



paralympics
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Amiri Diwan photo
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah exchanges pleasantries with the Saudi Minister of State and Cabinet Member Prince Turki bin Mohammad bin Fahad Al-Saud.

Amir receives Saudi minister

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Wednesday Saudi Minister of State

and Cabinet Member Prince Turki bin Mohammad bin Fahad Al-Saud.

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Amiri Diwan photo
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, in the presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, received at Bayan Palace on Wednesday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, who

Amir receives PM, Information Minister

introduced to His Highness the newly appointed Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Badah Al-Mutairi, who took the constitutional oath before His Highness the Amir. The ceremony was attended by senior state officials. (KUNA)

Kuwait charitable role making massive stride

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait, within the framework of celebrating the International Day of Charity (September 5), is boosting further its leading role in providing relief for the needy on the global stage.

Practically, the Kuwaiti authorities are offering various forms of support for philanthropic associations and workers in the sector, coordinating charitable tasks at the internal and external levels and handling hurdles facing the personnel.

These authorities, namely the ministries of social affairs, information, defense, foreign affairs and others, are involved in the tasks of relieving peoples in need, without discrimination, everywhere, thus earning Kuwait its global and much acclaimed reputation for aiding peoples in need or victims of crises and catastrophes.

Advocating objectives of the International Day of Charity, namely encouraging NGOs and identical associations to help others through volunteering and relief action, the workers in the Kuwaiti philanthropic sector are keen on implementing such goals through diverse actions such as the launch of campaigns and working out agreements to speed up execution of charitable projects and delivering aid to the afflicted communities.

Abdulaziz Al-Obaid, Director General of Kuwait Relief Society, said in an interview with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that the association, hinging on the state support, is moving ahead in charitable intervention and accomplishing various relief activities in communities and countries afflicted with disasters and humanitarian crises, alluding particularly to Gaza Strip, Sudan, Yemen, Lebanon, North Syria, Somalia and Bangladesh, among other suffering nations.

Al-Obaid has affirmed that the execution of the projects at this level is done through agreements and cooperation with the local and external partners notably foreign establishments and organizations. He has explained that the work involves health aid, providing shelter, food, launching development ventures, offering education and various other kinds of action aimed at aiding people suffering from hunger, poverty, diseases and illiteracy.

Kuwait Relief Society, between 2023 and 2024, carried out 11 charitable campaigns in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Lebanon, he said, indicating at help for poor Lebanese and Syrian refugees during winter times.

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs **Abdullah Al-Yahya** held a virtual meeting on Wednesday with his Tajik counterpart **Sirajuddin Muharuddin**, and **Vladimir Voronkov**, Under-Secretary General of the Counter-Terrorism Office.

During the meeting, the ongoing preparations for the State of Kuwait to host the Fourth Dushanbe Conference during the days of November 4th and 5th, 2024 were discussed, under the title "Strengthening international cooperation in combating terrorism and building flexible mechanisms for border security - Kuwait's phase of the Dushanbe process." (KUNA)

CAIRO: The Arab Parliament strongly condemned the offensive statements made by Israeli occupation Prime Minister **Benjamin Netanyahu**, considering them misleading claims aimed at hindering **Egypt's** effort to mediate for a ceasefire and stopping the aggression on **Gaza**.

In a statement on Wednesday, the Parliament stressed that the words of Netanyahu reflect the internal failure of the Israeli occupation, and helps reveal their false claims that are intended to deceive the world's public opinion from the occupation's politics. (KUNA)

BEIRUT: Lebanon charged its embattled former central bank governor Wednesday with the embezzlement of \$42 million, three judicial officials told The Associated Press.

Riad Salameh, 73, was charged by the Financial Public Prosecution a day after he was detained following an interrogation by Lebanon's top public prosecutor over several alleged financial crimes. (AP)

CAIRO: The Egyptian presidency said on Wednesday that the official visit of President **Abdelfattah El-Sisi** to **Turkiye** established a new phase of joint cooperation and strengthening the bilateral relations.

The presidency added in a statement that El-Sisi's visit to **Turkiye** represented a new milestone in the path of strengthening bilateral relations and building on Turkish President **Recep Tayyip Erdogan's** visit to **Egypt** last February. (KUNA)

Labor shortage pushes up wages by 40 pct; call to issue new visas

Security checks score 70% illegal workers at projects



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the Cabinet meeting.

Tough penalties for reserve trespassers

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4, (KUNA): Kuwait's Cabinet convened its regular weekly meeting at Bayan Palace on Tuesday under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to discuss the outcome of Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya's visit to the UAE.

Al-Yahya briefed the meeting on the deliberations of the fifth session of the Kuwait-UAE joint committee, co-chaired by him and UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu-Dhabi yesterday.

During the joint committee meeting both sides signed a number of agreements and MoUs on cooperation in several vital areas. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Abdullah Al-Mousherji said following the Cabinet meeting.

Al-Yahya also apprised the Cabinet of the outcome of his meeting with UAE President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan which focused on ways to strengthen the bilateral ties in all areas and enhance the joint action among the GCC member states.

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NBK leads The Banker's 2024 list of Top 100 Arab Banks in Kuwait

— Details Page 9 —

Kuwait eyes Jordanian high-tech expertise to combat terror, riots

AMMAN, Sept 4, (KUNA): Kuwait's security apparatuses are eager to develop cooperation with their Jordanian peers in combating terrorism and riots, Maj. Gen. Abdullah Al-Mulla, Assistant Undersecretary for Special Security Affairs at the Ministry of Interior, said on Tuesday.

Al-Mulla's statement to KUNA followed after partaking on behalf of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and Minister of Defense Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, in inaugurating the 14th Special Operations Forces Ex-

hibition and Conference SOFEX 2024 in Jordan's Aqaba.

He stressed the Interior Ministry's keenness to implement the political leadership's directives in developing and modernizing security systems and supporting its staff with means for the national interest.

He said that during SOFEX 2024, the Kuwaiti delegation saw a Jordanian military demonstration on combating terrorism using high-tech equipment and weapons in this field.

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Regional scene discussed in talks

Kuwait, UAE to upgrade security ties

DUBAI, Sept 4, (KUNA): Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah held talks, on Tuesday, with Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, on cooperative ties and the Kuwaiti-Emirati partnership.

Sheikh Hamdan met with Sheikh Fahad Yousef at Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi where they reviewed collaboration and developed partnership on all fields, thanks to the wise leaderships of UAE's President Sheikh Moahmmad bin Zayed Al Nahyan and His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, UAE's news agency (WAM) reported.

They discussed ways to enhance longstanding cordial relations between the two countries, it said, adding that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yusuf congratulated Sheikh Hamdan on gaining political leadership's confidence of the UAE as evidenced in his appointment as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense.

They focused on recent regional and international developments and challenges facing the region as well as other topics of mutual interest.

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By Fares Al-Abdan
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Due to the acute shortage of expatriate labor, new housing projects, particularly in Mutlaa City, are experiencing disruptions and delays in completion.

The situation is exacerbated by the fact that many of these workers are not sponsored by companies, which makes them hesitant to work on these projects for fear of inspections.

A video clip, which went viral on social media and shows a security checkpoint in Mutlaa City, reveals the state of fear and confusion it caused expatriate workers. In the clip, many workers can be seen exiting their vehicles and fleeing on foot to avoid inspection and the threat of deportation.

This labor issue is impacting the progress of housing projects.

In this regard, a reliable source from the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) explained that PAM's role is to oversee inspections of commercial establishments, companies, and other sectors, and not inspections on the streets. At the same time, the authority is required to address these workers' issues and regularize their residency status as an important step for ensuring the completion of these projects.

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Kuwait-UK ties mark 125 years

LONDON, Sept 4, (KUNA): Kuwaiti-British relations have developed over the years after having been founded 125 years ago, in the light of high-level agreements, initiatives and visits aiming at promoting strategic bonds between both countries.

This year marks the Kuwaiti-UK Partnership Year in 2024, the 125th anniversary of the bilateral relations between the two countries and more than 12 years since the launch of the UK-Kuwaiti Joint Steering Group.

The two governments dubbed 2024 the year of Kuwaiti-British partnership, as per an agreement signed on sidelines of an official visit by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, then Crown Prince, to the UK on August 29, 2023.

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Day by Day

I TRULY wonder who advised the appointment of certain individuals to ministerial positions, only to find out later that they were corrupt and nothing but thieves who can't even differentiate between their elbow from their hand.

This raises the question: How long will such a scenario continue? When will we learn to identify those who we can trust?

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:05 Asr 15:20
 Sunrise .. 05:27 Maghrib .. 18:07
 Zohr 11:47 Isha 19:26

Local

BIOMETRIC/FINGERPRINT APPOINTMENT: <https://meta.e.gov.kw/En/>

Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-42 km/h with a chance for airborne dust over open areas.
By Night: Hot to rather hot with

light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-30 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	46	33
Kuwait Airport	45	34
Abdaly	45	28

Bubyan	45	25
Jahra	46	31
Failaka Island	43	28
Salmiyah	42	33
Ahmadi	41	31
Jal Aliyah	45	29
Nuwaisib	44	31

Condolences

HH Amir offers condolences to Saudi King over passing of princess

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a condolence cable to Saudi King King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, over the passing of Princess Latifa bint Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow the deceased with mercy and grant Al-Saud Family patience and solace.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a condolence cable to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, over the passing of Princess Latifa bint Abdulaziz Al-Saud, praying to Allah Almighty to bestow the deceased with mercy.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a condolence cable to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

Gov't proposes major reforms for public chalets, parks management

'Finance' directed to re-tender projects with expired contracts

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: In a significant move aimed at optimizing the management of state properties, the Kuwaiti government has proposed several key changes to its approach concerning public chalets and parks, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to informed sources, the Ministry of Finance has been directed to re-tender projects for public chalets built on state land, whose contracts have expired.

This recommendation comes as part of a broader strategy to ensure that state assets are managed efficiently and transparently.

The focus is on ensuring new tenants of these chalets adhere strictly to contractual terms and maintain the properties to high standards. Additionally, the Ministry of Finance will review contracts related to the management, exploitation, and maintenance of various public facilities, including those involving utilities.

One of the pressing issues is the impending expiration of temporary contracts for public parks, set to end in the coming months.

Temporary

Last year, investors managing these parks were granted temporary licenses as part of a new procedural framework designed to address the status of contracts that have been under the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) system and have expired since 2016.

This temporary arrangement was intended to prevent disputes with subcontractors and provide a window to resolve outstanding issues.

With these temporary licenses nearing their end, the Ministry of Finance is expected to take decisive action to implement a new procedural approach.

This includes possibly re-offering contracts through public auctions, in line with guidelines set by the Government Performance Follow-up Agency. Such auctions will likely involve specialized companies and aim to achieve the highest revenue for the state while ensuring fairness among investors.

The proposed re-offering of public park contracts will affect around nine chalet parks, with contract terms having ended between 2016 and 2018. The aim is to replace temporary measures with permanent mechanisms that align with the state's objectives, including enhancing non-oil public revenues and improving tourism facilities.

The government has also instructed the Ministry of Finance to review and take necessary legal actions concerning the management and maintenance contracts of some public facilities, in partnership with the Public Utilities Company.

This review is part of a broader effort to streamline operations and resolve overlapping responsibilities among government agencies, particularly between the Ministry of Finance and the Supreme Committee for Partnership Projects between the Public and Private Sectors.

Ultimately, these steps are intended to ensure that state assets are managed effectively, disputes are minimized, and revenue generation is optimized, aligning with the state's strategic goals for growth and development.



The Kuwaiti band 'Seen' during their performance.

KUNA photo

Kuwait cultural week in London holds 'Rhythms of Kuwait'

Kuwait cultural week in London held on Wednesday "Rhythms of Kuwait" musical evening in Theatre Royal Drury Lane as part of the celebrations of the 125th anniversary of the Kuwaiti-British partnership.

The Kuwaiti band (Seen) have performed different types of Kuwaiti music during the show, using various instruments and joint coherent clapping techniques.

Kuwaiti Maestro Khaled Nouri prepared an innovative musical piece especially for this occasion called (Tashabok), which reflects the strong historical relationship between Kuwait and the United Kingdom by exploring various types of music representing both nations.

(Tashabok), which means intertwine, features a range of musical instruments unique to Kuwait and the United Kingdom, including traditional Kuwaiti instruments such as the "Jarbah" which is the bagpipe, the "rababah" which is the spiked fiddle, the "safqa" which is clapping, and western wind instruments.

The ceremony was attended by the Dean of the Arab Diplomatic Corps, Bahrain's Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Sheikh Fawaz Al-Khalifa, a number of senior officials and a huge crowd of the public.

(Seen) band was established in 2022 with the aim of creating valuable cultural and high-level entertainment content. (KUNA)

AI-Namash chairs Kuwaiti delegation to meeting

Arab League calls on its council to mitigate economic and social impacts on Gaza Strip

CAIRO, Sept 4, (KUNA): The Arab League called on Wednesday for its Economic and Social Council to develop plans and programs in cooperation with the League's agencies and partners to mitigate as much as possible the Israeli occupation aggression's economic and social impacts of on Gaza, with a future vision of normalcy.

This came in the opening speech of the 114th session of League's Economic and Social Council, chaired by the UAE, by the League's Assistant Secretary-General Ambassador Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, to prepare for the council's ministerial meeting on Thursday.

Abu Ghazaleh said that the current council session is held amid "unprecedented exceptional circumstances" facing the Arab region, due to the continued Israeli occupation aggression practices not only on Palestine, but also extended to southern Lebanon and some areas in Arab countries.

The brutal aggression has become the "foundation" of social, humanitarian and economic tragedy witnessed by many Arab countries as the Israeli occupation disregarded all international legitimacy resolutions, she added.

The difficult social and humanitarian conditions resulting from this aggression have destroyed the infrastructure of Gaza Strip, displaced families and children, and the number of martyrs and injured is increasing around the clock, explained Abu Ghazaleh.

In this regard, she pointed to the Palestinian Ministry of Health announcement of the risen number of martyrs that reached 40,819 deaths and the injured to 94,291, since October 7 in a tragedy first of its kind in history.

She stressed the importance of focusing on ensuring a decent life for Arab citizens within a framework of social justice and by strengthening Arab efforts aimed at implementing Arab and international resolutions and charters related to sustainable economic and social development.

For his part, Assistant Undersecretary for International Trade Affairs at the UAE Ministry of Economy Jumaa Al Kait, stressed in his speech the importance of strengthening joint Arab action in the economic field and developing policies that serve the shared economy as well as Arab countries.



Acting Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance for Economic Affairs, Talal Al-Namash, heading the Kuwaiti delegation to the meeting.

KUNA photo

Al-Kait said that the council meeting will discuss several matters including following up on implementing decisions of previous session, reviewing latest developments in Arab work, Arab Free Trade Area and the Arab Customs Union, activating investments between Arab countries, and joint Arab work.

For her part, Secretary-General of the Jordanian Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply Dana Al-Zoubi said in her speech that this is the second session of the Economic and Social Council to be held in light of the brutal Israeli occupation aggression on Palestine.

Al-Zoubi stressed the importance of joint Arab action to face the challenges "that no longer exclude anyone" as the Arab region is affected by regional instability, and the need to follow a "collective approach" in work as the individual approach will not suffice to avoid economic crises.

She called for activating Arab Free Trade Area and Customs Union, expressing hope for increasing the rate of inter-Arab trade and enhancing Arab cooperation and investments.

The Kuwaiti delegation to the meeting is chaired by Acting Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance for Economic Affairs Talal Al-Namash.

Other Voices

Robert Hill's generosity and 'Kuwaiti friendship'

By Ahmed alsarraf

'The greatest joys in life we have ever seen come from our giving,' billionaire Robert Hill Jr. said from the stage at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, at the commencement of the Class of 2024, referring to himself and his wife, Karen.

"Today, we want to share with you this gift of giving." He then handed each graduating student two envelopes, each containing \$1,000 in cash.

He told the students, who emerged from under their umbrellas, into the rain, to thunderous cheers and long applause, that he had one condition for his financial grant: They must spend the first \$500 on themselves, as a gift to each of them. The second \$500 is to be given to someone else or to another organization, where it can be used in a different way, or for a better purpose!

Although Robert Hill's wealth is not huge compared to other millionaires in America and the world, he owns "only" \$5.4 billion, which puts him in 203rd place on the list of the 400 richest Americans, he has, relatively speaking, spent more than others, as he and his wife have given more than \$270 million to charitable causes, including cancer research and funding educational institutions.

This is what a small Kuwaiti association in Kuwait aims to do, the "Humanitarian Friendship Association," a charitable association that

has been known for about seven years and has achieved remarkable success in helping those in need in the fields of education and helping patients.

Worth noting that the members of the board of directors of the "Friendship Association" participate in its meetings and in its executive committees throughout the year, voluntarily, without compensation, and their motivation is to do good, not for personal or material interest, or a partisan or political goals.

There is no doubt that they find pleasure in "giving," which is represented in receiving donations from charitable people and spending them with the greatest degree of rationality and justice on those who deserve help, and they feel that giving represents moments that may be the happiest in their lives ... and the lives of many.

* * *

The Human Friendship Society intends to hold its annual charity event at the end of next month. As usual, the event will include honoring ten personalities, male or female, regardless of their field, who have spent fifty years or more among us, continuously and without interruption.

Due to the difficulty of accessing the names and addresses of these people, the association would be pleased to receive the names of these people, from them or from those who represent them, and their phone numbers, on WhatsApp number 90056080, to communicate with them.

□ □ □

e-mail: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Kuwait signs social, humanitarian MoUs with Qatar, Saudis

DOHA, Sept 4, (KUNA): Kuwait signed on Wednesday three memorandums of understanding (MoU) in fields of social affairs, charity and humanitarian work with Qatar and Saudi Arabia in the Qatari capital Doha.

Kuwait's Minister of Social Affairs, Labor, Family Affairs and Childhood and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dr Amthal Al-Huwailah, Qatari Minister of Social Development and Family Mariam Al-Misnad and the Saudi Minister of Human Resources and Social Development signed the MoUs.

Al-Huwailah expressed to KUNA her happiness on the signing of the three MoUs, which contributes to strengthening the relations of GCC countries in the social, charity and humanitarian fields.

Minister Al-Huwailah told KUNA that the meeting discussed several topics, including the GCC social development strategy the plan for joint charitable and humanitarian work in (2025-2030).

She stated that the meeting also addressed the joint Gulf action strategy for women's affairs in (2025-2030) and

the seventh Gulf theater festival for people with disabilities.

Minister Al-Huwailah has declared that the State of Kuwait will host the next meeting of the GCC Committee of Ministers of Social Affairs and Development in September next year.

She expressed her thanks and appreciation to the State of Qatar for hosting the tenth meeting and for the good reception, organization and generous hospitality.

Minister Al-Huwailah headed the Kuwaiti delegation at the tenth meeting of the GCC committee.



Dr Al-Huwailah and Qatari Minister signing MoU.



Dr Al-Huwailah and Saudi Minister exchange documents.

KUNA photos

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Is fingerprinting more effective than employee discipline and commitment?'

"IN LINE with its commitment to accelerate development, drive reforms, combat corruption, and integrate modern technology across its departments, the state has implemented a fingerprint system to monitor employee attendance during official working hours," columnist **Mohammed Saud Al-Badr** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"This system has introduced an additional layer of accountability by requiring a third fingerprint check during working hours."

"While this system enforces discipline, especially among employees who may not be consistently diligent, it is essential to recognize that the truly successful employee should be motivated by personal integrity, commitment, and a sense of national duty, rather than solely relying on the presence of a fingerprint system."



Al-Badr

"Such employees, driven by their own self-discipline and dedication, perform their duties with sincerity and excellence, under the guidance and support of their supervisors."

"Conversely, employees who lack commitment and fail to recognize their responsibilities may view the fingerprint system merely as an obligation rather than a tool for ensuring accountability."

"This lack of engagement can create inefficiencies and burden their colleagues, particularly in roles involving sensitive or confidential tasks."

"In such cases, it is crucial for management to address the issue promptly, potentially reassigning responsibilities or, if necessary, terminating employment to ensure that work is carried out effectively."

"Fortunately, such disengaged employees are the exception rather than the rule. The majority of employees, dedicated to their roles and driven by a genuine sense of duty, contribute positively to the state's progress."

"These committed individuals work diligently to enhance Kuwait's standing and achieve its aspirations. The state's efforts to raise its profile on the global stage are supported by the dedication and hard work of its employees, who are united in their goal to see Kuwait excel and prosper."

Also:

"Our wise government deserves commendation for its unwavering commitment to identifying and swiftly addressing problems with a comprehensive approach. In an era of rapid change, the government's actions to resolve issues through decisive decisions, new laws, and practical measures are truly praiseworthy," columnist **Dr. Muhammad Khaled Al-Hajifa** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"The government's efforts to streamline workflows, ensure efficiency and quality, and enforce laws and penalties for negligence are noteworthy. These measures not only enhance service delivery but also aim to address persistent problems, such as lengthy document processing and job market challenges for citizens with specific qualifications."

"We deeply appreciate these initiatives, which promise to alleviate many obstacles faced by citizens, whether they are employees or clients interacting with government agencies. By simplifying procedures and removing bureaucratic hurdles, these efforts are set to improve overall efficiency and service quality."

"Furthermore, the government's proactive stance against corruption, particularly in combating drug trafficking that threatens our youth, is highly commendable. The arrest of personnel working for these networks and are involved in such illegal activities reassures us that vigilant oversight is in place to safeguard the nation's future."

"It is imperative for all of us to unite and take responsibility for our country by working diligently and addressing any instances of negligence or wrongdoing. Our collective effort will help ensure that Kuwait remains a beacon of excellence in the Gulf."

"We sense a strong resolve in implementing measures that protect the country from individuals driven solely by self-interest, with no regard for the public good."

"May pray to God to protect Kuwait, its Amir, its dedicated Crown Prince, its citizens, and all who reside on its blessed land from harm."

"I watched touching footage of a Kuwaiti brother talking about a logical and rational discussion that took place between him and an American friend," columnist **Talal Abdul Karim Al-Arab** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"The focus and basis of the dialogue is that there is a fierce Kuwaiti campaign against America, and demands to boycott American goods that have a relationship with Israel."

"There are even those who demanded that the credentials of the new American ambassador not be accepted. The bitter truth is that the unjust American support for Israel politically, economically and militarily arouses anger and rage, and even hatred."

"However, the American asked his

Kuwaiti friend a question that is difficult for us not to understand and ponder. The security of Kuwait and the security of the Gulf is the most important and takes priority over everything else."

"The question is: 'America liberated Kuwait in the first invasion when political, economic and trade relations with it were at their best. But if another invasion occurs, do you expect that we will liberate you this time?'"

"I previously wrote about the above topic in 2021, and I will republish some of it: We thank God, as usual, that Kuwait, the Arab and Islamic nation, and some somewhat independent countries of the world have repeatedly condemned Israel since its establishment until this day, tirelessly and without boredom."

"They have condemned with unparalleled violence the massacres and abuse committed by the Zionists against our brotherly people in Palestine. We also support those who formulated the firm Kuwaiti nationalist position on the Palestinian issue in their tough statement against the enemy."

"Kuwait officially and popularly condemned the aggression on Gaza, launched a popular donation campaign, and sent relief supplies to the people of Gaza who were afflicted by Hamas and the Zionist enemy."

"What Kuwait did was undoubtedly a duty, and it is sufficient for it. Do not burden it with more than it can bear, and do not compete and race over positions it cannot tolerate. Our hearts go out to Kuwait, the owner of the nationalist panic for Palestine."

"Who will panic for it this time if it falls into the clutches of another invader? It seems that it is walking alone, carrying the ladder across the width, happy with messages of praise that will not enrich it or benefit it at all."

"Most Arab and Gulf countries have either normalized, will normalize, or agree to normalize relations with Israel. Will those slogans, demonstrations, and opposing America and its allies benefit us?"

"Will our nationalist positions benefit us in times of distress? Who will stand with us if we are exposed to any danger?"

"What some of the Brotherhood members are doing will leave Kuwait alone, far from the international situation, and it is certainly not in our national interest. It seems that Kuwait yearns for the good old days that led it to disaster."

"What we see today is a trend to put Kuwait once again in the line of fire, despite the silence of those who are more deserving of steadfastness."

"They are the ones whose lands were occupied, they are the strongest, they are the ones who are supposed to recover what they gave up, they are the ones who raised their voices demanding the liberation of Palestine from behind their microphones, and in the end they are the ones who normalized relations with Israel in secret and in public."

"The world is living today an era - the American era - so it is wise not to lose it, as Kuwait's security comes first."

"I feel a deep sadness for our Constitution, which was a monumental achievement crafted by our father and forefathers through the Constituent Assembly. In just one year, they had accomplished what other countries struggled to achieve over many years, all while our state was at the dawn of its independence," columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Today, after all these years, it seems that everyone has become an expert on the constitution, irrespective of whether they have studied it extensively, or only glanced at it. Some individuals are now claiming that the state's suspension of bank accounts for those who haven't undergone biometric fingerprinting is unconstitutional."

"I am not sure what evidence they have to support this claim, or how the Constitution relates to the state's decisions made in the public interest, or those driven by new developments or the state's general direction. Some constitutional experts argue that these decisions violate the constitution, even though the National Assembly in the past has frequently disregarded constitutional principles, both from the presidential platform and Abdullah Al-Salem Hall, with little response from these same experts."

"Poor constitution ... It has become like a winter cloak that we wear when convenient, and discard when not. People cling to it when it serves their interests and ignore it when it doesn't."

"To the constitutional experts, we say - There are 27,000 visitors who entered Kuwait and overstayed their visits. Is there a constitutional violation if the concerned authorities prosecute them? Are they similar to those who have not complied with biometric fingerprinting requirements?"

"To those in charge of enforcing the law and restoring order, we say - Focus on addressing the chaos and anarchy we face. Do not be swayed by those who disregard these issues. Clean our country and act decisively. The price of our country is too high for us to prioritize the constitution or human rights over our loyalty and sense of belonging."

— **Compiled by PFX Fernandes and Mahmoud Ateyieh**



Governor Sheikh Abdullah during his visit to Farwaniya Security Directorate.

Al-Seyassah photo

Capital governor discusses training, cooperation with security officials

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem, Governor of the Capital and Acting Governor of Farwaniya, met with Brigadier General Mishaal Al-Huwailah, Director of the National Security College, and Colonel Abdulwahab Al-Najadah, Director of the Institute of Strategic Security Studies, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

During the meeting which was held at the Governorate Diwan, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem was briefed on the college's training programs and explored opportu-

nities for collaboration, including potential participation by governorate employees.

Emphasizing the need for discipline and legal adherence, Sheikh Al-Salem also reviewed security operations at the Farwaniya Security Directorate, commending the efforts of security personnel and aligning with directives from Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior. He encouraged continued dedication to maintaining security and serving the nation effectively.

Court of Appeals delays ex-MP Al-Tabtabaie's trial to Sept 11

Prosecution refers KD 120 mln laundering case to Criminal Court

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: The Court of Appeals decided yesterday to postpone the trial of former MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaie to September 11 due to Al-Tabtabaie's absence from the session, as he was receiving medical treatment in the hospital.

He was convicted by the Criminal Court and sentenced to four-year imprisonment for challenging the rights of His Highness the Amir and misusing a phone, for which a State Security case was filed against him. He is currently detained in the Central Prison.

Case sent to Criminal Court: The Public Prosecution has referred to the Criminal Court the money laundering case involving 27 citizens and expatriates accused of illegally transferring more than KD120 million by using local banking systems to conceal the money and disguise its source.

Case files indicate that the Ministry of Interior confirmed the State Security Department arrested a gang of 27 individuals, including six citizens, who laundered more than KD120 million. They were referred to the prosecution for legal action.

The prosecution ordered the detention of 27

members of the gang that illegally transferred more than KD120 million within a short period through local banking systems.

DGFD closes 56 shops: Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) has administratively closed 56 shops and facilities across various governorates Tuesday morning, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

These closures were due to the failure of these businesses to obtain the necessary fire licenses and their non-compliance with safety and fire prevention requirements.

Despite receiving prior warnings to address these violations, the establishments did not meet the required standards, leading to the enforcement action.

17-year-old boy assaulted: A 17-year old boy sustained several injuries and fractures after he was assaulted by an unknown individual in Saad Al-Abdullah, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to security sources, the victim's mother went to Saad Al-Abdullah Police Station and reported the incident. She explained that her son was severely attacked by an unknown individual due to which he sustained fractures and injuries throughout his body. He has been admitted to Jahra Hospital where he would need to stay for 21 days for treatment, based on doctors' orders.

She submitted a medical report which revealed the extent of injuries and fractures the boy sus-

tained. Based on the directives of the Deputy Attorney General, a case of felony has been filed, and investigations have begun to unravel the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Dead person's ID revealed: The victim of a recent road accident in Ouyoun, where he was hit by a vehicle driven by a Kuwaiti citizen, has been identified as a 43-year-old expatriate, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to security sources, the initial report indicated that an unidentified person had been run over by a vehicle and died, and no identifying evidence was found on the victim at the scene. After the body was transferred to the Forensic Medicine Unit and fingerprinted, it was confirmed that the deceased was an expatriate born in 1981.

The Kuwaiti motorist involved is currently under investigation.

Encroachments dismantled: The Violations Removal Department of the Kuwait Municipality, Hawalli Governorate, in collaboration with the Cleaning Department and the Environmental Police, has removed several encroachments from the state property in the Salwa area, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

These encroachments were identified as animal pens. The coordinated effort helped address and clear these unauthorized structures from state-owned land.

Municipality lifts six abandoned vehicles

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: The Public Relations Department of the Kuwait Municipality announced that a recent inspection tour organized by the General Cleaning and Road Occupations Department of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate Municipality branch led to the removal of six abandoned and dilapidated vehicles, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

During the campaign the inspectors also issued a citation to a grocery store. The team also placed 14 stickers on cars found abandoned in various areas.

If owners fail to remove the vehicles, they will be towed to the Municipality garage.



Maj. Gen. Fahd talking with the injured DGFD employee.

KFF photo

Fahd visits injured fireman

Major General Khaled Abdullah Fahd, the Acting Chief of the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), visited Captain Mohammed Abdul Majeed Salman at Al-Razi Hospital today to inquire about his health, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The daily added, Captain Salman had sustained injuries while on duty.

During the visit, Major General Fahd conveyed the greetings and appreciation of the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, along with his wishes for Captain Salman's swift recovery.

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Education sector faces exodus as retirement incentives surge

Kuwaiti employees rush to secure new pension perks

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Following the approval of the law to increase the minimum retirement pension by the then National Assembly at the end of 2023, there has been a significant surge in retirement requests among Kuwaiti gov-

ernment employees working in the public sector reports Al-Jarida daily.

This increase is attributed to the newly introduced pension benefits, which offer substantial financial incentives for retirees.

In the Ministry of Education, the number of retirement applications has doubled this year. The total number of requests has exceeded 2,000, with a notable rise in January, February, and March, when 900 requests were submitted.

Many administrators, especially those without allowances or additional benefits and whose salaries are under 1,000 dinars, are opting for retirement to benefit from the new minimum pension law.

Under this law, the minimum retirement salary is 1,010 dinars, which has motivated many employees to retire and benefit from the increased pension.

With the upcoming school year, the number of retirement requests is expected to rise further. School principals and supervisors are anticipated to submit their retirement applications to benefit from the financial incentives before the new systems, including fingerprint attendance, are implemented.

The new law stipulates various minimum pension amounts based on family size. For instance, those supporting seven or more children will receive 1,615 dinars per month, while individuals with fewer dependents will receive proportionally lower amounts.

This adjustment aims to provide better financial support for retirees based on their family responsibilities.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, will start preparing 19 new school clinics to be operational by the beginning of the school year.

The health authorities will provide the necessary equipment and devices to ensure these clinics can offer health services to students effectively.



Al-Jarida photo
Dr. Issam Al-Rubaian headed Kuwait's delegation to Qatar meet.

Civil service heads convene in Qatar to bolster HR programs

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Dr. Issam Al-Rubaian, President of the Civil Service Bureau, announced that the 20th meeting of the Committee of Ministers and Heads of Civil Service and Administrative Development Agencies from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries was held in Qatar, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The discussions centered on enhancing human resources programs, including support, qualification, training, and honoring competencies.

The meeting also addressed the GCC strategy for civil service and hu-

man development for 2026-2030.

Al-Rubaian, who led the Kuwaiti delegation, disclosed that Kuwait will host the next meeting in September 2025.

In his opening speech, GCC Secretary-General Jassim Al-Budaiwi praised the GCC countries for achieving top positions in the Arab world and advancing globally in government efficiency and infrastructure, according to the 2024 Global Competitiveness Ranking Report by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) in Switzerland.

Balancing innovation with reliability

MoE emphasizes need for traditional whiteboards in secondary classrooms

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: The Ministry of Education has recently installed 4,359 electronic whiteboards in computer labs and secondary school classrooms following which Acting Undersecretary of the Public Education Sector, Mansour Al-Dhafiri, has stressed on the need to have a regular whiteboard in every secondary school classroom, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This directive, issued in a circular to general managers and directors, aims to ensure that no classroom is left without a traditional whiteboard -- an interactive whiteboard, also known as interactive board, interactive display, interactive digital board or smart board -- which is vital for continuity in edu-

cation. Al-Dhafiri emphasized the importance of coordinating with the Supply and Warehouses Department to meet this requirement, especially in preparation for the new academic year 2024/2025.

He noted that while electronic whiteboards are a modern addition, they are susceptible to malfunctions and power outages, making traditional whiteboards essential for emergencies and uninterrupted teaching.

In addition, the Ministry has installed 5,125 interactive screens across various educational stages, with a focus on integrating modern technology into the classroom.



Group photo during the career day event.

438 Kuwaiti job seekers interviewed

PAM hosts career day with ASICO

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) organized a career day focused on hiring national workers for the private sector, featuring ASICO Construction Company as a key partner, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The event, held at the Manpower Building Theater, was attended by Acting Director General Marzouq Al-Otaibi and Acting Deputy Director General for National Manpower Affairs Najat Al-Yousef.

Representatives from ASICO Construction expressed their appreciation for PAM's efforts in facilitating the recruitment of Kuwaiti talent.

The career day aimed to support and enhance the participation of Kuwaiti youth in the labor market, align job opportunities with their qualifications, and contribute to reducing unemployment in the private sector.

ASICO provided an overview of the company and its job openings, highlighting their commitment to attracting national talent across various departments.



Al-Jarida photos
Applicant engaging in the interview selection process.

During the event, 438 job seekers with diplomas and university degrees were interviewed, with subsequent tests and selection processes planned to finalize hiring decisions.



September

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Revenues hit KD 6.7 million

Billboard site contracts extended

By Mohammad Al-Musleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: The supervisory authorities agreed to extend six contracts for utilizing billboard sites along the roads, after the total revenues reached about KD 6.7 million within six months.

Sources told the newspaper that the State Audit Bureau (SAB) approved the extension of the contracts for licensed auctions to use billboard sites in Hawally, Jahra, Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Farwaniya and Ahmadi, in addition to the highways.

Sources confirmed that the Ministry of Finance approved the auctions; indicating the highways auction yielded the highest revenue at KD2.4 million, followed by Hawally Governorate at KD 2.2 million; while that of Farwaniya Governorate reached

KD740,000.

Sources said the extension period varies from one auction to another, as some start at the end of the year and others at the beginning of the following year for a period of six months.

Sources also pointed out that the revenues of auctions vary from one governorate to another, especially the Hawally Governorate and highway auctions, which are considered the largest in terms of value. Sources revealed they are considered the most important advertising market in the country due to their geographical location, population and commercial diversity.

Sources added that SAB has stressed the need for Kuwait Municipality to complete the bidding, awarding and contracting procedures for new auctions before the end of the extended periods.

Humidity and winds crucial factors

Kuwait's weather alters bird migration

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: The Bird Monitoring and Protection Team at Kuwait Environment Protection Society has confirmed that the weather, natural phenomena and other factors affect bird migration, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In a press statement, Team Leader Mohammad Shah explained that "high humidity and adverse winds lead to lower number of migratory birds compared to ideal conditions. These factors affect the process of determining the times of bird movement during migration. Observers usually notice a remarkable increase in the number of migratory birds once the country starts experiencing the northern winds during fall, especially the big ones like raptors and eagles, which depend on the winds in their flight."

Shah pointed out that "bird migration is one of the amazing natural phenomena in our world. Kuwait is one of the main stations for migratory birds due to its strategic location in the northwestern part of the Arabian Gulf, which covers three migratory bird areas -- Asian, European and Indian. Scientists identified and divided these areas in order to classify birds based on their types and presence."

He added "most non-aquatic birds from Central Asia and Siberia do not cross the seas, so they prefer to pass through Kuwait to avoid crossing the sea."

Moreover, members of the team Mohammad Al-Hadeena said "humidity has a negative impact on migratory birds. High humidity hinders their flight, since it makes the air denser. It is difficult for the birds to fly under such conditions,



Al-Jarida photo
Migratory birds fly along the Arabian Gulf.

Marvelous astronomical events expected in Sept

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Several fascinating astronomical events are expected to light up the skies of Kuwait in the month of September, starting from Thursday dawn, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement to KUNA, the Al-Ojjeiri Scientific Center explained that the first of these events will occur when Mercury reaches its maximum western elongation from the Sun. This means Mercury will be at its highest point above the eastern horizon at dawn, just before sunrise, before it fades from view with the morning light.

On the same day, the Moon will align with Venus, which is the brightest planet in our solar system. This alignment will be visible to the naked eye and can be observed just after sunset in the western sky. The Moon and Venus will appear close together until they set in the early hours of the night.

The next day, the Moon will be in conjunction with the star Spica, which will be visible just after sunset and into the early night.

A rare and spectacular event is expected to occur on September 8. Saturn will reach opposition when Saturn and the sun are positioned directly opposite of each other in the sky. When Saturn reaches opposition, it will appear larger because it will be at its closest point to Earth. Saturn will be visible throughout the night, as it will be fully illuminated by the sun, making it appear brighter and more luminous than at any other point in the year. On September 10, the Moon will be in conjunction with the giant star Antares, which will be visible immediately after sunset until the Moon sets.

because humidity reduces the efficiency of their flight and makes them more exhausted. Headwinds also slow down the movement of birds and remarkably increase their energy consumption, which may force them to stay in one place for long periods; while tailwinds support their movement and help them fly longer distances with less effort."

LOCAL



Archive photo of the Doha Port.

Al-Jarida photo

Technical reviews underway

New reclaimed land approved for Doha Port commercial expansion

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: The Kuwait Municipality has granted approval for the Kuwait Ports Authority to utilize a 220,000-square-meter reclaimed land area for a development project south-east of Doha Port, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This new allocation is set to expand the commercial port area, which currently covers 224,000 square meters.

In its technical review, the municipality highlighted that the landfill area was incorporated into the master plan for the development of Sulai-bikhat Bay.

However, the Water Department at the Ministry of Electricity, Water,

and Renewable Energy emphasized that landfill activities should not interfere with seawater outlets from the Doha East Station or compromise the quality of seawater in the intake area.

The municipality's decision also requires adherence to guidelines from the Public Environment Authority, and detailed plans for the Southeast Doha Port Development Project must be submitted to the Municipal Council within three years for approval.

Moreover, the relevant departments have the authority to adjust the dimensions and coordinates of the project sites as needed.

this industry to develop military ac-tion.

Earlier in the day, King Abdullah II of Jordan inaugurated the exhibition and conference, under the theme "Collaboration and Convergence to Strengthen Global Security", with the participation of 73 countries and more than 300 global defense and security companies.

The inauguration ceremony featured Kuwait's Ambassador to Jordan Hamad Al-Marri, Military Attache at the embassy Mohammad Al-Eyada and a security delegation.

Tough penalties

Continued from Page 1

During his visit, Al-Yahya inaugurated the new premises of Kuwait Embassy in Abu Dhabi in the presence of UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

On her part, Minister of Public Works Dr. Nourah Al-Mashaan briefed the Cabinet on the outcome of the recent visit to Kuwait by a Chinese delegation which focused on the implementation of agreements on mega projects, including the construction and operation of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port.

The Port, part of a gigantic regional project, aims to create an international trade hub in keeping with the Sovereign instructions of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Al-Mouasherji pointed out.

On the preparations for the 2024-2025 school year, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Acting Minister of Education Dr. Nader Abdullah Mohammad Al-Jallal gave a presentation on the rehabilitation and maintenance of schools countrywide.

He also briefed the Cabinet on the measures made by various panels to ensure provision of qualified teaching staff and books as well as the selection of a number of catering companies in collaboration with the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN).

Regarding the efforts to protect environment, the Cabinet tasked the Environment Public Authority to work with the Fatwa (Legal Advice) and Legislation Dept. to toughen penalties for any infringement on nature reserves pursuant to the provisions of Act 42 (2014) and Act 99 (2015).

The Cabinet congratulated the Kuwaiti athlete Faisal Al-Rajehi on winning the bronze medal of the men's 5000m race - T54, at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games on Saturday.

Labor shortage

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, several housing project specialists and business owners have called for resolving the status of workers in the country through prompt solutions, and for opening new visas to bring in additional workers, given the numerous upcoming housing and developmental projects.

Head of the Union of Restaurants and Cafes Fahad Al-Arbash explained that the reason behind this problem is that some citizens, faced with the pressure of rising prices, hire these workers for construction work, as they are readily available and there are no other alternative.

While most large companies have organized workers, their costs are high and often unaffordable for citizens. Citizens may become victims of contractors who either abandon the project or fail to complete construction work.

He expressed hope for a serious approach to resolving this issue.

Al-Arbash stressed that the municipality is the relevant authority in this case, and it should mediate between the citizens and the contractors, adding, "If an agreement is made between the two parties, the contractor should provide a bank guarantee for the payment re-

Average price per kilogram recorded at KD 2.52

Local fish sales hit 631K dinars in Q2

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4, (KUNA): The Central Statistical Administration (CSA) said Tuesday that the quantities of local fish sold during the second quarter of this year amounted to 250 tons, with a total value of about KD 631,000 (around USD 2 million) at wholesale prices.

The CSA added in its quarterly bulletin on the total quantities and values of local fish sold for the second quarter of this year, exclusively for the Kuwait

News Agency (KUNA), that the average kilogram recorded KD 2.52 in the second quarter. It explained that the total quantities of local fish in April amounted to 93 tons, with a value of KD 232,700 (around USD 767,000) according to wholesale prices for that month. The total quantities in May amounted to 90.9 tons, with a value of KD 237,900 (around USD 785,000).

The quantities of local fish sold in June amount-

ed to 65 tons, with a value of KD 160,000 (around USD 528,000). The administration's statistics include 25 different types of fish, including shrimp, sea bream, grouper, nuwaibi, bass, naqrour, and others. It is worth noting that the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources sets fishing dates for fish species to give them a chance to reproduce and turn them into a sustainable resource for the country.

Sharjah's Deputy Ruler underlines agile gov't communications in solving issues

IGCF '24 kicks off

SHARJAH, Sept 4, (KUNA): Deputy Ruler of Sharjah and chairperson of Sharjah Media Council, Sheikh Sultan Ahmad Al-Qasimi stated Wednesday that achieving agile government communication starts with agility of the minds.

Inaugurating the 13th international forum for government communication, themed "Agile governments, innovative communication," Deputy Ruler Al-Qasimi underlined opening direct communication channels between audience and government bodies to solve people's issues urgently citing Sharjah's "Direct Line" Programme over radio and TV.

"Flexibility is deeply rooted in our nature, and issues were resolved swiftly in a time when a carrier pigeon was the fastest means of communication," the Deputy Ruler reflected, "Yet today, in our era of rapid advancements, unfortunately, certain terms have dominated the work of some governments: bureaucracy, the procedural cycle."

The opening ceremony also included a short film featuring global advancements and its significance in improving people's quality of life through active and flexible communication between government and people.

The two-day forum, organized by the Emirate's media council, and under the auspices of Federal Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad Al-Qasimi.

The 13th edition of the International Government Communication Forum (IGCF) 2024 focuses on the key challenges and opportunities facing nations and governments in the 21st century and aims to enhance communication between governments and the public by discussing governmental communication strategies to address contemporary global challenges.

The forum attracts experts and speakers from various sectors, including government officials, academics, researchers, communication and media professionals, and representatives from international organizations.

These participants aim to explore new communication pathways and provide forward-looking recommendations for government communication.



Al-Qasimi

11th relief aid arrives

Kuwait's 12th air bridge flight departs for Sudan

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4, (KUNA): Kuwait's 12th relief aid plane departed to Sudan on Wednesday, carrying on board 36 tons of food, medicine and two ambulances, organized by the Kuwaiti Society for Relief (KSR) to help those affected by the war and floods.

Before take-off, the General Manager of the Society, Abdulaziz Al-Obaid said told KUNA that this aid plane is part of Kuwait's air bridge to help Sudan with the support of Zakat House in cooperation with Ministries of Defense, Social Affairs, and Foreign Affairs, as well as other eight charities.

The shipment consists of 10 tons of shelter tents, 20 tons of necessary food that helped meet the needs of the displaced families, as well as two ambulances, Al-Obaid added.

He noted that the ongoing armed conflicts in Sudan, the heavy rains, and the flood that left hundreds of Sudanese deceased and injured as well as thousands displaced, was the key motive for Kuwaiti charities to continue this relief mission and to ease the pain and suffering of the Sudanese people.

On his part, the Director General of Kuwait Zakat House, Dr. Majed Al-Azmi affirmed to KUNA that Kuwaiti Air Bridge is to help and support the people of Sudan in this humanitarian crisis.

Dr. Al-Azmi praised the Kuwaiti political leadership for the rapid response to the people of Sudan, with all charities and ministries having provided them with tremendous assistance in the past 16 months.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's 11th air bridge plane arrived in Port Sudan International Airport, loaded with 10 tons of various aid relief supplies.

Kuwait Ambassador to Sudan Dr. Fahad Al-Dheferi told KUNA that the plane was presented by Al-Salam Society for Humanitarian and Charity Work in cooperation with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Affairs, Defense and Foreign Affairs and the Sudanese authorities.

law.

Dr. Al-Enezi urged the state to find solutions for amending the conditions of these workers, such as by establishing a dedicated company or providing temporary sponsorship, similar to measures taken for other categories.

He indicated that citizens are bearing the brunt of this issue, with money being wasted, projects being stalled, and homes remaining incomplete due to high worker costs and unresolved residency issues, adding that the state should take necessary steps to address these challenges as effectively as it has with other issues.

Dr. Al-Enezi highlighted that many workers cannot leave the country due to various reasons such as lack of alternative opportunities to return, accumulating debts, and other personal issues, which collectively prevent them from departing.

He reiterated that the workers' skills are crucial for constructing homes due to which it is necessary to retain them.

Dr. Al-Enezi called for increased efforts to improve their conditions in the country and to address the issues caused by sponsors who have contributed to their status as marginal labor.

Kuwait charitable

Continued from Page 1

The involved teams had also scrambled to assist victims of earthquakes in Syria and Turkey. Al-Obaid also mentioned humanitarian missions in Morocco, Libya, Gaza and Sudan.

Revealing specific details, Al-Obaid said 19 states benefited from the campaigns, over the past two years, with 177 executed projects, more than 1.7 million beneficiaries and 8.5 million spent dinars. Up to 45 charitable and private associations, companies and public departments had taken part in the campaigns, Al-Obaid added.

The society aims, by the end of next year, to achieve strategic goals, expand coordination and partnerships with leading local and international levels, increase benefits for those in need and enhance speedy intervention, Al-Obaid revealed.

For his part, Chairperson of the Union of Kuwait Charity Organizations (UKCO) Saad Al-Otaibi has said the federation continues to back up humanitarian conditions in many states of the world through coordination and cooperation with charities and philanthropic

associations in Kuwait.

The UKCO stands behind efforts and schemes for pursuing the Kuwaiti charitable action, in coordination with the official quarters. The tasks involve campaigns, conventions, meetings, forming voluntary teams and devising future plans for overhauling the charitable sector, Al-Otaibi said.

The federation has recently organized several conventions, addressing in part education for refugees and prospects of providing sustainable teaching in countries witnessing conflicts namely Palestine, Yemen, Syria and Jordan. Moreover, it has coordinated field efforts by the Kuwaiti associations for helping the Rohingya in the regions where they have taken up refuge.

Meanwhile, Abdullah Al-Dawas, Director of Resources and Media at Sheikh Abdullah Nouri Charity, said the Kuwaiti charities have become a landmark and civil icon in the country's history due to the political leadership's support and the innate trait of the Kuwaiti people of doing good deeds and development of the sector.

Nouri Charity, since its launch, has been able with support of the Kuwaiti community, the local and external partners, to provide humanitarian support in many countries, soothing suffering of the stricken, aiding the poor and the needy, Al-Dawas said in remarks to KUNA.

Al-Dawas disclosed that the association, earlier this year, executed several charitable projects, aiding 400,840 people in Gaza, building residential towns in Kenya, Yemen and the Kyrgyz Republic. The houses were particularly built for widows and orphans. Furthermore, the society had launched medical programs for treating patients of eye illnesses, building hospitals and providing treatment for 91,250 patients. Additionally, medical camps had been erected in the Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan where 850 patients received care.

Ramadan iftar meals and Eid slaughtered livestock had been provided to some 775,000 people in 30 countries, he said, adding that wells had been dug to secure water for nearly 50,000 people and 28,571 individuals benefited from financial allocations for mosques and donations.

Abdulaziz Al-Kandari, in charge of communications and information technology at Namaa charity, said a statement to KUNA that the national philanthropic institutions are "prime partners" of sustainable development, improving life quality ad social solidarity.

As to Namaa charity, the association

has succeeded in expanding scope of its tasks covering many countries and regions in dire need, soothing suffering of millions of afflicted peoples and paving the way for hundreds of thousands of the impoverished to work and produce.

In 2023, Namaa provided at the local level treatment to more than 150 cancer patients, education to 2,366 youngsters, distributed 211 air-conditioning sets, sponsored 1,100 orphans, supported 479 university-level students, distributed 2,674 food parcels, cared for 137 special needs' cases, distributed 5.85 million water bottles, granted monthly financial aid to 3,229 families. Outside Kuwait, also during the same year, it built 198 mosques, 29 Islamic centers, 838 water wells, conducted 1,600 eye surgeries, carried out 300 development projects, built five orphanages and four medical centers, in addition to other good deeds.

"While we celebrate the International Day of Charity to back up its message, encourage the associations and educate the masses about significance of charity, we gratefully recall the giving by the good doers, the charity activists and the volunteers in this realm," he said, while also lauding the State of Kuwait's supreme leadership for guiding this sector and promoting its effective role.

Dr. Adnan A-Haddad, the deputy director general for communications and marketing at the International Rahma Society, said the association is celebrating its pioneering charitable role on this distinguished occasion under the theme "42 years of giving," affirming that the society aims to expand its societal role for promoting public awareness of the philanthropic and volunteering actions.

It is seeking to overhaul the sector by means of dedicating attention to the quality of its programs and projects, targeting the segments in need throughout the globe, he said, pointing out that the Kuwaiti relief bodies have set an example to follow in relieving peoples suffering from catastrophes and crises, latest of which was the crisis in Gaza.

In 2023, the association achieved, with support from donors, 3,578 social ventures, 1,003 relief projects, 131 educational ones, 114 health activities, 66 cultural ones and 91 seasonal ventures, after sponsoring 7,673 individuals in need in several countries.

Al-Haddad expressed gratitude to the charitable associations, the relevant ministers, the workers, the volunteers and the donors who have "made the Kuwaiti charitable work a shining star in the humanity's sky."

World News Roundup

Europe

'Conditions very fragile'

Ukraine's Foreign Min Kuleba quits

KYIV, Ukraine, Sept 4, (AP): Foreign Minister **Dmytro Kuleba**, one of Ukraine's most recognizable faces on the international stage, submitted his resignation Wednesday ahead of an expected major government reshuffle. Russian strikes, meanwhile, killed seven people in a western Ukraine city, a day after one of the deadliest missile attacks since the war began.

Kuleba, 43, didn't give a reason for stepping down. His resignation will be discussed by lawmakers at their next session, parliamentary Speaker Ruslan Stefanchuk said on his Facebook page. Four other Cabinet ministers tendered their resignations late Tuesday, making the Cabinet reshuffle likely the biggest since Russia's February 2022 invasion.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy indicated last week that a reshuffle was imminent, with the war poised to enter a critical stage and as its 1,000-day mark looms in November.

He said Wednesday that Ukraine needs "new energy, and that includes in diplomacy." He said during a Kyiv news conference with visiting Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris that he couldn't announce any replacements yet because he didn't know whether the candidates would accept his invitation to join the government.

Zelenskyy needs to keep up Ukraine's morale amid the grinding war of attrition with its bigger neighbor and steel the country's resolve for what will be another hard winter. Russia has been smashing Ukraine's power grid, knocking out some 70% of generation capacity and rupturing heat and water supplies.

Attack

And Wednesday's deadly attack on Lviv - a city near the border with NATO member Poland and far from the front lines - underscored how all of Ukraine is at the mercy of Moscow's long-range capabilities.

The Ukrainian army's risky incursion almost a month ago into Russia's Kursk border region raised Ukrainian spirits and countered months of grim news from the front line in eastern Ukraine. The incursion's ultimate goals are unclear, though Zelenskyy says Ukraine wants to create a buffer zone there that would prevent cross-border Russian attacks.

'Conditions very fragile at Zaporizhzhia': The head of the United Nations' nuclear watchdog on Tuesday described the situation at Europe's largest nuclear power plant as "very fragile" following fresh attacks near the site in central Ukraine, and vowed to expand the agency's inspections to include critical electricity supplies.

Rafael Mariano Grossi, the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, was making his 10th visit to Ukraine since the Russia-Ukraine war began in February 2022.

He was headed to the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant after talks in Kyiv with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and top energy officials.

"I think the situation - I have very often characterized it - as very fragile," Grossi told reporters in the Ukrainian capital. "The station is again on the verge of being on a blackout. We've had eight of those in the past. A blackout (means) no power; no cooling, no cooling. No cooling, then maybe you have a disaster."

Earlier, Grossi posted on X that he was on his way to Zaporizhzhia to "help prevent a nuclear accident."

'Failures turned Grenfell into death trap': A damning report on a deadly London high-rise fire said Wednesday that decades of failures by government, regulators and industry turned Grenfell Tower into a "death trap" where 72 people lost their lives.

The years-long public inquiry into the 2017 blaze concluded that there was no "single cause" of the tragedy, but said a combination of dishonest companies, weak or incompetent regulators and complacent government led the building to be covered in combustible cladding that turned a small apartment fire into the deadliest blaze on British soil since World War II.

"We conclude that the fire at Grenfell Tower was the culmination of decades of failure by central government and other bodies in positions of responsibility in the construction industry to look carefully into the danger of incorporating combustible materials into the external walls of high-rise residential buildings and to act on the information available to them," said the inquiry, led by retired judge Martin Moore-Bick.

British hiker found dead after flood: A British man has been found dead while emergency services search for a woman of the same nationality after both were apparently swept away in a flash flood while hiking on the Mediterranean island of Mallorca, Spanish police said Wednesday.

Spain's Civil Guard said that both people were taking a trail that leads through a small canyon to the sea when the storm hit on Tuesday.

The body of the 32-year-old man was found on Wednesday while the search continues for woman, police said.

More inclement weather was forecast for the island and parts of Spain's mainland. The Balearic Islands and a large swath of Spain's eastern coast was under alert for strong winds and heavy rains.

More thunderstorms over Barcelona forced the organizers of the America's Cup sailing event to postpone racing. That decision came after lightning struck near a yacht on Tuesday, forcing a race to be abandoned.

Boat tries to make apparent Channel crossing: Just a day after 12 migrants died in a failed effort to cross the English Channel aboard an small inflatable, another boat carrying several dozen people appears to be making another crossing attempt from the coast of northern France on Wednesday, seemingly trying to head toward Britain.

Associated Press journalists on a beach in Wimereux, on the northern French coastline and close to the site of Tuesday's deadly sinking, broadcast live video of an inflatable boat crowded with people, seemingly migrants, out at sea.

The boat is so laden that some of those aboard, crammed side-by-side on the inflatable tubes, have their legs over the sides.

Many are wearing orange life preservers. A small patrol boat flying a French flag approached the inflatable at one point and a crew person aboard then tossed more orange life vests - about half a dozen of them - to people aboard the vessel, who caught them.



Kuleba



Poland's President Andrzej Duda, (second right), and First Lady Agata Kornhauser-Duda, (right), greet Lithuania's President Gitanas Nausėda, (second left), and First Lady Diana Nausėdienė in Warsaw, Poland, on Sept 4. The visit is to be filled with talks on the region's security in the face of Russia's war on Ukraine and meetings with the defense sector and troops of the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade in Lublin, eastern Poland. (AP)



Voters fill out their ballots at a polling station during Massachusetts state primary voting on Sept 3, at the Newton Free Library, in Newton, Mass. Atorney John Deaton won a three-way Republican primary to face off against incumbent US Sen Elizabeth Warren, who ran unopposed in Tuesday's Massachusetts primary. (AP)



Hoskins



Sullivan

America

6 hurt in Seattle gunfire: At least seven vehicles traveling along Interstate 5 just south of Seattle were hit by gunfire overnight, leaving at least six people injured before a suspect was taken into custody, officials said Tuesday.

The state patrol did not release any information on the suspect in the shooting that left two people in critical condition and said they would not speculate on his motive. Once they complete their investigation, the case will be turned over to the prosecuting attorney.

The Washington State Patrol has been involved in 37 active investigations into highway shootings in King County, which includes Seattle, since the start of the year, which is similar to the previous two years, Capt. Ron Mead said during a press conference. Statewide, there have been 57 in 2024, he said.

The latest gunfire started at 8:26 p.m. Monday on northbound Interstate 5, said Chris Loftis, a state patrol spokesperson. Someone in a white Volvo fired several rounds, striking a driver and passenger in a nearby car, he said. The female passenger was hospitalized in critical condition, he said. (AP)

4 Vegas teens plead guilty: Four Las Vegas teenagers pleaded guilty Tuesday to voluntary manslaughter in the fatal beating of their high school classmate, as part of a deal with prosecutors that kept them from being tried as adults.

The teens originally were charged in January as adults with second-degree murder and conspiracy in connection with the November death of 17-year-old Jonathan Lewis Jr. The attack was captured on cellphone video and shared widely across social media.

Each teen faces incarceration at a juvenile detention center for an undetermined length of time, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reported.

Minors prosecuted in the juvenile court system in Clark County, which includes Las Vegas, do not face traditional jail or prison sentences and instead are released from custody after they complete rehabilitation programs, according to Brigid Duffy, director of the juvenile division of the Clark County district attorney's office. (AP)

Politics

Federal judge rejects Trump's request

Deaton to face Sen Warren in November

BOSTON, Sept 4, (AP): Attorney John Deaton won a three-way Republican primary to face off against incumbent US Sen Elizabeth Warren, who ran unopposed in Tuesday's Massachusetts primary.

Deaton, a former US Marine and cryptocurrency attorney who was born in Detroit, announced earlier this year that he would vie for the chance to challenge Warren in November as she runs for her third term in office. He defeated fellow Republicans industrial engineer Bob Antonellis and Quincy City Council President Ian Cain.

Deaton said in a statement that he was humbled by the support from voters.

"Tomorrow, we begin the next phase of the campaign - an effort that will hold Elizabeth Warren accountable for her failures on the border, the unaffordable cost of supporting a family, a broken healthcare system, abandoning our ally Israel, and restoring faith in our politics," Deaton said.

Warren said in an email that she's accepted two October debates, one in Boston and one in Springfield.

"A small handful of crypto billionaires and corporate special interests poured more than \$2 million into a super PAC to handpick their preferred Republican candidate, and now Massachusetts voters have a clear choice that could determine control of the Senate," Janice Rottenberg, Warren campaign manager, said in a statement.

Climb

Relatively unknown in Massachusetts politics, Deaton faces a steep climb against Warren, a former Harvard law professor who has twice won a Senate seat but came in third in Massachusetts in her 2020 bid for president. She remains popular in the heavily Democratic state.

Warren faced a competitive race in her first US Senate bid in 2012, when she toppled Republican incumbent Scott Brown. She received more than 60% of the vote in 2018. Biden carried the state with 66% of the vote in the 2020 presidential race.

In eastern Massachusetts' 8th Congressional District, US Rep Stephen Lynch faces no primary challenge in

his race for a 12th full term. Videographer Rob Burke defeated two fellow Republicans - health care worker and retired Verizon employee Jim Govattos and bar owner Daniel Kelly - for the chance to face off against Lynch in November.

Burke challenged Lynch in the 2022 general election, receiving 30% of the vote, compared to 70% for Lynch. Biden won this Boston-area district in 2020 with 67% of the vote. Lynch had about \$1.1 million in the bank as of the end of June. None of his Republican challengers have reported raising any money.

Iowa lieutenant gov resigns: Iowa Lt Gov Adam Gregg resigned his position Tuesday after serving more than seven years in office to take the helm of the state's bankers association.

Gregg said in a statement that "my time in public service must come to a close." Also Tuesday, the Iowa Bankers Association announced Gregg as their incoming president and CEO, effective Oct. 1.

Represent

"In my time as lieutenant governor, I found that for every good thing happening in our state, there was an Iowa bank backing it," he said. "Now I have the great honor to represent this industry, which is so critical to Iowa's success."

Gov Kim Reynolds initially announced the resignation, saying in a statement that the 41-year-old Republican "has been a tremendous partner" and is pursuing "a career opportunity that allows him to focus more on his family."

Iowa law states that the governor shall appoint someone to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. Reynolds indicated that she will do so "later this fall." For now, Iowa Senate President Amy Sinclair, a Republican representing a south central district, is next in the line of succession.

The Iowa Bankers Association advocates for its members with state and local governments and has been led for 28 years by John Sorensen, who is stepping down this year.

The new job is likely to come with

a significant pay increase for Gregg, whose salary remained by law at \$103,212 throughout his tenure.

Trump's request rejected: A federal judge on Tuesday swiftly rejected Donald Trump's request to intervene in his New York hush money criminal case, spurning the former president's attempt at an end-run around the state court where he was convicted and is set to be sentenced in two weeks.

US District Judge Alvin Hellerstein's ruling - just hours after Trump's lawyers asked him to weigh the move - upends the Republican presidential nominee's plan to move the case to federal court so that he could seek to have his conviction overturned in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's presidential immunity ruling.

Trump's lawyers challenged the decision, filing a notice of appeal late Tuesday in the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Trump and his lawyers "will continue to fight to move this Hoax into federal court where it should be put out of its misery once and for all," his campaign spokesperson, Steven Cheung, said in a statement.

Ex-aide to 2 NY gov's charged: A former aide to two New York governors was charged Tuesday with acting as an illegal agent of the Chinese government who used her state positions to subtly advance Beijing's agenda in exchange for financial benefits worth millions of dollars.

Linda Sun, who held numerous posts in New York state government, including deputy chief of staff for Gov Kathy Hochul and deputy diversity officer for former Gov Andrew Cuomo, was arrested Tuesday morning along with her husband, Chris Hu, at their \$4 million home on Long Island.

Federal prosecutors said Sun, at the request of Chinese officials, blocked representatives of the Taiwanese government from having access to the governor's office and shaped New York governmental messaging to align with the priorities of the Chinese government, among other things.

2 Phoenix officers shot: Two Phoenix officers were shot and wounded by a person suspected of breaking into a vehicle, one in critical condition and the other stable, likely saved by his ballistic vest, police said Tuesday.

One person has been detained, interim police Chief Michael Sullivan told a news conference hours after the shooting near downtown Phoenix. He said police do not believe there is an immediate danger to anyone in the community.

"This is a terrible night for the Phoenix Police Department and for those who love and care for officers and for members of our community," he said.

Sullivan said he spoke to the officer in stable condition: "He was traumatized. He just been shot, and his partner had just been shot."

The officers responded to a call of someone attempting to break into a vehicle around 6:30 p.m.

'They were shot execution-style': A man suspected of killing four people aboard a Chicago-area transit train shot them at close range while they were asleep, officials said Tuesday.

The shooting took place before 5:30 a.m. Monday aboard the Chicago area's L system, on a Blue Line train that was moving near where the line ends in Forest Park, a suburb about 10 miles (16 kilometers) west of downtown Chicago. Rhanni S. Davis, 30, was later arrested on another Chicago Transit Authority L line, according to police. Authorities charged Davis with four counts of first-degree murder Tuesday.

Forest Park Mayor Rory Hoskins said the victims likely didn't even see the shooter.

"They were shot execution-style as they slept," Hoskins told The Associated Press. Margaret Miller, 64, and three men including Simeon Bihest, 28, and Adrian Collins, 60, were fatally shot, according to the Cook County medical examiner's office. (AP)



Britain's Queen Camilla arrives for a visit at the Dyson Cancer Centre, part of the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, in Bath, England on Sept 3. (AP)

Lat/Am

Venezuela security forces tied in killings: A global human rights watchdog on Wednesday implicated Venezuelan security forces and pro-government armed groups in killings that occurred during the protests that followed the country's disputed July presidential election.

Human Rights Watch (HRW), in a report detailing repressive measures the government unleashed after the vote, asserted that credible evidence gathered and analyzed by researchers, forensic pathologists and arms experts ties Venezuela's national guard and national police to some of the 24 killings that took place as people protested the outcome of the election.

The organization also concluded that violent gangs aligned with the ruling party also "appear to be responsible" in some of the deaths.

Twenty-three of those killed were protesters or bystanders and one was a member of the Bolivarian National Guard.

"The repression we are seeing in Venezuela is shockingly brutal," **Juanita Goebertus**, the organization's director for the Americas, said in a statement. "Concerned governments need to take urgent steps to ensure that people are able to peacefully protest and that their vote is respected."

The organization said it reached its conclusions regarding the killings based on interviews with witnesses, journalists and other sources; reviews of death certificates, videos, photographs; and analyses by forensic pathologists and arms experts.

Thousands of people, including minors, took to the streets across Venezuela hours after ruling party-loyal electoral authorities declared President Nicolás Maduro the winner of the election. (AP)



Goebertus



'Christmas in Venezuela kicks off in Oct': The world's attention on Venezuela has been focused in the last weeks on the fallout from a highly contested presidential election that both the ruling party and its opponents claim to have won, the ensuing persecution of critics and the arrest warrant against the former opposition presidential candidate.

But as political tensions escalate, President Nicolás Maduro decided there was a more important matter to discuss: Christmas and the need to kick off the jolly season a tad early this year. In October, to be precise.

"It's September, and it already smells like Christmas," Maduro said Monday night during his weekly television show. "That's why this year, as a way of paying tribute to you all, and in gratitude to you all, I'm going to decree an early Christmas for October 1." But not everyone seems eager to start singing Christmas carols.

"Christmas is supposed to be a time of joy, family reunions, parties, presents," José Ernesto Ruiz, a 57-year-old office worker, said Tuesday in Caracas, the capital. "(But) without money and with this political crisis, who can believe that there will be an early Christmas?" (AP)



Ex-Venezuelan political prisoner arrested: A Venezuelan opposition member and former political prisoner has been arrested in Miami after fleeing the scene of a fatal crash, police said.

Gilber Caro, 50, was charged Monday with leaving the scene of a crash involving death, a Miami police arrest report said. Caro is a member of former opposition leader Juan Guaidó's party, Voluntad Popular. Caro was part of a group of opposition lawmakers and politicians who were pardoned and released from jail in Venezuela in 2020.

According to Miami police, Caro was driving an SUV early Monday morning when he crashed into a car at a major intersection. Crash investigators determined that the other vehicle had run a red light, and the driver died at the scene. Caro left the area on foot without rendering aid, police said.

Several hours after the crash, Caro called the registered owner of the vehicle he had been driving, officials said. He told the owner he had been in a crash and to call 911. Caro was arrested about two hours later. Caro was being held at the Miami-Dade jail on an immigration hold, according to jail records. (AP)



Protesters block Congress over judicial overhaul: After protesters blocked the entrance to Mexico's Congress on Tuesday in an attempt to stop a controversial judicial overhaul, lawmakers took the first steps to jam through the proposal at a nearby gymnasium.

The plan would make judges stand for election, something critics say would deal a severe blow to the independence of the judiciary and the system of checks and balances.

"The party with the majority could take control of the judicial branch, and that would practically be the end of democracy," said protester Javier Reyes, a 37-year-old federal court worker. "They want to own Mexico."

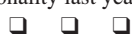
Despite that, lawmakers from Mexico's governing party, Morena, and their allies appeared determined to quickly pass the reform. (AP)



Nicaragua OKs criminal code changes: Nicaragua's Sandinista-controlled National Assembly approved criminal code changes Tuesday that allow the government to try opponents in absentia and seize the assets of the condemned. It's a practice that's already carried out but will now have legal foundation.

The proposal from President Daniel Ortega was approved unanimously in the state party controlled legislature. Opponents and organizations that have fled or been forced into exile in Ortega's years-long campaign to silence critical voices could be fined, sentenced to lengthy prison terms and see their property seized by the government under the approved changes.

Nicaraguan lawyer Uriel Pineda said that with these changes Ortega's administration is looking to "legalize the arbitrary (actions) that it has been committing, like the confiscation of property," while at the same time "reinforcing the structure of repression, giving it a legal framework." Pineda was exiled and stripped of his nationality last year. (AP)



Haiti unveils corruption cases against officials: Investigators with Haiti's anti-corruption agency donned caps and face masks on Tuesday as they stood behind boxes of evidence that accuse high-ranking government officials of crimes ranging from illicit enrichment to abuse of office.

It's the latest crackdown on widespread corruption in the impoverished Caribbean country long known for its impunity. The newest cases involve food meant for public school students being diverted for other purposes to government fuel being used for personal benefit.

He said the corruption cases unveiled Tuesday have cost the Haitian government \$4.7 million, "an amount that paradoxically exceeds twice the budget allocated to the (agency) to fight corruption." (AP)



Colombian truckers protest over fuel prices: Thousands of Colombians were forced to walk to work on Tuesday, as truckers in major cities blocked highways to protest a recent increase in the price of diesel fuel.

Truckers unions have said that plans by the government to eliminate diesel fuel subsidies would push their businesses to the brink of bankruptcy, while the administration of left-wing President Gustavo Petro argues it must phase out subsidies to cut a growing budget deficit and direct more funds to education and health. On Saturday, the government raised the price of diesel fuel to around \$2.90 per gallon, an increase of 50 cents, following numerous meetings with truckers unions.

In response, the unions have been holding protests around the country, which intensified on Tuesday, with roadblocks in the cities of Bogotá, Medellín and Cali, that have diminished the amount of food arriving at wholesale markets. (AP)



Chinese President Xi Jinping holds talks with Senegalese President Bassirou Diomaye Faye, who is in Beijing for the 2024 Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and a state visit, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China on Sept 4. (Xinhua)

Xi holds talks with Senegalese president

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday held talks with Senegalese President Bassirou Diomaye Faye, who is in Beijing for the 2024 Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and a state visit.

Noting that China and Senegal are friends and partners on the path of national development and revitalization, Xi said the bilateral cooperation has yielded tangible results and benefited the two peoples over the past years.

China is willing to work with Senegal to realize their respective modernization, and advance the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries to a new level, Xi said. (AP)



South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, (right), greets New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon during a meeting at the Presidential Office in Seoul, South Korea, on Sept 4. (AP)



Museveni



Wine

Africa

Ugandan oppn figure Wine shot: Uganda's leading opposition figure **Bob Wine** was shot in the leg in a confrontation with police Tuesday just outside the capital, Kampala, and was "seriously injured," his political party said.

Video posted online showed Wine surrounded by followers who yelled that he had been shot before some supported him into a car. It was not immediately clear whether he was hit by a live bullet or a tear gas projectile. Images shared by his close associates showed a bleeding wound below the left knee.

Street confrontations between Wine and the police have frequently descended into violence, but this is the first time he has been wounded in such a way. He was being treated at a local hospital.

His party, the National Unity Platform, holds the most seats of any opposition group in the national assembly. The party said on X that Ugandan security operatives "have made an attempt on the life" of Wine, whose real name is Kyagulanyi Ssentamu.

"He was shot in the leg and seriously injured in Bulindo, Wakiso District," it said, referring to a town on Kampala's outskirts.

Ugandan police said in a statement that Wine had been advised against holding a street procession when he left a private event in Bulindo. According to the statement, Wine "insisted on proceeding and closing the road, leading to police intervention to prevent the procession."

Wine became one of the most recognizable opposition figures in Africa when he ran for president in 2021, losing to President **Yoweri Museveni** in an election he claimed was rigged against him. Wine had been a famous entertainer in this East African country before he won a seat in the national assembly in 2017. He is especially popular among young Ugandans in urban areas. (AP)



S.Africa railway official gets 15 yrs: A former top official at South Africa's state-owned passenger railway company received a 15-year concurrent prison sentence on Tuesday for faking his engineering qualifications and other cases of fraud.

Daniel Mtimkulu, 49, resigned as the head of engineering at the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa, or PRASA, shortly before he was arrested in 2015. He was convicted of three counts of fraud and forgery in 2022 over fake university qualifications and a forged job offer from a rival company that resulted in executives at PRASA nearly

Asia

Philippine fugitive mayor arrested in Indonesia

SKorea, NZ condemn NKorea-Russia ties

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 4, (Agencies): The leaders of South Korea and New Zealand strongly condemned the deepening military cooperation between North Korea and Russia as they met Wednesday for a summit meant to strengthen bilateral ties.

New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon arrived in Seoul, the South Korean capital, on his first trip to the Asian country since he took office last November.

Luxon and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol condemned "in the strongest possible terms" the expanding military ties between North Korea and Russia, including North Korea's export of ballistic missiles to Russia in violation of UN Security Council resolutions, according to a joint statement released by Luxon's office.

Support

The two leaders denounced "in the most serious of terms" North Korea's illegal nuclear and missile development programs. They also strongly condemned Russia's war against Ukraine and pledged to continue to support the sovereignty of Ukraine and its efforts to secure a just and lasting peace, according to the joint statement.

During the summit, Yoon and Luxon decided to launch a regular bilateral economic security dialogue to discuss challenges and opportunities. The two emphasized the importance of strengthening trade and economic connections, noting that the two-way trade volume between South Korea and New Zealand has approximately doubled in the past decade, according to the joint statement. During the summit, Yoon and Luxon decided to launch a regular bilateral economic security dialogue to discuss challenges and opportunities.



'NKorea launches balloons': South Korea says it has detected suspected trash-carrying balloons launched by North Korea, in the latest round of a Cold War-style psychological warfare between the war-divided rivals.

The metropolitan government of Seoul, South Korea's capital, issued text alerts Wednesday saying that objects likely to be North Korean bal-

loons were spotted in regions north of the city. It advised people to stay indoors and beware of objects dropping from the sky.

South Korea's military did not immediately release details and there were no immediate reports of injuries or damage.



Japan, Norway sign MoU: Japanese Defense Minister **Minoru Kihara** and his Norwegian counterpart **Bjorn Gram** on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding on bilateral defense equipment and technology cooperation, Japan's Defense Ministry said.

During their meeting in Tokyo, Kihara and Gram agreed to work more closely together towards further deepening Japan-Norway defense cooperation and exchanges, the ministry said in a press release. The two ministers also shared the view to further strengthen cooperation against unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion.

Kihara welcomed the signing of the MoU and the deployment of Norwegian Navy frigate to the Indo-Pacific region for the first time next year as a part of the UK Carrier Strike Group.



Thailand welcomes new Cabinet: Thailand on Wednesday welcomed a new Cabinet after **King Maha Vajiralongkorn** approved the appointment of 35 members to serve under Prime Minister **Paetongtarn Shinawatra**.

Paetongtarn took office on Aug 16, after her predecessor, **Srettha Thavasin** was forced out of office by a court ruling that he had violated an ethics law by appointing a Cabinet member who had served time in prison in connection with a bribery case. She is the daughter of former Prime Minister **Thaksin Shinawatra**, who was ousted by a military coup in 2006 but remains politically influential.

Paetongtarn is leader of the Pheu Thai Party, which took power after last year's general election. It formed a government after members of the conservative Senate refused to endorse the prime minister nominated by the progressive Move Forward Party.

served concurrently.

As PRASA's head of engineering, Mtimkulu was behind a deal worth more than \$100 million to buy dozens of new train locomotives from Spain, which were then found to be too tall for South Africa's rail

The new Cabinet is substantially the same as Srettha's, with five of the deputy prime ministers retaining their jobs.



'China gifting 2 warships': Cambodia's Defense Ministry said Wednesday that China is gifting its navy two warships of the type it has had docked for months at a strategically important base being expanded with Beijing's funding, which has raised concerns of China establishing a permanent naval presence on the Gulf of Thailand.

Ministry spokeswoman **Maly Socheata** told The Associated Press that China would give Cambodia two newly built Type 56 corvettes, smaller vessels typically used for coastal patrols, next year at the earliest.

She would not comment on reports that China also planned to hand over to Cambodia newly expanded facilities at Ream Naval Base, including a lengthy new pier capable of accommodating much larger naval vessels than Cambodia has in its own fleet.



Philippine mayor held in Jakarta: A dismissed town mayor who fled the Philippines after being accused of helping establish an illegal online gaming and scam center catering mostly to clients in China has been arrested near Indonesia's capital, officials said Wednesday.

Indonesian authorities arrested **Alice Guo** at a house in Jakarta's satellite city of Tangerang just before midnight on Tuesday, according to **Khrisna Murti**, chief of the international division of the National Police.

Guo was in custody and awaiting deportation to the Philippines, Murti said, adding that her arrest was the result of "cooperation between Indonesian and Filipino police."

Filipino President **Ferdinand Marcos Jr.** thanked the Indonesian authorities.

"Let this serve as a warning to those who attempt to evade justice," Marcos said and added that arrangements were being made to bring Guo back to the Philippines where she faces a slew of criminal charges.

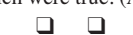
doubling his salary to keep him.

Mtimkulu was sentenced to 15 years for the first count of fraud and six years in prison for each of the other two counts. A judge at the special commercial crimes court in Johannesburg ordered that the sentences be



Judicial workers block entrances of Congress to protest constitutional reform proposals that would make judges stand for election in Mexico City on Sept 3. After protesters blocked the entrance to Mexico's Congress on Tuesday in an attempt to stop a controversial judicial overhaul, lawmakers took the first steps to jam through the proposal at a nearby gymnasium. (AP)

network and couldn't be used. The big-money contract was one of several at PRASA that have been linked with alleged bribes and kickbacks. Mtimkulu claimed to have a master's degree from a university in South Africa and a doctorate in engineering management from a university in Germany, neither of which were true. (AP)



Algeria votes for prez this weekend: Billboards are strikingly empty. There are few campaign posters. And aside from public television broadcasts showing candidates traveling the country, there are few signs of enthusiasm heading into Algeria's presidential election this weekend.

Prospective voters in the gas-rich North African nation say they are more concerned about prolonged inflation's effects on the spiking prices of school supplies, potatoes and coffee. Military-backed President **Abdelmadjid Tebboune**, 78, appears poised to breeze to a second term. "How can you expect Algerians to have any interest in the elections when life is hell on a daily basis?" asked middle school principal **Noureddine Benchikh**, who told The Associated Press he wasn't really in the mood for politics.

The malaise is a far cry from the hopes of April 2019, when pro-democracy activists with the Hirak movement called for broad, structural changes to Algeria's military-dominated political system after then-oc-togenarian President **Abdelaziz Bouteflika** resigned under pressure. (AP)

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+401.45	78,849.50	SAUDI - TASI	-52.23	12,128.14
			DUBAI - DFMGI	-5.07	4,364.76
			JAPAN - Nikkei 225	-1,638.70	37,047.61
			PHILIPPINES - PSEI	-0.80	6,882.12
			EGYPT - EGX 30	-20.29	30,998.19

Business

By the Council of Ministers of Labor in GCC States

KFH honored as best bank in Kuwait for Manpower Nationalization at private sector level

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has received an honor from the Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs in GCC States for its distinction and excellence in the execution of the Manpower Nationalization and qualification programs at the private sector level in Kuwait. The recognition was in a special ceremony held in the Qatari capital "Doha" under the patronage of the Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs in GCC.

On the sidelines of receiving the honor plaque, KFH Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, expresses his pleasure to receive this recognition as an official tribute to KFH's efforts in the field of labor qualification and nationalization. This recognition holds particular significance as it is awarded annually, underscoring the continuous efforts of KFH to nationalize and develop the Kuwaiti talents among young graduates and experienced professionals.

KFH is committed to enhancing their capabilities and active roles in various activities and services by implementing a balanced strategy to attract, develop and prepare national expertise. This approach ensures the growth of creative minds and talented individuals as well as skilled professionals, while also qualifying fresh graduates. Additionally, KFH provides equal opportunities for everyone in terms of promotions, leadership roles and being active contributors to KFH's successful journey across all levels.

AlOmar said that selecting KFH as the best institution for the nationalization of labor at the private sector level in Kuwait was based on certain criteria and calibers through which KFH was able to achieve high scores on the Kuwaitization and training indicators according to the ratings and feedback issued by the concerned official authorities. He affirmed that KFH shall continue its endeavor to raise the Kuwaitization levels as per global standards in this respect.

100% of Kuwaiti hires

AlOmar expressed his pride of KFH having the highest



Zeyad AlOmar receiving the honor for KFH.

number of Kuwaiti employees at the Kuwaiti banks and private sector level. He highlighted that the Bank has continued attracting and hiring national talents and competencies, in addition to enhancing its policies in terms of learning and development, women empowerment and digital transformation. This dedication is exemplified by ongoing efforts to enhance the digital skills of KFH's human capital and the introduction of qualitative and specialized programs through KFH Digital Academy. KFH's impressive hiring records further underscore

this achievement, with Kuwaitis making up 100% of the approximately 400 new hires in 2023, resulting in a Kuwaitization rate of 81%.

KFH also provided over 83,000 training hours for more than 3000 employees by the end of last year. KFH also introduced a program to develop its leaders which encompasses the "Building Leadership Excellence" and "Enterprise Leadership" programs in collaboration with prestigious universities and renowned training institutions. This initiative is designed to el-

evate the capabilities and performance of nearly 50 manager and executive managers within KFH Group.

AlOmar indicated that KFH is achieving remarkable progress in accomplishing sustainability goals at the HR level by applying transparency, development of professional policies at work, commitment to environmental standards, social values, governance and sustainability as a part of improving employees' education and strengthening the bank's principles. He added that KFH continues to focus on the enhancement of women representation in all departments and participates in providing the market with banking and finance expertise of Kuwaiti ladies who enjoy high level of professionalism, thus achieving an added value to national economy and Kuwaiti society. KFH has also reinforced its social responsibility and commitment to women empowerment principles by signing agreements with United Nations Entity for the Empowerment of Women as part of the UN Global Compact.

Honoring criteria

The honoring is based on certain criteria and calibers. Each GCC member country nominates private sector institutions which have achieved high and advanced ratios nationalization programs, recruitment of high ratios of national labor and providing appropriate qualification and training opportunities to national labor, taking into consideration the type of advantages and allowances applied at the nominated institution to achieve national labor stability.

Regarding the selection procedures, a special committee is formed under the supervision of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in cooperation with Chambers of Commerce and Industry and other related entities to review and value the information of the candidate institution.

Ratios and figures

- 81% Kuwaitization ratio
- 100% Kuwaiti hires
- 83,000 training hours for over 3000 employees
- Graduation of 50 KFH Group Leaders

Real estate transactions plunge by 21% in August, deals down by 26%

Residential sector experiences 38% decline in value

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: The latest real estate transaction statistics from the Real Estate Brokers Union for August revealed a significant decrease in the value of real estate transactions, dropping by about 21 percent, while the number of deals fell by approximately 26 percent compared to July. In August, the total value of real estate transactions amounted to around 304 million dinars for 350 deals, down from 385.5 million dinars for 472 deals in July.

The monthly report highlighted that residential

real estate dominated the market, accounting for 66 percent of the total deals, with 231 transactions worth 94.5 million dinars.

Investment real estate followed with 97 deals, representing 27.7 percent and totaling around 116.8 million dinars, while commercial real estate saw 15 deals, representing 4.3 percent of the total number of deals, with a value of 61 million dinars.

The residential sector experienced a sharp decline, with a 38 percent drop in transaction value and a 31 percent decrease in the number of transactions compared to July.

The value of residential sector transactions amounted to about 151.5 million dinars across 337 transactions. Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City led the market with about 8 percent of the transaction value, followed by Abu Futaira with around 6 percent, with Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City also representing about 22 percent of the land transactions in the residential sector.

In the investment sector, there was a slight increase in transaction value by about 1 percent, despite a 14 percent decrease in the number of deals in August compared to July, with a trading value of approximately 115.5 million dinars across 113 deals.

The Dasman area topped the list with 45 percent of the total trading value, followed by Hawalli with 12 percent, while Mahboula accounted for about 41 percent of apartment transactions in the investment sector.

The commercial sector, however, saw a 7 percent decline in trading value, although the number of deals increased by about 36 percent compared to July, with a trading value of approximately 65.9 million dinars for 11 deals.

The Al-Qibla area led with about 34 percent of the trading value, followed by Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City with about 33 percent, which also represented about 33 percent of the land transactions in the commercial sector.

Employment declines, output prices rise

Kuwait's PMI drops below 50 in Aug, first decline in 18 months

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Kuwait's Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell below the neutral 50 mark in August, marking the first dip in over a year and a half, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The index recorded 49.7 points, down from 51.5 in July 2024, signaling a slight decline in the non-oil private sector, according to a report by S&P Global.

The report highlighted signs of a slowdown in the non-oil private sector amid intense competitive pressures.

Although production and new orders continued to grow, the rates of expansion in both areas slowed significantly.

The employment also declined for the

first time in four months, and companies raised their output prices at a slower pace due to these competitive pressures, with overall input cost inflation easing compared to July. Business activity continued its growth streak, extending to 19 months, but the rate of expansion was marginal and the weakest in this period.

While competitive pricing and advertising helped drive new business in August, some companies lost out to cheaper alternatives, causing the growth rate to slow.

The expansion in new business from abroad, however, outpaced the rate of new domestic orders.

Stock market value up 5.46%

Boursa indices rise amid foreign investment surge

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: In the first eight months of 2024, foreign investors recorded net buying transactions worth 125.34 million dinars (\$411.06 million) on the Kuwait Stock Exchange, boosting the market's main indicators, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This influx of foreign capital was, however, counterbalanced by net selling from local and Gulf investors.

Statistics issued by the Information Direct show that institutions and investment funds -- key active traders -- also contributed positively with net purchases during this period.

The four main indices of the Kuwait Stock Exchange saw growth: the Main Index led with an 8.99 percent rise, followed by the "Main 50" at 7.60 percent, the "General" at 5.33 percent, and the "First" at 4.61 percent.

As of August 29, 2024, the market value of shares stood at approximately 42.458 billion dinars, marking a 5.46 percent increase from the end of 2023.

The trading activity for the first eight months reached 8.71 billion dinars, with 35.74 billion shares traded across 2.28 million transactions.

Oil soars to \$77.88 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 3, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up 18 cents to USD 77.88 per barrel on Tuesday, compared to USD 77.70 pb on Monday, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Wednesday.

On a global scale, the price of the Brent crude futures' contracts went down USD 3.77 to USD 73.75 pb, as did the West Texas Intermediate crude, down USD 3.21 to USD 70.34 pb.

A struggle for control over the Libyan Central Bank led to a halt in oil production in Libya, which threatened an economic crisis there due to the heavy reliance on oil revenues and it also posed a risk to global oil supplies.

China announced on Monday that new export orders declined in July for the first time in eight months, and that new home prices in August rose at a slow pace in 2024.

Import financing surges 31.53%

Kuwaiti banks' import financing hits seven-month high in July '24

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: In July 2024, the value of financing provided by Kuwaiti banks for imports rose to its highest level in seven months, reaching 819.1 million dinars, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This represents a significant 31.53 percent increase compared to the same

month in 2023, when the value was 597.9 million dinars.

According to the monthly statistics issued by the Central Bank of Kuwait, import financing also saw a monthly rise of 24.02 percent from June's 634.1 million dinars.

Company honored during GCC Secretariat General ceremony in Qatar

Zain honored for Distinguished Social Project in Kuwait's private sector

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Zain has been recognized with the Distinguished Social Project honor in Kuwait's private sector for its annual Ramadan campaign, Zain Alshuhoor. The recognition came during the recent tenth meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States' Ministers of Social Affairs held in Doha, Qatar.

The announcement was made during the thirteenth honoring ceremony for recognizing leading community projects, attended by H.E. the GCC Secretary General Jasem Al-Budaiwi, H.E. Minister of Social Affairs and Family & Children Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, and H.E. Qatar's Minister of Social Development and Family Mariam Al-Misnad. Zain Kuwait's Corporate Relations Specialist Faisal Al-Duwaihees received the recognition.

This honor underscores Zain's commitment to implementing its comprehensive corporate social responsibility and sustainability strategy to drive impactful social contributions. It also reflects the company's ongoing efforts to foster collaboration with public and private sector organizations to create a positive impact within the community, especially during the Holy Month of Ramadan, which embodies values of generosity, goodwill, and sharing.

Zain expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat General of the Gulf Cooperation Council for this regional recognition, considering it a testament to the Kuwaiti private sector's commitment to achieving social development goals, fostering community outreach, and advancing sustainable objectives—goals that the company has successfully achieved through its Zain Alshuhoor campaign.

The campaign is one of the first and largest Ramadan community



H.E. Social Affairs Minister Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah honors Faisal Al-Duwaihees, attended by H.E. GCC Secretary General Jasem Al-Budaiwi and H.E. Qatar's Social Development Minister Mariam Al-Misnad.

campaigns in Kuwait. Launched over a decade ago, it kicks off annually before the start of the Holy Month and continues daily until Eid Holidays. The campaign offers a wide and ever-evolving range of volunteer, charitable, humanitarian, social, spiritual, and sports programs throughout the month.

Through this campaign, Zain strives to reinforce the values of generosity and kindness that the Holy Month embodies, renewing its connection with all segments of society through numer-

ous initiatives and contributions that reflect the deep-rooted values of the Kuwaiti community in helping others and promoting such values.

This year, Zain collaborated with several strategic partners from both the public and private sectors in Kuwait, including the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Grand Mosque of Kuwait, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), the Kuwait Food Bank, the Public Authority for Disabled Affairs, and Suffix, a sports events and activities organization.

The campaign featured tens of initiatives, including distributing food baskets, hosting Iftar meals, organizing humanitarian and social visits to care homes, children's hospitals, and centers for people with disabilities, in addition to health & sports activities, entertainment and social events, Quran recitation competitions, participations in popular media programs, and much more.

The campaign achieved positive results this year, including the distribution of 42,000 iftar meals throughout



Zain Kuwait HQ Building.

- Attended by H.E. GCC Secretary General Jasem Al-Budaiwi, H.E. Social Affairs Minister Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, and H.E. Qatar's Social Development Minister Mariam Al-Misnad.
- Regional recognition reflects Zain's efforts to implementing its comprehensive social sustainability strategy, driving impactful community contributions.

the Holy Month and nearly 1,000 food baskets to underprivileged families through three official entities. Zain also contributed KD 500,000 to the national campaign to aid debtors in co-operation with the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Additionally, more than 800 participants took part in Zain Alshuhoor Park Ramadan Challenge, while hundreds participated in the company's first Holy Quran recitation competition in collaboration with the Grand Mosque. Hundreds of families also visited

Zain's headquarters to participate in the second season of the unique Zain Girgeaan Drive-Thru event, along with presenting numerous prizes through wZain believes that its success in serving the community is largely due to its strong strategic partnerships with various government and civil society organizations, non-profit entities, international organizations, public and private sector institutions, and volunteer groups -- partnerships that have resulted in a positive social impact year after year.

National Bank of Kuwait leads The Banker's 2024 list of Top 100 Arab Banks in Kuwait

Rating reinforces bank's brand excellence and showcases its robust financial strength

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: In a testament to the enduring strength of its banking brand and robust financial standing, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has soared to the pinnacle of The Banker's 2024 ranking of the top 100 Arab banks, securing the premier position within Kuwait while sustaining its distinguished ninth place among regional banks.

In its annual ranking of the top 100 Arab banks, The Banker magazine evaluated various criteria, with a focus on Tier 1 capital, assets, profitability, asset quality, return on capital, and return on assets. Leveraging its robust financial position and impressive performance metrics, NBK achieved an eighth-place ranking in total assets, boasting a return on assets of 1.56% and a return on capital of approximately 15%.

NBK led the ranking in Kuwait for Tier 1 capital, which amounted to US\$ 12.8 billion as of the end of 2023, reflecting a year-on-year growth of 7.48%. Ad-



ditionally, the Bank excelled in operational efficiency, securing the top position among all Kuwaiti banks.

NBK's inclusion in this prestigious list underscores its leadership on both regional and global stages, highlighting the strength of its balance sheet and its superior performance across several key financial indicators relative to its peers.

The Bank's placement on the list of the region's top financial institutions accentuates the superior quality of its profits, which are firmly anchored in robust foundations across all its business sectors. Moreover, it underscores NBK's exceptional geographical reach, extending across four continents and 13 countries.

Last year, NBK distinguished itself as one of the few banks globally to be honored with several prestigious



NBK Headquarters

- The recognition highlights the Bank's position as a preeminent leader in the region.
- NBK leads in operational efficiency across all Kuwaiti banks.
- The rating highlights the bank's balance sheet strength and excellence in several key financial metrics.
- It reflects the quality of NBK's profits, grounded in solid performance across all business sectors.
- The bank retained its position as the ninth-ranked bank in the region.

awards for its innovations in digital banking. Additionally, the Bank achieved a notably high ranking in the customer satisfaction index.

The Bank maintains one of the highest credit ratings among major banks in the Middle East, as affirmed by the consensus of the three leading global credit rating agencies—Moody's, Fitch, and Standard & Poor's. This prestigious standing is bolstered by its robust capitalization, prudent lending policies, systematic risk management approach, and the expertise and stability of its management and executive team.

In 2023, the bank reported a net profit of KD 560.6 million (US\$ 1.8 billion), reflecting a year-on-year growth of 10.1%. Additionally, net operating income surged by 15.6%, reaching KD 1.2

billion (US\$ 3.8 billion). By the end of 2023, the bank's assets stood at US\$ 122.8 billion, marking a growth of 3.7%.

Established in 1926, the internationally renowned magazine "The Banker," a distinguished part of the British Financial Times, stands as one of the most prestigious publications in the financial sector. It undertakes extensive surveys of leading financial institutions across approximately 120 countries to spotlight the most prominent and exemplary banks in the global banking community.

For more information on The Banker's Top 100 Arab Banks 2024, please visit: <https://www.thebanker.com/The-Banker-s-Top-100-Arab-Banks-2024-1724321937>

Investors wait

Asian shares trade lower

TOKYO, Sept 4, (AP): Asian shares mostly declined Tuesday as investors looked ahead to a key report on U.S. employment set for release later in the week. Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 erased earlier gains to finish less than 0.1% lower at 38,686.31, while Australia's S&P/ASX 200 fell less than 0.1% to 8,103.20.

The closely watched U.S. jobs data is expected to influence the Federal Reserve's read on the American economy and when it will start lowering interest rates. The move will have repercussions through global markets, including Asia.

"It is shaping up to be a significant litmus test. A stronger-than-expected payroll number, paired with a lower unemployment rate, could inject some much-needed confidence into the market, signaling that growth risks might be easing, at least for now," said Stephen Innes, analyst at SPI Asset Management.

"If the report disappoints, especially if it pushes the unemployment rate higher, we could quickly see growth concerns flare up again."

A wait-and-see mood was earlier prevalent, as Monday was Labor Day, a national holiday in the U.S.

South Korea's Kospi initially rose after a report showed consumer inflation slowed in August to the weakest in more than three years, supporting expectations of an easing of monetary policy. The Kospi later declined 0.6% to 2,664.63.

South Korea's consumer price index, or CPI, rose 0.4% from the previous month and 2.0% from a year earlier, after gaining 0.3 from a month earlier and 2.6% on-year in July.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng dipped 0.4% to 17,624.35, while the Shanghai Composite edged down 0.3% to 2,803.99.

Worries were also growing about the resilience of China's economy, as recently disclosed data showed a mixed picture. Recent weak earnings reports from Chinese companies, including New World Development Co., a property developer and investor, added to the pessimism.

Cathay Pac cancels more flights over 'A350s' engine part failure

TOKYO, Sept 4, (KUNA): Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific Airways said Wednesday that another 22 flights will be cancelled until Saturday as work continues to replace fuel lines on numerous A350 planes, public broadcaster Radio Television Hong Kong reported.

Engineers identified 15 aircraft in need of repairs after a flight to Zurich was forced to return to Hong Kong due to a glitch on Monday, according to the report.

The city's flag carrier said a total of 90 flights have been cancelled this week, but some of the planes affected have already been repaired and all 15 are expected to

be back in service by Saturday.

"Completing thorough inspection and maintenance for all A350 aircraft within such a short timeframe has been challenging," said Chief Operations and Service Delivery Officer Alex McGowan.

The airline said the engine component failure identified in its planes is the first of its kind on any A350 anywhere in the world.

Other operators of the A350 aircraft include Qatar Airways, Japan Airlines and British Airways. Japan Airlines said Wednesday that there has been no impact on A350 operations so far.



A Cathay Pacific airplane taxis at Hong Kong International Airport in Hong Kong on Nov. 25, 2022. (AP)

COVID-19 govt disaster loans saved businesses

NEW YORK, Sept 4, (AP): In 2020 and 2021, COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loans were a lifeline for small businesses.

But now some small businesses are having trouble paying them off. And a Small Business Credit Survey report from the 12 Federal Reserve banks shows that small businesses that haven't paid off COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loans are in worse shape than other small businesses.

Dwayne Thomas, owner of events lighting company Greenlight Creative in Portland, Oregon, got a roughly \$500,000 EIDL loan in 2020, when all events shut down, crippling his businesses.

EIDL loans were designed to help small businesses stay afloat during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of these loans have a 30-year term with a 3.5% interest rate. With lower interest rates than typical loans, the loans were provided for working capital and other normal operating expenses.

Thomas says his business would not have survived without the loan. But, at 64, his plan to sell his business in a few years and retire has been scuttled, since the 30-year loan has left his business saddled with debt, even though otherwise it's a healthy business that turns a profit.

"We're as successful as we've ever been," Thomas said. "It's just that we have this huge thing hanging over us at all times. It is not going away on its own."

The SBA awarded about 4 million loans worth \$380 billion through the program. More than \$300 billion was outstanding as of late 2023. Unlike some other pandemic aid, these loans are not forgivable and must be repaid.

The survey by the Federal Reserve Banks found firms with outstanding EIDL loans had higher debt levels, were more likely to report challenges making payments on debt and were less likely to be profitable as of fall 2023, when the survey was conducted.

Firms with outstanding EIDL debt are also more likely to be denied when applying for additional credit. Half said they were denied for having too much debt.

Still, the survey stopped short of saying the disaster loans were a negative for companies. Some companies said they would have gone out of business altogether if it weren't for the loans. And it's impossible

Initiative saddled survivors with debt

Conversation

'Social profit orientation' can help firms and nonprofits alike do more good in the world

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

By Leonard L. Berry, Texas A&M University; Lerzan Aksoy, Fordham University, and Tracey Danaher, Monash University

Economist Milton Friedman's influential maxim, that a company's sole obligation is to maximize profits, is outdated. Many companies have voluntarily integrated social concerns into their business operations through corporate social responsibility, or CSR, policies for years.

More recently, some companies have broadened their notion of what's required of them beyond a traditional CSR approach by adopting what's known as environmental, social and governance (ESG) strategies that can be more appropriate for confronting challenges that go beyond the social realm, such as climate change.

What happens when a company or a nonprofit operating at a national or global scale commits to improving the well-being of people and the planet? Does that commitment compromise its ability to thrive or, if it's a public company, to comply with the financial return expectations of its shareholders?

This tension, and questions about the authenticity of corporate social responsibility and environment, social and governance commitments, have been the subject of much debate over the past decade, with the pendulum swinging from one side to another.

Some conservative states have enacted anti-ESG laws aimed at preventing public pension funds and even insurance companies from consider-

ing the potential long-term effects of climate change on their investments. So-called anti-woke lawsuits from shareholders alleging that a company's social policies illegally restrain profits are on the rise.

Although anti-ESG shareholder proposals are increasing, they typically receive the support of fewer than 5% of the shares voted, in part due to institutional investors understanding the long-term corporate risks of neglecting climate change and social unrest.

The three of us are marketingscholars who teamed up with two other professors to examine whether organizations can and should go further than CSR and ESG approaches. We also wanted to see whether it's worth withstanding the inevitable political backlash to try to meaningfully address the quality-of-life challenges of modern society: climate change, poverty, food insecurity, homelessness, wars, pandemics and more.

To assess whether it's feasible to take social and environmental action and still prosper financially, we conducted 78 in-depth interviews with executives from 21 for-profit companies and nonprofit organizations around the world that strive to do one or the other or both. We also analyzed archival data regarding the companies' and nonprofits' performance.

Among the organizations we studied are MasterCard, whose Girls4Tech initiative has helped more than 1 million girls around the world develop technology skills; World Central Kitchen, a nonprofit that has fed millions of hungry people in dozens of countries following and amid hurricanes, fires, wars and other disasters; buildOn, a nonprofit that works with low-income communities in the U.S. and abroad to build schools; and Australia's Children's Cancer Institute's ZERO pro-

gram, a registered charity that draws significant government funding that uses genomic data to guide precision treatment planning for kids with cancer.

We found that the opportunity to do good socially and well financially is real for these companies and nonprofits. By seeking to do right by the public and the planet, reputations are strengthened, employees are energized, external relationships are enhanced, new competencies are created - and society benefits.

We find that companies and nonprofits can prosper when they embody what we're calling a social profit orientation by making sustainable, social and environmental impact central to their missions.

At first glance, social profit orientation may seem similar to corporate social responsibility, but there is a significant difference. CSR companies often sponsor commendable activities, such as recycling drives and volunteering, while still making financial profit a priority that's above all else. With social profit orientation, financial profits and benefits for the common good are equally prized. It is a deliberate, strategic, organization-wide effort to address systemic social and environmental challenges.

Unlike corporate social responsibility and environmental, social and governance initiatives, which critics view as peripheral to the core business strategy and profit-driving, a social profit orientation embeds social impact directly into the organization's mission, integrating social good with economic goals. This can help reduce the risk of legal challenges based on fiduciary duties - a legal obligation to make decisions that will protect shareholders' financial interests - as the nonfinancial initiatives are tied to the organization's long-term success. (AP)

But unlike a loan for an asset that you can pay off, the loan just went to rent and other overhead costs. And Janisch said the outstanding debt stops them from taking on other loans for assets that could help the business.

"It's hindered us because we don't want to take out any loans to invest in the company now because we have such outstanding (debt)," he said. "So it's definitely like a weighing on us, of like what we do going forward."

'TechNext' empowers 40 Kuwaiti youth with tech skills

stc concludes sponsorship of 'TechNext' program at Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Center

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, concluded its sponsorship of the 'TechNext' program hosted by Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Center.

The initiative, organized in collaboration with Kuwait Technical College (KTECH) and under the umbrella of stc's educational 'upgrade' initiative, aimed to enhance the human capital and developing technological skills among the new generation and build on stc's extensive corporate social responsibility (CSR) program that focuses on empowering the younger generation.

The 'TechNext' program was designed to educate and empower young individuals between the ages of 16 to 23 by encouraging them to channel their energy and creativity into innovation. The program officially launched on Sunday, August 18, 2024, and ran for two weeks till August 29, 2024. The program reflects a commitment to supporting and developing youth skills, guiding them to use technology in ways that benefit society. This initiative aligns with Kuwait's development vision, which aims to achieve sustainable development by enhancing youth capabilities and providing them with essential skills and knowledge.

During the program, participants engaged in a series of workshops covering key areas such as programming, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity. The workshops were led by certified and specialized trainers from Google, KTECH and stc, providing participants with hands-on experience and the opportunity to develop valuable skills in these fields. A total of 40 students from various universities and high schools in Kuwait participated in the program.

A highlight of the program was the cybersecurity workshop presented by Omar Al Sanae, Director of Cybersecurity at stc. The session provided participants with essential knowledge and insights into the increasingly important cybersecurity domain. Considering stc's high level of attention on protecting customer data, Al Sanae shared valuable information on some of the protocols taken by stc to prevent cyber threats, as well as those that should be applied by customers. Additionally, Al Sanae participated in the judging panel that selected the top 5 projects in the

AlJasem

- stc strongly believes in the power of education and innovation as key drivers that will play a crucial role in the future of Kuwait
- Workshops covered key areas such as programming, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity, and were led by certified trainers from Google, KTECH and stc

program, who also received gifts from stc for their innovative concepts.

The closing ceremony was held at Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Center and was attended by Maryam Al Kandari and Abdullah Al-Najdi from stc Kuwait Corporate Communications Team, Rawan Al-Qahtani - a representative from Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Center, and Noura Al-Asimi - Manager of the training institute at KTECH. Aside from recognizing the top 5 projects, stc was recognized by the Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Center for its sponsorship role in the program.

Danah AlJasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at stc, commented, "stc strongly believes in the power of education and innovation as key drivers that will play a crucial role in the future of Kuwait. Our sponsorship of the TechNext program reflects our ongoing commitment to empowering the youth by equipping them with the technological skills needed to thrive in an increasingly digital world. By supporting initiatives like this, we aim to inspire the next generation to harness their creativity and energy towards building a better and more sustainable future for our community. We would also like to thank the Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Center for recognizing stc for its sponsorship role, as well as KTECH for their ongoing collaboration throughout this program."

Bullet Points on the side

- A total of 40 students from various universities and high schools in Kuwait participated in the program.
- Omar Al Sanae, Director of Cybersecurity at stc Kuwait presented a workshop related to Cybersecurity
- Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Center recognized stc for its sponsorship and key role in the community



Abdullah Al-Najdi, Maryam Al Kandari, and Omar Al Sanae from the stc Team, alongside participants and program organizers.

Juniors Day features work IDs, face painting, and bank tours

ABK hosts 'Juniors Day 2024,' bringing employees' children to office

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently hosted 'ABK Juniors Day 2024,' allowing employees to bring their children to the office. This initiative aims to familiarize the children with their parents' work and daily responsibilities. The event reflects ABK's dedication to promoting employee satisfaction, loyalty, and a positive work environment, all of which contribute to enhanced productivity and improved banking services for customers.

The event featured a variety of activities, including the issuance of special work IDs for children, the distribution of refreshments, face painting, and coloring. Additionally, the event included a science show and guided tours of various bank divisions, including the main vault, safe deposit room, data center, and security CCTV room. Children also learned how ATMs function and gained insights into the Bank's products, services, and banking solutions. The event

culminated in competitions and the distribution of gifts to all participants.

Commenting on this occasion, Afrah Al Arbash, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, said, "We are delighted to welcome our employees' children and shed light on their parents' work lives. This experience has helped enhance children's sense of pride in their parents' essential contributions and roles in delivering outstanding banking services to customers."

Al Arbash emphasized that organizing such events demonstrated ABK's ongoing efforts to create an ideal work environment that enables them to balance their personal lives and job responsibilities. This ultimately strengthens ABK's leading position in the banking sector in Kuwait. She also highlighted the significance of involving employees in various events, as this enhances their morale, encourages improved performance, and

fosters a sense of innovation. She added, "The ABK Juniors Day 2024 event is part of a broader series of initiatives organized for employees outside of work. These include sports tournaments, open days, awareness workshops, medical examinations, and exclusive offers, all aimed at strengthening friendship and promoting a spirit of cooperation and participation among employees." This continuous focus on meeting their needs underscores their vital role in contributing to the Bank's success at various levels.

At the end of her statement, Al Arbash expressed her appreciation for the enthusiastic participation of the children during the ABK Juniors Day 2024 event. She revealed that ABK plans to organize more events for its team in the future, further enhancing its reputation as one of the top workplaces and helping to attract exceptional talent in the banking sector in Kuwait.



Photos during the event.

Bank partners with Free Jabriya Productions for five-night show

Burgan Bank sponsors grand show 'Feykom Tarab? Sukkar Zeyada!' featuring Miami Band

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: Expanding on the massive success and wide public acclaim of "Feykom Tarab? A Night with Miami", which presented audiences with a uniquely immersive and multi-sensory musical experience, Burgan Bank announced the sponsorship of a bigger and more extravagant Free Jabriya Production: "Feykom Tarab? Sukkar Zeyada!", featuring the cross-generational favorite, Miami Band. The elaborate performance is scheduled to take place for five nights between September 19 and 23 at The Arena Kuwait. The sponsorship marks a new milestone in Burgan Bank's ongoing partnership with Free Jabriya Productions, which has yielded numerous successful shows, and comes as part of the Bank's comprehensive social responsibility strategy and dedicated arts and culture development program in Kuwait.

The new musical extravaganza, co-directed by Maryam Al-Khatrash and Jassem Al-Qames and produced by Free Jabriya co-founder Ali Al-Nusif, promises audiences a visually engaging musical journey like no other. The show offers a rich blend of new songs, gripping performances, colorful designs, dazzling costumes, and an altogether more immersive entertainment experience that incorporates the latest audio-visual technologies alongside a bigger crew of local top talents and calibers and international experts in the live entertainment industry.

"We are delighted to partner with and extend our support for Free Jabriya on their latest live production, 'Feykom Tarab? Sukkar Zeyada!', which follows the unmatched success of the previous performance, 'Feykom Tarab? A Night with Miami', in addition to a series of successful collaborations over the past two years," said Ms. Hessa Hussain Al-Najadah, Senior Manager – Corporate and CSR Communications at Burgan Bank. "This year's performance is truly special because it rests on the genuine skills and dedicated efforts of youthful local talents who have exhibited prime professionalism on every front to present a creative show that befits the history and fanbase of Miami Band, as well as rises to the high standards of the Free Jabriya productions and the events that Burgan Bank sponsors."

"Our steadfast support for young Kuwaiti talents is integral to Burgan Bank's strategy, our social respon-



H. Al-Najadah



Hamad Haji



Ali Al-Nusif

sibility program, and our commitment to achieving sustainable development. Through our sponsorship of world-class performances, we aim to contribute to the advancement of Kuwait's art and entertainment industry and attract art enthusiasts from all over the world," she added.

Meanwhile, Mr. Hamad Haji, Executive Manager – Products and Segments at Burgan Bank, said: "Through our sponsorship of artistic and entertainment events, we are delighted to attract one of society's biggest and most impactful segments, the youth. Our role as sponsors of 'Feykom Tarab? Sukkar Zeyada!' is a testament to our commitment to maintaining direct communication with the youth wherever they are and catering to their taste. Exclusively for our Youth account customers, we have prepared several surprises and social media competitions to win free tickets to the upcoming Miami Band performance, in addition to many fun on-ground activities that will be taking place during the five nights of the show. The Youth account also offers many benefits, including a KD 100 cash gift upon transferring educational allowance, a referral program, exclusive offers and discounts, and an annual draw to win a car."

"Burgan Bank is committed to offering the youth the best financial tools that enable them to manage their finances wisely and responsibly at a young age. The account centers on youths' advanced needs and modern lifestyles, confirming our commitment toward this special segment," Haji added. "In line with the 'Let's Be Aware' (Diraya)



Poster of the event.

campaign, advancing the Youth account aims to reinforce financial literacy, boost banking awareness, and encourage the adoption of the saving culture among Kuwaiti teenagers and young adults."

Mr. Ali Al-Nusif, Executive Producer and Co-Founder – Free Jabriya, stated that producing the second Miami show was greatly influenced by the grand success of the first volume of "Feykom Tarab?", which introduced a new entertainment formula to the Kuwaiti audience, whereby singing, choreography, and audio-visual technology entwined into a momentous live performance.

"We wanted this show to really bring the essence of Miami Band through the different acts that come together as elaborate paintings, each taking the audience on a colorful journey that picks up where the previous show left off," Al-Nusif added.

Burgan Bank's partnership with Free Jabriya Productions has yielded many valuable works of art that raised the bar of live performances in Kuwait and were met with wide public acclaim and enthusiasm. These collaborations include "Feykom Tarab? A Night with Miami", "Graish", and "Macintosh". As part of its dynamic social responsibility program, Burgan Bank continues to create and sponsor new spaces where national talents can thrive and shine, preserving the Kuwaiti culture and allowing more generations to connect with the country's authentic identity.

Program provides global travel benefits

Gulf Bank launches 'Back to School' campaign with discounts up to 20%

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: As part of its ongoing social responsibility efforts to support the community in the upcoming school year, Gulf Bank has launched the 'Back to School' campaign, rewarding credit and prepaid cardholders with exclusive discounts of up to 20% at Lulu Hypermarket, Dabdoob, and the Landmark Group (Max and Centrepoint).

Lulu Hypermarket is offering Gulf Bank's Credit and Prepaid cardholders 15% discount, while Lulu Prepaid cardholders will get an exclusive 20% discount until September 20, 2024. Landmark Group stores including Centrepoint & Max are also offering a 20% discount until September 20, 2024. Additionally, Dabdoob is offering a 15% discount until September 14, 2024.

In collaboration with our numerous partners, Gulf Bank delivers exclusive offers and discounts annually during the Back-to-School season. Additionally, the Bank offers financial services such as educational loans and encourages savings through its savings accounts.

The Bank is committed to supporting the community's aspirations on various occasions and helping shape the future of the next generation of leaders and pioneers, while continuously striving to deliver the best products and services, ensuring an exceptional customer experience."

Through its "Gulf Points" rewards program, Gulf Bank allows customers to redeem points for airline tick-

ets on any global airline and book accommodations at over 300,000 hotels worldwide, offering one of the most convenient rewards systems in Kuwait.

Gulf Bank credit cards offer a variety of benefits for customers. These cards provide access to a wide range of deals across various sectors, including restaurants, hotels, tourism, travel, entertainment, health and beauty, car rentals, and more.

Credit cardholders can take advantage of a wide array of discounts and benefits at many restaurants, cafes, and retail stores throughout Kuwait. These exclusive, ongoing offers include more than 550 restaurants and cafes, and over 300 retail stores.

Gulf Bank aims to be Kuwait's leading bank, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace to deliver exceptional customer service while contributing sustainably to the community. Through its extensive branch network and innovative digital services, the bank empowers customers to conduct banking transactions conveniently and efficiently, ensuring a seamless experience.

In alignment with Kuwait Vision 2035, "New Kuwait," and its commitment to fostering collaborative partnerships, Gulf Bank is dedicated to driving robust sustainability initiatives across environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions. The bank is committed to implementing strategically selected and diverse sustainability programs both internally and externally.



Gulf Bank's 'Back to School' campaign.

Film

Guadagnino's film shines at Venice with Craig in lead role

VENICE, Italy, Sept 4, (AP): Venice Film Festival regular Luca Guadagnino was back on the Lido to debut his new Daniel Craig film "Queer" on Tuesday night.

A festival favorite, Guadagnino had to forgo a splashy red carpet premiere for the sexy tennis drama "Challengers" last year, when the studio delayed its release amid the actors strike. But the filmmaker is returning with another highly anticipated project, adapting a William S. Burroughs novel about an American expat in Mexico City in 1950 who develops an obsession with a young, male student.

Guadagnino, 53, first read the book when he was 17 and it made a profound impact on him. He didn't know who Burroughs was, or his significance in his time, but he fell into its world at the same time he was dreaming of building worlds of his own in movies.

"It really transformed me and changed me forever," Guadagnino said. "Because I want to be loyal to that young boy, I want to bring this to the screen."

A longtime fan of Craig, an actor who he said is unafraid to be fragile on screen, Guadagnino also said he never thought he'd be able to get him in a movie. But Craig's "yes" came immediately.

"If I wasn't in this movie, I would want to be in it," Craig said. "These are the kinds of film I want to see, I want to make, I want to be out there...they're challenging but they're incredibly accessible."

A few hours before the premiere, Craig spoke to The Associated Press about the role. His character, William Lee, spends his days drinking in sweaty bars or doing heroin alone. It's a raw and exposing per-

formance, but Craig trusted his director's vision.

"I think if it was wrong, (Luca would) say something, but if it was right, he'd just say, you know, move on. Let's do it. Let's go. We have it," Craig said. "Which can be a little disconcerting, but I think after a while you just go, 'I'm in his hands.'"

Character

"Challengers" screenwriter Justin Kuritzkes wrote the script for "Queer," adapting a novel that was written in the 1950s but not published until 1985. It's a story that others have tried to adapt over the years, including Steve Buscemi and Oren Moverman. Kuritzkes also went beyond the slim text, adding a third act that isn't there, and weaving in some of Burroughs' own biography into the main character.

This gave Craig opportunities to study Burroughs himself for inspiration.

"I always felt that Burroughs had a very public face, and I wanted to know what the private part of him was like," said Craig, who spoke to a few people who knew him. "I think in 'Queer' you sort of see more of that than you do in his other books."

To play the young object of his affection, Eugene Allerton, Guadagnino cast rising actor Drew Starkey, who said he devoured the novel in a day. Starkey said he was intimidated to work alongside Guadagnino and Craig.

"I was familiar with both their work. I was fans of both their work," he said. "I think coming into any situation is nerve-wracking. And

there was an extra layer on top of that."

Starkey and Craig did dance classes together to get comfortable with one another and the choreography of the intimate scenes.

"There's nothing intimate about filming a sex scene... we just wanted to make it as touching and as real and as natural as we possibly could," Craig said. "Drew is a wonderful, beautiful, fantastic actor to work with. We kind of had a laugh. We tried to make it fun."

Craig and Starkey star alongside Lesley Manville and Jason Schwartzman in the film, which is playing in the main competition and will be released in theaters by A24. Guadagnino also reunited with composers Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross for the score, as well as designer Jonathan Anderson for the costumes.

"Luca is the only person I could work with in this medium because he's the only person who gives trust to everyone and lets them paint their part of the picture," said Anderson, who ensured that every item they used was from the period.

Instead of filming on location in Mexico City, Guadagnino chose to create the world of Burroughs' mind inside Cinecittà Studios. He wanted to evoke the spirit of Powell and Pressburger in doing it.

Reviews for "Queer" praised Craig in particular for his vulnerable performance.

"Queer" is this emotional thump. It's this tiny book. And it is about love but it's about loss, it's about loneliness, it's about yearning," Craig said. "If I was writing myself a part with all of the things I want to do this would fulfill all of them."

Variety



Director Todd Phillips, (from left), Lady Gaga and Joaquin Phoenix pose for photographers upon arrival for the press conference of the film 'Joker: Folie à Deux' during the 81st edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Wednesday, Sept. 4. (AP)

Film

Gaga, Phoenix hit the red carpet

'Joker' sequel sparks buzz at Venice

VENICE, Italy, Sept 4, (AP): Five years after "Joker" won the top prize at the Venice Film Festival, director Todd Phillips can't help but be a little nervous about returning with its sequel.

"Joker: Folie à Deux," one of the most anticipated films of the 81st edition of the festival, is having its world premiere in competition Wednesday night with stars Lady Gaga and Joaquin Phoenix in attendance.

"It feels right, it feels correct to be back in Venice. It felt like the logical launching off point for us," Phillips said ahead of the premiere. "On this one I'm a little more nervous. It's a lot easier to come into something as the insurgent rather than the incumbent."

A sequel was more a joke than an inevitability to Phillips and Phoenix while making the first movie. For one, Phoenix is not the kind of actor to jump at a "franchise." But then an idea emerged to explore the music that Phoenix's character, Arthur Fleck, is hearing in his head. It would have to be as bold, unexpected and audacious as the first, they thought.

That first film had resonated in a way that no one quite expected: It made over \$1 billion at the box office and won Phoenix the best actor Oscar. One of its fans was Gaga, who said that it "really deeply moved me" and showed her something she had never seen before.

"Joker: Folie à Deux" finds Phoenix's Arthur Fleck institutionalized and awaiting trial for his crimes. The last film ended after he shoots late night host Murray Franklin (Robert De Niro) on live television, which has made him a great to a certain set, including Gaga's Harley Quinn who he meets in a different ward. The two fall immediately in love and take to song to express themselves.

Both Phoenix and Gaga sang live for the film, with a pianist just off camera who, she said, felt like another actor in the scene in a way.

"For me it was kind of about unlearning technique and forgetting how to breathe and allowing the song to come completely out of the character," Gaga said. "It gives the characters a way to express what they need to say."

Phoenix, who initially balked at the idea of singing

live, added: "Part of the joy at least for me was taking these songs that were standards and trying to find a way that they were specific to the characters."

They also learned various choreography over the course of months for several different numbers, including a waltz in the rain. But even with the training and practice, they said, things had a tendency to change in the moment.

"We all really thrived in the moment and in the chaos of it all," Gaga said. "We had to find it every day. What was the truth of the scene, what was the honest moment."

Honest

She added: "You can learn a song, learn a routine for a dance...but that's not always the most honest thing to do on camera."

Phoenix recently made headlines for leaving a Todd Haynes film several days before it was to start shooting. He declined to elaborate on the situation, saying it wouldn't be fair to the other creatives involved who were not available to comment. He also said he didn't want to focus on the weight he lost to play Arthur Fleck. During the press tour for the last film, he regretted speaking about it so much.

Gaga made a grand entrance to the Lido on Wednesday several hours before the red-carpet premiere. Fans and photographers clamored around the docks outside of the Excelsior Hotel hoping to catch a glimpse of her arriving. She popped her head out of the private water taxi, alongside Phillips and Phoenix, as fans nearby shouted "Gaga! Gaga! Gaga!" in unison.

On the dock, she blew kisses to the excitable fans, stopped to sign several autographs, and accepted flowers from one eager onlooker. She wore an elegant black dress, beret and sunglasses offsetting her blonde hair.

In a festival lineup full of major Hollywood stars, including the likes of Angelina Jolie, George Clooney and Brad Pitt, Gaga is in a class of her own with her knack for creating a memorable red carpet moment.

Six years ago, for "A Star Is Born," she made a splash playing the part of the movie star - and gave

the festival some of its most iconic shots in recent memory. Remember her perched on the side of the private water taxi in that black Jonathan Simkhai bustier dress, blowing kisses to fans and photographers? Or her show-stopping pale pink feathered Valentino Couture gown that seemed to pop even more against the rainy backdrop?

Reviews for the new film will be out in a few hours, which could dictate the trajectory of the film for months to come and whether or not it is once again an Oscar contender or another billion-dollar box office hit.

The Joker sequel is competing again for the festival's main prizes against the likes of Pedro Almodóvar's "The Room Next Door."

Luca Guadagnino's "Queer," Pablo Larraín's "Maria" and Halina Reijn's "Babygirl." Awards will be presented on the final day of the festival, Sept. 7.

"The hard part of this is you feel eyeballs on you," Phillips said. "You just have a different pressure."

Also:

VENICE, Italy: The winners of the first edition of the Reply AI Film Festival have been announced, the competition for authors of original short films made with Artificial Intelligence (AI), conceived by Reply, a leading international group in the creation of new business models enabled by AI and Digital Media. The awards event, organized in collaboration with Mastercard, was held at the Priceless lounge of the Hotel Excelsior in Venice.

The award for Best Short Film was given to 'To Dear Me' by Gisele Tong, which tells the story of a young woman, tormented by memories of her parents' divorce and her mother's loneliness, struggling with love, feeling lost and distrustful, until she realizes that finding her true self is the key to healing and moving forward.

Second place went to 'One Way' by Egor Kharlamov, a story about how life can offer a second chance even when it seems there's nothing left to lose. The film ponders on what the price of this second opportunity is.

LOS ANGELES: Taraji P. Henson will receive an honorary AARP Award for eradicating the stigma around mental health within marginalized communities through her foundation that was created in honor of her father.

The organization announced Tuesday that Henson will receive the honorary AARP Purpose Prize during the ceremony on Oct. 1 in Washington, D.C. The Oscar-nominated actor will be recognized for her work through the Boris Lawrence Henson Foundation.

Henson said she is honored by AARP's recognition of her foundation's efforts. She hopes the organization's platform will put a spotlight on mental health and encourage people to be "open about discussing their struggles and ultimately receiving help."

Henson's foundation, which launched in 2018, honors the legacy of her father, who battled untreated mental health issues after returning from the Vietnam War. The foundation focuses on providing mental health resources and encouraging members of marginalized communities to seek help and support without fear and shame.

The actor said her foundation's mission has been to "eradicate the stigma around mental illness."

Last year, Henson's foundation partnered with Alabama State University on mental health wellness. She was honored by the Boston-based Ruderman Family Foundation in 2000 for her work to end the stigma around mental illness. (AP)

ALAMO, Tenn.: A woman who appeared on the reality TV show "1,000-Lb. Sisters" was arrested at a Tennessee zoo and charged with possessing drugs and child endangerment, authorities said Tuesday.

Amy Slaton Halterman was arrested Monday at the Tennessee Safari Park in Alamo along with Brian Scott Lovvorn after deputies found marijuana and what appeared to be illegal mushrooms in a car they were sitting in, said Stephen Sutton, a public information officer for the Crockett County Sheriff's Department.

Deputies went to the West Tennessee zoo after receiving a call that a visitor may have been bitten by a camel, according to a

sheriff's department statement. Deputies went to the visitor's car and smelled "suspicious odors" coming from the vehicle, the sheriff's department said.

Along with the drugs, two children were also found in the car, Sutton said. It was not immediately clear whose children they were. They have been released into the



Henson



Oldman

custody of family. Halterman was taken to a hospital for treatment for an injury to her arm that may have been caused by the camel, Sutton said. She and Lovvorn were then booked in jail.

A general sessions court clerk said the court did not have information about whether Halterman or Lovvorn had lawyers to speak on

their behalf about the charges.(AP)

LOS ANGELES: "Slow Horses," Apple TV+ British spy series starring Gary Oldman, returns for season four just in time for the Primetime Emmy Awards. Season three received nine nominations including outstanding drama

series and lead actor for Oldman. The show's new season is also rated 100% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes. In "Slow Horses," M15 agents who've made big mistakes are relegated to a division run by Oldman's character Jackson Lamb. The story is based on Mick Herron's "Slough House" novels. It returns Wednesday. (AP)

People & Places

Books

'Sync' stirring tale

Jackson 'shares' her story, song at Apollo

NEW YORK, Sept 4, (AP): In one of her first public appearances on behalf of her newly published memoir, "Lovely One," Supreme Court Justice **Ketanji Brown Jackson** didn't make a lot of news, but she did make a little history: She can add her name to James Brown, Stevie Wonder and Smokey Robinson among others as someone who has sung at the Apollo Theater.

Reminiscing Tuesday night with interviewer Gayle King about her love for musical theater, Jackson ably crooned a few lines from "The Wiz" - "When I think of home, I think of a place/Where there's love overflowing" - and threw in a favorite chant from "Schoolhouse Rock" - "I'm just a bill, yes I'm only a bill. And I'm sitting here on Capitol Hill."

The capacity audience at the famed Harlem performance center cheered and sang along.

King had promised - and kept her promise - to focus on Jackson's personal story and not on the law. Jackson discussed her childhood in Miami, the origins of her name (It means "lovely one," the book's title), her undergraduate years at Harvard University, her interracial marriage to Dr. Patrick Jackson - who was in the audience Tuesday night - and her rise through the court system, culminating in 2022 when she became the first Black woman on the Supreme Court. "A roaring ocean" in her ears is how she remembered the call from President Joe Biden, asking her if she would agree to fill the vacancy left by retiring Justice Stephen Breyer, for whom she had once clerked.

Jackson explained Tuesday that she had been interested since she was a girl, when she and her father, Johnny Brown, would sit together at the dining room table, she with coloring books and he with law books he was studying at the time. Her ambition grew in middle school after she learned about Constance Baker Motley, the first Black woman to serve on the federal judiciary.



Jackson

Kinship

"I remember this kinship with this fantastic woman," Jackson told King. "I thought, 'Why stop at law? I could be a federal judge.'"

Jackson's book, 405 pages, combines family history, legal history and personal history as she narrates her own improbable journey - a Black woman rising to the highest court in a country where segregation was legal well into the 20th century. "Lovely One" often reads as a kind of lesson, or roadmap, what Jackson calls in the preface "a testament for young women, people of color, and strivers everywhere, especially those who nourished outsized ambitions and believe with stubborn faith in the possibility of achieving them."

She endured aggressive questions from Republican senators during her confirmation hearings and she currently serves on one of the most conservative and divisive courts in U.S. history, casting dissenting votes on such landmark rulings as the granting of partial legal immunity for former presidents. But Jackson avoided naming names - beyond noting that Sen. Ted Cruz, the Texas Republican, attended law school with her - or pointing fingers in her book, and resisted Tuesday night when King pressed her to cite even one justice she had clashed with.

"I'm not going to answer that question," she said, laughing.

When King asked if justices socialized, Jackson responded, "There are opportunities to have lunch."

Jackson spoke of remaining calm during the confirmation hearings, thanks to her resolve, her preparation and to political realities. The White House worked with her at length in advance, helping her anticipate questions that might otherwise have upset her. One aide had advised she had a choice: "You can get angry or you can be a Supreme Court justice." Jackson also welcomed another suggestion: Meet with the senators before the hearings.

"They were all lovely. Person to person they were courteous, they were respectful," she said Tuesday night. "It was ... super helpful in the hearings, because we had had conversations. So I said, 'Oh, I see. You're not really talking to me' - right in my head, as I'm listening to them - because we had talked. 'You must be talking to your constituents or to someone else.'"

I'm always amazed at how **Ellen Hopkins** can convey so much in so few words, residing in a gray area between prose and poetry.

Her latest novel in verse, "Sync," does exactly that as it switches between twins Storm and Lake during the pivotal year before they age out of the foster system. Separated years ago, the two write to each other in an effort to maintain their unparalleled bond. In the process, we learn about their home life before the state of California took custody, and the placements - good and bad - in between.

Shortly after turning 17, their case workers organize a reunion. It's enough to recharge their "sync," but the joy from their brief reconnection is short-lived.

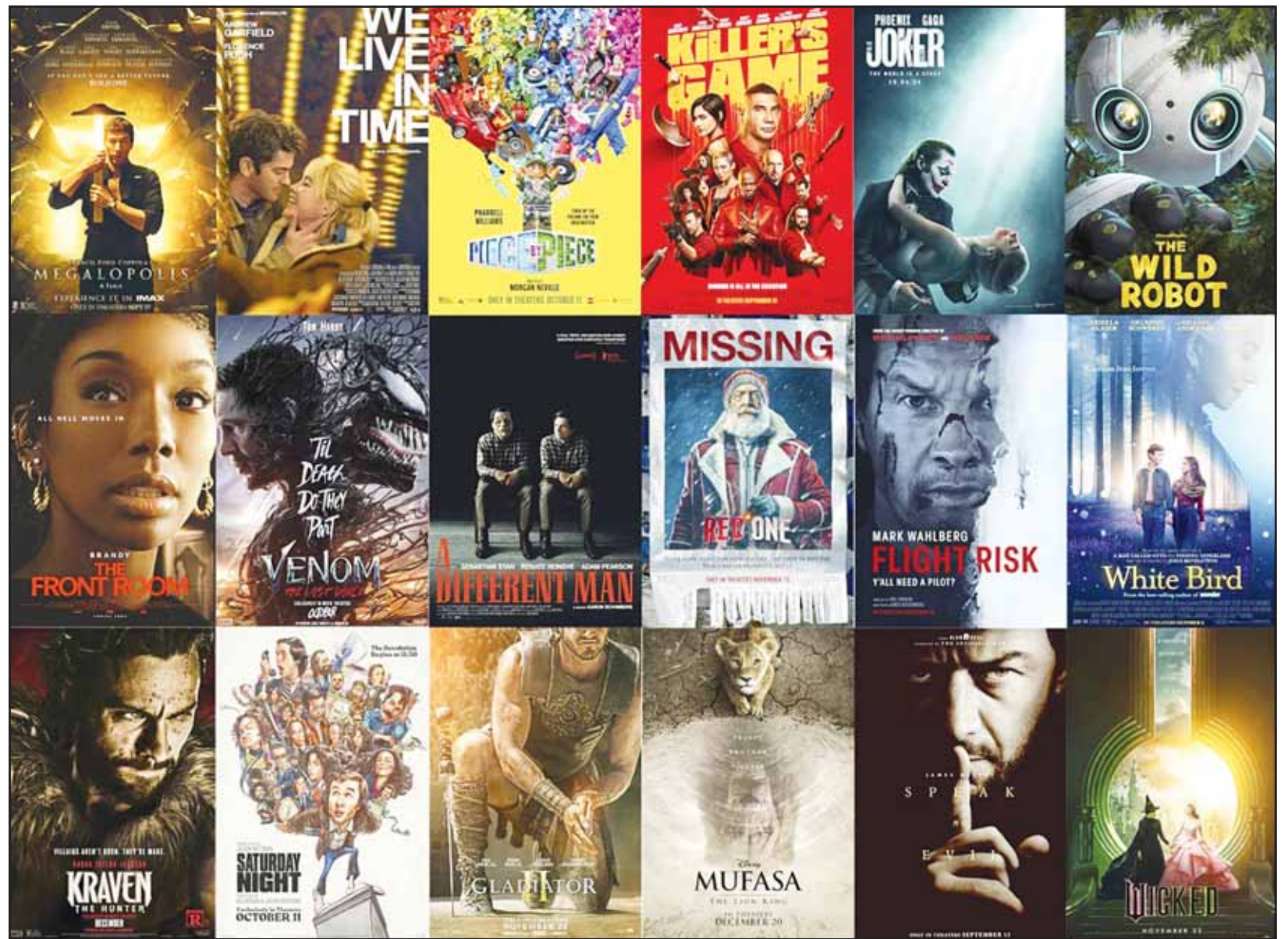
Storm winds up in juvenile detention when he takes justice into his own hands to avenge his girlfriend, the single good thing in his day-to-day life. And when Lake is caught in bed with her fellow foster and girlfriend, the two see no other choice but to run away and try living on their own.

This may be a young adult novel, but the themes are definitely for mature audiences.

Between sexual assault, homophobia, suicide, homelessness and all manner of child abuse, there are a lot of emotionally and psychologically challenging elements in "Sync." On top of that, Hopkins tackles topical issues from the teens' perspective: the lack of options for a rape survivor to seek justice or get help without having to undergo an invasive and often scarring process; the ways the justice system meets poverty and other societal disadvantages with punishment over reform, perpetuating recidivism; arguments about critical race theory and whether books like Toni Morrison's "Beloved" should be taught in school. The last of these being particularly pertinent for an author whose books are no strangers to bans and assigned reading lists alike.

As with most of Hopkins' narrators, Storm and Lake are observant and introspective, making them relatable, thought-provoking and fun to read.

Another thing Hopkins excels at is bringing you down to the lowest low before managing to end on a high note. While "Sync" avoids veering into trauma porn, it does occasionally get pretty brutal - particularly about two-thirds of the way when Lake and Storm's fast descent toward rock-bottom goes from 45 to 90 degrees - but the hopeful ending is worth it.



This combination of photos shows promotional art from upcoming films, (top row from left), 'Megalopolis' (Lionsgate), 'We Live in Time' (A24), 'Piece by Piece' (Focus Features), 'The Killer's Game' (Lionsgate), 'Joker: Folie à Deux' (Warner Bros.), and 'The Wild Robot' (Universal), (second row from left), 'The Front Room' (A24), 'Venom: The Last Dance' (Sony), 'A Different Man' (A24), 'Red One' (Amazon), 'Flight Risk' (Lionsgate), and 'White Bird' (Lionsgate), (bottom row from left), 'Kraven the Hunter' (Sony), 'Saturday Night' (Sony), 'Gladiator 2' (Paramount), 'Mufasa: The Lion King' (Disney), 'Speak No Evil' (Universal), and 'Wicked' (Universal). (AP)

Film

'Moana 2' and 'Gladiator II' face election

Fall films compete with politics

NEW YORK, Sept 4, (AP): Three weeks after the US presidential election in November, Ridley Scott will present his latest big-screen opus. "Gladiator II" returns the prodigious filmmaker to ancient Rome for a story about a power, the survival of Rome and the fate of democracy.

"Hopefully," Scott says, "it will be a good omen."

This fall, Hollywood will be trying - with everything from swaggering historical epics like "Gladiator II" to the high-seas adventure of "Moana 2" - to capture the nation's attention at a time when much of it will be directed at the polls.

Already, Hollywood has played a co-starring role in the election. The Democratic Convention in August was packed with stars like Oprah Winfrey. Republican vice-presidential candidate, JD Vance, was first introduced to many by the 2020 big-screen adaptation of his "Hillbilly Elegy." And it was George Clooney, who this month stars in the Apple Studios film "Wolfs" alongside Brad Pitt, who was one of the most prominent voices to urge President Joe Biden to step down from the race.

Hollywood, famously progressive, has always had to strike a balance between the liberal leanings of the majority of its creatives with the big-tent demands of pop culture. In recent years, that's grown increasingly tricky.

At the same time, the movie industry, after several years hobbled by pandemic and strikes, is striving to recapture its all-audiences populism - and all the billions that can come with it. Disney chief Robert A. Iger last year signaled the need "to entertain first," adding "it's not about messages."

This past summer, Disney led Hollywood out of a box-office slump with a pair of billion-earners in "Inside Out 2" and "Deadpool vs. Wolverine." Ticket sales for the summer rose to \$3.7 billion, according to Comscore - less than the traditional \$4 billion benchmark but significantly better

than initially feared after a painfully slow start.

One of the fall's likeliest candidates to continue the trend is "Moana 2." Dwayne Johnson, who returns as the voice of Maui, earlier this year said he wouldn't endorse a candidate in the election out of concern for the division it would cause.

Like many of the films opening this fall, "Moana 2" (opening Nov. 27), as a story about a strong female protagonist and a celebration of Pacific Islander culture, could resonate very differently, depending on the outcome of the election.

"If it resonates for people in a different way, I can't control that," says Dana Ledoux Miller, who directed "Moana 2" with David Derrick Jr. and Jason Hand. "I'm so excited about what this story is and what it means to be a person in a community who wants something more for the world they live in and for the future. We'll see what happens, but the movie is what it is."

Themes

Movies this year have largely only approached political themes from a distance. "Civil War," by Alex Garland, imagined the US in all-out warfare. "War Game," directed by Tony Gerber and Jesse Moss, gathered real political figures for an insurrection simulation.

But "The Apprentice" will offer the movie version of an October surprise. The film, the release of which was announced just last week, stars Sebastian Stan as a young Donald Trump under the tutelage of Roy Cohn (Jeremy Strong). The Trump campaign has called it "election interference by Hollywood elites." Its director, Ali Abbasi, argues filmmakers have a responsibility to face current politics head-on.

Complicated (cross head) "I've been hearing a lot: Let's make a movie about the Second World War or the Civil War - just go back in time," says Abbasi. "They say a Civil

War movie is a good metaphor for the way our society is now. I'm like: Our society is extremely exciting, complex, complicated, has huge problems and opportunities. Why not address them? We have a (expletive) responsibility."

As usual this fall, studios will trot out a new wave of awards contenders. Unlike last year, when Christopher Nolan's "Oppenheimer" came into the season the clear favorite, no such frontrunner has yet emerged. At the Venice, Telluride, Toronto and New York film festivals, notable premieres include Todd Phillips' anticipated sequel "Joker: Folie à Deux," Edward Berger's "Conclave," Marielle Heller's "Nightbitch," Malcolm Washington's "The Piano Lesson," Steve McQueen's "Blitz" and LaMell Ross's "Nickel Boys."

Standouts from earlier festivals will also mix in, like Sean Baker's Palme d'Or-winning "Anora" and Jacques Audiard's "Emilia Pérez." But, at least for now, the Oscar race appears wide open.

"Emilia Pérez" about a Mexican drug lord who transitions into a woman, is just one of the many musicals landing in theaters. Some studios have recently run from the label of "musical"; last December's "Wonka" wasn't advertised as such. But this fall, no matter what's happening on the news, it won't be hard to find song and dance on the big screen.

That includes "Joker: Folie à Deux," "Moana 2" and the two-part adaptation of the Broadway show "Wicked!" - not to mention biopics on Robbie Williams ("Better Man") and Bob Dylan ("A Complete Unknown," with Timothée Chalamet).

"Wicked" director Jon M. Chu and producer Marc Platt were confident enough in their film, starring Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande, that they opted to split it into two. (Part two will release in November 2025.) "Wicked," opening Nov. 22, will open against "Gladiator II" in the fall's most "Barbeheimer"-like weekend matchup.



Tim Burton attends a ceremony honoring him with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on Tuesday, Sept. 3, in Los Angeles. (AP)



Kelce



Swift

Variety

KANSAS CITY, Mo.: Travis Kelce spent the offseason jetting around the world, following his girlfriend, pop superstar **Taylor Swift**, to multiple stops on her Eras Tour. He popped up on TV, showed up at some of the biggest sporting events in the world and continued to produce his popular podcast with his brother, retired Eagles center Jason Kelce.

The Chiefs tight end has never been busier. He's never had more to juggle, with more eyes on everything he is doing.

All of which makes the Chiefs' practice facility, along with Arrowhead Stadium just up the hill and across an expanse of parking lots, something of a sanctuary, where Kelce can let loose with some of his closest confidants.

"I just love football, and how it takes me away from life," Kelce said Tuesday, two days before the Kansas Chiefs play the Baltimore Ravens in a rematch of their AFC championship game and officially lift the lid on the NFL's regular season. (AP)

GRAND HAVEN, Mich.: An ultra swimmer is trying again to cross Lake Michigan, from Michigan to Wisconsin, just a few weeks after trouble with a GPS device forced him to give up after 60 miles (96 kilometers).

Jim Dreyer set out after 6 p.m. Monday in Grand Haven. He said the journey to Milwaukee would cover at least 80 miles (128 kilometers) in the water and last 72 hours or more without sleep.

Dreyer, 61, will also be towing a small inflatable boat with supplies.

"Sorry for the last-minute notice, but chaos is often part of this open water swimming game," he said on Facebook while also posting "Here I Go Again," a 1987 power ballad video by Whitesnake.

His progress can be tracked online. Dreyer, who calls himself The Shark, crossed Lake Michigan in 1998, starting in Two Rivers, Wisconsin, and finishing in Ludington, Michigan. But three attempts to do it again have been un-

successful since 2023. His last effort began on Aug. 6. The next day, he paused to get fresh AA batteries to keep a GPS device working.

But during the process, Dreyer said he somehow lost the bag in the lake.

He had only a compass and nature to help him try to keep moving west. But

Dreyer ended up swimming north instead, burning precious time and adding more miles as risky weather approached. (AP)



Kate Winslet poses for photographers upon arrival at the UK premiere for the film 'Lee' on Tuesday, Sept. 3, in London. (AP)

HELSINKI: A white beluga whale named "Hvaldimir," first spotted in Norway not far from Russian waters with a harness that ignited rumors he may be a **Moscow** spy, has been found dead.

The Norwegian public broadcaster NRK reported that the whale carcass was found floating at the Risavika Bay in southern Norway Saturday by a father and son who were fishing.

The beluga, named by combining the Norwegian word for whale - hval - and Russian President **Putin's** first name **Vladimir**, was lifted out of the water with a crane and taken to a nearby harbor where experts will examine it.

"Unfortunately, we found Hvaldimir floating in the sea. He has passed away but it's not immediately clear what the cause of death is," marine biologist Sebastian Strand told NRK, adding that no major external injuries were visible on the animal.

Strand, who has monitored Hvaldimir's adventures for the past three years on behalf of the Norway-based Marine Mind non-profit organization, said he was deeply affected by the whale's sudden death. (AP)

Chip that steers terahertz beams sets stage for ultrafast internet

Silicon beamformer chip set to transform 6G networks

By Ranjan Singh

University of Notre Dame

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

Imagine a future where internet connections are not only lightning-fast but also remarkably reliable, even in crowded spaces. This vision is rapidly approaching reality, thanks to new research on terahertz communications technologies. These innovations are set to transform wireless communication, particularly as communications technology advances toward the next generation of networks, 6G.

I'm an engineer who focuses on photonics, the study of how light and other electromagnetic waves are generated and detected. In this research, my colleagues and I have developed a silicon topological beamformer chip. Topological refers to physical features in the silicon that help steer terahertz waves, and beamformer refers to the purpose of the chip: forming terahertz waves into directed beams.

Terahertz frequencies are crucial for 6G, which telecommunications companies plan to roll out around 2030. The radio frequency spectrum used by current wireless networks is becoming increasingly congested. Terahertz waves offer a solution by using the relatively unoccupied portion of the

electromagnetic spectrum between microwaves and infrared. These higher frequencies can carry massive amounts of data, making them ideal for the data-intensive applications of the future.

Our chip takes a terahertz signal from a single source and splits it into 54 smaller signals, which are then guided through 184 tiny channels with 134 sharp turns. Each beam can transmit and receive data at speeds of 40 to 72 gigabits per second, many times faster than today's 5G networks.

Communications

With the help of artificial intelligence, we designed the chip to have a specific microscopic honeycomb pattern to form lanes for the terahertz waves. The array of channels sends out powerful, focused beams that cover the entire 360 degrees around the chip. This allows a phone or other wireless device anywhere around a Wi-Fi router or other communications device using the chip to receive the high-speed signal. We demonstrated the chip by splitting an input signal of a streaming HD video into four output beams.

Terahertz waves have a shorter range compared with lower-frequency signals used in 4G and 5G networks. Terahertz beamformers address this challenge by precisely directing high-frequency signals to ensure they reach their destination without loss or degradation.

Beamformers are essential for the next generation of wireless communi-

cation. Unlike traditional antennas that broadcast signals indiscriminately, beamformers focus signals in specific directions, boosting both efficiency and reliability. Our chip ensures that those beams provide coverage in all directions.

This focused approach not only extends the signal's range but also improves its quality, even over long distances. Beamformers are likely to be crucial in managing stable connections by reducing interference as the world adds billions of connected devices.

The potential impact of terahertz beamforming chips on everyday life is profound. For example, these chips could make it possible to download a 4K ultrahigh-definition movie in mere seconds compared with 11 minutes over today's Wi-Fi, or support immersive virtual and augmented reality experiences without any lag.

Beyond entertainment, they could make real-time holographic communication a reality, where people appear as lifelike holograms. Smart cities could use this technology to seamlessly coordinate traffic systems and emergency responses, while health care could benefit from remote surgeries where doctors control robotic instruments from afar.

The terahertz beamforming chip represents a significant step forward on the path to faster, more reliable wireless communication by overcoming the challenges of high-frequency signal transmission. (AP)

WHO review finds no evidence

Mobile phones not linked to brain cancer

CANBERRA, Sept 4. (Xinhua) - Mobile phones are not linked to head cancers, a World Health Organization-commissioned review by Australian government scientists has concluded.

Researchers from the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) on Wednesday published the results of a systematic review into the potential health effects of radio wave exposure from mobile phones.

The review, commissioned by the World Health Organization (WHO), analyzed the results of over 5,000 studies conducted between 1994 and 2022,

and found that brain tumor rates have remained steady despite a widespread increase in mobile phone usage in the same period.

"When the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified radio wave exposure as a possible carcinogen to humans in 2013, it was largely based on limited evidence from human observational studies," ARPANSA's Ken Karipidis, who led the review, said in a media release.

"This systematic review of human observational studies is based on a much larger dataset compared to that examined by the IARC, that also includes more re-

cent and more comprehensive studies, so we can be more confident that exposure to radio waves from wireless technology is not a human health hazard."

The research also concluded that there is no link between prolonged mobile phone use or the amount of mobile phone use and cancer.

Karipidis, who is also the vice-chair of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection, said the results were consistent with previous ARPANSA research showing there has been no increase in the incidence of brain cancers over the last 20 years.

Unregulated psychedelics pose risk

What to know about delta-8 and other common vape shop drugs



Products advertised as containing synthetically derived delta-8 THC are offered for sale at a smoke shop in north Seattle on Feb. 25, 2022. (AP)

NEW YORK, Sept 4. (AP) - They're sold in gas stations, vape shops, online and in other stores around the country in seemingly countless enticing forms: gummies, chocolate bars, chips. Their packaging lists things like delta-8 THC, micro- and macrodoses of "psychedelics" and "nootropics."

These substances are often sold through legal loopholes, despite concerns about potential health risks and a lack of oversight of how they're produced. And in the absence of federal rules, many states have banned or have tried to ban delta-8 THC.

Legal but under-regulated drugs are easy to come by, but experts say there are still a lot of uncertainties. Here's what to know.

Drug laws are often specific to the substance, so federal and state regulators are left chasing the newest chemical concoction.

Delta-8 THC exploded in popularity under the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, more commonly known as the Farm Bill. Under that law, hemp products and the cannabinoids that could be made from them were classified as distinct from marijuana.

Investigation

Delta-8 has just a slight chemical tweak from the psychoactive delta-9 compound found in marijuana, but it can still get you high.

It remains in a legally ambiguous area with restrictions that vary state by state, said Robert Mikos, a marijuana policy and law expert at Vanderbilt University. Substances like cannabinoids are also easy to change into new but similar versions of drugs that may come under scrutiny.

"There's been all sorts of things that (have) cycled through popularity over time," he said. "And government enforcement is always one step behind what the chemists can come up with."

Not necessarily. Because of a lack of oversight into manufacturing processes and a lack of uniform labeling requirements, it's hard to know what exactly is in a particular product.

For example, the US Food and Drug Administration began investigating illnesses earlier this year caused by recalled Diamond Shrooms products, which in addition to containing muscimol, a legal psychoactive compound from the Amanita muscaria mushroom, were found to contain other unlisted ingredients, including psilocin, a controlled substance.

Stay up to date with vaccines: CDC

Why COVID-19, flu and RSV shots are crucial this fall: Expert insight

By Annette Regan

University of San Francisco

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

The Food and Drug Administration approved and granted emergency use authorization on Aug. 22, 2024, for the newest, updated version of the COVID-19 vaccine. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention quickly endorsed the new shot to protect against severe illness.

The 2024 summer wave of COVID-19 cases is a good reminder of why people need to stay up to date with their vaccines.

As the fall and winter seasons approach, the usual seasonal respiratory viruses, including flu and respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, will also be on the rise. Vaccines are now available to help protect against these viruses.

The Conversation asked epidemiologist Annette Regan to explain why officials recommend that people get these shots over the coming months.

The COVID-19 vaccine has been updated several times since the original shot in 2020-21 to keep up with how the SARS-CoV-2 virus is changing.

In September 2023, the CDC recommended that all people get the newly updated vaccine that was designed to protect against XBB.1.5, the variant that had been dominant in the US that summer, regardless of whether they had received all recommended shots in the past.

Now, in August 2024, the XBB.1.5 variant is no longer around and has been replaced by the KP.2 and KP.3 variants, which make up more than 60% of variants currently detected.

Moderna and Pfizer both made updated formulations of the COVID-19 shot that target this new KP.2 variant. It is a monovalent vaccine, which

means it includes only the KP.2 strain.

This strain was selected because it was the most common variant at the time the choice was made. Even when new variants such as KP.3 emerge, we researchers expect the updated vaccine to protect against the newer strains. For example, the 2023-24 vaccine was designed to target the XBB.1.5 strain, and studies showed that it continued to protect against the JN.1 variant that later emerged.

The CDC recommends a single shot for everyone 6 months and older, with some exceptions. Children 6 months to 4 years old who have not received any prior shots of COVID-19 vaccine still need two or three shots of the updated 2024-25 vaccine. Adults 65 and older and children and adults with certain health conditions may require an additional shot as well.

Reinfection

People who recently had a SARS-CoV-2 infection may consider delaying their shot for three months after the illness, since risk of reinfection is thought to be low during the months after infection.

Recent studies have shown that people who received the 2023-24 vaccine were 54% less likely to develop symptomatic COVID-19 illness, 39% to 51% less likely to visit an emergency department or urgent care with COVID-19, and 50% to 53% less likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19 compared with unvaccinated people.

The vaccine was most effective among those who had received their shot more recently.

COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths have been rising since May 2024, with the highest rates seen in adults 65 and older and infants under 6 months old. Therefore, public health experts are recommending that people get the COVID-19 shot as soon as possible to protect against severe illness.

Because infants younger than 6

months are not old enough to be directly vaccinated, COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy is the best way to protect these babies.

When it comes to the flu, cases and hospitalizations seem to rise steeply between November and December. Some years, however, such as the 2022-23 flu season, they start as early as October.

It's important to remember that vaccines do not offer immediate protection. You need about two weeks for your body to generate enough antibodies to offer protection. September or early October is a good time to get the flu shot to ensure you are protected in time. However, if you aren't able to get the shot before November, it's important to know that it is still helpful to get the shot as long as flu is around.

Getting the COVID-19 and flu shots together can certainly make it easier to get up to date with these recommended vaccinations. Data shows that getting the flu shot and the COVID-19 shot together is safe and effective.

Some vaccine companies are working to develop a combined flu/COVID-19 vaccine to reduce the number of shots needed. This vaccine still needs to be approved by the Food and Drug Administration but could become available soon.

RSV is another common respiratory virus that can cause severe illness in young children and older adults. There are two groups of people who should get one of the three currently available RSV vaccines: adults 60 years and older and pregnant people. The CDC recommends a single dose of either GSK's AREXVY, Moderna's mRESVIA or Pfizer's ABRYSVO for all adults 75 years and older and adults between the ages of 60 to 74 who are at increased risk of severe RSV disease.

Unlike the COVID-19 and flu shots, additional RSV doses are not currently recommended, because research suggests that the vaccine offers protection for at least two RSV seasons.

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Aces hand Sky 7th-straight loss

Mercury clinch playoff berth with win over Dream

PHOENIX, Sept 4, (AP): Kahleah Copper scored 28 points, Diana Taurasi and Brittney Griner hit clutch 3-pointers and the Phoenix Mercury clinched a playoff berth with a 74-66 win over the Atlanta Dream on Tuesday night.

The Mercury also needed Chicago's loss to Las Vegas at the same time, which clinched a playoff spot for Caitlin Clark and the idle Indiana Fever.

Atlanta, which trailed by as many as 16, was within 60-57 early in the fourth quarter when Taurasi hit a 3-pointer. It was a four-point game with four minutes to go when Griner knocked down a 3 from the top of the key to make it 69-62.

Griner finished with 16 points and Taurasi had 13 for the Mercury (17-17). The Mercury were without Natasha Cloud, who had to sit out after picking up her seventh technical foul

of the season in her last game.

Rhyne Howard scored 31 points for the Dream (11-22), who remain tied with Chicago for the final playoff spot, a game ahead of Washington, with seven games left. Tina Charles added 12 points and 12 rebounds.

Aces 90, Sky 71

In Las Vegas, A'ja Wilson scored 30 points and had 14 rebounds, Chel-

BASKETBALL

sea Gray added 13 points and 10 assists and the Las Vegas Aces beat Chicago, handing the Sky their seventh straight loss.

Chicago's loss, and Atlanta's loss in Phoenix, clinched playoff spots for the Mercury and the idle Indiana Fever.

Tiffany Hayes, who stepped into

the starting lineup for Kelsey Plum while she rested a sore ankle, added 20 points for the Aces (21-12), while Jackie Young had 15.

Wilson's eighth game this season with at least 30 points and 10 rebounds helped Las Vegas stay a game up on Seattle for the fourth playoff spot and homecourt advantage in the first round. Wilson also had three blocks, three assists and two steals and did not commit a foul.

Mystic 90, Wings 86

In Arlington, Emily Engstler had a career-high 19 points to lead a dominant performance by the Washington Mystics' bench in a critical win over the Dallas Wings.

Both teams started the night 9-23 and coming off losses after three straight wins had reignited their playoff hopes. They began two games behind Chicago and Atlanta in the

battle for the final playoff berth. Both have seven games remaining.

Ariel Atkins added 14 points and Julie Vanloo and reserve Shatori Walker-Kimbrough had 11 each for the Mystics, who started the season 0-12.

Washington's bench scored 50 points to 13 for the Wings, who were down 16 with less than five minutes to go and missed three shots in the closing seconds. The Mystics missed their last nine shots.

Arike Ogunbowale had 21 points to lead Dallas, three in the first half and 11 in the final five minutes. Teaira McCowan had 20 points and 13 rebounds, Natasha Howard had 14 points, Satou Sabally 12 and Kalani Brown 10.

Storm 71, Sun 64

In Uncasville, Skylar Diggins-Smith scored 18 points, Jewell Loyd added 17 and the Seattle Storm

bounced back from a tough loss at Connecticut last weekend to beat the Sun in a rematch.

The Storm got hammered inside in a 93-86 loss at Connecticut on Sunday when they allowed 56 points in the paint and they got off to a similar start on Tuesday. The Sun led by 12 in the first quarter and nine in the middle of the second with a big rebounding advantage and 20 points in the paint. By the end, the Storm had a 40-34 advantage inside and won the rebounding battle 31-30.

Nneka Ogumwike scored 14 points and Gabby Williams added 11 for Seattle (20-13), which was 2-5 coming out of the Olympic break and had slipped from third to fifth in the standings. The Storm are battling Las Vegas for the fourth seed and homecourt advantage in the first round of the playoffs.

DeWanna Bonner had 26 points

and Brianna Jones 21 for the Sun (24-9).

Seattle was up three when Diggins-Smith made a driving layup for a 65-60 lead with three minutes to go. Connecticut missed two shots on its next possession and then Dijonai Carrington was called for an offensive foul on the next.

With a minute to go and the lead down to four, the Storm made 5 of 8 free throws to offset Bonner's 3-pointer.

The Sun scored the first eight points of the game, starting and ending with Carrington scoring inside, and led 18-6 on Bonner's layup before settling for an 18-13 lead after one.

The key for Seattle was finishing strong, using a 7-0 run to close the first quarter and a 14-2 surge at the end of the second to take a 34-31 halftime lead. A 9-2 run gave Seattle a 55-48 lead going into the fourth quarter.

Masters wins 8th Paralympic gold

Hart beats Baker to Paralympic dressage title

PARIS, Sept 4, (AP): Ok-sana Masters has claimed another gold medal at the Paralympic Games by defending her title in para cycling's H4-5 individual time trial.

The American multi-sport specialist clocked 23 minutes, 45.20 seconds on Wednesday to finish 6.24 seconds ahead of Chantal Haenen of the Netherlands and a whopping 1 minute, 27.87 seconds ahead of China's Sun Bianbian.

It takes Masters' career total to eight golds - and 18 medals overall - from both summer and winter Games.

Masters will also compete in a H5 road race as defending champion on Thursday, before she wraps up her Paris Games in the mixed H1-5 team relay on Saturday.

Masters was born in 1989 near Chernobyl in Ukraine, the site of the world's worst nuclear accident, and has birth defects believed to be from the aftermath of the disaster.

PARALYMPICS

She was adopted by an American mother when she was a child. She had her left leg amputated near the knee at 9 and the right one at the same spot five years later.

Rebecca Hart won the dressage gold medal aboard Floratina at the Paris Paralympics and the United States won two other equestrian medals.

Britain's Natasha Baker, a six-time gold medalist, was the favorite but finished third in the Grade III category for riders with severe impairments in both legs but minimal or no trunk impairment.

"It's been 25 years of trying to get to this point and being close many, many times," said the 39-year-old Hart. "To actually get it, I feel like I'm going to wake up at any moment. It's just surreal. It feels like a dream." Hart's best previous result at the Paralympics was a team bronze medal in Tokyo.

Fiona Howard won gold for the U.S. in the Grade II category on Diamond Dunes and Roxanne Trunnell took silver on Fan Tastico H in Grade I - which has the most severely impaired riders.

She praised the impact of team veterans Hart and Trunnell, who is also 39.

Howard got distracted by her surroundings in the regal gardens at the Palace of Versailles, once the home of French royalty.

It was Trunnell's fourth Paralympic medal after two individual golds and a team bronze at the Tokyo Games in 2021. She contracted a virus in 2009 that caused swelling in her brain and left her needing a wheelchair.

The United States routed France 82-47 in men's wheelchair basketball to advance to the semifinals.

The Americans, looking for their third straight gold medal, will face Canada on Thursday for a spot in the final.

Tuning out the spirited French crowd, the Americans never trailed and held France to just 36% shooting.

Jake Williams poured in 23 points and had 10 assists, and Brian Bell scored 20 and pulled down 14 rebounds. Christophe Carlier led France with 11 points.

Britain faces Germany in the other semifinal.

Alexandr Kostin won the T12 1,500 meters for athletes with minor



Belgium's Michele George, centre, Germany's Regine Mispelkamp, left, and Britain's Sophie Wells pose with their gold, silver and bronze medals after the equestrian individual grade V competition at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris, France. (AP)

Debacle against Bangladesh cited

Pakistan test cricketers criticized at home

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan, Sept 4, (AP): Pakistan's embarrassing test series whitewash against Bangladesh has been heavily criticized at home, with former captain Ramiz Raja calling for an explanation from red-ball captain Shan Masood and senior players.

"Pakistan cricket sunk in Bay of Bengal," read a headline in leading Urdu language newspaper Daily Jang on Wednesday.

CRICKET

Bangladesh jumped three places to No. 4 in the ICC World Test Championship with back-to-back victories against Pakistan, which is lying at No. 8 just above last-placed West Indies.

Masood blamed lack of fitness and long gaps between test matches among the reasons for the debacle against Bangladesh as he suffered a second successive whitewash after losing 3-0 to Australia earlier this year.

"It's the job of the leader to fight," Raja said on his YouTube channel Ramiz Speaks. "Agreed he (Masood) is a young captain, agreed the bowling attack was young, but he had picked up this bowling attack."

Bangladesh quashed all of Pakistan's plans during its historic achievement in test cricket as Pakistan faced a 10-wicket defeat in the first test after it opted to go with four fast bowlers - including new-ball pair of Shaheen Shah

visual impairment, in a Paralympic record time of 3 minutes, 44.43 seconds, four seconds faster than the previous mark.

Yeltsin Jacques of Brazil also set a record in the T11 1,500 for athletes with severe visual impairments who use guides.

Jacques won in 3:55.82, breaking the world and Paralympic records he

Afridi and Naseem Shah.

Pakistan's ploy to rest both Afridi and Naseem for the second test and try their three premier domestic pace bowlers - Mir Hamza, Khurram Shahzad and Mohammad Ali - also couldn't turn the result as Bangladesh romped to a six-wicket win on Tuesday to seal the series win.

Khurram and Hamza had floored Bangladesh to 26-6 in the first innings but Litton Das' 138 and Mehidy Hasan Miraz's 78 led an improbable fightback.

"It's a first class bowling attack not a test cricket bowling attack," Raja said.

There are question marks on Masood's own batting form as the left-hander scored only one half century against Bangladesh while his last test century came against England in 2020.

"He has to answer about his own performance," Raja said. "He is not scoring and the way Bangladesh squeezed, somebody has to be called for explanation, senior players needs to explain."

There has been a sharp decline in Pakistan's performances this year - both in red-ball and white-ball cricket. The introduction of foreign coaches has made no impact with Pakistan los-

ing to co-host United States and India at the T20 World Cup to make an early exit under head coach Gary Kirsten of South Africa.

Jason Gillespie took over as head coach of red-ball cricket, but the former Australian fast bowler failed in his first assignment against Bangladesh.

"I fail to understand why we always bring in foreign coaches," said another former captain Rashid Latif.

Raja said Pakistan cricket fans have started to lose interest in their team.

"Lots of fans are disheartened," he said. "Why do someone watch Pakistan's test cricket, because when you surf television channels and watch quality and classy cricket elsewhere, why should someone stop and watch how low can they (Pakistan cricketers) go."

Pakistan's top-order batters have long been struggling - especially Babar Azam, who hasn't scored a half century in his last 16 innings. Left-hander Saud Shakeel had a promising start, but led the team down against Bangladesh. Opener Abdullah Shafique could score only 43 in four innings against Bangladesh and added to Pakistan batting woes.

"Only (Mohammad) Rizwan fights," Raja said. "The overall (cricket) structure is shaken and when the foundation is shaken, sponsors are shaken, fans are shaken and expectations are dead."

Pakistan has little time to recover, with England lined up for a three-test series next month in Pakistan.

medalist and has achieved the feat of winning gold at each of the last four Paralympic Games.

The men's 50 meters backstroke S5 final saw the same scenario as three Chinese swimmers also claimed all three medals.

Yuan Weiwei won the race at La Défense Arena, beating Guo Jincheng and Wang Lichao.

Palmer, Watkins and Foden ruled out of England's games vs Ireland and Finland

LONDON, Sept 4, (AP): Cole Palmer, Ollie Watkins and Phil Foden have been ruled out of England's upcoming UEFA Nations League matches against Ireland and Finland. England plays in Dublin on Saturday before hosting Finland at Wembley three days later

as the Euro 2024 runner-up competes under interim manager Lee Carsley for the first time. England was relegated from the top-tier Nations League group in 2022. It will be the first competitive match between England and Ireland since 1991.

Gareth Southgate stepped down as manager after the European Championship. Carsley has been appointed on a temporary basis. "The Three Lions squad reported to St. George's Park on Tuesday but, following assessment, both Palmer and Watkins returned

to their clubs to continue rehabilitation for ongoing issues," the Football Association said in a statement. "Foden did not report through illness and is ruled out of the matches against Republic of Ireland and Finland." No additions to the team were planned.

Bolivia 'moves' WC qualifier to higher altitude

EL ALTO, Bolivia, Sept 4, (AP): Bolivia has always been a difficult place to play.

Now the challenge is even higher. Literally.

The men's national soccer team is hoping that hosting World Cup qualifiers at an altitude higher than ever will help it improve in the South American standings.

The Bolivians usually play in the capital La Paz at 3,640 meters (11,940 feet) above sea level, but the South American soccer body CONMEBOL has allowed them to move their games to El Alto, the second largest city in the country at an altitude of 4,150 meters (13,615 feet). That's as high as nine Empire State Buildings on top of each other.

With one win and five losses, Bolivia is second to last in the standings, and needs a win on Thursday against visiting Venezuela, which is fifth and coming off a quarterfinal run at the Copa America.

New Bolivia coach Oscar Villegas will make his debut after replacing Antonio Carlos Zago, who was fired in July after a winless Copa. Villegas hopes to exploit the higher altitude by picking a squad in which 80% of the players are used to the thinner air, including six from Always Ready club in El Alto, and six more from Bolívar in La Paz.

SOCCER

"Soccer is made of details. It does not mean that with this (changing stadiums) we are going to win," says Villegas, a former La Paz striker. "We are trying to take care of details that can allow us to be more effective."

"In El Alto, we are going to try to be as intense as possible and to let them know that they are on a new pitch where we have been unbeatable," Villegas said, referring to local teams playing there in club competitions such as Copa Libertadores and Sudamericana. "The psychological and emotional aspect also plays a role, it is something that is going to help us a lot."

El Alto Municipal Stadium opened only in 2017 and is considered a jewel in the Bolivian highlands. On its green grass, marked in white, is the phrase, "You play where you live."

Oval-shaped with seating for 24,000 spectators, the El Alto stadium is smaller than the 40,000-seat Hernando Siles Stadium in La Paz. But El Alto's elevation is 560 meters (1,840 feet) higher.

The president of the Bolivian Football Federation, Fernando Costa, says the stadium is being trialed to see how the players respond, to determine if El Alto can become a permanent venue for home games.

Venezuela's home matches are at sea level, and it has not complained about the change of venue, but it is taking measures.

In a preliminary squad of 47 players, Venezuela coach Fernando Batista included some who are active in cities where the game is played at altitude, among them goalkeeper Alain Baroja from Bolivian club Always Ready. The Venezuelans are preparing by undergoing oxygen breathing exercises and acclimatization in hyperbaric chambers.

Not everyone agrees that first-class soccer should be played at high altitudes.

Tite, the coach of Brazilian club Flamengo, says it is "difficult" to play at altitude after they lost to Bolívar 1-0 in La Paz two weeks ago in the Copa Libertadores last 16.

In 2007, FIFA criticized matches at the height of La Paz and ruled that international games could not be played above 2,750 meters. However, the next year FIFA backtracked after objections from Bolivia, where most stadiums are above that altitude.

"The field has been approved by CONMEBOL because it meets all the requirements they have requested," Edmundo Vargas, municipal sports director of El Alto, told The Associated Press.

But there is little research on playing soccer at more than 4,000 meters above sea level, as will occur on Thursday.

"We always recommend that any athlete have a prior evaluation before coming to altitude and an adaptation period," said Jesús Jiménez, a researcher at the Bolivian Institute of High-Altitude Biology.

He was skeptical about claims that the high-altitude gives Bolivia an advantage over other teams, noting that "Bolivia has lost before on its home ground."

SPORTS

Tiafoe, Fritz meet in all-American semifinal

Navarro's first Grand Slam semifinal will be against Sabalenka

NEW YORK, Sept 4, (AP): Frances Tiafoe and Taylor Fritz set up an all-American semifinal at the U.S. Open with victories Tuesday, guaranteeing the United States a man in the title match at the country's Grand Slam tournament for the first time in 18 years.

The 20th-seeded Tiafoe made it to the final four at Flushing Meadows for the second time in three years when his quarterfinal opponent, Grigor Dimitrov, stopped playing because of an injury in the fourth set. Tiafoe was leading 6-3, 6-7 (5), 6-3, 4-1 with midnight approaching when Dimitrov retired from the match, providing an anticlimactic ending to a contest that was not necessarily of the highest quality.

TENNIS

Just one glimpse of the sort of uneven play from both: Dimitrov held three set points in the tiebreaker at 6-3. On the first, he double-faulted. On the second, he double-faulted again. On the third, Tiafoe double-faulted, handing over that set.

Hours earlier, Fritz advanced in a far more satisfying way, watching one last errant forehand from his higher-ranked, more-accomplished opponent land wide. Fritz dropped his neon-colored racket, clenched both fists and screamed, "Come on!"

He gathered himself and his equipment, walked to the net for a hug with No. 4 Alexander Zverev, who twice was a Grand Slam runner-up, then stepped to the center of Arthur Ashe Stadium, spread his arms wide and yelled again, "Come on!"

After years of climbing the rankings, of becoming the top American man in tennis, of coming close to making a breakthrough at one of his sport's four most important events,



Taylor Fritz, of the United States, returns a shot to Alexander Zverev, of Germany, during the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open tennis championships, in New York. (AP)

Fritz finally came through at home, beating Zverev 7-6 (2), 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (3) to reach a major semifinal for the first time.

The 12th-seeded Fritz, a 26-year-old from California, entered the day with an 0-4 record in Slam quarterfinals.

Now on Friday, he will take on longtime friend Tiafoe, a 26-year-old from Maryland who lost to eventual champion Carlos Alcaraz in the 2022 U.S. Open semifinals.

Fritz holds a 6-1 head-to-head

edge over Tiafoe as pros.

The Fritz-Tiafoe showdown - "That could be crazy," Fritz said, before he knew whom he'd face next - is the first semifinal between a pair of American men at any major since 2005, when Andre Agassi defeated Robby Ginepri in New York.

No American man has won a Grand Slam singles trophy since Andy Roddick triumphed at the U.S. Open in 2003; Roddick was the last man from the United States in the

U.S. Open final, losing to Roger Federer in 2006.

Dimitrov, who was seeded No. 9, had played a five-setter in the fourth round and appeared to be fading late in the third set against Tiafoe, grabbing at his left hamstring, walking gingerly between points and hitting serves much slower than earlier in the evening. After that set, Dimitrov was visited by a trainer and then headed to the locker room for treatment.

He returned to the court for the start of the fourth set but wasn't able to move properly and eventually quit. Dimitrov, a 33-year-old from Bulgaria who has appeared in three major semifinals, wouldn't say afterward exactly what was wrong, only that it was an accumulation of things.

Fritz used his usual blend of big serving, winning 20 of 21 points when his first serves landed in during the fourth set, and big forehands, but he also was effective at the net - win-

ning 16 of 24 points when he pushed forward - and returned well enough to accumulate 10 break points.

Even though Fritz only converted two of those break chances, it meant he constantly put pressure on Zverev, a German who made it to the finals of the U.S. Open in 2020 and the French Open this year.

In women's play, Emma Navarro's first Grand Slam semifinal will come at the U.S. Open against Aryna Sabalenka, someone trying to win her second major trophy of the year and third overall.

Navarro, an American who is seeded 13th, used a stunning turnaround to grab the last six games of her quarterfinal against Paula Badosa for a 6-2, 7-5 victory at Flushing Meadows on Tuesday, following up her upset of defending champion Coco Gauff.

There was no such drama in No. 2 Sabalenka's 6-1, 6-2 win against No. 7 Zheng Qinwen, the gold medalist at the Paris Olympics last month, in a rematch of Sabalenka's victory in the Australian Open final.

With Roger Federer in the stands, attending the U.S. Open for the first time since his retirement, Sabalenka displayed a typically powerful performance to get into the semifinals in New York for the fourth year in a row. In 2023, she was the runner-up to Gauff.

Sabalenka said she saw Federer in the crowd and figured he was there to watch Frances Tiafoe and Grigor Dimitrov in the match that followed hers.

"But still, I was like, OK, I have to play my best tennis so he enjoys it. I have to show my skills, you know, slice skills, come to the net and all that stuff," Sabalenka, a 26-year-old from Belarus who's known more for her power, said with a laugh.

She is trying to become the first woman since Angelique Kerber in 2016 to win the hard-court major titles at the Australian Open and U.S. Open. Sabalenka defeated Zheng in January for a second consecutive title at Melbourne Park.

Kuwaiti stars 'shine' in J60 Isfahan International Junior Championship



Kuwaiti tennis players with the delegation.

ISFAHAN, Sept 4: Kuwaiti players Mohammed Al-Awadhi and Mohammed Al-Qali excelled in the J60 Isfahan International Junior Tennis Championship, currently underway in Isfahan, Iran. The duo advanced to the quarter-finals in the doubles competition after defeating the Iranian pair, Eric Abedinzadeh and Sam Atran, in a thrilling match that ended 2-1. Additionally, Mohammed Al-Awadhi reached the singles round of 16 by defeating Iranian player Bardia Daneshvar in straight sets.

TENNIS

This marks the second tournament in Isfahan in which the Kuwaiti national tennis team is participating. The Kuwaiti delegation for these championships includes Ahmed Al-Qallaf as the head of the delegation, Saad Al-Kandari as the administrator, Ali Al-Qali as the coach, and players Mohammed Jassim Al-Awadhi, Fawzan Fahad Al-Khashan, Mohammed Ali Al-Qali, and Fares Nasser Al-Kazemi.

Atlanta United fires technical director

ATLANTA, Sept 4, (AP): Carlos Bocanegra, who helped build Atlanta United into an MLS champion in just its second season but couldn't get the club back to that level, was fired Wednesday as technical director.

Bocanegra was dismissed with seven games left in another disappointing season. United is mired in ninth place in the Eastern Conference with just eight wins in 27 matches.

President and CEO Garth Lagerwey will assume Bocanegra's duties on an interim basis for the remainder of the season.

Atlanta was already playing under an interim coach, Rob Valentino, after Gonzalo Pineda was let go in early June.

Now, the club is set for a total overhaul heading into 2025.

"While we will continue to fight

for a playoff spot down the final stretch of the season, this gives us a clean slate and a runway to properly assess all vacancies in our sporting operation ahead of what will be an extremely important offseason for our club," Lagerwey said in a statement.

Bocanegra originally joined United as technical director in 2015, two years before the expansion club entered the league, and added the title of vice president as he assembled a high-scoring roster that reached the playoffs in Atlanta's debut year and won the MLS Cup in 2018.

Among those he signed were Josef Martinez, who won the league's MVP award, and midfielder Miguel Almiron, one of the league's most dynamic players before he transferred to Premier League club Newcastle.

Lightning ends Italy-New Zealand race

Swiss revive America's Cup campaign with win over French

BARCELONA, Spain, Sept 4, (AP): Some fireworks between America's Cup heavyweights from Italy and New Zealand were interrupted by the real thing when a brilliant bolt of lightning struck the course a few hundred meters in front of the carbon-fiber boats during preliminary racing.

Italy's Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli Team was sailing through a storm well ahead of two-time defending America's Cup champion Emirates Team New Zealand when the lightning strike startled the sailors and ended the race on the first day of the second round robin of the Louis Vuitton Cup.

The race committee called an almost immediate halt to racing, awarding the win to Luna Rossa while the Kiwis were disqualified for going far outside the boundary as they headed off the course to avoid the incoming bad weather. Both boats immediately dropped their sails and were fast-towed back to port.

SAILING

Video from the Kiwi boat shows the bolt hitting the water, with an instantaneous clap of thunder. Co-helmsman Nathan Outteridge is heard saying, "big gust here," while co-helmsman Peter Burling looks at the lightning strike and responds with a startled expression.

Luna Rossa co-helmsman Jimmy Spithill outmaneuvered the Kiwis approaching the starting line and forced them into a low-speed tack that dropped them off their foils. The Italian crew then survived a nerve-racking broach when the bow of the 75-foot monohull leaped out of the water and led at every mark.

The Kiwis are competing in the round robins, but their points don't count. They will sit out the semis and finals of the Louis Vuitton Cup while waiting to defend the Auld Mug in mid-October.

Team New Zealand beat Luna Rossa 7-3 in the 2021 America's Cup in Auckland. Spithill won the America's Cup for Oracle Team USA in 2010 and 2013 before losing it to the Kiwis in 2017.

Team New Zealand already has had its share of drama. On Thursday, its yacht Taihoro was damaged when it was dropped some 6 meters (20 feet) onto the support cradle by a crane lifting it out of the water after racing. The shore crew repaired the damaged hull and had the boat back on the water two days later.

Earlier Tuesday, Alinghi Red Bull Racing got a big win and boosted its chances of advancing when the Swiss beat France's Orient Express Racing Team.

Alinghi scored its first win of the opening phase to pull level with Orient Express at the bottom of the standings with 1-4 records. The victory avenged a loss to the French on the first day of racing last week.

The opening stage of the competition will eliminate the lowest-scoring yacht by Sunday.

The remaining four boats will enter two-round playoffs to decide which one will take the Louis Vuitton Cup and earn a place in the America's Cup match, where it will face Emirates Team New Zealand.

Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli Team leads the double round-robin stage with a 5-0 record.

Tomashova banned for 10 years

Latest Russian doping case set to elevate Rowbury to bronze

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, Sept 4, (AP): More than 12 years after the 2012 London Olympics, United States 1,500-meter runner Shannon Rowbury is set to get a bronze medal because of yet another doping case in a notoriously dirty race.

Russian athlete Tatyana Tomashova, a two-time world champion, was banned for 10 years on Tuesday by a Court of Arbitration for Sport judge. The lengthy ban was imposed because it was her second offense as she previously served a two-year ban in a case that removed her from the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

The court said Tomashova tested positive for anabolic steroids in re-analysis in 2021 of samples she gave in June and July 2012, weeks ahead of the Olympics in London.

The Russia also was sanctioned with "disqualification of all competitive results" from June 21, 2012 into January 2015 - a period including the London Games.

Tomashova placed fourth on the day in London - and Rowbury was sixth - in a race where the original gold and silver medalists from Turkey, Asli Cakir Alptekin and Gamze Bulut, have long since been disqualified and banned for doping.

Though Rowbury had five racers ahead of her at the finish line in London, she now stands to be upgraded to third in the final standings.

The International Olympic Committee has final approval to reallocate medals that were awarded at the time. Medal presentation ceremonies can be held at a world championships or a fu-

ture Olympics. The next Summer Games is in 2028 in Los Angeles.

Rowbury is now aged 39 and retired from racing, and worked as a broadcaster at the Paris Olympics analyzing track races for NBC.

Two runners who placed behind Rowbury in London, from Russia and Belarus, also were later disqualified for doping.

The disqualifications for Alptekin and Gamze lifted Maryam Yusuf Jamal, an Ethiopian-born Bahraini, to be Olympic champion and Tomashova's disqualification should now raise Abeba Aregawi, an Ethiopia-born Swede, into the silver medal position.

ATHLETICS

Rowbury is a three-time Olympian who placed fourth in the 1,500 at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics and seventh in 2008 in Beijing. She took bronze at the 2009 world championships in Berlin.

CAS said it acted as the first tribunal in the Tomashova case as a replacement for the Russian track and field federation, which is suspended by the World Athletics governing body.

Tomashova, now aged 49, took silver in the 1,500 at the 2004 Athens Olympics and won back-to-back titles at the world championships in 2003 and 2004.

Her reputation already was damaged by her involvement in a Russian conspiracy to avoid detection of track athletes' doping by switching urine samples. She was provisionally suspended ahead of the Beijing Olympics and later banned for two years.



Emirates Team New Zealand's AC75 boat sails during America's Cup Preliminary Regatta ahead of the 37th America's Cup sailing race at the Barcelona's coast, Spain, Thursday, Aug. 22, 2024. The world's oldest international sports trophy, best yachtsmen and cutting-edge design and technology will come together in Barcelona when the 37th edition of the America's Cup starts on Thursday. (AP)



Pizzi and Al-Hajri address the media on the eve of the World Cup qualifying in Jordan.

Sports

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Palestine travels to South Korea as Saudi Arabia takes on Indonesia

Pizzi confident in Kuwait's readiness for key World Cup qualifier against Jordan

By Khaled Al-Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

AMMAN, Sept 4: Argentine coach Juan Pizzi of the Kuwaiti national team expressed confidence in his players' readiness for today's match against Jordan. Speaking at a press conference, Pizzi highlighted that he faced no issues increasing the training intensity during the preparation period, noting that the players' positive response facilitated effective preparation.

Pizzi emphasized that the team is fully prepared and expressed hope that the players will deliver a performance that reflects the strong reputation of Kuwaiti football.

Fahad Al-Hajri acknowledged the challenge of facing a strong Jordanian team with home advantage and enthusiastic fans. However, he assured that the Blues are determined to make a significant impact. Al-Hajri expressed confidence in the team's ability to compete at a high level both in today's match and throughout the qualifiers under the guidance of the new technical staff. In today's other Group Two fixtures, Iraq will take on Oman and Palestine will face South Korea.

Since August 24, the Kuwaiti team has been training in the Emirates under the guidance of new Argentine coach, Juan Pizzi. Pizzi, who replaced Portuguese coach Rui Pinto last July, has been assessing players for this campaign. The squad includes Abdulrahman Kamil, Suleiman Abdul Ghafoor, Abdulrahman Al Fadhli, Rashid Al Dosari, Sami Al Sanea, Khaled

SOCCER

Ibrahim, Fahad Al Hajri, Khaled Al Fadhli, Salman Burmiah, Faisal Zayed, Mahdi Dashti, Ahmed Al Dhafiri, Adhbi Shehab, Reda Hani, Hamad Harbi, Sultan Al Anzi, Yousef Majed, Salman Al Awadhi, Yousef Nasser, Eid Al Rashidi, Moaz Al Asima, Abdul Mohsen Al Ajmi, Hussein Ashkanani, Ali Khalaf, and Hamad Al Qallaf.

Kuwait secured its place in this round by finishing second in Group 1 during the second round of qualifiers, amassing 7 points behind Qatar (16 points) and ahead of India and Afghanistan (5 points each).

The team is aware of the significant challenge ahead, aiming to make a mark in these qualifiers and achieve a feat not seen since the 2006 World Cup qualifiers. It is also looking to replicate the success of the 1982 World Cup in Spain and secure its first win against Jordan since 2014, when it won 1-0 in a friendly. The last encounter between the teams was in June 2022, when Jordan defeated Kuwait 3-0 in the 2023 Asian Cup qualifiers.

Jordan coach, Moroccan Jamal Salami, shared that qualifying for the World Cup is a cherished goal for all Jordanians. He emphasized the importance of the upcoming match against Kuwait, stating that it must be exceptional to secure the team's progression to the next stage. Salami noted that the draw for the third round of World Cup qualifiers has positioned the Al-Nashama advantageously, especially with the upcoming match against Kuwait.

Jordanian player Ihsan Haddad also voiced the team's ambition to secure a victory to bring joy to Jordanian fans and take the initial steps towards World Cup qualification.

Jordan is bolstered by its strong performance in the Asian Cup earlier this year, where it reached the final but lost to Qatar 1-3. It is determined to secure a World Cup spot and overcome its previous disappointment in the 2014 continental play-offs. Under the guidance of Moroccan coach Jamal Al-Salami, Jordan topped Group Seven on goal difference over Saudi Arabia.

In today's other matches, Australia will face Bahrain in Group 3, Japan will play China, and Saudi Arabia meets Indonesia. In Group 1, Uzbekistan takes on North Korea, Iran faces Kyrgyzstan, and Qatar competes against the UAE.

The 18 teams that advanced from the second round will be divided into three groups, with the top two from each group qualifying after ten rounds extending until June 2025. The third and fourth-placed teams will be divided into two groups, with the top team from each group earning a direct qualification spot and the second-placed teams competing for a play-off opportunity.

Kuwait on track for WC qualification



Kuwaiti players celebrate after qualifying for the second round.

Adel Al-Harbi to oversee referees at Asian Clubs Volleyball Championship

By Khaled Al-Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 4: At the invitation of the Asian Volleyball Confederation, international volleyball referee Adel Al-Harbi, a member of the Continental Federation's Referees Committee, has been selected to oversee the referees for the 24th Asian Men's Clubs Volleyball Championship. The tournament will be held in Yazd, Iran, from September 8 to 15.

VOLLEYBALL

This selection reflects the Asian Volleyball Confederation's confidence in the caliber of Kuwait's international referees, entrusting them with the responsibility of supervising the continent's top club-level competition.

The Continental Federation redrew the tournament, which includes Kuwait Club, after several teams withdrew. The new groupings are as follows:



Adel Al-Harbi

Group A features Kuwait Club, Shahdab Yazd of Iran, Jakarta Bhayangkara of Indonesia, and Pavlodar of Kazakhstan. Group B includes

Gas Al-Janub of Iraq, Al-Rayyan of Qatar, Kam Air of Afghanistan, and Foolad Sirjan of Iran.

Kuwait Club is currently preparing for the Asian Championship with a training camp in Turkey. It played a friendly match against Istanbul Sport two days ago, losing 1-3, and had a rematch yesterday. The team will depart from Turkey directly to Iran on Friday.

Musleh Al-Rashidi, the Director of Volleyball at Kuwait Club and Head of the Delegation to the Turkish camp and the Championship, praised the commitment of the players to the instructions from the technical and administrative staff and their dedication to gaining valuable experience from the friendly matches ahead of the Asian competition.

He expressed his gratitude to the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Club, Khaled Al-Ghanim, for his unwavering support of the volleyball team and his efforts to overcome challenges to ensure an honorable representation in this significant continental event.

Shanto impressed with the work ethic of young fast bowlers

Historic triumph will bring smiles in Bangladesh

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan, Sept 4, (AP): Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto believed his team's first test cricket series win over Pakistan will give his compatriots reason to smile amid ongoing difficulties.

The recent civil unrest that toppled Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina caused Bangladesh to be stripped of the Women's Twenty20 World Cup, and in the past week the country has been hit by deadly flash floods that have affected millions of people.

"For the last 1 1/2 months, everyone (in Bangladesh) has struggled a lot," Shanto said after Bangladesh beat Pakistan by six wickets in the second test on the last day Tuesday.

"We all know cricket is a very emotional thing in our country, so I

hope they will get some smiles because we've won the series."

Bangladesh followed an epic 10-wicket victory in the first test at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium with a comeback win in the second test on the same ground.

Bangladesh was 26-6 in its first innings but Litton Das and Mehidy Hasan Miraz batted them to just a 12-run deficit. Then the fast bowlers dismissed Pakistan for 172 and Bangladesh reached the winning target of 185 in 56 overs.

"The belief in the dressing room is very different this time," Shanto said. "We were nervous (at 26-6) but the way Litton and Miraz batted ...

we believed that those guys will take us to a good position."

Shanto was impressed with the work ethic of young fast bowlers Hasan Mahmud and Nahid Rana, who shared nine wickets in the second innings.

"We read the conditions very well," Shanto said. "The bowlers did their job ... and just tried to bowl in the channel for a long time, not like one or two overs. The bowlers did a lot of hard work and that's why we got the result."

Bangladesh is scheduled to tour India this month for two tests and three Twenty20s, and Shanto said the historic win in Pakistan - only their second series triumph away from home - boosts their morale.

"This series (in Pakistan) gives us a lot of confidence," Shanto said.

Blues defeat China

By Khaled Al-Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

AMMAN, Sept 4: The Kuwait junior handball team advanced to the second "main" round of the 10th Asian Championship, currently taking place in Amman, Jordan.

This championship also serves as a qualifier for the World Junior Cup finals in Slovenia next year. Kuwait defeated China 32-24 for its second consecutive victory in Group Four's "preliminary round" matches.

The team has four points. In its opening match of the championship, the Blues triumphed 37-31 over Chinese Taipei.

Other results in the group saw Iran defeat China 28-23; Saudi Arabia beat the Emirates 45-14, Japan overcome India 49-12, and South Korea edge out Iraq 27-20. In the second round of preliminary matches, Qatar defeated the Emirates 31-21.

Five matches are scheduled for today,

including a critical clash between Kuwait and Iran at 3:30 pm in the final round of the preliminary stage to determine the leader of Group Four. China will face Chinese Taipei, while other matches include Korea vs. Bahrain, Saudi Arabia vs. Qatar, and Jordan vs. Japan. The teams will have a rest day tomorrow.

According to the rules of the Asian Junior Handball Championship, the top two teams from each group will progress to the main round, where they will be divided into two groups for a single-round league. The top two teams from each group will advance to the semi-finals and secure a spot in the

HANDBALL

2025 World Cup finals. Meanwhile, the third-placed teams will compete in a playoff for fifth place and a qualification spot for the World Cup in Slovenia next year.

Youssef Al-Shaheen, the manager of the team, expressed his satisfaction with the team's performance, praising the technical skills of the young players. He remains hopeful that the team will continue to perform at a level that honors the reputation of Kuwaiti handball.



Kuwaiti Paralympics champion Faisal Al Rajhi.

Al Rajhi secures 10th place in Para

Kuwaiti Paralympics champion Faisal Al Rajhi was placed tenth in the 1500m (T54) wheelchair race finals at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, clocking a time of 2:54.60 minutes at the Stade de France.

The gold medal was claimed by China's Jin Hua with a time of 2:49.93 minutes, followed by Switzerland's Marcel Hug, who took silver with a time of 2:52.59 minutes.

The bronze medal went to China's Dai Yongqiang, who completed the race in 2:53.54 minutes.

Al Rajhi is scheduled to compete today, Thursday, in the 800m qualifiers. He previously earned a bronze medal last Saturday in the 5000m (T54) race, finishing with a time of 10:55.99 minutes.