



FRESH U.S. STRIKE WARNINGS PUT GULF ALLIES ON EDGE Kuwait, Saudi bolster strategic ties

Pakistan, Kuwait consolidate maritime partnership

RIYADH, Oct 29, (Agencies): Saudi Arabia's Civil Defense said Thursday that the danger in Najran had passed after authorities briefly activated an emergency warning, while the Saudi-led coalition announced that air defenses intercepted and destroyed a Houthi ballistic missile fired toward the kingdom's Eastern Region.

Earlier in the day, the Civil Defense issued an emergency warning in Najran, urging residents to follow safety guidelines and official instructions. It later announced that the danger had passed, without disclosing the nature of the threat.

The alert came shortly after the Coalition to Restore Legitimacy in Yemen said its air defenses intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile launched by the Houthi militia toward Saudi Arabia's Eastern Region. Coalition spokesman Maj. Gen. Turki al-Malki announced the interception in a brief statement on X, offering no further details.

Against this backdrop, Kuwait's Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Saudi Defense Minister Prince Khaled bin Salman Al Saud

held telephone talks on Wednesday on regional security developments and defense coordination.

According to a Ministry of Defense statement, the two ministers reviewed the deep-rooted fraternal ties between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in the defense and military fields. They also discussed recent regional developments, stressing solidarity and joint coordination in confronting threats and challenges to the security and stability of both countries.

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah separately met Saudi Minister of State and Cabinet Member Prince Turki bin Mohammad bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud in Riyadh on Wednesday, during an official visit to the Saudi capital.

The two officials discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations under the direction of their countries' leaderships. Sheikh Jarrah reaffirmed Kuwait's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and its support for measures the Kingdom is taking to protect its sovereignty, security, and stability against what he described as terrorist Houthi aggression. He emphasized that Saudi Arabia's security is inseparable from that of Kuwait and other Gulf Cooperation Council states.

Later the same day, Sheikh Jarrah met Saudi Energy Minister and Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman Al-Saud.

The meeting likewise focused on advancing historical fraternal relations and expanding cooperation, with the Kuwaiti minister repeating Kuwait's support for Saudi Arabia's security and its stance against Houthi attacks.

Elsewhere, Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif met Commander of the Kuwaiti Naval Force Maj. Gen. Saif Al-Hamlan in Islamabad on Wednesday to discuss expanding naval cooperation and strengthening regional maritime security.

Kuwait's Ambassador to Pakistan Nassar Al-Mutairi attended the meeting, according to a statement from the Kuwait Armed Forces' Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations. The talks covered regional maritime developments, joint operational readiness, and improving naval exercises between the two friendly armed forces.

During his official visit, Maj. Gen. Al-Hamlan also met Pakistani Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters in Islamabad. The Kuwait Armed Forces said the visit reflects ongoing efforts to broaden military coordination and deepen defense cooperation between Kuwait and Pakistan.

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Bid to unclog roads

Kuwait to plug gaps in power, water networks

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: The Ministry of Public Works will soon award the contract for maintenance works and remediation of traffic bottlenecks and accident-prone areas throughout the country.

The project is included in the plan of the ministry for the current fiscal year, with an implementation period of 730 days.

The tender will be administered by the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) and will be open to companies pre-qualified by the agency.

The contract covers a wide range of works, including improvement of road junctions and intersections, rainwater drainage and sanitary sewage networks, along with their infrastructure, civil works, supply and installation of safety barriers, roadside fencing, directional signs and traffic signs, road marking, utility services, miscellaneous works, and electrical works. All works will be carried out in accordance with the terms and specifications in the tender documents.

In another development, the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) set Nov 3 as the deadline for submitting bids for the tender to operate and maintain the rainwater filtration and settling basins in Al-Mutlaa City.

These facilities, originally constructed by the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), are designed to filter rainwater. The maintenance contract aims to ensure the system's operational efficiency, extend its service life, and prevent malfunctions and leaks in the city.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy floated 32 tenders through the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) to develop its electricity and water networks.

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Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Kuwait's highway fades into a curtain of dust and haze on Thursday as vehicles press ahead through the murky conditions, highlighting the dangers of reduced visibility and the need for extra caution on the road.

Kuwait weekend forecast goes off script as rain, fog set to steal show

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29, (KUNA): The Meteorological Department has forecast scattered rainfall, occasional thunderstorms, blowing dust, and fog in some areas through the weekend, with warm and humid conditions expected during the day and mild, humid

weather at night.

Ali Al-Ali, the acting Director of the Meteorological Department, explained to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that weather models indicate the country is affected by an extension of a surface low-pressure system, coinciding

with an upper-level low-pressure system. These conditions are expected to increase low and medium cloud cover, bringing scattered showers that may occasionally develop into thunderstorms.

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Citizenship revoked from 18 individuals

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: The Supreme Committee for the Verification of Kuwaiti Nationality announced Decision No. 20/108/2026, ordering the revocation of Kuwaiti nationality from 18 individuals, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decision, which was published in a supplement to the official gazette "Kuwait Al-Youm", affects nine men and nine women.

The measure was taken in accordance with Article 11 of Amiri Decree No. 15/1959 concerning the Kuwaiti Nationality Law, as amended.

Kuwait schools step up digital reading training

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: The Ministry of Education is preparing for the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2026, which focuses on improving teachers' competencies and offering digital training resources that replicate the actual testing conditions, thereby, enhancing student preparedness and elevating their reading comprehension abilities to meet international benchmarks.

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Photo during training session.

Kuwait reshuffles ministerial trial, probe panels

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: President of the Court of Appeals Counselor Tariq Al-Jaber on Thursday issued Administrative Decision No. 50/2026 on the reconstitution of the Court of Ministers, Investigation Committee for Ministers and Judicial Disciplinary Council.

This action was taken after the General Assembly of the court adopted supplementary resolutions on Sept 24, taking into account the request of several counselors to be excused from these posts and as per the operational require-

ments of the judiciary.

The decision mandates the reconstitution of the Court of Ministers, pursuant to Article Eight of Trial of Ministers Law No. 88/1995, as amended by Law No. 29/2014, consisting of five primary counselors and five alternate counselors. This appointment takes effect on the date of the issuance of the decision, for a two-year term, served along with the primary judicial duties of the counselors.

It also reconstitutes the Investigation Committee for Ministers, in accordance with Article Three of the same law, consisting of three primary counselors and

two alternate counselors. This term commences on Nov 2 for a period of two years, along with their current judicial responsibilities.

This is in addition to the reconstitution of the Judicial Disciplinary Council, pursuant to Article 41 of Decree-Law No. 80/2026 on the organization of the judiciary. It will include two primary counselors and two alternate counselors, serving from the date of the issuance of decision until Sept 30, 2027.

The decision stipulates notifying the Minister of Justice of its contents, incorporating it into the supplementary resolutions of the court, and informing the

concerned counselors and the Registry Department at the court to take the necessary administrative steps.

Al-Jaber, who also chairs the Ad Hoc Committee, signed the decision along with members Senior Counselors Abdul-Salam Nasser Al-Baijan and Hussein Abdul-Karim Al-Ramadan.

Following are the principal members of the Court of Ministers:

1. Senior Counselor Mohammad Yousef Othman Jaafar
2. Counselor Faisal Rashid Salem Al-Harbi

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KUNA photo

Kuwait's Sahel app and "Newborn Journey" service display their double triumph at the GCC Digital Government Awards, winning top honors for government application and digital service excellence.

Sahel scores double win

MANAMA, Oct 29, (KUNA): Kuwait has achieved a dual Gulf accomplishment, with its unified government application for online services, "Sahel", by winning the award for Best Comprehensive Government Application, and (Rehlat Al-Mawloud) or "Newborn Journey" service receiving the Excellence Award in the category of Best Government Digital Service within the GCC Digital Government Award.

The accomplishment was announced during the seventh edition of the award, hosted by Bahrain on Wednesday, reflecting the success of the Kuwaiti experience in digitizing government services, enhancing integration among entities, and advancing user experience.

Speaking to KUNA, Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology and Acting Minister of Information and Culture Omar Al-Omar expressed his pride and honor in this double Gulf honoring.

He underlined that the victory of "Sahel" and the distinction of the "Newborn Journey" manifest Kuwait's progress in enhancing digital government services and signal the success of joint government work in delivering more integrated and efficient services.

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Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a cable to the King of Spain Felipe VI, expressing sincere condolence over the victims of a train collision in the province of Toledo, wishing a swift recovery for the injured.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a cable to the King of Spain Felipe VI, expressing sincere condolence over the victims of a train collision. (KUNA)

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KUWAIT CITY: The Kuwaiti Army General Staff announced on Thursday that some of its army units will conduct live-fire exercises in the northwestern part of the country on Friday.

In a press statement, the Army's Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations said the exercises would begin from October 30 to November 3. (KUNA)



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HH the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah



Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of Türkiye

Kuwait Amir congratulates Türkiye on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a congratulatory cable to the president of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President Erdogan everlasting health and more progress and prosperity for Türkiye and its people.

HH the Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a congratulatory cable to the president of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished president everlasting health and more progress and prosperity for Türkiye and its people.

HH the PM

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a congratulatory cable to the president of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan on his country's National Day.

Kuwait Defense Minister

Kuwaiti Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a congratulatory cable to his Turkish counterpart Yasar Guler on the occasion of his country's National Day.

Other Voices

Days in Marrakech

By Ahmad alsarraf

I spent a few wonderful and relaxing days in Marrakech as the guest of a generous friend from Al-Shamiya. It was important to get to know the people of Morocco, a country separated from Kuwait by a three-hour time difference.



The name "Morocco" in Arabic refers to the direction of the setting sun.

In Spanish, English, and Latin, the name Morocco is derived from the historic city of Marrakech, known as Morocco in English and Maroc in French. Marrakech was the capital of a great empire and the political center of the state for centuries. As a result, European traders and diplomats came to refer to the entire country by the name of its capital.

Historically, Moroccans were known in Europe as "Moors," a term also associated with Marrakech. The name is derived from a compound Berber word - Amur, meaning "land," and Akush, meaning "God," hence, "the land of God."

The city was founded in 1062 CE by the Almoravids under Yusuf ibn Tashfin, who made it the capital of his empire. It was built with historic walls and ancient irrigation systems.

Although Marrakech later lost its status as the capital to Fez, it retained its great spiritual and economic importance. In the 16th and 17th centuries, it once again became the capital under the Saadian dynasty.

During the Alaouite era, Marrakech continued to play an important role in Morocco. Following the French occupation, the capital was moved to Rabat. Nevertheless, Marrakech remains a jewel of Moroccan tourism, history, and culture, and continues to be one of the country's most important cities to this day.

The Amazigh people, the original inhabitants of the land, have distinct linguistic and cultural traditions.

Over time, the differences between the Amazigh people and the Arabs who arrived from the Arabian Peninsula, along with subsequent waves of migration, gradually diminished. Nevertheless, historical, linguistic, and cultural distinctions between the two groups persisted, despite centuries of intermarriage and integration.

The majority of Moroccans have mixed ancestry, and today, it is rare to find anyone who is entirely Arab or entirely Amazigh.

Some differences may be

discerned through physical appearance or family names. Among the most prominent Amazigh figures after the Islamic conquest of North Africa are Tariq ibn Ziyad, Yusuf ibn Tashfin, Ibn Battuta, Al-Khattabi, the philosopher Ibn Rushd, Abbas ibn Firnas, and the botanist Ibn al-Baytar. The Amazigh were historically referred to as Berbers.

Following their conversion to Islam, the Amazigh became a major force in the conquest of Morocco and Andalusia and played a significant role in establishing powerful states across North Africa.

The most famous of these figures, Tariq ibn Ziyad, the conqueror of Andalusia, has a mysterious biography. According to some accounts, he was captured in Damascus, the Umayyad capital, where his fate remains unknown.

The cultural and political situation of the Amazigh differs somewhat between Morocco and Algeria.

In Morocco, the Amazigh have made significant legal and constitutional progress. In 2011, their language was recognized as an official language alongside Arabic, and in 2019, they were permitted to teach it. The Amazigh New Year was also recognized as an official holiday.

Despite the historically sensitive nature of Amazigh identity in the region, Morocco has not experienced a major Amazigh separatist movement. Instead, demands have largely focused on cultural recognition, social rights, and regional development within the framework of national unity.

In Algeria, where the Amazigh constitute the second-largest ethnic minority, their language was officially recognized in the 2016 constitutional revision. Tamazight is taught at certain educational levels and is used in official media. However, the country has also experienced separatist movements, some of which have been designated as "terrorist", although these movements do not necessarily reflect the aspirations of the majority of the Amazigh population.

Statistically, the Amazigh population in Morocco is estimated at no more than 40 percent, while their genetic ancestry may be considerably more widespread. In Algeria, the proportion of people who identify as Amazigh is estimated at less than 25 percent, although genetically, they constitute three times that number. Over the centuries, the populations of both countries have undergone extensive Arabization, both linguistically and culturally.



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PM steps up oversight of development projects

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired Thursday a meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Following Up on Major Development Projects in Kuwait.

The meeting reviewed coordination between various government entities and the companies executing the projects, along with ongoing efforts to speed up the development, completion, and maintenance of diverse projects under the direction of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The meeting was attended by several ministers, senior state officials and representatives of relevant authorities.



PM Diwan photo
HH the PM chairs a meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Following Up on Major Development Projects in Kuwait.

Kuwait calls for stronger GCC digital cooperation

Ministers review AI strategy for 2026-2030

MANAMA, Oct 29, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology Affairs and Acting Minister of Information and Culture Omar Al-Omar emphasized Wednesday the vital importance of exchanging digital government expertise among Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states.

Speaking to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the sidelines of leading Kuwait's delegation to the 10th meeting of the GCC Ministerial Committee for Digital Government in Manama, Minister Al-Omar noted that joint collaboration fosters integration and elevates electronic service delivery across the region.

Minister Al-Omar highlighted that Gulf partnership serves as a cornerstone for enhancing the quality and operational efficiency of public sector services by sharing technical knowledge and unifying digital transformation strategies.

He explained that the ministerial gathering reviewed several key agenda items, most notably the GCC Artificial Intelligence Strategy for 2026-2030 and preparations for the GCC Digital Government Award.

The ministers also evaluated progress on previous committee resolutions and discussed joint initiatives aimed at advancing digital government ecosystems, cybersecurity posture, and business continuity frameworks across member states.

Furthermore, the meeting examined cooperation with international multilateral organizations and reviewed global indices assessing government technology maturity and digital readiness across the Gulf region.

Minister Al-Omar commended the Kingdom of Bahrain for hosting the conference and praised the GCC General Secretariat for its continuous efforts in organizing joint Gulf technical programs.



KUNA photo
Kuwait's Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology Affairs and Acting Minister of Information and Culture Omar Al-Omar leads Kuwait's delegation to the 10th meeting of the GCC Ministerial Committee for Digital Government in Manama.

ous efforts in organizing joint Gulf technical programs.

He reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to advancing regional digital integration to meet sustainable development goals and support the digital aspirations of GCC citizens.

The Kuwaiti delegation participating in the ministerial meeting included Acting Director General of the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) Najat Al-Toum.

Meanwhile, GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi said Wednesday the Gulf media ambition goes beyond achieving excellence and leadership to becoming a powerful force in shaping awareness, making an impact and bolstering the GCC's regional and global standing.

He made the remarks while addressing the 29th Meeting of the GCC Ministers of Information, held in Manama in the presence of the Ministers of Information of the GCC states.

He emphasised the importance of a Gulf media sector that draws its strength from the unity of the GCC position and its credibility from the

principles and values of the member states.

He stressed that the shared responsibility of the GCC states requires making their media a unified Gulf voice that speaks with confidence, exercises its influence with professionalism, defends their interests, safeguards their achievements and highlights their civilisational and developmental progress.

Al-Budaiwi underlined the significance of ensuring that Gulf media keeps pace with the aspirations of the wise GCC Leaders and reflects to the world the GCC states established model of stability, security, progress and prosperity.

He expressed his strong condemnation and denunciation of the blatant Iranian attacks against the GCC states, which constitute a violation of their sovereignty and a threat to their security and stability.

"We reaffirm the unity of the GCC position and our categorical rejection of any infringement upon the security and territorial integrity of our states. We also strongly condemn the

terrorist assaults carried out by the Houthi militia against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including the targeting of holy sites, in flagrant violation of international laws and norms. We affirm our full solidarity with the Kingdom in all measures it takes to protect its security and sovereignty," he added.

In this context, he expressed his deep pride and appreciation for the media outlets across the GCC states, which have demonstrated, since the beginning of the Iranian attacks against the member states, that they are fully capable of fulfilling their national responsibilities.

He noted that Gulf media had been at the heart of events, standing shoulder to shoulder with the valiant GCC armed forces, defending the truth, countering misleading narratives and confronting malicious rumours with professionalism and competence.

"Through its leading institutions and distinguished national talent, Gulf media has presented an exemplary model of responsible journalism in times of crisis, combining rapid response with accurate information and transparent reporting, while maintaining effective and reliable communication with the public.

It has served as a voice of truth, a source of trust and reassurance, and a strong pillar of support for the domestic front, the GCC noted.

He further stressed that this commendable performance demonstrates that Gulf media is not merely a conveyor of events, but an essential partner in safeguarding the security and stability of the GCC states, embodying their unity and the solidarity of their peoples, and protecting their achievements in the face of challenges.

Additionally, over the past years, the GCC states have achieved an advanced standing in the media sector, supported by well-established media institutions, exceptional national talent, growing capabilities in content production and digital media, and accelerating investment in modern technologies, he said.

Kuwait calls for 'water security'

CAIRO, Oct 29, (KUNA): Kuwait affirmed on Thursday its commitment to strengthening joint Arab action and integration between the water and agriculture sectors amid mounting challenges facing the Arab region.



Al-Mutairi

This came in a speech delivered by Director of the Chemical Works Department at the Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy, Sarah Al-Mutairi, on behalf of Kuwait, the current chair of the General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), during the eighth meeting of the High-Level Joint Water-Agriculture Technical Committee in Cairo.

Al-Mutairi said the Arab region faces growing challenges, particularly water scarcity and accelerating climate change, which are placing increasing pressure on agriculture and food security.

She noted that the cooperation process launched at the first joint ministerial meeting in Cairo in 2019 requires, more than ever, greater integration between water and agricultural policies and continued implementation of action plans stemming from the Cairo Declaration.

'Kuwait is its own protector': British ambassador on defence partnership

By John C. Fernandes

Online Media Manager – Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: British Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rasheed praised the role of traditional and digital media in strengthening public understanding, highlighting the long-standing UK-Kuwait relationship and the importance of strategic communication during conflict.

Speaking at a breakfast gathering that brought together representatives of Kuwait's print, television, radio and digital media, Rasheed thanked journalists and content creators for their work, describing the media's role as important as that of diplomats working on political, economic, business and defence relations.

He also highlighted the importance



British Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rasheed (left) speaks at a breakfast gathering that brought together representatives of Kuwait's print, television, radio and digital media.

of storytelling in reflecting Kuwait's history, culture, food, sports and wider social life, saying the changing media landscape made how information is communicated as important as the information itself.

Referring to the historical ties between the two countries, Rasheed said Britain had maintained a presence in Kuwait since 1899 and had supported the country through major historical events, including the 1990 Iraqi invasion and the subsequent liberation.

"Britain is no longer the protector of Kuwait. It's Kuwait that is the protector of Kuwait," he said, adding that the UK's role was to help Kuwait protect itself through military capabilities, personnel and expertise.

The ambassador also stressed the

importance of strategic communication during conflict, saying it was essential for countries to demonstrate unity and resilience. He said he had made efforts to remain visible in Kuwait during the recent conflict to reassure people that Britain remained committed to the country and trusted the Kuwaiti Armed Forces' efforts to maintain security.

The gathering also featured a photographic exhibition showcasing the UK-Kuwait defence partnership through the years, with images tracing the relationship from the early 20th century to the present day.

Rasheed welcomed both longstanding and new contacts from Kuwait's media community and expressed hope for continued cooperation.



Kuwait highlights emerging drug threats at conference

Brigadier Qabazard calls for enhanced Arab coop

TUNIS, Oct 29, (KUNA): Kuwait presented a working paper on emerging drug threats at the 40th Arab Conference of Heads of Anti-Narcotics Agencies, held in Tunisia by the General Secretariat of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers.

Director General of the Ministry of Interior's General Department for

Drug Control Brigadier Mohammad Qabazard told KUNA the paper seeks to raise vigilance, highlight new drug trafficking and promotion methods, and strengthen awareness campaigns targeting Arab youth.

He called for enhanced Arab cooperation to protect societies, particularly young people, from narcotics and psychotropic substances, stressing the need to intensify preventive, treatment and security efforts.

Qabazard reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to Arab and international ef-

forts, warning that drugs threaten Arab security by fueling money laundering and organized crime. He stressed the importance of exchanging expertise, coordinating efforts and strengthening joint action.

The conference brings together the GCC Criminal Information Center for Combating Drugs, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, an EU project combating organized crime and terrorism, and the European Union Drugs Agency to strengthen Arab security cooperation.



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah poses with the honored officers.

Farwaniya Gov honors security officers for outstanding service and dedication

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah honored several officers from the Farwaniya Security Directorate at the governorate's headquarters on Thursday morning in recognition of their outstanding efforts and dedication to their security duties.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the ceremony was attended by Director of the Farwaniya Security Directorate Brigadier General Faisal Musaed Al-Rabbah, Assistant Director Brigadier General Yousef Fahad Al-Sawla, and several other security officials from the governorate.

During the ceremony, the governor underscored the importance of recognizing dedicated and capable security personnel who carry out

their national duties with integrity, commitment and discipline.

He noted that the officers' dedication reflects the vital role of the security establishment in maintaining safety and stability, promoting societal well-being, and upholding the values of responsibility and commitment to national duty.

At the end of the event, Brigadier General Faisal Musaed Al-Rabbah expressed his sincere gratitude and appreciation to the governor for the initiative and his continued interest in recognizing the efforts and national contributions of security personnel. He affirmed that such recognition serves as a strong incentive for officers to continue their dedicated service and redouble their efforts in carrying out their security duties with the utmost responsibility and sincerity.

National Guard Deputy Chief visits injured serviceman

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Deputy Chief of the Kuwait National Guard Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas, accompanied by Commander of Military and Security Affairs Brigadier General Abdullah Saleh Abdullah, visited Al-Razi Hospital to check on the condition of First Warrant Officer Mubarak Mutlaq Khalid, a member of the 67th Special Operations Battalion, who was injured during training, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the visit, Lieutenant General Al-Barjas inquired about the serviceman's health and conveyed the greetings of the National Guard leadership and personnel, as well as wished him a speedy and full recovery.

He also reaffirmed the National Guard leadership's commitment to monitoring the health of injured personnel and ensuring that all necessary resources are available to provide them with appropriate medical care and support.



Deputy Chief of the Kuwait National Guard Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas, accompanied by Commander of Military and Security Affairs Brigadier General Abdullah Saleh Abdullah visits the injured serviceman.

Acquired skills to enhance participants' readiness

Kuwait's NATO centre completes crisis communication programme

KUWAIT, Oct 29, (KUNA): The NATO-Istanbul Cooperation Initiative Regional Centre in Kuwait concluded Thursday an advanced public affairs course titled "Crisis Communication," held in cooperation with North Macedonia's Public Affairs Regional Centre (PARC) from October 25-29, with GCC participation.

Centre Director Emad Al-Kandari spoke to KUNA praising participants' contributions to discussions and practical exercises aimed at enhancing media communication and professional engagement with the media during crises.

He said the course strengthened participants' skills in organizing press conferences, addressing the public, managing media operations and using traditional and social media professionally.

The program also addressed countering misinformation, raising awareness and reassuring the public during crises to strengthen trust in official institutions and improve institutional communication.



KUNA photo
Participants receive certificates at the closing ceremony of the "Crisis Communication" course at NIRCT.

Al-Kandari highlighted the exchange of expertise between participants and trainers, noting that the acquired skills would enhance participants' readiness to

serve as official spokespersons.

He congratulated participants on completing the course and thanked NATO and PARC trainers for sharing their expertise.

Probes launched on suspicious death of Kuwaiti

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Security authorities are investigating the mysterious death of a 1982-born Kuwaiti citizen born in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, reports Al-Anba daily.

The Deputy Public Prosecutor has ordered the case to be registered as "death under suspicious criminal circumstances".

According to security sources, the Ministry of Interior's Operations Room received a report

from a man in his thirties stating that his brother had died. Security personnel and the relevant authorities were immediately dispatched to the location to inspect the scene and take the necessary measures.

The Public Prosecutor was informed of the incident and he ordered forensic evidence specialists and forensic medicine experts to examine the case and determine the cause of death. A criminal in-

vestigations officer was also assigned to conduct inquiries into the circumstances surrounding the incident.

The sources indicated that the cause of death and the circumstances surrounding it would be established based on the findings of forensic examinations, technical procedures and ongoing investigations. A definitive conclusion will be reached once the relevant results become available.

PAFN turns up heat on 3 illegal kitchens

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN), in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior and other supporting government entities, has shut down three food establishments operating in private residential premises without the required health licenses, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

PAFN explained that the closures are part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen oversight of food establishments and safeguard consumer health. Violation reports have been filed and the necessary legal procedures initiated, with plans to refer the violators to the Public Prosecution.

PAFN reaffirmed that inspection campaigns will continue to address violations, ensure food safety, and protect public health.

Bangladeshi delivery worker dies in four-vehicle collision

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: A Bangladeshi expatriate delivery worker, born in 2002, died from injuries sustained in a collision involving four vehicles on an internal street in Adan. A Kuwaiti citizen, born in 1981, was also injured in the accident, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the Ministry of Interior's Operations Room received a report about the collision, and immediately dispatched security personnel to the scene.

One of the vehicles involved was driven by a Kuwaiti citizen who sustained bruises and abrasions to the head, according to the medical report. The other party was a Bangladeshi delivery worker riding a motorbike. He sustained serious injuries and was transferred to Adan Hospital, where he was admitted to the intensive care unit. He later succumbed to his injuries.

The collision also damaged two vehicles parked in front of a nearby house. One was American-made and the other Japanese-made.

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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Battles beneath our level of awareness

"MATURITY is not the ability to respond to every situation, but the wisdom to recognize when a response is necessary and when silence is a victory for our inner peace," Kuwaiti writer **Fatima Nasser Al-Muzayel** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"In an era of excessive and idle talk, the value of words has diminished. Reactions often precede thought, and impulsiveness takes precedence over reflection, to the point where the worth of a statement is measured by the speed with which it is uttered and the reach of its echo, rather than by its truth or depth.

As this phenomenon spreads, social media platforms have become arenas where reactions compete for attention, while thoughtful deliberation is sacrificed in the pursuit of haste. In this race to speak, understanding fades, and reflection is neglected.

Amid this confusion, silence reveals its true value, not as a sign of inability, but as an expression of wisdom. Likewise, deliberation is a mark of maturity, not weakness.

Words are wasted when addressed to narrow minds, and silence is often more dignified than engaging in a futile argument.

Quran guides us towards this principle - "And when the ignorant address them, they say, 'Peace.'" (Al-Furqan, 25:63).

We must learn the art of silence, not as a refuge for the weak or a mask for submission, but as a conscious choice to rise above trivial disputes that neither enrich our existence nor contribute to our understanding.

There are impulsive reactions, behaviors unworthy of our attention, and insignificant events that stir storms of anger within the soul, draining its energy and clouding its inner clarity.

This is where the wisdom of discernment comes into play - knowing the difference between what deserves to be confronted and what

is better left behind.

Choosing silence does not mean denying the truth or yielding to falsehood. Rather, it reflects the awareness that some arguments offer no genuine understanding.

Withdrawing from a futile debate is an act of wisdom, not an admission of incapacity, for reason cannot persuade every mind.

In the right circumstances, silence becomes a noble way of rising above pettiness, a conscious decision to resist the urge to engage in every dispute and instead turn such moments into lessons that refine the soul, rather than arenas in which our inner peace is sacrificed.

Not everyone who remains silent is defeated, just as not everyone who walks away is incapable of responding. Sometimes, we possess every ability to defend our position, yet deliberately choose not to, recognizing that some battles are simply beneath our level of awareness and not worth the peace they would cost us.

In this vein, Radwa Ashour writes, "...but I have reached a level of maturity that allows me to distinguish between a battle that might achieve its goals and battles that are pointless to wage." This wisdom distills years of experience. Maturity does not merely give us the ability to engage in battles; it grants us the insight to choose which ones are worth fighting. It teaches us that courage is not measured by the number of confrontations we enter.

As we journey through life, we gradually realize that many of the conflicts and confrontations we once faced were never worth the exhaustion they brought.

We have worn ourselves out over details that added nothing to our lives and squandered precious time trying to prove points that others were never willing or able to understand.

What if we had learned, early on, to distinguish between what is worth confronting and what is better left behind? What if, before engaging in any dialogue, we asked ourselves, "Is this matter truly worth sacrificing my inner peace?" The question may seem simple, yet it holds the key to profound change. When we learn to choose wisely, we stop exaggerating situations and begin directing our energy to-

ward what enriches our lives rather than what depletes them.

True strength lies in self-restraint, preserving our dignity, and rising above whatever disturbs the serenity of the soul.

It is not about defeating others with words, but about resisting the urge to respond when we recognize that doing so serves no purpose.

Silence teaches us to tame our impulses, allowing the waves of triviality to break far from the shores of our inner selves, so that we do not sacrifice our peace for matters that do not deserve it.

Ultimately, silence is not an absence from a situation, but a conscious presence rooted not in fear or incapacity, but in wisdom and nobility of spirit.

True courage lies in distinguishing between a battle worth fighting and one in which the real victory is choosing not to engage.

Maturity is not about responding to everything; it is about recognizing what truly deserves a response and what is best left behind as we move forward in peace."

Also:

"When the United Nations Charter was drafted in the aftermath of World War II, the vision was ambitious - a world free from war, justice without discrimination, and a single standard by which the rights of all peoples would be measured. Yet, eighty years later, that standard appears broken, serving primarily the interests of the powerful," Bahraini writer **Dr. Lulwa Al-Boursheid** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The truth is undeniable - the world today lacks international justice and a consistent standard that applies equally to all.

Laws exist on paper, and international charters fill libraries, yet they are enforced against the weak while the powerful act as they please, seemingly with impunity.

When the United Nations was established in 1945, its promise was clear - equality among nations, the prohibition of aggression, and the protection of human rights everywhere."

– Compiled by **Simi K. Kutty**



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Farwaniya Governor photos
Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah visits Al-Salam Kindergarten in Ardiya.

Farwaniya Governor reviews school maintenance projects

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Under the patronage and in the presence of Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah, Al-Salam Kindergarten in Ardiya presented a briefing on Wednesday morning on maintenance work completed at the kindergarten and several other schools in the governorate, as well as efforts to improve the educational environment.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the governor was received by Acting Director of Educational Affairs for the Farwaniya Educational Zone Mahmoud Abdulredha, Farwaniya Governorate Council member and Maintenance Supervisor in the Engineering Affairs Department Engineer Jamal Al-Aiban, Acting Supervisor of Kindergarten Educational Affairs in the Farwaniya Educational Zone Hiba Al-Kandari, Kindergarten Prin-

icipal Bodour Al-Ajmi, and several other educational officials.

During the visit, the governor received a briefing on the completed work before touring the kindergarten's facilities to review the maintenance projects and equipment installations.

Governor Sheikh Athbi emphasized his commitment to providing students with a safe and stimulating educational environment, and stressed the importance of monitoring the needs of schools and kindergartens.

He also expressed his appreciation to those responsible for the maintenance work and the kindergarten's administration for their efforts.

Meanwhile, the kindergarten's staff thanked the governor for his visit, his interest in improving the educational environment, and his support for initiatives aimed at its development.

Artificial intelligence poised to transform Kuwait's classrooms

MoE, Google Cloud expand digital education projects

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei met with a delegation from Google Cloud to discuss the latest developments in joint digital educational projects, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The discussion focused on using modern technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) to support the educational process, develop educational staff capabilities, and improve learning outcomes.

Undersecretary of the ministry Dr. Khaled Al-Rasheed, several other ministry officials, Educational Sector Director for the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia Mazen Abdullah, Regional Manager for Google Cloud in Kuwait Shaima Al-Turkait, and other company representatives attended the meeting.

They talked about the ongoing projects, their implementation stages, and proposed technical solutions to enhance their effectiveness within the educational field.

They also looked into the progress of the 'Smart School' (Al-bus) project, which has entered its pilot phase, at Jumana bint Abi Talib High School. They assessed the implementation stages, addressed technical and operational challenges, discussed proposed solutions to overcome them, and explored mechanisms for measuring the impact of the project on educational practices, teacher efficiency, and student engagement levels—all of which will help evaluate the pilot's re-



Ministry of Education photo
Kuwait's Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei meets with a Google Cloud delegation, led by Education Director for the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia Mazen Abdullah.

sults and identify opportunities for future expansion.

They deliberated on the progress of the training initiative for teachers focused on AI tools provided by Google for Education, which targets more than 40,000 educators.

They discussed the implementation of the program, ways to expand it to develop the digital skills of the educational staff, enhance teaching methods, sup-

port content development and facilitate the design of classroom activities, opportunities to present digital solutions that respond to the needs of the educational sector, strengthen integration among educational systems and platforms, improve operational efficiency, streamline procedures, and use technology in a practical and sustainable manner within the school environment.

Al-Tabtabaei emphasized the

importance of monitoring digital projects using clear performance indicators and measuring their impact on the quality of education.

He added that digital transformation is at the core of educational system reform plan, and that the success of technological initiatives depends on their role in empowering teachers, developing the school environment, and improving learning outcomes.



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KUNA photo
Second Secretary at Kuwait's Permanent Mission to the United Nations Wafiq Al-Mulla during an open discussion held by the UN Security Council on women, peace and security.

Kuwait promotes women's role in conflict prevention

NEW YORK, Oct 29, (KUNA): Kuwait reiterated that women are partners in resilience in the face of crises and conflicts, active contributors to recovery from their repercussions, and an indispensable voice in building a future of security, stability and peace for all.

This came in the Kuwaiti speech delivered by Second Secretary at Kuwait's Permanent Mission to the United Nations Wafiq Al-Mulla during an open discussion held by the UN Security Council on women, peace and security.

Al-Mulla praised the role of Kuwaiti women in facing the challenges the country has endured since the Iraqi invasion, shedding light on their resilience and sacrifices during that period, as well as their contributions to rebuilding the nation and strengthening its security and stability.

She called for boosting women's participation in efforts of building sustainable peace, noting that Kuwait's women continue their role in serving their country and community and contribute to facing the repercussions of the repeated Iranian attacks on Kuwait since February 28, 2026.

She went on to say that the attacks targeted civilian objects, vital facilities and infrastructure, and threatened the security and safety of citizens and residents, noting that Kuwait had been subjected to repeated Iranian attacks since February 28, 2026.

She expressed her appreciation for the efforts of Kuwaiti women across various fields of work and responsibility, and for their contributions, alongside their fellow citizens, to preserving social cohesion and ensuring the continuity of daily life.

Al-Mulla affirmed that women are neither immune to the effects of crises and conflicts nor absent from efforts to respond to them.

She reviewed Kuwait's efforts in enhancing women's participation in institutions concerned with security, justice and decision-making, along working to prepare the country's first national plan on women, peace and security through the concerned national committee in cooperation with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the relevant agencies.

These efforts aim to integrate the agenda of women, peace and security into the national plans and policies, and expand women's participation in conflict prevention, crisis response and recovery, in line

with Kuwait Vision 2035 and the Sustainable Development Goals, Al-Mulla pointed out.

She noted that women's participation should begin before conflicts erupt, through their contributions to preventive diplomacy and mediation, and continue through negotiations, the implementation of peace agreements, recovery and reconstruction.

She underlined that protecting women is an essential responsibility that requires respect for international law and international humanitarian law, the protection of civilians and civilian facilities, ensuring the safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid, and holding perpetrators of violations accountable.

Al-Mulla warned that escalating conflicts have repercussions that do not conclude at the end of military operations, as women and girls suffer from the loss of family individuals, displacement, violence, and deprivation of education, healthcare and livelihood, at a time when the responsibilities placed on their shoulders continue to grow.

She affirmed that sustainable recovery requires empowering women and girls to return to education, access healthcare, restore their livelihoods, and participate in decisions related to rebuilding their communities.

In addition, Al-Mulla stressed the importance of integrating women's needs and priorities into recovery and reconstruction plans, providing employment opportunities, and building capacities in ways that strengthen women's economic independence and their ability to contribute to the future of their families and communities.

On technological advancements, Al-Mulla emphasized the need to benefit from digital tools to enhance women's participation, facilitate the exchange of expertise, and build capacity, while addressing the threats women face in the digital space, including harassment and disinformation campaigns that may limit their participation in public life and decision-making.

Concluding the speech, the Kuwaiti official reaffirmed her country's commitment to continuing its work with the United Nations, Member States, and partners to translate the Women, Peace and Security Agenda into tangible reality, stating that sustainable peace cannot be built without women, but through their full and effective participation.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait reshuffles

3. Counselor Abdullah Ahmed Jas-sim Al-Najm
4. Counselor Abdul-Aziz Adnan Saad Al-Rubaian
5. Counselor Hamoud Dawood Su-laiman Al-Bader
The alternate members are:
1. Counselor Ali Badr Ali Abdul-Aziz bin Naji
2. Counselor Badr Adel Abdullah Saud Al-Ahmad
3. Counselor Ahmed Abdul-Wahab Ahmed Al-Duwaisan
4. Counselor Khalifa Jassim Khalifa Al-Najm
5. Counselor Abdullah Salah Nasser Al-Othman
Principal members of the Commit-tee for Ministerial Investigations:
1. Counselor Tariq Abdul-Aziz Mu-halhal Al-Yassin
2. Counselor Mohammad Khalid Mohammed Al-Ghamlas
3. Counselor Hamad Abdul-Aziz Sulaiman Al-Waqian
Alternate members:
1. Counselor Saud Ibrahim Saud Al-Farhoud
2. Counselor Hamad Abdul-Wahab Hussein Al-Salahi
Principal members of the Judicial Disciplinary Council
1. Senior Counselor Badr Turki Ibrahim Al-Wazzan
2. Counselor Salim Faleh Saad Al-Azmi
Alternate members:
1. Counselor Faris Abdul-Wahab Ju-maa Al-Fahad
2. Counselor Yahya Mohammad Hassan Al-Kandari

Kuwait schools

In view of this, the Measurement and Evaluation General Department at the ministry conducted a training ses-sion for the supervisors of Arabic and English subjects at its headquarters on Wednesday. The session aimed to pol-ish the students' skills in understanding and analyzing texts, extracting infor-mation, making inferences and connecting concepts.
Hawraa Ahmed Al-Qattan, Interna-tional Studies Supervisor at the min-istry, presented the goals, essential elements, and future stages of the elec-tronic training platform project. She in-dicated that the platform equips teach-ers with the skills to navigate the digital system and become acquainted with the testing procedures before its rollout.
Maryam Al-Farsi from the Depart-ment of Systems Development and Digital Services delivered hands-on training on utilizing the platform, its features and its technical specifications.
The project mandates the Interna-tional Studies Team to track student performance, submit reports and sta-

tistics, analyze outcomes, and evaluate students' proficiency in reading skills and their engagement with the digital environment.
The team is in charge of creating the platform's content, which includes stories, classroom activities, questions, surveys and answer keys, while the Information Systems Department is re-sponsible for the design, development, and execution of the platform's techni-cal and software needs.
The ministry affirmed that these ac-tivities are part of a preparatory strategy for an international study, integrating educational and technical efforts and providing a training environment that supports teachers in preparing students for assessment tasks.
It also reaffirmed its commitment to develop reading and comprehension skills, utilize modern technologies, and use the results of the study to pinpoint areas for development and to improve the quality of education and its outputs.

Kuwait to

The bids for these tenders will be opened at various dates soon. Once opened, the bids will be forwarded to the ministry for evaluation within 30 days, then CAPT will make a final decision to award each contract to the bidder that best meets the requirements.
These contracts aim to modernize the electricity and water networks, ensure the infrastructure is fully prepared to meet the growing demand for electricity and water due to the population growth and new residential cities, and improve services provided to the public.
The contracts are for the construction and maintenance of two 1,600 mm-di-iameter freshwater pipelines from Mina Abdullah Water Distribution Complex to West Funaites Complex and a 1,200 mm-diameter brackish water pipeline from Mina Abdullah Complex to Zour Complex along with the related works, the supply and installation of three main electrical substations along with feeders and auxiliary equipment to support the cloud data center project of the govern-ment, and the supply, installation, op-eration and maintenance of smart water meters.

Sahel scores

“Winning two Gulf awards in a sin-gle day is a source of pride and honor, and it shows the success of the vision from which the ‘Sahel’ application was launched,” the minister said.
Al-Omar stressed that this honoring marks a shared national achievement for all government entities participating in the “Sahel” application.
In a similar statement to KUNA, Chair-man of the Executive Committee for the “Sahel” application, Colonel Bashar Hashem said that winning the award for

Best Comprehensive Government Appli-cation and the distinction of the “Newborn Journey” reflect the success of the joint government work system.
He added that the “Sahel” applica-tion managed to gather the services of 42 government entities within a unified digital platform, while the “Newborn Journey” gave a practical model for state entities turning from offering sepa-rate services to acting within an inter-connected digital journey.
Bahraini Minister of Interior and Chairman of the Ministerial Commit-tee for Information and Communication Technology, General Sheikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, and GCC Secre-tary-General Jasem Al-Budaiwi were present at the awarding ceremony.

Kuwait weekend

Blowing dust could reduce horizon-tal visibility in some areas, while fog may form during the evening and early morning hours. Visibility is expected to improve gradually during the first hours of the morning.
The weather on Friday is expected to remain warm and humid during day-time, especially along the coast, with partly cloudy to cloudy skies. Winds will be variable, tending toward the southeast, at speeds of 8 to 40 kilom-eters per hour and occasionally becom-ing active.
There will be a chance of scattered rain, sometimes accompanied by thun-derstorms, while fog may form in the evening.
Maximum temperatures are forecast to reach between 32°C and 34°C, with sea waves ranging from 1 to 5 feet.
Friday night will be mild and humid, particularly in coastal areas. Winds will be southeasterly to variable, blowing at 8 to 30 kilometers per hour. Scattered rain and fog are possible in some areas. Minimum temperatures are expected to range between 24°C and 26°C, while sea waves will range from 1 to 4 feet.
Saturday's forecast points to contin-ued warm and humid conditions, par-ticularly in coastal areas, with partly cloudy to cloudy skies during daytime. Southeasterly winds will be light to moderate, occasionally strengthening to between 10 and 40 kilometers per hour.
Scattered rainfall is possible, and fog may form in the evening. Maximum temperatures are expected to reach be-tween 32°C and 34°C, while sea waves will generally be slight to moderate and may occasionally reach 2 to 6 feet.
On Saturday night, the weather will be mild and humid, particularly in coastal areas, with partly cloudy to cloudy skies. Winds will be light to moderate, south-easterly to variable in direction, at speeds of 8-35 km/h. Fog may develop in some areas, with a chance of scattered rain.
Minimum temperatures are expected to range between 23°C and 25°C. Sea

conditions will be slight to moderate, with wave heights of 1-5 feet.

Kuwait, Saudi

In latest development, US officials have told several Middle East coun-tries and regional allies to be prepared for potential renewed military action against Iran after next week's midterm elections in the United States - as well as the possibility that Iran will attempt to retaliate against them, according to two diplomats briefed on the matter.
Both of the diplomats spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment about the sensitive warnings conveyed by U.S. diplomats and defense officials.
President Donald Trump has not made a final decision on whether to carry out new strikes against Iran, the diplomats stressed. The president, however, has repeatedly said that he is weighing ordering new military action once the critical Nov. 3 elections in the United States are over.
Those threats and the fresh U.S. urg-ings for allies to prepare for potential retaliation are putting the region on alert that a return to major operations could now be on the horizon.
The White House and U.S. officials declined to comment.
Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Wednesday in a post on X that Tehran “continues to give di-plomacy a chance to succeed” and is working with mediators to review ide-as that Tehran included in a proposal floated last month - summarily rejected by Trump - that the Iranians still want to see used as the basis to return to a ceasefire.
Meanwhile, the United Arab Emir-ates foreign ministry issued a state-ment urging the sides to “exercise wisdom and pursue political solutions to help contain tensions” and prevent a return to full-scale operations in the war that began in late February.
The U.S. has told regional allies that the new round of military action could last for several days, but regional offi-cials are bracing for Iran and its proxy groups to retaliate - leading to a fight that could last even longer, the diplo-mats said.
The allies have also been urged by U.S. officials to take precautionary measures in anticipation that Iran's re-sponse will include retaliatory strikes on energy facilities and other crucial infrastructure.
While the U.S. has not carried out a strike against Iran since early Septem-ber, the situation in the Middle East has become more complicated.
The conflict has spread, with Iran-backed Houthi rebels carrying out at-tacks on Saudi Arabia's oil infrastructure and airports. A Saudi-led coalition has responded with its own deadly attacks on Houthi-held territory in Yemen.

Maldives seeks to deepen relations His Highness the Amir receives letter from Maldives president



Ministry of Foreign Affairs photo
His Highness the Amir receives a written message from the President of the Maldives, delivered to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Thursday a letter from President of the friendly Republic of Maldives Dr. Mo-hammad Muizzu regarding the close bi-lateral relations between the two friend-ly countries and frameworks to promote and develop them.
In a press release, the Foreign Min-istry said Minister of Foreign Affairs

Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sa-bah received the letter during his meet-ing with Maldivian Minister of Islamic Affairs and Endowments and the Mal-divian President's Special Envoy Dr. Mohammad Shaheem Ali Saeed.
During the meeting, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest, it said.

Kuwait, Netherlands explore ways to develop cooperation



KUNA photo
The Deputy Foreign Minister discusses the latest regional and international developments with the Director of the Middle East Department at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29, (KUNA): Ku-waiti Deputy Foreign Minister Amba-sador Hamad A-Mashaan welcomed on Thursday visiting Director of the North Africa and Middle East Department at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ambassador Stella Kloth.
They discussed bilateral relations between both friendly countries and ways to develop cooperation and ex-changed views on the latest regional and international developments.

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Americans confront record fuel prices, rising costs

Trump in Ohio, Obama in Georgia make closing stretch appeals to midterm voters

CHILLICOTHE, Ohio, Oct. 29, (AP): Georgia Democrats rallied with former President Barack Obama Wednesday night, at the same time President Donald Trump was in Ohio attempting to energize his base, as both parties began crystallizing their closing messages ahead of next week’s midterm elections.

Trump has been on a weekslong sprint around the country, doing 20-plus rallies this month alone while packing upcoming days with more travel. But as Americans confront record fuel prices, rising costs and an unpopular war in Iran, the president has been keeping his focus on states that he won handily two years ago.

“If you can get out to vote,” Trump told a raucous crowd in Chillicothe, south of Columbus, Ohio’s capital, “we’re going to have a tremendous victory.”

The last Democratic president to serve two terms, Obama is increasingly campaigning for his party and gleefully acting as a foil to Trump - including criticizing the Republican for spending too much time leading White House renovations and for becoming wealthier while in office.

He said Trump is “spending time supergluing gold medallions to the mantel in the Oval Office.”

Obama appeared in suburban Atlanta with that city’s former mayor,

Keisha Lance Bottoms, who could be the first Black woman elected governor in the United States, as well as Sen. Jon Ossoff, running for reelection and considered a potential future presidential candidate.

“Everywhere you go, it feels like change is in the air,” the former president said.

Even as he stages so many rallies, Trump also already turned to the courts to shape the midterms, directing his Department of Justice to file a lawsuit last week preemptively contesting the outcome of Alaska’s Senate race should Democratic challenger Mary Peltola win it.

That’s due to the presence of a second candidate with the same name as Republican incumbent Sen. Dan Sullivan.

Speaking to reporters as he boarded Air Force One to fly to Ohio, Trump called on Peltola to drop out of the race and warned she could face prosecution.

His comments followed a New York Times report that Peltola’s campaign was involved in an effort to recruit the second Dan Sullivan, which Trump called “voter fraud at the highest level,” adding: “It turned out it was a scheme by the Democrats. That’s what they do best: they cheat.” Peltola’s campaign said in a statement that it “has no involvement



Former US president Barack Obama greets Democratic candidate Sen Jon Ossoff during a rally in support of both Ossoff and Democratic gubernatorial candidate Keisha Lance Bottoms ahead of the Georgia Primary Election on Oct 28, Morrow, Ga. (AP)

with either Sullivan campaign.”

Another closely watched Senate race pits Democrat Abdul El-Sayed against Republican Mike Rogers. Trump has intensified his anti-Muslim rhetoric against El-Sayed, who on Wednesday told a crowd at an event in Wyandotte, outside Detroit: “They want to point to me and my name. They’re doing this because they’re trying to distract us.”

“Michiganers are big-hearted. We’re open-minded. We don’t care as much how you pray; rather, we care what you pray for,” El-Sayed said.

Republicans have argued El-Sayed is antisemitic, which he denies.

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, who also is frequently mentioned as a 2028 presidential candidate, campaigned with Rogers in Birmingham, Michigan, at

an event hosted by the Republican Jewish Coalition. Cruz said that anti-semitism is “a poison that is ripping the country apart” and that the Democratic Party was being taken over by “self-proclaimed communists and Islamists.”

The event featured several voters who described themselves as lifelong Democrats voting Republican for the first time because of El-Sayed’s comments last year after a man attacked a synagogue in a Detroit suburb. El-Sayed tied the attack to Israel’s actions in the Middle East, saying at the time that “hurt people hurt people.” He later apologized for the statement.

The issue was a focal point in the Democratic primary between El-Sayed and Rep. Haley Stevens, whom he narrowly defeated. Stevens has endorsed her former rival, but her fiancé Jason Turkish told The Detroit News on Wednesday that he plans to back Rogers because he believes El-Sayed is an antisemite.

Later, Stevens appeared on CNN and said of Turkish’s comments, “Like a household across America, we’re a household divided.”

“I still very much want our Democratic nominee - his name is Abdul - to win this race,” Stevens said.

“He can do the right thing,” Stevens told CNN. “He can disavow

these ads and he can reassure these undecided voters who are still left.”

Trump’s stops in the closing stretch of the campaign reflect Republicans’ defensive posture even as the party’s finances - and the president’s signature super PAC, MAGA Inc. - have helped sustain candidates.

Trump visited Mississippi on Monday and made another stop in a series of trips to Texas on Tuesday. He plans to be in South Carolina, Florida, Kansas and Iowa in the coming days.

Going to so many deeply red states hasn’t always gone smoothly.

Early in Wednesday’s speech, Trump was interrupted by a protester shouting about the late, disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein and made some rare remarks on his onetime friend, saying he’d expelled Epstein from his Mar-a-Lago club in Florida decades ago.

“That was a great thing I did, I must tell you,” Trump said, adding, “I threw Jeffrey Epstein the hell out of Mar-a-Lago.” The president then pivoted immediately into praising Ohio Sen. Jon Husted’s physique.

Trump has been lavishly praising Republicans’ physical appearances on the trail, often diverting into tangents about Husted - who played football in college - no matter where he’s campaigning.

US Justice Dept makes splash with politically sensitive cases, actions during midterm blitz

WASHINGTON, Oct. 29, (AP): A crucial and contentious midterm election arrives next week, and President Donald Trump’s Justice Department has been scrambling with a blitz of headline-making actions and cases that defense lawyers, Democrats and other critics say is no coincidence and reeks of politics - in both the timing and the targets.

This month alone, the Justice Department escalated an investigation into Democratic US Rep Ilhan Omar with a search of her home; brought criminal charges against two former FBI officials accused of falsely downplaying their knowledge of investigations involving Hunter Biden; revealed a fresh attempt to prosecute former FBI Director James Comey; and made an unsuccessful attempt to indict a former White House aide who delivered dramatic but disputed testimony about Trump’s efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

That’s on top of lawsuits in Alaska and California related to next week’s voting.

The moves are notable not only because of the timing but also because they largely have been directed at outspoken critics of Trump or issues that have animated the Republican’s base.

The Justice Department has also employed unusual maneuvers to lock down charges, bypassing grand juries to file what are effectively placeholder cases against Comey and the ex-FBI officials in the heavily Democratic nation’s capital -



Former FBI Director James Comey speaks during a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing on Capitol Hill on June 8, 2017, in Washington. (AP)

where prosecutors over the past year have repeatedly struggled to secure indictments.

“Never in the modern history of the Department of Justice has there ever been such a brazen disregard for time-honored norms and protocols in conceiving of or undertaking politically sensitive investigations,” said David Laufman, who served as a senior Justice Department official across Democratic and Republican administrations and helped oversee the Hillary Clinton email investigation.

The Justice Department, in a statement, said it is “following the

facts and the law, not anyone’s political timetable.”

The law enforcement agency has a long-accepted practice of avoiding overt investigative actions against candidates in the weeks before an election, or other public steps that could be perceived as attempting to influence a political outcome.

It’s such a foundational principle that successive attorneys general have issued departmentwide memos during election cycles reminding employees not to make an investigative move designed to help or hinder any particular candidate.

Responding to questions about the

recent investigative moves, the Justice Department said in a statement that it was an informal practice, not a written rule, to avoid overt actions within 60 days of an election. The practice is meant to prohibit prosecutors from choosing the timing of an action to affect an election, the department said.

“The standard is purpose, not proximity to Election Day. Department policy does not require the Department to stop ongoing work during an election season,” the department said.

That practice was famously tested in 2016 when Comey, then the FBI director, told Congress 11 days before Election Day that the bureau was revisiting its investigation into Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton’s handling of classified information because of newly discovered emails. Comey has said he felt he picked the least destructive option available, but his decision-making was harshly criticized by Democrats - and the Justice Department inspector general.

Attorney General Todd Blanche, for his part, has not been shy about his view that the Justice Department does not exist independent of the White House and has insisted he is no different from his predecessors in serving a president. He has denied that the department’s investigative decisions are political. Yet even before this month, the Justice Department had initiated multiple inquiries into the president’s perceived adversaries.

America

King tides inundate streets, flood homes: King tides have inundated parts of both U.S. coasts, flooding streets and sending seawater into homes and businesses in beach communities in California, Florida and the Carolinas.

The tides began with the full moon earlier this week and could cause flooding in some areas into the weekend, forecasters said. King tides are caused by the gravitational pull and alignments of the Earth, moon, and sun. They can occur several times a year and last several days.



Gass

Bay Area forecast office in Monterey.

This week’s king tides, like their name, have definitely been noticeable. Residents didn’t need a beach to see the ocean. The ocean came to them. (AP)

□ □ □

2 found dead after going missing during Colorado hike : Two Colorado college students have been found dead after going missing during a hiking trip in the Rocky Mountains last weekend when a heavy snowstorm hit, authorities said.

The bodies of Kaden Matsuda, 19, of Ridgway, Colorado, and Jackson Donlon, 20, of New York, were found Wednesday afternoon in a basin of West Apostle Mountain, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) southeast of Aspen, the Chaffee County Sheriff’s Office said in a statement posted on social media.

They left Colorado Mountain College Leadville’s campus on Friday, telling family and friends they planned to hike up Ice Mountain, a nearly 14,000-foot (4,270-meter) peak near West Apostle Mountain that requires technical climbing, the sheriff’s office said. They were expected back by Sunday, but college staff reported them missing on Monday morning.

The sheriff’s office said the causes of their deaths were under investigation, but foul play was not suspected. Authorities said they would not offer theories on what may have happened until autopsies are completed. (AP)

Localized truce holds for third day

Aid mission set to enter Oleshky

KHERSON, Ukraine, Oct. 29, (AP): Humanitarian aid is poised to roll into the stricken city of Oleshky on Friday, a Ukrainian official said, as a localized ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine stretched into a third day and military units cleared away landmines.

Moscow and Kyiv have observed the truce in and around the devastated southern Ukrainian city since Tuesday, despite remaining locked in war since Russia’s all-out invasion of its neighbor more than 4 ½ years ago. Previous efforts to secure ceasefires either never worked out or the truces quickly fell apart.

But elsewhere, a jet-powered Russian drone hit two trains stopped at a station in central Ukraine, killing at least 13 people and injuring 10 others, officials said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy described it in a post on X as a “horrific attack” that struck passenger trains in Dnipro.

Also, Russia’s Defense Ministry said air defenses downed 1,214 Ukrainian drones overnight in one of the largest drone attacks launched by Kyiv. Around half of the drones were heading to the Russian capital, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin said.

The planned six-day ceasefire around Russian-occupied Oleshky has also brought a rare and welcome stillness for civilians in the nearby city of Kherson, which is held by Ukraine and has also been wracked by the war.

Both sides thanked U.S. first lady Melania Trump for what the White House said was her role in helping broker the temporary ceasefire so that food and medical supplies can reach some desperate 2,000 people trapped in Oleshky. Pope Leo XIV also pressed for a truce.

“The ceasefire has been in place for 54 hours now,” Ukrainian ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets said Thursday, adding that aid deliveries were due to begin the following day.

“The parties are fully adhering to the agreements, and no violations of the ceasefire have been reported.”

His Russian counterpart, Yana Lantratova, confirmed the truce was holding and that Russian engineers are working on de-mining Oleshky roads.

“Both sides are fully honoring their commitments, and no violations have been recorded,” she said. “This allows military personnel to continue clearing roads of mines and to prepare a safe passage for the humanitarian convoy.”

Local people will also be able to evacuate, either into Russia or Ukraine, officials say. The mechanics of how that might work were unclear.

Lantratova said she and her team were on their way to Oleshky for the aid delivery, while Lubinets arrived in Belarus and will head to the city from there, as part of an operation that Lantratova said was five months in the making.

In the city of Kherson, growing numbers of people were out on the

streets as the truce held.

Nataliia Myronenko, 42, had a steady stream of customers at her coffee kiosk since early Thursday.

“Now, during the quiet, we have people at lunchtime and in the evening, which we didn’t have under the attacks,” she said. “For a while, people would race down this street because they were afraid to stop.”

The pause has brought a sense of relief, she said. “It’s a breath of freedom, when you don’t look at the sky. You keep looking at your feet because of the mines, but you’re not afraid of dying. It’s so great,” she said.

“It’s such a privilege and a joy, but we understand it will end soon.”

Moscow and Kyiv are keen to curry favor with Washington ahead of possible three-way talks next month between Russia, Ukraine and the United States.

American military support is vital for Ukraine, but US President Donald Trump has recently indicated that he is disengaging with Kyiv as he waived sanctions on Russia and publicly chided Zelenskyy.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, firefighters put out a fire at the residential neighbourhood following a Russian air attack in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on Oct 29. (AP)



Protesters gather during a demonstration demanding affordable housing outside Portugal’s Parliament in Lisbon on Oct 27. (AP)

Thousands of Portuguese gather outside Parliament

Thousands of people demonstrating against a prolonged and deepening housing crisis gathered outside Portugal’s Parliament in Lisbon on Tuesday, after police in previous days used batons and dogs to break up similar protests in the capital’s main downtown

squares.

Protests in recent weeks took their cue from demonstrations that began in neighboring Spain last month over similar complaints about unaffordable housing. Wide social unrest in the streets also has erupted elsewhere across Europe this

autumn.

Portuguese President António José Seguro, whose role is mostly ceremonial but who wields political influence, has convened a Council of State, an advisory body, for a meeting next week to discuss the protests in Portugal. (AP)

Europe

Protesters demand state action in Kosovo: Angry protesters in Kosovo on Wednesday demanded state action over widespread violence against women in the staunchly patriarchal Balkan country, splashing red paint on government buildings in a message to the authorities that they have blood on their hands for failing to prevent it.

Thousands of people joined the rally in the capital Pristina that was called after Arlinda Zekaj, 49, was killed by her brother-in-law on Sunday near the western town of Peja. Activists say that Zekaj became the eighth victim killed as the result of domestic violence in Kosovo this year.

“Do we have to die to be taken seriously?” read one of the banners that the protesters carried during their march. Other messages written in red paint said

“Men kill women, the state stays silent” or “Down with the patriarchal system.” (AP)

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Drone attack hits container ship: A Liberian-flagged vessel that was hit by drones off Bulgaria’s Black Sea coast has sunk, the local maritime administration said Thursday.

Three maritime drones struck the container ship Contship Jet about 21 nautical miles off the coast of Bulgaria on Wednesday, Defense Minister Dimitar Stoyanov said. It was the fifth drone attack in the NATO country’s exclusive economic zone this month.

The Greek-managed container ship was en route from Israel’s port of Haifa to Constanța in Romania. All 18 crew members, 14 Filipinos and four Ukrainians, were rescued by Bulgarian naval and border police vessels and taken to the port city of Varna for medical checks. (AP)

Xi leads renewed anti-corruption push

CPC seeks stronger institutional discipline

BEIJING, Oct 29, (Xinhua): The 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) held its fifth plenary session from Monday to Thursday in Beijing, adopting a resolution on persevering with full and rigorous Party self-governance.

The Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee presided over the meeting. Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, delivered an important address, said a communique issued after the session.

At the session, participants heard and discussed a report on the work of the Political Bureau presented by Xi.

They also considered and adopted the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Certain Major Issues concerning Persevering with Full and Rigorous Party Self-Governance. Xi delivered explanatory remarks on the draft of the resolution.

The CPC Central Committee fully affirmed the work of the Political Bureau since the committee's fourth plenary session, the communique said.

Looking back on the Party's journey since its founding, the CPC Central Committee pointed



Xi Jinping, Li Qiang, Zhao Leji, Wang Huning, Cai Qi, Ding Xuexiang and Li Xi attend the fifth plenary session of the 20th Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee in Beijing, capital of China. (Xinhua)

out that the key to the success of the CPC in winning one victory after another lies in its pursuit of the high ideal of communism, its dedication to achieving lasting greatness for the Chinese nation, and its commitment to seeking happiness for the Chinese people and rejuvenation for the Chinese nation.

At the session, the CPC Central Committee gave a highly positive assessment of the great achievements the Party has made in exercising full and rigorous self-gov-

ernance in the new era.

It was pointed out that as the Party endeavors to supervise, govern, develop, and strengthen itself in the new era, the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has put forward a series of new ideas, new thinking, and new strategies in response to the major questions of the times -- what kind of long-term governing Marxist party the CPC should build and how to build it, thereby giving rise to Xi Jinping Thought on Party Building.

US and Japan to establish Japanese facility for joint missile production

CEBU, Philippines, Oct 29, (AP): The United States and Japan have agreed to establish a Japanese facility for the joint production of advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles, the Japanese defense chief said late Wednesday. It is the latest move by the allies, which have repeatedly expressed alarm over China's growing assertiveness in Asia.

Japanese Defense Minister Shinjiro Koizumi made the announcement in a news conference Wednesday night in the Philippine central province of Cebu, where he met US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on the sidelines of an annual meeting of Southeast Asian defense chiefs and their major Asian and Western counterparts.

The annual meetings aim to avert a major regional conflict and strengthen defense cooperation. On the sidelines of the meetings, however, the US and China and their allies have often traded criticisms.

The missiles that will be produced as part of a joint effort called "Operation Supercharge" are "essential for the F-35," Koizumi said, without elaborating or providing other details of the agreement. The U.S.-made F-35 fighter jets are one of the world's most advanced aircraft and are also used by the Japanese military.



From left: Philippines Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro, Australia Defense Minister Richard Marles, Japan Defense Minister Shinjiro Koizumi and US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth pose for pictures before holding a Quadilateral Meeting on the sidelines of the 20th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and 13th ADMM-Plus Meetings in Cebu, Philippines on Oct 28. (AP)

During his brief meeting with Hegseth in Cebu, Koizumi said he "shared a sense of crisis ... regarding the increasingly severe regional situation and we agreed to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. alliance with greater speed and intensity than ever before."

"We reaffirmed the importance of a free and open international order based on the rule of law, which rejects any attempts to unilaterally alter the status quo through the use of force, coercion or other means," Koizumi said. He cautiously added that their discussions were not directed at any specific country.

S.Korean prosecutor seeks death penalty for ex-prez Yoon over martial law debacle

North Korea fires missile barrage toward the sea as tensions with South Korea rise

SEOUL, South Korea, Oct 29, (AP): North Korea launched a barrage of ballistic missiles toward its eastern waters Thursday, South Korea's military said, days after the North threatened to resume front-line propaganda loudspeaker broadcasts and deploy new weapons along the rivals' tense border.

The launches also followed leader Kim Jong Un's surprise weekend visit to China, the North's main ally and economic lifeline, to push for greater cooperation.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it detected about 10 short-range ballistic missiles fired from North Korea's eastern coastal town of Wonsan and that they each flew about 250 kilometers (155 miles). It said South Korea's military maintained its readiness to repel any provocations by North Korea in close coordination with the United States. Japan's Defense Ministry also reported a suspected ballistic missile launch by North Korea.

Animosity between the Koreans

has deepened since last month's land mine blasts at the border that injured three South Korean soldiers. Seoul accused North Korea of planting mines south of the military demarcation line and demanded an apology. But Pyongyang has denied responsibility for the explosions and warned of retaliation if provoked.

Last week, North Korea said it would restart propaganda broadcasts and place new weapons systems on alert along the border in protest against what it called repeated warning shots by South Korean troops at border areas. South Korea later proposed talks on clarifying the border to prevent accidental clashes, but North Korea hasn't responded.

During a visit to a South Korean border town earlier this week, Associated Press journalists saw North Korean artillery guns located on the other side of the border that had not been previously visible.

In recent years, North Korea has been placing more mines, barbed-



South Korea's ousted former president Yoon Suk Yeol arrives to attend his trial at the Seoul Central District Court in Seoul, South Korea on May 12, 2025. (AP)

wire fences and other defense structures along the border in line with Kim's policy of severing ties with South Korea. Seoul has said North

Korean troops have repeatedly violated the border during the work and that South Korea's military has responded by firing warning shots.

North Korea has denied the alleged border breaches.

North Korea has in recent weeks ramped up weapons tests in a likely bid to win greater U.S. concessions as President Donald Trump has expressed his desire to restore diplomacy with Kim.

On Saturday, Kim visited the Chinese border city of Dandong via a newly inaugurated bridge to pay his respects at a memorial marking China's support of North Korea during the 1950-53 Korean War. It was his sixth visit to China as leader.

At the memorial, Kim said North Korea will firmly carry forward "the invincible" friendship with China. Meeting with a top Chinese official later Saturday, Kim reaffirmed his resolve to develop bilateral cooperation.

Kim has recently taken steps to bolster ties with China after years of prioritizing ties with Russia, including by sending troops and armaments to support its war against Ukraine.

Also:

SEOUL, South Korea: A South Korean special prosecutor on Thursday demanded the death penalty for ousted President **Yoon Suk Yeol**, ahead of an appeals court verdict on rebellion charges over his brief imposition of martial law in December 2024.

The Seoul High Court has yet to set a date for a verdict on Yoon's appeal of a life sentence handed down in February by the Seoul Central District Court. The court found that he illegally mobilized troops and police to seize the legislature, arrest political opponents and establish unchecked rule for a "considerable time."

Investigators led by Special Prosecutor **Cho Eun-suk** also appealed the ruling, arguing Yoon deserves the death penalty because his actions posed a grave threat to the country's democracy. An execution would be unlikely. South Korea has not executed anyone since 1997, effectively maintaining a moratorium on capital punishment following calls for its abolition.



Rwandan president Paul Kagame speaks during an announcement that Formula 1 will return to Africa with a grand prix in the country starting early next decade, in Kigali, on Oct 13. (AP)

US imposes sanctions on Rwandan defense ministry over involvement in e.Congo conflict

DAKAR, Senegal, Oct 29, (AP): The US imposed sanctions on Rwanda's defense ministry on Wednesday over the country's involvement in mineral-rich eastern Congo, where fighting continues between the Congolese government and Rwandan-backed M23 rebels despite peace efforts from the Trump administration.

The sanctions come after a US-mediated peace agreement was signed late last year by Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi and Rwandan President Paul Kagame in Washington, alongside US President Donald Trump.

Following the signing of the deal, Trump proudly announced: "Today, we're succeeding where so many others have failed." However, these efforts have so far had little impact on the situation on the ground, where fighting continues.

The US Treasury Department said in a statement on Wednesday it was imposing sanctions on the Rwandan ministry of defense, which it said "deployed thousands of troops across eastern DRC's North and

South Kivu provinces, where they conduct operations alongside M23 and provide the armed group with military equipment, supplies, logistical support, and training."

Rwandan authorities have also "introduced advanced weaponry to the battlefield, including surface-to-air missile systems and jamming equipment, creating risks for civilian aviation in eastern DRC," the statement added.

Rwanda's government spokesperson Yolande Makolo told The Associated Press that "Rwanda remains ready to fully implement the Washington Accords, concurrently with the willingness of the DRC to fulfill those commitments, and with the mediator holding all parties accountable." She said the commitments from the DRC "are wholly unmet, and with no accountability," including the promise to neutralize forces.

M23 is one of about 100 armed groups that have been vying for a foothold in mineral-rich eastern Congo, along the border with Rwanda, in a decades-long conflict that

has created one of the world's largest humanitarian crises. M23 took control of Goma, the capital of North Kivu province, as well as other key cities in eastern Congo in a lightning assault last year.

Congo, the United States and UN experts accuse Rwanda of backing the M23. Rwanda's government has consistently denied backing armed groups in Congo, though U.N. experts have said they found evidence that Rwandan troops have fought alongside and directed M23.

"Rwanda must halt its support for M23 and withdraw its troops from eastern DRC," U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said on social media on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, the US also announced sanctions on Zigama Credit and Savings Society, a Rwandan financial institution which it said has "played a key role in facilitating Rwanda's support" to M23 and its political wing, the Congo River Alliance.

Earlier this year, the US imposed sanctions on the Rwandan Defense

Forces and four of its senior officials for supporting M23.

The UN has called the conflict in eastern Congo "one of the most protracted, complex, serious humanitarian crises on Earth."

Also:

MOGADISHU, Somalia: The United Nations' political mission in Somalia ends Saturday, closing more than three decades of successive UN missions that helped rebuild a country shattered by civil war and leaving no agreed replacement to help rival leaders resolve disputes.

The government calls the closure a milestone in Somalia's ability to manage its own affairs. But opposition figures and analysts warn that it comes at a time when the president's right to remain in office is contested, al-Qaeda-linked militants fight on and drought deepens humanitarian needs.

Somalia's government asked the UN to close the mission in 2024. The Security Council approved a two-year handover of its work to Somali institutions and other UNbodies.

Subcontinent

Pakistan oxygen cylinder blast kills 10: An oxygen cylinder exploded inside a parked ambulance at a government-run medical facility in southern Pakistan, killing at least 10 people, including a patient of the facility, police and hospital officials said Thursday.

The blast occurred overnight in Tharparkar district in the Sindh province, said district Police Chief Arif Aziz.

He said the victims included staff at the medical facility, patients, and their relatives.

Local police official Khalil Abro said patients were being transferred to another hospital when the explosion occurred. Images on social media and on television stations showed flames engulfing a vehicle, with one door open. Another image showed its blackened frame outside a building as people stood nearby. (Xinhua)

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Afghan police rescue 127: Police rescued 127 people from suspected human traffickers in Afghanistan's western Nimroz province on Wednesday, provincial police spokesman Mawlawi Gul Mohammad Qudrat said Thursday.

The suspected traffickers were attempting to take the individuals out of the country illegally via Nimroz, the official said, adding that police also seized five vehicles used to transport them. (Xinhua)

Deaths hit 84 in communal violence in South Sudan

NAIROBI, Oct 29, (Agencies): The death toll from fresh communal violence in Tonj North County, South Sudan, has risen to 84, a local official said Wednesday.

William Wol Mayom Bol, caretaker minister of information and communication services in Warrap State, said an additional 12 people were killed in an attack on Bunder village in Akop Payam on Tuesday.

In a statement, Wol described the attack as "unprovoked" and "coordinated," adding that 13 people were seriously injured.

The new violent attack followed a Monday attack by armed youth from neighboring Mayom County in Unity State, which initially left 72 people dead. The minister said the attackers burned the Bunder village and looted property.

Calling for calm and restraint, Wol said security forces were being deployed to areas of heightened tensions to restore order and track down those responsible.

Also:

BAMAKO: At least 13 civilians were killed in an overnight drone strike by Mali's military earlier this week near the border with **Mauritania**, local human rights activists and a separatist armed group said Wednesday.

The Malian military said in a statement Wednesday that it had targeted terrorists "gathered under cover."

Mali has been plagued for over a decade by al-Qaeda-linked militants, including the JNIM alliance, and fighters affiliated with the Islamic State group, as well as a Tuareg separatist rebellion in the north.

Lat/Am

Flávio Bolsonaro, family land in Miami: Defeated Brazilian presidential candidate **Flávio Bolsonaro** and his family arrived in Miami on Wednesday after he refused to concede the election to President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and fled the country.

In a circuitous journey, Bolsonaro left for Argentina on Tuesday with his wife and two daughters, then traveled to Ecuador, according to Argentine officials and flight data. The 45-year-old senator, a close ally of US President Donald Trump, visited the White House in May, and the Trump administration approved U.S. visas for him and his family this week.

Bolsonaro's father, Jair Bolsonaro, also fled to Florida after losing the 2022 presidential election to Lula before returning to Brazil three months later.

Flávio Bolsonaro is under investigation by Brazil's Supreme Court, accused of corruption, money laundering and tax evasion. The court ordered him to hand over his regular and diplomatic passports by noon Tuesday. It remained unclear whether he complied, but allies said late Tuesday he also has an Italian passport.

On Wednesday, Bolsonaro issued his first comments on his flight in a statement on X, in which he



Bolsonaro

called himself the victim of electoral fraud and political persecution, and again asked for the annulment of the Lula-Alckmin ticket. (AP)

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'Nicaragua leaders established dictatorship': United Nations human rights experts said Wednesday that Nicaragua's co-presidents have established a dictatorship and that there are "reasonable grounds to believe that crimes against humanity have been committed."

The expert group has been investigating allegations of human rights violations and abuses in Nicaragua, which the country's government denies, since April 2018. The U.N. experts said they have documented actions by husband-and-wife leaders Daniel Ortega and Rosario Murillo aimed at eliminating opposition through arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances, political persecution and stripping opponents of their citizenship.

"What we are looking at is a full dictatorship, and that dictatorship has one clear goal: permanent dynastic rule," Jan-Michael Simon, chair of the group appointed by the Geneva-based Human Rights Council, told UN reporters. "Four months ago, Daniel Ortega said it loud - Nicaragua will never hold elections again."

In response, Nicaragua called the Human Rights Council - a UN agency that it has withdrawn from - "manipulated, obsolete and interfering" and accused "neo-colonialist powers" of weaponizing human rights for "political aggression."

Since mass protests in 2018, which led to a bloody government crackdown that killed hundreds, Ortega and his wife have held on to power. (AP)

Kuwait oil price drops to \$111.55 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil fell 86 cents to USD 111.55 per barrel (pb) in Wednesday's trading, compared to USD 112.41 pb in Tuesday's trading, the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said on Thursday.

In global markets, Brent crude went up by USD 1.44 to USD 115.32 pb, and US West Texas Intermediate increased USD 2.88 to USD 102.78 pb.

Reaffirming commitment to Kuwait's investment sector

ABK Wealth Management named strategic sponsor of Money Tech 2026 Summit

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: ABK Wealth Management, the investment arm of Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait Group, announced its participation as a strategic sponsor of the annual Money Tech 2026 Summit. The sponsorship reflects its firm commitment to supporting platforms for dialogue and economic development that explore the future of the financial and investment sectors in Kuwait and the region.

The strategic sponsorship underscores ABK Wealth Management's commitment to participating in events that bring together leading decision-makers, experts, and senior executives to discuss growth prospects, the transformation of investment services, and market developments. The event will be attended by Sherif ElRafie, Chief Executive Officer of ABK Wealth Management; Mohammad Al Qattan, Chief Consumer Officer at ABK; and other executive members.

ElRafiewill join as a panelist alongside other senior corporate executives at the summit's opening session that will explore approaches to mergers and acquisitions, valuation methodologies, and other key topics.

Commenting on the occasion, ElRafie said, "Our participation as a strategic sponsor reinforces our pivotal role in supporting economic initiatives that enrich discussions on the future of wealth management and investment solutions. We consistently seek to deliver added value and share our comprehensive approach to providing integrated solutions that combine disciplined financial planning with advanced digital capabilities to meet our clients' ambitions."

ElRafie added that the event offers an ideal platform to explore future investment opportunities amid rapidly changing market conditions. He noted that the company continues to strengthen its position as a trusted investment partner, supporting the growth and stability of Kuwait's financial and investment sectors.

He concluded by noting that ABK Wealth Management will showcase its leading investment products and services at the summit, designed to em-



Sherif ElRafie



Mohammad Al Qattan

power clients and enable flexible, efficient portfolio management. He also stressed the importance of collaboration between the investment sector and leading media organisations in strengthening financial literacy and advancing the business environment.

Effective Client Engagement

Al Qattan said, "This sponsorship reflects our ongoing commitment to engaging effectively with our clients and meeting their evolving financial aspirations through personal banking and integrated wealth management so-



the latest solutions and products that address the needs of different client segments, enabling them to achieve their financial goals with flexibility and security, while strengthening the Bank's position as a trusted partner in the Kuwaiti market."

Al Qattan noted that such conferences provide a platform to highlight the latest global trends in wealth management, financial technology, and sustainable growth. He emphasised the commitment of ABK and ABK Wealth Management to working alongside their industry peers to enhance the attractiveness of the investment environment and identify priorities for the next phase.

He concluded by highlighting the seamless integration between ABK's Private Banking services and the advanced investment solutions offered by ABK Wealth Management. Together, they provide a comprehensive range of advisory and financial services delivered to the highest international standards, enabling high-net-worth clients to benefit from tailored solutions to preserve and grow their wealth. These range from portfolio management and asset planning to direct access to local, regional, and global investment opportunities, helping clients fulfil their financial aspirations and safeguard their investments across generations with efficiency and security.

Through its integrated platform, ABK Wealth Management delivers world-class investment solutions that meet clients' aspirations, while offering an exceptional experience through access to ABK's Private Banking products. This approach combines extensive investment expertise with innovative banking solutions, reflecting an ongoing commitment to managing and growing clients' wealth to the highest standards.

Highlighting portfolio diversification, strong liquidity

Fitch affirms KIPCO's 'BB-' rating with Stable Outlook

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: KIPCO – Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) – announced that Fitch Ratings has affirmed the company's Long-Term Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'BB-' with a Stable Outlook, reflecting its well-diversified asset portfolio, stable through-the-cycle dividends, track record of long-term investment returns and financial flexibility. Fitch also assigned a 'BB-' rating to KIPCO's updated Euro Medium Term Note (EMTN) Program, in line with the company's Long-Term Issuer Default Rating.

The affirmation comes despite challenging regional conditions, with Fitch highlighting the resilience of KIPCO's diversified portfolio across multiple sectors in the MENA region in mitigating the impact of the regional conflict on asset valuations and operating performance. Fitch also cited the Group's history of asset monetization, its influence over portfolio companies, and its supportive shareholders as key reasons for the affirmation.

Fitch noted the strong credit quality of KIPCO's two largest holdings, Burgan Bank and SADAF-ACO, which together account for 41% of the portfolio's gross asset value, and observed that many of the Group's portfolio companies are market leaders in their respective countries.



Moustapha Chami

Fitch recognized KIPCO's active portfolio management and demonstrated ability to reduce leverage through strategic asset monetization. The sale of Gulf Insurance Group in 2024 and other asset

monetizations in 2025 contributed to debt reduction and improved liquidity.

The agency also highlighted KIPCO's substantial liquidity position, with cash balances of US\$1.1 billion, sufficient to cover debt maturities into early 2028. Fitch expects the Group's net loan-to-value (LTV) ratio to remain below 45% over the next four years, with potential improvements in asset valuations supporting a reduction towards the 40% target.

Commenting on the rating, Mr Moustapha Chami, KIPCO's Group Chief Financial Officer, said:

"The affirmation of our credit rating amid challenging regional conditions is a clear endorsement of the resilience of our diversified portfolio and the financial discipline underpinning our strategy. Our focus on active portfolio management, strategic asset monetization and prudent debt management has strengthened our liquidity and financial flexibility, enabling us to navigate market uncertainties while meeting our financial commitments. The rating of our updated EMTN Program further reinforces our access to international debt capital markets. We remain committed to strengthening our balance sheet, optimizing our portfolio and building sustainable long-term value for our shareholders."

Diversifying trade exchanges

Kuwait, Bahrain assess trade and investment cooperation

MANAMA, Oct 29, (KUNA): Kuwait and Bahrain discussed on Thursday the possibility of organizing an economic forum involving the public and private sectors of both countries to explore trade and industrial opportunities and expand economic and investment cooperation.

In a statement to KUNA, the Kuwaiti Embassy in Manama said the discussions took place during a meeting between Bahraini Minister of Industry and Commerce Abdullah Fakhro and Kuwait's Ambassador to Bahrain Jassem Al-Najem.

The meeting focused on strengthening trade and industrial cooperation and expanding economic partnerships between the two countries.

Both sides stressed the importance

of diversifying trade exchanges, encouraging private sector partnerships, developing industrial cooperation and exchanging expertise to enhance the competitiveness of national products and open new markets.

They also discussed the "Made in the Gulf" conference and its role in supporting Gulf trade and industrial integration, as well as facilitating the movement of goods and products, addressing trade and procedural obstacles, and strengthening cooperation in food security and supply chain sustainability.

The meeting was attended by Counselor Abdulaziz Al-Falah and Second Secretary Lujain Abu Alyan from the Kuwaiti Embassy in Bahrain.

Highlighting Kuwait's investment potential

World Bank Group seeks to enhance private investment

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Head of the World Bank Group Office in Kuwait Azhar Iqbal Hussain stated that integrating the expertise of the constituent institutions of the group under a unified leadership enhances its capacity to deliver comprehensive development, financing and advisory solutions.

Hussain made this statement on the sidelines of the World Bank Group Diwaniya at The St. Regis Kuwait Hotel recently.

Titled, "Partners in Growth and Prosperity," the event aimed to strengthen engagement with the Kuwaiti community, highlight the dimensions of the development partnership between Kuwait and the group, and showcase the role of its institutions in supporting economic development and broadening the scope of cooperation with the public and private sectors.

During the event, Hussain affirmed that the abovementioned solutions support the government and private sector, thereby, contributing to the expansion of investments and the creation of job opportunities. He indicated that directing private capital toward development projects is the center of the efforts of the group to achieve sustainable growth.

He revealed that the group brings together the expertise of five integrated institutions —World Bank, International Finance Corporation (IFC), Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), International Development Association (IDA), and International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

He explained this structure aims to consolidate efforts, expand services, and take advantage of global expertise in finance, investment, policy advisory and development of the business environment. He added that the World Bank works with the Kuwaiti government on knowledge exchange, benefiting from the group's eight decades of accumulated expertise.

He went on to say that IFC focuses on supporting the private sector and assisting companies in their growth and expansion—particularly in emerging markets, while MIGA provides instruments to safeguard investments against political and non-commercial risks, enabling investors to enter new markets with

confidence, IDA plays a vital role in supporting low-income countries through grants and concessional financing, and ICSID provides a framework for resolving international investment disputes in accordance with its procedures.

He confirmed the significance of Kuwait within the group, which consists of 190 member countries and maintains operational presence in 110 nations. He said Kuwait has been a key partner in a collaborative relationship for almost six decades now. He pointed out that Kuwait's representation in the Board of Directors of the group reflects its standing in the international system. He added that the private sector in Kuwait has a solid foundation and innovative capabilities, positioning it well to capitalize on opportunities in regional and international markets.

He disclosed that the group looks forward to further developing its partnership with Kuwait by deploying its global expertise and knowledge to support national development priorities, raise the efficiency of economic policies, develop the public sector, and improve the investment and business climate, including the establishment of public-private partnerships and expanding the role of private capital in development projects.

On the priorities of the group, he asserted that job creation is at the center of the development agenda of the group. He said the activities of the group — linked to the public and private sectors—aim to generate more employment opportunities and achieve a sustainable economic and developmental impact.

He clarified that the challenge is not just the availability of private capital, but also knowing how to direct it toward projects that propel development and deliver economic and social value.

He said the group works hard to facilitate investments and provide the expertise and tools, which help companies expand into new markets.

He revealed that the flow of Kuwaiti capital and expertise into markets in need of further development is a model in terms of the role the private sector can play in supporting economic activity and broadening the scope of investment opportunities. He underscored the importance of assisting companies in their international expansion and increasing their contribution to job creation.

Kuwait: Credit growth accelerated in Q3 as business and household lending strengthen

By National Bank of Kuwait

Domestic credit growth accelerated to a solid 1.7%q/q in Q3 2026, up from 1.2% in Q2, signaling improved lending activity despite lingering regional uncertainties and pushing YTD growth to 4.7% in September. The pickup was driven by stronger business credit and a further acceleration in household lending, which more than offset the steeper contraction in lending to banks and financial institutions while security purchases lending growth remained unchanged in Q3. Credit to non-residents also recovered following a sharp decline in Q2, providing additional support to overall credit expansion. On the liabilities side, residents' deposit growth was stable in Q3 underpinned by strong growth in public sector deposits and continued, though more modest growth in private sector and government deposits. Meanwhile, non-resident deposits continued to contract, albeit at a substantially slower pace than in Q2. Overall, credit growth has held up slightly better than we had expected earlier in the year given persistent conflict-related pressures, though geopolitical developments remain an important source of uncertainty for Q4.

Growth in business credit strengthened to 1.8%q/q in Q3 from 1.3%q/q in Q2, lifting the YTD growth to 6.1% in September. The improvement reflected stronger lending across several major sectors, particularly in construction (5.2%q/q), industry (3.0%), and other services (4.2%). Credit growth also remained positive in real estate (0.5%) and crude oil & gas (1.0%), while the trade sector returned to modest growth (0.2%) following a contraction of -1.4% in Q2. Credit to banks and financial institutions contracted further by -5.2%, pushing YTD growth into negative

territory (-3.0%). Meanwhile, credit for the purchase of securities grew by 1.2%q/q, unchanged from Q2 and bringing the YTD growth to 3.6%. Household credit accelerated further, expanding by 2.8% in Q3 compared to 1.5% in Q2, suggesting continued strength in consumer borrowing demand. Credit to non-residents rebounded by 2.8% q/q, reversing the -6.7% contraction recorded in Q2, largely due to increased lending to non-resident banks, which rose by 5.0% q/q following the sharp decline seen in the previous quarter.

Resident deposit growth remained robust in Q3

On the liabilities side, resident deposit growth rose by a strong 2.4%q/q in Q3, matching the pace recorded in Q2 and lifting the YTD growth to 8.8% in September. Quarterly growth was supported by public sector institutions' deposits, rising by 9.0%q/q after declining by -2.2% in Q2. Government deposits also remained a key source of support, rising by 5.5% following the exceptionally strong 23% increase recorded in Q2. Private sector deposits, which constitute the bulk of resident deposits, continued to expand albeit at a slower pace, rising by 0.5% q/q compared with 1.2% in Q2. Meanwhile, non-resident deposits declined by -0.7% q/q in Q3 following the sharper -4.6% contraction recorded in Q2, leaving YTD growth at -3.5%. While cross-border funding flows remained soft, the smaller decline came mainly due to the rise in private sector foreign currency deposits by 5.3%q/q in Q3 compared with the -9.1% decline in Q2, suggesting some stabilization in non-resident private sector deposits compared with the heightened uncertainty seen in Q2.

Table 1: Credit						Table 2: Deposits					
Credit	Sep-2026	% growth				Deposits	Sep-2026	% growth			
	KD billions	q/q	YTD	y/y	2025		KD billions	q/q	YTD	y/y	2025
Business	27.1	1.8	6.1	6.7	6.0	Private sector	41.2	0.5	1.7	1.6	3.8
of which Real Estate	11.1	0.5	3.9	3.2	5.2	of which Time dep.	23.8	1.8	0.7	0.4	5.6
Household	20.9	2.7	4.4	5.1	3.7	of which CASA dep.	15.1	-1.8	1.4	1.3	0.8
Securities	5.0	1.2	3.6	10.2	27.9	Public Institutions	10.4	9.0	20.7	47.4	30.8
Banks & financial instit.	2.7	-5.2	-3.0	5.5	25.3	Government	5.9	5.5	58.9	37.8	-23.5
Total domestic credit	55.7	1.7	4.7	6.3	7.6	Total resident dep.	57.5	2.4	8.8	10.8	4.7
Non-resident credit	10.5	2.8	-0.9	7.0	36.1	Non-resident deposits	6.1	-0.7	-3.5	14.5	89.3
Total credit	66.2	1.9	3.8	6.4	11.5	Total deposits	63.6	2.1	7.5	11.1	9.9

Source: Central Bank of Kuwait

First Market Index declines

Boursa Kuwait closes lower on Thursday

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29, (KUNA): The Boursa Kuwait closed Thursday's trading session with its general index falling 36.41 points, or 0.43 percent, to settle at 8,453.99 points. Trading activity totaled 306.4 million shares across 16,378 cash transactions, with a combined value of KD 81.17 million (approximately USD 250 million).

The Main Market Index recorded a slight gain

of 5.65 points, or 0.07 percent, closing at 8,454.85 points. A total of 163.2 million shares were traded through 8,298 cash transactions, valued at KD 29 million (approximately USD 89.3 million).

Meanwhile, the First Market Index declined by 47.24 points, or 0.53 percent, to close at 8,892.55 points. Trading volume reached 143.17 million shares

across 8,080 transactions, with a total value of KD 52.13 million (approximately USD 160.5 million).

The Main 50 Index also ended the session lower, dropping 20.32 points, or 0.22 percent, to reach 9,423.62 points. Trading in this segment amounted to 153.7 million shares through 6,904 cash transactions, valued at KD 26.9 million (approximately USD 82.8 million).

Net profit reaches KD 523.4 million

KFH holds earnings webcast for the period ended Q3 2026

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) held the earnings webcast to highlight the Group’s financial performance and results for the period ended Q3 2026. The webcast was attended by KFH Group Chief Financial Officer, Abdulkarim Al-Samdan and Acting Group Chief International Banking Officer, Group Chief Strategy Officer, Eng. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem.

Group Chief Financial Officer, Abdulkarim Al-Samdan:

Group Chief Financial Officer, Abdulkarim Al-Samdan commenced the meeting by shedding light on the Bank’s financial performance for Q3 2026. He added that KFH Group’s financial performance demonstrated strong growth in core banking activities, highlighting key indicators.

Al-Samdan said that the nine-month results show a stronger operating earnings base, reflecting growth in financing and fee income alongside lower expenses. Net operating income rose by 11.7% year-on-year to approximately KD 1.0 billion, with cost-to-income at 30.8%. Shareholder profit increased by 6.2% to KD 523.4 million.

The financing portfolio is now 7.5% above year-end, reflecting continued deployment of liquidity into customer financing.

Al-Samdan said that the Group’s earnings are geographically diversified. “As of the end of September, the international business accounted approximately 38.6% of Group financing and 49.6% of deposits.”

Al-Samdan explained that: “The gap between income and expense growth remains favorable. Compared with the same nine-month period last year, operating income was 6.7% higher, while expenses fell by 3.0% to KD 447.5 million. As a result, cost-to-income ratio improved by 3.1 percentage points to 30.8%.”

He also highlighted that the regulatory provision balance remains above the IFRS 9 expected credit loss balance. Against expected credit losses of KD 549.8 million, provisions under Central Bank of Kuwait regulations stood at KD 1,049.7 million. The resulting buffer was KD 499.9 million.

Meanwhile, Al-Samdan said that September liquidity ratios remained comfortably above the current regulatory minimums. LCR of 137.0% and NSFR of 120.7%



Abdulkarim Al-Samdan

Eng. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem

- **Al-Samdan:** Stronger operating earnings base, growth in financing income, and lower expenses
- **Al-Mukhaizeem:** Financial results, growth indicators, and achievements reflect solid performance and confidence in the future

were above their respective 80% minimums. The Kuwait financing-to-deposit ratio was 84.3%, below the 100% ceiling.

On that basis, CET1 was 13.2%, Tier 1 was 15.4%, and total capital adequacy was 17.2%. The corresponding current requirements were 10.5%, 12.0% and 14.0%, respectively.

Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem, Acting Group Chief International Banking Officer, Group Chief Strategy Officer

Meanwhile, Acting Group Chief International Banking Officer, Group Chief Strategy Officer, Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem shared insights into Kuwait’s economic landscape and KFH’s strategic progress in Q3 2026.

He said: “KFH entered the final quarter of 2026 from a position of strength, remaining the largest listed company on Boursa Kuwait by market capitalization as of 30 September. Q3 demonstrated the strength of KFH’s diversified franchise and our continued execution. Our priorities remain clear: focus on customer centricity, deepen integration, accelerate digital adoption and pursue quality

growth with disciplined risk and liquidity management.”

He added: “We remain confident in our ability to deliver sustainable shareholder value, support our customers and contribute to Kuwait’s long-term development.”

Al-Mukhaizeem stated that KFH continued to advance its digital capabilities through KFHOnline, smart branches, upgraded ATMs and the enhanced eCorp platform for corporate customers. “The opening of Al-Qairawancenter brought our Group Service Centers in Kuwait to three, strengthening service for customers across our regional network,” he added.

300 services

KFH Bahrain also demonstrated strong digital progress, reporting a 40% year-on-year increase in active customers through digital channels and having successfully automated more than 150 banking services, bringing the total number of digital banking services to over 300 services.

Customer experience

These initiatives strengthen Group integration, customer experience and efficiency. The Banker recognized



KUNA photo
Minister of Oil discusses ways to enhance joint cooperation with the Russian Ambassador.

Kuwait and Russia explore new energy opportunities

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29, (KUNA): Minister of Oil and Chairman of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Tareq Al-Roumi discussed on Thursday with Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Vladimir Zheltov ways to strengthen bilateral relations and enhance cooperation in the oil and energy sectors.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Oil said both sides discussed key issues of mutual interest, emphasizing

the importance of ongoing coordination, consultation, and knowledge-sharing to unlock new opportunities that serve the shared interests of both friendly nations.

The meeting is part of broader efforts to maintain open channels of communication and expand economic and energy cooperation between Kuwait and Russia, reflecting the depth of their bilateral relations, the ministry added.

Companies seek digital growth as costs climb

Kuwait exchange firms bolster fraud defenses

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29, (KUNA): Kuwait’s exchange companies are working to strengthen financial transaction security and combat electronic fraud through cooperation with the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and relevant authorities, said Chairman of the Kuwait Union of Exchange Companies Abdullah Al-Mulla.

In an interview with KUNA, Al-Mulla said exchange companies operate under the close and continuous supervision of the CBK, which plays a key role in strengthening regulatory standards, sound governance and compliance practices across the sector.

He said the union supports the industry by bringing member companies together, facilitating communication with relevant authorities and providing a platform to discuss regulatory developments and common challenges.

Al-Mulla praised the proactive efforts of the CBK and national authorities to strengthen regulatory standards, particularly in combating money laundering, terrorist financing and the financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Continued cooperation between regulators and the sector, he said, would help build a stronger, more transparent and competitive exchange industry.

He also commended the CBK’s leadership and initiatives in developing the financial sector and safeguarding the stability and integrity of Kuwait’s financial system.

Al-Mulla identified the rapid development of digital payment technologies, changing customer expectations, rising operating costs and the need to continually strengthen compliance and cybersecurity controls as major challenges facing exchange companies.

He said companies were focusing on adopting digital technologies, investing in professional expertise and improving monitoring systems to address these challenges, meet evolving customer needs and ensure the continued delivery of secure, efficient and reliable financial services.

On cybersecurity threats, Al-Mulla said exchange companies worked closely with the Cyber and Operational Resilience Working Group established at the CBKs initiative. Companies regularly report identified cyber threats and incidents through a dedicated communication channel.

He added that exchange companies were also working to meet the requirements of the CBKs Cyber and Operational Resilience Framework, issued on December 3, 2025, to strengthen their ability to prevent, respond to and recover from emerging cyber threats.

Regarding electronic fraud, Al-Mulla said exchange companies had recently joined the Amaan platform, which provides a centralized mechanism for processing fraud reports and facilitating timely coordination between financial institutions and relevant authorities.

The union, he said, coordinated with the Kuwait Banking Association to facilitate member companies participation in the platform. These joint efforts reflected the commitment of the CBK, national authorities, the banking association and the exchange companies union to combating cyber threats and fi-



Abdullah Al-Mulla, Chairman of the Kuwait Union of Exchange Companies

nancial fraud, protecting customers and reinforcing confidence in Kuwait’s financial system.

Al-Mulla said alternative payment technologies posed a challenge by changing how customers transfer money and access financial services, while also creating opportunities for exchange companies to modernize their offerings and respond to changing expectations.

He noted that most exchange companies had extensive experience in remittance services and a deep understanding of their diverse customer bases. By adopting new technologies, they could expand digital channels, accelerate transactions, improve transparency and offer customers greater convenience and flexibility.

He stressed that exchange companies would continue adopting new technologies under the CBK’s supervision and guidance while maintaining competitiveness, improving customer service and safeguarding the security and integrity of the financial system.

Al-Mulla said narrow profit margins, higher operating costs, wages, rent and other administrative expenses constrained geographical expansion. The impact varied from one company to another depending on its business model, operational efficiency and customer base.

Decisions to open new branches or expand into different areas of Kuwait remained independent commercial decisions for each company, based on local market demand, customer needs, commercial feasibility and applicable regulatory requirements, he said.

He added that the sector was exploring ways to improve operational efficiency through digital services, better use of technology, staff development and effective resource management. Expanding digital services could help companies reach more customers without necessarily opening additional physical branches, enabling them to manage costs while main-

taining service quality, regulatory compliance and fair competition.

National initiatives

KFH continues to support national initiatives of strategic impact, including a USD 13 million contribution to the Kuwait Emergency Response Fund, and an additional USD 6 million planned contribution to support power station infrastructure needs.

Award-Winning Performance

KFH continues to earn international recognition, including No. 1 Best Performing Bank in Kuwait in The Banker’s 2026 Top 100 Arab Banks, Euromoney awards for Wealth Management, ESG and Digital Banking, World’s Best Islamic Bank by Global Finance, and Best Digital Bank in Kuwait by MEED.

Kuwait Economic Outlook

Kuwait’s outlook reflects temporary pressure from regional conditions and oil disruptions. The IMF projects a 2026 GDP contraction, followed by a strong rebound in 2027 with a GDP growth forecast of 17.1% as energy production and transport are expected to normalize.

Kuwait’s USD 122.7 billion pipeline of planned and unawarded projects offers significant longer-term financing potential. In Q3, power and gas represented more than 80% of project awards.

Monetary and Banking Environment

Inflation in Kuwait remained at 2.19% in July 2026. The IMF projects, on average, a moderate inflation of 2.2% in 2026 and 2.4% in 2027. The Central Bank of Kuwait maintained the discount rate at 3.5% in September.

Legislative and Financial Developments

The new Government Sukuk Law establishes a framework that can diversify sovereign funding, broaden the investor base and support a Sharia-compliant yield curve.

The new mortgage financing law broadens bank participation and allows eligible beneficiaries to combine subsidized and unsubsidized financing for terms of up to 25 years. Both frameworks create promising opportunities for KFH as implementation progresses.

Global Economic Backdrop

The global economy remained resilient. In October, the IMF raised its 2026 global GDP growth forecast to 3.1%, while maintaining 2027 at 3.4%, supported by AI-driven investment.

‘Youth to gain startup access’

Kuwait signs contract with Boeing for youth tech hub

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Public Authority for Youth and Sports signed a contract agreement with global aerospace company Boeing on Thursday to establish the Kuwait tech hub for entrepreneurship.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Acting Director General of the Authority Bashar Abdullah said the collaborative project marks a qualitative leap in providing Kuwaiti youth with innovative, practical, and scientific training in entrepreneurship.

He emphasized the Authority’s commitment to delivering the project to the highest standards, empowering local youth across technical, technological, and entrepreneurial fields.

The initiative aims to transfer knowledge, technology, and expertise from Boeing, its partners, and international companies to young Kuwaiti entrepreneurs through specialized skill development programs, he explained.

Additionally, the project will connect local startups and entrepreneurs with international business accelerators - including Boeing’s own accelerators - opening broader opportunities for global expansion, networking, and market access.

The deal was signed by Abdullah on behalf of the Authority, and by Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Boeing Kuwait Musaed Al-Hawli on behalf of the company.

Energy prices forecast to rise 32%

Global commodity prices to rise 23% in ’26: World Bank

WASHINGTON, Oct 29, (KUNA): Global commodity prices are projected to surge 23 percent in 2026 as mounting geopolitical shocks, Middle East conflict, depleted oil inventories, and climate disruptions hit supply chains, according to the World Bank Group’s latest Commodity Markets Outlook report published Wednesday.

The multilateral lender noted that ongoing conflicts across the Middle East have severely drawn down global oil stocks, pushing energy prices to a four-year high, while grain shipment disruptions and El Nino weather patterns threaten agricultural harvests and global food affordability. Energy prices are projected to jump 32 percent in 2026, reversing three consecutive years of declines, before moderating in 2027.

Under the baseline scenario, Brent crude is forecast to average USD 91 per barrel in 2026, up from USD 69 in 2025, before easing to USD 79 per barrel in 2027.

Food commodity prices are expected to rise approximately 10 percent in 2026 and an additional 7 percent in 2027, representing a cumulative 18 percent increase, driven by elevated fuel, fertilizer, and transport costs alongside shipping disruptions.

Overall commodity prices are forecast to rise 23 percent this year before declining by 7 percent in 2027, assuming no major further escalation in active conflict zones.

The report warned of adverse risk scenarios where intensifying Middle East hostilities, persistent structural damage to oil infrastructure, attacks on Black Sea grain shipping routes, and severe El Nino weather combine to trigger an acute food crisis. Under such an adverse scenario, Brent crude could average USD 105 per barrel in 2027, while food commodity prices could surge 12 percent above baseline estimates, surpassing peak levels recorded in 2022.

European leaders begin search for Lagarde’s successor

ECB President Christine Lagarde to resign Feb. 7

FRANKFURT, Oct 29, (AP): European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde will resign nine months before the end of her term, a move that opens the way for European leaders to choose a successor ahead of France’s presidential election next year.

Lagarde, 70, will leave Feb. 7, the ECB said Thursday. Her eight-year term was to end Oct. 31, 2027.

The resignation opens the way for complex political horse trading over her successor and replacements for two other top officials who are leaving next year. The ECB president leads the bank’s governing council, which sets interest rates for the 21 countries that use the euro currency, affecting borrowing costs for everything from house purchases to new factories and serving as the European Union’s chief crisis fighter in times of economic and financial turbulence.

“It has been a great pride and a huge privilege to serve this institution,” Lagarde said in a video message posted on X. “I think that I leave this institution with a sense of good work done and an ECB that is fit for the future.”

The announcement was expected following speculation that Lagarde would leave early to enable EU leaders to choose a successor while pro-EU French President Emmanuel Macron is still in office. That would guard against the possibility that right-wing presidential candidate Marine Le Pen might win the election and influence the choice.

“That she leaves early is no surprise and does not change the outlook for ECB policies,” said Holger Schmieding, chief economist at Berenberg bank.

European Council President Antonio Costa said that the selection process “will be initiated today and will proceed without delay.”

The term of another top ECB official - chief economist Philip Lane - is to end May 31, while another member of the ECB’s executive board, Isabel Schnabel,

is resigning Jan. 3 to move to the International Monetary Fund. European leaders are expected to work out a package deal to apportion the three vacancies among member countries in a complex round of political bargaining.

EU leaders would likely seek to reach agreement on all three posts before a summit meeting on Dec. 17-18, said Holger Schmieding, chief economist at Berenberg bank.

He said that leading candidates for Lagarde’s job appeared to be former Netherlands central bank head Klaas Knot and Spain’s Pablo Hernandez de Cos, the general manager of the Bank for International Settlements. The BIS is an international organization of central banks.

“The European Union is trying to guard itself at least somewhat against the risk that right-wing Marine Le Pen may win the French presidential election in April-May 2027,” Schmieding wrote in an email. “Lagarde’s successor will still be appointed while the staunchly pro-European centralist Emmanuel Macron still resides in the Elysee Palace.”

Lagarde, the former head of the International Monetary Fund, was appointed in 2011 to succeed Mario Draghi. A key decision during her tenure came in 2020, when the bank deployed 1.35 trillion euros (\$1.5 trillion) in emergency stimulus in the form of bond purchases to keep the COVID-19 pandemic from drying up credit for the economy.

The bank’s ability to act swiftly - in contrast to the often drawn-out negotiations among the 27 European Union national governments - has given it a leading role in combating Europe-wide crises such as the pandemic and the peak period of the eurozone’s debt crisis in 2010-2012. Most notably, Draghi’s promise in 2012 to “do whatever it takes to preserve the euro” calmed bond market turmoil that raised fears the eurozone would break up.

The initiative uses art and AI to equip young people with autism for future employment

Warba Bank supports ‘INNOVARTISM’ initiative to empower neurodivergent Kuwaiti youth

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Warba Bank announced its support for the “INNOVARTISM” educational initiative, which aims to empower Kuwaiti talent on the autism spectrum and other neurodivergent individuals. Through its sponsorship of an intensive training program, the bank is helping participants develop creative and digital skills that can support their entry into the workforce and future career opportunities.

The initiative forms part of Warba Bank’s corporate social responsibility and sustainability efforts, supporting national talent, expanding opportunities for individuals requiring specialized support, and contributing to a knowledge-based economy driven by innovation.

Connecting Creativity with Professional Skills

INNOVARTISM aims to bridge the gap between creative abilities and professional skills by combining art, innovation, and artificial intelligence in a practical training program.

The program equips participants with creative and digital skills that can be applied in future professional settings, using modern tools aligned with the needs of an evolving job market.

Intensive Training for 15 Participants

The intensive program runs from



A glimpse of the initiative’s launch, attended by representatives from Warba Bank.

October 25 to 31, providing five hours of training daily for 15 participants on the autism spectrum. The sessions cover design thinking, art fundamentals, and AI-assisted content creation in an applied learning environment.

Upon completing the program, participants will receive joint certificates from the participating organizations. The initiative brings together Warba Bank, MBVISION, led by the initiative’s Founder and CEO Manal Al-Gharaballi, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which supports the provision of specialized trainers, and the Autism Center.

Al-Rasheed: Empowering Youth and Facilitating Workplace Integration

Commenting on the initiative, Maali Abdullah Al-Rasheed, Chief Human Resources and General Services Officer at Warba Bank, stated: “The initiative aims to create direct social and developmental impact by supporting the integration of youth with autism into the private sector workforce, while providing them with specialized vocational and technical training free of charge.”

Al-Rasheed added: “Providing practical opportunities for talented individuals with disabilities allows them to develop their skills, make

use of their creative and technical abilities, and participate more actively in the workplace.”

Al-Rasheed also emphasized that the initiative aligns with Warba Bank’s efforts to empower individuals requiring additional support, strengthen local partnerships, and contribute to a knowledge-based economy by developing innovative national talent.

Advancing an Inclusive Creative Economy

The initiative is scheduled to conclude with an event at UN House in Kuwait, featuring a documentary screening and a ceremony recognizing the program’s graduates. The event will highlight the participants’ achievements and Kuwait’s role in supporting an inclusive creative economy.

Warba Bank said its participation reflects its continued commitment to supporting initiatives that empower national talent, encourage innovation, and strengthen social responsibility and sustainable development through partnerships with specialized organizations.

About Warba Bank:

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

Embassy of India in Kuwait observes Special Campaign 6.0 for Swachhata

The Embassy of India in Kuwait observed Special Campaign 6.0 for Swachhata on 28 October 2026, as part of Government of India’s nationwide campaign for cleanliness, disposal of pending matters and improved office management.

The Campaign aims to promote cleanliness in Government offices, improve workplace efficiency, ensure proper disposal of obsolete records and encourage environmentally responsible practices. This year’s Campaign places special emphasis on the management and disposal of electronic waste (e-waste).

As part of the Campaign, the Embassy undertook activities focused on maintaining cleanliness and hygiene within its premises, promoting proper segregation and disposal of e-

waste in an environmentally responsible manner.

The Embassy also recognized the valuable contribution of Safai Mitras (cleaning and sanitation workers) in maintaining cleanliness and hygiene within the Mission’s premises. The initiative highlighted the importance of their dedicated efforts in ensuring a clean, healthy and well-maintained working environment.

The Embassy remains committed to promoting sustainable practices and efficient office management in line with the Government of India’s ongoing efforts under Special Campaign 6.0.

For further information regarding the campaign, please contact the Embassy of India in Kuwait at admkuwait@mea.gov.in



Embassy of India, Kuwait observing the Swachhata campaign.



Monthly sessions with writers and intellectuals to discuss literary works

NBK launches ‘Reading Club’ with That Al-Salasil Bookstore

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: In a new cultural initiative aimed at spreading knowledge, fostering intellectual dialogue, and promoting a reading culture across diverse segments of society, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) launched a “Reading Club” in collaboration with That Al-Salasil Bookstore. This initiative serves as an interactive platform bringing together writers, readers, and cultural enthusiasts for a series of open discussion sessions featuring distinguished authors and thinkers.

The initiative reflects NBK’s commitment to supporting culture and knowledge in Kuwait and enriching the intellectual landscape by providing a space for dialogue and the exchange of ideas and experiences, further reinforcing the role of reading as a tool for lifelong learning, raising awareness, and fostering creativity.

The “Reading Club” is held at the NBK Headquarters during October, November, and December. Each month, the club will host an author to discuss one of their literary or intellectual works, share their insights and experiences, and shed light on issues and topics relevant to their fields of interest and expertise.

The sessions are open to both NBK employees and the public, a move aimed at broadening community engagement and providing readers with the opportunity to interact directly with authors, discussing their ideas and experiences within an interactive cultural atmosphere.

The sessions are held concurrently with the International Book Fair, which features a diverse range of new releases and classic titles, offering participants the opportunity to explore the latest books and discuss literary and intellectual works with authors and fellow reading enthusiasts.

The club aims to embed reading into daily life and foster construc-



Yaqoub Al-Baqer and ‘Reading Club’ team, in collaboration with That Al-Salasil Bookstore.

Al-Baqer: We aim to enrich interaction between authors and the public, delivering intellectual value that extends beyond the pages of a book.

- The initiative reflects the Bank’s commitment to supporting the cultural landscape and enabling community members to engage in intellectual and creative pursuits.
- NBK consistently champions impactful initiatives that contribute to creating a positive, sustainable influence across all sectors.

tive dialogue on cultural and intellectual issues, while also encouraging community members to engage in diverse literary and human experiences that enrich their knowledge and broaden their horizons.

On this occasion, Yaqoub Al-Baqer, Assistant Vice President - Public Relations and Event Management at the National Bank of Kuwait said: “The book club serves as a cultural hub bringing together writers and readers for enriching dialogues that foster knowledge exchange and broaden learning horizons. It also provides a space for direct discussion regarding the ideas and experiences that form the

essence of literary and intellectual works. Through these sessions, we aim to enrich the reading experience, transforming it into a vibrant dialogue that enhances interaction between authors and the audience while delivering intellectual value that extends beyond the pages of the book”.

Al-Baqer also emphasized that NBK continues to adopt impactful initiatives that foster human development, promote knowledge, and embed a culture of lifelong learning. The launch of the reading club reflects the Bank’s commitment to supporting the cultural landscape and enabling diverse segments of

society to engage with ideas and creativity, aligning with its vision of creating a positive, sustainable impact that extends beyond economics to encompass human and cultural development.

This initiative builds upon NBK’s leading role in supporting culture and knowledge through community programs and initiatives that foster awareness and enhance the community’s intellectual capital. It also reflects the Bank’s commitment to creating a positive, sustainable impact that extends beyond the banking sector to encompass various aspects of human and cultural development in Kuwait.

A month-long live art experience in November brings Kuwait’s cherished memories to life through filography

Waldorf Astoria presents the final chapter of its Contemporary Visual Arts Exhibition with Maisam Qassem

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Waldorf Astoria Kuwait welcomes acclaimed Kuwaiti artist and entrepreneur Maisam Qassem for the concluding chapter of its Contemporary Visual Arts Exhibition. Throughout November, the hotel’s main lobby will become a live canvas for “Threads of Heritage”, an artwork inspired by the historic 1968 Kuwaiti quarter-dinar banknote depicting young girls playing the traditional game of Al Haila.

Known for her intricate filography, Maisam works with precisely arranged nails, woven threads, fine wood, and natural leather to transform familiar scenes into contemporary artworks. Following her 2023 live piece inspired by the Kuwaiti quarter-dinar, her latest creation draws on the precision of traditional crafts, including string art.

Commenting on the collaboration, Saleh Bataineh, General Manager of Waldorf Astoria Kuwait, said: “This collaboration celebrates Kuwait’s heritage through Maisam’s distinctive artistry. We are delighted to give our guests the opportunity to see her work takes shape and connect with the stories that inspired it”.

Throughout November, guests and visitors can watch Maisam at work in the main lobby, observing the delicate layering of threads as her piece takes shape. The experience will begin even before arrival, with an exclusive gesture conceived by the artist, known as Haba, whose details will remain a surprise for guests.



Maisem Art



Thread Art

Extending this artistic journey into the hotel’s culinary offering, Threads Afternoon Tea at Peacock Alley takes inspiration from Maisam’s “Threads of Heritage”. The experience features delicate savory bites and handcrafted sweets alongside freshly baked scones, artisanal jams, and traditional Arabic coffee, culminating in a refreshing tableside sorbet. Together, these elements offer a thoughtful tribute to treasured memories and intricate craftsmanship.

Since beginning her artistic journey in 2018, Maisam has earned widespread recognition for her string and nail art. Her notable achievements include creating exclusive gifts for VIP guests during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, producing bespoke artworks for prominent regional leaders, and completing what is described as the world’s largest string and nail artwork in 2022.

Beyond the centerpiece, the collection will showcase additional artworks inspired by the GCC’s rich cultural heritage, incorporating elements of traditional Sadu weaving and Arabic calligraphy. Through her signature nail-and-thread technique, Maisam brings a contemporary interpretation to the region’s shared traditions and craftsmanship.

The collaboration brings art into the guest experience in unexpected ways, from witnessing Maisam’s creative process to discovering an afternoon tea inspired by her work, offering a distinctive finale to the hotel’s exhibition.

Graham explores killer's mind in new TV series

Apple's 'Nocturne' brings murder, mystery and FBI secrets

NEW YORK, Oct 29, (AP): To play a serial killer in the new Apple TV series "Nocturne," Stephen Graham did what all good actors do: He watched a bunch of serial killers.

The Emmy- and Golden Globe-winning actor binged on true crime documentaries, handpicked by his wife, Hannah, who he says is slightly obsessed with the genre.

"She just kept going, 'Right, this one's really good. Watch this one.' And I was like, 'All right,'" says Graham. "I watched how they kind of manipulated certain people and how they believed their own truth."

Viewers who tune in starting Friday will find a new frightening side of the "Adolescence" star, who this time plays an imprisoned murderer with ferocious intensity, beguiling hospital staff and frustrating law enforcement as he plots horrible things. All that TV binging of killers paid off, so to speak.

"You absorb them," says Graham. "It's like kind of going to an art gallery and being inspired by wonderful art. At some point, you may not even be aware of it, but it'll be something that you may use."

The 10-episode drama "Nocturne" is an adaptation of the Lars Kepler novels "The Sandman" and "Lazarus." It's been created by John Hlavin and Rowan Joffe, who shifted the location from Scandinavia to western Pennsylvania.

The series begins with a kidnapped teen resurfacing in the woods after three years. His abducted sister is still out there, presumably held by the same person who took her brother.

Authorities - including a broken, retired detective played by Liev Schreiber - turn to Jurek Walter, Graham's serial killer who terrorized the community for years. But Walter has a very good alibi: He's being held underground in a restricted unit of a psychiatric hospital. Maybe he has an accomplice?

To find out what's going on, the FBI sends in an undercover officer as an inmate, played by Zazie Beetz. There's a lot going on here: the hunt for a missing child, an ex-detective's obsession with solving a case he once aban-



This image released by Apple TV shows Rory Culkin in a scene from "Nocturne." (AP)

doned and a dangerous game of cat-and-mouse with a serial killer - all shot cinematically.

"Audiences are very sophisticated, and there's so much entertainment, even inside of this particular genre," says Hlavin. "The goal was just to try to find a way to make the story feel different."

Graham's serial killer is one of the tent poles. Viewers early on are taught that he has excellent manipulative skills, including talking another inmate into killing himself - from another cell. To get contraband and ferry out messages, he tries to befriend a hospital aide played by Rory Culkin.

The series leans into the contrast between the inmate confined to an underground cell and the wide open spaces of rural Pennsylvania. "Jurek is almost a wolf, you know what I mean?" says Hlavin. "And a wolf longs to be free, and we put him in effectively a kennel."

The actors really put in the work. Graham and Culkin hung out outside of work to create a real bond, eating dinner, going to museums and catching a football game. They also gathered with the creatives on Sundays to go over scenes before cameras rolled on Monday.

For her part, Beetz learned some Dominican Spanish for one crucial introductory scene. The crew also stepped up: In some scenes they used huge fans to make trees wave, suggesting motion in the woods.

Schreiber was attracted by the scripts and working with director Tim Van Patten, who has won Emmys for his work on "Boardwalk Empire" and "The Pacific" and earned nominations for "Sex and the City," "The Sopranos" and "Game of Thrones." Schreiber says he saw the three leads as each dealing with existential isolation.

"Who defines you? Am I defined by my family? Am I defined by my colleagues? Am I defined by my career? And what happens when those things become untethered or unhinged and we're set off into the world?" he says.

It's a show that doesn't want to patronize its audience and doesn't spoon-feed it, either. "It feels like something you should be leaning into as opposed to folding your laundry while you're watching," says Hlavin.

Beetz says the series tries to carefully drop clues and the creators trust the audience to keep up while also making sure they're given enough context.

"That was something we were always kind of trying to strike the balance of like, 'Are we giving away too much or are we not?'" she says.

Film

Kreutzer probes loyalty & moral complicity

'Gentle Monster' exposes evil behind closed doors

LOS ANGELES, Oct 29, (AP): "Gentle Monster" lets you fall a little bit in love with Lucy, Philip and their young son Johnny, before blowing everything up. This is a film about moral and societal evils and the webs we might spin to give a loved one the benefit of the doubt. Filmmaker Marie Kreutzer is not interested in letting the audience off the hook with a villain that looks like a villain.

Instead, Philip (Laurence Rupp) seems to be a loving father to Johnny (Malo Blanchet) and partner to Lucy (Léa Seydoux), a popular avant garde musician who plays experimental covers of well-known songs. Philip is a filmmaker who has had to work in television to pay the family bills. And we meet them in a moment of transition - Lucy has been practicing at the piano, a slowed down, melancholy version of Charles & Eddie's "Would I Lie To You" when Philip comes home sobbing. He is in the midst of some kind of breakdown.

We next see them relocating to a peaceful home in the German countryside, where they make love on a mattress on the floor, build a trampoline for Johnny and talk about getting rid of their cellphones altogether. It is a quiet, peaceful and bohemian life and there is evident love and joy in this family. And then, one day, several police cars descend on the house with a warrant to confiscate Philip's computer and hard drives. He's aghast but does not seem to protest. This is a man who knows why the police are there. Lucy does not.

But we'll all learn together when she heads to the police station and looks for department K17. In the elevator she pushes the button for the second floor. K17, we discover, deals in sexualized violence against children and child sexual abuse images. She's barely had time to register the words when the elevator door cruelly opens and she wanders into the office in a daze.

Philip has left and she gazes out through a window to see him in the parking lot, with his lawyer, lighting a cigarette. But he quit smoking, she says.

An officer, a young woman,



This image released by Netflix shows Léa Seydoux, left, and Jella Haase in a scene from "Gentle Monster." (AP)



This image released by Netflix shows Léa Seydoux, left, and Laurence Rupp in a scene from "Gentle Monster." (AP)

Elsa Kuhn (Jella Haase), informs Lucy that Philip is active in online forums, and there's an investigation into whether he may have produced content himself. This is about 20 minutes into a nearly two-hour film in which we and Lucy process this information.

Lucy leaves their countryside home with Johnny immediately, going straight to her mother's house (Catherine Deneuve plays mom), but avoids telling her, or anyone else, the specifics of this sudden separation. She is, you suspect, holding out hope that it's all a big misunderstanding, that

there is some explanation and that she'd rather not risk having their friends and family know anything. It's also certainly a bit of denial, and she's eager to grasp at threads that might make it a little less bad in her mind. But really, how much solace is there in believing that Philip might have done it for money instead of pleasure? And then there is the looming question of whether Johnny might also be a victim.

Seydoux is movingly understated in this difficult film and role, with the camera often lingering on her face in harsh close-up.

There are no obvious Oscar reels here, monologues or breakdowns. Instead, she masterfully draws you in and keeps your attention in a slow-burn film where not all that much happens.

We also get a bit of a glimpse into Elsa's home life, where her senile father seems to be developing a habit of harassing his female caretakers. Elsa, for whom the issue is so black and white in her job, offers a nurse on her way out the door more money to stay and look the other way.

Kreutzer, the Austrian writer-director, was inspired to start working on this idea by distressing reports of a pedophile network in Germany. Then she too found herself uncomfortably close to the situation. A principal actor in her excellent Empress Elisabeth film "Corsage,"

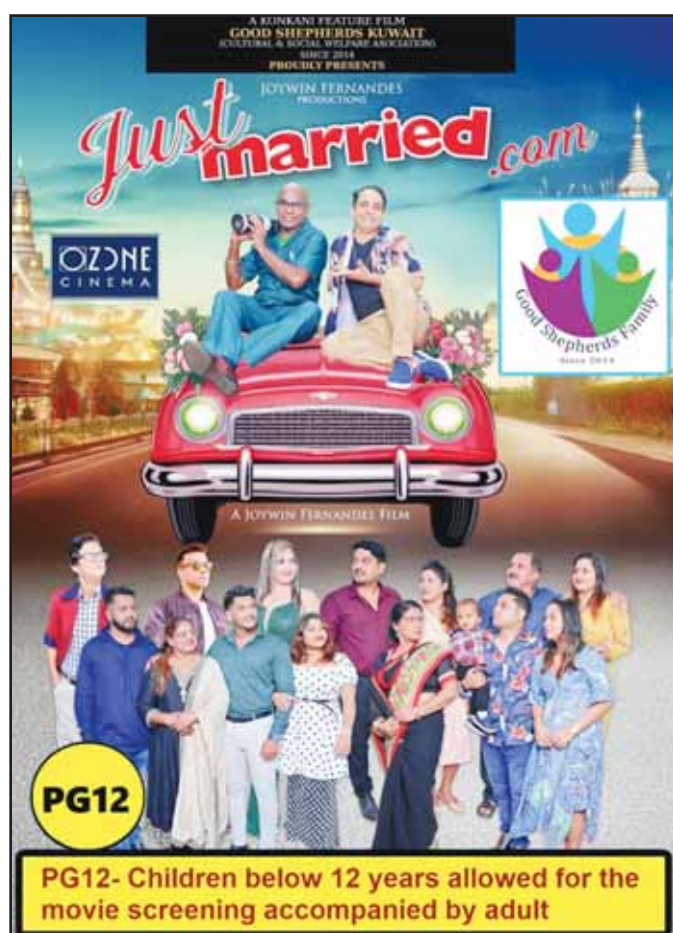
Florian Teichtmeister, was charged with possessing and producing child sex abuse images and would be found guilty.

Some have criticized "Gentle Monster" for not digging deeper, for not offering any resolution, for positing the uncomfortable idea that we're the ones who are enabling the villains and maybe even suggesting that no men are to be trusted.

I don't think Kreutzer is saying that all men are secret pedophiles or sex pests, even if you might walk out of "Gentle Monster" with that gnawing feeling. Lines blur when loved ones are involved, and mothers will always want to protect their sons.

There's always that neighbor who will say things like "he was always nice to me" or "he was the last guy I'd suspect would do this." "Gentle Monster" is a film that wants you to question your own complicity, to remove the blinders that obscure and excuse and to just look a little more closely at our world. Similar to Lucy's songs, it's a deconstructed social horror in a minor, haunting key.

"Gentle Monster," a Netflix release in theaters Friday and streaming Nov. 18, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "graphic nudity, some language and sexuality." Running time: 114 minutes. Three stars out of four.



Poster of the Konkani film Just Married.com.

Just Married.com opens Oct 30

Konkani film set for Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Good Shepherds Cultural and Social Welfare Association Kuwait will present the Konkani romantic comedy-drama Just Married.com, written, produced and directed by Goan filmmaker Joywin Fernandes, at Ozone Cinema - Khaitan, from Oct 30 to Nov 5.

The film follows two friends running a wedding planning agency who discover a serious mistake

involving four marriages they organised, leading to humorous situations, emotional moments and unexpected twists.

The screening is part of the association's efforts to promote Konkani cinema, language and Goan cultural heritage among the community in Kuwait. The association has invited Konkani cinema lovers and families to support the initiative.

Hayden Panettiere death probe closed after ruling

GREENVILLE, South Carolina, Oct 29, (AP): Police in South Carolina have closed their investigation into the overdose death of actor Hayden Panettiere following a coroner's finding that it was accidental.

The decision was based on the medical examiner's determination as well as the findings of the investigation, Greenville police said Wednesday in a statement.

Panettiere, who starred in the TV series "Heroes" and "Nashville," was pronounced dead in an apartment in Greenville on Aug. 16 at age 36 after paramedics found her unresponsive. A coroner's report obtained by The Associated Press last month said her death was from an accidental overdose of several drugs, including fentanyl, and she had been in rehab just weeks before. Her on-and-off boyfriend, Brian Hickerson, and his brother Zach Hickerson were at the home.

It remains unclear whether federal authorities may still be examining the case separately. In a petition to a California court last month, Panettiere's ex-fiance,

former boxer Wladimir Klitschko, said some of her property had been taken by federal law enforcement agents investigating her death and by an unnamed nonrelative looking to sell it.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration did not immediately respond to emailed requests for comment Wednesday, and Greenville police Sgt. Diana Munoz said she could not comment on whether any other agencies were investigating.

The California court granted Klitschko legal status this month to protect Panettiere's property for their 11-year-old daughter, who is her sole heir.

In "This Is Me: A Reckoning," a memoir that was published in May, Panettiere acknowledged being addicted to alcohol and having postpartum depression after her daughter's birth in 2014. The girl went to live with Klitschko full-time when she was 2.

Panettiere's father told investigators that at the time of her death, she had plans to visit her daughter in Ukraine days later.



Hayden Panettiere attends the world premiere of "Scream VI" at AMC Lincoln Square on March 6, 2023, in New York. (AP)

CNN, MSNOW, Politico seek permanent Trump access order

WASHINGTON, Oct 29, (AP): Three news outlets have beefed up their legal complaint against the White House over access, saying it is continuing to defy a judge's orders by refusing to let them return to covering President Donald Trump in the Oval Office and on Air Force One - thus violating their free speech rights by continuing to keep them out of the rotating press "pool."

CNN, MSNOW and Politico said Wednesday that the president is retaliating against them for reports he does not like, which violates U.S. District Judge Timothy Kelly's previous orders for the administration to allow reporters for the outlets to fully return to the pool of journalists covering the president.

Even after those orders, the White House was continuing to block reporters for those outlets from covering Trump in "the very locations that the president most frequently engages with the press," Theodore J. Boutros Jr., the outlets' attorney, said in a statement.

The most recent filing asks the court to make those previous orders permanent.

At issue is whether the president, or anyone, can punish news outlets for the content of their reports. The news organizations say that doing so is "viewpoint discrimination" forbidden by the First



The CNN logo is displayed at the entrance to the CNN Center in Atlanta on Feb. 2, 2022. (AP)

Amendment's free-speech protections.

Trump insists that he doesn't have to let news outlets whose reports he dislikes onto White House grounds, on Air Force One or other areas. The White House had not responded to the amended lawsuit as of Thursday morning.

"Every news organization now faces the risk of similar punishment for coverage the President deems insufficiently favorable," the outlets wrote in their filing, "and the public is deprived of current and complete information about its government."

The filing comes about two weeks after Kelly ruled that CNN, MS NOW and Politico are likely to succeed in the extraordinary case pitting the president against the news outlets that cover him.

In a victory for the journalists, Kelly expanded a previous, temporary ruling that the administration had violated the news outlets' Fifth Amendment right to due process. On Oct. 13, Kelly also sided with a second argument by the outlets: that Trump's ban breached their First Amendment right to free speech.

Kelly rejected Trump's reasoning that the ban was driven by policy goals, such as protecting national security. He argued the ban was the result of Trump's stated belief that the outlets' reporting was inaccurate and biased.

"Simply put," Kelly wrote in the opinion, "That is unlawful viewpoint discrimination" - the government taking action against types of speech or coverage it does not like.

Technology

How to use AI agents and choose the best one for each task

NEW YORK, Oct 29, (AP): Agentic artificial intelligence is gaining popularity far beyond tech circles, with Meta, OpenAI, Anthropic and other companies going head-to-head in the surging market for consumer-friendly AI agents.

While the leading AI labs have offered tools with agentic capabilities for years, agents that are designed to work proactively on a user's behalf for tasks from buying groceries to managing to-do lists have taken off this year.

For anyone getting started, it can be overwhelming to understand the differences between the companies' various offerings and which agents might be best suited for specific tasks.

Here are some pointers on where to begin if you're looking to leverage agents in your personal or professional life - or both.

Many people in the tech world turn to multiple agents from different AI labs for both their work and home lives. Why? Because "there's not one holy grail-like agent right now that could do everything," said Jose Artigas, a business consultant working on AI strategy.

Artigas and many others who use AI agents regularly rely on a "stack" of them, a term that refers to a com-



Open AI CEO Sam Altman speaks at the OpenAI DevDay 2026 conference, Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2026, in San Francisco. (AP)

bination of many tools and technologies.

Each company's consumer-facing agent has a slightly different target function, and they vary in accessibility. Some are free, some require a monthly subscription and others are still in testing modes or otherwise not available to everyone. There are also restrictions on their availability in countries outside of the U.S.

Experts say it's best not to rely solely on one agent if you're looking to maximize their output and productivity.

"What I like to do is to have this system of checks and balances in place where one agent does the work and then I let the other one critique and criticize it, and that way, they find mistakes, correct themselves and become better," said Clara

Gigling, founder of Oudae Labs, a research lab building bespoke tools for agents.

Each of the major AI companies markets their consumer-facing agents in slightly different ways, often focusing on its ability to help manage either a busy work life or a busy personal life.

Anthropic said it built Claude Duet for "professionals and small business owners with more on their plates than they can track." In contrast, Meta said Muse can help with tasks from "saving money and improving your health to smart shopping and helping you strengthen your relationships."

Claude Duet, OpenAI's Dots and xAI's Grok Bot have each been described as aiming to be like a colleague, or even a chief of staff, whereas Muse and Instinct, from the startup Spear Street Technology, have been described as more like personal assistants. But that's not to say any of them are incapable of helping with tasks outside those realms.

Artigas said he'd recommend looking at Claude Duet as key for someone working on a side hustle or launching a new business, Dots as a debugger and problem solver if they're engaging in any special-

ized technical work, and Instinct for help with things like sending tedious emails or booking reservations and travel plans.

Those are the three consumer-facing agents he uses most often, but Artigas said Muse would be a good place to start for a novice because it's "very user-friendly," with many prompts early on to give people ideas of how they can use it.

Your preferences for how you want to interact with an agent, how your agent communicates, and your own assessment of the quality of its work should all factor into which agents you'd like to use - and which tasks you'd like to assign to an agent.

Experts recommend testing out agents you're curious about to help in reaching those determinations.

To begin this testing, Gigling said it can be helpful to think about tasks you consistently do and then choose some to delegate to agents. It is important to be specific - giving the agent a detailed goal and the required context and tools to achieve it, she said.

"Start with one annoying, repeated thing that you keep putting off," Artigas said, with the caveat that it has to be an online task. An agent can't handle the pile of laundry you've

been meaning to fold or the junk drawer that needs organizing. A long email you don't want to write or a flight you've been slow to book are good jumping off points.

"You just have to experience the different agents and see what works best" for you, Artigas said.

For an agent to most effectively handle routine tasks or act like a proactive assistant, it needs to have access to a slew of information about you.

Your inbox, your calendar, your personal identification information and even your credit card number and bank account are all par for the course if you want an agent to sort through your deluge of emails, book your flight or do some holiday shopping.

This has raised significant privacy concerns for some.

"Curiosity is always a great starting point, just trying and playing around with it," Gigling said, but it's also important to "be mindful" when sharing private information.

Many companies offering consumer-facing personal agents have worked to address those concerns, with privacy policies that outline how agents operate on their own dedicated cloud computers and how users can control their memory retention.

Film

Docu maker receives Rubenstein Prize

Burns wins \$250K prize for promoting American history

NEW YORK, Oct 29, (AP): Documentary maker Ken Burns has won a \$250,000 prize for his "significant contributions to promoting knowledge and understanding of American history."

Burns is the inaugural winner of the David M. Rubenstein Prize for the Advancement of American History, presented by The New York Historical museum. A prize jury that includes the Pulitzer Prize winners Annette Gordon-Reed and Jon Meacham cited Burns for work that "reflects our highest aspirations." Burns' many subjects have included the American Revolution, the Civil War and the Vietnam War.

"Always asking the question, 'Who are we as Americans?' Ken's films have brought the his-



Ken Burns poses for a portrait during the 2017 Television Critics Association Summer Press Tour in Beverly Hills, Calif., on July 28, 2017. (AP)

tory of the nation to more people in our time than perhaps any other body of work by one person, shedding light on our virtues and our vices," the jury's statement reads in part.

The award was established earlier this year by Rubenstein, the financier, philanthropist and Baltimore Orioles owner.

In a statement issued Wednesday through New York Historical, the 73-year-old Burns said he was "hugely appreciative and humbled."

"Our films rely on the work of generations of historians and archivists and what amounts to a collective conversation about who we are as a people," he said. "I am very fortunate to be part of this conversation about a country I love."

HARRISBURG, Pa., Oct 29, (AP): New York is enacting farther-reaching restrictions on companion chatbot behavior, as states increasingly move to protect children who use artificial intelligence, regulate how employers deploy AI systems and push developers to prevent an AI-caused catastrophe.

Legislation signed Wednesday by Gov. Kathy Hochul outlines a dozen definitions of "unsafe AI companion features" that will be prohibited when a companion chatbot interacts with a child under 18.

A violation could expose a chatbot developer to a lawsuit by the state attorney general's office. Penalties could include monetary damages, shutting down the chatbot and destroying data. The law takes effect Jan. 1.

Hochul, in the thick of her reelection campaign, signed the bill amid growing warnings about the existential risks posed by the rapid development of AI technology and calls for bold action by a reluctant Washington.

With Congress doing little to regulate AI, state legislatures are packed with efforts to wield state consumer protection laws to make AI use more transparent and rein in chatbots and rogue AI frontier models.

New York and California are at the vanguard of such laws that also are targeting social media platforms.

In September, California Gov. Gavin Newsom signed legislation requiring chatbot developers to assess a model's risk to children, show how they tried to eliminate those risks and submit to an independent audit to determine whether they are complying with the law.

He also signed legislation to prohibit social media platforms from deploying addictive features for users under 16.

Meanwhile, eight states sued AI giant OpenAI earlier this month, saying the company's popular chatbot model violated state consumer protection laws by hurting children and deceiving adults in what one activist called "the most significant coordinated state action ever taken against an artificial intelligence com-



New York Governor Kathy Hochul speaks during a news conference, Friday, Oct. 2, 2026, in New York. (AP)

pany."

However, governors acknowledge that Congress and the federal government have farther-reaching abilities to clamp down on AI-posed threats, even as President Donald Trump has brushed off concerns and warned states not to regulate AI.

Under New York's law, outlawed chatbot behavior with children under 18 includes suggestions that the chatbot is a real person that has emotions, opinions or an actual relationship with the child. It also outlaws chatbot messages that use flattery, involve sexually explicit material or encourage secrecy or unhealthy behavior.

Jim Steyer, founder and CEO of watchdog group Common Sense Media, called New York's law "the strongest kids' AI safety bill in the country."

Justine Gluck, policy analyst at the Future of Privacy Forum, a non-profit focused on data protection and AI governance, said the different regulatory approaches by California and New York could be models other states adopt after legislatures reconvene next year.

New York's law, she said, underscores how quickly chatbot regulation is evolving, as states move beyond basic disclosures and crisis-response protocols to regulating the underlying design and operation of chatbots.

Still, several categories in New York's law are broadly worded or undefined, Gluck said.

That raises questions, she said, about "where ordinary conversational responsiveness ends and prohibited behavior begins," and could complicate how it is enforced.

Pavilion features 50+ Chinese films & TV shows

Chinese TV and film take spotlight in Cape Town

CAPE TOWN, Oct. 29, (Xinhua): The China Pavilion took center stage on Wednesday at MIP Africa 2026, a major film and television industry event in Africa, featuring a diverse range of Chinese audiovisual content, promoting cultural exchange and industry cooperation between China and the continent.

Sponsored by China's State Council Information Office and National Radio and Television Administration and organized by Jiangsu Broadcasting Corporation, the China Pavilion brought together 16 Chinese audiovisual organizations from sectors including broadcasting, film and television production, animation, and cultural media.

Exhibitors at the pavilion showcased more than 50 Chinese audiovisual titles across genres, including TV dramas, documentaries, variety shows and animation, as well as the latest audiovisual technologies.

Wang Xiao, acting consul general of China in Cape Town, told Xinhua that Chinese audiovisual productions had



This photo taken on Oct. 28, 2026 shows the China Pavilion at MIP Africa 2026 in Cape Town, South Africa. (Xinhua)

increasingly reached African audiences in recent years, particularly younger viewers, as cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and Africa continued to flourish.

"Excellent audiovisual works serve as both a window and a bond, fostering mutual understanding and affinity between the peoples of China and Africa," Wang said. "They enable African friends to know more about China, while helping Chinese audiences gain



Wang Xiao, acting consul general of China in Cape Town, speaks at a promotion session of MIP Africa 2026 in Cape Town, South Africa, (Xinhua)

a better understanding of Africa."

Carol Weaving, managing director of RX Africa, the organizer of MIP Africa, said Chinese audiovisual content brought a wealth of storytelling, production expertise and innovation to the African market, spanning drama, animation, documentaries and new digital formats.

"The opportunity lies in identifying stories that connect with African audiences, making them accessible through

appropriate language, localization and distribution, and building a deeper understanding of what viewers across our continent want," Weaving said.

Martin Hiller, portfolio director of FAME Week Africa, told Xinhua that the China Pavilion brought not only content for the African market but also expertise that could benefit local industry players.

Hiller expected Chinese content to become more widely available on African streaming platforms, describing the exchange as an opportunity for both sides to share content and knowledge.

MIP Africa 2026 runs from Oct. 28 to 30 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre in South Africa, and has recorded registrations from more than 100 international media companies and over 1,500 attendees, with participation spanning African countries, including South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana. Its theme is "Africa. Untold. Unstoppable."

AI creates ideas quickly, but human collaboration sparks creativity

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.

By Clin Lai, Brandeis University and Roger Beaty, Penn State

The productivity gains of generative AI are often touted as the main reason for its rapid adoption. Much like how a calculator can instantly solve mathematical equations too long for the human brain to compute, generative AI can help someone quickly summarize long articles and draft emails.

But beyond productivity, a key question remains: How is AI affecting quintessentially human activities, such as collaboration and creativity?

As cognitive scientists who study creativity, we recently conducted an experiment that explored how working with AI - rather than humans - affects originality and other aspects of creativity.

Creativity is often tied to what cognitive scientists call "divergent thinking." One way of measuring divergent thinking is to ask someone to come up with a range of uses for a common item, such as a brick or a book. This is known as the alternate uses task.

Researchers then compare the number of ideas and the originality of these ideas to assess creative capacity.

Large language models appear to have the "number of ideas" part down pat: They can generate many more ideas than humans can. This ability to produce more - and produce that high volume more quickly - partially explains why more than half of new articles online are now generated by AI.

These texts, however, are often verbose, with redundant information. Researchers who tested 12 AI chatbots across different companies on thousands of factual questions found that their answers were often many times longer than human-written answers, with the actual answer making up only about 42% of the text. The rest was largely extra padding: repetitive information, unnecessary background details and explanations that went into too much detail or veered off topic.

Large language models also seem to struggle with the originality of their outputs.

In our research, we compared the results of people working on the alternate uses task with another person to those who collaborated with ChatGPT on the same task. We randomly assigned 208 participants to work with either AI or another person.

We found that compared with two people taking turns together, people working with ChatGPT wrote longer responses on the alternate uses task. But human pairs came up with more creative ideas than the humans working with ChatGPT.

We also found that the ideas people came up with when working with other people tended to be more distinct and diverse than those who worked with large language models. Individual AI suggestions could be quite creative - using a book as a sound dampener, for example - but ChatGPT presented that same idea across many separate sessions, making its overall pool of ideas more homogeneous.

Other studies have highlighted the homogeneity of generative AI's outputs. One group of researchers found that using AI repeatedly over time to generate images often results in bland, generic pictures - what they call "visual elevator music." Other studies have found that although AI may help an individual write a more creative story when compared with their preexisting work, AI-assisted writing as a whole, across all users, tends to be more similar.

All of this makes sense when you think about how large language models work. After being trained on massive sets of texts, large language models predict the next most likely words. Because their training processes were similar, different large language models, whether it's ChatGPT, Claude or Gemini, tend to have similar cadences, diction, syntax and suggestions - particularly when compared with the work of two random human writers.

In other words, generative AI's ideas may seem unique in a vacuum. But if everyone's using AI, the ideas and writing style start to converge.

Finally, we also found that the creativity benefits of working with another person became even stronger as the collaboration progressed.

Ideas can be measured through semantic distance, which is a way of

quantifying how distinct individual concepts are. Over time, interacting with other humans seems to result in larger semantic distance than interacting with a chatbot. In other words, people may traverse more creative terrain when collaborating with other people. Meanwhile, the tendency for ideas to converge in chatbot-assisted brainstorming could accumulate, potentially narrowing the range of ideas people explore over the course of a long period of time.

This is important because many creative projects involve long-term engagement.

For example, to launch a new product, researchers have found that it takes an average of 27 months to go from the initial idea to the finished product. More innovative products can take as long as 54 months.

If you want to work with a chatbot, how can you preserve your creativity in the face of AI's tendency toward homogeneity?

Some research suggests using what's called "persona prompting." Like talking to other people with different perspectives, users could provide an extensive prompt to give chatbots a pretend personality that can simulate different types of people. For example, you might prompt it to respond as if it is "a male college professor from India who is an expert in teaching" or "a 58-year-old female founder of a construction company."

Researchers found that while this persona prompting increased ChatGPT's idea diversity, the overall range of ideas still fell short of that produced by human writers. These findings echo other recent research suggesting that chatbots are poor simulators of human personality.

If you need help with a creative task, we suggest going back to the basics: Chat with a person before chatting with AI. They'll have idiosyncratic personal experiences that can't be captured by a large language model that's trained to generate average responses.

Composing a sentence, however modest, is a creative act, whether it's in a text to a friend or a wedding speech. As AI is integrated into workflows, it's important to remember that other people can still be a valuable resource. Work completed in collaboration with other humans feels more meaningful.

They might not respond as quickly or as comprehensively. But chances are they'll have something more interesting to say. (AP)

Early detection saves lives and improves breast cancer treatment outcomes: CAN

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Cancer Aware Nation (CAN) Campaign Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh affirmed the importance of awareness and early detection in saving lives.

Al-Saleh made the statement during the ‘Your Day is Pink’ event, aimed at raising awareness on breast cancer, at the Youm Al-Bahar Heritage Village with the theme, “Your Awareness Is the Pink Seat Belt.”

Present at the event were Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Affairs at the Ministry of Defense Dr. Anoud Al-Tariman, Honorary President of CAN Dr. Rashid Al-Hamad, and several members its Board of Directors.

The event was in collaboration with the Media Office of the Health Ministry, Youm Al-Bahar Heritage Village and Patients Helping Fund Society.

According to Al-Saleh, the 30 percent increase in early detection over the campaign’s 20-year history has helped save more than 120 women annually in Kuwait. He explained that the objectives of awareness efforts are to prevent the disease and facilitate early detection.

He urged women to familiarize



Dr. Hessa Majid Al-Shaheen

themselves with breast self-examination techniques and risk factors, undergo regular screenings appropriate to their age and health status, and consult a doctor if they notice any unusual changes. He stressed that early detection remarkably increases the chances of successful treatment.

He indicated that health awareness messages promote a balanced lifestyle, including eating plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole grains, reducing the consumption of highly

processed foods and sugars, walking regularly, avoiding smoking, and maintaining good sleeping habits. He said these practices could help reduce the risk of chronic diseases and certain types of cancer, although they do not provide absolute protection.

He added that holding the event at Youm Al-Bahar Heritage Village was intended to bring health awareness messages to public gathering places and connect health education with national identity and heritage.

He stressed that the success of awareness campaigns is measured by their impact on the behavior of individuals and families.

He also expressed his gratitude to the administration of the village and supporting organizations, while commending the support of Head of the breast cancer awareness initiative Dr. Hessa Majid Al-Shaheen, CAN board members and Dr. Rashid Al-Hamad.

Meanwhile, Al-Shaheen advised women not to postpone screenings because of family or work commitments or fear of the results. She stressed that the absence of symptoms does not necessarily mean the absence of a health problem, emphasizing that early detection significantly improves the chances of successful treatment.

She explained that the campaign’s slogan encourages women to take the initiative to undergo screening, asserting that prioritizing one’s health is both a right and a responsibility toward oneself and one’s family.

She also underscored the importance of providing specialized care, as well as family and community support, to those affected by the disease, while respecting their privacy. She called for the empowerment of survivors based on their personal experience.



Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh

‘HHS had taken huge step for patient, provider medical freedom’

RFK Jr eases access to unproven peptides despite opposition from FDA scientists

WASHINGTON, Oct 29, (AP): The Trump administration on Wednesday acted to ease access to unproven peptide drugs favored by Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. Food and Drug Administration scientific staffers had little input on the decision and opposed the changes, according to six people familiar with its development.

The draft policy posted online by Kennedy’s Department of Health and Human Services covers a handful of injectable peptides promoted within the wellness industry for uses such as building muscle, healing injuries and boosting energy. The government will take comments for two weeks before finalizing the measure.

The document, primarily written by officials at HHS, faced overwhelming pushback among FDA drug staffers who warned it could undermine the agency’s long-standing mission of keeping unsafe health products off the US market, according to the people familiar with its development.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity to discuss confidential government deliberations.

The policy directs the FDA not to take action against specialty pharmacies that sell a half-dozen wellness peptides, including BPC-157, TB-500 and KPV. Under normal FDA rules, those chemicals would be considered illegal drugs because they have not gone through the agency’s rigorous review process for safety and effectiveness.

According to the document posted online, Kennedy determined the change “advances patient choice and freedom” while protecting people in the United States from peptides sold online that are often made from ingredients of unknown origin and quality.

Kennedy has called himself a “big fan” of peptides and previously described using BPC-157 to treat a muscle injury.

Lee Rosebush of the American Academy of Peptide Medicine said in an online post that HHS had taken



Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr speaks at a campaign rally with President Donald Trump at Alico Arena on the campus of Florida Gulf Coast University on Oct 23, in Fort Myers, Fla. (AP)

“a huge step for patient and provider medical freedom.” The group, which is not a medical professional society, represents people who prescribe or sell peptides.

The peptide business has caught the attention of major telehealth providers, including Hims & Hers, which recently announced plans to offer wellness peptides once the

government changed its policy. Wall Street analysts estimate the market could be worth more than \$2 billion.

Some peptides occur naturally in the human body, where they trigger hormones needed for growth, metabolism and healing. Drug companies have brought several to market as medications, including mainstream treatments for diabetes and weight loss.

The chemicals subject to the new policy have not been approved as safe and effective by the FDA. Still, they are promoted online by influencers and celebrities for a range of medical uses, including insomnia, anxiety, inflammatory conditions and migraines.

Dr. Peter Lurie, a former FDA official, noted that the FDA has already approved rigorously tested drugs for all of those conditions.

As people “are diverted from those drugs toward this stuff, there will be more unnecessary pain and suffering,” said Lurie, who now leads the nonprofit Center for Science in the Public Interest.

He also questioned the timing of

the change, days before the midterm election.

“This is a wink and nod to the MAHA faithful in the hope that they’ll show up at the polls,” said Lurie, referring to Kennedy’s “Make America Healthy Again” movement.

A spokesperson for HHS said the agency is “confronting the risks of black-market peptides” by giving Americans “a more controlled alternative through licensed US compounds.”

It is the latest example of Kennedy reshaping US health policy in the MAHA mold. Some of the biggest figures in that movement sell peptide injections and supplements.

The decision is a stark break from past FDA efforts to limit the availability of unproven wellness products, including peptides, stem cell therapies and dietary supplements, that make unsupported medical claims. But that approach put the agency at odds with Kennedy, who has publicly endorsed the benefits of all of those products.

266 mln suffer from acute food insecurity, says WFP

NEW YORK, Oct 29, (KUNA): The new Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) Luke Lindberg has cautioned that about 266 million people, across the globe, suffer from acute food insecurity, saying that conflicts drives two thirds of this number.

This came in a news conference Lindberg held early Thursday at the United Nations’ headquarters.

He noted that the programme continues to provide humanitarian assistance despite growing challenges.

Programme’s activities are currently focusing on Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia amid tough humanitarian conditions in these states, he stated, stressing continued efforts aiming to alleviate the suffering of affected people.

Lindberg revealed that his first trip as Executive Director would be to Sudan in a couple of weeks, to thank frontline staff working in “the most challenging places on Earth”.

Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia are the three operations where WFP is currently focusing, he said. “In the short run, it’s no more famines.”

The next visit requires focusing on implementing humanitarian programmes through protecting staff, strengthening donor partnerships and improving operations “a little bit better each and every day”, he explained.

He noted that one of the programme’s key priorities is to increase investment in disaster preparedness measures before disasters strike, alongside expanding school meal programmes, which he described as a significant global opportunity that has attracted considerable interest from donors.

The UN official further expressed his appreciation for frontline workers who continue to carry out their duties under extremely difficult conditions in some of the most challenging areas around the world. (end)

Meanwhile, Switzerland, the European Union, and more than 30 nations issued a joint statement Tuesday warning of the grave risk of widespread famine

across Sudan, urging all warring factions to immediately lift all impediments on humanitarian assistance in accordance with international humanitarian law.

“The risk of famine in the coming months, as warned by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), demands urgent action,” stated the joint release published by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs on social media platform X.

“There is no time to lose to save lives and prevent catastrophe.”

The joint declaration highlighted that an estimated 19.5 million people, representing 41 percent of Sudan’s population, are currently experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity, including five million individuals facing emergency-level conditions.

“Without immediate action to reverse the current trajectory, the number of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition could exceed the projected 825,000,” the statement warned, adding that the number of severely food-insecure regions is expected to double beyond the 14 areas initially identified.

The signatory nations stressed that the ongoing armed conflict serves as the primary driver of Sudan’s severe hunger crisis, having displaced millions, devastated critical civilian infrastructure, and disrupted healthcare systems, agricultural production, supply chains, and local markets.

The statement noted that persistent bureaucratic and field impediments to humanitarian access, compound by climate-driven effects of El Nio, reduced seasonal rainfall, and worsening drought conditions, have severely aggravated the humanitarian catastrophe.

Consequently, the signatory states called upon the conflicting parties to guarantee full, safe, rapid, and unimpeded humanitarian access across all territories, reminding all factions that they bear the primary legal responsibility for alleviating civilian suffering and protecting aid workers.

Smoke from LA fires exposed millions of people to high levels of toxic heavy metals, says study

LOS ANGELES, Oct 29, (AP): At the height of the Los Angeles fires in 2025, millions of residents were exposed in a 24-hour period to toxic lead levels from smoke that were 80 times higher than the typical background level, according to a new study.

Researchers from the California Institute of Technology compared the chemical composition of smoke from the Eaton Fire with that of a wildfire and found that the urban plume had more lead, arsenic and halogens (which include chlorine and bromine) linked to burning vehicles, building materials and electronics.

“The main, key finding is really that wildfire smoke is very different fundamentally from the urban smoke,” said Nga Lee “Sally” Ng, an author of the study published Wednesday in the journal Science Advances. With the new technology they used to measure what was in the smoke, they were able to “actually see the very detailed component of these particles that we are breathing.”

Co-author Haroula Baliach said understanding the different chemical compositions of smoke from an urban versus a wildland fire helps bridge a missing gap in research. Wildfires are growing larger, more intense, faster-moving and more frequent largely because of drier and warmer weather associated with human-caused climate change. As urban growth and climate change push more fires into cities, researchers said monitoring and emergency response will have to adapt.

Ed Avol, professor emeritus in the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California who has researched the health effects of air pollution for decades, said significant exposure to heavy metals is consistent with what he’d expect, “but certainly surprising because we haven’t been able to document this sort of thing.”

“One of the real advantages of this study is that it had the opportunity to make measurements sort of hour-by-hour across the sampling network. And typically we make measurements of airborne particulates and so forth a couple of times a week, at best,” said Avol, who wasn’t involved in the study.

The two wind-whipped infernos in Altadena and the Pacific Palisades

that ignited on Jan. 7, 2025, killed at least 31 people and destroyed more than 16,000 structures, mostly homes, and everything in them - cars, paint, furniture, chemicals under sinks and more. Millions of people were exposed to smoke, which across the entire United States has been linked to tens of thousands of deaths annually. A recent study found that metal mixtures in the leftover smoke, ash and debris from the deadly 2023 Maui wildfires were harmful to the lung health of people living nearby long after the burning ended.

During the fires, researchers measured trace elements of fine particulate matter, or PM2.5, every hour reported by instruments in the Atmospheric Science and Chemistry Measurement NeTwork (ASCENT), a relatively new network of air quality monitors across the U.S. that measures the size and chemical composition of these particulates in real time. Ng said ASCENT is the U.S.’s first measurement network able to measure the chemical composition of airborne particles in real time.

Researchers were able to see what chemicals were in the smoke, track how its composition changed over the fire’s course, and distinguish

emissions coming from burning structures. From there, they estimated how many people across Los Angeles were exposed to the heavy metals, particularly lead, during the fire’s first days.

They compared the typical value of lead before the fires and the chemical makeup of smoke from a 2024 fire in Riverside County that burned mostly vegetation with data from the Eaton Fire plume. Contrasted with the wildfire smoke, the plume from the LA fire contained 50 times more lead, three times more arsenic, and seven times more halogens. At the peak of burning, about 7 million people were exposed for 24 hours to lead levels more than 80 times what’s typical.

Lead is a neurotoxin that can stunt children’s development, lower IQ scores and increase blood pressure in adults. Scientists still don’t know how short-term, high exposure to lead impacts human health. Arsenic exposure is associated with various cancers.

Yaguang Wei, assistant professor in the department of environmental medicine at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai who researches the health impacts of air pollution, wildfire smoke and severe weather,

said their findings reinforced some conclusions of a recent study he co-authored that found, in part, that PM2.5 from wildfire smoke was more toxic than particulates from other sources.

“I think their findings are not surprising,” said Wei, who was not involved in the study. When fires burn properties, they’re also burning “a lot of lead on your wall paint and the plastics and electronics and those are very toxic” when they burn, he said.

Wei said the study has “important policy implications.” He thinks governments should take stronger actions to protect public health during these fires by investing in more wildfire monitoring and public alerts, and having more prescribed fires.

For Avol, the study is a reminder of our “strange and increasingly dangerous new world” where urban and wildland intersect - and increasingly catch fire.

“It reminds us to be cautious and be concerned and, you know, think about what we can do to minimize this. We’re not going to stop using all these materials containing metals and halogens and so forth in our homes,” he said. “How do we protect people from being exposed to that?”



A firefighter battles the Eaton Fire on Jan 8, 2025, in Altadena, Calif. (AP)

Antetokounmpo leads Heat to first season victory

Jokic notches 200th career triple-double as Nuggets down Pelicans

ATLANTA, Oct 29, (AP): **Giannis Antetokounmpo had 24 points and 18 rebounds in his first victory with the Heat, leading Miami over the Atlanta Hawks 129-117.**

Bam Adebayo also had 24 points and grabbed nine rebounds for the Heat, who lost their first four games after acquiring Antetokounmpo from Milwaukee in the offseason.

Andrew Wiggins scored 18 points and Pelle Larsson had 17 points, eight assists and six rebounds for the Heat, who shot 53% from the field and had a whopping 70 points in the paint.

Nuggets 104, Pelicans 91
In New Orleans, Nikola Jokic had 21 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists for his 200th career triple-double in the regular season, and the Denver Nuggets never trailed in a 104-91 victory over the winless New Orleans Pelicans.

Jamal Murray scored 23 points, and Aaron Gordon added 15 points and 11 rebounds for the Nuggets, who swept a two-game, home-and-home series with New Orleans.

Rockets 132, Bucks100
In Milwaukee, Fred VanVleet scored 24 points and Amen Thompson added 23 as the Houston Rockets remained undefeated with a rout of the Milwaukee Bucks.

Center Alperen Sengun, the leading scorer for Houston (5-0) at 24.5 points per game, sat out with low back soreness.

VanVleet, who missed all of last season with a torn ACL, hit 7 of 14 shots, including 4 of 9 from deep.

Knicks 133, Bulls 127
In Chicago, Jalen Brunson had 38 points and seven assists, and the New York Knicks beat the Chicago Bulls for their second straight win.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 19 points and 13 rebounds for New York, which beat the Detroit Pistons 111-97 on Tuesday night after drop-



Dallas Mavericks guard Walter Clayton Jr. drives past Oklahoma City Thunder forward Micah Peavy during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Dallas. (AP)

ping its first three games of the season. OG Anunoby scored 23 points, Jordan Clarkson had 18 and Landry Shamet finished with 14.

Spurs 117, Jazz 111OT
In Salt Lake City, Victor Wembanyama had 36 points and 14 rebounds, and the San Antonio Spurs beat the short-handed Utah Jazz in overtime. Devin Vassell scored 17 of his 21 points after halftime to give the Spurs (3-2) a second option that was missing early on as Utah (1-4) led by as many as 11.

Keyonte George had a season-

high 31 points but seemed gassed at the end of regulation and overtime carrying the Jazz offense. Ace Bailey added 19 points and rookie Daryn Peterson had 18 but didn't play down the stretch or in overtime.

76ers 114, Pacers 109
In Indianapolis, Tyrese Maxey scored 27 points, including two 3-pointers in the final 1 1/2 minutes, to lift the Philadelphia 76ers to a victory over the Indiana Pacers.

Joel Embiid had 21 points and 11 rebounds for the 76ers, who rebounded from a dismal start to the

second half. Jaylen Brown had 20 points and 10 boards, Anfernee Simons scored 20 points off the bench and LeBron James added 13 points and 10 assists.

Maxey's second 3-pointer gave the 76ers a 112-106 lead with 46 seconds left.

Pacers guard Tyrese Haliburton was sidelined with a left hamstring strain. Pacers coach Rick Carlisle said he expected Haliburton will be out at least two weeks.

Mavericks 120, Thunder 96
In Dallas, Cooper Flagg had 26

points and eight assists and P.J. Washington scored 18 points as the Dallas Mavericks beat the injury-depleted Oklahoma City Thunder.

The Mavericks (3-2) led by 12 in the first half and by 27 in the fourth quarter to move over .500 for the first time since Flagg joined the team last fall.

Dallas' Kyrie Irving scored 15 points, 13 in the first half when he hit his first four shots, including three behind the arc.

Lakers 103, Clippers 87
In Inglewood,Quentin Grimes

scored 23 points, Collin Sexton added a season-high 21 points off the bench, and the Los Angeles Lakers - without Luka Doncic - beat the Los Angeles Clippers 103-87 for the second time in a week.

Doncic sat out with back tightness from the second game of the team's first back-to-back of the season.

Cavaliers 121, Wizards 111
In Cleveland, Evan Mobley had 24 points, Peyton Watson added 22 and the Cleveland Cavaliers rallied in the second half for a victory over the Washington Wizards, spoiling AJ Dybantsa's NBA debut.

Dybantsa, the No. 1 pick in the June draft, led the Wizards with 19 points. He started at shooting guard and played 26 minutes. Dybantsa was sidelined the first four games due to a sprained ankle.

Pistons 97, Hornets 89
In Detroit, Cade Cunningham scored 30 points to help the Detroit Pistons hold off the Charlotte Hornets.

Paul Reed added 16 points and Ausar Thompson had seven points, nine rebounds and eight assists for the Pistons (4-1). They were coming off a 111-97 loss at New York on Tuesday night.

Raptors 129, Magic 99
In Toronto, Scottie Barnes scored 28 points, RJ Barrett had 25 and the Toronto Raptors routed Orlando Magic 129-99 to open a two-game set.

The teams will meet again Friday night at Scotiabank Arena in an NBA Cup game.

Toronto star Kawhi Leonard sat out as he recovers from swelling in his left knee. He was not on the Raptors' bench.

In Minneapolis,Stephen Curry scored a season-high 44 points, rookie Yaxel Lendeborg had 26 and Golden State Warriors held for a 119-114 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves, who were without injured guard Anthony Edwards.

The Warriors have won two straight after opening 0-3, while Minnesota has dropped two in a row after starting 3-0.

SA eyes 2036 or 2040 Summer Games

South Africa chooses Durban as preferred city to host Olympics

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 29, (AP): South Africa on Thursday announced the east coast city of Durban as its preferred candidate to host the first Olympics in Africa.

South Africa is bidding to host the 2036 or 2040 Summer Olympics and Paralympics.

The International Olympic Committee will choose the host city for 2036 in mid-2029.

The country's choice to put forward Durban, South Africa's third biggest city, was announced by South African Olympic committee acting president Lwandile Simelane.

She said Durban would be the main candidate city for South Africa's bid, but it would likely be a "multi-city bid" that would propose some events are held in other cities.

South Africa's economic hub



Simelane

of Johannesburg and Cape Town were also considered as the candidate city.

Durban was touted as a possible Olympic host city more than a decade ago following South Africa's staging of the 2010 soccer World Cup, the first in Africa. But an official bid didn't materialize then, largely due to concerns over costs.

Officials said on Thursday they were not yet able to provide any estimates regarding how much it might cost South Africa to stage the Olympics if its bid was successful.

South Africa is among seven countries bidding for the 2036 Games. The others are India, Qatar, South Korea, Germany, Hungary and Turkey.

The IOC gave Oct. 31 as the deadline for national Olympic committees to formally declare their interest in bidding for the 2036 Games.

American weightlifter eyes bigger prize

Morris proud of bronze in Chinese debut

NINGBO, Oct. 29, (Xinhua): American weightlifter Hampton Morris said he was proud of his bronze medal at the IWF World Championships despite narrowly missing out on gold after failing his final clean-and-jerk attempt.

Morris, 22, lifted 143 kilograms in the snatch and 185kg in the clean and jerk for a total of 328kg, finishing third in the men's 65kg category behind DPR Korea's Pak Myong-jin, who set two world records with a 187kg clean and jerk and a 331kg total, and Türkiye's Muhammed Furkan Ozbek, who took silver with 330kg.

"I'm very, very proud of what I was able to accomplish today. I had some very, very tough competitors," Morris told Xinhua. There were nevertheless positives for the American, whose 143kg snatch was a personal best, improving on the 142kg he lifted at a domestic competition six weeks earlier.

However, Morris welcomed the challenge posed by his Asian rivals, who had swept the podium at last month's Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan.

"Not nervous, but more excited. It's a really incredible opportunity to be able to compete here," he said. "I'm grateful that they're able to push me as much as they have." The American's respect for his competitors was evident throughout the competition. During his interview with Xinhua, Morris briefly excused himself to greet Chinese lifters Ding Hongjie and He Yueji, shaking hands with both before returning to answer questions.

Competing in China for the first time, Morris has also embraced his experience away from the platform. He shared his amusement at encountering a food-delivery



American weightlifter Hampton Morris.

robot at his hotel in Ningbo in a post on Instagram. "It's amazing. I've really, really enjoyed being here," he said.

Morris is already a familiar figure among Chinese weightlifting fans, having attracted attention for his cheerful demeanor at the 2024 Paris Olympics, where he won bronze in the men's 61kg category.

His clean-and-jerk lift of 172kg set an Olympic record and helped him become the first American man to win an Olympic weightlifting medal since 1984.

The lifter from Marietta, Georgia, had previously won clean-and-jerk gold at the 2023 world championships in Riyadh, becoming the first American man to claim a world weightlifting title since 1984.

Crew moves into final Eastern Conference playoff spot

White scores 100th goal as Whitecaps beat San Diego to strengthen hold on 1st place

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, Oct 29, (AP): Brian White scored his 100th MLS goal, Ryan Gauld had a goal and an assist, and the Vancouver Whitecaps beat San Diego 4-1 on Wednesday night.

Vancouver (17-8-7) extended its lead in the Western Conference to four points over second-place Dallas, which lost to Columbus earlier.

San Diego (8-13-11), which was eliminated from playoff contention, had its winless streak stretched to 10 games (0-5-5).

Aleksa Cvetković, in just his fourth start since joining the Whitecaps in August, scored his first MLS goal in the 24th minute on a redirection of Mathias Laborada's pass across the goal. White headed in a curling pass by Oliver Larraz in the 41st for his 18th MLS goal this season.

The 30-year-old White has 98 goals across all competitions since joining the Whitecaps in 2021. White became the 17th player in MLS history to score 100 goals.

Santiago Rodríguez set up a goal by Gonzalo Tapia in the first half before scoring in the second and the Columbus Crew kept their postseason hopes alive by beating FC Dallas 2-0 for their fourth straight victory.

Patrick Schulte finished with seven saves for Columbus (12-15-

5) to earn his seventh clean sheet in 32 starts this season and help the club move into the ninth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference with two matches remaining.

Kristoffer Velde scored a goal in each half and added an assist to lead Portland to a 3-2 victory over St. Louis City, keeping the Timbers' postseason hopes alive.

Portland (11-14-7) pulled within two points of the final playoff spot in the Western Conference with two matches remaining.

Riquelme Fillipi tallied his first Major League Soccer goal in the 90th minute to cap a late-game barrage of scores, and Lionel Messi and Inter Miami escaped with a 2-2 tie against FC Cincinnati.

Luis Suárez scored in the 61st minute to give Inter Miami a 1-0 lead, and then the reigning MLS Cup champions needed some late-game heroics to salvage a point. They still fell to third in the Eastern Conference, after New England beat Red Bull New York 3-2.

That gave New England 58 points, two ahead of Miami with two matches left - including one between those clubs in Foxborough, Massachusetts, on Sunday.

Evander had a brilliant chance to win it for Cincinnati with a shot

from around the penalty spot on what became the last real chance of the match in stoppage time - but Inter Miami defender Ian Fray got his body in front of the ball to deflect it away.

Cincinnati's ensuing corner kick was harmless and time expired.

Saba Lobjanidze and Morgan Guilavogui scored six minutes apart as Real Salt Lake beat Austin 2-1.

Salt Lake (12-14-6), which en-

tered two points shy of the ninth place LA Galaxy, extended its unbeaten streak to four games.

Austin (8-14-10) was eliminated from playoff contention.

Antoine Griezmann had a goal and an assist and Iván Angulo also scored a goal for Orlando City in a 2-2 tie with the Chicago Fire.

Griezmann became just the fourth player in MLS history to record a goal or assist in at least 12 consecutive matches in a single



Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi, right, is pursued by FC Cincinnati forward Kenji Bmoma Dem during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Miami. (AP)

regular season. The 35-year-old French forward has 14 goals and eight assists in 16 regular-season games since joining Orlando City after the World Cup break.

Josh Sargent scored a go-ahead goal in the 86th minute to help Toronto FC beat D.C. United 2-1 on Wednesday night.

Sargent calmly slotted home a rebound for his ninth goal of the season after Theo Corbeanu's shot bounced off the post. It was the ninth time this season Toronto has scored a tying or go-ahead goal in the final 10 minutes of a game.

Toronto (9-11-12), which finished its home schedule with a 6-2-9 record, needed the win after entering three points outside of a wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference.

Dor Turgeman had two goals, Dániel Gazdag scored the go-ahead goal in the 83rd minute, and the New England Revolution beat the New York Red Bulls 3-2 for their fourth consecutive win.

Carles Gil had an assist and became the eighth player in MLS history with at least 100 career assists in the regular season - the first to reach the milestone since Brad Davis in 2013.

New England (18-10-4) is second in the Eastern Conference with

58 points, two ahead of Miami.

Liel Abada scored a career-high three goals in a 15-minute span and Charlotte FC beat CF Montreal 4-0 to clinch a berth in the 2026 MLS Cup playoffs.

Idan Toklomati had a goal and an assist for Charlotte (14-10-8), which snapped a three-game winless streak. Pep Biel added three assists.

Abada had his first career hat trick and the third in club history, joining Toklomati and Daniel Rios.

Montreal (6-19-7) is winless, with four losses, in its last five. Montreal has the fewest points (25) and worst goal differential (minus-30) in the Eastern Conference.

Houston defender Lucas Halter scored in the first half and Jonathan Bond made it stand up as the Dynamo beat the Seattle Sounders for the first time on the road 1-0 .

Jack Jasinski and Reid Roberts each scored a goal for the San Jose Earthquakes in a 2-2 tie with the Colorado Rapids.

The Earthquakes (13-9-10), who are winless in five straight, have 49 points. San Jose is fifth in the Western Conference standings, behind Houston and St. Louis (tied for third with 51 apiece). The Rapids (12-13-7) are seventh with 43 points.

Longstanding strategic partnership continues to empower local athletes at major regional and international sporting events

Zain’s support for Kuwaiti sports recognized by Olympic Committee



Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah, Faisal Al-Duwaihees, and partners with the honored athletes.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Zain has been honored by the Kuwait Olympic Committee in recognition of its role as the official partner of Team Kuwait at the 20th Asian Games, Aichi-Nagoya 2026, held recently in Japan.

The recognition celebrates Zain’s continued support for Kuwaiti athletes on one of Asia’s biggest sporting stages and was presented during a special ceremony celebrating the national delegation’s remarkable achievements, which saw Kuwaiti athletes secure nine medals and bring pride to the nation.

The ceremony was held at the Kuwait Olympic Committee’s headquarters and attended by Committee Vice President Sheikh Mubarak Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Zain Kuwait’s Community Partnerships and Youth Empowerment Team Leader Faisal Al-Duwaihees, who accepted the recognition on behalf of Zain, along with officials, sports personalities, and the honored athletes.

The recognition reflects Zain’s longstanding strategic partnership with the Kuwait Olympic Committee and its commitment to standing behind Kuwait’s athletes as they pursue their ambitions on regional and international stages. It also highlights the role of private sector organizations in supporting national sports and helping nurture future generations of champions.

Zain expressed its pride in the outstanding achievements of Kuwait’s athletes throughout the Games, which saw 120 men and women represent the nation across 16 sports. The Kuwaiti delegation brought home nine medals, including four gold, one silver, and four bronze, adding another proud chapter to Kuwait’s sporting achievements on the Asian stage.

Zain commended the determination, perseverance, and competitive spirit demonstrated by Kuwait’s athletes throughout the Games, emphasizing that their achievements reflect the wealth of sporting talent and potential in the country.

The company also expressed its appreciation to the Kuwait Olympic Committee, national sports federations, and technical and administrative teams for their dedication to preparing and supporting the athletes throughout their journey.

In September, Zain announced the continuation of its longstanding strategic partnership with the Kuwait Olympic Committee, becoming the official partner of Kuwait’s delegation to three major international sporting events. The partnership kicked off with Zain joining athletes and delegation officials at Kuwait International Airport ahead of their departure to Japan, sharing in the excitement and pride as they set off to represent their country and carry the



Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah presents Zain’s recognition to Al-Duwaihees.

aspirations of an entire nation onto the Asian stage.

The partnership extends beyond the Asian Games in Japan to support Kuwait’s participation in the fourth

Summer Youth Olympic Games, Dakar 2026, in Senegal, and the sixth Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games, Riyadh 2026, in Saudi Arabia, alongside several other interna-

tional sporting events. This builds on a history of collaboration between Zain and the Kuwait Olympic Committee, including the company’s support for Kuwait’s delegation to the

■ During ceremony celebrating Team Kuwait’s achievements at Aichi-Nagoya 2026

19th Asian Games, Hangzhou 2023, in China.

Zain continues to strengthen its role as an active partner in Kuwait’s sporting landscape through longstanding partnerships and initiatives that place young people and national talent at the heart of its community priorities.

The company remains committed to creating more opportunities for athletes to develop their abilities and achieve their ambitions, believing that sports go beyond competing for titles to inspire future generations and instill the values of ambition, perseverance, teamwork, and national pride.

This commitment reflects Zain’s purpose, “Better Lives. Lasting Connections.”, by building meaningful and lasting connections with communities and institutions, empowering national talent, and helping showcase Kuwaiti sporting excellence on regional and international stages. Through these efforts, Zain remains dedicated to standing alongside Kuwait’s champions as they pursue greater achievements and new milestones.

Important step in brand’s growth

AAW expands ASICS SportStyle in Kuwait with 2nd store at 360 Mall

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. (AAW) celebrated the opening of the second ASICS SportStyle store in Kuwait at 360 Mall, further strengthening the brand’s presence in the local market. The opening was attended by His Excellency Mr. Kenichiro Mukai, Ambassador of Japan to the State of Kuwait, alongside AAW and ASICS management, including AAW Deputy CEO Mr. Khalid Faisal Al Mutawa and ASICS Arabia FZE General Manager Mr. Seiji Hori.

To mark the opening, a mural was unveiled at the new store, blending Kuwaiti and Japanese influences to reflect the distinctive ASICS SportStyle experience. Guests also experienced a series of creative activations throughout the evening.

AAW Deputy CEO Mr. Khalid Al Mutawa said: “We are very pleased to partner with ASICS to open the second SportStyle store in Kuwait at 360 Mall. This opening reflects our commitment to meeting the needs of Kuwaiti consumers, who are increasingly embracing active lifestyles and seeking high-quality products that combine performance, comfort and designs suited to everyday use.”

ASICS Arabia General Manager Mr.



Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait Kenichiro Mukai (center), alongside Khalid Al Mutawa and Seiji Hori, cut the ribbon to inaugurate the ASICS SportStyle branch at 360 Mall.



A view of the interior of the ASICS SportStyle branch at 360 Mall.

Seiji Hori said: “The opening of the second ASICS SportStyle store in Kuwait marks an important step in our brand’s growth and expansion in the region. It reflects our commitment to promoting active lifestyles within local communities, a commitment we proudly share with Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co., our partner in Kuwait.”

Designed for consumers seeking both style and comfort, ASICS SportStyle reinterprets the brand’s performance roots through a modern, fashion-forward lens. The new 360 Mall location offers customers a curated selection of footwear that blends the brand’s athletic heritage and technical innovation with contemporary, everyday style.

As part of its ongoing partnership with AAW, ASICS continues to expand its presence across Kuwait, with four ASICS stores located at The Avenues, 360 Mall, Al Khiran Mall and Assima Mall, alongside dedicated ASICS SportStyle locations at The Avenues and 360 Mall.

Established in 1918, Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Company is one of the largest retail and distribution companies in Kuwait. It operates across multiple sectors and represents more than 100 global brands in the wholesale and retail markets.

Fluminense rallies late to sink Internacional

RIO DE JANEIRO, Oct. 29, (Xinhua): Luciano Acosta struck in stoppage time as Fluminense recovered from a goal down to clinch a 2-1 home win over Internacional in Brazil’s Serie A.

Alan Patrick opened the scoring just after halftime by finishing clinically into the bottom corner after Matheus Bahia’s pass on the counterattack.

The hosts equalized through Hercules, whose powerful 22-yard volley left goalkeeper Kauan Jesus with no chance.

Luciano completed the comeback in the 97th minute when he fired in from close range after Wesley Nata’s shot was blocked by Jesus.

Fluminense is now fifth in the 20-team standings with 54 points, behind Cruzeiro and Athletico Paranaense on goal difference. Internacional remains in a fight to avoid relegation with 35 points from 33 games.

Elsewhere in Brazil’s top flight on Wednesday, Bahia won 3-2 at home to Sao Paulo, Remo edged to a 2-1 home win over Botafogo, Santos was held to a goalless home draw by Palmeiras and Bragantino cruised to a 3-0 home win over Chapecoense.

Bangladesh spinners strike back after stunning batting collapse

DHAKA, Bangladesh, Oct 29, (AP): Bangladesh’s spinners compensated for a batting collapse caused by West Indies tweekers Jomel Warrican and Joshua Bishop on day two Thursday of the first cricket test.

Resuming the day at 231-3, Bangladesh was dismissed for 272 after losing seven wickets for 59 runs in the morning session.

Left-arm Warrican claimed 5-53 and fellow spinner Joshua

Bishop took 2-61 on debut.

The West Indies made a promising start before Bangladesh’s spinners Taijul Islam and Mehidy Hasan took four wickets in quick succession to reduce West Indies to 134-4 in 48 overs before a premature stumps from bad light and rain.

Tagenarine Chanderpaul was unbeaten on 43 with Justin Greaves for company at the day’s end.

Opener John Campbell struck 54

and gave the side a fluent start.

Pacer Hasan Mahmud dismissed opener Brandon King for 15 but Campbell and Chanderpaul kept the runs flowing with different methods.

While Campbell attacked the bowlers, Chanderpaul showed strong determination to deny the spinners who got plenty of turn and bounce.

Campbell raised his sixth test fifty off 61 balls by smashing Me-

hidy Hasan for a six through long on.

With West Indies at 89-1 and in control, bad light and rain delayed the game for an hour.

After the resumption, Mehidy struck immediately with the wicket of Campbell, who poked toward second slip.

Taijul removed Kavem Hodge (7) and Aamir Jangoo (0) in the same over, leaving West Indies at 97-4.

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NEWS



Genoa's Vitorino, left, and Juventus' Pierre Kalulu battle for the ball during the Serie A soccer match between Genoa and Juventus in Genoa, Italy. (AP)

Sports

Salmiya takes on Sulaibikhat

Al-Qadsia & Al-Arabi build confidence ahead of derby

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Qadsia and Al-Arabi head into Sunday's eagerly anticipated derby in positive spirits, with both sides looking to build on their latest victories in the Zain Premier League.

Qadsia cruised to a 4-0 away win over Al-Shabab on Thursday, with former Al-Arabi striker Hamza Khabba scoring a hat-trick. Meanwhile, Al-Arabi defeated Fahaheel 2-0 at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium to secure its first league victory of the season.

The results boosted both teams ahead of their seventh-round clash. Qadsia extended its winning streak to move into third place with 12 points, behind leader Kuwait Club on 16 and second-placed Kazma on 14, although Qadsia has a game in hand.

The four-goal victory was Qadsia's biggest league win of the campaign and reflected their improving form. The team had also secured qualification for the AFC Challenge League



Hamza Khabba

Best of the Rest

Rybakina secures year-end No. 1 ranking: Top-ranked Elena Rybakina secured the year-end No. 1 ranking with a last-16 win at the Pan Pacific Open on Thursday, while Naomi Osaka lost in front of her home crowd.

Rybakina beat Yulia Putintseva 6-2, 6-3 to advance to the quarterfinals and will stay the world No. 1 at the conclusion of a year in which she won two Grand Slams - the Australian Open and the U.S. Open.

Having won Wimbledon in 2022, Rybakina - a 27-year-old born in Russia but representing Kazakhstan - is only a French Open title away from completing the career Grand Slam.

She described her year-end status as "an incredibly special moment for me." (AP)

Sports Minister discusses volleyball development with federation officials

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Youth and Sports Minister Dr Tareq Al-Jalahma met a delegation from the Kuwait Volleyball Association to discuss the latest developments in the sport and plan to improve its standards.

The delegation included association Chairman Dr Jaber Al-Merri, Secretary-General Talal Al-Nimsh and beach volleyball coach Ahmad Abdulrazzaq.

The meeting reviewed the association's programs to promote Kuwaiti volleyball and develop its competitions, with particular emphasis on beach volleyball and the resources needed to advance the discipline and achieve better results regionally and internationally.

The delegation thanked Al-Jalahma for his warm welcome and constructive discussions, praising his interest in the sport and support for the association's development plans, in line with the government's continued backing of Kuwaiti sports.



Al-Jalahma receives Volleyball Association delegation.

Dortmund coach urges team effort to stop Kane

DORTMUND, Germany, Oct 29, (AP): Borussia Dortmund coach Niko Kovac has called on his players to work together to stop "sensational" Ballon d'Or winner Harry Kane in the Bundesliga Klassiker against Bayern Munich.

Dortmund goes to Bayern on Saturday level on points at the top of the Bundesliga but winless in its last five games against the Munich team since 2024.

Speaking on Thursday, Kovac said being on level terms makes it "much more exciting" but Dortmund will need "90 minutes at the highest level" to get anything out of the game against the German champion.

It's set to be the first game as Ballon d'Or winner for Kane, who stayed on the bench as Bayern cruised past second-division Magdeburg 6-1 in the German Cup on Wednesday.

"He didn't buy this somehow, he definitely wasn't giving it for free, he worked hard for it," Kovac said of the 33-year-old Kane becoming the first Bayern Ballon d'Or winner in 45 years.

"Since he came to Germany (in 2023), he's made another big step up. He was a top player in England already but to make another step up at his age that's sensational and shows the danger and the quality of a player like that. We won't get this done one on one, we'll need to do it together."

"It needs 11 players and only when you have 11 players at a top level can you get something in Munich."

Kane was given a guard of honor by his Bayern teammates ahead of the Magdeburg cup game and the club has signaled there will be another gesture of recognition on

Saturday before playing Dortmund.

Bayern remained without coach Vincent Kompany, who spent several days in hospital after collapsing on Friday at the club's training ground. Assistant Aaron Danks has been in charge in the Belgian's absence.

Bayern board member for sport Max Eberl told German broadcaster ARD on Wednesday that Kompany was treated for meningeal irritation, which is an inflammation of the tissue around the brain or spinal cord, and had been discharged from hospital. Before his collapse, he had also been struggling with a viral infection and a hip injury.



Munich's Harry Kane, the men's Ballon d'Or winner, waves to the fans before the German Cup soccer game between Bayern Munich and 1. FC Magdeburg in Munich, Germany. (AP)

Kuwait advances to semifinals of Asia-Africa Padel WCup qualifiers



Kuwait men's padel team.

Women's team delivers strong performance

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 29: Kuwait's men's national padel team have advanced to the semifinals of the Asia-Africa World Cup qualifiers, being held in Kuwait from October 26 to 30, with 14 men's teams and 13 women's teams participating.

The host secured its place in the last four after defeating Saudi Arabia and will face Egypt for a place in the final.

Kuwait, whose squad comprises eight players, made an impressive start to the competition, beating Hong Kong 3-0 before recording an identical victory over Pakistan without dropping a set.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's women's team, also featuring eight players, delivered a strong performance, reflecting the continued growth of women's padel in the country.

The progress of both national teams highlights the Kuwait Padel Federation's efforts to prepare players for competition at continental and international levels.

City hosts Brighton

Bournemouth emerges as surprise success story

LONDON, Oct 29, (AP): Held aloft by Bournemouth supporters at one end of the club's cozy, 12,000-seat stadium was a giant tifo that posed a simple question: "How did we end up here?"

Their team was about to play AC Milan, one of the most famous names in world soccer, in the Europa League and cruise to a 3-0 win. Three days later, it would steamroll Manchester United - another global superpower - by the same score in the Premier League.

Indeed, these are pinch-me times for fans of a team from England's south coast which was playing in the second-tier Championship just five years ago and, 18 years ago, went into bankruptcy protection, leading to demotion to the bottom tier of the English Football League.

That year - the 2007-08 season - Milan started out as the Champions League titleholder and Man United finished it by winning Europe's biggest club trophy.

Bournemouth? It was on its knees, barely able to survive.

How different things are now. The Cherries are owned by U.S. billionaire Bill Foley, have a raft of top international talent in its squad including U.S. captain

Tyler Adams, and have just finished in their highest ever end-of-season position - sixth place in the Premier League - to qualify for European competition for the first time.

In almost every transfer window Bournemouth's best players are typically poached by the heavyweights of the European game, like Dean Huijsen going to Real Madrid, Illia Zabarnyi moving to Paris Saint-Germain and star winger Antoine Semenyo signing for Manchester City. Even its previous manager, Andoni Iraola, left to join Liverpool during the last offseason.

Yet so well-run is the club and so astute is its recruitment team - much like another upwardly mobile south-coast club, Brighton - that it isn't turning out to be a problem.

OK, this season started slowly in the Premier League, with Bournemouth not winning any of its first six matches under newly appointed coach Marco Rose - chiefly because good performances were under-



Chelsea's Morgan Rogers, left, and Liverpool's Joe Gomez fight for the ball during the fourth-round English Football League Cup soccer match between Liverpool and Chelsea in Liverpool, England. (AP)

mined by letting in sloppy late goals.

But the team has just had five straight wins, culminating in a magical past week containing the Milan-United double that would have had dyed-in-the-wool Bournemouth fans rubbing their eyes in disbelief and then Wednesday's 3-0 win over Aston Villa - one of England's Champions League entrants this season.

"It feels at the moment that we are in a flow but it is hard work - that's what we have to know and we have to continue the hard work to stay in it," Rose said.

Sitting in 13th place in the 20-team Premier League but clearly with sky-high confidence, Bournemouth next faces Leeds at home on Saturday and has a benign run of games coming up, after its tough schedule to start the season.

France Under-21 star Eli Junior Kroupi, the team's biggest young talent and possibly its next big money sale, is fit again after a three-month layoff with a foot injury. Rayan, an imposing 20-year-old winger and another potential superstar-in-the-making, joined from Vasco da Gama only in January but is already in the Brazil squad and is a fearsome opponent to handle. Portugal defender Antonio Silva, signed from Benfica in the summer, is settling in nicely. Brazilian striker Evanilson has hit form with goals in four of his last five games.

No wonder Rose has high expecta-

tations.

"I want to win every game and we want to be competitive in every competition," said the coach who has managed two of Germany's biggest clubs - Borussia Dortmund and Leipzig.

Win the Europa League - just like English clubs Tottenham and Aston Villa have done the past two seasons - and Bournemouth will be in the Champions League next year, marking the next extraordinary chapter in its rise from the depths of English soccer.

Manchester City, which is continuing to play under a cloud after being found guilty of large-scale financial rule-breaking, and Arsenal are tied on points at the top of the standings and both have tough games in the ninth round.

City hosts Brighton on Saturday - a repeat of their English League Cup meeting on Wednesday, won by City on penalties - and Arsenal visits Liverpool in Sunday's only match.

Under-fire Michael Carrick appears to be in charge of Manchester United only on a match-by-match basis after back-to-back heavy losses to Como in the Champions League and Bournemouth in the league. Next up for United is Chelsea away on Saturday.

Erling Haaland was rested by Man City for the cup in midweek, so will be fresh as he continues to chase history. Haaland has scored in each of his last seven league games, meaning he is closing in on Jamie Vardy's record of scoring in 11 consecutive matches for Leicester in the 2015-16 season.

Chelsea striker Joao Pedro is out for several weeks with a thigh injury and that's a problem for manager Xabi Alonso. The Brazil international has missed two games this season and Chelsea lost both and didn't score in either of them.

Man United might be missing its leading specialist striker for longer. There has been no confirmation from the club but reports in the English media, including the BBC, say Benjamin Sesko is expected to be out until at least January with a shin injury. He hasn't played since mid-September.