cancer awareness event on Thursday under the slogan “Your Strength Lies in Your Awareness,” reaffirming its commitment to promoting health education, encouraging early detection and strengthening community awareness.

Held at the Capital Educational District in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, the initiative brought together participants from the healthcare and education sectors, along with students and artists, to highlight the importance of breast health and the role of public awareness in encouraging timely medical examinations.

The event formed part of activities marking Breast Cancer Awareness Month, observed globally throughout October, and featured health awareness booths, an art exhibition, live painting demonstrations and contributions from schools representing various educational stages.

Promoting community awareness

Mashaal Al-Hadad, Head of the Public Relations Department at the Capital Educational District, emphasized the importance of educational institutions in promoting health awareness beyond the classroom.

“At the Capital Educational District, we have an important responsibility to promote health awareness and spread awareness messages throughout the community. Our message to every woman is clear: Your health is a priority, early detection is extremely important, and your strength truly lies in your awareness,” Al-Hadad said.

She highlighted the district’s commitment to organizing the initiative for the second consecutive year, noting the valuable contributions of participating schools, healthcare departments and art educators.

The Ministry of Health participated through three departments: Nursing Services, Nutrition and Food Services, and Physiotherapy, reflecting the importance of cooperation between the education and healthcare sectors in promoting community health awareness.

A personal story of strength and resilience

One of the event’s most moving moments came as Manal Al-Jarallah shared her personal experience of living with stage IV breast cancer, offering a message of courage, resilience and hope.



ience and hope.

Al-Jarallah revealed that she was diagnosed approximately a year and a half ago and continues to receive hormonal therapy as part of her ongoing treatment.

Recalling conversations with her physician, she explained that she had repeatedly asked when her treatment would end. Her doctor encouraged her to continue living normally and to approach her condition as a chronic illness requiring ongoing medical management, comparing it with conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Drawing on her personal experience, Al-Jarallah urged women not to allow fear to prevent them from seeking medical attention, particularly when discovering unusual changes in their breasts.

She explained that she frequently receives messages from followers who have discovered breast lumps but hesitate to consult healthcare professionals because they fear receiving a cancer diagnosis.

“What is more frightening than

getting checked is postponing it,” she said, emphasizing early detection and timely medical intervention can significantly improve treatment outcomes.

Al-Jarallah also highlighted advances in modern cancer treatment, stressing that medical progress has provided patients with more treatment options and renewed hope.

She encouraged attendees to leave the event with a greater understanding of breast health, including how to recognize unusual changes and the importance of seeking appropriate medical advice.

Concluding her remarks with a heartfelt message, Al-Jarallah said: “Your life matters, and your soul is a trust.”

Her testimony reinforced the event’s central message that awareness, timely diagnosis and access to appropriate medical care play an important role in improving breast cancer outcomes.

Art as a platform for awareness

Beyond medical education, the event highlighted the role of artistic expression in communicating impor-



Photos from the event.

tant health messages.

The Art Education Technical Supervision Department participated through an exhibition featuring paintings inspired by breast cancer awareness and the importance of early detection.

Six female art teachers also contributed live painting demonstrations, creating artwork before visitors and demonstrating how creativity can serve as a means of spreading awareness.

The artistic contributions added a visual and educational dimension to the initiative, illustrating how community health messages can be communicated through different forms of expression.

Schools demonstrate community engagement

Schools across the Capital Educational District also contributed to the event, with participation extending from kindergarten through primary, intermediate and secondary education.

A total of 19 schools and kindergartens were represented, reflecting the district’s efforts to encourage

community engagement and social responsibility among educational institutions.

The program included a recognition ceremony honoring participating schools, the Art Education Technical Supervision Department and Al-Jarallah for their contributions to the awareness initiative.

Attendees were also invited to tour the health awareness booths, explore the school exhibits and view the accompanying art exhibition and live painting activities.

Through cooperation between the education and healthcare sectors, the initiative underscored the importance of making breast cancer awareness a continuing community priority rather than limiting discussions about early detection to the month of October.

The event concluded with a message encouraging women to prioritize their health, seek appropriate medical guidance and recognize the importance of awareness in making informed decisions about their wellbeing.

Health

US measles cases top 4,500: The United States has reported 4,588 confirmed measles cases so far in 2026, more than twice the total for all of 2025, according to the latest data released Friday by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Of the confirmed cases, 4,570 were reported by 47 jurisdictions, while 18 involved international visitors to the United States, the CDC said.

Children and adolescents aged 5 to 19 accounted for the

largest share of cases, with 1,914 infections, or 42 percent of the total.

A total of 479 patients, about 10 percent of all confirmed cases, have been hospitalized.

About 96 percent of cases involved people who were unvaccinated or whose vaccination status was unknown, according to the CDC data. (Xinhua)



Botswana seeks malaria-free status: Botswana launched a national council on malaria and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) elimination Thursday, as Botswanan President Duma

Boko pledged to see the country certified malaria-free by 2029.

Boko made the remarks at the launch of the inaugural meeting of the 28-member Botswana End Malaria and NTDs Council in Tlokweng, near Gaborone, the capital of Botswana, under the theme Accelerating Botswana’s journey towards Malaria and NTDs elimination by 2029.

The goal is to “stand before you before my term ends” to announce, alongside the World Health Organization (WHO), that Botswana is officially certified Malaria-Free, said Boko, who also chairs the African Leaders Malaria Alliance. (Xinhua)

Celtics fend off Knicks as Spurs fall to 0-2

Mavericks lose Flagg to injury, and ruin Haliburton’s home return

BOSTON, Oct 24, (AP): Jayson Tatum scored 25 of his 36 points in the second half, including seven of his team’s final eight to help the Boston Celtics hold off the New York Knicks 107-103.

Paul George and Neemias Queta added 15 points apiece to fend off a late rally by the defending NBA champion Knicks.

New York fell to 0-2 after losing its season opener to the Philadelphia 76ers.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 22 points to lead five Knicks in double figures. OG Anunoby had 20 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists. Deuce McBride finished with 20 points and Jalen Brunson added 19.

Rockets 114, Spurs 110

In Austin, Amen Thompson blocked Victor Wembanyama’s game-tying layup attempt with less than a second remaining and the Houston Rockets held on to beat the San Antonio Spurs.

Fred VanVleet made two free throws for the final points after Thompson turned away the 7-foot-4 Wembanyama in the lane as the Rockets started their season with two victories.

Kevin Durant had 20 points, seven rebounds and six assists in a homecoming game for the former University of Texas star. Thompson had 20 points and 10 rebounds.

Wembanyama had 25 points and 13 rebounds but San Antonio fell to 0-2.

Mavericks 121, Pacers 105

In Indianapolis, Kyrie Irving scored 24 points and the Dallas Mavericks overcame the loss of Cooper Flagg to spoil Tyrese Haliburton’s home return for the Indiana Pacers in a victory.

Flagg, last season’s NBA Rookie of the Year, did not play in the second half after he injured his left shoulder when he was fouled by Aaron Smith on what looked like it would be a breakaway dunk.

Nesmith was called for a flagrant foul, and a double technical was assessed after a brief shoving match ensued. Flagg finished with 15 points, five rebounds and six assists.

Pistons 128, Heat 111

In Miami, John Collins scored 23 points, Paul Reed added 19 off the



Los Angeles Lakers center Walker Kessler, left, shoots as LA Clippers center Brook Lopez defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles. (AP)

bench and the Detroit Pistons added to Miami’s season-opening defensive misery by beating the Heat.

Former Heat guard Duncan Robinson scored 17 and Cade Cunningham finished with 16 for the Pistons, who led wire-to-wire and are 2-0 for the first time since 2018-19.

The Pistons lost Ausar Thompson in the third quarter after taking an awkward fall, and Jalen Duren played only 10 first-half minutes before leaving with a right thigh issue.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 36 points and 12 rebounds for Miami.

Grizzlies 111, Warriors 108

In San Francisco, Cameron Booser made a go-ahead jumper with 20 seconds left and finished with 25 points and 13 rebounds, and the Memphis Grizzlies came from 12 points down

over the final 3:47 to beat the Golden State Warriors.

After De’Anthony Melton’s 3-pointer with 3:47 left put the Warriors ahead 106-94, Golden State missed nine shots and went without a field goal the rest of the game.

Stephen Curry scored 24 points, rookie Yaxel Lendeborg added 18 points, 13 rebounds and six assists in his home debut, but the Warriors blew it.

Lakers 125, Clippers 117

In Los Angeles, Austin Reaves had 28 points and nine assists, Walker Kessler added 22 points and six blocked shots, and the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Los Angeles Clippers for their second win to start the season.

Luka Doncic scored 23 points and committed a career-high 11 turnovers

on a rough night for last season’s NBA scoring leader. The Lakers’ healthy second-half lead dwindled to six points down the stretch, but Reaves and Kessler made big players to seal the Lakers’ ninth win in the last 13 meetings with their crosstown rivals.

Trail Blazers 128, Kings 120

In Sacramento, Deni Avdija led the Trail Blazers with 26 points, six rebounds, and six assists in the Portland Trail Blazers victory over the Sacramento Kings.

Damian Lillard and Toumani Camara scored 19 points each and helped the Trail Blazers improve to 2-0.

Rookie Darius Acuff Jr. scored 33 points, while Domantas Sabonis had 27 points, 19 rebounds, and 10 assists for the Kings (0-2) in their home

opener. Zach LaVine added 22 points.

Hornets 128, Hawks 81

In Charlotte, Jalen Johnson had 19 points, eight assists and seven rebounds and Atlanta hammered the Charlotte Hornets in the Hawks’ largest blowout in franchise history.

The 47-point victory topped the previous franchise mark of 46 set in a 126-80 win over Sacramento on Nov. 15, 2017.

Aaron Wiggins added 19 points off the bench on 7-of-9 shooting and all five Atlanta starters finished in double figures in scoring, including Nickell Alexander-Walker with 14 and C.J. McCollum with 13.

Naz Reid led the Hornets with 17 points.

Timberwolves 115, Magic 93

In Orlando, Anthony Edwards and Jaden McDaniels each scored 15

points to help the Minnesota Timberwolves past the Orlando Magic.

Rudy Gobert added 14 points and nine rebounds for the Timberwolves (2-0), off to their best start since winning their first two games five years ago.

Wendell Carter Jr. had 20 points and nine boards for the Magic (0-2), who held Edwards largely in check throughout the game.

Fresh off a 45-point effort at Miami Wednesday, Edwards nailed a 3 for his first points but then missed his next 10 field goals. He finished just 5 of 23 from the floor, including 2 for 9 from 3-point range.

Raptors 112, Wizards 102

In Washington, Scottie Barnes had 28 points and 14 rebounds, and the Toronto Raptors continued their stellar defensive start to the season with a 112-102 victory over the Washington Wizards.

RJ Barrett added 23 points and Kawhi Leonard scored 16 for Toronto, which forced 23 Washington turnovers after Chicago committed 27 in the Raptors’ season-opening victory on Wednesday.

Trae Young had 22 points and 12 assists for the Wizards.

Tre Johnson added 20 points, but Anthony Davis finished with only nine on 3-for-12 shooting in his second career game for Washington.

BIn Salt Lake City, Jaren Jackson Jr. had 24 points and 10 rebounds, rookie Darryn Peterson made the go-ahead free throws with 50.5 second left, and the Utah Jazz outlasted the New Orleans Pelicans.

Keyonte George tallied 19 points and 10 assists and Jaxson Hayes added 17 points for Utah (1-1).

Zion Williamson scored 23 and Saddiq Bey had 20 points for the Pelicans (0-2) who gave up second-half leads in both of their games this season.

Bulls 132 Bucks 125

In Milwaukee, Norman Powell had 25 points, rookie Caleb Wilson added 21 and the Chicago Bulls beat the Milwaukee Bucks.

The game was played four hours earlier than originally scheduled because of the Milwaukee Brewers hosting Game 1 of the World Series.

Leonard Miller scored 19 points to help the Bulls rebound from a season-opening 135-92 loss at Toronto on Wednesday night. Jalen Smith had 14 points and 13 rebounds, and Buddy Hield scored 13 points.

Al-Sarraf wins Mini Max category at Bahrain Karting Championship

MANAMA, Oct 24, (KUNA): Kuwaiti racer Abdulaziz Al-Sarraf won first place in the Mini Max category at the second round of the Bahrain Rotax Max Karting Championship, held at the Bahrain International Circuit in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The 965 Motor Club said Saturday, in a statement to KUNA, that Al-Sarraf excelled in qualifying and preliminary races, finished second in the semi-final, and won the final on Friday evening.

The club said the achievement highlights Al-Sarraf’s technical skills and ability to compete successfully in karting championships.

The victory boosts Al-Sarraf’s chances of qualifying for the Rotax Max Challenge Grand Finals and representing Kuwait internationally in the 2026/2027 season.



KUNA photo
Kuwaiti racer Abdulaziz Al-Sarraf.

England suffers consecutive losses for first time in decade

OTTAWA, Ontario, Oct 24, (AP): No. 1-ranked England suffered consecutive defeats for the first time in a decade after it was beaten by Canada 31-22 in WXV women’s rugby.

Canada doubled down on its historic 24-21 win in Toronto last week with sustained defensive pressure and a withering three-try burst in nine minutes around the hour mark.

The Canadians have been the bane of England’s existence for the past five weeks, responsible for ending the Red Roses’ record 39-win streak in a 26-26 draw in Exeter, stopping their 41-match unbeaten run in Toronto, and now starting their first losing streak since July 2016.

“It’s so amazing. It shows we can consistently perform at this level and now we just need to do it for another two, three years to the next World Cup (in 2029 in Australia),” Canada captain Sophie de Goede said.

Despite conceding five scrum penalties, Canada’s defense forced constant errors by world champion Eng-

land in front of 13,117 spectators.

“We’re not broken, we just need to grow from this,” England captain Meg Jones said.

England got the ideal start from a try between the posts by No. 8 Maddie Feaunati, but was quickly overtaken by Canada tries to flanker Julia Omokhualo from a tap penalty and de Goede, a gift from Gabrielle Senft.

England then lost four straight balls in contact in the Canada half and Sarah Bern was held up over the tryline to leave Canada leading 12-7 at half-time.

England moved ahead 17-12 after a 20-meter rolling maul try for Amy Cokayne but Canada then struck three times. De Goede scored her second bounding over a ruck, prop DaLeaka Menin scored in a lineout drive, and fullback Savannah Bauder stepped two defenders in a 55-meter solo try to make it 31-17.

England kept coughing up possession and couldn’t reply until there were seconds left.

Several players recognised for outstanding individual performances

IYY Sporting Club wins Champions League Cricket title



IYY Sporting Club celebrates with the championship trophy.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: IYY Sporting Club was crowned champion of the Champions League Cricket Tournament in Kuwait after defeating Bangladesh Friends Sporting Club in the final held at Jleeb Cricket Ground. Organised by the Bangladesh Cricket Association Kuwait, the tournament featured 10 teams representing expatriate cricket communities from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and other Asian countries. After winning the toss, Bangladesh Friends Sporting Club elected to bat first and scored 149 runs before being bowled out in 18.1 overs. Chasing a target of 150,

IYY Sporting Club reached 150 for six in 18.2 overs to secure a four-wicket victory and lift the trophy.

Several players were recognised for their outstanding individual performances during the tournament. Md. Sajib was named Man of the Match in the final, while Ashfaq of Gujarat emerged as the tournament’s leading run-scorer with 604 runs. Mehedi Hasan claimed the Best Bowler award after taking 14 wickets.

Speaking at the event, Bangladesh Cricket Association Kuwait General Secretary Moazzem Hosain said the association planned to organise and participate in

larger tournaments in the future. Association President Jahangir Khan Palash said the tournament provided expatriate cricketers from different countries with an opportunity to showcase their talent while strengthening friendship, mutual understanding and unity among the communities.

The chief guest, journalist Moin Uddin SarkerSumon, President of the Bangladesh Press Club Kuwait and an adviser to the association, said the tournament was not only a contest for the title but also a gathering that brought expatriates together. He noted that the participation of cricketers from different

nationalities demonstrated how sports could serve as an effective platform for promoting unity and harmony among expatriates. He expressed hope that similar initiatives would continue to create greater opportunities for expatriate cricketers, particularly young and emerging players, to develop their skills and showcase their talent. The tournament highlighted the growing popularity of cricket among expatriate communities in Kuwait, where sporting events provide a welcome opportunity for recreation, cultural exchange, and stronger community bonds amid busy working lives.

Change Name

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Blakely’s long road to the top ends with gold at world championships

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands, Oct 24, (AP): Skye Blakely kept going. Through heartbreak. Through injury. Through doubt. Through all of it.

The American gymnast never gave up on herself, not after her dreams of Olympic glory ended one step short of a lifelong goal not once, but twice. Not after “shutting down” at times mentally as she wondered if it was all worth it.

The 21-year-old from Dallas kept faith in herself and in the process. She took two years off from competing in the all-around at the elite level after tearing her right Achilles at the 2024 Olympic trials, opting to patiently and painstakingly rebuild her body and her routines until she felt they were ready, and not a moment before.

That moment arrived on Friday at the 2026 world gymnastics championships, when Blakely put together four polished and confident routines that ended with happy tears and an all-around gold medal around her neck that even she didn’t see coming.

“Throughout the meet, I was telling myself ‘Do it for the girl in 2021 and the girl in 2024 who couldn’t do everything, just fight for her,’” Blakely said after posting a total of 55.733, more than a half-point ahead of silver medalist Liudmila Roschina of Russia and bronze medalist Ke Qinqin of China. “That’s what I kept telling myself: ‘I am capable, I am ready’ and I made every version of myself extremely proud.”

And maybe a bit surprised. Blakely was a prodigy in 2021 when she injured her elbow at Olympic trials. She was a semi-longshot then to make the team. She wasn’t in 2024. Blakely was in excellent position to head to Paris before shredding her Achilles during training the day before the start of the competition.

Rather than rush back, Blakely took her time, competing usually as an event specialist at the University of Florida. She did the all-around for the first time in two years at the U.S. championships in August but ran out of gas on the final day of the meet.

Burgan tops Al-Arabi to clinch second place and Asian berth

Kuwait Club maintains winning momentum

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Burgan secured second place in the 2025-2026 Handball Premier League and booked its place in the next Asian Club Championship after edging Al-Arabi 29-28 in a dramatic 19th-round clash.

Burgan will aim to defend its continental crown. The team won the previous edition, hosted by Kuwait, after defeating Saudi Ara-

bia's Al-Khaleej in the final

The match brought together the two contenders for the runner-up spot, with Burgan eventually prevailing by a single goal to settle the race and secure continental qualification.

In another match, champions Kuwait Club maintained its winning momentum with a comfortable 33-27 victory over Sulaibikhat, further underlining its dominance this season.

Kuwait Club finished atop the standings with 23 points after sealing the league title, while Burgan claimed second place with 19 points. Al-Arabi came third with 16 points, followed by Kazma on 14, Sulaibikhat on six and Nasr on two.

Burgan handball manager Abdulaziz Najeeb

expressed his gratitude to the club's board for its continued backing of the first team. He also praised the coaching and administrative staff and the players for their hard work and strong team spirit throughout the campaign.

Najeeb highlighted the importance of the victory over Al-Arabi, which officially confirmed Burgan's runners-up finish and secured qualification for the Asian tournament.

He stressed that the achievement was no coincidence, but the result of sustained effort, strong support from the club's management, and the dedication and commitment of the players and both technical and administrative staff throughout the season.



Players battling for the ball during league match.

Initiative aims to discover young talent

Round II of Inspire Kuwait Int'l Roll Race kicks off



Highlights from the Roll Race.



A look at the custom show cars.

KUWAIT, Oct 24, (KUNA): The second round of Inspire Kuwait International Open Roll Race Championship, organized by Kuwait Motorsport Club began on Thursday at the Kuwait Motor Town in the Arijfan area, in the southern part of the country.

The two-day event features 290 participants competing across 11 categories, as part of the Kuwait Youth and Sports Season.

Dr. Falah Al-Mahawesh, Chairman of the "Inspire" Club, told the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that the "roll race" competitions, or acceleration races for cars and motorcycles, have attracted many participants from the Gulf region.

He said this reflects growing interest in motorsports and shows the need to develop the championships further and expand local and regional participation.

Al-Mahawesh added that the club is preparing additional local



Chairman of the "Inspire" Club
Dr. Falah Al-Mahawesh.

rounds in 2027.

One round is scheduled for March 25-26, followed by another on April 1-2.

These events aim to give competitors more opportunities and strengthen motorsports' presence

throughout the season.

He noted that the current championship includes a range of side events, with booths, food trucks, family areas, and a dedicated zone for children's games.

He added that, following a proposal by the Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs, Dr. Tariq Al-Jalahma, the club will soon organize the Middle East's first quad-bike racing championship for children and youth under 18.

The initiative aims to discover promising young talent early and develop their skills in a structured, safe environment.

Al-Mahwash expressed his deep gratitude to Minister Al-Jalahma for his support and attention toward motorsports.

He also acknowledged the presence of the Vice President of the Kuwait Olympic Committee, Sheikh Mubarak Faisal Nawaf Al-

Ahmad Al-Sabah.

He said such support encourages further development of motorsports, Kuwaiti youth participation in athletic competitions, and higher standards of event organization.

He added that the first round's success reflects the significant efforts of the club's board of directors, the organizing committees, and the technical and administrative teams.

Working with the Kuwait Motor Town and other relevant entities, they delivered a championship that meets all technical and organizational requirements, as well as safety and security standards.

This provides an ideal competitive environment for participants and spectators alike.

The Kuwaiti "Inspire" Sports Club for Cars and Motorcycles covers all forms of motorsports, including automobile and motorcycle racing.

Volleyball league resumes

Qadsia, Kazma make winning starts

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Qadsia began the resumed 2025-2026 Volleyball Premier League campaign in impressive fashion, sweeping past Al-Arabi 3-0 in the opening round at the Volleyball Association Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex.

Kazma also enjoyed a convincing start, defeating Sulaibikhat by the same scoreline to strengthen its early position in the race for the title.

Qadsia moved to the top of the standings with three points, ahead of Kazma on set difference. Al-Arabi and Sulaibikhat remained without points, while defending champion Kuwait did not feature in the opening round.

The second round continues on Monday with two matches. Kuwait launches its campaign against Al-Arabi at 5:00 pm, seeking a winning start following the league's resumption, while Al-Arabi aims to recover from its opening defeat.

Qadsia takes on Kazma at 7:00 in an early showdown between the two teams that opened the campaign with straight-set victories. Both sides will be looking to maintain their perfect records and claim outright possession of the top spot.

The Volleyball Association has released the remaining Premier League fixtures as part of its plan to complete the 2025-2026 season, which resumed last Thursday.



Qadsia player returns a shot against Al-Arabi.

Infantino says he is supported by 'vast, vast majority' of soccer

BAKU, Oct 24, (AP): FIFA's embattled president Gianni Infantino said he has the backing of the "vast, vast majority" of soccer, despite his failed plan to sell stakes in the World Cup.

Infantino is seeking re-election next year as the head of soccer's world governing body in the face of attempts to force him to stand down in the wake of the divisive plan.

He infuriated soccer leaders in Europe, North America and Asia over the proposal to sell profits in the World Cup through a commercial subsidiary.

But in an interview released Saturday with the BBC at the Under-15 World Cup in Azerbaijan, Infantino brushed off doubts about him being able to continue as president.

"Well you know I was elected by 211 member associations from all over the world," Infantino said. "I think what is important is that in an organization like FIFA, there can be different views, different points of view."

"But if we are serious about democracy, about the democratic process, about believing that everyone has the same vote and the same voice all over the world, that football belongs to everyone, if we are serious about that, then we need, to respect as well the views of the vast, vast majority."

Infantino is standing for a final term in office in March. The deadline for potential candidates to come forward to stand against him is Nov. 18.

His latest comments came after he apologized to FIFA's ruling council last week for "mistakes" in his secretive investment plan for the World Cup.

Despite his apology, European delegates said they left the meeting disappointed about what they saw as a lack of clarity.

On Friday, the Asian Football Confederation endorsed Infantino for another term as FIFA president in an apparent turnaround in its stance from two months ago when it criticized him for a breach of trust.

Bashar hails Kuwait's Asian Para Games success



Acting Director-General of the Public Authority for Youth and Sports,
Bashar Abdullah.

NAGOYA, Oct 24: Acting Director-General of the Public Authority for Youth and Sports, Bashar Abdullah Al-Salem, has praised Kuwait's athletes for their outstanding performances at the 2026 Asian Para Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

Faisal Sorour captured gold in the F42 shot put with a record-breaking throw of 16.06 meters. Malak Al-Anzi won bronze in the F54 shot put with a distance of 4.98 meters, while Dhari Nassar Al-Bati secured bronze in the F37 event with a throw of 12.53 meters.

Bashar said the medals reflected the strength of Kuwait's integrated sports system, which provides athletes with equal opportunities through technical preparation, overseas training camps, and logistical and medical support to ensure they are ready for continental and international competitions.

"The achievements of Faisal and Malak are a source of pride for Kuwaiti sports and demonstrate the authority's continued commitment to empowering national athletes and providing them with the ideal environment to compete at major international events," he said.

Mbappe, Bellingham in excellent form

Drama, tension and controversy await as Barca hosts Real in 1st Clasico of season

MADRID, Oct. 24, (Xinhua): FC Barcelona hosts Real Madrid in the first 'Clasico' of the season at the Spotify Camp Nou on Sunday night, in what is the biggest game of the season to date in Spain. The match is likely to be surrounded by controversy and could also go a long way towards deciding the title race.

Barcelona go into the game having won its first nine La Liga matches of the season. Hansi Flick's side sit at the top of the standings with 27 points, six more than Real Madrid, who have won seven matches but suffered defeats away to Betis and Atletico Madrid.

Another defeat would leave Real Madrid nine points behind Barcelona, a significant deficit to make up even at this relatively early stage of the campaign.

The good news for Jose Mourinho's side is that they have bounced back strongly after the international break, beating Sevilla 4-1 at home last weekend before defeating RB Leipzig by the same scoreline in the Champions League on Wednesday night.

Kylian Mbappe, Jude Belling-



Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe, left, challenges for the ball with Leipzig's Castello Lukeba during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Real Madrid and Leipzig in Madrid. (AP)

ham, Arda Guler and Yan Diomande have been in excellent form, and their pace on the counter-attack could be a key factor on Sunday against a Barcelona side that likes to maintain possession and play with a high defensive line.

Barcelona lost 4-2 away to Paris Saint-Germain on Tuesday, with the reigning European champions exploiting gaps in the Barcelona

defence. Injuries to Eric Garcia, Andreas Christensen and Jules Kounde, who looks certain to miss out with an ankle injury, have also limited Flick's defensive options.

That is likely to mean Joao Cancelo continues at left-back, with 19-year-old Xavi Espot on the right and Pau Cubarsi and Gerard Martin in central defence.

One potential change from Tues-

day should be the return of Rodri in central midfield to provide additional control and protection in front of the back four.

Real Madrid will be without Vinicius Jr., who is serving the second match of a four-game domestic suspension. That could mean Diomande returns to the starting lineup after the summer signing impressed with goals against Sevilla and Leipzig.

Elsewhere, Fede Valverde is expected to continue at right-back, with former Barcelona youngster Marc Cucurella on the left and two of Dean Huijsen, Ibrahima Konate and Antonio Rudiger in central defence.

Real Madrid has complained about refereeing decisions going against them this season, with Barcelona midfielder Fermin Lopez responding that the complaints "are becoming tiresome". Controversy is likely to surround the game, especially if Mourinho's men look to disrupt Barcelona's possession with tactical fouls.

That controversy will be another ingredient in what is always a footballing spectacle.

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NEWS



Silver medalist Helen Kevric, of Germany, left, gold medalist Kaylia Nemour, of Algeria, and bronze medalist Skye Blakey, of the United States, pose on the podium of the uneven bars during the apparatus finals at the Artistic Gymnastics World Championships in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. (AP)

Sports

Qadsia faces Ansar after perfect group campaign

Kuwaiti side edges Goa in Challenge League

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Qadsia secured its place in the AFC Challenge League quarterfinals after beating India's Goa 2-1 in the final round of Group C at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium.

The Kuwaiti side will face Lebanon's Ansar in a two-legged quarterfinal, with the matches scheduled for March 3 and 13.

Qadsia finished top of Group C with a perfect nine points from three matches, underlining its strong form in the continental competition.

Moroccan striker Hamza Khabba opened the scoring in the 10th minute, but Goa drew level through Chheki in the 21st minute to send the teams into halftime tied at 1-1.

Khabba struck again four minutes after the restart, scoring in the 49th minute to seal the victory and confirm Qadsia's place in the knockout stage.

After securing qualification, Qadsia coach Mohammed Ibrahim, known as "The General," said the team had achieved its primary objective of advancing as group winners.

He acknowledged the pressure of playing three matches in six days, particularly with Qadsia hosting the group and expected to deliver results. Ibrahim

said he was pleased the team had secured direct qualification without leaving its fate to complicated calculations.

The coach also praised Goa, describing it as a competitive opponent whose performance required Qadsia to remain focused and cautious throughout the match.

Ibrahim commended the commitment of both local and foreign players, highlighting their ability to withstand the demanding schedule. He also pointed to squad rotation and several changes to the starting lineup as important factors in managing the physical demands of the tournament.

He added that Qadsia was improving steadily, with the experience of veteran Bader Al-Mutawa and the contributions of the new foreign players proving increasingly valuable in decisive moments.

With its continental campaign temporarily on hold, Qadsia will now turn its attention to domestic duties. The team is scheduled to meet Shabab on Wednesday in the sixth round of the Zain Premier League.

Ibrahim stressed that Kuwaiti clubs need more international and overseas fixtures to raise their competitive standards and improve their chances of success in Asian competitions.

He expressed hope that Kazma and Kuwait Club would qualify for the Gulf Club Champions League and AFC Champions League Two, respectively. He also wished Al-Arabi success in future competitions following their elimination from the AFC Challenge League.



Qadsia players celebrate after scoring against India's Goa.

Kazma beats Sulaibikhat to stay second

Kuwait Club strengthens grip on top spot; Amir Cup quarterfinals set for November

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 24: Kuwait Club maintained its impressive form in the Zain Premier League with a resounding 6-2 victory over host Tadamon in the sixth round, extending its lead at the top of the standings.

The defeat marked Tadamon's sixth consecutive loss, prompting the club to part ways with Bosnian coach Igor Remetic and appoints Adel Marzouk to take charge of the Farwaniya-based side.

Remetic became the second coach to leave his post this season, following Croatian coach Goran Sablic's departure from Al-Arabi.

Kuwait Club moved to 16 points after recording its fourth straight victory and its third consecutive emphatic win. It had beaten Sulaibikhat 7-1 in the fifth round and Nasr by the same score line in the fourth.

Yassine Khenissi and Amro Abdel Fattah scored twice each, while Mohammed Daham and Abdullah Al-Qarzin added one goal apiece. Ahmed Shabib and Abdulrahman Al-Rashidi scored for Tadamon.

Kuwait Club will now turn its attention to continental action, with training scheduled to resume.

Kazma kept the pressure on the leader with a 2-1 victory over Sulaibikhat at Al-Sadaqa and Al-Salam Stadium.

Sulaibikhat took the lead through



Players in action during the Zain Premier League match between Kuwait Club and Tadamon.

Abdullah Al-Awadhi before Bader Tareq equalised for Kazma. Shabib Al-Khaldi then scored the winner to secure all three points.

The victory lifted Kazma to 14 points in second place, while Sulaibikhat remained on three points.

The Kuwait Football Association (KFA) has announced the league schedule from the seventh round through the end of the first phase,

with matches set to continue until mid-December.

The competition will then pause until January as Kuwait prepare for the AFC Asian Cup in Saudi Arabia, scheduled to run from January 5 to February 7.

The KFA also confirmed the dates for the remaining matches of last season's His Highness the Amir Cup.

The quarterfinals will begin on November 25, when Salmiya faces Tadamon. Two more ties are scheduled for November 26, with Qadsia taking on Fahaheel and Al-Arabi meeting Khaitan.

Kuwait Club will face the winner of the Qadsia-Fahaheel tie in the semifinals, while the winners of the Salmiya-Tadamon and Al-Arabi-Khaitan matches

Kuwait suffers second defeat at Gulf U-17 Cup

CAIRO, Oct 24: Kuwait's U-17 national team suffered its second consecutive defeat at the Gulf U-17 Cup in Doha, losing 3-0 to Iraq, while Egypt cruised to a 5-1 victory over Yemen.

At Hamad bin Khalifa Stadium, Iraq took the lead in the 30th minute with a penalty before scoring twice

more in the 62nd and 88th minutes to seal a comfortable win.

Kuwait had started its campaign with a 3-0 loss to Egypt.

Kuwait is competing in Group B alongside Iraq, Yemen, Egypt and defending champion Saudi Arabia. Group A comprises hosts Qatar, the UAE, Bahrain, Oman and China.



Kuwaiti and Egyptian players wait for proceedings to restart.

Best of the Rest

Bayern says Kompany is 'stable': Bayern Munich coach Vincent Kompany will undergo more testing to determine why he collapsed during a training session the previous day, the club said Saturday.

Board member for sport Max Eberl told reporters that Kompany's condition was "stable" and that doctors were focused on "trying to find out" the cause.

"The tests have already yielded some results, but further results are needed to determine exactly what it is and how long it will take for him to recover," Eberl said.

The 40-year-old Kompany was observing a training session for the reserves team when the incident occurred on Friday. (AP)

Fulham holds off Coventry

Man City falls at Villa and Arsenal moves level on top of Premier League

MANCHESTER, England, Oct 24, (AP): Manchester City's perfect start to the Premier League ended in a 2-1 loss at Aston Villa, allowing Arsenal to move level on points atop the standings on Saturday.

Nicolas Jackson scored both goals for Villa against a City that was aiming for an eighth straight league win. Victory extended Villa's outstanding recent run to six wins from seven games in all competitions.

"It is incredible," Jackson said. "It was difficult but we got the win and that is the most important thing. Now we can focus on the next one."

After City's defeat in the early kick-off, defending champion Arsenal took advantage by beating Everton 2-0 at Emirates Stadium.

Ezri Konsa and Gabriel Magalhaes scored in each half for Mikel Arteta's team, which is second on goal difference.

Fulham beat Coventry 1-0.

Villa is rapidly climbing the standings after a desperate start to the campaign saw it fail to win its opening four games and picked up just one point.

The difficult start was understandable after a hugely disruptive offsea-



Aston Villa's Nicolas Jackson, centre, challenges for the ball with Manchester City's Marc Guehi during the English Premier League soccer match between Aston Villa and Manchester City in Birmingham, England. (AP)

son when a raft of star players left the club including Morgan Rogers, Ollie Watkins, Konsa, Emi Martinez and Youri Tielemans.

Unai Emery, who transformed the club from relegation battler to Champions League contender, was forced to rebuild a team that won the Europa League last season, and has done that in double-quick time.

Villa's last defeat was on Sept. 12, to Nottingham Forest 2-1. Since then Emery's team is unbeaten.

Jackson is up to seven goals in all competitions. He fired the opener inside six minutes at Villa Park.

Erling Haaland headed City level in the second half, but Jackson got his second and the winner with a first-time finish that squirmed under goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma.

City fell to a fourth defeat at Villa Park in as many seasons.

"Emery is just a tactical genius. Especially against Man City at our place we have been really good," Villa defender Matty Cash said. "He always has a plan for something and is always coming up with new ideas. When you play against top teams you have to adapt and we did that today."