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KUWAIT TRACKS SALARIES FROM BANK TO WORKER

Payday gets full digital check

Eight steps to make every salary count

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) revealed that its electronic linkage system with the platform of the Central Bank of Kuwait for verification of salary payments consists of eight steps.



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

The First Deputy Prime Minister's grasp of reality is greatly appreciated

AT the outset, I wish to express my gratitude to First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah for convening a meeting with local business owners. This initiative offered considerable reassurance to the public, as it steered matters back to the right direction.

However, to be entirely candid, not every company that erred did so intentionally. In fact, several issues stem from state institutions. The main factors contributing to these challenges include withholding public funds. Delays in salary disbursement occur frequently, because the state withholds payments owed to companies.

This is in addition to administrative hesitation. A huge number of government bodies are headed by acting officials who refrain from taking decisive actions out of fear of liability in the future, thereby, creating operational bottlenecks.

Regional factors like external and economic pressure, coupled with escalating costs of raw materials and essential services, stalled project timelines, slowed overall progress, and

delayed the fulfillment of financial commitments. The current circumstances are the expected outcome of the regional situation.

In response, neighboring Gulf nations acted proactively. Their central banks instructed commercial lenders to immediately suspend demands for loan payment from businesses, hence, extending debt timelines, along with additional supportive measures. These interventions shielded local firms from defaulting.

In contrast, Kuwait's approach has remained stagnant since the crisis began, relying on legal enforcement actions that only compounded the strain on struggling enterprises. This unsustainable trajectory necessitates urgent reconsideration, particularly in

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Kuwait makes strides in heart valve procedures

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The Salman Al-Dabbous Heart Center at Al-Adan Hospital has launched a transcatheter tricuspid valve implantation program using the "LuX-Valve Plus" device, alongside a specialized workshop.

The medical team successfully performed two procedures through the jugular vein in the neck, using an incision of no more than one centimeter.

The patients - two Kuwaiti women in their late sixties - had been diagnosed with severe tricuspid regurgitation and early-stage liver fibrosis.

Both patients were discharged from the center the following morning in stable condition, with significant im-

provements in cardiac function.

The center's valvular heart disease team was led by Dr. Al-Tayeb Al-Qallaf, a consultant specializing in valvular and structural heart diseases.

The medical team also included Dr. Ali Al-Humaidan, a consultant in cardiology and echocardiography, Dr. Ibrahim Hussein Arzoun, a cardiologist, and Dr. Mohamed Abdel-Shafi.

The achievement was made possible through the support of the anesthesia and intensive care teams, under the guidance of the heads of the relevant departments, including Dr. Bader Al-Ayyad, Head of the Cardiology Department, Dr. Huda Al-Foudari, and Dr. Mohammed Shamsha.

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Kuwait slams Houthi missile bid against Saudi holy cities

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25, (KUNA): Kuwait on Sunday strongly condemned continued terrorist attacks by the Houthi militia against several areas in Saudi Arabia, including an attempt to target the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah with two ballistic missiles.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the cowardly and reprehensible act constituted a blatant violation of the sanctity of Islam's holy sites, disregard for their religious significance, an affront to Muslims' feelings, a violation of Saudi sovereignty and a breach of international law.

Kuwait reaffirmed its full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and support for all measures taken by the kingdom to safeguard its sovereignty and security and protect the Two Holy Mosques and their sanctity.

The ministry also commended the vigilance and efficiency of Saudi air defenses in countering the attacks, stressing that Saudi Arabia's security was an integral part of Kuwait's security and that of the GCC states.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call on Sunday with Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Ayman Safadi.

During the call, Sheikh Jarrah reiterated Kuwait's condemnation of the terrorist attack targeting a church in Jordan's Karak Governorate, affirming Kuwait's full solidarity with Jordan and its support for all measures taken by the kingdom to safeguard its security and stability, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement.



Ministry of Defense photo
Kuwait's Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah attends the inauguration of the Desert Shield and Desert Storm Memorial in Washington, in the presence of Kuwait's Ambassador to the United States, Sheikhza Al-Zain Al-Sabah.

Kuwait's Defense Minister joins memorial dedication in Washington

WASHINGTON, Oct 25, (KUNA): Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah attended the inauguration of the Desert Shield and Desert Storm Memorial in Washington, in the presence of Kuwait's Ambassador to the United States, Sheikhza Al-Zain Al-Sabah.

The Ministry of Defense's Moral Guidance Directorate said in a statement on Sunday that Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ali viewed the memorial's

historical significance, which commemorates the sacrifices of US-led international coalition forces and their role in liberating Kuwait in 1991.

The statement added that the minister paid tribute to the participating forces' sacrifices and heroism, noting that the memorial represents a historic legacy of solidarity and cooperation.

He stressed the importance of preserving this historical memory and passing it on to future generations. The memorial also reflects the deep-

rooted historical relations and close ties between Kuwait and the United States.

The Desert Shield and Desert Storm Memorial embodies an "exceptional chapter" in modern military history and commemorates the sacrifices of troops from more than 30 countries who liberated the State of Kuwait in 1991, a prominent US military veteran said.

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Photo by Rezk Tawfiq
Gloomy skies blanketed Kuwait on Sunday as high humidity and increasing cloud cover signal scattered rainfall in the coming days.

Kuwait eyes rainy spell as stormy twist brews Thurs

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25, (KUNA): Kuwait is expected to experience scattered light rainfall over the coming days, with the likelihood of rain increasing next Thursday and possible thunderstorms accompanied by strong winds.

The acting Director of the Meteorological Department Dharr Al-Ali explained to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Sunday that weather maps and numerical models indicate

the country will be affected by an extension of a surface low-pressure system coinciding with an upper-level low-pressure system.

These conditions are expected to bring increased low-level and medium-level cloud cover, resulting in scattered light rain that may occasionally develop into thunderstorms.

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Kuwait moves to shield families from eviction

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25, (KUNA): Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait said amendments to the civil law aim to protect family stability and balance safeguarding of family homes with the rights of heirs and co-owners, in line with the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In a statement to KUNA on Sunday, Al-Sumait was commenting on the publication in the Official Gazette, Kuwait Al-Youm, of De-



Al-Sumait

cree law No. 121 of 2026 amending Article 830 of the civil law, issued under Decree law No. 67 of 1980.

He said the amendment addresses cases in which the division or auction sale of a jointly owned residential property could leave a co-owner, such as a father, mother or child, without their only home. The protection extends to any co-owner who meets the legal requirements.

Under the amendment, a court may postpone the division of a residential property for a period it determines, upon a co-owner's request, if the property is their only

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Kuwait sets new fees for medical liability services

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi has issued Ministerial Decree No. 351/2026, establishing fees for services provided by the Medical Liability Authority, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The services cover various administrative and technical procedures, including requests to form committees to review objections

to reports issued by the authority's technical committees.

According to the decree, which was published in the official gazette "Kuwait Alyoum", a fee of KD 20 will be charged for each administrative service request related to healthcare professionals and health facilities, as well as for administrative services provided by the Department of Health Licensing.

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PACI deletes 932 addresses

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) announced in the latest Sunday edition of the official gazette "Kuwait Alyoum" that the residential addresses of 932 individuals had been removed from its records.

The decision was made either at the request of property owners or following the demolition of the buildings concerned.

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Maldives offers attractive incentives for Kuwaiti investors



Al-Sager: NBK sustains strong performance, underpinned by its diversified business model and extensive geographic reach



Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:37 Asr 14:43
Sunrise .. 05:56 Maghrib .. 17:08
Zohr 11:32 Isha 18:27



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince

Kuwait congratulates Kazakhstan

Kuwait Amir receives Crown Prince, Premier, and ministers

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace on Sunday.

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

His Highness also received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereedah Abdullah Al-Mousherji, as well as Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, at Bayan Palace on Sunday.

His Highness the Crown Prince also received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs

Shereeda Al-Maousherji, followed by Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Separately, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Sunday a congratulatory cable to President of Kazakhstan Kassym Jomart Tokayev on the occasion of his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished the President good health and further progress and prosperity for Kazakhstan and its people.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent Sunday a congratulatory cable to President of Kazakhstan Kassym Jomart Tokayev on the occasion of his country's National Day, wishing him good health.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent Sunday a congratulatory cable to President of Kazakhstan Kassym Jomart Tokayev on the occasion of his country's National Day.

Al-Jarallah receives Maldivian Minister of State to discuss investment opportunities

Maldives offers attractive incentives for Kuwaiti investors

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: Dean of Kuwaiti journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times Ahmed Al-Jarallah received at his office yesterday afternoon a high-level delegation from the Republic of Maldives headed by H.E. Mr. Ismail Azmee Adnan, Minister of State at the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Ocean Resources, in the presence of Kuwaiti businessman Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Fadhli, Director and Co-Partner of White Oryx Infrastructure Works for Petroleum Services Co.

During the meeting, the Maldivian delegation presented a detailed overview of promising investment projects and opportunities currently available in the Maldives, particularly in the sectors of tourism and luxury resorts, infrastructure, ports and airports, food security, fisheries, and renewable energy.

Minister Adnan explained that the Maldivian government is offering a comprehensive package of incentives and facilities for foreign investors, including long-term land lease facilities, tax exemptions, streamlined licensing procedures, and guarantees for profit repatriation under a new foreign investment protection law.

Al-Jarallah welcomed the delegation, praising the friendly relations between Kuwait and the Maldives and the re-



Photos by Rezk Tawfik

Dean of Kuwaiti journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times Ahmed Al-Jarallah receives a high-level delegation from the Republic of Maldives headed by H.E. Mr. Ismail Azmee Adnan, Minister of State at the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Ocean Resources, in the presence of Kuwaiti businessman Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Fadhli, Director and Co-Partner of White Oryx Infrastructure Works for Petroleum Services Co.

markable development boom the Maldives is witnessing, which has made it a global destination.

For his part, Al-Fadhli stressed the importance of opening new horizons for Kuwaiti private sector investments in the Maldives, noting that the Maldives is now considered one of the most secure and stable tourist and investment destinations in the Indian Ocean, attracting the interest of businessmen from around the world.

Both sides expressed their aspiration to enhance media and economic cooperation between the two friendly countries.

Kuwait plans tender for infrastructure works in three areas

CAPT returns public works file over delayed response

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The Ministry of Public Works, in coordination with the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT), intends to issue a tender for the study, design and construction supervision of infrastructure improvements in Rawda,

Adailiya and Khaldiya.

This project is in line with the ongoing efforts of the ministry to develop infrastructure in residential areas and raise the efficiency of their utility networks.

Through this project, the ministry will upgrade the infrastructure in the abovementioned areas by conducting the necessary technical studies, developing appropriate designs for the improvement works, and overseeing the execution in accordance with the technical specifications

and requirements.

The preparatory phase of the project includes conducting studies and creating designs that define the scope of work and the priorities for implementation, based on the actual needs of the three areas.

This will pave the way for completing the necessary procedures to issue the tender and award the contract in compliance with the regulations.

Regarding the tender procedures, CAPT recently reviewed a letter from the ministry (Ref. No. 2601) regard-

ing the requested amendments for the project.

CAPT returned the file to the ministry, as the latter failed to respond within the timeframe stipulated in the previous decision of the agency (Decision No. 30 issued during the 82nd meeting of CAPT for 2026).

In a related development, the ministry continues to carry out infrastructure improvement projects in various residential areas. Similar work is underway in Yarmouk and Qurtoba to develop infrastructure and improve services in these areas.



Ministry of Oil photos

Minister of Oil and Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Board Chairman Tariq Al-Roumi receives ambassadors of Kyrgyzstan (left) and Tajikistan (right).

Kuwait seeks closer energy ties with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25, (KUNA): Minister of Oil and Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Board Chairman Tariq Al-Roumi discussed with the ambassadors of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Kuwait ways to strengthen bilateral relations, expand cooperation and enhance coordination.

The Ministry of Oil said in a press release Sunday that Al-Roumi separately received Kyrgyz Ambassador to Kuwait Nurlan Tokobaev, with the two sides reviewing bilateral relations and exploring ways to develop cooperation across various fields in support of their mutual interests.

Al-Roumi also met Tajik Ambassador to Kuwait Khusraw Noziri, during which they reviewed Kuwait-Tajikistan relations and discussed prospects for closer cooperation and coordination in areas of mutual interest, particularly economic relations and opportunities for cooperation in the energy sector.

The ministry said the meetings underscored the importance of continued communication and coordination, exchanging expertise and developing bilateral cooperation to expand economic partnerships and advance shared interests.

The meetings also reflect Kuwait's commitment to strengthening ties with friendly countries, enhancing channels of international cooperation and opening broader prospects for bilateral partnerships, it added.

Other Voices

Liquidation, the liquidator, and exploitation

By Ahmad alsarraf

The role of a judicial liquidator is a crucial legal and administrative function involving the liquidation of distressed or defunct companies, as well as the administration of estates where disputes arise among heirs. The process aims to settle the rights of all parties fairly and equitably.

Liquidation is not merely a matter of closing a company's records; it is a structured legal process that requires a thorough understanding of applicable laws and regulations to ensure its proper and fair implementation for all stakeholders.

A company's legal personality does not cease upon its dissolution but continues throughout the liquidation process for the benefit of its partners, employees, and creditors.

If a company's legal personality were to terminate immediately upon dissolution, it would lose the legal capacity to initiate or defend lawsuits, collect outstanding debts, and dispose of its assets in accordance with the law.

Therefore, the law provides for the appointment of a liquidator to manage these matters and protect the interests of all concerned parties.

Although companies may be liquidated for various reasons, liquidation generally falls into two main categories - amicable liquidation and judicial liquidation. Amicable liquidation is typically faster and less costly, but judicial liquidation requires a binding court order and is more common, although it is often more expensive and time-consuming.

The appointment of a liquidator is a crucial step in the liquidation process. The liquidator may be appointed from among the company's partners or from outside the company, either by mutual agreement of the parties or by court order.

Upon their appointment, the company's debts become due immediately, and their repayment is arranged as follows:

- Financial obligations arising from the liquidation process itself.
- All amounts owed to the company's employees.
- Outstanding debts, according to their priority order.
- Debts secured by collateral.



alsarraf

■ Ordinary debts.

If the company's assets are insufficient to cover all its debts, the remaining balance is distributed among ordinary creditors in proportion to their respective claims. This legal arrangement reflects a legal principle aimed at protecting the most vulnerable groups, such as employees, while promoting economic stability by prioritizing essential obligations.

Finally, the liquidator submits a final account of the liquidation process to the general assembly of shareholders or partners for approval. Once approved, the liquidation is declared complete, and the company is deregistered.

The liquidator acts as an agent of the company, not of its partners or creditors, and their role is limited to the liquidation process rather than the management of the company.

However, the liquidator has significant powers, particularly concerning the sale of the company's assets and real estate and the assignment of some of its liabilities. Strict restrictions are imposed to ensure that the liquidator does not exceed their primary role, and court authorization must be obtained. The court also has the right to remove the liquidator for legitimate reasons, such as inability to perform their duties, fraud, or gross negligence.

The liquidator is usually paid a substantial sum for their services. Consequently, the liquidator may have a financial incentive to prolong the liquidation process to maximize their earnings.

Therefore, the legislator intervened by setting a time limit for completing the liquidation. However, given the complexity and scale of some companies' operations, the presence of assets abroad, and the difficulties involved in selling those assets, it is understandable that liquidation may continue for years.

Setting a strict limit on the liquidation period may therefore be impractical. It is important for company auditors to intervene by requiring liquidators who have delayed completing their work to submit periodic reports, such as quarterly reports, to the ministry explaining the reasons for the delays. Complaints against some liquidators for deliberately prolonging the liquidation process are increasing.



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Armenian Church praises Kuwait's human rights role

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The priest and vicar of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Kuwait, Archimandrite Oshin Vartanian, who serves as the Vicar of the Prelacy of the State of Kuwait and the Neighboring Countries, extended his heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and the government and people of Kuwait on the country's re-election to the United Nations Human Rights Council for the 2027-2029 term.

In a press statement, Archimandrite Vartanian explained that the international achievement represents not only a diplomatic success but also global recognition of Kuwait's standing and its longstanding contributions to humanitarian and relief efforts. It reflects a foreign policy based on wisdom, moderation, and support for the oppressed.

The Armenian Apostolic Church, which has been part of Kuwait for many years, has daily witnessed the respect, appreciation, and freedom enjoyed by the Armenian community in practicing its religious traditions.

This environment is fostered by authentic Kuwaiti values that promote coexistence, tolerance, and the dignity of every individual, regardless of religion or ethnicity. He described



Archimandrite Oshin Vartanian

Kuwait's election to the UN body as fully consistent with these principles.

Archimandrite Vartanian stressed that the principles of justice, human dignity, and fraternity upheld by the Human Rights Council are the same values upon which the State of Kuwait was founded.

He expressed confidence that Kuwait, through its new membership, would continue to play an active role in advocating for vulnerable populations, promoting a culture of dialogue, and protecting human rights without discrimination or bias.

Archimandrite Vartanian concluded by praying for God's protection over Kuwait, its Amir, Crown Prince, and people, and for the continued blessings of security and safety.

He expressed hope that Kuwait would remain an oasis of peace, a beacon of humanity, and a meeting point for religions and cultures.

The Kuwait-Paris Summit: Balancing mutual interests

“THE visit of French President Emmanuel Macron to the State of Kuwait holds exceptional significance, serving as a practical reflection of a framework of mutual interests based on concrete realities and official data,” Kuwaiti writer **Faisal Al-Muzain** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“In line with the strategic vision of His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Kuwait’s engagement with France follows a clear, pragmatic approach aimed at securing direct and measurable security and economic benefits for the nation.

First - Security and defense gains

Security and defense issues rank among the top priorities of the visit, supported by both legislative and operational developments.



Al-Muzain

■ Intelligence Coordination: A bilateral agreement on the exchange of classified and protected defense-related information, signed on April 24, 2025, and enacted through Decree-Law No. 6/2026, has established clear protocols for safeguarding internal security.

■ Field Training: The Kuwait National Guard has announced the implementation of a memorandum of understanding on cooperation and joint training with the French Gendarmerie, aimed at enhancing combat capabilities and tactical readiness.

■ Navigation and Logistics: The summit concluded on the afternoon of Monday, October 19, 2026, with the signing of a letter of intent on defense cooperation between the Kuwaiti and French armed forces, alongside a declaration of intent to develop air navigation routes.

Second - Maritime security and oil market stability

The visit coincides with international efforts to restore stability to maritime trade through the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

Kuwait seeks to leverage this coordination to protect its oil tankers and petroleum exports, which are vital to the national budget, particularly given that energy exports account for the vast majority of its trade with Paris.

Third - Investment, energy contracts, and digitalization

Economic relations are undergoing a structural shift toward major development projects.

■ Strategic Agreements: Both sides are strengthening a joint declaration of intent for an investment partnership covering 2025–2035, designed to align with the objectives of “New Kuwait 2035” vision.

These efforts were further reinforced by the signing of a declaration of intent to encourage direct investment on Monday, October 19, 2026.

■ Investment Volume: Annual trade between the two countries stands at 2.5 billion euros. France is the leading European investor in Kuwait, with 39 major companies managing vital projects in infrastructure, transport, and digital solutions.

■ Technology and Aviation Partnerships: On Monday, October 19, 2026, Kuwait signed a cooperation agreement with the company “Bertin” concerning data and artificial intelligence. A declaration of intent was also signed between the Kuwait Investment Authority and Airbus concerning the commercial aviation sector.

Fourth - Knowledge transfer and cooperation in health and academia

On February 20, 2025, the Ministry of Health signed a direct agreement with Gustave Roussy, a cancer treatment hospital, to facilitate the transfer of advanced expertise and provide technical oversight in Kuwait.

This cooperation culminated on Monday, October 19, 2026, with the signing of a tripartite declaration of intent involving the Kuwait Investment Authority, the Ministry of Health, and the Gustave Roussy Institute.

The agreement was accompanied by an announcement to strengthen academic cooperation, as well as a research memorandum for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) and Airbus.

Fifth - France’s strategic and economic calculations

President Macron’s objectives center on securing immediate gains to strengthen the French economy, given Kuwait’s pivotal importance.

■ Geopolitical Calculations: Kuwait is a reliable partner in de-escalating regional crises and ensuring the stability of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz. This is vital to protecting the French economy from the effects of supply chain disruptions and inflation.

■ Economic Calculations: Paris relies on Kuwait to meet its oil requirements, with energy exports accounting for nearly 100 percent of the goods France imports from Kuwait.

Furthermore, Kuwait represents a vital market for France, which is the leading European investor in the country, with 39 French companies managing half of the total foreign investment in Kuwait.

Strategic Conclusion - The outcomes of the summit underscore Kuwait’s regional and international importance and strategic weight as a trusted partner in shaping regional decision-making.

This approach reflects the wisdom of the political leadership in pursuing a balanced strategy to build strong international alliances, safeguard the state’s present, and secure its future.

In international relations, coordination with France carries particular significance given its political standing and influence as a permanent member of the

UN Security Council.

This partnership provides Kuwait with a solid strategic and legal framework to protect its sovereignty, security, and economic interests in the face of challenges, while strengthening the nation’s security, growth, and prosperity.”

Also

“Filing a complaint is one of the primary legal avenues available to individuals to defend their rights, report crimes, and seek the intervention of the competent authorities to protect their legitimate interests,” Kuwaiti lawyer **Awatef Al-Dousari** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“However, this right, despite its importance, is not absolute. It must not be used to harm others, damage their reputations, or subject them to criminal proceedings based on allegations that the complainant knows to be false.

Accordingly, the Kuwaiti legislator has criminalized the filing of a “false report” or “false accusation,” thereby striking a balance between an individual’s right to seek recourse from public authorities and the need to protect others from baseless accusations.

First - When does a complaint become a “false report”? The Kuwaiti Penal Code addresses this offense under Article 145.

This article stipulates that anyone who submits a report, whether orally or in writing, to a public official authorized to initiate criminal proceedings, accusing a specific person of committing an act punishable by law when that person did not commit it, shall be subject to the prescribed penalty.

If the person filing the report knows that the allegation is false, they may face imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, a fine not exceeding two thousand dinars, or both.

It follows that the offense of filing a false report is not established merely because an accusation remains unproven, an investigation is closed without charges, or a defendant is acquitted.

Rather, all the legal elements of the offense must be established, particularly the attribution of a punishable act to a person who did not commit it and proof that the person filing the report knew the allegation was false.

There is a fundamental distinction between a complaint that remains unsubstantiated and a report that the complainant has deliberately fabricated or submitted despite knowing it to be false.

The legislator has further clarified that the penalty applies even if the official who received the report lacked the specific jurisdiction to act on the reported incident or if no actual measures were taken as a result.

This demonstrates that the criminalization focuses on the act itself and the deliberate misleading of the authorities, rather than solely on the consequences that may have resulted.

Second - Falsely disturbing public authorities constitutes a distinct offense

The legislator’s intervention is not limited to the false accusation of innocent individuals; it also extends to filing false reports about non-existent disasters, accidents, or dangers.

Article 145-bis-1, added by Law No. 9/1985, stipulates that anyone who disturbs public authorities, administrative bodies, or individuals entrusted with a public service by notifying them, through any means, of non-existent disasters, accidents, or dangers shall be subject to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years, a fine not exceeding one thousand dinars, or both.

Furthermore, the court must order the payment of any costs incurred as a result of such disturbance.

The scope of this provision differs from that of Article 145, as it specifically addresses false reports that burden public authorities with imaginary events or dangers, potentially draining their resources and hindering the performance of their legitimate duties.

Third - False reporting and the necessity of proving criminal intent

When filing a complaint concerning a false report, it is not sufficient merely to state that the previous accusation was untrue.

The incident in question must be specified, the reasons why the report is false must be explained, and evidence or indications demonstrating that the person who filed the report knew the truth must be provided.

Furthermore, any available supporting documents, such as correspondence, court judgments, or official records, should be attached to the complaint.

The investigating authority and the competent court determine criminal intent based on the specific circumstances and evidence in each case. Bad faith cannot be presumed merely because an allegation is proven false or remains unsubstantiated.

Ultimately, the criminalization of false reporting is not intended to restrict an individual’s right to file a complaint, but rather to protect that right from abuse.

While the law provides a means for individuals to seek redress, it does not permit complaints to be used as tools for retaliation, defamation, or causing harm to others.

Between the right to report and liability for making false allegations, truth remains the foundation of justice, while respect for the law serves as an essential safeguard for rights and freedoms.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

Amiri Diwan Min. and Crown Prince Diwan Head receive Moroccan Amb



Amiri Diwan photo

Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Head of the Crown Prince Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, receive the Ambassador of Morocco to Kuwait Ali Ibin Issa.

KUWAIT, Oct 25, (KUNA): Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Head of the Crown Prince Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, received the Ambassador of Morocco to Kuwait Ali Ibin Issa.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed the historic, brotherly relations between Kuwait and Morocco, and discussed ways to enhance bilateral cooperation across various fields, aiming to elevate these ties to broader horizons while serving the shared interests of both nations.

The meeting was attended by the Director of the Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Office Sami Sulaiman Al-Mulla.

Other Voices

No power lasts forever

By Suad Almojil

As the third anniversary has passed, and the war of annihilation on Gaza and southern Lebanon entered its fourth year, the world is witnessing tremendous shifts in opinion regarding what is happening in the Middle East in general, and in Gaza and southern Lebanon in particular.

When Tucker Carlson, once a prominent defender of Israel, stands to criticize unconditional American support for Israel and to condemn the war of annihilation in Gaza; when Piers Morgan, who vehemently opposed describing what is happening in Gaza as a war of annihilation, becomes a voice opposing Israel’s policies of annihilation and settlement expansion; when Pink Floyd, one of the most prominent Western artists, protests and attacks Israeli policies, calling on artists not to perform there and comparing the current cultural boycott of Israel to the boycott waged against the apartheid regime in South Africa—when the positions of such media figures and artists shift from supporting the Israeli narrative and the victimhood claims adopted by the Zionist entity for eight decades to opposing and rejecting the entity and its policies, the question arises: Is military force alone sufficient? Which decides matters on the battlefield, or do soft power and media theory of justice have a power that is absolutely no less than the power of the military machine, or financial and economic superiority?

In 2011, Roger Waters wrote in The Guardian appealing to the world to impose a cultural boycott on Israel, stressing that refraining from performing any artistic activity in Israel could lead to peaceful and soft pressure that serves Palestinian rights. He then repeated the same speech in 2013, considering at that time that the boycott that was practiced against the apartheid regime in South Africa was one of the most effective means of pressure.

Military force is not always what decides matters. There are many historical transformations that were decided by changes in human consciousness and the shift in the direction of global public opinion. What happened in South Africa, with the accumulation of such consciousness, was an important factor in bringing down the oppressive apartheid regime. Today, with Gaza, the repercussions of the change in the moral positions of prominent media figures, artists, and pioneers of theater, art, and music are accumulating every day, along with sports and academic boycotts, economic sanctions, withdrawal of investments, and boycotts of companies and brands, after the world witnessed, through live broadcasts, Israel’s crimes against children, the elderly, the land, rights, freedoms, and everything else.

Such pressure alone may not have been what led to the fall of the apartheid regime in South Africa, but it was a symbolic and direct cause that contributed to its downfall, when the regime felt isolated and ostracized from the circles of sports, art and culture in general, before it was politically isolated.

Today, something similar is happening with regard to the media, cultural, and literary stance of prominent figures in these fields who found in Israel’s practices a direct violation of the human right to dignity, life, and freedom. These people called things by their names and described Israel’s crimes in Gaza as genocide, not the legitimate right to self-defense that Israel has been promoting for eight decades.

The decisive moment in South Africa was the one that took place at the Sun City resort, when artists launched a campaign to stand up against apartheid. This happened in 1985, leading to the decisive political dismantling of this system in 1990, culminating in a symbolic date in April 1994. The scene was repeated today when thousands of film workers signed a pledge in September 2025 not to cooperate with Israeli film institutions that they consider complicit in the war of extermination in Gaza.

Indeed, “We alternate these days among people,” so no power lasts forever, especially if people’s awareness and conscience awaken to its unjust practices.



Suad Almojil

Police sweep racks up 203-action tally

GAC foils cigarette smuggling

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The General Department of Emergency Police conducted a comprehensive security campaign in all governorates of Kuwait, resulting in 203 security and traffic-related actions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The campaign forms part of the Ministry of Interior’s ongoing efforts to strengthen security presence, apprehend wanted individuals and violators, and combat unlawful activities.

According to an official statement issued by the Ministry of Interior, the campaign resulted in the arrest of 125 individuals wanted for security-related reasons, two wanted in criminal cases, four found in possession of narcotics, one found in possession of intoxicating substances, and two individuals found in an impaired state.

Also, 13 individuals were detained for failing to carry identification documents.

The campaign also led to the seizure of eight vehicles wanted by judicial authorities and 23 vehicles in violation of traffic regulations. Furthermore, 25 abandoned vehicles

were removed in coordination with Kuwait Municipality.

The ministry confirmed that the campaign resulted in a total of 203 security and traffic-related actions.

It added that the necessary legal procedures had been initiated against those apprehended and that they had been referred to the competent authorities.

□ □ □

Inspectors from the General Administration of Customs at the Nuwaiseeb border crossing thwarted an attempt to smuggle 63 cartons of cigarettes, reports Al-Seyassah daily

The cigarettes were discovered concealed inside a bag in a vehicle belonging to a traveler from a Gulf state who was attempting to evade customs inspection.

In an official statement, the Customs authority said the seizure reflected the vigilance and dedicated efforts of its inspectors in combating smuggling attempts.

The General Administration of Customs reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening oversight at all border crossings and combating various smuggling methods, stressing that the alertness and competence of its inspectors are essential to protecting the country’s security and economy.

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Photo during the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Girl Guides Association.

Board welcomes new member

Kuwait Girl Guides preps for peace camp in January

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The Board of Directors of the Girl Guides Association held its first meeting since its reconstitution, chaired by President of the association Hind Al-Houli, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Houli opened the meeting by expressing her gratitude to Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei for his renewed confidence in the board.

She also welcomed the newest board member, Director General of the Educational Services General Department at the Ministry of Education Maryam Al-Enezi, and other board members.

The board discussed the roles and titles of its members based on their capabilities and preferences, honoring retired members of the previous board, registering guide troops and units in association, preparations for the 30th Annual Girl Guides Peace Camp scheduled for Jan 14-19, 2027 with the theme "Rising for the Sake of Kuwait," approval of the general annual plan and schedule for 2026/2027, 26th Arab Girl Guides Camp that will be hosted by the Republic of Tunisia in December, seminar titled "Helen Storrow" that will be held in Switzerland in January 2027.

KAPP seeks SAB nod for wastewater plant contract

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) referred contract no. 1/2025-2026 to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for review, audit and approval.

This contract, valued at KD295,000, is for conducting consultancy studies on the public offering and transfer of shares designated for citizens in Umm Al-Hayman Wastewater Treatment Company K.S.C.P.

It is in line with Article 17 of Public Tenders Law No. 49/2016, which regulates contracting through competitive negotiation or proposal solic-

itation. The plant is the largest of its kind in the country. It is also the first facility to utilize integrated renewable energy, as the biogas produced on site generates 50 percent of the electricity needed for its operations.

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

The project won several awards like Best Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Deal in 2020 and Best Subsea Tunneling in 2022.

NATO initiative promotes Gulf crisis communication

Training boosts readiness for media challenges

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25, (KUNA): Head of the NATO-Istanbul Cooperation Initiative Regional Centre in Kuwait Emad Al-Kandari stressed on Sunday the importance of strengthening media and institutional communication skills and improving Gulf personnel's ability to engage with the media, particularly during crises and emergencies.

Speaking to KUNA on the sidelines of the launch of an advanced public affairs training course titled "Crisis Communication," Al-Kandari said the programme is hosted by the centre in cooperation with the Regional Public Affairs Centre in North Macedonia and runs until October 29, with participants from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

He explained that the course aims to equip participants with advanced communication skills, professional media presentation techniques and effective crisis communication methods, enhancing their ability to engage professionally with the media and improve institutional communication in their daily duties.

The programme combines theoretical lectures with practical exercises covering press release drafting, media interviews and press conference organization, alongside training in verbal and non-verbal communication and media monitoring and



Participants and organizers of the training course titled 'Crisis Communication'.

KUNA photos



Emad Al-Kandari, Head of the NATO-Istanbul Cooperation Initiative Regional Centre in Kuwait



Launch of the advanced public affairs training course titled 'Crisis Communication'.

analysis.

Al-Kandari added that the course also focuses on developing participants' capacity to manage media communications under various circumstances and during crises, strengthening their preparedness to address media challenges efficiently and professionally.

Kuwait resets supervisory exams

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The Ministry of Education set Nov 3-4 as the dates for the re-administration of the fourth phase of examinations for the applicants for supervisory positions -- school principal, assistant principal and technical supervisor.

Meanwhile, examinations for the department head position will be held on Dec 7-17, in cooperation with Kuwait University and according to the approved organizational procedures.

The ministry explained that these re-examinations are in line with the decision to cancel the previous exam results based on the findings of an independent investigative committee.

This step aims to address issues that affected the earlier process, ensuring assessment integrity, result reliability, and protection of applicants' rights.

The ministry pointed out that the administration of these examinations has been entrusted to Kuwait University, specifically its Center for Measurement and Evaluation, to guarantee impartiality and transparency and to take advantage of its academic and technical expertise in the field of assessment. This will be carried out according to standardized criteria to ensure fairness among all applicants.

It added that the examinations for school principals, assistant principals and technical supervisors will take place at the Kuwait University Center for Measurement

and Evaluation building.

Each day has two sessions -- from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, and from 5:45 pm to 6:45 pm. Applicants must strictly adhere to the dates and times specified in their examination details.

Applicants may access the online portal provided by Kuwait University to view their examination date and time, and watch an instructional video on the directions to the building.

They must print their examination entry card and bring their original civil identification card or passport. They must arrive at least 45 minutes before the scheduled time to complete the necessary administrative procedures.

The ministry indicated that the examinations will be in multiple-choice format. The approved study material is the same as that used in previous examinations and it is available in the documents published on the website of the ministry, while the required study content has not changed.

Examinations for the department head applicants will be conducted on Dec 7-17, in coordination with Kuwait University and arrangements are managed according to the protocols established by the ministry and the university.

The ministry stressed that re-administering these examinations serves as a corrective measure to bolster confidence in the process for filling supervisory positions and to reinforce a merit-based system rooted in competence and capability.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait makes

The establishment of the program was facilitated by the support and directives of Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi and Ministry of Health Undersecretary Sheikh Dr. Salman Khalifa Al-Sabah, alongside the dedicated efforts of the medical and technical staff at the center and the relevant departments at Al-Adan Hospital.

Kuwait moves

home and their financial resources are insufficient to purchase a suitable alternative. Courts will also consider the family and social circumstances of each case.

The protection remains in force only while the reasons for postponement persist. Any co-owner may request its termination once those reasons cease to exist, while the court may determine fair compensation for the use of the property, where warranted, to protect the rights of other co-owners.

The amendment also allows other co-owners, during division proceedings, to request the purchase of the applicant's share at a value assessed by a court-appointed expert in accordance with the law. This enables the applicant to exit the joint ownership and receive the value of their share, while the property remains with the other co-owners.

Al-Sumait stressed that the amendment does not affect heirs' legally prescribed shares or co-owners' ownership rights. Instead, it regulates property division while taking into account the needs of those living in the property and safeguarding the financial rights of other co-owners.

"We want everyone's rights to be protected, while ensuring that a father, mother or child receives legal protection against losing their only home, without compromising the rights of other heirs and co-owners," he

told KUNA.

The Cabinet approved the draft decree-law on October 6, providing for two additional clauses to Article 830 of the civil law. The amendment applies exclusively to jointly owned residential property and excludes other jointly owned assets.

Decree law No. 121 of 2026 was issued on October 19, seeking to balance co-owners' rights to divide residential property with humanitarian and social considerations.

Kuwait sets

A fee of KD 20 will also apply to requests for additional copies of technical committee reports.

The decree further stipulates a fee of KD 200 for each request to form an objection committee to review reports issued by the Medical Liability Authority's technical committees.

Those filing objections must pay the prescribed fees within 30 days of being notified that their objection has been accepted. Failure to pay within this period will render the objection request null and void.

The decree directs the relevant authorities to implement its provisions, which will take effect on November 1, 2026.

It also repeals any previous decisions or provisions that conflict with its terms.

PACI deletes

PACI urged those affected to update their residential addresses by visiting its offices or using the Sahel application, provided they submit the required supporting documents.

The process must be completed within 30 days of the announcement. Failure to comply will result in penalties under Article 33 of Law No. 32/1982, which stipulates a fine of up to KD 100 for each individual.





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Left: Ambassador of India to Kuwait Mrs. Paramita Tripathi. Center: Group photo. Right: ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ (Plant 4 Mother) campaign.

India, Kuwait mark 65 years of ties with tree-planting drive

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The Embassy of India in Kuwait, in association with ARMS4U, organised a tree-planting event at Rawda Park on 24 October 2026 under the “Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam” (Plant 4 Mother) campaign, commemorating 65 years of diplomatic relations between India and Kuwait.

The event brought together Kuwaiti dignitaries, resident ambassadors, diplomats, members of the Indian community, school students and families in a collective tribute to Mothers and Mother Earth.

Participants planted trees as a symbolic commitment to environmental protection, sustainable urban spaces and a greener Kuwait. The initiative highlighted the value of community-led action in promoting environmental awareness and creating healthier public spaces.

“Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam” was launched by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on World Environment Day, 5 June 2024. The campaign encourages people to plant trees in honour of their mothers and, more broadly, as a tribute to Mother Nature, linking gratitude towards those who nurture us with responsibility for protecting the

planet that sustains all life.

Ambassador’s address

Speaking at the event, Ambassador of India to Kuwait Mrs Paramita Tripathi welcomed guests in Hindi, English and Arabic, describing the gathering as a meaningful tribute to mothers and the natural world.

“This occasion is especially significant as we commemorate 65 years of diplomatic relations between India and Kuwait, celebrating a friendship built on mutual respect, trust, and enduring people-to-people ties,” she said.

Ambassador Tripathi said the campaign beautifully links appreciation for mothers with the duty to safeguard the environment. “Like a mother, a tree gives selflessly — providing shade, improving air quality, supporting biodiversity, and nurturing life,” she said.

She noted that the participation of Kuwaiti friends, Indian community members and children reflected the spirit of togetherness that defines India–Kuwait relations. “When people from different backgrounds come together for a common cause, they demonstrate that

care for our environment transcends nationalities and brings us closer as members of one global family,” the Ambassador said.

Highlighting the role of young participants, she said involving children in tree planting helps them understand that protecting nature is “not merely an obligation but a lifelong commitment.”

“The saplings they plant will grow alongside their own hopes and aspirations, reminding them that even small actions can make a lasting difference,” she added. “They are not only the inheritors of tomorrow’s world; they are its caretakers from today.”

Ambassador Tripathi also stressed the importance of environmental conservation in Kuwait’s desert climate, saying every tree planted represents a meaningful contribution towards a more sustainable future.

“As India and Kuwait celebrate 65 years of diplomatic relations, let today’s initiative symbolise the continued growth of our friendship,” she said. “May the bonds between our peoples deepen with every passing year, just as the trees we plant today take root and flourish.”

She expressed appreciation to the Kuwaiti authorities and friends, ARMS4U, Carmel School and its students, participating families, community members and the media for supporting the event.

“Let us plant these trees with love, nurture them with care, and leave behind a greener planet and a stronger legacy of friendship for generations to come,” the Ambassador concluded.

Growing friendship

The tree-planting initiative served as a celebration of 65 years of India–Kuwait diplomatic relations, reflecting the longstanding friendship and close cooperation between the two countries. Organisers said it also strengthened people-to-people ties through a shared commitment to sustainability.

The Embassy of India thanked ARMS4U for its support and cooperation, and encouraged further community-led initiatives under the campaign to contribute to a greener and more sustainable Kuwait.

For further information, contact the Embassy of India in Kuwait at edu.kuwait@mea.gov.in.

Continued from Page 1

The First Deputy

light of the delicate and concerning environment in the region.

We commend the First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister for instructing Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) Rabab Al-Osaimi to meet with business owners later this week in order to address the pressing difficulties. Thousands of firms are currently unable to meet payroll obligations due to such underlying factors.

Depending only on rigid and automated metrics could lead to failure to consider the extraordinary pressures that businesses are facing, thus, accelerating the risk of their collapse.

Although Kuwait remains a compassionate country toward citizens and residents, reality does not always correspond to expectations.

Without a doubt, there are unscrupulous actors, such as human traffickers or shady company and factory owners. The competent authorities can easily spot them, as the government is fully equipped to separate the honest from the dishonest.

Instead of intentionally withholding salaries, most companies that fell behind on salary disbursement were pushed into this predicament due to severe hardships. Therefore, it is unfair to freeze business license renewals, suspend administrative operations required for routine activities or exclude companies from bidding on tenders. These punitive actions have been proven to be disastrous for enterprises, putting them in an impossible situation. Let us join forces to overcome these obstacles.

The harm inflicted on individuals by these measures is beyond doubt—a concern that was highlighted during the meeting of First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef with the affected business owners.

Given His Excellency’s decisive leadership and commitment to do what is right, we respectfully appeal to him: “Please refrain from putting additional strain on these enterprises or further tightening regulatory restrictions through withholding the license and residency renewal or barring them from bidding on tenders.”

It is worth pointing out that a computer functions as an unyielding processor of instructions, executing tasks without leniency according to its underlying code.

If the restrictive practices persist, businesses will be at the risk of falling into insolvency within months—an outcome that will destabilize the national economy and devastate commercial enterprise owners and their workforce.

US unveils

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Memorial at the National Mall in the heart of Washington on Saturday night, Scott Stump, CEO of the National Desert Storm Memorial Association, stressed the importance of passing the lessons of this experience on to future generations.

Stump - a US Marine Corps Reserve veteran of operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, praised the generous support provided by the State of Kuwait and the Kuwait Banking Association to complete the important memorial.

This memorial will tell future generations the story of an international coalition of more than 30 countries from five continents, with diverse religions and backgrounds, that came together and made sacrifices to achieve freedom, he pointed.

The fact that an estimated five to six million people will visit the memorial annually means that “this story will remain alive and endure long after we are all gone.

The lessons will remain present as a living and vibrant classroom for future generations.

The memorial will stand as long as Washington, DC exists, he noted.

On his part, former Congressman and US Army veteran Dr. Phil Roe said that what Stump had built goes beyond being just a memorial; it is a tribute to a coalition of nations that stood united in 1990 and 1991 to restore Kuwait’s freedom.

The memorial is particularly fitting that our friends from Kuwait are with us today, as this memorial tells their story as much as it tells ours.

It is a lasting international tribute to everyone who served and to those who sacrificed their lives during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Dr. Roe noted.

On a similar note, Kuwait Ambassador to Washington Sheikh Al-Zain Al-Sabah said the liberation of Kuwait in 1991 represented a historic model of international solidarity and collective action in defense of sovereignty and freedom.

She praised the strategic partnership and deep-rooted friendship between Kuwait and the United States.

There are moments in history that change the destinies of nations and remind us at the same time of what can be achieved when the international community stands united, Al-Zain Al-Sabah said.

She added that US leadership of the international coalition constituted an unprecedented call to action that resonated across continents and brought nations together in an exceptional model of unity, determination and common purpose.

“We are honored today to have among us ambassadors and representatives of many countries of that coalition.

Your presence is a valuable reminder that the liberation of Kuwait was a shared achievement and that the bonds forged during that historic moment remain strong to this day,” she went on.

Praising the completion of the Memorial, she said, “We are thereby giving this great history a permanent place,” a vision realized through the tireless dedication of visionaries, builders, legislators, artists and craftsmen.

She stressed that the memorial carries profound significance for the Kuwaiti people, honoring the courage of those who served and the sacrifices made in defense of freedom, as well as the enduring friendship born from that extraordinary moment in their shared history.

“To all those who answered the call of duty: you will always remain present in Kuwait’s national memory and in our hearts, and we will never forget you,” Al-Zain Al-Sabah told the audience.

More than 35 years after Kuwait liberation, she said, despite changes in the world, the principles that united the coalition countries remain as important today as they were then: sovereignty, international law, territorial integrity and the firm belief that collective action based on shared principles can change the course of history.

Meanwhile, Skip Graffam - Director of Research at OLIN, said its location and accessibility would enable millions of visitors each year to learn about the significance of the conflict and its impact on American history.

OLIN is a leading landscape architecture and urban design firm that designed the memorial.

Graffam noted that the memorial is also close to the US Department of State, which led intensive diplomatic efforts to secure multiple UN resolutions and mobilize coalition support for the liberation of Kuwait.

He explained that the design team created the memorial as an “oasis” within the landscape of the National Mall, with the interior space surrounded by two landforms resembling sand dunes, inspired by Kuwait’s Burgham dunes, shaped by sand and desert winds.

The dunes were designed to allow the wall surfaces and artwork displayed on them to interact with sunlight throughout the day and year, he

said.

In the afternoon, for example, the wreaths are positioned to receive the golden light of sunset, offering a subtle invitation for visitors to return throughout the year, including in the evening.

The “Storm Wall” is the first wall and features a highly dynamic character, reflecting the power and speed of military operations.

Sculptures by artist Emily Bedard emerge from the dune landscape, depicting the stages of the conflict, from military buildup through confrontation and combat to the liberation of Kuwait.

The composition culminates at the highest point of the wall, where intricate details and emotions convey the intensity of the battles, Graffam went on.

The circulation paths curve in a design inspired by the left hook maneuver carried out during Operation Desert Storm, connecting visitors with the memorial elements as they gradually lead toward the center of the memorial.

Along this path, two stainless-steel elements created by artist Robert Eccleston symbolize the United States and Kuwait in a powerful formation representing the alliance between the two countries.

The United States is depicted as leader of the victorious coalition returning home, while Kuwait is shown liberated and restoring its sovereignty and freedom as an independent state.

By contrast, the “Inscription Wall” offers a clear contrast to the Storm Wall, featuring a calmer and more serene character centered around two interlocking wreaths representing Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

The wall reminds visitors of the sacrifices of the men and women who volunteered for military service thousands of miles from their homes, while at the heart of the memorial stands the “Unity Shield,” representing the coalition countries that supported Kuwait’s liberation.

Green spaces surround the central area, with a fountain at their center designed to create an oasis-like atmosphere and provide a place for rest and quiet reflection, he added.

Also attending the opening ceremony were Kuwaiti Defense Minister Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and a large number of US officials, cultural and political figures, diplomats from several countries, as well as veterans and their families.

and gratitude to those who served their country and made the ultimate sacrifice.

The US Department of the Interior and the National Park Service will assume responsibility for preserving the memorial for future generations, he added.

Burgum praised the designers for selecting stone that closely matches the colors of Kuwait’s sands. The memorial also features two birds of prey: an eagle representing the United States and a falcon symbolizing the Middle East’s longstanding falconry tradition. Both birds soar towards a new dawn.

Meanwhile, US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, in remarks delivered by Under Secretary of War for Policy Elbridge Colby, said the memorial served as a solemn reminder of the gravity of decisions to use military force.

Hegseth said the United States owed its service members a commitment to wage wars wisely and effectively, ensuring the costs borne by Americans remained proportionate to the interests at stake.

He described Operation Desert Storm as a model of this principle, adding that the memorial would serve as a lasting reminder of the importance of responsible military action.

Hegseth said Desert Shield and Desert Storm demonstrated the exceptional value of partnerships built on shared interests, forging lasting ties between the American people and those of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries.

He recalled how coalition forces regained the initiative, restored Kuwait’s

sovereignty and freedom, and decisively defeated Iraqi forces through sound strategy and the skill, readiness and courage of the troops.

The operations demonstrated that military power, when directed towards clear political objectives alongside capable and willing partners, could deliver decisive results, he said.

He added that peace and stability in the Gulf, the Pacific, Europe and the United States’ immediate neighborhood depended on strength, describing this as the core of President Donald Trump’s approach of achieving peace through strength.

He concluded by expressing appreciation to all who served in the operations, particularly those killed or wounded, and their families, saying the memorial would help preserve their sacrifices in the collective memory of future generations.

The ceremony drew a large gathering of US officials, Kuwaiti Embassy representatives, political and cultural figures, diplomats, veterans and their families.

The program included tributes to veterans of Desert Shield and Desert Storm and the families of fallen service members. A Kuwaiti song celebrating freedom and expressing Kuwait’s gratitude for US support during the liberation war was also performed.

The memorial stands at the intersection of 23rd Street and Constitution Avenue, a prominent location symbolically linking the avenue’s constitutional significance with the diplomatic role represented by 23rd Street and the US Department of State.

Constitution Avenue connects key US government institutions and national landmarks, including the Lincoln Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. It extends from the US Capitol towards the Lincoln Memorial and the western end of the National Mall, forming a symbolic link between the nation’s legislative center, founding ideals and presidential memorials.

The avenue is also lined with major federal buildings, including the National Archives, which houses the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Kuwait eyes

Winds would initially be variable in direction before shifting to light to moderate southeasterly winds, occasionally becoming active in some areas. The chances of light rainfall would vary in the coming days.

Humidity is expected to remain high throughout the week, increasing the likelihood of fog formation at night, particularly in coastal and agricultural areas. Fog may reduce horizontal visibility, requiring motorists to exercise caution.

Rainfall chances are forecast to increase on Thursday, when scattered showers and occasional thunderstorms may occur alongside stronger winds.

Al-Ali urged citizens and residents to follow the latest weather updates through the Meteorological Department’s official website, mobile application, and social media accounts.



JOINT OPERATIONS

SAUDI ARABIAN CHEVRON INC. KUWAIT GULF OIL COMPANY (K.S.C.)



Joint Operations (Saudi Arabian Chevron Inc. / Kuwait Gulf Oil Company) announces the under-mentioned Public Tenders for procurement of materials. Kuwaiti and Saudi merchants, registered with either company wishing to participate in any of the under-mentioned Tenders should submit their bids electronically through "SMART BY GEP" <https://smart.gep.com>.

For first-time registration please contact TLQX@Chevron.com - BHSJ@Chevron.com for support and guidance.

A non-refundable fee mentioned against each tender. Tender fees must be deposited and bidder must attach proof of payment copy as follows:

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The start date for the following Tenders will be on **SUNDAY, 25 OCT 2026** and closing date will be on **TUESDAY, 24 NOV 2026 @ 09:00 A.M.**

S. NO.	TENDER NO.	MATERIALS CLOSING DATE	FEES (KD)	CLOSING DATE
1	062971	Package AC Units, 1 LI, 376,970 BTU, Coolex PNGF-350 C2, MAZ, New Tech Bldg	15	24/11/2026
2	062970	Gas Pilot Burner Assy, 1 LI, 2in/3/4in, John Zink/Zeeco, MGC, H-202A/B	15	24/11/2026
3	062969	Dosing Pump Spare Kits/Parts, 6 LI, 2K08N01AC7ML2500, SEKO, Wafra, MGC Chem Skid	25	24/11/2026
4	062968	Instrument Cables, 5 LI, 6Px1/10Px1/10Cx2.5mm2, Approved MFR, Wafra, FE-158	15	24/11/2026



In this image from video, fire and smoke rise from a building attached to Quaker Oats facility in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. (AP)

America

Explosion, fire erupt in Iowa plant: An apparent explosion caused a fire Saturday at a Quaker Oats plant in Iowa that the company touts as the largest milling facility in the world. No one was hurt, fire officials said.

The Cedar Rapids Fire Department said firefighters responded to the call at about 4:45 p.m. Video and photos posted to social media showed black smoke over the downtown of the city of about 140,000.

The fire evidently began with an explosion, the department said via Facebook.

All workers got out safely and were accounted for without any injuries, Mayor Tiffany O'Donnell said in a Facebook video.

The fire happened in an area of the building that handled products, O'Donnell said. (AP)

12 injured in Florida shooting: At least 12 people were injured, including six children, in a shooting Saturday near a football stadium in Tallahassee on homecoming weekend for Florida A&M University, authorities said.

Tallahassee Police Chief Lawrence Revell told reporters that no arrests had been made.

In a statement, police said the preliminary inves-

tigation indicates that a fight broke out prior to the shooting. It followed a football game in a crowded area.

Eleven of the victims sustained gunshot wounds, and at least three victims sustained serious injuries, according to police.

The university said on social media that the shooting happened near its campus and that it remained safe. (AP)

More rain in Four Corners region: Hundreds of homes remained evacuated and without electricity Saturday after days of heavy rain - over 5 inches (13 centimeters) in places - surged water from the Colorado mountains into the New Mexico and Arizona desert.

Even as the San Juan River and other streams receded from record highs, more storms rumbled through, causing local officials to warn of still more surges.

"This is not over, and we need you to monitor alerts," police Chief Steve Hebbe of Farmington, New Mexico, said in a news conference.

The flooding affected some 2,000 people in and around the city of 46,000 not far from Four Corners, the meeting point of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah. (AP)

US president casts midterm ballot early in Florida

Obama assails ‘cruelty’ from Trump and allies in midterm campaign

DETROIT, Oct 25, (AP): Former US president Barack Obama on Saturday seized on what he described as cruelty and indecency coming from President Donald Trump and his Republican allies, stepping into one of the nation’s ugliest midterm fights as he worked to rally Democratic voters in two Midwestern battlegrounds.

First in Ohio, Obama took aim at Republican gubernatorial candidate Vivek Ramaswamy, who has doubled down on an advertising campaign featuring the estranged mother of Democratic rival Dr. Amy Acton. Trump and Vice President JD Vance have also defended the ad, even as Republican leaders across Ohio, including Gov. Mike DeWine, have called for its removal.

"In recent days, we’ve seen there is no line he will not cross, no low he will not sink to," Obama said of Ramaswamy, noting that Acton has "spoken movingly about her painful childhood and all she’s experienced: abuse, neglect and homelessness."

Later in Michigan, Obama condemned critics of Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed, suggesting that they're using his name or his faith to tear him down.

"We have seen this movie before. I starred in it," Obama told a packed high school gym in Detroit. "I've got a long-form birth certificate to prove it."

"Abdul is as Michigan as it gets,"

he added.

Obama, 65, remains the Democratic Party’s best motivator nearly a decade after leaving the White House. And he’s taking his star power on the road in the final days of the midterm elections, which will help determine the balance of power in American politics on Nov. 3.

Trump cast his own ballot on Saturday in Florida, where he defended the Ramaswamy ad, which has emerged as a national flashpoint a little more than a week before Election Day.

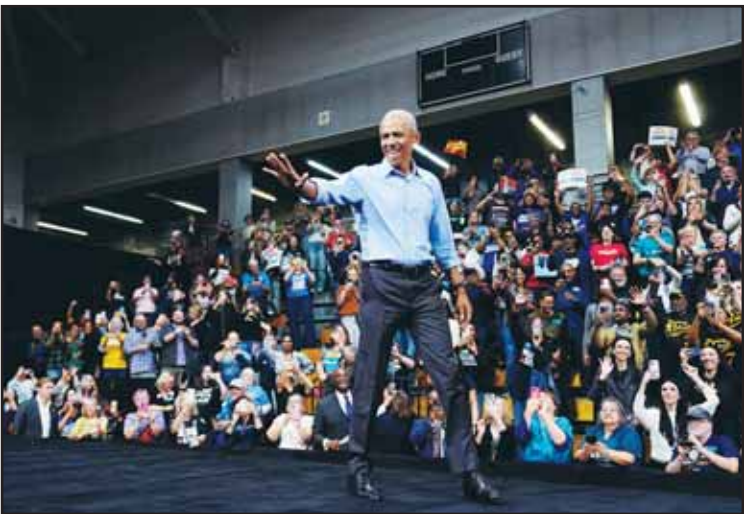
"The mother said that Amy Acton is a liar, and she’s no good," Trump said. "And you know what? I don’t think you can get a better reference on that."

The Ramaswamy campaign video features Acton’s birth mother, Donna Arthur, calling her "a liar" and insinuating she has mental health issues.

Acton, Ohio’s COVID-19-era health director, has made no secret of facing homelessness and abuse as a child. Arthur lost custody of her children after their stepfather, Arthur’s husband, was indicted on a charge of rape involving Acton.

The abuse allegedly happened from December 1976 to April 1978. Cledith Arthur failed to show for a court appearance and became a fugitive. Donna Arthur remained married to him until his death in 2004.

Appearing before Obama, Acton



Former US President Barack Obama, greets supporters upon his arrival during a campaign rally at Cass Technical High School on Oct 24, in Detroit. (AP)

spoke as if addressing Ramaswamy directly.

"My opponent has chosen to exploit, intentionally, my childhood to save his stumbling campaign, but it’s not going to work," she said. "Decency still matters." She added: "Mr. Ramaswamy, you are not just out of touch, you are out for yourself and you are a danger to my state. Apparently there is no low to which you won’t stoop."

Although Ohio has become more reliably Republican, it’s been a hotly

contested battleground this year. Trump and Vance have both visited the state in recent weeks to drum up support for Sen. Jon Husted and Ramaswamy. And the controversy over Ramaswamy’s ad has ratcheted up the already high temperature.

Michigan, too, is a critical state this midterm season, with high-stakes contests for the Senate and governor.

While Obama addressed both races, he offered a passionate defense of El-Sayed, a former public health

official running against former Rep. Mike Rogers, a Republican.

The former president pushed back against those who call El-Sayed a radical, declaring that "Abdul shares my values." He also acknowledged that El-Sayed was critical of him after his 2012 reelection for not following through on all of his progressive campaign promises.

El-Sayed wrote that Obama "was not the right choice - he just wasn't the wrong one."

"Some of these folks say, well, you know, Abdul didn't like some of the things you did as president," Obama said in Detroit, wearing a blue shirt with no tie, his sleeves rolled up. "You know who else doesn't agree with everything I do? Michelle Obama. Michelle Obama, about five times a day."

Democrats hoped that Obama’s appearance in the city, which is three-quarters Black, could bolster support for El-Sayed among Black voters. In the primary, his opponent Haley Stevens won Wayne County, which includes Detroit, by about 6 percentage points. Former Vice President Kamala Harris, the first Black and South Asian vice president, campaigned for El-Sayed in September.

Cheryl McWilliams, 67, said Obama’s speech "pumps you up to vote," and she’s hoping to see high turnout in the midterms.

"If Detroit doesn’t vote, whoever’s

running is going to lose, period," McWilliams said. "I’m just hoping we can reach voters that don’t vote. They think it doesn’t matter, and it does."

Chunnika Hodges, who lives in Detroit and canvassed for El-Sayed on Saturday, said some Black voters are supporting Rogers because they don’t think anything has changed after years of voting for Democrats. Some are also wary of El-Sayed because of his progressive policies, Hodges said.

"We don't lean to the conservative, but we have seen that within our community," Hodges said. "There are conservative Blacks, conservative Democrats."

Also:

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla: US President Donald Trump cast his ballot in the midterm elections Saturday, saying he voted for all Republicans in Florida before speaking at a Georgia rally.

Trump and first lady Melania Trump arrived at their West Palm Beach polling location at the Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections office together after the president spent the morning at his nearby golf course. Trump has been criticized in the past for voting by mail despite his long history of railing against that method of submitting ballots.

UK endures second big storm, with north bearing the brunt this time

LONDON, Oct 25, (Agencies): The second of two storms to hit the UK this weekend brought widespread travel disruptions and power outages to Scotland, Northern Ireland and northern England on Sunday.

The Met Office, the UKs national forecaster, said Storm Boelo will bring a danger to life from flying debris and crashing waves and people should stay indoors as much as possible.

Gusts above 80 mph (128 kph) have already been recorded in Scotland, including on the island of Tiree in the Inner Hebrides.

An amber wind warning, the Met Office’s second most severe, is active across Scotland and the north of England until late Sunday. Flood warnings are also in place, while airports, ferries, railways and roads have seen disruptions. Power outages have been reported across Scotland, in particular.

Boelo, pronounced "Boo-Loh", has followed hard on the heels of Storm Austen, which battered southern England on Friday. The National Grid, which distributes electricity around the U.K., said power had been restored to more than 130,000 properties impacted by Austen by 7 pm on Saturday.

The Met Office began naming major storms in 2015 as a way to keep the public informed about severe weather. Storms are named in alpha-



A car drives on the flooded A8 in Port Glasgow, Scotland on Oct 25 after Storm Boelo passed through the area. (AP)

betical order throughout the season, from September to August.

High wind and rain also were expected through the day in Denmark, Norway and parts of Sweden. Some ferries in the region were canceled, train services were suspended on some Swedish lines as a precaution and some trailers were barred from Denmark’s Great Belt Bridge.

Also:

BRUSSELS: Storm Austen swept across Belgium on Friday, bringing strong winds and rain, injuring sev-

eral people. Rail, road, air and maritime transport were also disrupted.

According to the Brussels fire service, a tree fell onto a restaurant terrace near the Grand Place in central Brussels, injuring three people. Another person was struck by a falling branch in Woluwe-Saint-Pierre, a municipality in the Brussels-Capital Region.

Belgium’s Royal Meteorological Institute (RMI) issued orange alerts for strong winds in several parts of the country, including Brussels, where the alert was set to be downgraded to yellow at 9 p.m. local time (1900 GMT).

On Friday evening, Beaufort Force 9 winds were recorded at the Westhinder monitoring station in Belgian waters of the North Sea. Peak gusts reached 99 kmh in the coastal town of Blankenberge and 97 kmh in Chieuvres, in Wallonia’s Hainaut province.

Several railway lines were affected by fallen trees and strong winds. Rail infrastructure operator Infrabel reported about eight incidents in Flanders and Brussels in the evening. Near Puurs, in Antwerp province, a fallen tree damaged overhead lines, leaving about 45 passengers stranded on a train for nearly three hours before they were all evacuated. Rail services were also disrupted in Wallonia.



Demonstrators gather outside the Polytechnic University of Milan, Italy on Oct 24, to protest against the rising cost of living and deteriorating public services, during one of several demonstrations organized across Italy by groups spanning the political spectrum. (AP)

Thousands of young protesters march in cities across Europe

MILAN, Oct 25, (AP): Thousands of young people marched Saturday through the streets of several Italian cities, including Milan, Rome and Turin, as authorities deployed large numbers of police and soldiers in a largely successful bid to stave off a repeat of the violent clashes and looting that marred similar protests last week.

The demonstration in Milan remained peaceful, but there were brief clashes with police in both Rome and Turin.

In Milan, thousands of young people marched the streets as soldiers were deployed and luxury boutiques were boarded up, but by late afternoon, most shops had opened, Italian media reported.

Premier Giorgia Meloni announced a raft of measures, including sending an additional 500 soldiers to Milan and tougher penalties for minors, who police said made up a large part of the violent protesters last week. In Milan, police detained several minors as a preventive measure, media reported.

While protests in France have claimed most international attention, large demonstrations also rocked many European cities Saturday from Milan to Rome to Madrid, Lisbon and Tirana.

The protests encompass a broad

range of issues from education and corruption to anti-war movements, pensions and housing.

In Milan, huge crowds of mostly young people gathered as night fell, chanting insults to Meloni and holding aloft banners such as "No to lies of the state."

A group of protesters dumped manure outside Italy’s energy regulator and burned a symbolic, oversized electricity bill, images broadcast on local television showed.

The 500 soldiers deployed to Milan came in addition to hundreds already stationed there, supporting about 5,000 police and other security personnel. Authorities used drone surveillance, checks at railway stations, rapid-response units and on-line monitoring for potential calls to violence.

A mayoral hopeful, Pierfrancesco Majorino, who announced his candidacy Thursday, joined the marchers and remarked how peaceful the day was, according to Italian media. He will contest a center-left primary in early 2027. Milan’s center-left Mayor Giuseppe Sala, who has held the role since 2016, is not running again.

Many stores, particularly luxury boutiques within Milan’s fashion district including Omega, Tiffany and Gucci, boarded up their front

windows. The Apple store also shut down and remained shut even as others reopened.

Rioters last weekend smashed their way into stores, targeting sneakers, athletic wear and sporting goods on streets that run off the city’s central Duomo square.

Security measures extended beyond the city center over concerns protesters could move into other neighborhoods.

The protesters ended their march peacefully Saturday evening outside the Milan Polytechnic, more than 3 kilometers (2 miles) from the city center.

Officials said Saturday they were investigating a 30-year-old freelance journalist said to be the "mastermind" of the newly formed Oct. 17 movement, which has been the main driver of the recent protests in Italy.

Milan police say last week’s violence and looting involved about 2,000 very young protesters, many of them "naturalized, second-generation Italians," alongside foreign nationals. Over two days, police arrested 45 people, including 34 minors.

A group of about 30 far-right activists, described as hooligans linked to Inter Milan soccer club, made a brief appearance chanting anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim slogans but were isolated by police.

Europe

Bulgaria holds presidential election: Bulgarians headed to the polls on Sunday to elect their next president in a campaign centered on growing economic hardship and drone attacks on Black Sea shipping.

The vote will also be the first major test for the Moscow-friendly Progressive Bulgaria party of Prime Minister **Rumen Radev** after its triumph in parliamentary elections in April.

Despite a record number of candidates, the race is expected to be decided in a runoff between incumbent President Iliana Yotova, backed by Radev’s party, and former caretaker Prime Minister Andrey Gyurov, who is backed by pro-Western opposition parties.

The campaign has focused heavily on Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the widening hostilities in the Black Sea, where recent drone attacks on commercial vessels off Bulgaria’s coast have heightened security concerns in the European Union and NATO member country.



The strikes have raised concerns over Russia’s intentions to escalate the conflict and prompted the government to ask Bulgaria’s partners for assistance to strengthen its maritime security.

Candidates have also sought to address public anxiety over rising energy prices and inflation, as many families, particularly in rural areas, struggle to make ends meet. (AP)

Serbia holds parliamentary election: Long lines of voters formed outside polling stations across Serbia on Sunday for a parliamentary election that is seen as a showdown between the Balkan country’s strongman leader Aleksandar Vucic and a diverse movement of university students who have led protests against him for almost two years.

Though Serbia’s 6.4 million voters get to choose from 18 parties hoping to enter the 250-member Parliament, the election has taken shape as a referendum between Vucic’s right-wing Serbian Progressive Party and the youth-backed Students’ List.

The main contenders are believed to be polling neck-and-neck, making Sunday’s election the most uncertain in recent years. Turnout is expected to be high and could push most smaller parties below the 3% threshold needed to make it into the assembly. (AP)

S.Korea proposes military talks with DPRK over border line issue

N.Korean leader Kim visits China to inaugurate new cross-border bridge

SEOUL, South Korea, Oct 25, (Agencies): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited China on Saturday, inaugurating a new bridge that connects the two countries and vowing to expand cooperation with his powerful neighbor.

Kim’s visit to China is his latest move in an increasingly assertive foreign policy as he seeks to align Pyongyang with Beijing and Moscow in a united front against the United States under what he portrays as a “new Cold War.” It’s his first visit in a year.

Kim arrived in the Chinese border city of Dandong Saturday after crossing the newly opened bridge, according to South Korea’s Unification Ministry and China’s official Xinhua News Agency.

In Dandong, Kim visited a memorial marking China’s support of North Korea during the 1950-53 Korean War and met with Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of China’s Communist Party.

At the memorial, Kim said that North Korea will “firmly carry forward the invincible DPRK-China friendship forged at the cost of blood all the time,” according to the North’s official Korean Central News Agency. DPRK stands for the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the North’s official name.

During their meeting, Kim reaffirmed a resolve to develop bilateral cooperation, while Wang conveyed Chinese President Xi Jinping’s greetings and said Kim’s visit to the memorial was “of great significance” in carrying forward the friendship between the two countries, KCNA said.

The two toured a car factory as well, before Wang accompanied Kim to the bridge to send him off, according to KCNA and Xinhua.

Experts said the opening of the New Yalu River Bridge this month was a key symbol of strengthening ties between North Korea and China and reflected their intent to expand trade, as it is expected to accommodate two-way traffic around the clock, including container shipments and heavy cargo trucks. The bridge was opened after more than a decade of delay.

While returning home via the bridge, Kim said “the bridge would undoubtedly and correctly fulfill its historic mission of linking the two countries and firmly joining the minds of the peoples of the two countries,” KCNA reported.

Kim has recently taken steps to bolster ties with China, the North’s traditional main ally and economic lifeline, after years of prioritizing ties with Russia. China, for its part, has sought to restore its unique influence over North Korea.

North Korea has sent thousands of troops and conventional weapons to support Russian President Vladimir Putin’s war in Ukraine, possibly in exchange for military and economic assistance.

Kim’s latest visit to China is his sixth since taking power in late 2011 following the death of his father, Kim Jong Il. The visit appears to be timed to underscore the strength of his ties with Beijing ahead of the



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, (left), is accompanied by Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of China’s Communist Party, second right, and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, third right, during a see-off ceremony at the new Yalu River Bridge, that connects the two countries, after Kim’s visit to Dandong, northeast China’s Liaoning Province on Oct. 24. (AP)

Oct. 25 anniversary of China’s first major victory in the Korean War, which was days after Chinese troops crossed the Yalu River into North Korea in October 1950.

The war began with North Korea’s surprise attack on the South in June 1950, prompting a U.N.-led coalition headed by the United States to intervene and push back the offensive. North Korea was backed primarily by Chinese forces, with assistance from the then-Soviet Union’s air force, before fighting ended with a 1953 armistice that left the peninsula technically at war.

which broke down in 2019 during Trump’s first term. Kim’s government has called for Washington to abandon its “hostile policy” and drop demands for the North’s denuclearization as a precondition for renewed talks.

South Korea’s liberal government, which favors engagement with the North, hopes renewed talks between Washington and Pyongyang will thaw inter-Korean relations, and has also urged China to play a “constructive” role in resolving the standoff. Seoul’s spy agency told lawmakers last month that it saw a 50% possibility of a meeting between Trump and Kim on the sidelines of next month’s Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, or APEC, summit in Shenzhen, China.

“From Seoul’s perspective, if North Korea focuses more on economic development than military buildup and threats, that would be positive for diplomacy and security,” said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul.

“But if Kim can extract even more benefits from China and Russia, it is unclear what Seoul could offer that would be worth the political risks Pyongyang attaches to exchanges with a more prosperous, globalized, and free Korea.”

Also:

SEOUL: South Korea’s defense ministry on Friday officially proposed military talks with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) to mutually confirm the clear loca-

tion of the ground military demarcation line (MDL), restore military communication lines and discuss measures to prevent accidental clashes in the border areas.

In a statement, the Ministry of National Defense stated that a trilateral meeting including the United Nations Command would be possible if necessary, saying specific schedules and venues can be discussed through the border village of Panmunjom.

On Oct. 5, South Korea claimed that an explosion in the demilitarized zone (DMZ) on Sept. 21 had been caused by landmines “planted by the DPRK,” injuring three South Korean service members.

Considering the military confrontation in the MDL between the two Koreas, it will be difficult to predict what other situations may arise if the current state continues to be left unaddressed, the ministry cautioned.

The ministry explained that without specific measures, soldiers of the two Koreas will conduct operations based on the MDL locations they perceive, raising the possibility of more accidental clashes.

On Oct 6, the Foreign Ministry of the DPRK said that the recent landmine explosion in the demilitarized zone was a “farce” fabricated and unilaterally determined by South Korea.

Seoul’s attempt to shift responsibility for the incident onto the DPRK and tarnish its international image constituted a grave provocation that could not be overlooked, the Korean Central News Agency quoted the ministry as saying.

Asia

5 killed in Philippine market fire: Five people have been confirmed dead after a fire in a public market in Sorsogon City, in southern Luzon, Philippines, on Saturday night, local media reported Sunday.

Based on initial reports, the fire broke out between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. local time on Saturday and quickly spread throughout the market. Authorities declared the fire out on Sunday morning, and investigations are underway. (Xinhua)

6 killed in Myanmar express bus crash: Six people were killed and 12 others injured in a road accident in Myanmar’s Mandalay region on Saturday, according to the Myanmar Fire Services Department.

The accident occurred at around 6:05 p.m. local time on a downhill section of the Pyin Oo Lwin-Mandalay road in Pyin Oo Lwin township, when an express bus traveling from Pyin Oo Lwin to Mandalay had brake failure and collided head-on with a van traveling in the opposite direction, the department said.

Following the collision, the bus plunged into a roadside ravine about 50 feet deep and overturned, it said.

Local firefighters and rescue personnel were dispatched to the scene to carry out rescue operations, the department said.

The van’s driver was killed in the accident. Among the 29 people aboard the bus, five were reported dead and 12 injured. The injured passengers were taken to hospitals for medical treatment, the department said. (Xinhua)

US Marine indicted in Japan: A US Marine stationed in Japan was indicted on robbery-murder charges on Sunday over the alleged killing of a local woman at a hotel in Naha, Okinawa Prefecture, Kyodo News reported.

According to the indictment, Devin Ballard strangled the woman with a telephone cord at a hotel in Naha on Oct. 3 and stole her backpack. Okinawa prefectural police arrested him on Oct. 4.

The case has sparked public anger in Okinawa, where crimes involving US military personnel stationed in Japan have long been a source of concern. Such offenses have included rapes, murders and robberies.

According to a previous report by Japanese newspaper Shimbun Akahata, citing National Police Agency data, Japanese police dealt with 4,998 criminal cases involving U.S. military personnel and their family members from 1989 through May 2026. Of these, 2,447 occurred in Okinawa Prefecture, accounting for nearly half of the total. (Xinhua)

Typhoon kills 1, injures 350 in Taiwan: Typhoon Champi killed one person and injured hundreds in Taiwan, as well as downing trees and knocking out power for hundreds of thousands of people as the storm’s strong winds and rains continued overnight Friday into Saturday morning.

Although Champi did not hit Taiwan directly, the storm’s span was large enough to impact most of Taiwan. The island’s weather authorities said the storm was weakening Saturday morning and that by evening, the land warnings for the typhoon would be removed. (AP)

Taiwan’s Central Emergency Operations Center reported that 350 were injured as of Friday night. The one death was a man who was washed away by waves in Taiwan’s Pingtung county, the island’s southernmost part. (AP)



People ride scooters as Typhoon Champi approaches in Taipei, Taiwan on Oct 23. (AP)

22 killed in Kenya bus crash

Nigerian president launches reelection bid

ABUJA, Nigeria, Oct 25, (AP): Nigerian President Bola Tinubu launched his reelection bid Saturday, campaigning at a rally for a second presidential term during a cost-of-living crisis and a fractured opposition.

The presidential election will be held in January against the backdrop of a worsening economy that has caused anger among voters against Tinubu’s government, but which Tinubu blamed on opposition parties.

“I hear my opponents talking about hunger and poverty. Who created it? They did,” he said at a rally in the northwestern state of Kaduna. “They created the hunger, they created the poverty. We are trying to eradicate it.”

Tinubu is being challenged by over a dozen opposition candidates, but analysts predict a three-man race between Tinubu and the two contenders he defeated in 2023. They

are former Vice President Atiku Abubakar of the African Democratic Congress, or ADC, a serial presidential candidate, and Peter Obi of the Nigeria Democratic Congress, or NDC, a former state governor who blew the last race wide open with his mass appeal to Nigeria’s youth.

In 2023, Tinubu scrapped a decades-long government-funded subsidy on gasoline moments after his inauguration as president. The move has been touted as a bold economic reform but it contributed to the naira’s devaluation and widespread hardship.

“We have prosperity and consistency, growth, recovery and opportunity, I assure you. Your prosperity is here. Fuel subsidy is in the past, no more corruption, no more lies,” he said.

Political analyst Majeed Dahiru told The Associated Press that Tinubu’s chances of winning a second term are challenged by public discontent over his economic policies.

Also:

MAKUENI, Kenya: A bus collided with a truck on Kenya’s main highway on Sunday, killing at least 22 people, police said.

The crash came three weeks after 17 people died in another accident along the same highway linking the capital, **Nairobi**, with the coastal city of **Mombasa**.

Several others were injured in the Sunday morning crash and were receiving treatment, police said. The passengers were reportedly returning from a funeral when the accident occurred.

Makueni County Commissioner **Abdullahi Khalif** said that the death toll could rise.

The circumstances surrounding the crash remain unclear. Speeding and poor road conditions have previously been cited as contributing factors in road accidents in Kenya.



Supporters of Nigeria incumbent president, Bola Tinubu, of the All Progressives Congress Party, attend the Presidential election campaign flag off in Kaduna, Nigeria, on Oct 24. (AP)

Subcontinent

4 dead in Pakistan vehicle collision: Four members of a family were killed and four others injured when a passenger coach collided with their car in Pakistan’s southern Sindh province on Sunday morning, police and rescue officials said.

The accident occurred on Jhool Road in Tando Adam, a town in Sanghar district, when a speeding coach rammed into the car, Rescue 1122 Sindh said in a statement.

The deceased included a woman and a child. The injured, including women and children, were shifted to a nearby hospital for medical treatment, according to the statement. (Xinhua)

Afghanistan accident kills four: At least four people were killed and eight others injured when a passenger vehicle overturned in Afghanistan’s remote northern province of Badakhshan late Saturday, local media reported on Sunday.

The accident occurred as the car was heading from Kofab and Yaftal districts of the province, Ariana News quoted a local official as saying.

Authorities have not disclosed the cause of the crash. The injured were transferred to the provincial hospital for medical treatment. (Xinhua)

Over 500 kg drugs seized in Sri Lanka: The Sri Lankan Navy and Coast Guard on Saturday seized more than 561 kilograms of methamphetamine and heroin during a joint operation on the country’s southern coast, the navy said.

The operation was conducted at Naotunna beach in Thalalla, Matara, following information received by the Coast Guard.

Search teams recovered 21 sacks and travel bags containing suspected narcotics, alongside a dinghy believed to have been used to smuggle the consignment. (Xinhua)

Brazil votes in tense Lula versus Bolsonaro runoff

RIO DE JANEIRO, Oct 25, (AP): Brazilians began voting in Sunday’s polarizing presidential election between incumbent President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Flávio Bolsonaro, a contest that will determine whether the US will significantly expand its growing influence in Latin America.

Polls before Sunday’s vote showed the two candidates, who need more than 50% of the vote to become Brazil’s next leader in January, in a neck-and-neck race. The election pits the left-of-center veteran politician Lula against Bolsonaro, an ally of US President Donald Trump and the son of imprisoned former President Jair Bolsonaro.

Flávio Bolsonaro bested Lula by more than 2.2 million votes in the first round of the election earlier this month. More than 33 million voters out of nearly 160 million did not turn out.

The difference between the two candidates is stark. Bolsonaro and Lula have opposing ideological views on issues ranging from US-Brazil relations and climate change to social welfare.

A win for Bolsonaro would signify a pivot to the right by Latin America’s most populous country and its largest economy in a year when Trump allies have notched victories in Chile, Peru and Colombia.

A victory for Lula would leave Brazil and Mexico, which is the region’s second most populous country and led by President Claudia Sheinbaum, with left-of-center leaders.

In many ways, Brazil’s runoff vote resembles a rematch between the country’s two polarized political forces that trigger passion as much as loathing. Four years ago, Lula beat Bolsonaro’s father by the narrowest margin since the country’s return to democracy in 1985. Polls suggest that this election will be even closer.



Supporters of former Haitian president Michel Martelly celebrate his arrival to an electoral office to officially register as a presidential candidate in the upcoming election, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on Oct. 23. (AP)

A national campaign to raise cybersecurity awareness and promote safe digital practices across all segments of society

The National Cyber Security Center and stc launch the ‘You Are Safe’ campaign



A group photo of officials from the National Cyber Security Center and the stc.



stc booth at Khiran Mall with National Cyber Security Center.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The National Cyber Security Center and Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a leader in enabling digital transformation and providing innovative services and platforms to customers in Kuwait, announced the launch of a national cybersecurity awareness campaign. The campaign forms part of national efforts to create a safer digital environment by raising awareness of digital risks and online fraud, while encouraging safe practices when using digital services and platforms.

Developed in collaboration with the National Cyber Security Center, the campaign falls within stc’s corporate social responsibility (CSR) framework and its strategy to support the community. The campaign aims to raise public awareness by presenting information on how people can protect themselves in a simple and effective way form online threats. As part of this approach, the campaign targeted employees across state institutions and government sectors, while including surveys using the KnowBe4 cybersecurity awareness platform to assess their level of cybersecurity awareness.

The campaign also included awareness messages addressing situations that users may encounter in their daily lives, helping them recognize potential risks and understand the steps they can take to protect themselves. The initiative will combine educational content with live activities and interactive digital experiences, supported by online campaigns across approved digital and advertising channels to reach a wider audience.

Awareness is the foundation of protection

The National Cyber Security Center emphasized the importance of cybersecurity awareness as a fundamental part of protecting individuals and organizations. The Center explained that a better understanding of digital risks and how to respond to similar situations helps users make more informed decisions when using digital platforms, reducing the risk of falling victim to online

fraud.

The Center added that raising awareness is a shared responsibility that requires government entities and the private sector to work together. This includes providing straightforward content that relates to situations people face in their daily lives, helping them turn knowledge into safe practices that protect their data and privacy. The Center remains committed to supporting initiatives and partnerships that promote a culture of cybersecurity, raise awareness across all segments of society and contribute to a safer digital environment.

As part of the collaboration, the National Cyber Security Center set the campaign’s overall direction, key themes and target audience, and approved its awareness content and messages. The Center will also oversee the campaign’s implementation and measure its impact. In coordination with the Center, stc will provide the platform and interactive tools required for the campaign, manage the experiences and activities, and support the distribution of awareness content through relevant channels.

Supporting a safer digital community

In a statement, stc explained that the awareness campaign was also present at various public locations that attract large numbers of visitors across Kuwait. The Company was present at the Ministries Complex, Al Khiran Mall and Assima Mall at different times during the campaign.

stc stated, “Our participation in this national campaign reflects the Company’s commitment to supporting initiatives that promote a safer digital culture within the community. As a provider of telecommunications services and digital solutions, we have a responsibility to use our capabilities and digital platforms for the benefit of society. Working alongside the National Cyber Security Center allows us to make cybersecurity awareness more accessible and relevant to the situations people encounter in their daily lives in Kuwait.”

The Company added, “At stc, we believe cybersecurity awareness is the first line of defense against many digital risks. Technology continues to play an increasingly important role in our daily lives, making it more important than ever for users to understand how to identify potential threats and adopt safer digital practices. Building a safer digital environment requires ongoing collaboration among national entities, the private sector and members of the community. stc will continue supporting efforts that help users engage with digital services with greater awareness and confidence.”

This collaboration reflects the importance of coordination between the public and private sectors in supporting national cybersecurity efforts and promoting shared responsibility for protecting the digital community. As the use of digital services continues to expand, greater public awareness and safer practices when browsing and using the internet can help individuals engage with technology more confidently and better understand the risks they may encounter.

About stc

Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is a Kuwaiti shareholding company incorporated pursuant to Amiri Decree No. 187 on 22 July, 2008, to operate and manage the third GSM mobile network in Kuwait as per Law No. 2 of 2008. Accordingly, stc launched its operations in December 2008 and was listed on Boursa Kuwait in December 2014.

stc Kuwait is a leader in enabling digital transformation and providing innovative services and solutions to individual and enterprise customers in Kuwait, and is a subsidiary of stc Group. stc Kuwait has expanded its portfolio by acquiring companies such as Qualitynet General Trading and Contracting Company (solutions by stc) in Kuwait, and e-portal Holding Company and its subsidiaries.

Kazakhstan tries to bridge US-China AI divide

The US-China AI rivalry leaves smaller nations with shrinking room to hedge

HONG KONG, Oct 25, (AP): With the two leading AI powers, the United States and China, forming their own AI blocs, other countries are maneuvering to harness the strengths of both groupings and avoid losing out.

As the rivalry intensifies, experts say the window for countries to be able to choose freely between the two AI superpowers may be narrowing, forcing them to at one point pick between the U.S.-led Pax Silica and the China-inspired World AI Cooperation Organization.

That could put many countries in a dilemma: Do they go with the U.S.’s most advanced chips and AI technologies, or join China’s more affordable, open-source AI systems?

Kazakhstan, a Central Asia nation of about 21 million people, is a rare example of a country that has sought to bridge that gap.

Just three weeks after its AI minister Zhaslan Madiyev visited Washington in June to join the U.S. group working to strengthen AI supply chains, he headed to Shanghai for a signing ceremony making the Central Asian country a founding member of China’s initiative to shape the global AI agenda.

Being in Pax Silica means more technological partnerships, high-tech manufacturing jobs and a place in global AI supply chains. At the same time, as part of China’s World AI Cooperation Organization alongside 28 other initial founding countries including Pakistan and Russia, Kazakhstan hopes to also have a voice in setting regional and global AI standards.

“Everyone is hedging,” said Dana Masalimova, a former Kazakhstan diplomat and independent scholar and center associate at the Kathryn W. and Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University.

“We don’t want this binary choice,” Masalimova said.

Kazakhstan is benefiting from both U.S. and Chinese investments, but is in a “very precarious spot,” she said.

It has rich critical mineral resources essential to AI development and has cheap electricity to power data centers, which have become politically fraught in the U.S.

Earlier this year, Kazakhstan’s government signed an investment deal worth up to \$10 billion involving Nvidia to build a “data center valley” in the country.

Meanwhile, more Chinese companies are investing in Kazakhstan. Local officials say Chinese foreign direct investment in Kazakhstan reached a record \$2.8 billion in 2025. Chinese leader Xi Jinping met with Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev in July to expand cooperation under China’s global infrastructure building Belt and Road initiative.

Both China and the U.S. are leveraging access to AI to increase their global influence.

President Donald Trump insisted last month that “whoever wins AI, wins.” U.S. officials and AI companies have accused China of large-scale “distillation,” or extraction of capabilities, from frontier American models.

Beijing has rejected those claims and says the U.S. is pursuing an AI monopoly while restricting China’s access to some of the world’s most cutting-edge AI chips and chipmaking machinery.

Washington has signaled that Pax Silica - with China as its implicit target - is only for the trusted.

“Countries can’t be trusted partners in Pax Silica while substantively engaging in initiatives that advance a competing vision for super intelligence,” the U.S. State Department said, using the Trump administration’s new preferred term for AI.

For its part, Beijing touts the openness and inclusiveness of its World AI Cooperation Organization. “As both major countries in AI, China and the United States should leverage respective strengths in AI rather than guarding against each other,” the Chinese embassy in Washington said in a statement. “AI should not be owned by major countries.”

The two AI powers have different messaging largely

because Beijing needs to court third countries in its bid to build an alternative coalition, whereas Washington already has a powerful network of allies, said Kyle Chan, a fellow at The Brookings Institution’s John L. Thornton China Center.

That lends power to what he described as “swing countries.”

Like Kazakhstan, Indonesia has resources vital for AI and other technologies, such as nickel and copper. It’s also seeking to make the most of both AI powers, having joined China’s World AI Cooperation Organization.

Indonesia wants to benefit from both, Mari Pangestu, Indonesian National Economic Council’s vice chair, told reporters at a University of Hong Kong Business School event. “We should be able to be part of both, put it that way. And choose the best system.”

U.S. AI firms are bringing investments to other countries like Singapore, where Anthropic is setting up its latest Asia office. The city-state says it is also considering joining China’s AI organization.

In Saudi Arabia, the AI startup Humain unveiled in September a platform built on an open model by a Chinese AI company. The kingdom also has a deal with Nvidia to expand AI computing with its advanced chips.

France, one of the most ambitious AI developers aside from the U.S. and China, is attempting to go its own way with its startup Mistral, whose new model released this month outperforms some advanced Chinese models.

Japan is closely aligned with the U.S. on strategic and security issues, including advanced semiconductors, trusted AI and standards. But it will not reject the more affordable Chinese AI models for “lower-risk applications,” said Takahiro Tsuchiya, a professor at Kyoto’s University of Foreign Studies.

For countries like the U.K. and Germany which have substantial economic and military capacity but no self-developed powerful frontier AI models of their own, aligning with the U.S. may be vital for their access to data centers and chip deals with U.S. companies, said Anton Leicht and Sam Winter-Levy at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Essentially, their access to advanced AI systems “depends on the whims of policymakers in Washington and Beijing,” they said, while those countries may have limited influence over AI’s future.

China, meanwhile, has been closing the technology gap with the U.S. when it comes to chipmaking and advanced AI capabilities, but it still trails top U.S. technological capabilities, at least for now.

Also, Beijing’s open-source approach allows countries to be less reliant on the U.S., and China has been providing funding for developing countries to develop their own AI ecosystems, said Alberto Lemma, a research fellow at the think tank ODI Global.

To date, China has provided official sector grants and loans for project and activities that use or enable AI technologies in at least 77 low- and middle-income countries, according to the AidData research lab at William & Mary, a public university in Virginia. Some top recipients include Nigeria, Zambia, Ghana, Bangladesh, Senegal, Cameroon, and Kenya. Public perceptions are also changing. Recent study results from Pew Research Center have shown that people in middle-income countries are becoming more positive and trusting of China when it comes to AI and the technology’s regulation.

All things considered, many countries “don’t want to pick a side ... because there are advantages and disadvantages to each technology stack,” said Aalok Mehta, director of the Wadhvani AI Center at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Most countries may eventually lack a good option since they cannot compete on building AI frontier models, but “every country in the world in some way or another is thinking about AI sovereignty,” he said. After all, “maybe no other country than the U.S. and China can really build these very large, powerful models.”

Anthropic pledges 5% stake

AI companies promise to share the wealth – but details are still vague

NEW YORK, Oct 25, (AP): As they steam toward massive public offerings on Wall Street, the companies at the forefront of artificial intelligence have begun sketching plans to share their wealth with the public - a commitment they say is imperative to address disruptions the technology could bring to the workforce and people’s livelihoods.

Executives at Anthropic and OpenAI have long argued the technology’s arrival will bring many benefits for everyday people, and they’ve promised that will include a share of the profits. The companies are outlining a range of proposals for distributing AI fortunes, but so far they have not resolved key questions over how they would work, how transparent they will be, and who will determine beneficiaries.

On Sunday, Anthropic said it would commit 5% of its shares to the Anthropic Public Benefit Fund, a new entity within the company, pending approval from stockholders. The stake could increase “as the company grows” in the future. The maker of AI assistant Claude said the fund “might explore” large donations to traditional nonprofits or potentially distribute money to “specific populations.”

The San Francisco-based company shared little information about the types of organizations supported by the fund and the issues they will address. One area it will not support, Anthropic said, is lobbying and political giving.

Phil Buchanan, the president of The Center for Effective Philanthropy, said he welcomed Anthropic’s commitment - especially at a time when he said some billionaires are “diminishing the importance of philanthropy.” But he cautioned that Anthropic should avoid the “arrogance” of previous technology barons who assumed their professional expertise would translate to philanthropic wisdom.

Buchanan recommended the fund support highly effective, existing nonprofits but said it is “hard to talk about any of this because it’s all so abstract.”

“I guess I’m hopeful,” Buchanan said, “but I’m not going to get too excited until I see some evidence of what’s actually happening.”

Anthropic, which was valued at close to \$1 trillion earlier this year, is preparing for an initial public offering as soon as next month that is shaping up as one of the biggest ever.

Once a company is public, donations might be made through the

selling of future shares, or potentially turning to cash dividends in the future, explained Jay R. Ritter, director of The IPO Initiative at the University of Florida’s Warrington College of Business. The specifics on how charitable donations will be made through Anthropic’s fund are not clear yet.

Regardless, Ritter said the announcement now is helpful for potential investors to “know what they’re buying.”

Anthropic has already committed \$200 million to study the economic effects of AI more broadly. Combined with Sunday’s announcement, Anthropic said roughly 20% of its shares will be dedicated to the “public good,” plus any additional percentage that could be added if the company’s valuation reaches certain milestones.

In announcing the benefit fund, Anthropic offered labor market impacts as one example of its philanthropic focus.

“AI may generate enormous economic value, but it could also cause instability for many workers,” Anthropic said in a blog post Sunday. It added the fund will have the “versatility” to pursue “bolder approaches” that might be necessary to offset that. The company said it would share more details about the fund’s structure and governance in the coming months.

In a May interview with The Associated Press, Anthropic president Daniela Amodei said she expected the company’s success would generally lead to more philanthropic support for disease research and “ensuring that everyone around the world gets to share in the prosperity that we hope AI creates.”

The companies’ pledges have met with skepticism from some critics.

“Anthropic is playing games here,” Gary Marcus, a longtime AI expert and professor emeritus at New York University, wrote on social media Sunday. “Trying to curry public favor while still holding control and resisting disclosure is annoying.”

Anthropic and OpenAI are each structured as a public benefit corporation, a designation that requires the companies to pursue not just profit but a social good.

OpenAI Foundation, the non-profit that controls OpenAI, promised to build out its grantmaking capacity earlier this year with a \$1 billion commitment.

Separately, OpenAI in April proposed the creation of a “Public Wealth Fund” with a stake in “AI-

driven economic growth” across companies more broadly. That fund could be invested in a handful of assets, OpenAI noted, with returns distributed directly to people regardless of whether or not they’re invested in financial markets. OpenAI is planning its own initial public offering next year.

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman also has spoken to lawmakers on both sides of the aisle about sharing equity in AI companies with the public.

SpaceX CEO Elon Musk, who has tended to eschew traditional philanthropy, pledged as recently as Monday to donate some shares of his own company.

During the personal computer boom, the likes of Michael Dell and Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates started private foundations to manage their philanthropy. Today, Silicon Valley’s leaders including Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg have turned instead to limited-liability companies, the option that Anthropic is pursuing for its public benefit fund.

The structure offers more control for its owners, experts say. An LLC is not bound by the same spending rules as a foundation, which is required to distribute at least 5% of the value of its endowment.

“They have a lot more flexibility and latitude in how to use the resources they put into the fund,” said Katherina Rosqueta, the founding executive director of the University of Pennsylvania’s Center for High Impact Philanthropy.

Brian Mittendorf, the chair in accounting at Ohio State University, said LLCs allow for activity outside “traditional philanthropy,” such as payouts to individuals that would not be possible through a 501(c)(3) charity. But if they are not making traditional charitable gifts, that puts the companies in a “gray area” by raising the question of how the public is benefiting, he said.

LLC owners don’t reap the same tax benefits, either, according to Rosqueta and Mittendorf. Anthropic’s pledge doesn’t immediately trigger a tax write-off, and the company can only claim a deduction once the donated shares are moved to a public charity. There’s also less transparency required of LLCs.

Overall, Anthropic’s announcement amounts to a commitment to “yet-to-be-specified wider goals,” Mittendorf said. The move “reflects more of an intention to do things in the future rather than an act now,” Mittendorf said.

On the sidelines of NBK’s third quarter 2026 earnings conference call

Al-Sager: NBK sustains strong performance, underpinned by its diversified business model and extensive geographic reach



Isam Al-Sager

■ **Al-Sager:**

- Net operating income surpassed KD 1 billion, up 3.8% year-on-year despite a challenging operating environment
- NBK’s strong market position and robust performance provide a solid foundation for sustained growth and reinforcing its leadership in Kuwait
- Substantial progress in accelerating digital transformation and advancing innovation capabilities
- Diversification of the Group’s businesses and revenue streams remains central to NBK’s long-term strategy
- We strengthened our GCC presence with the opening of a new branch at the Qatar Financial Centre
- We reached 60% of our USD 10 billion sustainable finance target for 2030
- Our longstanding relationships with the public and private sectors position NBK at the forefront of supporting Kuwait’s investment agenda
- Notable progress in advancing Kuwait’s legislative and economic reform agenda
- The mortgage financing law presents substantial long-term lending growth opportunities as more housing units become available for distribution
- Kuwait’s investment outlook remains encouraging, supported by a growing pipeline of tenders and anticipated project awards

■ **Ronghe:**

- International operations and Islamic banking collectively contributed approximately 39% of the Group’s total profits
- Our 2026 loan growth guidance remains in the mid- to high-single-digit range



NBK headquarters

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) held its Third Quarter 2026 Earnings Conference Call with analysts and investors to discuss its financial results for the third quarter and first nine months of 2026. During the call, Mr. Isam J. Al-Sager, Vice Chairman and Group CEO of NBK, reviewed the operating environment, key developments and financial results, as well as the economic outlook across Kuwait, the region and global markets.

Al-Sager began by highlighting the Bank’s financial performance, noting that NBK reported a net profit of KD 481.7 million in the first nine months of 2026, compared to KD 467.4 million in the corresponding period of 2025.

He added that net operating income grew by 3.8% year-on-year to exceed KD 1 billion, emphasizing that this growth reflects the strength of the Bank’s diversified business model and extensive geographic footprint, supporting its solid performance despite challenging operating conditions.

Al-Sager noted that return ratios remained strong, with return on average assets standing at 1.39% during the first nine months of 2026, while return on average equity reached 13.9%.

On the strategic front, Al-Sager highlighted the Bank’s continued progress in advancing its digital transformation agenda and strengthening innovation capabilities. He explained that during the third quarter of 2026, NBK expanded its end-to-end digital banking services across more key consumer banking products, introducing Kuwait’s first fully digital loan journey, alongside digital account opening for children and a fully digital credit card application and issuance process.

Al-Sager emphasized that diversification of the Group’s business activities and revenue streams remains a key pillar of NBK’s strategy, supported by its extensive regional and international presence, wealth management business, and Boubyan Bank, the Group’s Islamic banking arm.

He noted that during the third quarter, NBK further expanded its presence in the GCC with the opening of a branch at the Qatar Financial Centre, strengthening client relationships in a market where the Bank has maintained an established presence for many years.

On sustainability, Al-Sager reaffirmed NBK’s commitment to integrating environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles across the Group’s businesses and operations. He highlighted that, as of September 2026, the Bank had reached 60% of its USD 10 billion sustainable finance

target for 2030, reflecting effective execution and its commitment to sustainable long-term growth.

Looking ahead, Al-Sager emphasized that NBK’s strong market position and robust performance provide a solid foundation for sustained growth and reinforcing its leadership in Kuwait. He noted that the Bank’s strong capital base and liquidity position provide the capacity to expand lending as economic activity recovers, while its longstanding, trust-based relationships with the public and private sectors continue to position NBK at the forefront of financial institutions supporting Kuwait’s investment plans, infrastructure development and economic transformation.

Domestic Operating Environment

Commenting on Kuwait’s economic landscape, Al-Sager noted that economic activity regained momentum following a slowdown in the second quarter. Oil production rebounded significantly from its earlier lows, although output remained below pre-conflict levels, with the pace of further recovery dependent on export conditions.

Meanwhile, he highlighted the greater resilience of non-oil activity, supported by progress in implementing Kuwait’s development agenda and a notable pickup in tendering activity across the utilities, infrastructure and energy sectors.

Al-Sager stated that significant progress had been made during the year on legislative and economic reforms. He added that these developments, together with Kuwait’s strong financial position, were positively assessed by credit rating agencies, contributing to the affirmation of the country’s sovereign credit ratings.

Al-Sager also noted that the mortgage financing law had been approved and published in the Official Gazette, with its implementing regulations expected to be issued shortly.

He expected lending activity under the newly approved mortgage financing law to gain momentum gradually, with the full potential for growth emerging over the longer term as more housing units become available for distribution.

In the meantime, he indicated that lending activity is expected to pick up outside the scope of the mortgage financing law, as more work is directed towards infrastructure projects and the development of these new residential cities.

Project Awards

Al-Sager noted that project award activity maintained its momentum, with the total value of projects awarded reaching approximately KD 3 billion during the first nine months of 2026. He also highlighted that the third quarter attracted

significant international investment into Kuwait’s infrastructure sector, which he described as a strong indication of investor confidence in the country. Al-Sager emphasized that the investment outlook remains promising, supported by the continued issuance of tenders and expectations of further project awards.

Resilient Business Model

For his part, Mr. Sujit Ronghe, Group Chief Financial Officer of NBK, stated that the Group continued to deliver strong financial and operating performance during the first nine months of 2026, despite persistent economic uncertainty and heightened regional geopolitical tensions since the end of February. He emphasized that the Group’s resilient business model, diversified revenue streams and extensive geographic footprint have strengthened its ability to navigate challenges while maintaining robust profitability.

Ronghe explained that the Group reported a net profit of KD 481.7 million for the first nine months of 2026, representing a 3.1% increase compared to the corresponding period of the previous year. Third-quarter net profit reached KD 156.9 million, also up 3.1% year-on-year, supported by stable operating performance and a relative decline in net credit provisions and impairment losses.

He added that net operating income increased by 3.8% year-on-year to KD 1 billion, supported by a strong contribution from non-interest income, which accounted for approximately 25% of total operating income, reflecting the continued balance of the Group’s revenue mix. Non-interest income rose by 14.2% to KD 251.4 million, while fees and commissions income grew by 11.9% to KD 181.6 million, reflecting solid contributions across the Group’s business segments and operating markets.

Ronghe noted that growth in fees and commissions income was primarily driven by asset management, lending and cards businesses, with card-related income benefiting from increased travel activity and flight operations during the summer season in the third quarter. Foreign exchange gains of KD 40.7 million also supported revenues, benefiting from improved transaction volumes and favorable exchange rate movements.

He highlighted that international operations and Islamic banking, the two key pillars of the Group’s diversification strategy, collectively contributed approximately 39% of total Group profits, reflecting the success of NBK’s geographic and operational diversification strategy.

Ronghe explained that continued issuance of Kuwaiti dinar-denominated government treasury bonds contributed to a gradual increase in the share of interest-earning reserves held with the Central Bank of Kuwait, providing some support to net interest income and net interest margin. He expressed the Bank’s expectation that debt issuances would continue, creating opportunities to deploy liquidity into higher-yielding assets with the Central Bank of Kuwait.

Turning to the balance sheet, Ronghe stated that the Group’s total assets reached KD 46.9 billion as of the end of September 2026, representing a 4.5% year-on-year increase. Gross loans and advances grew by 8.2% year-on-year to KD 28.2 billion, with loan growth primarily driven by the Kuwaiti market, alongside contributions from international operations despite the challenges posed by regional developments. Customer deposits increased by 13.5% year-on-year, with growth coming from both Kuwait and overseas markets, although Kuwait accounted for the larger share.

He reaffirmed that asset quality remained stable, with the non-performing loan (NPL) ratio remaining low at 1.29% and the NPL coverage ratio standing at 236%, reflecting the Group’s prudent approach to risk management and provisioning.

Ronghe explained that the Bank maintains credit provisions of KD 940 million in accordance with Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) requirements, compared to expected credit loss (ECL) requirements of KD 713 million. Accordingly, provisions held on the balance sheet under CBK regulations exceed ECL requirements by KD 227 million, providing a comfortable buffer that enables the Group to absorb any potential adverse impacts arising from the prevailing conditions.

He added that the Group maintained strong liquidity levels in line with Basel III requirements, with the liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) standing at approximately 163% and the net stable funding ratio (NSFR) at 107%, both exceeding the original minimum regulatory requirements.

Looking ahead, Ronghe expressed cautious optimism regarding the overall stability of the operating environment over the coming quarters, despite ongoing challenges.

He noted that the Bank’s loan growth guidance for 2026 remains in the mid- to high-single-digit range, emphasizing that the overall quality of NBK’s credit portfolio remains strong.

Ronghe also expected recoveries recorded during the first nine months of 2026 to help reduce net provisions charged to the Group’s full-year results.

AI uncertainty boosts safe-haven demand as oil surge fuels inflation risks

By National Bank of Kuwait

Global markets this week turned risk-averse amid concerns over artificial intelligence (AI) investment sustainability, Middle East tensions, and persistent inflation. In the US, Treasury yields fell as technology stocks sold off, with the 10-year yield below 5% and the two-year near 4.66%. Economic activity remained robust, with the composite PMI at 57.6 and initial jobless claims falling to 194K, while intensifying price pressures complicated the Federal Reserve’s policy outlook. DXY closed the week at 101.810 [-0.03%]. In Canada, headline inflation rose to 3.1% YoY, while easing core measures offered the Bank of Canada some policy flexibility amid trade uncertainty and labour-market weakness. USD/CAD closed at 1.4003 [-0.99%]. In Europe, the eurozone composite PMI fell to 51.9, while French economic weakness and fiscal concerns widened the French-German 10-year spread to 178bps, with French yields reaching 5.14%.

EUR/USD closed at 1.1202 [-0.33%]. In the UK, inflation accelerated to 3.5% YoY, complicating the Bank of England’s policy outlook. Retail sales fell 0.4% MoM, despite the composite PMI strengthening to 53.1. GBP/USD closed at 1.3374 [+0.35%]. Across Asia-Pacific, Japanese core inflation reached 2.1% YoY, keeping further Bank of Japan policy normalisation in focus. USD/JPY closed at 156.87 [-0.73%]. Meanwhile, China’s GDP grew 4.5% YoY in Q3, although weak consumption remained a concern. USD/CNH closed at 6.6690 [-0.26%]. In Australia, hawkish Reserve Bank commentary increased expectations of a rate hike, while New Zealand inflation eased to 3.7% YoY but remained exposed to energy-price pressures. AUD/USD and NZD/USD closed at 0.7036 [+1.30%] and 0.5699 [+0.83%], respectively. Geopolitical risks supported oil, with Brent closing at USD 116.72 per barrel, while gold fell below USD 4,000 per ounce on liquidity pressures. The US Treasury 2s10s and 5s30s spreads stood at 30.845bps [-5.395bps] and 51.402bps [-3.686bps], respectively. Overall, markets remained caught between energy-driven inflation pressures and uneven growth signals, keeping volatility elevated across currencies, bonds, and equities.

United States and Canada

US Treasuries Rally as 10-Year Yield Falls Below 5% and Nasdaq 100 Drops

US Treasuries regained their traditional safe-haven appeal as concerns over AI investment returns triggered a broad technology sell-off. The Nasdaq 100 fell 2.9% on Thursday, while the Philadelphia Semiconductor Index plunged 6.7%, prompting investors to rotate into government bonds amid growing concerns about economic growth. The 10-year Treasury yield declined below 5% to approximately 4.97%, while shorter-dated yields fell by as much as 20bps. Despite Brent crude rising above USD 116 per barrel amid escalating Middle East tensions, markets increasingly viewed higher energy costs as a threat to growth rather than solely as an inflationary risk. Consequently, the probability of a Federal Reserve rate increase by year-end fell to 90%, reflecting a reassessment of persistent inflation risks against rising downside risks to growth. DXY last printed at 101.810.

US Composite PMI Eases to 57.6 as Jobless Claims Fall to 194K and Price Pressures Intensify

US economic activity remained resilient in October, while inflation pressures strengthened. The S&P Global flash composite PMI eased to 57.6, its second-highest reading since 2022, as new orders recorded their fastest growth in four-and-a-half years and employment remained firm. Selling prices rose at the fastest pace in more than four years amid higher energy, transportation, and raw-material costs. Labour-market data were similarly robust, with initial jobless claims falling by 6K to a three-month low of 194K, while the four-week average declined to 197.75K, its lowest since 2022. Meanwhile, University of Michigan consumer sentiment was revised higher to 48.0, although one-year inflation expectations held at 4.7%. Overall, resilient activity and elevated price pressures reinforce a challenging policy backdrop for the Federal Reserve.

Canada Inflation Rises to 3.1% YoY in September as Core Measures Ease to 1.8%

Canadian annual inflation accelerated to 3.1% in September from 3.0% in August, remaining below economists’ expectations of 3.2%, as gasoline prices increased 27.8% YoY. However, underlying price pressures moderated,

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week’s Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.1239	1.1183	1.1261	1.1202	1.1050	1.1300	1.1247
GBP	1.3327	1.3299	1.3419	1.3374	1.3285	1.3560	1.3376
JPY	158.02	156.08	158.6	156.87	155.05	157.75	155.69
CHF	0.8240	0.8192	0.8270	0.8250	0.8155	0.8350	0.8159

with the Bank of Canada’s median and trim core inflation measures easing to 1.9% and 1.8%, respectively, while inflation excluding food and energy remained at 2.1%. Consumer prices increased 0.1% MoM, and the proportion of CPI components rising at 3% or more declined to 29.2% from 34.2%. Slower grocery inflation also provided relief, with prices increasing 1.7% YoY. These developments offer the Bank of Canada some flexibility ahead of its October 28 policy decision, although higher energy costs, rising inflation expectations, and US trade tensions complicate the outlook. Meanwhile, employment has declined by 41.2K since December 2025, highlighting underlying economic vulnerabilities. USD/CAD last printed at 1.4003.

Europe and the United Kingdom

French-German 10-Year Bond Spread Widens to 178bps as French Yields Reach 5.14%

French sovereign bond markets came under renewed pressure as political uncertainty, fiscal concerns and deteriorating risk sentiment intensified investor selling. The spread between French and German 10-year government bond yields widened by as much as 19bps to 178bps, its highest level since late 2011. French 10-year yields climbed to 5.14%, their highest since 2002, while two-year yields rose 11bps to 3.86%. The CAC 40 equity index also declined by 2.19% on the week, reflecting broader concerns about France’s economic and political outlook ahead of next year’s presidential election. Elevated energy prices, limited market liquidity, and the unwinding of leveraged carry trades further exacerbated the sell-off. Although Europe’s financial safeguards are stronger than during the sovereign debt crisis, continued deterioration could spread to other eurozone bond markets and complicate the European Central Bank’s monetary policy decisions. EUR/USD last printed at 1.1202.

Eurozone Composite PMI Falls to 51.9 as France Contracts at 48.4 and Germany Slows to 52.8

Eurozone private-sector growth weakened in October, with the composite Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI) falling to 51.9 from 53.1 in September, its lowest level since June. Rising energy and transport costs intensified inflationary pressures, while business confidence declined to a five-month low and employment growth nearly stalled. Germany’s composite PMI eased to 52.8 from 53.8, marking its fourth consecutive month of expansion, although new business growth remained modest. France deteriorated more sharply, with its composite PMI falling to 48.4 from 51.1, signalling renewed contraction amid political uncertainty, fiscal pressures, and tighter financial conditions. French services activity declined to 48.4, while manufacturing fell to 49.3. Although export orders increased for a third consecutive month across the eurozone, weakening domestic demand and persistent cost pressures complicate the European Central Bank’s policy outlook ahead of its October 29 decision.

UK Inflation Accelerates to 3.5% YoY as October Composite PMI Rises to 53.1

UK inflation increased to 3.5% YoY in September from 3.1% in August, reaching an 11-month high as rising petrol and diesel prices intensified household cost pressures. Services inflation climbed to 3.7%, while producer input prices accelerated to 8.3% YoY. Average earnings excluding bonuses rose 3.7% YoY in the three months to August, while unemployment declined to 4.7%. However, retail sales fell 0.4% MoM in September, exceeding expectations for a 0.1% decline and signalling emerging consumer weakness. In contrast, the October composite PMI strengthened to 53.1 from 52.0, its highest reading since February, supported by new orders, manufacturing output and AI-related technology demand. Stronger activity and persistent inflation have reinforced expectations of a Bank of England rate increase on November 5, with swap markets currently pricing a 95% probability of a 25bp hike, while weakening retail demand and rising household energy costs weigh on the growth outlook. GBP/USD last printed at 1.3374.

Asia-Pacific

Japan Core Inflation Reaches 2.1% YoY in September, Exceeding the BOJ’s 2% Target

Japan’s core consumer price index, excluding fresh food, increased 2.1% YoY in September, exceeding the Bank of Japan’s (BOJ) 2% target for the first time this year. Underlying inflation, excluding fresh food and energy, accelerated to 2.4%, while service prices rose 1.5% YoY, their fastest increase since March. Higher food, hotel, and water prices contributed to persistent inflation, although gasoline tax relief and a 20.6% annual decline in rice prices provided partial offsets. The data strengthen expectations of further BOJ policy normalisation, with swap markets pricing around a 75% probability of another rate hike by year-end. The yen strengthened to a one-month high against the US dollar as safe-haven demand increased amid global equity market volatility. Nevertheless, Japan’s dependence on imported energy and food leaves its inflation outlook vulnerable to escalating Middle East tensions and higher commodity prices. USD/JPY last printed at 156.87.

China GDP Growth Accelerates to 4.5% YoY in Q3 as Industrial Production Rises 5.5%

China’s economy expanded 4.5% YoY in the third quarter, accelerating from 4.3% in the second quarter and bringing growth for the first nine months to 4.6%, within Beijing’s annual target of 4.5% to 5%. Industrial production increased 5.5% YoY in September, its strongest expansion in six months, supported by manufacturing and AI-related exports. However, retail sales rose just 1.1%, highlighting persistently weak domestic consumption amid a prolonged property downturn and subdued employment conditions. Infrastructure investment also remained under pressure, despite accelerated local government bond issuance and targeted fiscal support. With growth increasingly dependent on external demand and technology-related investment, trade tensions and weakening global demand present significant risks. Policymakers are expected to maintain existing stimulus measures while limiting additional easing, with attention increasingly shifting towards the 2027 growth outlook. USD/CNH last printed at 6.6690.

RBA Flags Materially Worse Inflation Outlook as November Rate-Hike Probability Reaches 50%

Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) Deputy Governor Andrew Hauser warned that Australia’s inflation outlook had deteriorated materially relative to the central bank’s August projections, strengthening expectations of another rate increase in November. Rising energy prices, AI-related technology costs, and expanding data-centre investment are adding to inflationary pressures, while higher oil prices are exceeding the assumptions underpinning previous forecasts. Following Hauser’s comments, swap markets priced around a 50% probability of a November 3 rate increase, up from around 30%, while expectations for a 25bp increase by February became fully priced. The Australian dollar appreciated and three-year government bond yields rose on the comments. Although the RBA has already tightened policy substantially this year, signs of a softening labour market complicate its decision. Upcoming third-quarter inflation data will be crucial in determining whether further tightening is necessary to prevent inflation expectations from becoming entrenched. AUD/USD last printed at 0.7036.

New Zealand Inflation Eases to 3.7% YoY in Q3 as OCR Hike Probability Reaches 85%

New Zealand’s annual consumer price inflation eased to 3.7% in the third quarter from 4.1% in the second quarter, below economists’ expectations of 3.8%. Consumer prices rose 0.7% QoQ, also below forecasts, as lower petrol prices moderated tradables inflation to 4.3% YoY. However, core inflation excluding food, energy and fuel increased to 2.9% from 2.5%, while non-tradables inflation remained elevated at 3.3%. Rising fuel, electricity, and construction costs continue to threaten the disinflation outlook, with some economists expecting inflation to exceed 4.5% in the fourth quarter. Consequently, markets increased the probability of a 25bp Official Cash Rate (OCR) increase at the Reserve Bank of New Zealand’s October 28 meeting to 85%. The New Zealand dollar weakened immediately after the release, reflecting the softer headline reading, although persistent domestic price pressures continue to support expectations of tighter monetary policy. NZD/USD last printed at 0.5699.

Kuwait

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30800.

Reinforcing its commitment to developing national talent

KIB concludes its fourth consecutive year of participation in ‘Watheefti’

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) concluded its participation in the fifth edition of Watheefti, which took place from October 15th to 17th at The Arena– 360 Mall. The Bank’s participation highlighted its unwavering dedication to supporting young Kuwaiti professionals and graduates in pursuing meaningful career paths in the banking sector. This year, KIB also introduced the new KIB Initiative, which brought outstanding senior-year students from Canadian Bilingual School to the fair, alongside an interactive AI-powered experience aimed at helping visitors explore career opportunities that match their skills and aspirations.

Commenting on KIB’s continued involvement in the fair, Hadi Ibrahim Hadi, Acting General Manager of Human Resources at KIB, said: “Our participation in Kuwait’s largest and most prominent employment fair for the fourth consecutive year reflects our firm belief that Kuwait’s youth are the cornerstone of the country’s future development and our ongoing commitment to nurturing their talents and preparing them for the job market. At KIB, we continuously seek opportunities to connect with ambitious young professionals, introduce them to the diverse career paths available in the banking sector, and equip them with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. We are proud to once again be part of this important national initiative, which brings together leading employers and the next generation of Kuwaiti talent.”

During the three-day event, KIB’s Human Resources team welcomed job seekers, introduced them to the Bank’s available positions, and shared insights about its dynamic work culture and professional development opportunities at KIB’s booth. The team also highlighted the importance of responsible financial practices, in line with the nationwide “Let’s Be Aware” (Diraya) campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) in collaboration with local banks.

Visitors also had the opportunity to take part in an AI-powered career profiling experience. Using an interactive



H.E. Dr. Tareq Al-Jalalma, Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs, in a group photo with the Kuwait International Bank (KIB) team during Watheefti 2026.

console with illuminated buttons, participants answered a series of short questions about their skills, interests, and work preferences. Within one to two minutes, the experience generated a personalized career profile, suggesting relevant career directions and matching participants with available opportunities at the Bank.

Reflecting on the interactive experience, Hadi explained: “KIB remains committed to adopting innovative approaches that bring young talents closer to suitable career opportunities. Our interactive AI-powered experience at the fair offered visitors a new way to explore their professional interests and identify potential career paths. By combining technology with our team’s expertise, we sought to make the recruitment experience more engaging and informative, while helping candidates discover opportunities that align with their abilities and ambitions.”

As part of the KIB Initiative, the Bank’s team was joined by outstanding senior-year students from Canadian Bilingual School, who volunteered to welcome visitors, interact with candidates, and assist the recruitment team in presenting available career opportunities at KIB.

Ahead of the fair, the Bank had conducted a career awareness session at the school, introducing students to KIB, the private sector, and Watheefti. The session also covered the academic majors currently in demand, the skills each field requires and how to build them, and the career paths and roles these majors lead to. Designed to give students a real first look at the world of work before they choose their university majors, the initiative offered them first-hand experience of a professional working environment and insight into the expectations and requirements of today’s labor market.

Bringing together leading organizations from across Kuwait’s private sector, Watheefti 2026 provided a valuable platform for job seekers and graduates to explore employment opportunities, connect with potential employers, and gain a better understanding of the skills and qualifications required in different industries.

KIB continues to underscore its role as a notable Islamic financial institution that not only contributes to Kuwait’s economic development but also prioritizes the growth and empowerment of national talent. Through its ongoing participation in Watheefti and similar initiatives, the Bank reaffirms its steadfast commitment to supporting future generations and living up to its main slogan, “Bank for Life.”

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.

At the 20th Telecom Review Leaders’ Summit in Dubai

Zain wins double accolades for 5G-advanced leadership

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: Zain Group, a leading regional TechCo, has added four prestigious accolades to its growing record of regional and international industry recognition at the Telecom Review Excellence Awards, held alongside the recent 20th Telecom Review Leaders’ Summit in Dubai.

Leading the Group’s achievements was Zain Kuwait, its flagship operation, which further strengthened its position at the forefront of next-generation connectivity by securing the Best 5G Advanced Business Innovation and Best 5G Advanced Network Experience awards, recognizing its success in translating advanced network capabilities into exceptional customer experiences and tangible value for businesses.

The Group’s success also extended to Zain Jordan, which received the Best Digital Transformation Deployment award, and Zain Omantel International (ZOI), which earned the Best Subsea Cable Innovations/Solutions award.

Together, these achievements underscore the breadth of innovation across Zain Group’s operations and investments, from accelerating digital transformation and elevating customer experiences to advancing international connectivity and strengthening the region’s digital infrastructure.

Commenting on the Zain Kuwait 5G-Advanced achievement, Zain Kuwait’s Chief Technology Officer, Daaij Al-Oud said, “This is a testament of Zain Kuwait’s long-term commitment to network excellence and the consistent quality of experience we deliver to our customers. For us, true network leadership goes beyond achieving record speeds or introducing new technologies. It is about translating these advancements into tangible improvements in how people connect, communicate, work, and experience the digital world.”

He added: “What makes this recognition particularly meaningful is that it celebrates both the customer and business dimensions of our 5G-Advanced journey. We are building a network that



Daaij Al-Oud receiving Zain Kuwait’s awards during the ceremony in Dubai.

not only delivers exceptional everyday experiences, but also empowers enterprises, industries, and entrepreneurs to embrace new digital opportunities. That’s why we continue to invest in intelligent infrastructure, AI-driven innovation, and advanced connectivity to strengthen Kuwait’s digital foundations and support its ambitions for a more connected, technology-driven economy.”

During the Summit, Al-Oud also joined a high-level panel discussion titled Network Experience: Connectivity Redefined, alongside senior executives and technology leaders from across the telecom industry.

The discussion explored how rising data consumption, AI workloads, and enterprise demand are reshaping network capacity requirements, highlighting the importance of spectrum efficiency, intelligent network optimization, and sustainable infrastructure investment.

Al-Oud shared insights from Zain’s 5G-Advanced journey, emphasizing the industry’s shift beyond peak speeds toward delivering consistent performance, seamless indoor and outdoor connectivity, and more intelligent, adaptive networks capable of supporting future digital demands.

Zain Bahrain also contributed to the Summit’s discussions, with its Network Director Amar Buali joining a panel titled Building Digital Resilience: Strengthening Critical Infra-

structure. The session explored emerging digital risks and vulnerabilities, the shift from reactive recovery to proactive resilience, and the importance of building secure, reliable, and sustainable digital infrastructure. His participation highlighted Zain Bahrain’s continued commitment to strengthening network resilience, embracing technological innovation, and delivering dependable connectivity experiences.

Zain Kuwait - Best 5G Advanced Network Experience in the Middle East

Zain Kuwait earned this award in recognition of its sustained efforts to translate advanced network technologies into a superior, reliable, and consistent customer experience. Following its commercial, nationwide launch of 5G-Advanced in 2025, the company continued enhancing its network through intelligent capacity management, advanced carrier aggregation, and AI-powered optimization. These efforts include Kuwait’s first successful six-carrier 5G-Advanced verification, achieving peak speeds of 3 Gbps while demonstrating greater spectrum efficiency, improved indoor coverage capabilities, and enhanced uplink performance.

Zain Kuwait - Best 5G Advanced Business Innovation in the Middle East

This award recognized Zain Kuwait’s success in extending the value of next-generation connectivity beyond traditional telecom services

to enable business transformation across multiple sectors. Its advanced network infrastructure supports enterprise-grade connectivity, IoT, cloud-based applications, and emerging AI-driven solutions, with a regional-first 31 Gbps verification demonstrating the potential of ultra-high-capacity networks for demanding business environments.

Zain Jordan-Best Digital Transformation Deployment – Middle East

This award reflects Zain Jordan’s continued commitment to accelerating digital transformation and enhancing the customer experience through innovative technologies and digital solutions. The recognition highlights the company’s focus on modernizing its digital capabilities, streamlining operations, and delivering seamless, customer-centric services, while strengthening its role as a key enabler of the Kingdom’s growing digital economy.

ZOI-Best Subsea Cable Innovations/Solutions – Middle East

The award recognized Zain Omantel International (ZOI)’s contributions to advancing international connectivity and strengthening the region’s digital infrastructure. The accolade reflects ZOI’s focus on developing innovative subsea connectivity solutions that enhance network capacity, resilience, and reliability, supporting the growing demand for high-performance international data transmission.

These capabilities were recently demonstrated through ZOI’s collaboration with Zain Kuwait in enabling a Guinness World Record-breaking remote robotic surgery between Kuwait and Brazil in 2025, spanning over 12,000 km, with ZOI providing the ultra-low-latency international connectivity essential to the procedure’s success.

The Telecom Review Leaders’ Summit is a prominent gathering for the regional and international telecommunications and ICT industry, bringing together senior executives, technology leaders, regulators, and innovators to explore emerging technologies and the future of digital connectivity.

Fed, GDP and inflation reports to test US economy this week

NEW YORK, Oct 25, (AP): A key update on inflation and its impact on consumer confidence, economic growth and interest rate policy will fill a busy calendar this week along with more big earnings reports.

They all arrive just weeks before the Nov. 3 midterm elections that will determine the future makeup of Congress as the U.S. economy grapples with constantly shifting global trade conflicts and a global oil shortage brought on by the U.S. war with Iran. Inflation is stubbornly high, consumers are losing confidence and the resilient jobs market is showing more signs of stress.

Here’s a look at some of the key reports coming in the week ahead.

Americans are losing confidence in the economy as rising prices for everything from gas to groceries guts budgets. The latest consumer confidence survey from business group The Conference Board on Tuesday is expected to show that consumer confidence kept shrinking in October.

The last report showed that confidence plunged in September to the lowest level in more than a decade. The October report is expected to show confidence kept weakening. Consumer confidence is down sharply from two years ago, according to the survey. In that time, the U.S. has waged a wide-ranging trade war with much of the world, including its neighbors and closest trading partners. The uncertainty around the sudden shifts in tariffs left businesses and consumers wary about planning ahead over worries about higher costs. The U.S. war with Iran that started in 2026 slashed global oil supplies and added more fuel to rising prices.

The Federal Reserve will close out a two-day meeting on Wednesday and is expected to hold its benchmark interest rate steady following a hike at its September meeting. The central bank has been signaling that it is still worried about inflation and that it may have to continue raising rates to help tame rising costs. Wall Street still expects that one more rate hike is coming at the Fed’s meeting in December.

Higher interest rates make borrowing more costly, which in turn can slow economic growth and cool stubbornly hot inflation. The Fed has to balance taming inflation with supporting the jobs market. Higher interest rates and slower economic growth could dampen rising inflation, but they could also hurt job growth at a time when the somewhat resilient employment market is showing signs of stress.

The U.S. Department of Commerce on Thursday will release its initial report on economic growth during the third quarter and economists expect a sluggish result. Economists are forecasting that gross domestic product, which is the nation’s output of goods and services, rose 1.7% from July through September. It’s the first of three reports for third-quarter GDP and can be re-

vised higher or lower.

The forecast for the initial assessment marks an easing from 2.2% growth during the second quarter. GDP growth has been slowing since the first quarter under pressure from higher oil prices fueling already stubbornly high inflation. Growth has been bolstered by a strong stock market and businesses investing in artificial intelligence technology. Households, though, have been struggling with higher costs on everything from gas to groceries eating up more of their budgets at the same time that average wages for workers stagnate.

The latest inflation update is expected to show that prices on everything from gasoline to clothing and groceries marched higher at a faster rate in September. The U.S. will release the personal consumption expenditures report, or PCE, on Thursday and economists expect that inflation jumped at a 3.7% rate, up from a 3.4% rate in August.

The PCE is the preferred measure of inflation used by the Fed, which wants to bring inflation down to its target rate of 2%. Several other measures of inflation have also moved stubbornly above a 3%. Inflation has been rising at an even sharper rate since the U.S. war with Iran started in February, essentially shutting down the vital Strait of Hormuz and stifling the global oil supply. That has prompted a surge in gasoline prices that have been a direct hit to household budgets. Higher diesel fuel costs raised the cost of shipping and warehousing goods, which businesses typically pass along to consumers.

The latest updates on retail sales show that household spending remains strong, on the surface. Much of that spending, though, is the result of paying higher costs, especially for gasoline.

Investors have another busy week of earnings ahead, with reports from big names that could provide more insight on plans for AI spending and how inflation is influencing profits.

The most closely-watched reports this week are likely to be the big technology or technology-related companies that have seen their stock values surge as they heavily invest in artificial intelligence technology with hopes for a big benefit. Google’s parent company Alphabet reports its results on Wednesday, with Intel and Amazon reporting their latest results on Thursday. Analysts expect all three companies to report profit gains as Wall Street tries to determine whether their big AI investments will translate into future growth and whether their outsized stock values are justified.

A wide range of other companies will report results this week, shedding more light on inflation’s impact across industries. Shipping company UPS and beverage giant Coca-Cola report results on Tuesday. Starbucks reports its results on Thursday, while oil giants Exxon Mobil and Chevron report their results on Friday.



Al-Oud participating in the panel discussion.

Trump announces at a Georgia campaign rally that Audi will build a new auto factory in state

PERRY, Oct 25, (AP): President Donald Trump on Saturday announced that Audi will build an automobile plant in Georgia as he tries to deliver on his promise to bolster American manufacturing in the final days before the midterm elections.

Speaking at a campaign rally in Perry, Georgia, where he sought to boost Republican candidates, Trump said Audi - the German luxury brand owned by Volkswagen - would commit \$4.2 billion in nearby Macon to begin construction on a plant that will produce 200,000 cars a year.

“Think of that. 200,000 cars a year. That’s incredible,” Trump said, crediting his aggressive and unpopular tariff policies for the company’s decision to build the plant.

The announcement seemed timed to offer a last-minute boost to Republican candidates in the battleground state, including Rep. Mike Collins, who is trying to unseat Democratic Sen. Jon Ossoff. Trump has spent October campaigning in reliably Republican states as the party tries to hold onto its majorities in the House and Senate. Trump won Georgia in 2024 after losing it in 2020.

Trump was joined on stage by Gernot Döllner, the chairman of the board of management at Audi, who said the plant would be producing “our biggest and most premium SUVs.”

“This is a long-term investment, because we believe in the American market,” he said.

Audi, in a news release, said the plant - its first in Georgia - would create approximately 4,500 jobs and that construction was scheduled to begin in 2027, with production beginning in the early 2030s.

Republicans are bracing for losses in the Nov. 3 midterm elections as they contend with an unpopular president and an electorate that is angry over high costs and the ongoing war in Iran.

At the rally, Rick Jackson, the Republican candidate for Georgia governor, thanked Trump for the plans.

“Thank you on behalf of Georgia for putting the biggest economic deal in Georgia history right here today,” he said.

Not every director agrees

Hollywood's longest movies reflect growing runtime trend

NEW YORK, Oct 25, (AP): Your bladder isn't lying. Movies are getting longer.

All kinds of films, from big-budget spectacles to art house dramas, are stretching their runtimes. It's an old saying that a short movie can feel long and a long movie can feel short. But data, not just bathroom runs, shows that runtime inflation is real at the movies.

After analyzing 36,431 movies released theatrically from 1980 to 2025, researcher Stephen Follows found that the average length of a wide-release movie has grown from 106 to 114 minutes.

For most who frequent the movie theater, this isn't surprising. It's become a regular feature of the prerelease anticipation of a movie: How long is it? When the official runtime of "The Odyssey" was released (173 minutes), for some it was as if Christopher Nolan had laid down a challenge as intimidating as the Cyclops.

But there's little evidence that long runtimes are dissuading moviegoers. They may even be a draw. "The Odyssey" is the second-highest grossing movie of the year, with \$1.8 billion in ticket sales, and the front-runner for best picture at the Oscars.

Still, the shift has changed the whole ecosystem around movies. Ahead of last year's Venice Film Festival, festival boss Alberto Barbera noted that movies running 2 hours and 15 minutes or 2 hours and 30 minutes had become "the new international standard."

This, Barbera said, can be a programming annoyance as well as a knock on an otherwise good film. The festival selection committee, he said, often sees films that would have benefited from being 10-20 minutes shorter.

This year, three films viewed as top Oscar contenders - "The Odyssey," "La Bola Negra" (159 minutes) and "You Can See Everything" (174 minutes) - all easily run more than 2 ½ hours. It's far from just the awards movies, though. The upcoming "Hunger Games" movie, "Sunrise on the Reaping," is 158 minutes long, a new high for the franchise. Any way you cut it, that's a lot of reaping.

The advent of streaming has led the movies to seek larger screens and longer runtimes. When the flat-screen enticements at home are so great, the movies strive to be bona fide events to get people to come

out. Bigger is better, or so the thinking goes.

No one knows this better than Joe and Anthony Russo, stewards of the "Avengers" movies including the upcoming "Avengers: Doomsday."

"The moviegoing experience is evolving," Joe Russo said in a recent interview. "Eventized cinema seems to be the draw to get people out of their homes. That can be premium storytelling, premium moviegoing experience, and length can certainly contribute to the feeling of an experience. In a lot of ways, it's the feeling of getting your money's worth."

"Doomsday" doesn't yet have an announced runtime, though that hasn't stopped a sizable cottage industry of coverage committed to pinning down its length. The Russos expect "Doomsday" to be closer to two and a half hours, slimmed down from the three-hour-long "Endgame" and relatively slender given that it contains a sizable portion of the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

For Russo, bigger is good, but not automatically better.

"It doesn't mean that you can't pack a punch in a shorter runtime," Russo said. "It's whatever the story requires. It's about squeezing the story into a diamond, and if that diamond ends up three-and-a-half hours, sure. If it ends up two-and-a-half hours, sure."

The Japanese filmmaker Ryusuke Hamaguchi makes movies that are almost the diametric opposite of a superhero film, yet he has arrived at similar runtimes.



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Matt Damon as Odysseus in a scene from "The Odyssey." (AP)



Virginie Efira, left, and Tao Okamoto appear in a scene from "All of a Sudden." (Neon via AP)

Hamaguchi's films are resolutely human-scaled; they move with the rhythm of life. His 2021 film "Drive My Car," the first Japanese film nominated for best picture, ran just under three hours. His movies are patient powerhouses that reject conventional movie plotting.

"Storytelling as an action, you're sort of forcing certain things to happen to make an interesting film," Hamaguchi said. "Oftentimes, when I watch other films, they say this is how it is and continue to push the plot forward. I find that to be uncomfortable."

Hamaguchi was speaking in an interview shortly after the Cannes Film Festival premiere of his latest film, "All of a Sudden." Contrary to its title, it runs 197 minutes. But the film, which Neon will release Nov.

25, is one of the gentlest and most enlightening movies of the year. Fittingly, it's about time.

Virginie Efira stars as the director of a Paris nursing home where she's introducing a more humane but time-consuming care technique called Humanity. She encounters resistance from some staff but finds life improves for both the facility's patients and its employees.

For Hamaguchi, that message applies as much to movies as it does elder care.

"My own values and thoughts around filmmaking come into the film," he said. "I first learned about Humanity in a different context and I decided to work within the field of caregiving. But when I started to research about it, I realized there were so many shared

issues in common with the film industry."

Not everyone shares the feeling that movies need to push closer to the three-hour mark. Polish filmmaker Pawel Pawlikowski has made three acclaimed films in a row, all 90 minutes or less. He's not necessarily against longer-running movies, but he sets out to distill his films down to their most potent elements.

"I love 'Lawrence of Arabia.' It felt proportionate to the film and the landscape," says Pawlikowski of David Lean's 327-minute 1962 epic. "But nowadays there are films where it's just too much. There are five endings and it's just showing off. I won't mention names but there are some really great directors doing it, too."

Pawlikowski's latest, "Father-

land," is a neat 82 minutes. Yet despite, or possibly because of its concision, "Fatherland" is an uncommonly rich experience, starring Hanns Zischler as the German Nobel Prize-winning novelist Thomas Mann and Sandra Hüller his daughter, Erika. They're on a road trip through Germany in the aftermath of World War II.

Pawlikowski is keenly aware that he's swimming against the long-movie current.

"It feels a bit controversial what I'm doing," Pawlikowski says, chuckling. "I'm quite aware that it's provocative to be so stripped down. I'm all into simplifying life, anyways. Stick to your friends. Like what you like. Try to be honest. If you can do that in film, or any kind of art form, it helps."



Audiences take pictures of elephant-shaped installations during the premiere in Beijing, capital of China, Oct. 21, 2026. (Xinhua)

IMAX footage brings story to life

Elephant Odyssey hits big screen

BEIJING, Oct. 25, (Xinhua): A herd of Asian elephants that traveled hundreds of kilometers across southwest China's Yunnan Province before making its way back south is among the real-life stories featured in a new documentary that premiered in Beijing.

Titled "The Elephant Odyssey," the film follows China's efforts to protect Asian elephants, from monitoring their movements to rescuing elephants in need and returning them to the wild.

Directed by Alice Gu and co-produced by China, Canada and Singapore, it took three years to make, with the crew repeatedly venturing into the tropical rainforests of Yunnan to document conservation efforts firsthand.

The film captures the remarkable journey of the herd that left a nature reserve in Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture in March 2020 and traveled about 500 kilometers north to Kunming, Yunnan's provincial capital, arriving in June 2021. The elephants later headed south and eventually returned safely to the reserve. The film

was an effort to bring the remarkable journey of the wandering Asian elephants to global cinema screens.

It also follows A Bao, an elephant rescued in 2018 after becoming separated from his herd at the age of 12. Following years of training and preparation, A Bao was released into the wild in May 2024, marking China's first successful reintroduction of a rescued Asian elephant into the wild.

At the premiere, a representative of China International Publishing Center said the film uses real footage to showcase China's ecological conservation efforts and achievements.

The co-production also seeks to foster cultural exchanges and explore ways to connect with international audiences through shared emotions and an immersive cinematic experience, said the representative.

The film will feature additional footage exclusively in IMAX theaters, offering audiences a more immersive view of the natural world and the elephants' remarkable journey.

Variety

DAKAR: The 2026 Chinese Film Festival in Senegal opened in Dakar, drawing around 100 guests from various sectors of both countries. The opening ceremony was followed by a screening of "The Shadow's Edge."

Speaking at the ceremony, Chinese Ambassador to Senegal Li Zhigang said this year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and African countries, as well as the China-Africa Year of People-to-People Exchanges.

Describing cinema as a "bridge across borders that connects people," Li expressed hope that the festival would "give Senegalese audiences a closer look at China's history, contemporary society and people's lives."

El Hadji Tanor Gning, chief of staff to Senegal's minister in charge of culture, creative industries and historical heritage, said the festival offered local audiences "a valuable opportunity to discover the richness, diversity and modernity of Chinese cinema." (Xinhua)

'I really want every album to be my best'

John Legend explores new sound on 'Muse'

LOS ANGELES, Oct 25, (AP): Jay-Z once told John Legend, "You're our voice." But Pharrell Williams had another idea for Legend's signature baritone: Sometimes, let it do more talking than singing.

On his new album, "Muse," Legend dials back his powerhouse vocals on certain songs, adopting a more conversational delivery at Williams' urging. It's a departure for the EGOT winner, whose piano-driven ballads like "All of Me" and "Ordinary People" have helped define his career for more than two decades.

The 16-track project, out Friday, marks Legend's first full album with Williams after more than 20 years of friendship. Recorded mostly at Williams' studio inside Louis Vuitton's Paris headquarters, it grew out of Legend's appearance on Clipse's "The Birds Don't Sing," which inspired Williams to build an album around his voice.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Legend discussed Williams' creative influence, Jay-Z's memorable compliment and composing his first original stage score for "Imitation of Life," an off-Broadway musical opening at The Shed in New York in December.

Remarks have been edited for brevity and clarity.

AP: You've achieved EGOT status and more than two decades of success. What do you still feel you have to prove?

LEGEND: I really want every project to be my best project. Every album to be my best album. That means continuing to push myself, continuing to challenge myself and not resting on all the work I've done before.

That also means trying new things. Working with Pharrell on an entire album was something new for



Singer John Legend performs during the dedication ceremony for the Obama Presidential Center in Chicago on June 18, 2026. (AP)

me. I'm writing for Broadway now. Just finding new creative avenues to continue to throw some more challenges into the mix and seeing what it inspires in my creativity.

AP: Has the success of your piano ballads and songs like "All of Me" ever made you feel creatively boxed in?

LEGEND: No, not at all. Honestly, I feel like my success has made me feel empowered. It's made me feel confident and trusting my voice, trusting my instincts. It's allowed me to have relationships with record labels and other business partners where they trust my judgment and don't over-micromanage me. ... I think it allows me to operate from not being in a place of fear, but a place of confidence and willingness to try new things.

AP: What did Pharrell challenge you to do differently on "Muse"?

LEGEND: One of the things that he encouraged me to do on specific

songs was to talk-sing in a way where it was like I was more speaking and having a conversation.

Like in "Fireflies," some of the delivery of the verses of the song is more like I'm orating, like I'm speaking, rather than like I'm singing a melody. That was his idea, and I think it really works. ... That's why you work with new people, because they may bring new ideas to the table that you hadn't tried before.

AP: Why did it take more than 20 years for you and Pharrell to make an entire album together?

LEGEND: Early in my career, I was signed to GOOD Music. Kanye (West) was very involved in executive producing all my albums, and so it wouldn't have made sense for me to do a whole album with a whole other producer at the time. I'm more of a free agent now and able to just do whatever I want musically. My label, Republic Records, kind of lets me have free rein with whatever I want to do musically

and wherever my muse takes me — no pun intended.

AP: You've worked with everyone from Lauryn Hill and Jay-Z to Nipsey Hussle, Rick Ross and Clipse. Do people overlook how much hip-hop has impacted your career?

LEGEND: I think a lot of people know it and they acknowledge it to me. Jay-Z one time came up to me and said, "You're our voice." I think a lot of hip-hop fans know that these MCs bring me onto a song when they think that I'll add something special to it. ... I love that hip-hop is such a big part of my legacy and my body of work over the years.

AP: What scares revisiting "Imitation of Life," with its themes of race and identity, important now?

LEGEND: What we found interesting was the challenge of writing it as Black creatives and centering the Black woman Delilah at the heart of our storytelling in a way where she was never centered before. Making it a musical when it never was a musical before was also an interesting challenge. It allowed us to write an era that's really interesting in our musical history and our cultural history, the time of the Harlem Renaissance and the Jazz Age.

AP: What scares you more at this stage: taking a creative risk that doesn't work or making music that no longer surprises you?

LEGEND: I don't know if anything scares me. I would say I don't want to get complacent. I want to continue to hold myself to a high standard, hold anything I release to a high standard, and I refuse to just rest on my laurels.

I guess you could call it fear, but I don't think it's really fear. It's motivation and challenge that I put in front of myself.

'Deeply distressed'

UK authorities withheld claims against Meghan's father

LONDON, Oct 25, (AP): British police confirmed Saturday that they passed a letter about alleged offending by the father of Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, to her in 2019, but said it did not share details with other law enforcement agencies.

Meghan, Prince Harry's wife, said Friday she was "deeply distressed" by allegations that a collection of child sexual abuse images had been found at a former home of her father, Thomas Markle Sr. She issued a statement after a British tabloid newspaper reported that her brother found the images while clearing out their father's home in the Philippines.

She also referred to a letter containing "troubling and disturbing allegations" against her father that was sent to the Metropolitan Police Service's Royal and Specialist Protection unit, which later shared its contents with her.

On Saturday, the Metropolitan Police confirmed that in January 2019 it received a letter "containing a number of claims about alleged offending outside the United Kingdom."

It said that while officers shared the letter with Harry and Meghan's office, they did not share the allegations with other law enforcement agencies - and

that it is now reviewing how it handled the matter and considering whether the force needs to be referred to the police watchdog.

Meghan married Harry at Windsor Castle in 2018. They have two children, Prince Archie and Princess Lilibet.

Thomas Markle Sr., a retired television lighting and photography director, did not attend their wedding, prompting extensive media coverage of Meghan's estrangement from her father. Meghan said her decision to distance herself was intended to protect her children.

Obituary



This June 7, 2012 file photo shows Tom Skerritt at the AFI Life Achievement Award Honoring Shirley MacLaine in Culver City, Calif. (AP)

‘We know him for his humor’

Tom Skerritt, Emmy-winning ‘Picket Fences’ star, dies at 93

NEW YORK, Oct 25, (AP): Tom Skerritt, the Emmy-winning actor who embodied a solid, wry authority figure, whether as a flight instructor in “Top Gun,” a tough-but-fair sheriff on TV’s “Picket Fences” or the doomed captain of “Alien,” has died. He was 93.

Skerritt died Wednesday of natural causes, his family said in a statement. “While the world knew Tom through his remarkable acting career, we knew him for his humor, curiosity, wisdom, generosity and the love he brought into our lives. He cared deeply about imagination, creativity, storytelling, service, veterans, the natural world and helping others find and share their own voices,” the statement said.

Skerritt was twice nominated for an Emmy - both for “Picket Fences,” winning outstanding lead actor in a drama series in 1993. Other career highlights include playing the patient husband of Shirley MacLaine in “Turning Point,” Sally Field’s husband in “Steel Magnolias” and a scheming opportunist who stands in the way of Jodie Foster’s attempt to communicate with extraterrestrial life in “Contact.”

“A writer once described me as a character actor locked in a leading man’s body, and I’ve always loved that. It’s a nice compliment. I’ve been able to walk the line between television and features,” he told the Seattle Post-Intelligencer in 1997.

Onstage, he was the narrator in “Our Town” at Seattle’s Intiman Theatre in 2004 and made his Broadway debut in 2013 in an adaptation of John Grisham’s “A Time to Kill,” in which The Associated Press wrote he “nicely pulls off a charming disgraced and drunken lawyer.”

Skerritt grew up in a middle-class Detroit family, his father a small businessman and his mother a housewife. He had two brothers; a sister died as a child.

He spent four years in the Air Force, attended Wayne State University and then switched to the University of California, Los Angeles, to study filmmaking, inspired by a viewing of “Citizen Kane.”

His performance in a Los Angeles theater production of “The Rainmaker” led to his first film role - a supporting role as a sergeant in the 1962 scrappy, \$250,000 independent Korean War film “War Hunt.” The movie marked the debuts of Skerritt, Robert Redford, Sydney Pollack and Francis Ford Coppola.

Redford and Skerritt were vying for the same lead role, with the former winning out. Years later, Redford, now directing, paid Skerritt back with compound interest in “A River Runs Through It,” handing him the plum role of the stern Rev. John Maclean, a minister whose governing passions are his faith and fly-fishing. The New York Times was impressed by his “halting, thoughtful manner.”

Redford, who died last year, became a lifelong friend. “There was such a deep connection we made with each other that it matured into a level-headed friendship,” Redford told the Seattle Times in 2007. “His values were close to mine, and he kept his integrity.”

After “War Hunt,” however, Skerritt still struggled for screen time, landing a small role in “M.A.S.H.” and “Thieves Like Us” for Robert Altman, and doing a bit part as a motorcycle cop in “Harold and Maude” for Hal Ashby.

Things changed with “The Turning Point,” which earned him a National Board of Review win. Then came “Alien,” with Skerritt playing the beleaguered and doomed captain of the ship Nostromo, crouched in a dark, claustrophobic duct, hunting the alien with a sputtering flamethrower. He told the Seattle Times that what appealed to him in the script was that the lead actor disappeared and “the woman becomes the hero. I really like that idea.”

Things shifted again after that, including a memorable role as Tom Cruise’s instructor in the landmark “Top Gun”: “Gentlemen, you are the top 1% of all Naval aviators. The elite. The best of the best. We’ll make you better,” he told the students. “This school is about combat. There are no points for second place.”

Skerritt achieved perhaps his best notices as the kindly sheriff in “Picket Fences,” a comedy created by David E. Kelley that won 14 Emmy Awards - one for Skerritt - and a Golden Globe over its four-year run from 1992 to 1996.

Skerritt co-starred opposite Kathy Baker, playing his doctor wife in the community of Rome, Wisconsin, a place with bizarre happenings, like having a robber leaving a trail of frogs or the pope becoming the primary witness to a murder.

“It was written by the best writer on television,” he told the A.V. Club in 2019. “That was the magic and brilliance of it. Because I wasn’t trying to do a series, but then they said Kathy Baker was going to do it, and I thought, ‘She’s fabulous - what do they want me for?’”

Also on the small screen, Skerritt played William Walker on ABC’s “Brothers and Sisters,” Jimmy Ford on TNT’s “Leverage” and he had the recurring character Evan Drake on “Cheers.” He starred in the Hallmark movie “What the Deaf Man Heard,” co-starring Matthew Modine, Judith Ivey and James Earl Jones. He also modeled for Guess jeans.

Directing and writing - his initial dream - had been overtaken by a career in front of the camera, though he managed to direct and star in the 1997 television movie “Divided by Hate.”

“Things happen,” he told The Ottawa Citizen in 1992. “You get hired for a film and the roles kept coming for me. I kept telling myself that if I stuck with acting it would be a really good training for what the problems are in directing. Then the family came along and I had to support them. The years flew by and there was a time when I said I would give up acting and really try to get into directing. But it hasn’t worked out that way and I have no regrets.”

He is survived by his third wife, Julie Tokashiki, and five children.

Barcelona Design Week brings art and creativity to city streets

BARCELONA, Spain, Oct. 25, (Xinhua): The 21st edition of Barcelona Design Week (BDW) is underway in the northeastern Spanish city, bringing together designers, artists and businesses to explore new approaches to creativity and innovation.

Running from Oct. 14 to 26 under the theme “PRO-TEST,” this year’s event focuses on experimentation and the role of design in challenging conventional thinking and developing alternative solutions.

Alessandro Manetti, curator of this year’s design week, said the theme encourages designers to explore alternatives to approaches that are often presented as the only possible options.

The event features around 140 activities, including exhibitions, installations, talks and workshops, with

the participation of approximately 100 brands.

Among the highlights is the Shutter Route initiative, which brings art and design into Barcelona’s streets. A total of 185 businesses across 10 neighborhoods are collaborating with local artists to transform storefront shutters into creative works.

Another major attraction is Underground BDW, an experimental exhibition featuring 30 exhibitors from eight countries, showcasing innovative approaches to designing, producing and experiencing everyday objects and spaces.

In addition, initiatives involving universities and design schools aim to strengthen connections between young creative talent and the business community.

Officials warn overuse harms children’s sleep, focus & development

Greece approves social media ban for children under 15

ATHENS, Oct. 25, (Xinhua): The Greek parliament has approved legislation banning children under 15 from accessing social media from Jan. 1, 2027, Greek media reported.

The legislation requires social media platforms to implement age-verification measures to ensure compliance. Companies that fail to meet the requirements could face fines of up to 6 percent of their global annual turnover.

Addressing parliament ahead of the vote on Thursday evening, Digital Governance and Artificial Intelligence Minister Dimitris Papastergiou described the measure as a necessary step that is compatible with the European Union’s (EU) existing regulatory framework.

“It would have been very easy to do absolutely nothing today and wait for the perfect European law. But the challenge is here. Children are sinking into the internet every day, and I believe a responsible government must do what it is obliged to do,” he said.

Minister of State Akis Skertsos said technology should be regulated in ways that give children greater freedom to grow up safely.



Emojis are seen on a mobile phone in Ankara, Türkiye, on July 28, 2023. (Xinhua)

Meanwhile, Health Minister Adonis Georgiadis described digital addiction as a public health challenge. Excessive use of social media can negatively affect children’s sleep, concentration, social relationships and psychological development, he said.

The legislation forms part of broader government efforts to protect children from harmful online content, cyberbullying and platform features that encourage excessive use.

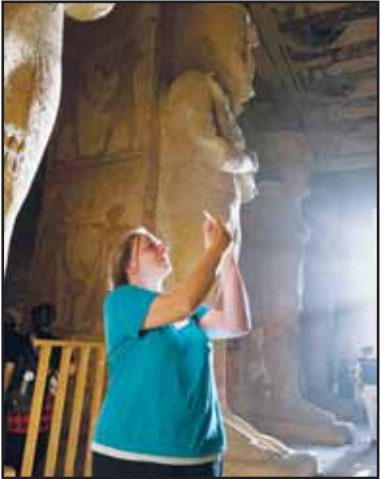
Greece aims to become the first EU member state to introduce such a ban, the government has said.

The French parliament passed legislation on July 21 aimed at protecting minors from the risks associated with social media use. However, the French Constitutional Council ruled on Aug. 14 that the key provision banning under-15s from accessing social media was unconstitutional.

Culture & Heritage



Tourists crowd to film the sun as it sends a beam of light into the Great Temple of Ramses II’s dark inner chamber in Abu Simbel, 870 kilometers (540 miles) south of Cairo, Egypt, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2026. (AP)



A tourist films the sun as it sends a beam of light into the Great Temple of Ramses II’s dark inner chamber in Abu Simbel, 870 kilometers (540 miles) south of Cairo, Egypt. (AP)



The sun sends a beam of light into the Great Temple of Ramses II’s dark inner chamber, for some minutes in Abu Simbel, 870 kilometers (540 miles) south of Cairo, Egypt, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2026. (AP)

Crowds gather for Abu Simbel’s solar spectacle

Golden sunbeam illuminates Egypt’s ancient temple

ABU SIMBEL, Egypt, Oct 25, (AP): Hundreds of tourists from around the world and locals gathered at dawn at a temple in southern Egypt, with some sleeping outside it overnight to witness a solar phenomenon that has taken place here for millennia.

Twice a year, on Oct. 22 and Feb. 22 - dates believed to mark the ascension of Ramesses II to the throne and his birthday - the sun sends a beam of light into the Great Temple of Ramses II’s dark inner chamber to illuminate the statues of the pharaoh and two gods beside him.

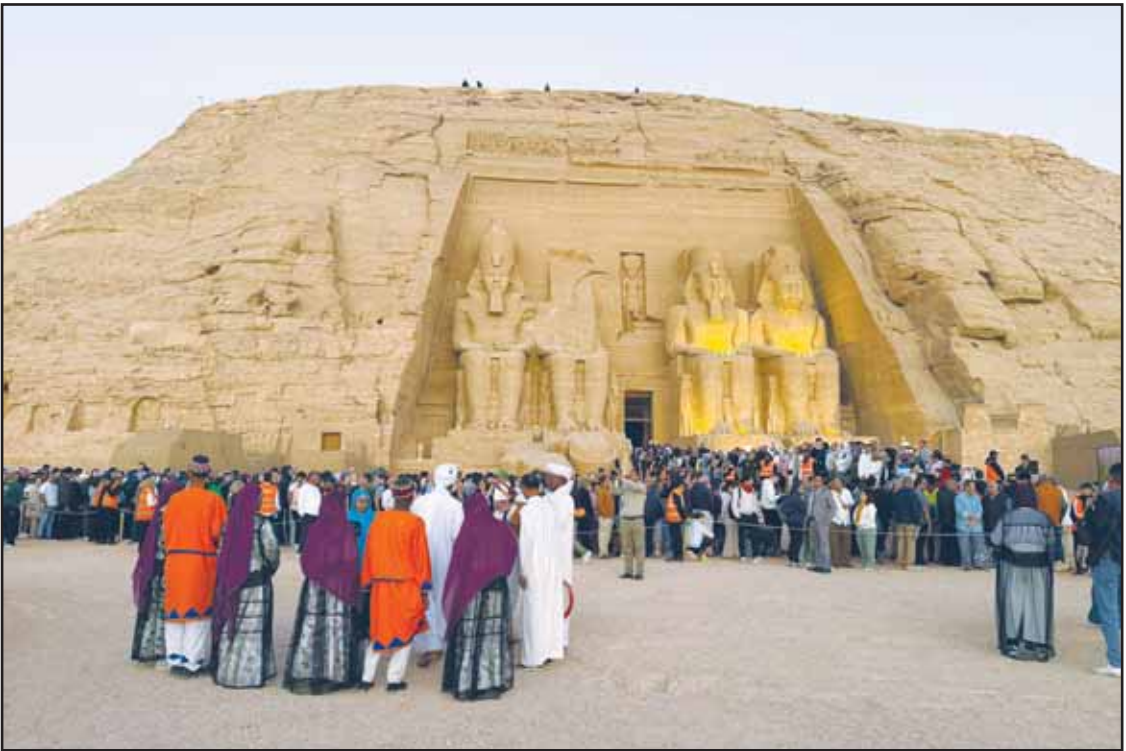
The illumination, a result of the temple’s alignment with the sun, lasts about 20 minutes.

“Today is a very special day, as you can see. It’s a celebration and a historic holiday,” Hisham Khela, a local tour guide for Italian tourists, told The Associated Press.

Egyptology enthusiasts and other visitors stood in a messy single-file line with phone cameras in hand, some with selfie sticks and most with bags under their eyes from waking up so early. Although huge crowds turned up, they looked tiny beside the giant statues lining the temple, which overlooks the Nile.

To mark the phenomenon, colorfully dressed performers scattered in front of the temple smiled and danced in unison to meditative chimes, the percussion of the tabla and the distinct sound of mizmars, an ancient Egyptian trumpet.

Inside the temple, visitors huddled tightly in near-total darkness in front



Tourists crowd to watch the sun as it sends a beam of light into the Great Temple of Ramses II’s dark inner chamber in Abu Simbel, 870 kilometers (540 miles) south of Cairo, Egypt, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2026, a rare 3,200-year-old astronomical ceremony that happens twice a year. (AP)

of the statues of Ramesses II and the gods Amun-Ra and Ra-Horakhty, lit by a beam of sunlight that traveled about 60 meters (200 feet) into the temple, according to the National Research Institute of Astronomy and Geophysics.

For first timers, ancient history created modern memories.

Janice Souudi, who traveled from

Atlanta, Georgia, said it was her first time in Egypt, and she said it won’t be her last.

“I came here today for the huge temple statues and how well preserved they are. But I was most impressed with the colors of the carvings and hieroglyphics and imagery,” she said. “Beautiful, stunning, worth it!”

In the 1960s, archaeologists carried out a massive project to dismantle and relocate the temple, moving it out of the path of rising waters created by the Aswan High Dam.

Engineers took care to preserve the temple’s alignment with the sun, so that more than 3,000 years after it was built, the light still finds its way inside.

Exhibition features more than 700 cultural relics

Beijing’s Great Wall Museum reopens after renovation



People visit the China Great Wall Museum in Beijing, capital of China, Oct. 23, 2026. (Xinhua)



A woman visits the China Great Wall Museum in Beijing, capital of China, Oct. 23, 2026. (Xinhua)

BEIJING, Oct. 25, (Xinhua): The China Great Wall Museum at the foot of the renowned Badaling Great Wall in Beijing reopened to the public on Saturday after an extensive renovation and upgrade.

Located in Yanqing District on the outskirts of the Chinese capital, the museum first opened in 1994 and closed in April 2022 for redevelopment.

Construction began in December 2023, with a building built to better blend the museum into the surrounding mountains and vegetation.

The museum, with a floor area of 16,000 square meters, features exhibition areas, educational and public service areas, collection storage areas and research spaces.

Its permanent exhibition and special thematic displays explore the Great Wall’s history and culture. The permanent exhibition features more than 700 cultural relics, including many on loan from museums across China.

The displays trace over 2,000 years of the Great Wall’s construction efforts and showcase how its preservation methods have advanced, from emergency protection to systematic conservation.

Visitors can also better understand the Great Wall’s historical roles. Beyond its function as a military defense structure, it also gradually became a site of exchanges and integration among China’s ethnic groups.

On the museum’s second floor, visitors can enjoy expansive views of the imposing Badaling section outside the venue through glass curtain walls.

The Great Wall, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, stretches more than 20,000 kilometers across 15 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions. Beijing has about 520 kilometers of Great Wall sections in total, and the Badaling section is the most visited.

Health Minister highlights role of plastic surgery beyond aesthetic procedures

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi confirmed that plastic surgery is a vital medical specialization, as it extends beyond aesthetic procedures, playing a crucial role in treating burns, reconstructing tissue following injuries, addressing congenital defects, and performing reconstructive surgery after tumor removal, reports Al-Seyas-sah daily.

Al-Awadhi made the statement at the opening of Kuwait Conference on Plastic Surgery and Aesthetic Medicine 2026 organized by Saud Al-Babtain Center for Burns and Plastic Surgery with the theme, "Between East and West," with the participation of medical experts, consultants and researchers from Kuwait and other parts of the world.

He expressed his pride in the achievements and services provided by Saud Al-Babtain Center for Burns and Plastic Surgery since its establishment in 1991, making it one of the first specialized centers of its kind in the region. He said the center treats more than 20,000 patients annually and performs more than 1,200 advanced surgical procedures -- all carried out by highly skilled national professionals.

He also highlighted the role of artificial intelligence and robotics in surgical planning, training and practice. He emphasized that the adoption of these technologies



Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi

must be contingent upon a thorough assessment of their efficacy and safety, while ensuring responsible medical oversight and the protection of patient data.

He stressed that technology is a tool to enhance the role of doctors, rather than replacing their responsibility in the decision-making process.

On the other hand, Dr. Mohammad Khalaf, Chairman of the conference and head of the center, stated that the theme for this year's conference underscores the importance of scientific exchange among medical centers specializing in plastic and aesthetic surgery. He believes that

such collaboration, as applied in the country, is a commitment to the highest medical and ethical standards.

He disclosed that the field of plastic and aesthetic surgery witnessed remarkable developments in recent years, such as scientific and technological advancements, artificial intelligence and robotic surgery. He said these innovations enhanced aesthetic and reconstructive procedures, leading to improved outcomes, higher standards of safety and quality, greater patient satisfaction, and reduction of post-operative complications and mortality rates.

Study warns of pathogen risks from healthcare handbasins

CANBERRA, Oct 25, (Xinhua): Contaminated handbasins in healthcare settings may put patients at risk of infection and contribute to outbreaks of drug-resistant bacteria, a study has warned.

The study, led by Australia's Flinders University, compared healthcare handbasin design guidelines across 39 countries and regions with available scientific evidence, finding substantial inconsistencies and limited evidence on which design features best reduce pathogen spread, according to a university statement released on Friday.

"Microbes can build up in taps and drains. When water hits contaminated surfaces, splashing can carry them onto nearby equipment and surfaces," said Mikaela Todarello, a PhD candidate at Flinders University, lead author of the study published in the Journal of Hospital Infection.

The researchers said improved basin engineering could reduce splashing, limit biofilm buildup and prevent contamination from spreading, particularly in areas caring for patients most vulnerable to infection.

The study found that flat or shallow basins, drain positions directly beneath taps, water flow and bowl slope can affect splashing and microbial spread.

Further research was needed to determine which combinations of design features best reduce infection risks in real healthcare settings, Todarello said.

Also:

SYDNEY: Researchers have warned of a global decline in childhood measles vaccination rates since the COVID-19 pandemic, contributing to a resurgence of the highly contagious disease.

Routine vaccine program disruptions and under-resourced health systems are driving the global decline, with estimated measles cases among children under five rising to 15.6 million worldwide in 2023, a 40 percent increase from 2019, according to a statement released Thursday by Australia's University of Queensland (UQ).

The study, published in Nature Medicine, examined measles cases, deaths and vaccination gaps among children under five across 204 countries and territories from 1990 to 2023.

Associate Professor Benn Sartorius from UQ's Frazer Institute said the resurgence coincided with pandemic-related disruptions to immunization programs, health systems and funding, reversing decades of progress, with measles cases falling nearly 80 percent worldwide between 1990 and 2019.

An estimated 23.7 million infants, or one in five worldwide, missed their first measles vaccine dose in 2023. Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 50 percent of the missed doses, followed by South Asia at 20 percent, Sartorius said, adding the study's data could help authorities identify under-vaccinated populations to prevent future outbreaks.



CANBERRA: The number of Australians hospitalized with injuries sustained in incidents involving e-scooters has more than tripled since 2019, according to a government report.

The report released on Thursday by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) showed that there were 4,089 hospitalizations for falls involving powered scooters in 2024-25, up 216.7 percent from 1,291 in 2019-20.

It said that the population-wide hospitalization rate for falls involving powered scooters increased from 5.1 per 100,000 people to 14.9 per 100,000 people in the same period, while the hospitalization rate for falls involving non-powered scooters fell from 6.8 to 4.9 per 100,000 people. According to the report, males accounted for 69 percent of hospitalizations for falls involving powered scooters. The increase in hospitalizations was largest among people aged 12-15, with the rate growing from 3.1 hospitalizations per 100,000 people in 2019-20 to 33.4 per 100,000 in 2024-25.

Among boys aged 12-15, the hospitalization rate was 54 per 100,000 compared to 12 per 100,000 for girls.

"While the data cannot tell us exactly how much of this change is due to increased use, it is consistent with the growing popularity of e-scooters in Australia over recent years," AIHW spokesperson Jacqueline Rek said in a media release.

Too much caffeine can cause significant side effects: experts

Some schools banning caffeine pouches. Here's what parents, students should know

WASHINGTON, Oct 25, (AP): Coffee, energy drinks and soda are not the only ways young people are getting their caffeine fix. Another product catching the attention of health experts, school officials and parents doesn't come in a cup or a can. It comes in a pouch.

Caffeine pouches, small packets placed in the mouth between the lip and gum, are marketed as a portable and discreet way to boost energy and focus. Some contain as much as 200 milligrams of caffeine or about the amount in two cups of coffee, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Health experts warn that consuming too much caffeine can cause serious side effects, including increased heart rate, especially in children and teens.

The pouches also closely resemble nicotine products, raising concerns among school officials about student health and the difficulty of distinguishing between the products. Some K-12 school districts across the US have responded by banning them, even though there is no federal minimum purchase age for caffeine pouches.

Here's what to know about the pouches, their potential risks and how schools are responding.

Caffeine is a stimulant that increases alertness, energy and brain activity. It can be safe for most healthy people in moderate amounts. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration said amounts up to about 400 milligrams per day, roughly two to three 12-ounce (about 354.8 milliliters) cups of coffee, are not generally associated with health problems.

Caffeine pouches are small packets designed to release caffeine through the tissues in the mouth. The amount in each pouch depends on the brand.

The main concern is consumption by children. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, caffeine from the pouches is absorbed into the bloodstream and the effects are felt in minutes.

The pouches do not require spitting and are sold in multiple flavors, such as coffee, mint, fruit and seasonal options like pumpkin spice. Some health officials worry they can be mistaken by young consumers for candy or gum.

Unlike with caffeinated beverages, children and teens may use caffeine pouches more discreetly. The pouches are sometimes referred to on social media as lip pillows, lip cushions and upper or lower deckies, depending on where they are placed in the mouth.

Consumer trade groups and caffeine pouch makers, including ALP Pouch, declined to speak to The Associated Press about the products.



Containers of caffeine pouches, small packets placed in the mouth between the lip and gum, are on display at Red Star Vapor Smoke in Flag staff, Ariz., on Oct. 13. (AP)

Health organizations, including Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, say too much caffeine can cause significant side effects, including tremors, anxiety, difficulty sleeping, seizures and other complications. Caffeine can remain in the body for more than eight hours depending on the person's metabolism, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics' Committee on Nutrition. When the effects of caffeine wear off, people can experience headaches, irritability and tiredness. The academy says avoiding caffeine is the best choice for children.

Caffeine pouches may worsen anxiety and sleep problems among teenagers already facing academic and social pressures, potentially affecting their mental health, academic performance and development, said Rob van Dam, a professor of exercise and nutrition sciences at George Washington University

in Washington. "You can get into a vicious cycle where kids just don't get enough sleep for their normal development and mental health," he said.

Health experts also worry that teenagers may lose track of their total caffeine consumption, particularly when combining pouches with energy drinks and other caffeinated foods and beverages.

Parents concerned about excessive caffeine consumption can contact the Poison Control Center Hotline at 1-800-222-1222. Seizures, difficulty breathing, collapse or severe heart-related symptoms warrant emergency medical attention, experts say.

Nearly two-thirds of young people ages 12 to 19 consumed caffeine on a given day, according to a July report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Their average daily intake was about 31 milligrams, far less than the amount found in some caffeine pouches.

Some K-12 schools have taken precautionary measures to restrict use, such as banning caffeine pouches altogether, over concerns about student health, classroom distractions and the difficulty of distinguishing them from nicotine products. It remains unclear whether usage is increasing among American students, although some schools have reported seeing more of the products on campus.

School districts in New York, Kansas, Pennsylvania and Missouri have included caffeine pouches in student conduct policies or prohibited their use on campus. Other schools, including Onsted Middle School in Michigan and North Middle School in Wisconsin, have warned families to leave the products at home.

Holton High School in Kansas says staff cannot reliably determine what substances are inside the pouches, so they prohibit the products under its rules against tobacco and simulated tobacco products. Violations could result in disciplinary action or citations from law enforcement.

In New York, Peru Central School District officials also raised concerns about the nearly identical appearance of caffeine and nicotine pouches during a May 2025 school board meeting. The district's code of conduct now prohibits caffeine pills and pouches on school grounds.

"The real issue for us as a school, in the middle and high schools in particular, is that when students are using pouches it's impossible for us to know what the pouch is," Joha Battin, associate director of student services for the school district, said during the meeting.

Warming blamed for two-thirds of deaths

Europe's killer heat claims 50,000 lives

WASHINGTON, Oct 25, (AP): Blistering record heat in Europe this summer helped kill more than 50,000 people, with nearly two-thirds of that death toll blamed on human-caused climate change, a new study found.

Researchers modeled heat-related deaths for different age groups in 854 European cities during repeated heat waves in June, July and August and found that 50,391 people died from warmer temperatures, and of those, 32,619 died because of the extra heat caused by the burning of coal, oil and gas, according to a study in an upcoming issue of Nature Health.

That's 71% higher than the previous deadliest summer, which was 29,480 in 2022, according to the same researchers, who produced a study earlier this month tracking yearly summer heat-related deaths in those European cities. And this summer's death figures are underestimates because they don't count a deadly heat wave in May and they only look at deaths in those 854 cities, which are about 40% of Europe's population, study authors said.

About one-third of the deaths were from June 17 to July 1, a particularly intense heat wave when temperatures were 9.5 degrees Fahrenheit (5.3 degrees Celsius) above normal, said study co-author Garyfallos Konstantinoudis, a biostatistician at Imperial College London.

"Much of Western and Northern Europe, our infrastructure is just not designed to cope with the sort of temperatures that we are seeing now because of the effects of human-caused warming," said lead author Clair Barnes, a climate scientist at Imperial College London. She said some European cities this summer had temperatures 21.6 F (12 C) warmer than normal.

Of those 50,000, more than 32,000 died from the added heat of human-caused climate change, the study also found. Italy, France, Spain and

Germany had the highest death tolls, the study said. Of all the European capitals, Rome had the highest heat death total from 2000 to 2025, according to the team's study earlier this month.

This would've already been an abnormal natural hot spell on top of a huge amount of climate change, Barnes said. She said Europe is the fastest-warming continent - although the Arctic, which is not a continent, is warming even faster - and is 4.5 F (2.5 C) hotter than pre-industrial times.

"Just the underlying warming from human activity, from mostly the burning of fossil fuels, it's increasing all of our temperatures by what sounds like quite a small amount," Barnes said. "For many people, it's certainly the case that that extra two-and-a-half degrees (Celsius) of warming is what's going to tip those temperatures from uncomfortable to dangerous and potentially deadly."

More than half of the people who died in Europe's heat were age 85 or older, but the stifling temperatures

also killed more than 800 people between the ages of 20 and 44, Konstantinoudis said.

The team used an established and accepted scientific method to figure out how many of the 50,000 heat deaths were from natural high summer heat and how many were due to what heat-trapping gases have done to the climate. They ran computer simulations of a world without climate change and compared it to the deaths that happened this summer. The difference is what was caused by global warming.

The percentage of heat deaths attributable to global warming has grown from about 45% in the early 2000s to 65% now, Barnes said.

"Summers are getting hotter, and the analytical tools for attributing deaths to heat are getting more accurate," said Dr. Howard Frumkin, former director of the National Center for Environmental Health in the U.S., who wasn't part of the study. "Together, these two trends yield increasingly high and increasingly accurate counts of heat-related deaths."



A worker drinks water on a construction site during high temperatures in Boulogne Billancourt, outside Paris on June 24. (AP)



Long March-8A carrier rocket carrying the 28th group of low-orbit internet satellites blasts off from the Hainan commercial spacecraft launch site in south China's Hainan Province, Oct. 25. (Xinhua)

NASA moves fast on plans to build moon base

China launches new net sat group

WENCHANG, Hainan, Oct 25, (Agencies): China launched a Long March-8A carrier rocket from the southern island province of Hainan on Sunday, sending a batch of internet satellites into space.

The rocket lifted off at 10:03 a.m. (Beijing Time) from the Hainan commercial spacecraft launch site. The payloads, the 28th group of low-orbit internet satellites, entered the designated orbit.

The satellites were developed by the China Academy of Space Technology.

The Long March-8A rocket is designed to meet the launch requirements of constellation networks in medium and low Earth orbits.

The launch marked the 674th flight mission of the Long March carrier rocket series.

Also:

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla: NASA is moving fast on its plans to build a moon base and return astronauts to the lunar surface in as little as two years.

Administrator Jared Isaacman said Friday that the space agency is still on track to launch Artemis III next summer on a docking exercise with Elon Musk's and Jeff Bezos' lunar landers. The two-week mission featur-

ing four astronauts will be confined to orbit around Earth - no moon trip this time.

The all-important Artemis IV - NASA's first moon landing by astronauts since Apollo - remains scheduled for 2028, Isaacman said. His update came six months after the successful Artemis II flight around the moon by four astronauts, humanity's first lunar trip in more than half a century.

NASA will keep its options open as long as possible before choosing between SpaceX and Blue Origin for the Artemis IV lunar lander, according to officials.

Isaacman said the "new space race" to land astronauts on the moon - racing against China now versus the Soviet Union during the Apollo era - will be "much closer than it ever needed to be" because of slow going in past years.

But the space agency is now accelerating its pace, he noted, eliminating endless meetings and bureaucratic inertia, as SpaceX, Blue Origin and other companies scramble around the clock to meet the deadlines and NASA bolsters its workforce.

Adopting Apollo's urgent and intense approach from 1968 through 1972, a period which saw 24 astronauts fly to the moon and 12 land on it, is not "tech industry pixie dust or some new management philosophy," Isaacman said.

Reese struggles on offense

Stokes dominates defensively as Valkyries defeat Dream to even WNBA Finals

ATLANTA, Oct 25, (AP): Gabby Williams gave a passionate speech to her teammates after Golden State fell behind in the WNBA Finals, saying she had to show a “different type of fire.”

The Valkyries leader did just that as she scored 17 points and led a stellar defensive effort to beat the Atlanta Dream 67-62 and even the WNBA Finals 2-2.

Tiffany Hayes was moved into the starting lineup and scored all of her 13 points in the second half, while Kiah Stokes anchored the defense effort that stymied Angel Reese, who had double-doubles in the first three games.

Golden State will host Game 5 of the best-of-seven series Monday.

Stokes, who won three WNBA championships while playing with Las Vegas, grabbed 16 rebounds, including eight on the offensive end. After Atlanta rolled to a 97-71 victory in Game 3, she told the Valkyries they only needed to worry about winning the next game.

Reese, like the rest of her teammates, struggled on offense. Reese had just eight points and nine rebounds after dominating the previous two games while averaging 25.5 points and 14 rebounds in the Dream victories.

Reese missed 10 of her 12 shots, including a few layups in the fourth quarter.

Atlanta shot 33.3% overall and only 4 for 23 from 3-point range. Rhyné Howard finished with 19 points to lead the Dream.

Even as poorly as they played at times, the Dream trimmed a 16-point halftime deficit to 61-55 midway through the fourth quarter, bringing fans in the sellout crowd of over 17,000 to their feet. Golden State answered with a



Golden State Valkyries forward Gabby Williams (1) passes the ball during Game 4 of the WNBA basketball finals against the Atlanta Dream in Atlanta. (AP)

3-pointer by Veronica Burton to briefly silence them.

The Dream then scored seven of the next nine points, including a three-point play by Howard with 28 seconds left to get within 66-62.

Burton then made the first of two free throws a second later and Atlanta couldn’t convert on the other end as once again Golden State challenged shots led by Stokes.

She finished with three blocks and now has a WNBA Finals record of 14 in the four games, surpassing the old record of 12 by Brittney Griner and Sylvia Fowles.

Coach Natalie Nakase also made a change in the starting lineup, Hayes and Kaila Charles for Kayla Thornton and Cecilia Zandalasini. While the Valkyries got off to a slow start again in the early afternoon tipoff with the Atlanta Hawks playing their home opener at night, when Thornton and Zandalasini entered the game they paid immediate dividends.

The two helped a key first-quarter run that gave Golden State its first lead since the third quarter of Game 2. Atlanta got within 24-20 on Reese’s basket - her lone one of the first half - but the Valkyries responded with an 18-6 run to close the half.

The 42-26 deficit at the break was the largest that the Dream had faced all playoffs.

Atlanta had dominated the third quarter in the WNBA Finals, outscoring Golden State 60-35 in the first three games. Atlanta managed just a 19-12 edge in Game 4.

Yan beats Dvalishvili

Volkanovski stops Evloev, retains featherweight title

ABU DHABI, Oct 25, (AP): Alexander Volkanovski stopped previously unbeaten Movsar Evloev at 4:54 of the second round to retain his featherweight championship at UFC 333.

The 38-year-old Australian overwhelmed Evloev with punches late in the round, sending the challenger to the canvas before the referee intervened with 6 seconds remaining.

Volkanovski (29-4) earned his ninth UFC featherweight title-fight win, tying Jose Aldo for the most in division history. Evloev (20-1) lost for the first time in 11 UFC appearances.

Already the oldest fighter to win and defend the UFC featherweight championship, Volkanovski extended his success during his second reign atop the division. He improved to 16-3 in UFC, with all six of his stoppage victories coming by knockout or technical knockout.

Despite giving up size to the challenger, Volkanovski pressed the action early and repeatedly regained his footing after first-round takedowns. Evloev struggled to turn those opportunities into sustained control.

Volkanovski developed swelling and a cut beneath his left eye but continued finding openings with his punches. A right hand staggered Evloev in the second round, and Volkanovski followed with a barrage that left the challenger covering up on the canvas.

Evloev won each of his first 10 UFC appearances by decision, becoming the first fighter in promotion history to start his career with that many decision wins.

Afterward, Volkanovski welcomed more challengers in the division and said he wanted to keep competing.

“You got a lot of these guys that are trying to get that No. 1 spot,” Volkanovski said. “They’re pushing for it, and that’s what I like to see.”

In the co-main event, Petr Yan retained his bantamweight title with a unanimous decision over No. 1 contender Merab Dvalishvili.

Yan (21-5) turned back the former champion, who fell to 21-6.

Yan is in his second reign as bantamweight champion. Dvalishvili entered with a UFC-record 119 takedowns, including a title-fight record 20 against Cory Sandhagen.

Sixth-ranked flyweight Lone’er Kavanagh (11-2) stopped No. 10 Ramazan Temirov (20-3) at 4:28 of the first round. Kavanagh caught the advancing Temirov with a left uppercut, then followed with a flurry of punches to finish the bout.

Temirov suffered his first UFC loss after winning his first three appearances with the promotion.

Second-ranked heavyweight Alexander Volkov (41-11) celebrated his 38th birthday with a unanimous decision over No. 7 Rizvan Kuniev (15-4-1, one no-contest), then pleaded for a championship opportunity.

“What should I do to get a title shot? Answer me, please,” Volkov said.

The former Bellator heavyweight champion earned his 15th victory in 20 UFC appearances.



Australia’s Alexander Volkanovski, left, punches Russia’s Movsar Evloev during the featherweight title bout at the mixed martial arts UFC Fight Night. (AP)

Late Hinestroza brace spoils Seedorf debut for Corinthians

SAO PAULO, Oct. 25, (Xinhua): Colombian winger Marino Hinestroza scored two late goals as Vasco da Gama recovered from a goal down to beat Corinthians 3-2 in Brazil’s Serie A.

Jose Luis Rodriguez opened the scoring for Vasco at Sao Januario Stadium before Gustavo Henrique headed in an equalizer just after half-time. Matheus Bidu then gave the visitors the lead with a composed finish after combining with Fabrizio Angileri.

But Hinestroza, a first-half substitute for injured forward Andre Gomez, struck twice in the last three minutes of normal time as Vasco clinched its 10th win of the campaign.

The Rio de Janeiro-based club is

now 13th in the 20-team standings with 38 points, five ahead of 17th-placed Corinthians.

The match marked the first appearance in the Corinthians dugout for Clarence Seedorf after the Dutchman was chosen to replace Fernando Diniz earlier this month.

“It’s normal to feel shaken at the end of a game like that,” Seedorf told a post-match news conference. “You work so hard, and it’s always harder in these moments to turn everything into something positive.”

“The team is angry because it isn’t getting the results. Today we had some moments where we could have done better in the attacking phase and made better use of opportunities in the defensive phase,” the former Real Madrid midfielder added.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct 25, (AP): Joel Embiid had a triple-double with LeBron James out, Jaylen Brown scored 27 points on his 30th birthday and the Philadelphia 76ers remained undefeated with a 127-116 win over the Milwaukee Bucks.

James was officially ruled out with lower back k games for the Sixers this weekend. He was expected to play Sunday night at home against Detroit.

Embiid had 28 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists and went 12 of 14 from the free-throw line. Tyrese Maxey scored 26 points and VJ Edgecombe had 17.

Brown hit a 3-pointer off a pass from Embiid that made it 120-114 and gave the All-Star center the triple-double. Kentavious Caldwell-Pope sank a 3 off a turnover for the nine-point lead that sent fans to their feet and ended Milwaukee’s late push for the win.

Suns 131, Warriors 122

In Phoenix, Devin Booker scored 43 points, Miles Bridges added 16 and the Phoenix Suns won their home opener for the fifth straight season by beating the short-handed Golden State Warriors.

The Warriors - who were playing for the third time in four days - fell to 0-3 for the first time in 19 years while resting several key players, including Stephen Curry (right knee), Brandin Podziemski (low back), Draymond Green (low back) and Al Horford (low back).

Hornets 115, Heat 110

In Charlotte, Brandon Miller scored 34 points and the Charlotte Hornets beat the winless Miami Heat bouncing back from one of the worst losses in franchise history a night earlier.

Charlotte’s 128-81 loss to Atlanta on Friday in its home opener was the fifth-largest in franchise history. Miller missed 12 of 14 field goal attempts and 10 of his 11 3-point tries in a six-point effort that came four days after he had signed a five-year, \$209 million contract extension.

Dennis Schroder added 25 points, Naz Reid had 23 and Grayson Allen 20 for Charlotte (2-1).



Philadelphia 76ers’ Joel Embiid, left, goes upon for the dunk as Milwaukee Bucks’ Kef’el Ware, right, looks on during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Philadelphia. (AP)

Giannis Antetokounmpo was limited to 14 points - more than 20 fewer than the 35.5 per game he averaged in his first two games after his trade from the Milwaukee Bucks in one of the biggest NBA offseason transactions.

Cavaliers 125, Nets 121

In Cleveland, Donovan Mitchell scored 22 points, Jarrett Allen added 21 points, and the Cleveland Cavaliers won their home opener over the Brooklyn Nets.

Evan Mobley added 20 points and 10 rebounds for the Cavaliers, who bounced back after blowing a 29-point lead in Thursday’s 114-106 season-opening loss at Philadelphia.

Michael Porter Jr. led Brooklyn with 28 points, Julius Randle scored 23 and Egor Demin 22.

Spurs 122, Mavericks 106

In Dallas, Victor Wembanyama had 23 points, seven rebounds and four blocks, Dylan Harper scored 22 points and the San Antonio Spurs beat the Dallas Mavericks for their first victory of the season.

De’Aaron Fox and Stephon Castle added 19 points apiece as the Spurs avoided their first 0-3 start since 2008-09. They lost to Oklahoma City on Tuesday and to Houston in Austin on Friday.

Nuggets 141, Pelicans 129 OT

In Denver, Nikola Jokic scored eight of his 35 points in overtime and finished with 15 rebounds and 10 assists, and the short-handed Denver Nuggets rallied from down 23 to beat the New Orleans Pelicans.

Jokic had his 199th career triple-double in the regular season, second to Russell Westbrook, who retired with 209.

Jamal Murray scored 42 points and rookie Trevon Brazile had seven of his 17 points in overtime in his home debut for Denver.

Rockets 121, Hawks 114

In Atlanta, Kevin Durant scored 22 points and both Reed Sheppard and Tari Eason had 19 points as the Houston Rockets beat the Atlanta Hawks.

The Hawks nearly pulled off a comeback by cutting Houston’s 20-point lead down to five in the closing moments, but Durant knocked down two three throws with 18.9 seconds remaining to push the lead back to three possessions.

The win gave Houston its first 3-0 start since 2017-18, and spoiled Atlanta’s home opener after the Hawks won their first two games of the season on the road.

Wizards 124, Bulls 120

In Chicago, Trae Young had 25 points and nine assists, and the Washington Wizards held off the Chicago Bulls for victory.

Kyshawn George had 22 points and nine rebounds for Washington in the opener of a three-game trip. Anthony Davis added 19 points, and Justin Champagnie had 11 points and 14 rebounds.

The Wizards played without AJ Dybantsa, the No. 1 pick in the draft. The 19-year-old Dybantsa is day to day with a sprained left ankle, delaying his anticipated NBA debut.

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China sweeps speed climbing titles in Santiago as Zhao clinches overall season crown

SANTIAGO, Chile, Oct. 25, (Xinhua): China’s Zhao Yicheng and Deng Lijuan won the men’s and women’s speed climbing titles at the World Climbing Series season finale in Santiago on Saturday, with world record holder Zhao also securing the men’s overall season crown.

The 17-year-old Zhao finished only 12th in quali-

fication but improved steadily through the knockout rounds, clocking 5.00, 4.81 and 4.79 seconds from the round of 16 to the semifinals.

He then won the gold medal race in 4.74 seconds, beating Indonesia’s Rahrjati Nursamsa.

Zhao said after the race that his disappointing qualifying performance had made

him nervous, but advancing to the last 16 helped him regain his form and start enjoying the competition. He said he was satisfied with his final performance.

China’s Chu Shouhong, fresh from winning gold at the Nagoya Asian Games, narrowly missed the podium in the bronze medal race. He clocked 4.96 seconds, los-

ing to Japan’s Ryo Omasa by 0.02 seconds.

Zhao made his World Climbing Series debut this season, winning two golds, one silver and one bronze across six events. He also set the men’s speed climbing world record of 4.54 seconds at the season opener.

Omasa finished second in the men’s overall standings,

with Nursamsa third.

In the women’s competition, Deng beat world record holder Emma Hunt of the United States in the gold medal race with a time of 6.38 seconds.

Deng, the silver medalist at the Paris 2024 Olympics, said she was delighted to win gold at the final event of the year. She said she had strug-

gled early in the season and only began to show her true level in the final two events.

In the bronze medal race, Isis Rothfork of the United States clocked 7.32 seconds to beat China’s Mou Yuju for third place.

Hunt finished atop the women’s overall standings, ahead of Ukraine’s Polina Khalkevych and Indone-

sia’s Desak Made Rita Kusuma Dewi, the women’s speed champion at the Nagoya Asian Games.

The Santiago event, held in Chile for the first time, attracted nearly 400 climbers from 95 countries and regions. It is the final stop of the 2026 World Climbing Series for speed and lead climbing.

Bournemouth shocks Man United in blow to Carrick

Liverpool beats Brighton

LONDON, Oct 25, (AP): The crisis at Manchester United deepened Sunday with a 3-0 home loss to Bournemouth in the Premier League, with under-pressure manager Michael Carrick's bold call to drop captain Bruno Fernandes failing to pay off.

Also, Brighton - the league's surprise package this season - was beaten 2-0 at Liverpool for its first defeat since August.



Bournemouth's Rayan celebrates scoring his side's first goal during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and Bournemouth in Manchester, England. (AP)

United's winless run extended to eight games in all competitions after its latest setback, coming four days after a humiliating 4-1 loss at Como in the Champions League that was followed by critical comments to the media by Fernandes about Carrick's tactics.

The Portugal star was left out of the team against Bournemouth in what Carrick described as a "pure football" decision and never made it onto the field, with the visitors taking advantage of woeful defending to score goals through Rayan, Marcus Tavernier and Evanilson.

With United tumbling to 16th place in the Premier League, Carrick's job is under huge threat - barely five months after signing a permanent deal as manager. Disgruntled United fans also chanted against Jason Wilcox, the club's director of football who was the target of recent criticism from defender Lisandro Martinez, and the Glazer family, the majority owners.

United has won one of its eight league games this season - and that was at home to promoted Ipswich on Aug. 30.

That was the same date of Brighton's only previous loss this season, with the south-coast team embarking on a stunning unbeaten run since that included two 5-0 wins and a 3-0 victory over Arsenal.

Liverpool edged a tight game at Anfield, with its goals coming in a four-minute span midway through the first half. Pascal Gross deflected Florian Wirtz's



Liverpool's Bradley Barcola, left, challenges for the ball with Brighton's Maxim De Cuyper during the English Premier League soccer match between Liverpool and Brighton and Hove Albion in Liverpool, England. (AP)

shot into his own net before Alexander Isak turned in Bradley Barcola's cross. 2-0 thanks to second-half goals from William Osula and Harvey Barnes. Hull and Brentford drew 1-1. Newcastle beat Crystal Palace

Rapids beat conference-leading Whitecaps

Revolution ends Union's club-record unbeaten run

CHESTER, Pa., Oct 25, (AP): Dor Tugeman and Carles Gil scored goals behind Matt Turner and the New England Revolution ended Philadelphia's club-record 15-match unbeaten streak with a 2-1 victory over the Union on Saturday night.

Turner finished with six saves for the Revolution (17-10-4), who moved ahead of Inter Miami in the battle for the second seed in the Eastern Conference.

The Union (13-11-7) had gone 12-0-3 since turning the reins over to interim coach Ryan Richter at the World Cup break. It was their first loss since a 6-4 setback at Inter Miami on May 24.

Malte Amundsen scored two goals, his first career multi-goal game in MLS. Gonzalo Tapia and Brooks Lennon each added a goal, and the Columbus Crew beat Toronto FC 4-2.

The Crew (11-15-5), who have won three consecutive games and five of their last six, have 38 points this season, two ahead of

Dylan Chambost had three assists for Columbus. Patrick Schulte had five saves.

Morgan Whittaker scored in the 81st minute, Nico Hansen made two saves for his ninth clean sheet of the season, and the Colorado Rapids beat the Vancouver Whitecaps to extend their home unbeaten streak to 10 matches.

Whittaker headed in his third goal of the season after Vancouver goalkeeper Yohei Takaoka deflected Donovan Phillip's shot off the crossbar and it fell to the Rapids forward at the back post.

Colorado (12-13-6) snapped a five-game winless streak with its first victory since Sept. 12. The Rapids entered having played to a tie in their last three games.

Alexander Aravena scored during second-half stoppage time after Ariel Lassiter had the first two goals for Portland, and the Timbers kept Charlotte FC from

clinching an Eastern Conference playoff spot with a 3-2 victory.

Idan Toklohati pulled Charlotte (13-10-8) even at 2-all in the 69th minute, using assists from Pep Biel and Luca de la Torre to score his 13th goal after scoring 11 times last year as a rookie.

But Aravena found the net six minutes into stoppage time with assists from Cole Bassett and Ian Smith to rally the Timbers (10-14-7), who entered play 11th in the Western Conference. It was his first goal in his 19th MLS appearance.

Biel staked Charlotte to a 1-0 lead in the 3rd minute when he used an assist from Ashley Westwood to score for a career-best 13th time this season.

Anton Salétros had a goal and an assist to help the Chicago Fire rally for a 3-2 victory over Atlanta United.

With the victory, Chicago (15-10-6) reached the 50-point plateau in back-to-back seasons for the second time in club history - also doing so in 2000-01.



Nashville SC's Sam Surridge, left, and CF Montreal's Hennadii Synchuk battle for the ball during the first half of an MLS soccer game in Montreal. (AP)

Atlanta United took a 1-0 lead in the 4th minute when first-year defender Tomás Jacob took passes from Miguel Almirón and Mauricio Amaro and scored his fourth goal. Almirón's assist was his eighth of the season and Amaro collected his first in his ninth career appearance.

Evander had a goal and an assist, Tom Barlow also scored and Cincinnati beat D.C. United 2-0.

Cincinnati (11-11-9), which also beat D.C. United 2-1 on Wednesday in a rescheduled game, moved into a tie for seventh place in the Eastern Conference with Orlando.

United (7-12-12) has lost three straight games.

Petar Musa scored twice in a five-minute span late in the second half and FC Dallas beat San Jose 3-0 on Saturday night behind former Earthquakes goalkeeper Daniel De Sousa Britto.

Musa ended De Sousa Britto's scoreless duel with Angus Gunn when he used assists from Bernard Kamungo and Santiago Moreno to

score in the 83rd minute.

Musa added his 21st goal of the season - second only to the 25 of Inter Miami's Lionel Messi - in the 88th minute on a penalty kick. Musa took the PK after Kaick Ferreira was fouled by San Jose defender Paul Marie.

Moreno capped the scoring when he used an assist from Ramiro Benetti in the fourth minute of stoppage time to notch his fourth goal along with his third assist.

Myrto Uzuni scored two goals in the second half and Austin snapped a three-game losing streak with a 2-1 victory over Sporting Kansas City.

Austin (8-13-10) ended a five-game winless stretch with its first victory since Sept. 13.

Kansas City (6-21-4) remains last in the Western Conference, 12 points behind Austin. Sporting has already been eliminated from playoff contention.

Sergi Solans scored a goal in each half and Real Salt Lake took advantage of a red card on Tomas Ostrak to beat St. Louis City 3-0.

Rafael Cabral totaled two saves for Real Salt Lake (11-14-6), which began the day one spot away from a postseason berth in the Western Conference. It was his third clean sheet in 30 starts.

Jonathan Bond made five saves for his 12th clean sheet of the season and the Houston Dynamo played Minnesota United to a scoreless draw on Saturday night.

Houston (13-9-9) had its winless streak extended to seven games, with a fourth straight draw. The Dynamo's last win came on Sept. 9 against Real Salt Lake.

Jonathan Shore scored late in second-half stoppage time to help New York City FC play Orlando City to a 2-2 draw.

James Sands played it back to Shore near the top of the 18-yard box for a one-touch finish inside the far post in the 99th minute.

Olympic skiing champ Braathen wins season-opening giant slalom

SÖLDEN, Austria, Oct 25, (AP): The Brazilian skier who earned South America its first medal at the Winter Olympics remains unbeatable in giant slalom.

Lucas Pinheiro Braathen won the World Cup season-opener on the Rettenbach glacier on Sunday to extend his winning streak in the discipline to four races, a streak that began with his gold at last season's Milan Cortina Games.

The Norwegian-born Pinheiro Braathen added to his first-run advantage and finished nearly a half-second ahead of the two Swiss skiers who completed the podium. "I didn't want to hesitate," Pinheiro Braathen said. "I knew what I had in me, and I'm so, so proud to put it out there."

Olympic slalom champion Loic Meillard finished second, 0.48 seconds behind, and five-time defending overall champion Marco Odermatt came third, 0.49 back.

American racer River Radamus moved up from 15th after the first run to finish fourth, 0.82 behind.

After his second run, Pinheiro Braathen held his arms out wide in celebration and yelled toward the crowd, which featured a small group of spectators waving Brazilian flags.

Also celebrating in the finish area was Isadora Cruz, the Brazilian actress who is Pinheiro Braathen's girlfriend.

The course was shortened due to strong winds on the upper portion of the Rettenbach glacier and the race was held in flat light.

Pinheiro Braathen is unbeaten in giant slalom since his Olympic breakthrough, having also won the final two World Cup GS races last season to seal the season-long discipline title. He switched nationalities two years ago to represent his mother's home country.

"There was a lot of pressure on my shoulders today," Pinheiro Braathen said. "But pressure is privilege and I was able to capitalize on that. What a relief to be able to open the show in this way."

Pinheiro Braathen's slalom victory in Levi, Finland, nearly a year ago was Brazil's first World Cup victory in Alpine skiing. He now has nine career World Cup wins - including four since he started representing Brazil.

Atle Lie McGrath stood fifth after the first run but lost control early in his second run.

Marco Schwarz lost control shortly into the opening run and went through a gate.

On Saturday, Paula Moltzan claimed her first career World Cup victory in the women's opener, while Mikaela Shiffrin finished seventh.

Olympic champion Shaidorov only 10th as Siao wins figure skating Grand Prix opener

ANGERS, France, Oct 25, (AP): Olympic figure skating champion Mikhail Shaidorov slumped to 10th on Sunday as home favorite Adam Siao Him Fa won the Grand Prix de France on Sunday.

Shaidorov's skate was packed with high-scoring jumps, but it went badly wrong in a way reminiscent of Ilia Malinin's disastrous Olympic performance, which paved the way for Shaidorov to take gold in February.

The Kazakhstan skater fell twice, including on a quadruple toe loop, and under-rotated his other three quads in the worst-scoring free skate of the day, dropping from fourth to 10th overall. He stared down at the ice and ran his hand across his hair as he finished the skate.

It was only Shaidorov's second competition since winning Olympic gold, following third place in a lower-level event to begin the season.

Siao has struggled for consistency in the past, but showed little sign of that with a strong free skate for a total of 284.24. Kao Miura of Japan shrugged off an early fall to soar from ninth to second on a 247.96 total, with South Korea's Seo Min-kyu third on his Grand Prix debut with

244.90.

European champions Anastasiia Metelkina and Luka Berulava won the pairs event despite a heavy fall for Metelkina on a throw triple loop. The Georgians rallied for a total score of 204.65 to stay ahead of Russians Aleksandra Boikova and Dmitrii Kozlovskii, competing as neutral athletes, on 197.66. Germany's Annika Hocke and Robert Kunkel won their first Grand Prix medal since 2023 with bronze on 179.74.

This was the first time a Russian entry has competed in the Grand Prix series since the 2021-22 season.

They were barred following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 but the International Skating Union approved some neutral athletes from Russia and Belarus last season, when they were allowed only to enter the Olympics and one Olympic qualifier. They can enter a much wider range of ISU events this season.

On Saturday, Ami Nakai of Japan retained her Grand Prix de France title in the women's event and the French Olympic champion team of Laurence Fournier Beaudry and Guillaume Cizeron won the ice dance.

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NEWS



Pakistan's Shadab Khan and Haris Rauf celebrate after winning the tri-series one-day international cricket match against England, in Lahore, Pakistan. (AP)

Sports

Al-Jalahma highlights role of community sports in building healthy society

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25, (KUNA): Kuwait is committed to promoting community sports to encourage people from all segments of society to engage in physical activity, adopt healthy lifestyles and improves their quality of life, Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Tariq Al-Jalahma said.

Speaking to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) following a community sporting event organized by the Kuwait Cycling Club along the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Causeway, Al-Jalahma described such initiatives as an outstanding example of community sports, bringing cycling enthusiasts and amateurs together in a healthy and inclusive environment.

These activities also help promote a culture of physical exercise and strengthen positive communication and social interaction, he added.

Al-Jalahma said support for such initiatives aligns with the directives of the Public Authority for Youth and Sports to broaden participation



Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Tariq Al-Jalahma rides a bicycle during the community sporting event.

in sports and encourage people to embrace healthy and sustainable lifestyles.

Sports, he stressed, are not limited to competitions and championships but also represent a community culture that improves public health and

reinforces positive values.

He emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts among sports institutions, youth organizations and community initiatives to create more opportunities for people to make physical activity part of their daily lives.

Bashar highlights padel growth in Kuwait

Kuwait Premier Padel Major kicks off

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The Kuwait Premier Padel Major 2026 gets underway today at Arena Mall 360, featuring some of the world's top-ranked players and leading stars of the sport. The tournament runs through October 31.

Speaking at a press conference, Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Youth and Sports Bashar Abdullah highlighted the rapid growth of padel in Kuwait in recent years and the government's commitment to supporting major sporting events.

Abdullah said Minister of State for Youth and Sports Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma attaches great importance to such initiatives, adding that the authority continues to encourage sports development across the country. He thanked the organizers and sponsors and wished the tournament every success.

Sponsored by BNK Holding Group, the event is part of the Kuwait Youth and Sports Season initiative.

Tournament Director Meshal Al-Ansari said Kuwait is hosting the competition for the first time, praising the Public Authority for Youth and Sports for its support and continued efforts to ensure a successful event.

Al-Ansari also thanked government agencies for facilitating the tournament and acknowledged the sponsors' contributions. He called on fans to attend and enjoy the world-class competition.

Waleed Al-Saqabi, director of the Kuwait Youth and



Officials address the media.

Sports Season project, said the initiative was launched on October 1 to strengthen Kuwait's position as a destination for international sporting, cultural and youth events.

He added that the season aims to raise Kuwait's regional and international profile by attracting participants and visitors from home and abroad, boosting economic and tourism activity and showcasing the country's organizational capabilities.

Nasr routs Sahel to go 3rd



Mubarak Al-Fanini tries to get past an Al-Jahra player.

Salmiya edges Al-Jahra

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: Al-Nasr moved up to third place in the Zain Premier League standings after recording a convincing 3-0 victory over Al-Sahel at Nayef Al-Dabbous Stadium in the sixth round.

The win took Al-Nasr to 12 points, while Al-Sahel remained in ninth place with four points.

Al-Sahel started brightly and threatened early but failed to convert a clear scoring chance. The visitor's task became more difficult when Lucas de Souza was sent off. Al-Nasr capitalized on the advantage, with Mauritanian midfielder Sidi Yacoub opening the scoring from a free kick in the 28th minute. Tunisian forward Hazem Ben Issa then doubled the lead with a powerful effort in the 43rd minute.

Al-Nasr continued to control proceedings after the break, making the most

of its numerical advantage. Musfer Al-Adwani completed the scoring in the 85th minute to seal the 3-0 win.

In another fixture at Thamer Stadium, Salmiya edged Al-Jahra 1-0. Salmiya made an immediate impact, with Mubarak Al-Fanini finding the net in the sixth minute to give the host an early lead. Al-Jahra pushed for an equalizer but struggled to break down Salmiya's defense as the host held on for the victory.

The result lifted Salmiya temporarily to fifth place with nine points, while Al-Jahra remained eighth with four points.

The sixth round continues on Wednesday with two postponed fixtures. Al-Arabi takes on Fahaheel at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium, while Al-Shabab hosts Qadsia.

The matches were rescheduled because Al-Arabi and Qadsia were participating in the AFC Challenge League, with both clubs completing their campaigns last Friday.

Qadsia has nine points from four matches, while Al-Shabab has seven points from five games. Al-Arabi has three points from four matches, and Fahaheel has collected nine points from five outings.

Sulaibikhat takes on Al-Nasr

Al-Arabi and Kazma battle for third place as Handball Premier League enters final stretch

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: The 20th round of the 2025-2026 Handball Premier League will be played today with three matches at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex as the season nears its conclusion.

Sulaibikhat will take on Al-Nasr at 4:30 pm, followed by Kazma's clash with Burgan at 6 pm. The round's highlight fixture will see Kuwait Club face Al-Arabi at 7:30 pm.

Kuwait Club has already clinched the league title, moving clear at the top with 23 points after an impressive campaign. Burgan has secured second place with 19 points, with both sides earning qualification for the upcoming Asian Club Championship.

The main remaining contest is for third place



Kuwait Club player goes for goal as Arabi players defend.

and the bronze medal. Al-Arabi currently sits third with 16 points, while Kazma is fourth on

14 points. The results of their respective matches today could prove crucial in deciding the final standings.

Sulaibikhat occupies fifth place with six points, while Al-Nasr is sixth and last with two points.

The final round is scheduled for next Thursday, when Kazma meets Al-Nasr and Kuwait Club face Burgan, bringing the Premier League season to an official close.

The focus will then shift to the Federation Cup, which is scheduled to run from early to mid-November. It will be the last domestic competition before handball activities are suspended to allow Kuwait's senior national team to prepare for the 2027 World Men's Handball Championship in Germany next January.

The 2026-2027 season is expected to get underway next February with the Super Cup, followed by the league competition.

Al-Hatem claims gold at AJP Qatar Jiu-Jitsu Championship

DOHA, Oct 25: Kuwaiti athlete Jassim Al-Hatem won gold in the under-85kg blue belt category at the AJP Qatar Jiu-Jitsu Championship, adding another achievement to Kuwait's sporting record.

The championship attracted more than 1,000 professional competitors from around the world, with athletes battling for honors across various age groups and weight divisions.

Al-Hatem expressed pride in winning the title for Kuwait, pledging to continue working hard to achieve further success and raise the Kuwaiti flag at international sporting events.



Gold medalist Jassim Al-Hatem

Al-Anaz steals the spotlight

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 25: International rider Anaz Al-Anaz of Sahara Resort Equestrian Center delivered an outstanding performance to claim the spotlight at the Kuwait Equestrian Center Championship, which drew a large field of male and female competitors.

Al-Anaz secured first place in the main fourth round over 130 cm jumps. Khaled Al-Khuzaizi took second and third places, while Bjorn Kuertz finished fourth, and followed by Nick Channing and Pavel Voronko. International judge Dr. Yahya Al-Hadban presented the awards to the winners.

Al-Anaz also claimed the top spot in the third round over 120 cm jumps, ahead of Hussein Al-Kharafi, Sogou Babi, Maria Bushehri, Aws Al-Tanak and Bjorn Kuertz.

Abdulmohsen Mohammed won the second round over 110 cm jumps, while Ahmed Al-Enezi topped the opening round over 100 cm jumps.

International judge Nizar Al-Mustafa chaired the championship's judging committee, comprising Raghad Al-Dabbous, Ibtisam Al-Aroui and Lama Abdul Aal. Rider Yaqoub Al-Nasrallah designed the course, Dr. Yahya Al-Hadban served as arena judge, and Shahad Awad supervised the warm-up arena.



Winners on the podium.

Best of the Rest

Anderson leaves Lancashire after 25 years: James Anderson's 25-year stint at Lancashire is over - and the English cricket great has expressed regret at how his time at the club has come to an end.

Lancashire confirmed Sunday that it would not be offering the 44-year-old Anderson a new contract, meaning England's all-time record wicket-taker will leave his boyhood county after making his debut in 2001 and helping it win the County Championship title in 2011.

A few minutes before Lancashire made its decision public in a statement, Anderson posted on Instagram to make clear his own feelings. (AP)

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Rosario Central stays top: Emanuel Coronel and Angel Di Maria scored either side of halftime as Rosario Central eased to a 2-0 home win over Huracan in Argentina's Clausura tournament on Saturday.

The hosts went ahead in the 20th minute when Coronel combined with Colombian midfielder Jaminton Campaz before steering a header past Hernan Galindez.

Di Maria doubled the advantage with a first-time effort into the bottom corner following Franco Ibarra's cross.

Rosario Central now has a three-point lead at the top of the 15-team Zone B standings, nine points ahead of eighth-placed Huracan. (Xinhua)