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Kuwait, IAEA celebrate 6 decades of relations

VIENNA, Sept 19, (KUNA): Kuwait and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are celebrating 60 years of diplomatic relations Thursday at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna.

This event, hosted by IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi and Kuwait's Ambassador to Austria Talal Al-Fassam, coincides with the 68th annual IAEA General Conference, which began on Monday at the United Nations Office in Vienna and will conclude tomorrow, Friday.

The celebration, scheduled for Thursday afternoon, will highlight the achievements of the past six decades, covering all areas of technical cooperation.



Al-Fassam

Kuwait has held prominent positions within IAEA, including chairing the IAEA Board of Governors, the second-highest authority in the agency, in 2003, and presiding over the 65th General Conference in 2021.

The event, attended by numerous Arab and foreign ambassadors and international officials, will begin with a welcoming speech from Al-Fassam, followed by addresses from Grossi and Acting Director General of the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) Dr. Mashaan Al-Otaibi, and National Liaison Officer (NLO) for IAEA Dr. Nader Al-Awadi, will give a brief presentation on the long-standing cooperation between Kuwait and the agency.

Additionally, a book will be launched, reflecting on the 60-year partnership and providing an analytical review of current trends, challenges, and future prospects in utilizing nuclear energy for sustainable development.

The ceremony will conclude with an exchange of commemorative gifts and group photos.

Kuwait's cooperation with IAEA has been significant, particularly in the responsible use of nuclear technologies, contributing to Kuwait's scientific and technological development.

Over the past 60 years, Kuwait has supported

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KUNA photo Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah inaugurating a new wedding hall.

68 wedding halls unveiled

Al-Huwailah pushes for plan to protect families

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs and Chairperson of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah has emphasized the significance of formulating policies and strategies that guarantee the stability of the family and to stop acts of violence, particularly those affecting women and children.

Al-Huwailah made the statement at the recent meeting of the National Committee for Protection from Domestic Violence; with the representatives of civil society organizations, Supreme Council for Family Affairs, and ministries of Interior, Health and Social Affairs in attendance.

She covered a number of topics, such as the need to strengthen and coordinate the efforts of civil society organizations and government agencies to address domestic violence; while underscoring the need to overcome obstacles to the implementation of protection programs, and to take the necessary precautionary measures to safeguard and warn families about the risks of violence.

In accordance with the accepted psychological and social standards and foundations, Al-Huwailah also adopted a series of programs designed to qualify employees in the protection centers managed by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs. The goal of these initiatives is to develop the

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NewsWatch

BEIRUT: The leader of Hezbollah on Thursday said this week's deadly attack on the Lebanon-based militant group's communications devices was a "severe blow" that crossed a "red line."

Hassan Nasrallah said the group is investigating how the two-day attack, which killed more than 30, wounded thousands and was widely believed to be carried out by Israel.

"Yes, we were subjected to a huge and severe blow," Nasrallah said. "The enemy crossed all boundaries and red lines," he added.

As usual, Nasrallah spoke by video from an undisclosed location. Hezbollah typically convenes a rally for supporters to watch his speeches on a big screen, but this time they did not. (AP)

MADRID: The visiting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Thursday praised Spain's efforts within quarters of the European Union in support of the Palestinian cause namely the aspired settlement to establish two states according to relevant UN resolutions.

Abbas, talking to reporters outside the presidential palace in Madrid after meeting Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, expressed gratitude to the nation for its recent recognition of the independent State of Palestine.

Spain's recognition of the State of Palestine is an evidence of its commitment toward the Palestinian people in their quest to determine their destiny, Abbas said. He also thanked Spain for its bids to halt the war in Gaza and end the Israeli occupation to pave the way for the Palestinian people to establish their independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital. (KUNA)

Kuwait welcomes UN resolution on Israel quitting Gaza, W.Bank

Significant number of flaws in initiative: US ambassador



Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah leaves the country to participate in the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly. His Highness the Prime Minister and other senior government officials were at the airport to see him off.

Amir Rep, Crown Prince US bound for 79th UNGA

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and the accompanying delegation left Kuwait on Thursday, heading to New York to attend the 79th UN General Assembly.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Chief of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad, First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, Minister of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Al-Mousherji, and senior state officials saw His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled off at the airport.

The official delegation consisted of Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, Director General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Mishal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and senior officials at the Crown Prince Diwan.

Court cancels female officer appointments

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Court of Appeals ruled to annul all administrative decisions regarding the appointment of the 13th batch of female officers, known as "Specialized Officers", at Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences.

This decision affects a total of 190 female officers, with all its resulting implications.

Lawyer Saud Al-Barghash had filed the appeal on behalf of a Kuwaiti citizen who was denied entry into the course, that graduated in 2022.

After the ruling, Al-Barghash stated, "We are witnessing a historic ruling today. Following the Ministry of Interior's announcement of the opening of applications for Batch 13 in the Women's Police Institute at Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences, our client applied after ensuring she met all the general and specific conditions set by the Ministry.

She successfully passed all required tests, including medical, physical fitness, psychological, general knowledge, aptitude, and the personal interview.

Despite the decision by the Minister of Interior to accept all those who passed the tests and interviews, the plaintiff was shocked to find herself rejected, which prompted her to file a case against the negative administrative decision of not accepting her in Batch 13 of the Specialized Officers."

He explained that her exclusion came despite the constitutional legislator's commitment to ensuring equality before the law, equal opportunities, and non-discrimination among citizens, in line with the principles embedded in the Constitution.

He added, "While we have won the ruling in our favor, it pains us to see injustice and favoritism. Some are only deterred by the esteemed judiciary, which has always stood by the oppressed."

'Hi-tech wins in modern-day warfare'

Kuwait, Gulf must boost cybersecurity

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: While the shock still silences voices in the aftermath of the devastating event two days ago in Lebanon, where nearly 2,800 devices were detonated simultaneously, resulting in numerous deaths and injuries among Hezbollah members in what is now called the "Pager Raid," security and technology experts have shed light on the situation.

They emphasize that modern warfare no longer relies on traditional or even contemporary weapons, but rather the most dangerous weapons -- "technological". The victors in today's battles are those who possess the latest technologies, as new advancements emerge daily.

Dr. Ahmed Al-Munais, a professor of computer science at Kuwait University, described the number of casualties among Hezbollah members as a shocking indication of Israeli intelligence's ability to penetrate security measures using advanced technology, particularly in the realm of cybersecurity.

Al-Munais explained that those who followed the operation believe the pagers were likely tampered with during manufacturing or transportation, with small explosive charges planted that could be "activated remotely."

The presence of batteries heightened their destructive potential. He also noted the operation's political implications, highlighting that the Iranian ambassador

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Hot during day, warm at night: expert

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): The Meteorological Department in Kuwait announced on Thursday that the country is currently experiencing the effects of the seasonal Indian depression, accompanied by light to moderate northwesterly to variable winds. As a result, the weather is expected to be hot during the day and warm at night.

Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi, Director of the Department, in-

Nationality of 112 persons stripped

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): The Supreme Committee to Investigate the Kuwaiti Citizenship held a meeting on Thursday under chairmanship of the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, also the head of the commission.

The Ministry of Interior said in a statement that the committee decided to strip 112 individuals of the Kuwaiti citizenship, pending referral to the Cabinet. The statement noted that the Kuwaiti nationality would be withdrawn from one case as per Article 9 15/1959 of the Citizenship Law.

The committee also added that withdrawing the Kuwaiti nationality was in line with article 11 of the Kuwaiti Citizenship Law 15/1959 (12 cases). An identical measure would be taken according to the Provision 21 of the law (15/1959), for 58 case.

Moreover, up to 41 individuals will be stripped of the citizenship according to the Article 13 of the same law, issued the same year, in addition to its amendments.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (Agencies): The Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry on Thursday welcomed a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) with a majority of 124 votes during its 10th extraordinary session late Wednesday.

Based on a previous ruling from the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the latest resolution has something to do with the legal impacts of the Israeli occupation forces' policies and practices in Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, and the illegal presence of the Israeli occupation there, the ministry said in a statement.

It commended international unanimity on this resolution as a significant step towards backing the Palestinian rights and finding a just solution based on the Arab Peace Initiative and relevant international legitimacy resolutions, and ensuring the Palestinian people's self-determination, including an independent statehood on the 1967 border with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The U.N. General Assembly strongly supported a nonbinding Palestinian resolution Wednesday demanding that Israel end its "unlawful presence" in Gaza and the occupied West Bank within a year.

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Meshal Al-Shemali

Kuwait participates in WFI 2024 confab

NEW DELHI, Sept 19, (KUNA): Kuwait Ambassador to India Meshal Al-Shemali and representatives from the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) participated on Thursday in the official launch of the third edition of World Food India 2024 (WFI) conference, held in the Indian Capital New Delhi.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Shemali said that the conference, which launched Thursday under the patronage of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is an important opportunity for investors, producers, and manufacturers in the food sector on a Global level.

The conference provides a fundamental opportunity to enhance aspects of cooperation between the State of Kuwait and India in the areas of developing food infrastructure.

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ID, bank freeze Sept end

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Ministry of Interior urged citizens to complete the biometric fingerprint procedures before the deadline on Sept 30, 2024.

The ministry posted the announcement in its official account on the X platform, warning that the issuance of civil identification card and banking transactions will be suspended for those who fail to complete the biometric fingerprint procedures

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Resigned KFA leaders detained until Sunday

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Following their referral by the Ministry of Interior on State Security charges, the Public Prosecution has decided to hold until Sunday the resigned head of the Kuwait Football Association Haif Al-Mutairi, his deputy Ahmad Oqla, and Secretary-General Salah Al-Janaei.

The charges against them stem from issues related to the organization of the Kuwait-Iraq match, and the remarks made by the accused that negatively affected the nation's relations with friendly countries.



A KRCS volunteer hands over an aid parcel to a Sudanese woman.

KRCS, SRCS sign cooperation deal

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has partnered with the Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS) to launch an emergency response initiative in support of Sudan's escalating humanitarian crisis caused by widespread flooding and the displacement of thousands of people.

Speaking to the KUNA Thursday,

KRCS Deputy Chairman Anwar Al-Hasawi said this new partnership aligns with Kuwait's longstanding commitment to humanitarian causes.

The initiative is part of the society's broader mission to extend aid where it is needed most, especially in times of crisis, he added.

Al-Hasawi emphasized that the

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Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:15 Asr 15:10
 Sunrise .. 05:34 Maghrib .. 17:49
 Zohr 11:42 Isha 19:06

Local

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

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear with a chance for scattered light rain later on.

Weather

By Night: Rather hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 06-26 km/h.

Station **Max Exp** **Min Rec**
 Kuwait City 40 26

Kuwait Airport	40	27
Abdaly	41	23
Bubyan	40	23
Jahra	41	27
Failaka Island	40	25
Salmiyah	40	31
Ahmadi	37	23
Jal Aliyah	40	23

Women's Social and Cultural Society organizes first 'Brief' session

'My Paper' aims to strengthen Kuwait's efforts to legally empower women

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Lulwa Al-Mulla, the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Women's Social and Cultural Society, says the "My Paper" project aims to strengthen Kuwait's efforts to legally empower women and inform them of their rights as outlined in the country's legislation and Constitution, and in accordance with its international obligations.

In a press statement issued during the first "Brief" discussion session organized by the society under the slogan "No right is lost when demanding it" to discuss issues raised and potentially amend some local laws, Al-Mulla said the project supports the initiatives of the UNDP Office in Kuwait to empower women in various development fields.



Al-Mulla

Al-Mulla explained that the selection of the society as a local partner for the project was intended to preserve its distinctive local character and serve as a long-term sustainability strategy. This decision was partly motivated by the project's remarkable success in six Arab countries, which encouraged Kuwait to adopt it as the first nation among Gulf Cooperation Council member states.

The project was submitted to the Supreme Family Council along with an integrated plan to build and operate shelters for abused women and girls.

The project is divided into four sections: women's rights in family and marriage, their rights to citizenship, nationality, and political participation, protection against violence, and enhancement of women's economic rights.

Empower

Meanwhile, Head of the "My Paper" project at the society Haifa Al-Mousa announced the launch of the "Brief" series, which will organize discussion sessions aimed at legally empowering women through the "My Paper" initiative.

She explained that "Brief 1" focused on the unfair laws affecting women that have been changed or abolished due to cases filed by women.

For instance, the first paragraph of Article 15 of Law No. 11/1968, which restricted a married woman's ability to obtain a passport without her husband's consent, was canceled after a woman affected by this law filed a case. Lawyer Adel Qurban successfully argued the case, resulting in the cancellation of the article and benefiting all women.

Lawyer Adel Qurban will be the keynote speaker at the first discussion panel "Brief 1" during which he will elaborate on the ruling he obtained for his client - the woman who filed a lawsuit to annul the aforementioned article.

In conclusion, Al-Mousa called on all women who were harmed by such laws and legislation to seek recourse through the Kuwaiti judiciary to annul or amend these laws.

Describing the judiciary as fair and just, she revealed that many laws have

been successfully annulled or amended due to Kuwaiti judicial rulings.

With over 40 years of legal experience, Lawyer Adel Qurban, who is a lawyer for both the Constitutional Court and the Court of Cassation, expressed his gratitude to the Women's Social and Cultural Society for selecting him as the keynote speaker for its first discussion session "Brief 1."

He explained that the ruling he secured on behalf of his client resulted in the repeal of Article 15 of the Nationality and Passports Law, which required a married woman to obtain her husband's consent to secure a travel document.

This article was exploited as a tool by some men to control their wives and impose conditions on them.

The decision to repeal that article benefited all married women, as the rulings of the Constitutional Court are highly enforceable and the court has the authority to amend or repeal laws.

Regarding the reasons behind the revocation of Article 15, Lawyer Qurban explained that the revoked article conflicted with the provisions related to freedom of movement outlined in articles 29, 30, and 31 of the Kuwaiti Constitution. An individual cannot be restricted in their movement unless legally required, such as in cases of criminal charges or detention while awaiting trial.

The canceled article made a woman's freedom of movement contingent upon her husband's consent, which constituted a constitutional obstacle.

Litigation

The deliberations of the case took six months, a relatively reasonable timeframe considering the typically lengthy litigation process in Kuwait.

Regarding the most notable laws modified or overturned by court decisions to better represent women, Lawyer Qurban stated that the provision in the housing law that prohibits women from obtaining a housing document without the approval of the housing authority has been removed.

He explained that such unfair laws often allowed some husbands to exploit guardianship as a means of pressuring and humiliating women. Now, following a judicial ruling obtained by a client who was harmed by the previous law, women can secure a housing document without needing their husband's approval.

In his closing remarks, Lawyer Qurban listed several laws that need to be reviewed, particularly the one concerning the citizenship of children born to a Kuwaiti woman married to a non-Kuwaiti man. He highlighted a significant case that has not been previously discussed, which is the death of a Kuwaiti mother whose children are non-Kuwaiti and who owns a private home.

Under the current law, her non-Kuwaiti children are required to sell the property within one year of her death, as non-Kuwaitis are not entitled to own property according to housing regulations.

He indicated that there are many such cases where laws must be amended to ensure that the children of Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaiti men can remain in the country and are not forced to leave due to the severing of their connection to their deceased Kuwaiti mother.

National Day

HH the Amir congratulates Saint Kitts and Nevis

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Thursday a cable of congratulations to Governor-General of Saint Kitts

and Nevis Marcella Liburd on the National Day.

His Highness the Amir wished her good health and for the nation further progress and prosperity.

Meanwhile, His Highness

the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to Governor-General Marcella Liburd on occasion of the National Day, wishing her good health.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to Governor-General Marcella Liburd on the National Day.

Global indices mirror Kuwait's development in various sectors

Kuwait ranks 35th among 163 states in GPI in 2023: report

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): International indices have shown the State of Kuwait's progress in various sectors thus bringing into the limelight the government's successful steps regarding economic and financial reforms.

The government rapid steps to achieve actual development at diverse levels and enhance its ranking in the eyes of the international quarters is seen in its 2024-2025 development scheme, inspired from the 2023 new Kuwait vision.

Its development plans aim at elevating its classification in the economic and administrative indexes, also related to transparency and integrity, and the highest form possible of progress.

According to a report released by the Secretariat General of the Supreme Council of Planning and Development the main indexes of the Kuwaiti economy between 2023 and 2024 made progress as compared to the previous period. Kuwait ranked 35th among 163 states in the Global Peace Index (GPI) in 2023, improving by four tanks as compared to 2022.

In the Gender Gap Index (2023), Kuwait came in the 120th status among 146 countries and in the Financial Index, it was in the 82nd among 132 states.

In the Corruption Perceptions Index (2023), the report by the supreme council showed that Kuwait came 63rd among 180 countries and maintained its 69th point among 193 with respect of the Government AI (artificial intelligence) Readiness (2023).

Achievement

As to the Index of Economic Freedom (2024), it ranked 13th among 143 states and 49th among 193 in the Human Development Index (HDI).

For the second year in a row, Kuwait came top in the Global Communication and Information Technology Development Index (2024) released by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), an achievement that would provide greater confidence for external investors, help in creating new jobs and boost expertise transfer.

Moreover, Kuwait ranked 37th at the international level for administrative development, according to the 2024 Global Competitiveness Index released by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD).

The index that measures competitiveness of 67 states is based on 335 sub-indices partly showing that the Kuwait Government has moved forward by four points in terms of efficiency.

Regarding the Global Infrastructure Index (GII), Kuwait moved forward by three points, ranking 46th. As to the Global Knowledge Index (2023), it came 44th improving by three points compared to the previous year.

The GKI assesses pre-university education, technological and vocational teaching, higher education, research and development, innovation, IT, communications, economy and empowerment environments.

Other international indexes that showed Kuwait's concrete progress in various realms was the Global Index on Investment Insurance where it came fourth at the Arab level and 41st at the international level (2023).

The Kuwaiti Government's 2024-2025 development plan aims at improving the country's status in global indices to be among the first 35 ones by 2035.



KUNA photo

A photo from the meeting held between the Ministry of Social Affairs and the CSRSIR.

MoSA and CSRSIR discuss issuance of ID docs for orphans

The Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Social Welfare at the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Jassim Al-Kandari held a meeting recently with officials from the Central System for Remediating the Status of Illegal Residents (CSRSIR) to discuss joint cooperation in providing humanitarian and social services to orphans, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press statement issued on

Tuesday, the ministry explained that Dr. Al-Kandari focused on the mechanisms for issuing identification documents to the people of this category in order to guarantee their legal and social rights.

He affirmed the importance of enhancing cooperation among state institutions to secure a better future for orphans, and to achieve social justice for them,

thereby contributing to their psychological and social stability.

Dr. Al-Kandari said the ministry is continuously working to improve services for residents in the social welfare sector, particularly orphans, adding that these efforts are in line with Kuwait's vision of providing protection and care for all children, regardless of their legal status.

Occasion serves as time for families and friends

Chinese Cultural Center marks mid-Autumn Festival

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Chinese Cultural Center in Kuwait hosted an event to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival, which is observed annually by China in mid-September, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press release, the Cultural Attaché of the Chinese Embassy in Kuwait and Director of the Chinese Cultural Center Xia Jianfeng said, "We invited all children and students from Chinese schools, as well as their Kuwaiti counterparts, to learn about this renowned cultural heritage that has been celebrated for thousands of years in China.

"The Chinese people are accustomed to visiting family and friends during this festival. This occasion serves as a time for families and friends to come together.

"Kuwaitis have a strong interest in learning about Chinese cultural customs and traditions, as evidenced by the high number of Kuwaiti families who participate in our cultural events. There are many shared values between our Kuwaiti friends and us."

Regarding the influence of culture on relations among people, he explained



Jianfeng



Photo by Asad/Xinhua

A girl learns to make moon cakes at the Chinese Cultural Center in Hawalli Governorate.

that culture plays a great role in strengthening relationships in all forms between countries over the long term and in developing cultural ties among them. Only culture has the power to strengthen and enhance connections among people.

In a speech he gave on behalf of the Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei, Xia Jianfeng expressed his delight at the 1st Mid-Autumn Festival celebration at the Chinese Cultural Center in Kuwait.

During the event, a short film about the Mid-Autumn Festival was screened, and several famous poems

by renowned Chinese poets were recited, each telling a story about the moon, which is symbolic of the mid-autumn festival and traditional Chinese culture. The second part of the event featured a workshop on making traditional "moon cakes."

For presenting the event program, Jianfeng was joined by Head of the Chinese-Kuwait Cultural Center Zhang Zhang, who is dedicated to teaching Chinese, conducting academic research, and promoting Chinese culture among both the Chinese community in Kuwait and Kuwaiti citizens.

Move signals end to this method

Pager frequencies in Kuwait discontinued 20 years ago

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Technical sources have revealed that pager frequencies in Kuwait are no longer operational, as the technology was discontinued nearly 20 years ago, reports Al-Rai daily.

Since the cessation of its use, the frequencies allocated to pag-

ers have been stopped, signaling the end of this communication method.

Furthermore, the sources dismissed concerns about mass hacking of smartphones, such as iPhones and Android devices, explaining that these devices are

equipped with robust encryption and continuous security updates that safeguard user data.

Unlike older communication systems, modern smartphones are designed to prevent large-scale security breaches, making them far more secure.

by the World Bank that forecast economic recovery in 2024 while the international classification agencies drew a bullish outlook for Kuwait.

On Friday, Fitch placed Kuwait at the AA- level with a stable outlook, buoyed by solid financial conditions.

According to the Central Bank

of Kuwait, Fitch's lifting of Kuwait's rank signaled the state ability to cope with financial challenges in the long term, namely executing a plan to stem the budget deficit and cope with projected fall of the oil prices in addition to the adoption of a government transparent and sustainable financial strategy.



KUNA photo

The Director General of KUNA and the accompanying delegation listen to an explanation of the contents of the Ahmad Al-Jaber Oil and Gas Exhibition.

KUNA's Dir-Gen Dr Al-Salem visits Ahmad Al-Jaber Oil, Gas exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): The Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Dr. Fatima Al-Salem and other KUNA's officials visited on Thursday Ahmad Al-Jaber Oil and Gas Exhibition in Ahmadi Governorate.

The Director of the Public Relations and Media Group at Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), Mohammed Al-Basri, and Head of the Oil and Gas Exhibitions Team Yousef Al-Kandari received KUNA's delegation.

The KUNA team toured the exhibition facilities, and were briefed on the pioneering interactive experience it offers to visitors.

Upon the visit, Dr. Fatima Al-Salem stressed that the exhibition contributes to creating a broad understanding of the importance of oil as a valuable resource, noting its role to the oil and gas industry that works to provide an educational experience for visitors.

Al-Salem said that the exhibition raises awareness of the positive role of oil in Kuwait's progress, noting that it follows more

innovative educational policies and provides an entertainment educational experience.

She explained that the Ahmad Al-Jaber Oil and Gas Exhibition promotes a new concept that focuses on attracting visitors to Kuwait as a cultural landmark that documents the antiquity of the oil industry praising the technology used and the sites included in the exhibition.

KUNA's top official stressed the need to activate the media role to shed light on Kuwait's history, its origins, capabilities and resources, especially oil, through museums that simulate that history.

She expressed KUNA's readiness to harness all its capabilities, energies and cadres in this regard and its desire to exchange experience and visits with various state agencies and ministries, especially the Kuwait Oil Company.

KUNA's delegation included Al-Salem, Acting Editor-in-Chief Mohammed Al-Bahar and Director of the Office of the Director General Omar Al-Omar.



'From proposal to failure ... unpacking the Afia project'

"THE pensioners' insurance project – Afia – has undoubtedly been a major governmental blunder – one that came at a staggering cost and lacked a solid plan," columnist **Asrar Hayat Jowhar** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Yet, the response to this blunder has only compounded the problem: the abrupt and unannounced suspension of Afia services for pensioners.

"To understand the issue better, I need to explain why I opposed the Afia insurance project and considered it a governmental misstep.

"With a tender amounting to over 354 million Kuwaiti dinars, the project failed to deliver the expected results. It was poorly conceived, and its shortcomings cannot be overshadowed by the mere fact that it was a failed endeavor.

"For the same colossal amount, we could have built and managed two to three major public hospitals that could compete internationally, or six to eight specialized hospitals offering top-tier healthcare.

"Instead, the government opted for the Afia insurance project, which proved to be a financial and operational miscalculation.

"Another reason for the project's failure and its classification as an unforgivable error is the apparent lack of thorough study and oversight.

"There was no effective monitoring of how the project was utilized, nor was there sufficient government control over hospital pricing and healthcare quality.

"Some healthcare providers have exploited the insurance scheme, inflating prices and delivering unnecessary treatments, all while the costs are absorbed by the scheme.

"However, the cancellation and suspension of the service whether the government plans to renew the contract with a different company or not, are unacceptable. Announcing the service's suspension suddenly, without prior notice, leaves retirees – some of whom are in the midst of critical treatments – stranded.

"If the government's intention is indeed to revoke the Afia Law, as some rumors suggest, then transparency and honesty with citizens are imperative.

"The government should have openly communicated its plans to cancel the law, which has proven to be ineffective and a waste of resources.

"Citizens should have been given adequate time to complete their treatments before the service was abruptly cut off. The original mistake was severe, but the handling of it has been "a mistake and a half!"

"The pressing question now is: Will hospitals be able to manage the sudden increase in patients?"

Also:

"With the commencement of the new school year, the Ministry of Interior, particularly the Public Security, Operations, and Traffic departments, demonstrated remarkable commitment under the guidance of the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, along with Lieutenant General Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf, Major General Hamad Al-Munifi, and Major General Yousef Al-Khudah," columnist **Mohammed Al-Jalahma** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"Their focused efforts were geared towards ensuring the safety and security of students and road users, as well as facilitating smooth traffic flow, especially around schools.

"The deployment was meticulously organized, aiming to enhance security and manage traffic effectively around educational institutions and their access routes. This involved deploying

patrols on all main and secondary roads, addressing traffic congestion promptly, and implementing necessary legal measures for traffic violations.

"During my visit to Ahmadi Governorate on the first day of school, I observed Brigadier General Mohammed Ahmed Rajab, Director General of Ahmadi Security Directorate, actively overseeing the entry of students into schools and supervising the security measures.

"His diligent efforts were mirrored by his colleagues across other Kuwaiti governorates and traffic monitoring departments.

"The plan of the Ministry of Interior for the start of the school year involved comprehensive security coordination and a media campaign launched under the slogan "With our determination, we achieve our dream".

"This campaign was a collaborative effort involving the ministries of Interior, Education, Information, and the Government Communication Center.

"Despite these well-coordinated efforts, some roads experienced heavy traffic due to the high volume of vehicles at peak times -- something beyond the Ministry of Interior's control.

"As parents, our role is to support these initiatives by encouraging our children to use public transportation provided by schools and adhering to traffic regulations.

"It's crucial to avoid obstructing traffic by idling in front of schools unnecessarily and to cooperate with security personnel to ensure a smooth and safe school run."

"The devastating Israeli strike known as the "Pager War" resulted in the loss of several lives and left hundreds wounded. This happened at a time when the world was waiting for Iran's response to the killing of Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran," columnist **By M. Adel Al-Jarallah Al Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"This incident came as an unexpected shock. The Israeli intelligence used advanced technological methods to carry out its operation, thus adding new tactics to its extensive record.

"This approach to assassination using modern communication technologies sends a clear message that Israel, undeterred by the international community, can target anyone it chooses. This is evident from the string of high-profile assassinations, beginning with Soleimani, continuing with Haniyeh, and culminating in the "Pager" attacks.

"In this context, it is expected that Israel will escalate its assassination operations to unprecedented levels, with no apparent response to counteract them. This situation leaves Arab citizens feeling anxious and confused, particularly concerning the future of stability in Lebanon and the Palestinian issue.

"The evolving dynamics of the Arab-Israeli conflict, along with Iran's involvement, have brought the prospects for peace in the region to a dangerous turning point, potentially jeopardizing the two-state solution. Are Arab countries prepared for such developments? Can they ensure the legitimate national rights of the Palestinians amidst these challenges?"

"The official Arab response to the events in Gaza, including the recent assassinations, has largely been limited to denunciation and condemnation. Such reactions are unlikely to halt Israeli actions or lead to a just peace in the Middle East. It merely serves as an implicit acknowledgment of the status quo.

"This dynamic places the governments of Islamic countries in a difficult position between the hammer of Israel's transgressions and anvil of public demand to end its criminal practices. This situation could have serious repercussions and consequences."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



Mol photo

Major General Saif Al-Hamlan meeting with US Vice Admiral George Wyckoff.

Maj. Gen. Al-Hamlan hosts US Vice Admiral

The Assistant Commander of the Naval Forces Major General Saif Al-Hamlan recently held a meeting with the Commander of the Naval Forces in the US Central Command and Commander of the Fifth Fleet Vice Admiral George Wyckoff, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

According to a press statement, Ma-

ior General Al-Hamlan welcomed Vice Admiral Wyckoff and his accompanying delegation at the Mohammed Al-Ahmad Naval Base during their visit to the country. They held discussions related to several issues of mutual interest, particularly those related to military aspects.

'Appeals' jails ex-MP Al-Tabtabaei to 2 yrs

Court fines two officials KD 3,000

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud, Munif Nayef Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies**

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Court of Appeals sentenced former MP **Dr. Walid Al-Tabtabaei** to two-year imprisonment with hard labor in the State Security case filed against him on charges of challenging the powers and rights of His Highness the Amir via his X account.

On June 24, the Criminal Court had sentenced him to four-year imprisonment with hard labor.

However, Al-Tabtabaei had denied all charges against him in the first session of his trial. He said, "The post for which he is being tried was fabricated by his opponents."

His brother **Anwar Al-Tabtabaei** explained that the bad health condition of his brother **Walid** had prevented him from attending his three trial sessions. His son had submitted a medical report on his condition to the court yesterday, but the judge decided to reserve the case for judgment. He felt very tired yesterday and his heart rate increased after the dawn prayer. A group of doctors came to the hospital where he was admitted and conducted tests. They decided to discharge him from the hospital and transfer him in a wheelchair to the Ministry of Interior vehicle with the discharge paper. However, the officer returned him to the hospital after photographing the paper.

KD 3,000 fine upheld: The Court of Cassation upheld a ruling issued by a lower court which imposed a fine of KD 3,000 on an undersecretary and an Iranian correspondent who were accused of salary usurpation through fingerprint forgery.

Earlier, the Criminal Court had sentenced the undersecretary and the cor-

respondent to seven-year imprisonment with hard labor, dismissed the undersecretary from his position, and imposed a fine of KD 113,000, after proving that the correspondent had falsely logged the attendance of the undersecretary using fake fingerprint molds. Also, the undersecretary had requested a COVID-19 frontliner bonus, which was granted even though he did not record any actual work performance.

10 injured in bus collision: Ten individuals, mostly of Asian nationality, sustained injuries when two passenger buses collided near Souk Mubarakiya Thursday morning. The injured individuals have been taken to Amiri Hospital for treatment.

According to security sources, when the Operations Room of the Ministry of Interior received information about the accident near Safaat Square, police officers, an emergency medical team, and firefighters were quickly dispatched to the location.

Upon arrival, responders found that the accident had resulted in injuries to ten people, most of whom were Asians and one was an Egyptian.

Initial investigations indicate that one of the buses ran a red light due to a brake malfunction, which caused the collision. Police officers and firefighters worked to clear the buses from the road following the accident.

Citizen's house burgled: A citizen filed a report at Jahra Police Station that his house has been burgled and the culprit stole an undisclosed amount, official documents and a mobile phone, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The citizen said he discovered that the suspect broke the lock in the back door of his house, entered his diwaniya and stole a bag containing the abovementioned items.

A case was registered and forensic officers were summoned to lift fingerprints in order to identify the thief.

'Appeals' closes 7 real estate rental sections following new Decree 95/'24

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Head of the Court of Appeals, Counselor **Mohamed El-Rifai**, decided to close seven real estate rental appeal sections following the issuance of Decree 95/2024, which stipulates "the General Court sections shall deal with rent-related appeals in an appellate capacity," reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

The daily obtained a copy of the decision stating that "Article Two of Decree-Law No. 15/2024 on amending some provisions of Decree-Law No. 35/1978 regarding real estate rent; which was published in the official gazette – Kuwait Al-Youm, stipulates the referral of pending cases in all sections at the Court of Appeals to the Court of First Instance, except those scheduled for ruling, provided the ruling is announced within a month of the issuance of this Decree-Law and after reviewing the list of rental appeals. This decision is in line with the authorization granted to us by the General Assembly of the court on June 10, 2024 when it was decided to close the first and second Capital Rent sections, first and second Hawally Rent sections, in addition to the Farwaniya, Ahmadi and Jahra sections."

The decision also stipulates that the Book Administration, in coordination with the Technical Office, shall refer the appeals in progress in the sections subject to the first clause, which have not been decided until the date of the issuance of Decree No. 95/2024 on Sept 15, 2024; to the Technical Office to take the necessary measures in order to refer them to the Court of First Instance in implementation of the aforementioned law.

As for the appeals scheduled for ruling in the sections subject to the first clause and the sessions for pronouncing the ruling after the date of issuance of the decree, the concerned sections shall issue the ruling as per their previous capacity within one month in implementation of Article Two of Decree-Law 95/2024.

Appeals that will be returned for pleading for any reason shall be referred to the Technical Office to take the necessary measures in accordance with the second clause of this decision, as well as to look into petitions to rectify material errors in the rulings issued by the concerned sections.



Municipality photo

Municipality removing the vehicles.

Municipality lifts 'dilapidated' cars

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Public Relations Department of the Kuwait Municipality said the General Cleaning and Road Occupations Department has lifted 42 abandoned and damaged vehicles from the Jahra Governorate, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

This cleanup operation is part of ongoing initiatives to maintain the cleanliness and safety of the area.

The daily added, earlier the Municipality had issued warnings to Kuwaiti citizens and residents not to abandon their vehicles in public places to protect the aesthetic view of the governorate.

Evening school opens

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Ministry of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs, through its Social Care Sector and the Juvenile Care Department, has announced the opening of a new evening school for juvenile delinquents, marking a significant step in the State of Kuwait's commitment to education for all societal segments, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The new school, opened in conjunction with the start of the new academic year, is located in the newly established Juvenile Complex building.

This initiative reflects Kuwait's dedication to ensuring that education is accessible to every individual, including those in juvenile care facilities.

According to the ministry, this new educational facility aims to offer a comprehensive learning environment, catering to the academic needs of 29 male and female students from various educational stages.

The school is equipped with top-quality standards to create an optimal learning atmosphere, overseen by a team of specialized national experts in technical, supervisory, and educational roles.

Sponsorship forgery

Female employee held

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: A citizen submitted a complaint to the Public Prosecution immediately after finding out an expatriate employee was registered under his sponsorship without his knowledge, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The Residency Affairs Investigation Department at the Ministry of Interior conducted investigations, leading to the discovery of the illegal act of a female employee at a citizens service center who completed the transaction, and that she previously committed nine similar crimes, but managed to compromise with the informants.

The deputy public prosecutor ordered the detention of the female employee on charges of forgery and registering workers under the sponsorship of citizens without their knowledge in exchange for money.

According to a security source, the female employee denied the accusation in the initial investigations. The expatriate worker, who was registered under the citizen, was arrested, and he admitted that he paid an undisclosed amount to the female employee who completed the residency transaction for him. The female employee was re-investigated, during which the officers confronted her about the statement of the expatriate. She then confessed that she previously put several expatriates under the sponsorship of citizens without the latter's knowledge.

KFF shuts 35 establishments

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): On Thursday, the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) announced the closure of 35 shops and establishments across multiple governorates due to violations of fire safety regulations.

The KFF stated that the closures were a result of these businesses failing to secure the required fire-related licenses and not adhering to mandated safety and fire prevention standards. This action followed earlier warnings given to the establishments to correct their violations.

150,000 Lyrica pills, firearms seized in stables in recent major drug bust

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Criminal Security Sector in the Ministry of Interior, headed by Major General **Hamed Al-Dawas**, dealt a severe blow to drug dealers when securitymen raided two stables recently, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

One of these stables is located in the northern part of the country and belongs to a Border Security Sector officer with the rank of lieutenant. Around 150,000 Lyrica pills, a kilogram of hashish and four Kalashnikovs were found inside the stable.

The other stable is also located in the north and it belongs to a Bedoun. The securitymen found 30,000 Lyrica pills, eight kilograms of shabu and four kilograms of marijuana in this stable.

Earlier, the daily reported about the case of the lieutenant who was promoted from the rank of deputy officer and entered the drug trafficking corps. The illegal substances confiscated include 13 kilograms of hashish, shabu and marijuana; in addition to 180,000 narcotic pills.

The ministry issued two separate state-

ments regarding these cases. In one of the statements, it revealed that the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) at the Criminal Security Sector arrested a Kuwaiti and a jobless Bedoun after raiding a stable in the north. It confirmed that a large quantity of psychotropic substances and drugs were found in their possession --150,000 Lyrica and Captagon pills and one kilogram of hashish, as well as four firearms and ammunition.

In the other statement, the ministry disclosed that DCGD arrested a Bedoun for the possession of about 30,000 Lyrica pills, eight kilograms of shabu and four kilograms of marijuana. The Bedoun confessed that he owns the confiscated drugs for personal use and trafficking. The ministry confirmed the referral of the accused and the confiscated items to the Public Prosecution.

It added that the criminal securitymen are firm in dealing with drug dealers, calling on everyone to cooperate with the securitymen and report any negative phenomena through Emergency No. 112 and the Hotline of DCGD 1884141.

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Shuwaikh Seafront project gets go-ahead, Sharq parking halted

Capital Committee approves 5 out of 8 items on its agenda

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: In its fifth meeting yesterday, the Capital Committee of the Municipal Council, chaired by member Dr. Hassan Kamal, approved five out of the eight items on its agenda.



Photo taken during the meeting.

The approved items include:

■ The project to develop and rehabilitate the Shuwaikh seafront opposite Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center and allocate sites for future commercial use.

■ A proposal by member Fahad Musaed Al-Abdul Jader to allocate some yards in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area for management by the Public Facilities Management Company.

■ A request from the Expropriation Department for Public Benefit to reject issuing a public benefit decision for Plot 296 in Surra Block 5.

■ A request from the Kuwait Ports Authority to allocate land for a development project southeast of Doha Port.

The committee did not approve the Ministry of Finance's request to convert the surface parking lot in Sharq Block 2 into a multi-storey parking facility.

It also postponed its decision on the Ministry of Justice's request to reallocate the sites of the Constitutional Court and the Capital Markets Court in Granada, Block 6. The Injaz Market project was returned to the executive body for an updated response.

Regarding the development project for Shuwaikh opposite Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center, Dr. Kamal explained that the committee had previously approved a donation from a local bank to support the project for Shuwaikh Beach, which covers a total area of 150,766 square meters.

The committee also approved the four main components of the project, their uses and activities. These include sports fields, green spaces, beach areas, enclosed sports facilities, walking paths, as well as commercial and recreational spaces.

In a press statement issued following the committee meeting, Dr. Kamal affirmed that this project is expected to be one of the most distinctive and promising developments along the seafront. He revealed that another significant project discussed during the meeting was the Injaz Market project, which was executed by Kuwait Municipality in Al-Rai as part of its small projects initiative.

Dr. Kamal highlighted that the municipality, after a brief period of operation, understood the need to adjust the percentages of certain uses and activities outlined in the project. He said the committee decided to return the project to the executive body for an updated response and to review the suggestions from committee members, which must be taken into consideration before proceeding with any modifications in order to ensure optimal utilization of the project.



Dr. Kamal

Governors unite for progress

Governor stresses importance of ministerial co-op for governance

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: In a significant third coordination meeting held on Wednesday, Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser, the Governor of Farwaniya, held a crucial discussion with the governors of the Capital, Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Jahra, and Ahmedi at the governorate's general office on the effective execution of the decree assigning governors to supervise various state policies and development strategies, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The meeting was attended by the Undersecretary of the Civil Service Bureau, the Director General of the General Department of Administrative Affairs at the Ministry of Interior, the Director of

Administrative Affairs at the Council of Ministers, a legal advisor at the Council of Ministers, and the Director of the Legal Department at the Ministry of Interior.

During the meeting, the governors expressed their gratitude for the political leadership's confidence and support, which has empowered them with greater authority to drive development within their respective governorates. This increased role underscores their responsibility in implementing the state's general policy, overseeing the development plan, and enhancing service levels across all regions.

Debris cleared to prevent floods

Public Works 'ramps up' rainwater collection cleanup ahead of winter

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Ministry of Public Works is engaged in cleaning rainwater collection points across various governorates of the country, reports Al-Jarida daily.

These areas, which were blocked by accumulated waste during the summer, are being cleared of debris such as cans, water bottles, dirt, tree leaves, and construction materials. The build-up of these materials has been impeding the proper drainage of rainwater.

As part of its preparations for the upcoming rainy season, the Ministry has mobilized its contracting teams to tackle this task according to a structured schedule.

This schedule includes determining the locations of these collection points within different regions and on major highways, as well as setting specific dates for their cleaning.

Significant quantities of waste are being extracted and removed by the municipality's cleaning teams. The Ministry is committed to ensuring that these areas are thoroughly cleaned and tested to confirm their functionality for effective rainwater drainage.



Al-Jarida photo
Debris removed during the clean-up operation.

The Ministry also urges citizens and residents to contribute to maintaining the cleanliness of these collection points once the cleanup is completed. They emphasize the importance of not disposing of garbage near these areas, as such actions can block rainwater drainage pipes and create additional challenges.

The Ministry's efforts are focused on restoring these rainwater collection points to their optimal state, ensuring they can efficiently manage rainwater and reduce the risk of flooding during the winter season.

Combating health risks

NHRC conducts workshop on delivery bikers' rights, safety

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), in collaboration with the Industrial Medical Center of the Ministry of Health, recently organized a training workshop for delivery bike drivers, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This initiative aims to raise awareness among drivers about their rights and responsibilities, while also providing practical advice to ensure their safety and health during their work.

Anan Al-Mutawa, Director of the Research and Studies Department at the National Human Rights Commission, highlighted the commit-

ment of the Commission to support and care for less fortunate groups in society.

The workshop is part of the Commission's broader efforts to enhance labor rights and improve working conditions for these workers.

Dr. Al-Anoud Al-Ateeq, head of the Industrial Medical Center, noted that the center's comprehensive training addresses various health risks faced by delivery drivers, such as heat stress, sunstroke, diabetes, and asthma. The training aims to better protect drivers from these health issues while they perform their daily tasks.

Dr Pandita bids farewell to Kuwait

MoH honors renowned hematologist

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: In a heartfelt ceremony, Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi, Minister of Health, and Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, Undersecretary of the Ministry, paid tribute to Dr. Ramesh Kumar Pandita, a distinguished consultant in blood tumors, as he concludes his extensive service in Kuwait, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Dr. Pandita, who has been a cornerstone of the Hematology Department at the Kuwait Cancer Control Center for over 32 years, is returning to his native India after an illustrious career.

Dr. Pandita has dedicated his professional life to the care and treatment of blood cancer patients, particularly those suffering from leukemia and myeloma.

His expertise has not only helped countless patients but has also significantly contributed to the local medical community through his role in training and mentoring many doctors and specialists in collaboration with the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization. This has helped elevate local medical skills to meet international standards in this specialized field.

The Ministry's statement highlighted Dr. Pandita's exceptional contributions to both education and research.

He represented the Kuwait Cancer Control Center in numerous international forums, showcasing the center's advanced approach to treating blood cancers. His work has set a high standard in scientific and clinical practice, making him a model in the field.



Al-Jarida photo
Photo taken during the honoring ceremony.

228 cases reported in 2023

KCCC reveals lymphoma as among top cancer in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Director of the Hematology Department at Kuwait Cancer Control Center (KCCC) affiliated with the Ministry of Health and Chairman of Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Dr. Abdulaziz Hamada revealed that about 228 cases of lymphoma (lymph node cancer) were diagnosed in 2023, indicating most of the patients need chemotherapy while some need radiotherapy and antibodies cancer treatment, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the sidelines of the society's celebration of World Lymphoma Awareness Day, which falls on Sept 15 of each year, Hamada explained that lymphoma is a common type of blood cancer. He said the central registry at KCCC listed it as the fourth most common tumor among males and the fifth among females from 2010 and 2019.

Moreover, Dr. Pandita's commitment extended beyond his regular duties. During the COVID-19 pandemic, despite his advanced age and health challenges, he remained actively involved in the fight against the virus, demonstrating profound

dedication to his humanitarian and professional mission.

Dr. Pandita's legacy in Kuwait will be remembered for his remarkable contributions to medicine and his unwavering dedication to his patients and the broader medical community.

Kuwait Food and Relief Bank distributes 1,040,000 water bottles to beneficiaries

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Kuwait Food and Relief Bank has launched the 'Water Supply Bank' project, distributing 1,040,000 bottles of water to 520,000 beneficiaries, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This initiative was carried out in collaboration with the General Secretariat of Endowments.

According to the bank's statement, the water bottles were distributed across various community institutions, including mosques, schools, hospitals, health centers, and government agencies. This project is highlighted as one of the bank's significant charitable efforts aimed at benefiting a broad segment of the community.

The Food Bank expressed gratitude towards the General Secretariat of Endowments for their support and facilitation of the project. The Secretariat's assistance was crucial in ensuring the success of these charitable activities and helping to meet the community's needs.

The "Water Supply Bank" project under-



Al-Seyassah photo
The Kuwait Food Bank distributes water as part of its Water Supply Project.

scores the principles of social solidarity and compassion, inspired by the Islamic teachings that emphasize the importance of providing water.

The initiative reflects the bank's commitment to offering essential resources and seeks to embody the notion that providing water is among the highest forms of charity.

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Building permits hit 32,122; projects ahead of schedule

PAHW allocates 70% of South Saad Al-Abdullah housing plots

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) has confirmed the distribution of 70 percent of the plots in South Saad Al-Abdullah Housing Project -- 16,643 out of 23,551 plots.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the statistics that the authority issued in August; revealing the allocation of 4,423 plots in the abovementioned housing project that consists of 957 housing units.

In a press statement, Deputy Director General of the Public Relations and Development Sector and official spokesperson of the authority Omar Al-Ruwaih stated that the concerned departments dealt with 37,356 transactions in August.

He said 26,000 housing related transactions were processed through the Sahel application; in addition to responding to the citizens' queries while transactions were followed up through the hotline -- more than 10,000 calls.

He disclosed the number of building permits issued to citizens in three housing projects reached 32,122 -- 27,489 for Mutla'a Housing City plots; 3,237 for South Abdullah Al-Mubarak and 1,396 for South Khaitan.

He affirmed that the Implementation Sector in the authority completed 26.54 percent of South Sabah Al-Ahmad City project, stressing this is 14.79 percent ahead of the contractual completion rate. He added the South Saad Al-Abdullah project is also witnessing progress with a completion rate of 5.07 percent by the end of last month. He went on to say that the authority is closely monitoring the East Sabah Al-Ahmad project that consists of 1,184 houses.

On the allocation transactions, Al-Ruwaih indicated that plots in South Saad Al-Abdullah housing project were allocated to 4,423 citizens who submitted housing applications as at June 2007.

He continued saying that PAHW signed two contracts -- one for the establishment and maintenance of a center for girls in Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential City (Sector A) and the other for a similar center in Saad Al-Abdullah City (Ninth Sector).

"The number of public buildings under construction reached 122 -- 68 in Mutla'a Residential City, 31 in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak, seven in East Sabah Al-Ahmad, one building in South Khaitan, one in Jaber Al-Ahmad City and 14 in Sabah Al-Ahmad City," he concluded.

Kuwait advances economic cooperation at 72nd GCC Finance Undersecretaries meet

Consensus reached on financial recommendations

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): Kuwait participated on Wednesday in the 72nd meeting of the GCC Finance Undersecretaries Committee, held in Doha, Qatar. The Kuwaiti Ministry of Finance stated that Kuwait took part in the meeting to discuss important topics that contribute to enhancing financial and economic cooperation among the GCC countries in preparation for the 122nd meeting of the Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee.

The Kuwaiti delegation was headed by Aseel Al-Munifi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance.

The statement added that the meeting reviewed recommendations submitted by the GCC Central Bank Governors Committee, the Customs Union Authority, the Committee of Heads and Directors of Tax Departments in the GCC countries, and the Gulf Common Market Committee.

Economic unity

The program for achieving economic unity among the GCC countries by 2025 was also reviewed, along with follow-up on the decisions from the 121st meeting of the Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee.

The meeting concluded with the undersecretaries agreeing on all agenda topics and issues, as well as on the recommendations of the Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee for its 122nd meeting. This is in line with the directives of Their Majesties and Highnesses, the leaders of the GCC countries, aimed at achieving intensified efforts, cooperation, and consolidation among member states in all fields.



Participants of the 72nd Meeting of the Committee of Undersecretaries of the Ministries of Finance of the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries.

KUNA photo

Kuwait welcomes

Continued from Page 1

The vote in the 193-member world body was 124-14, with 43 abstentions. Among those in opposition was the United States, Israel's closest ally.

The resolution was adopted as Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza approaches its first anniversary and as violence in the West Bank reaches new highs. Troubled efforts to broker a cease-fire deal in Gaza and are pressing ahead, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken meeting fellow mediators Wednesday in Egypt, even as attacks elsewhere in the region raise fears of escalating conflict in the Middle East.

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian U.N. ambassador, called the vote a turning point "in our struggle for freedom and justice."

"It sends a clear message that Israel's occupation must end as soon as possible and that the Palestinian people's right to self-determination must be realized," he said.

Israel's U.N. Ambassador, Danny Danon, slammed the vote as "a shameful decision that backs the Palestinian Authority's diplomatic terrorism."

"Instead of marking the anniversary of the Oct. 7 massacre by condemning Hamas and calling for the release of all 101 of the remaining hostages, the General Assembly continues to dance to the music of the Palestinian Authority, which backs the Hamas murderers," Danon said.

While the resolution is not legally binding, the extent of its support reflects world opinion. There are no vetoes in the General Assembly, unlike in the 15-member Security Council.

The resolution also demands the withdrawal of all Israeli forces and the evacuation of settlers from the occupied Palestinian territories "without delay." And it urges countries to impose sanctions on those responsible for maintaining Israel's presence in the territories and halt arms exports to Israel if they're suspected of being used there.

In addition, the resolution calls for Israel to pay reparations to Palestinians for the damage caused by its occupation and urges countries to take steps to prevent trade or investments that maintain Israel's presence in the territories.

It comes in response to a ruling by the top United Nations court in July that said Israel's presence in the Palestinian territories is unlawful and must end.

In the sweeping condemnation of Israel's rule over the lands it captured during the 1967 war, the International Court of Justice said Israel had no right to sovereignty over the Palestinian territories and was violating international laws against acquiring the lands by force.

The court's opinion also is not legally binding. Nonetheless, the Palestinians drafted the resolution to try to implement the ruling.

The General Assembly's consideration of the resolution began Tuesday with Mansour stressing that any country that thinks the Palestinian people "will accept a life of servitude" - or that claims peace is possible without a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict - is "not being realistic."

The solution remains an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living side by side in peace and security with Israel, he said.

U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Linda Thomas Greenfield told reporters Tuesday that the resolution has "a significant number of flaws."

She said it goes beyond the ICJ ruling and doesn't recognize that "Hamas is a terrorist organization" in control of Gaza or that Israel has a right to defend itself, she said.

"In our view, the resolution does not bring about tangible benefits across the board for the Palestinian people," Thomas-Greenfield said. "I think it

could complicate the situation on the ground, complicate what we're trying to do to end the conflict, and I think it impedes reinvigorating steps toward a two-state solution."

ID, bank

Continued from Page 1

within the deadline.

It added that the operations of biometric centers in shopping malls will stop starting from Oct 1, 2024; indicating visitors will be received at the designated centers in the personality investigation units at the General Department for Criminal Evidence from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm throughout the week. An appointment must be booked through the Appointments Section on Sahel application before heading to the centers.

Kuwait, Gulf

Continued from Page 1

to Lebanon was injured when his pager exploded, underlining the involvement of Iranian interests.

Dr. Safaa Zaman, head of the Information Security Association and professor of computer science at Kuwait University, suggested that the explosion of pagers could have been executed through various methods, such as sending heat waves to the batteries or using specific software designed to target Hezbollah members.

Dr. Safaa explained that this technology has become incredibly frightening and complex, as it is hacked through extremely advanced techniques.

She pointed out that with modern technologies, any device can be hacked, even if it is not connected to the internet, as it can be accessed through a nearby internet network.

She stressed that in modern wars, those who possess advanced technological capabilities have the upper hand, and that both Israel and the United States have the technologies that enabled Israel to carry out this operation.

Dr. Zaman also warned that global technologies and applications could pose a significant threat to Arab countries, as these applications can easily hack into all kinds of information.

She explained that mobile phones can be detonated, noting that the same technology used to explode pager batteries can also be used to detonate mobile phones.

While the pager explosions were tragic, Dr. Zaman emphasized the importance of learning from this experience.

She called for increased awareness and cybersecurity protection in Kuwait and the Gulf countries, highlighting that more dangerous than device explosions is the hacking of state data through complex technologies. She stressed that the devices people carry can be easily used for espionage.

Cybersecurity expert Hoda Al-Kribani warned of the risks posed by all mobile phones and laptops, which can be detonated or used for eavesdropping in specific ways. She explained that even TV screens could be embedded with explosive materials, making them vulnerable to detonation via vibrations.

Al-Kribani stated that the pagers that exploded two days ago in Lebanon were part of a premeditated operation. She suggested that high-tech modifications were made to these devices, and the detonation command could have been sent via a drone or by software that raised the temperature of the pager batteries to extreme levels, triggering the explosion.

She highlighted that these devices had only been delivered to Hezbollah six months ago, and Israel was fully aware that the individuals using the

pagers held highly sensitive positions.

Retired Major General and security expert Hamad Al-Surayge commented that this operation was of the highest intelligence caliber, executed with skill and precision by the Israeli entity, underscoring that current wars are technological in nature.

He revealed that the pagers that exploded, killing and injuring many Hezbollah members, were made in Taiwan. The Taiwanese government is now investigating whether the modifications to the pagers were made in Taiwan or elsewhere.

Al-Surayge explained that the operation specifically targeted the pagers, as Hezbollah members had abandoned using mobile phones, some of which had been previously compromised. He suggested that the operation confirms that there was an infiltration within Hezbollah's ranks, with some members recruited by Israel. He concluded by urging Kuwait to take every precaution against such operations and emphasized the need for vigilance within the Kuwaiti security apparatus.

Experts have provided a set of important tips and guidelines to protect yourself in case your phone or pager battery explodes:

- Inspect any new device before purchasing to ensure it hasn't been tampered with.
- Regularly monitor your phone to ensure it doesn't overheat.
- Avoid charging your phone or pager while sleeping to reduce the risk of overheating.
- Let your phone cool down before charging it again.
- Use original charging equipment, such as a USB-C port or Quick Charge.
- Do not place your phone under your pillow while sleeping, as it can lead to overheating.

These scenarios suggest that attackers are using advanced knowledge of electromagnetic wave technology to target devices, requiring thorough investigations to determine the methods and technologies involved.

Major General Ashraf Fawzi, former Deputy Chief of Staff of the Egyptian Intelligence Service, told Al-Seyassah daily, that the recent Israeli operation was no coincidence, coming shortly after Israel thwarted an assassination attempt involving a 'Klimagor' explosive device planted by Hezbollah to target an Israeli security official.

In his statement, Fawzi explained that the operation marks a new phase in the ongoing conflict with Hezbollah. It underscores key field realities, including Israel's intention to "cool down" the front and send a clear message of its ability to strike Hezbollah effectively without incurring significant military costs or losses. At the same time, Fawzi emphasized that Israel felt the need to demonstrate its superiority.

Fawzi elaborated that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's strategy involved a sophisticated security and cyber attack aimed at testing Hezbollah's logistical capabilities and disrupting its health and social infrastructure.

This move, he suggested, could be part of broader preparations for a potential military operation in southern Lebanon or the Bekaa region. After striking the group's communications infrastructure and causing substantial casualties, Hezbollah now faces a new challenge, reminiscent of the one it encountered after the assassination of its leader, Fouad Shukur. Fawzi also touched on speculation that the operation might be a precursor to a ground invasion south of the Litani River, with the goal of pushing settlers back to the north.

However, he cautioned that, despite the speculation, Israeli military logic likely recognizes the potentially disastrous consequences of a ground war with Hezbollah, which would be far more severe than the results of Israel's invasion of Gaza, primarily due to Hezbollah's formidable combat capabilities in southern Lebanon.

KFAS ends healthcare forum with LSE

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) successfully concluded its annual conference in collaboration with the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Held under the theme 'Delivering Excellence in Healthcare in Kuwait', the conference aimed to introduce innovative solutions and advanced technologies to enhance Kuwait's healthcare sector.

This event was part of the LSE Kuwait Program, focusing on fostering academic and research partnerships between Kuwait and the prestigious British institution.

The conference, which saw a notable increase in participation following a promotional visit by LSE to Kuwaiti institutions last May, attracted approximately 220 attendees from various sectors.

The event was well-attended by prominent personalities, including the British Ambassador to Kuwait, Belinda Lewis, as well as academics, researchers, policy makers, and representatives from public and private healthcare institutions.

The conference coincided with the



The conference witnessed the participation of a group of prominent figures from government and private entities and diplomats.

KUNA photo

125th anniversary of Kuwaiti-British relations, highlighting the enduring partnership between the two nations. KFAS expressed pride in its role in strengthening these ties through support for scientific and academic initiatives with British institutions.

The agenda featured lectures from international experts, including Dr. Alistair McGuire from LSE, who spoke on "Global Trends in Healthcare: Lessons for Kuwait." Kuwait

experts and academics also contributed to specialized discussions on topics such as "Technology and Healthcare," "Lifestyle," and "Providing Local Healthcare."

Overall, the conference underscored KFAS's commitment to advancing science, technology, and innovation in Kuwait's healthcare sector, reflecting its ongoing dedication to fostering international academic and research collaborations.

Kuwait, IAEA

Continued from Page 1

IAEA, contributing to the modernization of its laboratories in Seibersdorf, the Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI), and the establishment of the IAEA Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) Bank.

KISR has also participated in a joint exhibition with IAEA at the UN Climate Change Conference, showcasing the Kuwaiti research vessel.

Kuwait's collaboration with IAEA extends beyond nuclear safety and security to include various fields like science, technology, agriculture, and health.

Through its embassy in Vienna, Kuwait has continuously worked to strengthen this relationship and seeks to explore new partnerships through IAEA initiatives, including the Rays of Hope initiative.

Last week, a high-level delegation from Kuwait Cancer Control Center (KCCC) visited IAEA to enhance radiotherapy services for cancer patients and explore opportunities for Kuwait to become a regional hub for the Rays of Hope initiative.

Hot during

Continued from Page 1

In the evening, Al-Qarawi mentioned that the coastal areas will experience relatively hot and humid weather, with light winds of 6 to 22 kilometers per hour. The temperatures will drop to a low of 26 to 28 degrees Celsius, while the sea will maintain light waves ranging between 1 to 2 feet.

For Friday, Al-Qarawi predicted continued hot weather with scattered clouds and a slight chance of light rain later in the day. Winds will be variable, turning southeasterly, with speeds between 8 and 28 kilometers per hour. Maximum temperatures are expected to range from 39 to 42 degrees Celsius, and sea conditions will remain light to moderate with waves between 1 and 4 feet.

Friday evening will bring relatively hot and humid conditions to the coastal areas, with northwesterly to variable winds, light to moderate at 8 to 28 kilometers per hour. Temperatures will range between 27 and 30 degrees Celsius, and the sea will remain calm with

waves from 1 to 4 feet.

On Saturday, the weather is forecasted to stay hot and relatively humid along the coast, with southeasterly winds varying between 8 to 28 kilometers per hour. Maximum temperatures will climb to 40 to 43 degrees Celsius, with the sea remaining light to moderate with waves from 1 to 4 feet.

Saturday evening will continue the trend of hot and humid weather in the coastal areas, with winds ranging from 6 to 26 kilometers per hour. The minimum temperature is expected to remain between 27 and 30 degrees Celsius.

Kuwait participates

Continued from Page 1

Representatives of ministers, officials and heads of food safety and manufacturing companies from 90 countries and international organizations participated in the four-day World Food Conference.

The participating Kuwaiti delegation included the Ambassador of Kuwait, President of the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies, Vice President of the Arab Cooperative Union, and General Director of Food Control and Inspection at the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition.

The discussions at the conference revolved around food security and innovations in the field of retail processing, with the participation of manufacturers, producers and investors from around the world.

WFI 2024 was organized by the Ministry of Food Industries in India and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce.

KRCS, SRCS

Continued from Page 1

agreement will enhance cooperation with Sudanese counterparts to deliver critical assistance to those affected by the floods and those forced to flee their homes.

The relief efforts, he said, are crucial in meeting the urgent needs of the displaced and mitigating the worsening humanitarian situation.

Kuwait's contributions, according to Al-Hasawi, underscored the nation's commitment to providing continuous

support to the Sudanese people, reflecting the political leadership's dedication to humanitarian work and the society's role in offering aid and relief.

KRCS has ramped up its efforts by dispatching substantial quantities of aid through relief planes and cargo ships while deploying a team of volunteers to Sudan to ensure the supplies reach displaced communities, he explained.

-Al-Hasawi concluded by highlighting Kuwait's growing reputation as a global leader in humanitarian relief, stating that the country's efforts reflect its moral duty and ethical principles on the international stage.

Al-Huwailah pushes

Continued from Page 1

employees' skills in handling domestic abuse cases. Awareness campaigns on the risks and consequences of domestic violence were launched as well.

As a key component and cornerstone of community development, Al-Huwailah stressed the importance of combating violence and strengthening family ties in her concluding remarks.

On the other hand, Al-Huwailah affirmed Thursday that the ministry continues to develop its services to transition into full digitalization, as per the directive of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to improve services for citizens.

Al-Huwailah made the announcement during the inauguration of Jaber Al-Ali Cooperative Society Wedding Hall, stressing the Ministry of Social Affairs continues to reopen and renovate community development centers and wedding halls in the interest of the public.

She revealed a total of 68 wedding halls and community development centers are now ready for reservation according to the Social Affairs Ministry's regulations. She said many such facilities will open upon completion of maintenance and renovation works, and they will be available for reservation online. She pointed out the ministry remains committed to provide citizens with the best services, including the wedding halls that cater to a large segment of the people.

She also called on the cooperative societies to intensify their efforts in serving the shareholders and to provide all their needs, asserting this is the primary role of cooperatives.

World News Roundup

Europe

Teachers detained

UK's PM criticized for taking freebies

LONDON, Sept 19, (AP) — Less than three months after he was elected on a promise to restore trust in politics, British Prime Minister **Keir Starmer** is trying to shake off criticism over donations from a wealthy businessman and the hefty salary of his most senior aide.

The Labour Party leader, who won power in a landslide victory on July 4, denies impropriety over thousands of pounds (dollars) worth of clothes and eyeglasses paid for by **Waheed Alli**, a media entrepreneur and longtime Labour donor.

Starmer is also facing grumbling among his own employees over the salary of chief of staff **Sue Gray**. The BBC disclosed that she is paid 170,000 pounds (\$225,000) a year — about 3,000 pounds more than the prime minister's salary.

Gray's salary is at the top of a set of pay bands for political advisers, which have been raised since the election. The government said it did not interfere in setting the pay scale.

"The pay bands for any official, any adviser, are not set by politicians. There's an official process that does that," Business Secretary **Jonathan Reynolds** said Thursday.

In recent days British media have been full of largely anonymous grumbling from government officials about Gray, a former senior civil servant best known for leading an investigation into lockdown-breaching parties in government buildings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gray's findings helped topple Conservative Prime Minister **Boris Johnson**, and her subsequent move to work for Starmer led the Conservatives to claim the "partygate" probe was politically biased, something Gray denies.



Starmer

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Italy floods force 1,000 to evacuate: About a thousand residents were evacuated in the northern Italian region of Emilia-Romagna after it was hit by torrential rains and severe flooding overnight, local media reported Thursday.

Rivers flooded in three of the region's provinces — Ravenna, Bologna and Faenza — as local mayors asked people to stay on upper floors or leave their houses.

At least 800 residents in the Ravenna area and almost 200 in Bologna province spent the night in shelters, schools and sports centers as local rivers overflowed.

Trains were suspended and schools closed across the affected areas, and residents have been advised to avoid travel and work from home where possible.

The Faenza area was just recovering from the devastating floods that hit Emilia-Romagna in May 2023, claiming 17 lives and causing billions of euros in damages.

"The night was dramatic, we waited for the river flood to cross the city," Faenza mayor **Massimo Isola** told state TV Rainews. "It rose really close to the limit, but thanks to the works done over the past year we managed to avoid an overflow in the center of the city."

Several Central and Eastern European nations have been plagued by severe flooding in recent days, including Austria, the Czech Republic, Poland and Romania, with the death toll rising over 20 people across the region.

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Italy hails ties with China: China and Italy, as inheritors of millennium-old civilization, will be able to use their wisdom to jointly promote global peace, stability and sustainable development, Italian Deputy Prime Minister **Matteo Salvini** has said.

"In the name of peace and global stability, the friendship between Italy and China is crucial," said Salvini on Tuesday at a reception hosted by the Chinese Embassy in Italy to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the 20th anniversary of comprehensive strategic partnership of the two nations.

He also said that he believes that dialogue, friendship, partnership, and collaboration between China and Europe are absolutely beneficial, positive, and necessary.

As Italy's minister of infrastructure and transport, Salvini also told Xinhua that he had great admiration for the path China has taken over the past 75 years. He thanked the Chinese community "for the contribution it brings to many Italian cities."

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Teachers in Belarus detained: Dozens of teachers in Belarus have been detained or interrogated by authorities as part of the country's wide-ranging crackdown on dissent, a respected local human rights organization said Wednesday.

Pavel Sapelka, a spokesman for the Viasna rights group told The Associated Press that moves against teachers began in September and that all those detained or questioned have taken part in an online teacher-education project that the KGB, Belarus' main security agency, declared to be an extremist group in August.

The project, named **Adukavanka**, gave guidance on technological innovations in education and offered suggested lesson plans. Hundreds of teachers joined.

Sapelka did not give precise figures for how many teachers have been detained or questioned.

In a post on the Telegram messaging service, **Adukavanka** advised all subscribers to its channel who live in Belarus to cancel their registrations. "Strong education is done with brains, not with truncheons," the post said.

Belarus has suppressed opposition and independent media for three decades under President **Alexander Lukashenko**, but the efforts to crush dissent intensified sharply in 2020 when nationwide protests arose after a presidential election whose disputed results gave Lukashenko a sixth term in office.

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Hungary refuses to pay fines: The European Union on Wednesday began the process of clawing back hundreds of millions of euros in funds meant to go Hungary after its anti-migrant government refused to pay a huge fine for breaking the bloc's asylum rules.

In June, the EU's top court ordered Hungary to pay 200 million euros (\$223 million) for persistently depriving migrants of their right to apply for asylum. The court imposed an additional fine of 1 million euros for every day it failed to comply.

The European Court of Justice described Hungary's actions as "an unprecedented and extremely serious infringement of EU law." Hungarian Prime Minister **Viktor Orbán** slammed its ruling as "outrageous and unacceptable."



US Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris speaks at Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) Leadership Conference, at Ronald Reagan Building in Washington on Sept 18. (AP)

Politics

Ex-prez rallies on Long Island

VP hits Trump promise of mass deportations

WASHINGTON, Sept 19, (AP) — US Vice President **Kamala Harris** criticized Republican **Donald Trump**'s promise to deport millions of people who are in the United States illegally, questioning whether he would rely on massive raids and detention camps to carry it out.

Harris, the Democratic presidential nominee, told the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's annual leadership conference that the nation can find both a pathway to citizenship for those who want to come and at the same time secure the border.

"We can do both, and we must do both," she said.

Focus

Trump, for his part, leaned heavily on his alarmist message on immigration as he held a rally in Uniondale on New York's Long Island, focusing the bulk of his remarks on the subject.

"We're just destroying the fabric of life in our country. And we're not going to take it any longer. And you got to get rid of these people. Give me a shot," Trump said.

Both candidates took a break Wednesday from campaigning in the toss-up states that will likely decide the Nov. 5 election. The former president drew a large, roaring crowd, giving him a chance to show deep support even in a blue state.

He ripped into Democratic leadership in New York City and state, blaming them for homeless people living in what he called "horrible, disgusting, dangerous, filthy encampments," and even the conditions on the New York City subway, which he called "squalid and unsafe" and promised to renovate.

"What the hell do you have to lose?" he said in asking for their votes.

Before heading out to the suburbs, Trump stopped at a Bitcoin cafe in New York City. Trump has recently embraced cryptocurrency and on Monday night helped launch his family's new cryptocurrency venture.

Harris harked back to the Trump administration's immigration policies as she bid for Hispanic support.

"While we fight to move our nation forward to a brighter future, Donald Trump and his extremist allies will

keep trying to pull us backward," Harris said. "We all remember what they did to tear families apart, and now they have pledged to carry out the largest deportation, a mass deportation, in American history."

"Imagine what that would look like and what that would be? How's that going to happen? Massive raids? Massive detention camps? What are they talking about?" she said.

Trump has promised to carry out "the largest deportation operation in the history of our country" if he's elected in November. He has offered no details on how such an operation would work.

Trump has focused on immigration as a top campaign issue and made it a key focus of his remarks Wednesday.

Johnson had pulled the bill from consideration last week because it lacked the votes to pass. He worked through the weekend to win support from fellow Republicans but was unable to overcome objections about spending levels from some members, while others said they don't favor any continuing resolutions, insisting that Congress return to passing the dozen annual appropriations bills on time and one at a time. Democrats overwhelmingly opposed the measure.

Requiring new voters to provide proof of citizenship has become a leading election-year priority for Republicans raising the specter of noncitizens voting in the U.S., even though it's already illegal to do so and research has shown that such voting is rare.

Opponents say that such a requirement would disenfranchise millions of Americans who do not have a birth certificate or passport readily available when they get a chance to register at their school, church or other venues when voter registration drives occur.

and we'll get right to it." Johnson had pulled the bill from consideration last week because it lacked the votes to pass. He worked through the weekend to win support from fellow Republicans but was unable to overcome objections about spending levels from some members, while others said they don't favor any continuing resolutions, insisting that Congress return to passing the dozen annual appropriations bills on time and one at a time. Democrats overwhelmingly opposed the measure.

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"Look at what's happening," he told his crowd in New York. "Businesses that are fleeing, money draining out of your state and hundreds of thousands of illegal migrants sucking your public resources dry."

Trump said he plans in the next two weeks to visit Springfield, Ohio, which has been the center of false accusations from the former president and his running mate **JD Vance** that members of the city's Haitian community are abducting and eating cats and dogs. Trump also said he plans to visit Aurora, Colorado, where he says a Venezuelan street gang with a small presence in the city has taken over a rundown apartment complex. Aurora police say that's not the case.

"Ultimately, as part of this operation, we were able to identify thousands of infected devices, and, then, with court authorization, issued commands to remove the malware from them, prying them from China's grip."

The hacker group's targets included organizations in the public and private sectors, as well as academia and the media.

Wray also revealed the hacker group's true identity to be an information security company known as the Integrity Technology Group. (KUNA)

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Boy kills bear mauling father: A 12-year-old boy has shot and killed a wounded black bear as it was mauling his father near their hunting cabin in the thick western Wisconsin woods.

Ryan Beierman, 43, told the Minnesota Star Tribune that he was pinned beneath the 200-pound bruin on Sept. 6 when his son, **Owen**, fired a shot from the boy's hunting rifle.

"Owen was a hero. He shot that bear and killed it on top of me," said Beierman, who suffered bites to his forehead, arm and leg. He also needed stitches to reattach a flap of skin on his cheek that was ripped during the attack.

Earlier, he and Owen spotted the bear from a tree stand near **Siren**, Wisconsin, about 90 miles (144 kilometers) northeast of Minneapolis. Owen fired a shot, wounding the bear which then ran away. The pair waited about 20 minutes before starting to look for the bear and used a neighbor's tracking dog to try and find it. (AP)



Firefighters work to extinguish a fire on the outskirts of Sever do Vouga, a town in northern Portugal that has been surrounded by forest fires for several days, Wednesday, Sept 18. More than 100 wildfires stretched thousands of firefighters to the limit in northern Portugal on Wednesday, with seven deaths since the worst spate of fires in recent years spread out of control over the weekend. (AP)



McIver



Bucco

America

McIver wins special election: Democratic Newark City Council President **LaMonica McIver** has defeated Republican small businessman **Carmen Bucco** in a contest in New Jersey's 10th Congressional District that opened up because of the death of Rep **Donald Payne Jr** in April.

McIver will serve out the remainder of Payne's term, which ends in January. She and Bucco will face a rematch on the November ballot for the full term.

McIver said in a statement Wednesday that she stands on the "shoulders of giants," naming Payne as chief among them.

She cast ahead to the November election, saying the right to make reproductive health choices was on the ballot as well as whether the economy should benefit the wealthy or "hard working Americans."

Bucco congratulated McIver on the victory in a statement but said he's looking forward to the rematch in November. (AP)

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Veteran CIA officer gets 30 yrs: A longtime CIA officer who drugged, photographed and assaulted more than two dozen women in postings around the world was sentenced to 30 years in federal prison Wednesday after an emotional hearing in which victims described being deceived by a man who appeared kind, educated and part of an agency "that is supposed to protect the world from evil."

Brian Jeffrey Raymond, with a graying beard and orange prison jumpsuit, sat dejectedly as he heard his punishment for one of the most egregious misconduct cases in the CIA's history. It was chronicled in his own library of more than 500 images that showed him in some cases abusing unconscious victims.

"It's safe to say he's a predator," US Senior Judge **Colleen Kollar-Kotelly** said in imposing the full sentence prosecutors had requested. "You are going to have a period of time to think about this."

Prosecutors say the 48-year-old Raymond's assaults date to 2006 and tracked his career in Mexico, Peru and other countries, all following a similar pattern: (AP)

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FBI dismantles botnet: The Federal Bureau of Investigation and partners disrupted

a major Chinese botnet and freed thousands of impacted devices from its clutches, FBI Director **Christopher Wray** announced on Wednesday.

The botnet, which was operated by a Chinese government-sponsored hacker group

known as **Flax Typhoon**, targeted internet-connected devices such as storage devices, cameras, and video recorders to compromise victims' systems and steal their confidential data. Wray said during a keynote at the 2024 Aspen Cyber Summit in Washington, D.C.



Russian police stand guard near the site where a shooting incident occurred in Moscow, Russia, on Sept 18. Two people have been killed and several injured in a shooting at the office of Russian online retailer **Wildberries** on Wednesday, according to the Russian Investigative Committee. (Xinhua)

Lat/Am

'Show proof of ties'

Haiti govt creates electoral council

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, Sept 19, (AP): Haiti's government on Wednesday created a provisional electoral council long sought by the international community to prepare the troubled Caribbean country for its first general elections since 2016.

Smith Augustin, a member of the country's transitional presidential council, confirmed to The Associated Press that the electoral council was created, albeit with only seven of what by law is supposed to be a nine-member panel. He said the two other members would likely be announced in upcoming days.

The electoral council, which represents groups including farmers, journalists, human rights activists and the Vodou community, is tasked with organizing the elections and helping create the legal framework to hold them.

Haiti has not had a president since July 2021, and it last held elections in 2016.

The previous electoral council had been dissolved in September 2021 by former prime minister Ariel Henry, who accused it of being "partisan." His move delayed elections planned for November 2021 and prompted critics to accuse Henry of holding on to power, accusations he rejected.

Henry was himself a transitional leader. He was sworn in as prime minister roughly two weeks after former president Jovenel Moïse was assassinated at his private home in July 2021. Henry repeatedly pledged to hold elections but blamed worsening gang violence for his failure to do so.

Attacks
Earlier this year, gangs that control 80% of the capital of Port-au-Prince launched coordinated attacks on critical government infrastructure, a move that eventually led to Henry's resignation.

A transitional presidential council was then created and tasked with holding presidential elections by February 2026.

The assassination of Moïse had left a major political vacuum.

In addition, the terms of 10 remaining senators expired in January 2023, stripping Haiti of its last democratically elected institution. The country had failed to hold legislative elections since October 2019, with Moïse ruling by decree before he was killed.

The newly formed provisional electoral council faces numerous obstacles, including persistent gang violence blamed for the killing of more than 3,200 people from January to May.

González forced to sign letter: Venezuela's former opposition candidate, Edmundo González, on Wednesday said he was coerced into signing a letter effectively recognizing his defeat in July's presidential election, which electoral authorities claim was won by President Nicolás Maduro.

The revelation of the letter is the latest strain to the country's political crisis, which was exacerbated by the disputed election results and González's recent departure for exile in Spain. González and the Unitary Platform coalition he represented on July 28 claim they defeated Maduro by a wide margin.

The document states it was meant to be confidential, but Jorge Rodríguez, head of the National Assembly and Maduro's chief negotiator, presented it during a nationally televised press conference hours after a local news outlet published parts of it. The letter shows González as the sender and is addressed to Rodríguez, who signed it as recipient.

Rodríguez told reporters González signed the letter of his own volition. González, however, in a video posted on social media said he signed it under duress.

"They showed up with a document that I would have to sign to allow my departure from the country," González said. "In other words, either I signed or I would face consequences. There were very tense hours of coercion, blackmail and pressure."

Rodríguez, questioned about González video message, threatened to reveal audio of his conversations with González if he did not take back his assertions.

Colombia suspends peace talks with ELN: Colombia on Wednesday suspended peace talks with the National Liberation Army, or ELN, after blaming the rebel group for an attack that killed two soldiers and injured more than 20.

"Today the dialogue process is suspended," said the government's peace delegation in a statement. "Its viability is severely damaged, and its continuity can only be recovered with an unequivocal manifestation of the ELN's will for peace."

This is the deepest crisis of the peace negotiations with the ELN since November 2022 and after President Gustavo Petro took power as the first leftist president launching talks with that and other armed groups under a policy known as total peace.

The National Liberation Army, or ELN, ended a cease-fire with the Colombian government in August, but was still involved in peace talks aimed at ending more than five decades of conflict.

The army said Tuesday that the group fired homemade rockets from a cargo truck that had been parked near a base in Puerto Jordan, a small town in Arauca province.

The rebel group has not claimed responsibility for the attack.

'Show proof of alleged cartel ties': Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador on Wednesday demanded that former Secretary of Public Security Genaro García Luna, who was convicted on drug trafficking charges in the United States last year, present evidence to support his accusations that the president has links to drug trafficking.

López Obrador was responding to a jailhouse letter from García Luna that his attorney distributed to the press. García Luna alleged contact between López Obrador and the faction of the Sinaloa cartel led by Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada, who was arrested in July in Texas.

The letter comes just weeks before López Obrador leaves office and after earlier allegations that López Obrador's previous presidential campaign took contributions from drug traffickers.

"He writes that there is proof, there are videos, there are calls, there are audios. It's very simple, he should share them with the public," said López Obrador in his morning news briefing.

"He needs to show proof," said the president. He suggested that he ask, "his friends at the DEA."



Henry



Zhao Leji, chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, meets with a delegation led by Kim Tae-nyeon, president of the Republic of Korea (ROK)-China Parliamentarians' Union in Beijing, capital of China on Sept 19. (Xinhua)

China's top legislator meets delegation of ROK-China Parliamentarians' Union

China's top legislator Zhao Leji met with a delegation led by Kim Tae-nyeon, president of the Republic of Korea (ROK)-China Parliamentarians' Union, on Thursday in Beijing.

Zhao, chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, said that the sound and steady development of the relations between China and ROK serves the common interests of both countries and is conducive to regional peace, stability, development and prosperity.

Zhao said the two sides should adhere to good neighborliness and friendship, follow the important

consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries, and push for sound and steady development of China-ROK relations.

He called on the two sides to strengthen mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, jointly maintain the stability and smooth flow of industrial and supply chains, promote people-to-people exchanges, carry out more activities conducive to enhancing friendship between the two countries, and lay public support for the long-term development of China-ROK relations.

"The NPC of China is willing to continue to carry out various forms of dialogue and exchanges with

the ROK National Assembly to promote the development of bilateral relations," Zhao said.

Kim said that the ROK side attaches great importance to developing ROK-China relations and congratulates the 70th anniversary of the founding of the NPC in China.

The ROK-China Parliamentarians' Union is willing to contribute positively to promoting the development of ROK-China relations, strengthening exchanges and cooperation between legislative bodies, and enhancing people-to-people exchanges, Kim said. (Xinhua)



Police from Jamaica stand on the tarmac of the Toussaint Louverture International Airport after landing in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on Sept 12. Haiti's government on Sept 18 created a provisional electoral council long sought by the international community to prepare the troubled Caribbean country for its first general elections since 2016. (AP)



Khan



Msuya

Africa

Nigeria warns of possible flooding: Nigeria's government warned of possible flooding in 11 states following the release of water from a dam in neighboring Cameroon.

The Nigerian hydrological agency said on Wednesday that water would be released from the Lagdo dam gradually and could cause flooding, but that there was no cause for alarm.

Severe floods have ravaged northeastern Nigeria, impacting more than 400,000 people, according to the United Nations.

Floods in Borno state have forced people from their homes into displacement sites. Earlier this month, flooding killed 30 people in the state after the collapse of a major dam. About 15% of Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state, was under water.

The flooding has worsened the humanitarian crisis in Nigeria, where armed violence especially in the troubled northern region has already displaced millions. (AP)

S.Africa train accident injures 25: Twenty-five people were injured when a train derailed on Tuesday night in South Africa's Western Cape province, local authorities confirmed on Wednesday.

The derailment occurred at Dal Josafat Station near Paarl, about 60 kilometers northeast of Cape Town, according to a statement by Metrorail Western Cape.

"The train was en route from Cape Town to Wellington station when the incident occurred," Metrorail said in the statement. "Twenty-five passengers were injured and transported by ambulance to various hospitals for treatment. No fatalities were reported. Other passengers onboard were transported to their homes."

Emergency services, including ambulances, firefighters and the South African Police Service (SAPS), responded to assist the injured.

Metrorail said that the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa and Transnet Freight Rail are investigating the derailment. (Xinhua)

Asia

Japan student stabbed near school in China dies

Kim bolsters nuke, conventional weapons

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 19, (AP): North Korea said Thursday that leader Kim Jong Un supervised successful tests of two types of missiles - one designed to carry a "super-large conventional warhead" and the other likely for a nuclear warhead, as he ordered officials to bolster up his country's military capabilities to repel United States-led threats.

The tests appear to be the same as the multiple missile launches that neighboring countries said North Korea performed Wednesday, extending its run of weapons displays as confrontations with the U.S. and South Korea escalate.

Launch

The official Korean Central News Agency said that Kim oversaw the launch of the country's newly built Hwasongpho-11-Da-4.5 ballistic missile tipped with a dummy "4.5-ton super-large conventional warhead." It said the test-firing was meant to verify an ability to accurately hit a 320 kilometer (200 mile) -range target, suggesting it's a weapon aimed at striking sites in South Korea.

KCNA said Kim also guided the launch of an improved "strategic" cruise missile, a word implying the weapon was developed to carry a nuclear warhead.

After the tests, Kim stressed the need to continue to "bolster up the nuclear force" and acquire "overwhelming offensive capability in the field of conventional weapons, too," according to KCNA. It cited the Kim as saying that North Korea can thwart its enemies' intentions to invade only when it has strong military power.

KCNA released photos of a missile hitting a ground target. South Korea's military said later Thursday it assessed that both ballistic and cruise missiles fired by North Korea the previous day landed in the North's mountainous

northeastern region.

Chu gets 14 months in HK: The first person convicted under a tough new Hong Kong national security law was sentenced on Thursday to 14 months in prison for wearing a T-shirt with a protest slogan.

Chu Kai-pong, 27, wore a shirt on June 12 reading "Liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our times," a slogan chanted during anti-government protests in 2019. That day was the fifth anniversary of a demonstration in which thousands of people surrounded the city's legislative council complex to protest a now-withdrawn extradition bill. Months of often-violent protests followed as demonstrators expanded their demands to call for greater police accountability and democracy.

Authorities have said the protest slogan could imply the separation of Hong Kong from China - a red line for Beijing.

Chu pleaded guilty in court on Monday to the charge of carrying out an act or acts with a seditious intent.

The city's new security law, which critics say further stifles freedom of expression, took effect in March and imposes stiffer punishments for seditious offenses. Offenders face up to seven years in prison, up from the previous maximum sentence of two years for a first offense and three years for a subsequent offense.

Vietnam tycoon faces trial: The second trial for Vietnamese real estate tycoon Truong My Lan - who was sentenced to death for financial fraud in April - started on Thursday, state media reported.

The 67-year-old chair of the real estate company Van Thinh Phat was convicted for orchestrating Vietnam's biggest ever financial fraud case, amounting to \$12.5 billion - nearly 3%

of the country's 2022 GDP and for illegally controlling a major bank allowing loans that resulted in losses of \$27 billion, state media said.

Her arrest and conviction was one of the highest profile cases in an anti-corruption drive that has intensified since 2022. The so-called blazing furnace campaign has also singled the highest echelons of Vietnamese politics and led to the resignation of a former president who was implicated in it.

Lan is being tried on fresh charges of appropriating property fraudulently and money laundering. According to a police investigation, she raised \$1.2 billion from nearly 36,000 investors by issuing bonds illegally through four companies, state media reports say.

Investigators found 21 companies controlled by Lan's Van Thinh Phat that illegally transferred over \$4.5 billion in and out of Vietnam between 2012-2022.

She is also accused of siphoning off \$18 billion obtained through fraud.

Japanese student dies: Officials in Tokyo said Thursday that a 10-year-old Japanese student attending a Japanese school in southern China who was attacked the day before has died, asking Beijing to provide details of the stabbing and take preventive measures. A suspect is in custody.

Japan's Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa expressed condolences and said it was "extremely regrettable" the student died despite requests for caution and enhanced safety around the time of the anniversary of the start of Japan's invasion of China in the 1930s.

Kamikawa said she also instructed Japanese schools in China to review their safety measures, and requested China to provide details of the attack and do its utmost to prevent a recurrence of similar attacks on the Japanese.

Fighting devastates Sudan: Relentless violence has devastated Sudan and large-scale fighting has escalated in and around the only capital in Sudan's western Darfur region not held by paramilitary forces, the United Nations top humanitarian official

said Wednesday.

Acting humanitarian chief Joyce Msuya told the UN Security Council that famine has already struck Zamzam camp, about 15 kilometers (10 miles) from North Darfur's embattled capital of El Fasher. She said a

large-scale humanitarian operation is "a matter of life and death."

Sudan plunged into conflict in mid-April 2023, when long-simmering tensions between its military and paramilitary leaders broke out in the capital Khartoum and spread to other regions including Darfur. The UN says over 14,000 people have been killed and 33,000 injured.

Msuya urged the council to demand that the warring government and paramilitary Rapid Support Force refrain from targeting civilians, hospitals, schools and other civilian infrastructure, and allow unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid through all border crossings and across conflict lines.

She also called on the UN's 193 member nations to pressure the parties "to agree to a humanitarian pause to save lives, give civilians respite and allow us to deliver assistance."

Two decades ago, Darfur became synonymous with genocide and war crimes, particularly by the notorious Janjaweed Arab militias, against populations that identify as Central or East African. Up to 300,000 people were killed and 2.7 million were driven from their homes.

That legacy appears to have returned, with the International Criminal Court's prosecutor, Karim Khan, saying in January there are grounds to believe both sides may be committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide in Darfur.

Msuya said "the world should not abide in El Fasher the atrocities we witnessed in West Darfur." (AP)



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, center, oversees a launch of what it says, the country's newly built Hwasongpho-11-Da-4.5 ballistic missile at an undisclosed place in North Korea on Sept 18. North Korea said on Sept 19 that leader Kim supervised successful tests of two types of missiles - one designed to carry a super-large conventional warhead' and the other likely for a nuclear warhead, as he ordered officials to bolster up his country's military capabilities to repel United States-led threats. (AP)

		Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
SAUDI	- TASI	+159.53	12,080.47			
DUBAI	- DFMGI	+31.32	4,421.52			
JAPAN	- Nikkei 225	+775.16	37,155.33			
PHILIPPINES	- PSEI	+46.26	7,202.16			
EGYPT	- EGX 30	+595.23	30,937.69			
PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	+1,001.99	81,589.44			

Business

Episodes broadcasted on board of Kuwait Airways

Warba sponsors 'Rewayat'hum' podcast for second consecutive year

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Warba Bank announced its sponsorship of the "Rewayat'hum" (Their Story) podcast for the second year in a row, presented by Sayer Al-Otaibi, which hosts influentials from various fields popular in the Kuwaiti society.

Ayman Salem Al-Mutairi, Director Marketing and Corporate Communications at Warba Bank, said that the episodes will be broadcast on board of Kuwait Airways, in addition to YouTube and other social media platforms, noting that the first sponsored episodes have exceeded 2 million views so far.

Al-Mutairi stated that the program seeks to introduce people to social events in Kuwait that have not been addressed before and are being published and documented for the first time. The program connects different generations within the same family with events that occurred in Kuwait. The program will be in the podcast style that is popular around the world, as it attracts the viewer to focus on the dialogue and story in the interviews. This is due to the simplicity of the decor, which gives the guest comfort and allows him to continue the dialogue and tell the events.

The program is special as it adopts the form of a podcast with a fast, direct and specific dialogue rhythm, far from traditional talk shows.

Al-Mutairi expressed his happiness, saying: "We at Warba Bank are happy to sponsor the "Rewayat'hum" program, which aims to tell useful stories," Stressing that Warba Bank works to support and



Musaed Alghareeb with Sayer Al-Otaibi

Al-Mutairi:

- 'Warba' supports and highlights local initiatives that shed light on the history and stories of Kuwait
- The Bank continues its strong commitment to the sustainability program at the societal, economic and environmental levels

highlight local initiatives that shed light on our history and local stories.

He pointed out that Warba Bank is sponsoring the "Rewayat'hum" program for the second year in a row, as part of a wide range of initiatives led by the Bank to achieve community sustainability, adding that Warba Bank continues its strong commitment to the sustainability program at the community, economic and environmental levels through initiatives that have been strategically identified in a systematic manner.

In turn, the broadcaster Sayer Al-Otaibi, the owner of the "Rewayat'hum" podcast, thanked Warba Bank for the sponsorship, stressing that the episodes have a societal impact on the recipient, as each episode targets a specific segment, and we found this through the followers on the psychological, scientific and historical levels, which led to a positive role played by the "Rewayat'hum" podcast, and that cooperation with Warba Bank led to achieving positive results.

Warba Bank is one of the banks that have achieved great successes in a short period of time, as it has occupied a leading position by providing innovative digital banking services in accordance with Islamic Sharia for individuals and companies. It is one of the local banks with the largest number of shareholders, and this is one of the most prominent elements that make the bank close to all members of society.

Kuwaiti real estate sector sees significant growth in bank financing and transactions

Real estate loans surge by 23.8% in July

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Local banks have significantly increased their financing to Kuwait's real estate sector, with loans reaching a total of 10 billion dinars in July, up from 9.949 billion dinars the previous month.

This represents a 1.1 percent monthly increase and a 4.5 percent annual rise from the 9.625 billion dinars recorded in July 2023.

In the first seven months of the year, banks extended approximately 3.7 billion dinars in credit to the real estate sector.

Interestingly, real estate financing surged by 125.1 million dinars, or 23.8 percent, in July alone, reaching 649.6 million dinars compared to 524.5 million dinars in June.

On a yearly basis, financing in July increased by 303.2 million dinars, or 87.5 percent, from 346.4 million dinars in July 2023.

The real estate activity was also robust last month, with 448 properties traded for a total value of 359.07 million dinars (about \$1.2 billion).

The private real estate transactions led with 321 properties valued at 153 million dinars, followed by investment real estate with 105 properties worth 62.105 million dinars.

Other transactions included 11 commercial properties for 9.65 million dinars, five craft real estate contracts for 6.1 million dinars, and three exhibition sector properties valued at 28 million dinars.

Additionally, transactions in the warehouse sector and coastal strip were valued at 2.5 million dinars and 6.15 million dinars, respectively.

This uptick in both financing and transactions reflects a growing confidence and active engagement in Kuwait's real estate market.

The data from the Central Bank of Kuwait reveals a notable increase in consumer loans and deposits over the first seven months of 2024.

By the end of July, consumer loans had risen by 59 million dinars, or 3 percent, reaching a total of 2.03 billion dinars. This compares to 1.97 billion dinars at the end of December 2023.

During this period, the total volume of loans granted by Kuwaiti banks amounted to 1.82 billion dinars, marking a 3.4 percent increase. Consequently, the overall credit extended in Kuwait grew to 55.37 billion dinars by the end of July, up from 53.55 billion dinars at the end of 2023.

The rise in loan volumes is attributed to broader credit expansion across various economic sectors. Housing loans, which are long-term personal loans for purchasing, building, or renovating residential properties, totaled 16.24 billion dinars by July's end.

This reflects an increase of 230 million dinars, or 1.42 percent, from the

Brent crude drops by 5 cents

Oil price surges to \$74.71 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 17 cents to USD 74.71 per barrel on Wednesday as opposed USD 74.54 pb the day before, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corpo-

ration (KPC) on Thursday. The price of the Brent crude and West Texas Intermediate went down respectively by 5 and 28 cents to settle each at USD 73.56 per barrel and 71.91 pb.

16.01 billion dinars recorded at the end of December 2023. Personal facilities also saw growth, with the total balance reaching 19.01 billion dinars, up by 250 million dinars or 1.35 percent from 18.76 billion dinars.

In terms of deposits, Kuwaiti banks saw a rise in total deposits to 49.48 billion dinars as of July, an increase of 755 million dinars or 1.55 percent from the 48.72 billion dinars recorded at the end of 2023.

This growth was driven primarily by an increase in private sector deposits, which grew by 2.58 percent to 36.53 billion dinars, reflecting a rise of 1.01 billion dinars. Deposits in foreign currencies also increased slightly, reaching 1.83 billion dinars, up 1.04 percent from 1.81 billion dinars at the end of 2023.

Conversely, deposits from public financial and non-financial institutions decreased by 11.5 percent, falling to 5.98 billion dinars from 6.76 billion dinars at the end of December 2023.

Overall, the data indicates a robust expansion in both consumer loans and deposits, underscoring a dynamic financial environment in Kuwait during the first half of 2024.

The Central Bank of Kuwait's latest data reveals a significant increase in government deposits over the first seven months of 2024.

By the end of July, government deposits had risen to 5.13 billion dinars, up from 4.63 billion dinars at the end of December 2023. This represents a substantial growth rate of 10.77 percent, amounting to an increase of 499 million dinars.

This notable rise in government deposits reflects a strong improvement in the financial position of the government and may indicate increased revenue streams or more effective fiscal management during the early part of the year.

Inflation rate dips to 3% in July

Central bank 'cuts' discount rate by 25 basis points to 4%

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): In light of its vigilant monitoring of the domestic and international economic developments and the end of the monetary tightening cycle initiated since March 2022 at most of global central banks, the Board of Directors of the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) decided to cut the discount rate by 25 Basis Points from 4.25 percent to 4 percent effective Thursday, September 19.

In a press statement released on Wednesday, the Governor and Chairman of the CBK's Board of Directors, Basel A. Al-Haroon, pointed out that the decision is informed by the latest developments in the local and global economic, monetary, and banking conditions including the domestic liquidity indicators, movements in deposits, banking credit, and interest rates on KWD and the

major currencies.

The Governor further explained that this decision aims at fostering an environment conducive to sustainable growth in various economic sectors through stimulating aggregate demand. Given the declining inflationary pressures in the national economy, the annual inflation rate has slowed down from 4.71 percent recorded in April 2022 to 3 percent in July 2024.

The Governor concluded by stressing the CBK's unwavering policy of monitoring economic, monetary and banking developments, and readiness to act, whenever needed, to direct the various monetary policy tools that support the sustainable economic growth, maintain the competitiveness and attractiveness of KWD as a lucrative and reliable store of local savings, and bolster the monetary stability and financial stability.

GCC economies forecasted to grow 4.4% by 2025, up from 2.1% in 2024

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: According to a recent report from Oxford Economics and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of the Middle East, Gulf economies are poised for significant growth, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The report forecasts that economic growth in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries will reach 4.4 percent by 2025, reflecting a major recovery and acceleration from the 2.1 percent expected in 2024.

Key highlights from the report include:

■ **Growth in Non-Energy Sectors:** Non-energy sectors within the GCC are expected to grow by 4.2 percent this year and continue to expand by 4.4 percent in 2025. This growth is attributed to the diversification efforts in tourism, trade, and finance, which have become crucial to the re-

gion's economic development.

■ **Purchasing Managers Index (PMI):** Recent PMI readings indicate strong local activity, suggesting a robust economic environment. The anticipated interest rate cuts are expected to further boost private consumption and investment.

■ **Strategic Investments:** The GCC's strategic investments in non-oil sectors, combined with a gradual recovery in oil production, are driving the region's economic resilience and growth.

Scott Livermore, ICAEW Economic Advisor and Chief Economist at Oxford Economics Middle East, highlighted that the GCC's proactive investments and economic strategies are crucial in showcasing the region's resilience and potential for strong growth in the coming years.

Inflation moderates to 51.97% in August, lowest in years

Türkiye's central bank expects to maintain tight monetary policy

ANKARA, Sept 19, (Xinhua): Easing monetary policy right now is premature as it may hinder disinflation efforts that have yielded successful results in Türkiye, said analysts as Türkiye's central bank is expected to announce the next rate decision this Thursday.

Türkiye has been struggling with rising inflation and one of the worst cost-of-living crises of its history. Since June 2023, the central bank has raised its key interest rate from 8.5 percent to 50 percent, tightening monetary policy.

The country's annual inflation rate moderated to 51.97 percent in August, marking its lowest yearly level. The figure, released by official data in early September, came in slightly below market expectations.

"Annual inflation is expected to drop below 50 percent in September," Turkish Treasury and Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek said Friday.

In July, Moody's Ratings upgraded Ankara's sovereign credit rating, the first of its kind in over a decade, citing improvements in governance and economic policies. S&P Global Ratings also lifted Türkiye's rating.

Fitch Ratings upgraded Türkiye's rating last week, the second upgrade this year, citing success-

ful disinflation efforts and policies to narrow the current account deficit.

Türkiye needs to maintain a tight monetary policy to improve inflation expectations even after a potential easing cycle, Arispe Morales, senior director at Fitch Ratings, told the semi-official Anadolu Agency following the upgrade.

Although the Turkish central bank has indicated that it does not favor a rate cut this year, a deepening cost-of-living crisis in the country out of tight monetary policies coupled with austerity measures might put the bank under great pressure to start easing in the short term, noted Atilla Yesilada, country advisor at business management consultancy Global Source Partners.

However, Yesilada stressed that "authorities have to maintain the tight policy for some time to obtain further concrete results in the fight against inflation."

An early rate cut could worsen inflation as it is cooling and fueling a run for hard currencies, Yesilada told Xinhua.

Türkiye's economic growth slowed to 2.5 percent in the second quarter from 5.3 percent in the first quarter this year, according to official data released last week.

Meanwhile, recent data from the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye showed that 15,000 companies in the country have closed so far in 2024, up 28 percent from last year.

"Inflation has proven to be stubborn, and as a result, there will be consequences in terms of employment and growth," noted Istanbul-based economist Mustafa Sonmez.

Still, the government has no other option but to continue with tight monetary and fiscal policies to control inflation for the foreseeable future, Sonmez said, adding that domestic demand needs to weaken further, and so policy will need to be kept tight for a longer time.

"Even though year-on-year inflation has dropped significantly compared to last year, Turkish inflation is still high, in fact, one of the highest in the world," said Sonmez.

In early September, the Turkish government raised its expected inflation rate for 2024 from 33 percent to 41.5 percent.

More financial difficulties await low and middle-income households in 2025 due to the ongoing implementation of austerity measures, said Sonmez.

Fourth phase of Dubai Solar Park generates 3.5 billion kWh of clean energy

Chinese-built green energy marvel rises as high-tech oasis in Dubai's desert

DUBAI, Sept 19, (Xinhua): In the heart of the desert, 65 km south of Dubai's glittering skyline, a 262-meter solar thermal tower rises from the sands like a futuristic beacon. Surrounding it, a shimmering field of 70,000 heliostats extends radially, their mirrors capturing and directing the sun's rays to a molten salt receiver at the tower's peak.

As the sunlight converges in dazzling beams, the scene resembles a surreal, high-tech oasis where innovation meets the boundless energy of the desert sun.

This is the fourth phase of the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park in Dubai, a key cooperative project to promote the construction of a Green Silk Road between China and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In November 2018,



This photo taken on Aug. 31, 2024 shows a view of Dubai, the United Arab Emirates. (Xinhua)

Shanghai Electric Group Co., Ltd. undertook the project as the engineering, procurement, and construction contractor. With a total installed capacity of 950 MW, including 700 MW of solar thermal-electric power units and 250 MW of photovoltaic power units, the project covers an area of 44 square km, equivalent to over 6,000 standard soccer fields.

As of February this year, all power generation units in the project have been successfully connected to the grid and started commercial operation, with a cumulative electricity generation of 3.5 billion kilowatt-hours. During the construction phase, this project has created approximately 50,000 local jobs. Omar Al Hassan, executive managing director of the project, told Xinhua that the project supplies green energy to 320,000 local

households and reduces carbon dioxide emissions by more than 1.6 million tons annually.

"We keep the sun at night and light up Dubai after sunset," said Zhao Hui, the project manager.

The project, he said, utilizes world-leading solar thermal technology, and is capable of consistently and stably converting solar energy into electricity. Unlike traditional photovoltaic power plants, which experience significant load fluctuations in different solar exposure situations and cannot generate power at night, the solar thermal storage plant can store large amounts of heat generated during sunny periods, ensuring stable power generation across day and night, and even under adverse weather conditions.

BUSINESS

EU tariffs on Chinese EVs raise trade war concerns

The EU has ignored fresh proposals from Chinese automakers aimed at resolving the dispute over Chinese EVs in the European market, undermining efforts to ease tensions through dialogue.

The decision to impose tariffs on China-made EVs, despite several offers from Chinese manufacturers, has sparked a new wave of outcry within the bloc.

GROWING OPPOSITION

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, during a recent visit to China, voiced his opposition to the proposed EU tariffs on Chinese EVs, urging the EU to reconsider and seek a compromise with China to avoid a trade war. His concerns were echoed by Ger-

man Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who also criticized the tariff plan.

In May, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson warned against levying tariffs on Chinese EVs, saying that "a wider trade war where we block each other's products is not the way to go for industrial nations such as Germany and Sweden."

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban described the tariffs as a "brutal" punishment against Chinese automakers and called for open competition.

These dissenting voices suggest that the decision to impose tariffs on Chinese EVs lacks unanimous support among all EU member states. "Many be-

lieve that this is a step towards a trade war between Europe and China, which will ultimately harm the European economy," said Croatian political analyst Mladen Pleše.

German automotive expert Ferdinand Dudenhoefer, director of the Center for Automotive Research (CAR) in Bochum, said that such a protectionist approach might push EU automakers to increase investments in China, the world's largest car market and a leader in the rapidly growing EV industry.

He warned that protectionism and tariffs are misguided strategies and would result in losses for Germany and the EU.

"The European Commission's punitive tariffs hit German companies and their top products. Cars become cheaper through more competition, open markets, and significantly better business conditions in the EU, not through trade war and market isolation," said German Transport Minister Volker Wissing in a message posted on X.

Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store openly opposed punitive tariffs on Chinese EVs. In a recent interview with Chinese media, he emphasized that as a non-EU member, Norway is not bound by EU policies. "Consumers in Norway should have access to the cars they want to buy," he stated. (Xinhua)

Nikkei 225 index jumped 2.1% to 37,155.33

Asian markets forge higher after Fed cuts interest rates

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (AP): Asian markets forged higher on Thursday after the Federal Reserve kicked off its efforts to prevent a recession in the U.S. with a bigger-than-usual cut to interest rates.

In Tokyo, the Nikkei 225 index jumped 2.1% to 37,155.33, lifted by major export manufacturers' shares. Toyota Motor Corp. jumped 5.1%, Sony Group Corp. added 2.9% and Hitachi Ltd. advanced 5.8%.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 1.9% to 17,993.30.

The Shanghai Composite index climbed 0.7% to 2,736.51, while Taiwan's Taix was up 1.7%.

South Korea's Kospi rose 0.2% to 2,579.86.

The Bank of Japan and the Bank of England are also holding monetary policy meetings this week. Neither central bank is expected to move on rates, though the language of what the officials say could be an indicator of later moves and still influence markets.

Because the Fed's half-percentage point rate cut was so well telegraphed, markets had already climbed in anticipation. So, Wall Street's reactions to the 180-degree turn on its policy rate were relatively muted.

"Markets barely reacted to the Fed's 50 (basis point) rate cut, on balance, and our base case is that further cuts won't move the needle too much either," Thomas Mathews of Capital Economics said in a commentary.

It was the first cut to the federal funds rate in over four years, ending a stretch where the Fed kept rates at a two-decade high to slow the U.S. economy enough to stifle the worst inflation in generations.

On Wednesday, the S&P 500 slipped 0.3%, closing at 5,618.26. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dipped 0.2% to 41,503.10. The Nasdaq composite lost 0.3% to 17,573.30.

The Fed's move can help financial markets in two big ways. It eases the brakes off the economy, which has been slowing under the weight of higher rates, and it gives a boost to prices for all kinds of investments. Besides stocks, gold and bond prices had already rallied in recent

months on expectations that rate cuts were coming.

Now that inflation has eased significantly from its peak two summers ago and appears to be heading toward 2%, the Fed says it can turn more of its attention toward protecting the slowing job market and overall economy.

"The time to support the labor market is when it's strong and not when you begin to see the layoffs," Fed Chair Jerome Powell said. "That's the situation we're in."

Some critics say the Federal Reserve may have already kept interest rates too high for too long, but Powell said that "We don't think we're behind."

"We think this is timely. But I think you can take this as a sign of our commitment not to get behind," Powell said in a press conference following the Fed's announcement.

"The focus has now decisively shifted to the labor market, and there's a sense that the Fed is trying to strike a better balance between jobs and inflation," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management

Like stock prices, Treasury yields wavered up and down repeatedly immediately after the Fed announced its cut and published its projections.

Trading in Tupperware Brands remained halted after the company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. Its stock has been sinking, down to 51 cents, since a mini-revival early in the pandemic sent its stock above \$30.

All told, the S&P 500 slipped 16.32 points to 5,618.26. The Dow dropped 103.08 to 41,503.10, and the Nasdaq composite lost 54.76 to 17,573.30.

In other dealings, U.S. benchmark crude oil lost 20 cents to \$69.68 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Brent crude, the international standard, declined 22 cents to \$73.43 per barrel.

The dollar rose to 142.58 Japanese yen from 142.29 yen. The euro rose to \$1.132 from \$1.1120.

Airline to remain separate

Alaska Airlines completes acquisition of Hawaiian Air

SEATTLE, Sept 19, (AP): Alaska Airlines closed its \$1 billion purchase of Hawaiian Airlines on Wednesday, a day after the federal government removed the last major regulatory obstacle to the deal.

Alaska will also assume about \$900 million in Hawaiian debt. Alaska says it will keep Hawaiian as a separate brand, eliminating the need to repaint planes.

To win approval from the Transportation Department this week, the airlines agreed to maintain current levels of service on key routes within Hawaii and between the island state and the U.S. mainland where they don't face much competition.

Alaska Air Group stock fell 3% Wednesday. The shares are up 2% since the start of the year.

The Justice Department, which had opposed previous deals between large airlines, including JetBlue's attempt to buy Spirit Airlines, has not challenged the Alaska-Hawaiian deal on antitrust grounds.

Alaska and Hawaiian also agreed to a handful of consumer protections, including not lowering value of frequent-flyer rewards as they combine their loyalty programs, and promising to compensate passengers for cancellations and significant delays that are the carriers' fault.

Seattle-based Alaska Airlines said those conditions were similar to its plans from the time it announced the deal in December.

The deal solidifies Alaska's position as the fifth-largest U.S. airline by revenue.

Treasury rule would expand tax credits for installing EV chargers

WASHINGTON, Sept 19, (AP): The Biden administration is moving to clarify how homeowners and businesses can receive lucrative tax credits for installing electric vehicle chargers.

A rule proposed Wednesday by the Treasury Department would make credits worth up to \$1,000 for individuals and \$100,000 for businesses available for each EV charger that is installed. If finalized, the new rule would be especially valuable to businesses that plan to install multiple chargers and would be eligible for significant credits to offset the expense.

"In order to help more Americans go electric, we need to make sure they can charge their EVs where they live, work and shop - from inner-city neighborhoods to rural areas," said John Podesta, White House senior advisor for international climate policy. The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act is expanding charging access by saving families and businesses up to 30% off the cost of installing EV chargers, he said.

The proposal announced Wednesday follows guidance issued in January that made tax credits for installing EV chargers available in about two-thirds of the country. The guidance responded to a directive from Congress in the climate law to ensure that the credits for EV chargers are limited to low-income or non-urban areas.

Treasury chose an expansive definition for census tracts covered by those terms to include about two-thirds of the country. The guidance issued in January did not address exactly which parts of an EV charging installation are eligible for the credit. The plan announced Wednesday again opts for an expansive definition - targeting individual charging ports rather than a single credit for a multi-port installation.

Advocates have said the tax credits could play a significant role in expanding use of EVs and reducing pollution from the transportation sector, which accounts for the single-largest source of U.S. climate-warming emissions.

"We appreciate the Treasury's movement on this important incentive, which will help ensure that Americans can benefit from the electric vehicle" provisions of the 2022 climate law,

said Katherine García, director of the Sierra Club's Clean Transportation for All program.

Together with other EV provisions in the climate law and the 2021 bipartisan infrastructure law, "this charging incentive will accelerate the transition to clean vehicles, create good-paying jobs and help our nation meet our climate and clean-air goals," García said.

Congress approved \$7.5 billion in the 2021 infrastructure law to meet President Joe Biden's goal to build a national network of 500,000 publicly available chargers by 2030. The public charging ports, along with a network of private ports, are crucial to the Biden-Harris administration's effort to encourage drivers to move away from gasoline-powered cars and trucks that contribute to global warming.

There are over 192,000 publicly available charging ports nationwide as of late last month, the Transportation Department said - more than double the amount in January 2021 when Biden took office.

The new tax credit will be particularly valuable to communities living near warehouses, who are often exposed to toxic vehicle pollution from gas-powered delivery trucks that pass through their neighborhoods every day, García said, adding that the tax incentives should be particularly attractive for warehouse owners to install EV chargers for thousands of commercial delivery trucks across the U.S.

Albert Gore, executive director of the advocacy group Zero Emission Transportation Association, said the new tax plan would boost the use of chargers where people live and work.

"One of the great things about driving an EV is that drivers can charge while their vehicle is parked, rather than adding another errand to their busy day," said Gore, the son of former Vice President Al Gore.

The alternative-fuel vehicle tax credit, known as "30C" for its location in the U.S. tax code, is designed to provide an incentive for individuals and businesses to build charging infrastructure in homes, businesses and retail locations.

Fed signals end to inflation fight with a sizable half-point rate cut

Reduction reflects the central bank's new focus

WASHINGTON, Sept 19, (AP): The Federal Reserve on Wednesday cut its benchmark interest rate by an unusually large half-point, a dramatic shift after more than two years of high rates that helped tame inflation but also made borrowing painfully expensive for American consumers.

The rate cut, the Fed's first in more than four years, reflects its new focus on bolstering the job market, which has shown clear signs of slowing. Coming just weeks before the presidential election, the Fed's move also has the potential to scramble the economic landscape just as Americans prepare to vote.

The central bank's action lowered its key rate to roughly 4.8%, down from a two-decade high of 5.3%, where it had stood for 14 months as it struggled to curb the worst inflation streak in four decades. Inflation has tumbled from a peak of 9.1% in mid-2022 to a three-year low of 2.5% in August, not far above the Fed's 2% target.

The Fed's policymakers also signaled that they expect to cut their key rate by an additional half-point in their final two meetings this year, in November and December. And they envision four more rate cuts in 2025 and two in 2026.

In a statement and in a news conference with Chair Jerome Powell, the Fed came closer than it has before to declaring victory over inflation.

"We know it is time to recalibrate our (interest rate) policy to something that's more appropriate given the progress on inflation," Powell said. "We're not saying, 'mission accomplished' ... but I have to say, though, we're encouraged by the progress that we have made."

"The U.S. economy is in a good place," he added, "and our decision today is designed to keep it there."

Though the central bank now believes inflation is largely defeated, many Americans remain upset with still-high prices for groceries, gas, rent and other necessities. Former President Donald Trump blames the Biden-Harris administration for sparking an inflationary surge. Vice President Kamala Harris, in turn, has charged that Trump's promise to slap tariffs on all imports would raise prices for consumers even further.

Rate cuts by the Fed should, over time, lead to lower borrowing costs for mortgages, auto loans and credit cards, boosting Americans' finances and supporting more spending and growth. Homeowners will be able to refinance mortgages at lower rates, saving on monthly payments, and even shift credit card debt to lower-cost personal loans or home equity lines. Businesses may also borrow and invest more.



Federal Reserve Board Chairman Jerome Powell speaks during a news conference at the Federal Reserve in Washington, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2024. (AP)

BoE keeps main interest rate on hold at 5% in wake of big Fed cut

LONDON, Sept 19, (AP): The Bank of England kept its main interest rate unchanged at 5% Thursday despite a big cut from the U.S. Federal Reserve, its first since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic more than four years ago.

The decision was widely expected amid ongoing concerns about inflation within the bank's monetary policy committee, particularly the elevated levels in the crucial services sector, which accounts for around 80% of the British economy. Figures on Wednesday showed that inflation overall in the U.K. held steady at an annual rate of 2.2% in August, still above the bank's goal.

Minutes to the meeting showed that eight of the nine members of the panel voted to keep rates unchanged, while one backed a quarter-point reduction.

"The economy has been evolving broadly as we expected. If that continues, we should be able to reduce rates gradually over time," said Bank Gov. Andrew Bailey. "But it's vital that inflation stays low, so we need to be careful not to cut too fast or by too much."

The bank, which last month cut interest rates for the first time since the pandemic, is widely expected to reduce borrowing costs again at its next meeting in November, especially as it will have details of the government's budget on Oct. 30.

On Wednesday, the Fed cut its main interest by half of a percentage point to roughly 4.8% from a two-decade high of 5.3%, where it had stood for 14 months. It also signaled that there will be more cuts to come in the next few months.

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coronavirus pandemic when prices started to shoot up, first as a result of supply chain issues built up and then because of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine which pushed up energy costs. As inflation rates have fallen from multi-decade highs recently, they have started cutting interest rates.

On Wednesday, the Fed became the latest major central bank to reduce borrowing costs, cutting its main interest by half of a percentage point to roughly 4.8% from a two-decade high of 5.3%, where it had stood for 14 months. It also signaled that there will be more cuts to come in the next few months.

The Bank of England is widely expected to reduce borrowing costs again at its next meeting in November, especially as it will have details of the government's budget on Oct. 30.

Powell was pressed at his news conference about whether the Fed's decision to cut its key rate by an unusually large half-point is an acknowledgement that it waited too long to begin reducing borrowing rates.

"We don't think we're behind," he replied. "We think this is timely. But I think you can take this as a sign of our commitment not to get behind. We're not seeing rising (unemployment) claims, not seeing rising layoffs, not hearing from companies that that's something that's going to happen."

Bank continues to strengthen financial awareness and support the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign

NBK alerts against online job offer scams promising high salaries

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) remains steadfast in its dedication to enhancing financial literacy and fostering inclusivity across diverse societal groups. In line with this commitment, the bank actively supports the "Let's Be Aware" campaign, an initiative launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in partnership with local banks and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA).

NBK amplifies its awareness efforts by disseminating educational materials and awareness content across all communication platforms and digital channels. This includes videos, text messages, and practical tips. Additionally, the bank republishes messages from the Central Bank of Kuwait to further raise awareness among diverse groups across the society, informing them about various fraud methods and how to effectively avoid them.

NBK is committed to keeping customers informed about the latest fraud tactics and deceptive schemes used by fraudsters. In this campaign, the bank emphasizes the risks associated with fraudulent job offers promising attractive salaries. These offers are often received via WhatsApp, email, or social media and are designed to lure individuals into disclosing personal or banking information, ultimately leading to financial theft.

Fake job offers may be sent by individuals pretending to be recruiters, high-level executives, or hiring managers from legitimate organizations, often advertising non-existent positions. NBK advises against sharing any personal information, such as passport details or credit card numbers. Additionally, the bank cautions against responding to requests for advance payments or fees for internships as



Diraya logo

- NBK is committed to keeping customers informed about the latest fraud techniques and how to avoid them.
- The bank advises against responding to job offers from untrusted sources or accounts.
- NBK emphasizes the importance of not sharing banking or personal information with any party.

conditions for employment.

NBK warns against falling for enticing advertisements that are often traps set by fraudsters. The bank emphasizes the importance of not disclosing sensitive information and advises changing your passwords for online accounts and applications to prevent hacking and data theft.

The bank also emphasizes that it will never request personal information via email, text messages, or phone calls. Customers are advised to ignore such communications, which are fraudulent attempts to obtain banking details for theft or data compromise.

With the wide array of fraud tactics in play, NBK is committed to protecting its customers and boosting their awareness of fraud prevention. The bank delivers essential advice and guidance across all its digital channels to ensure customers remain informed and secure.

NBK leverages its extensive communication capabilities and leading electronic channels, which have the highest engagement among Kuwaiti banks, to bolster the Central Bank of Kuwait's efforts in safeguarding customers and the economy.

NBK is a key supporter and partner in all CBK campaigns and initiatives focused on enhancing financial and banking awareness across society. As Kuwait's largest financial institution, NBK is at the forefront of community education on essential banking issues. The bank not only organizes impactful events but also invests in comprehensive training programs for its employees to bolster their skills in fraud prevention and financial crime combat, reinforcing its commitment to safeguarding both its customers and the broader financial landscape.

Next weekly draw scheduled for Sept 23

ABK announces Mohamad Hassan Dawi as Alfouz weekly draw winner

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced Mohamad Hassan Dawi as the winner of Alfouz KD 10,000 weekly draw on Monday 16 September 2024. The draw took place in the presence of a Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative, ensuring transparency.

From the highly coveted mega annual draw of a KD 5,000 monthly salary for 10 years to its KD 10,000 weekly prize, the Alfouz account has already attracted the attention of the Kuwaiti market. Based on the account's great success, ABK decided to go above and beyond to reward customer loyalty.

By introducing a KD 100,000 quarterly draw, in addition to an exciting KD 20,000 monthly draw, the Alfouz offering has continues to surpass expectations and deliver even more customer satisfaction.

To top it off, ABK has simplified the ability to open the account and win! Customers can enter the draws and get extra entry chances for every KD 10 deposited as opposed to KD 100 previously. The more you save, the higher your chance to be the next Alfouz winner!

ABK encourages everyone to open an Alfouz draw account or



ABK's Alfouz winner.

increase their balance to participate in the upcoming weekly draw, which is scheduled to take place on Monday 23 September 2024.

Open an Alfouz account today and enjoy increased opportunities to win the lifestyle you've been waiting for!

To learn more about the Alfouz account and its range of exciting draws and prizes, please follow the ABK's Instagram account @abk_kuwait, visit eahli.com, contact Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 or visit one of the Bank's branches across Kuwait.

Campaign enhances customer experience & rewards

Kuwait International Bank discloses winners of 'Summer Card Campaign'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) has announced the names of the winners of the third and last draw in its Summer Card Campaign, designed to reward its Visa Credit and Prepaid Cardholders and launched in collaboration with Visa.

The winners are Fahad Khaled Alabbous, Hamed Sabri Hassan, Meshari Dhafer Alhussaini, Islam Mohammed Elmenair, Rasmeyah Turki Hamzah, Naser Bader Aldahaen, Naser Essa Alhouthi, Abdullah Fuad Albader, Afnan Ayed Almutairi, and Rakan Turki Aldhafeeri. The announcement was made in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as KIB representatives.

Commenting on the occasion, Laila Naserallah, Senior Manager of Product Development at the Digital Innovation and Data Intelligence Department, said: "We are delighted to announce the third and last batch of winners for the Summer Card Campaign, which reaffirms the Bank's commitment to offering the best banking benefits and products that enhance the customer experience and suit their lifestyle, in line with its main slogan, 'Bank for Life.' This campaign has been a valuable addition to our customers' lives over the summer months of 2024, providing them a great opportunity to enjoy a rewarding shopping experience both in Kuwait and abroad."

Since its launch in June, the Summer Card Campaign has attracted customers wishing to earn double Cashback on purchases made with their



KIB's Laila Naserallah

cards, both within Kuwait and abroad, with the minimum prize set at KD 150 and the maximum prize set at KD 600.

The campaign enabled KIB customers who are holders of Visa Classic, Gold, Platinum, Signature, and Infinite Credit Cards or Visa Prepaid and Multicurrency Prepaid Cards to qualify for the campaign. Customers entered the monthly draw when using eligible KIB cards for their purchases of KD 600 for Credit Cards and KD 200 for Prepaid Cards, whether within or outside Kuwait. They received one chance to enter the draw for every KD 10 spent locally, and three chances for every KD 10 spent internationally during the campaign period.

It is worth noting that KIB spares no effort in launching different banking initiatives in partnership with Visa. The Bank encourages its customers to keep an eye on KIB's different platforms and social media accounts for

updates on how to maximize their benefits, along with other promotions and services it continuously offers to fulfill all their needs.

About KIB

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

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

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

The Conversation

Soft skills essential for job success amid AI concerns

By Lee Ann Rawlins Williams

University of North Dakota

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

Despite ongoing worries about how artificial intelligence will affect jobs, research shows that employers increasingly value something that only human workers can provide - soft skills. These include knowing how to communicate with co-workers, put others at ease and navigate conflict.

However, these essential skills are often neglected in traditional higher education. Colleges and universities' primary focus is to teach students how to become experts in their fields, but they often fall short in preparing students for the social and emotional demands of the workplace.

This disconnect is not a minor oversight. It's a fundamental flaw in how colleges and universities equip young professionals for success. At best, it creates a communication gap between younger and older workers. At worst, it impacts young workers' job performance as well as their mental health as they struggle to prove themselves.

Let me introduce you to a young woman whom I taught. Let's call her Emily to protect her privacy. She represents the qualities and challenges that many employers have observed in their new young hires.

Emily graduated at the top of her class at a public university, eager to make an impact in her new role at a dynamic startup. However, she soon encountered unexpected challenges.

She came to my office often after she graduated and told me she found it difficult to connect with colleagues and articulate her ideas in team meetings. This disconnect was compounded by a lack of understanding of workplace culture, including knowing how the chain of command works and how to communicate with her colleagues and bosses. She misinterpreted feedback as criticism rather than advice and struggled to communicate her thoughts clearly and precisely. She also struggled with how to manage conflict in the office.

As weeks passed, Emily's anxiety mounted. She felt the pressure to prove herself. Meanwhile, her attempts to contribute innovative ideas were often met with confusion or resistance, fur-

ther complicating her integration into the team.

Her bosses grew increasingly frustrated with what they perceived as Emily's inability to communicate effectively.

Accustomed to clear and direct communication, they found Emily's approach unengaged. Emily vented her frustrations in online chats and apps, like Snapchat, and even made a TikTok video about it, rather than approach her boss for a one-on-one conversation. This only widened the divide between her and her employer.

Emily's experience is far from unique. It represents a growing challenge faced by young professionals transitioning from the structured environment of education into the unpredictable terrain of the workforce. This period of transition can overwhelm new graduates who find themselves unprepared for the realities of professional life despite their academic achievements.

The transition from student to employee often triggers anxiety, stress and frustration. High expectations placed on young workers to quickly adapt and perform, often without sufficient support, exacerbate these feelings.

In Emily's case, her feelings of isolation grew, and she began to believe she was falling short of her potential. Lacking strong coping mechanisms, she became increasingly stressed, further impairing her ability to perform and communicate effectively.

Young professionals' struggles to find their footing in their jobs also have an impact on the workplace as a whole.

One of Emily's key challenges was navigating workplace communication, where the generational gap between young professionals and their more experienced colleagues often led to differing communication styles and expectations.

While older generations may favor direct, in-person communication, younger workers like Emily are more accustomed to digital communication. They may rely on social media platforms, like X and Snapchat, for feedback and support.

This generational divide can lead to misunderstandings and frustrations on both sides. In Emily's case, her inclination to seek online feedback was perceived by her employer as unprofessional. Such misalignments highlight the need for better preparation and understanding of workplace dynamics, starting in college. (AP)

Top six storytellers from semifinals to compete in finals

Kuwait Advanced Toastmasters to organize storytelling contest semifinals on Sept 26th

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Kuwait Advanced Toastmasters club is organizing its annual flagship event, the Storytelling contest semifinals on Thursday 26th September 2024 from 6pm (AST/ GMT + 3) onwards at York Tower in Shaab. Since it will be a Hybrid event, anyone can attend online through zoom. The theme for the Storytelling contest is "Let's Get Personal", a project from the Advanced manual of Toastmasters International. The only eligibility to participate as a contestant is to be a member of any Toastmasters club anywhere in the world.

Kuwait Advanced Toastmasters club is the first Advanced club in Kuwait and is conducting the Storytelling contest for ninth year in a row. The contestants will deliver a 7-9 minutes story speech. The top six winners from the semifinals will proceed to finals scheduled to be held on Friday, 8th November '24.

To register as a Contestant or an Attendee to join the event on 26th September '24. The deadline to register as a Contestant is 21 September 2024. For those attending the contest ONLINE as a contestant or an attendee, the zoom link will be sent to the email provided during registration.

Kuwait Advanced Toastmasters club is affiliated to Toastmasters International, a non-profit organization dedicated to building confidence by training members in developing and honing their com-

Kuwait Advanced Toastmasters Club

CLUB # 1255393 / AREA 22 / DIVISION F / DISTRICT 20

KAT Storytelling Contest Semifinals (HYBRID)

PROJECT: Let's Get Personal

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: 21ST SEP '24



Event Chair
TM Sumant Mishra



Chief Judge
TM Faten Osseili



MC 1
DTM Sheeba Premugh



MC 2
TM Saywed

26 September 2024
From 6pm (AST/ GMT +3)

Venue: York Tower,
Shaab, Kuwait & Zoom

📞 +20 1000011077, +965 65554673, +965 98989697

munication and leadership skills. Founded in 1924, the organization is headquartered in Englewood,

Colorado with approximately 270,000 members in more than 14,000 clubs in 150 countries.

For more information please (WhatsApp) contact: +965 98989697, +965 65554673.

How small businesses can recover from break-ins and theft

MINNEAPOLIS, Sept 19, (AP) Break-ins and thefts can happen at any small business, no matter how tight the security.

In the retail sector alone, more than half of small businesses said they had been victims of shoplifting in the prior year, according to a 2022 survey by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. And break-ins and thefts occur across all sectors.

So, it is important for small business owners to prepare in advance and have a plan for dealing with a break-in or theft, to minimize damage.

Roxie Lubanovic, co-founder of Frostbeard Studio in Minneapolis, which makes candles, had her studio broken into in 2016 over a holiday weekend. Thieves stole equipment and supplies, then damaged locks and doors getting in and out. Insurance covered the losses, but it was still difficult recovering. "The hardest part was feeling violated in a space we had put so much work into," she said.

There are several steps small business owners should take after a theft or break-in occurs.

First, don't wait to notify the police and file a police report. You can take inven-

tory of stolen or damaged items after the police have finished their investigation.

Once you've inventoried and documented the damage, file an insurance claim. You'll need photos or receipts for items stolen. Call your bank and notify them of what has occurred.

Have a transparent conversation with your employees about what happened. Analyze what went wrong and enhance security where needed. Once you have an updated business security plan, inform your employees about how the break-in has been addressed.

Lubanovic reviewed her security plan and upgraded her security system and installed cameras, new locks and an alarm.

"I also asked neighbors to keep an eye out, and had employees stagger their schedules for a while so someone was always present during business hours," she said. "Thankfully, we haven't had another incident since."

She advised small businesses to include building a strong relationship with their local community and neighboring businesses as part of their security plan, saying it "can be invaluable for support and vigilance."

'Release conditions 'insufficient' to ensure community safety'

Combs to stay in jail after bail is denied for a second time

NEW YORK, Sept. 19, (AP) — Sean “Diddy” Combs is staying locked up after a judge Wednesday rejected the hip-hop mogul’s proposal that he await his sex trafficking trial in the luxury of his Florida mansion instead of a grim Brooklyn federal jail.

US District Judge Andrew L. Carter ruled that Combs’ plan - which included a \$50 million bail offer, GPS monitoring and strict limitations on visitors - was “insufficient” to ensure the safety of the community and the integrity of his case.

Carter, agreeing with prosecutors who fought to keep Combs in jail, found that “no condition or set of conditions” governing his release could guard against the risk of him threatening or harming witnesses - a central charge in his case.

Combs’ lawyers were making their second attempt in as many days to spring him from the Metropolitan Detention Center, where he has been held since pleading not guilty Tuesday to charges he physically and sexually abused women for years.

Combs has been in federal custody since his arrest Monday night at a Manhattan hotel. A federal magistrate on Tuesday rejected Combs’ initial bail request. On Wednesday, he and his lawyers struck out with Carter, the judge who will preside over his trial.

Defense lawyer Marc Agnifilo says he will now ask the 2nd US Circuit Court of Appeals to overturn Carter’s ruling and release Combs. In the meantime, he wants Combs moved from the Brooklyn lockup, which has been plagued by rampant violence and horrific conditions,

to a jail in New Jersey. Carter said decisions on placement are entirely up to the federal Bureau of Prisons.

“I’m not going to let him sit in that jail a day longer than he has to,” Agnifilo said to reporters outside the courtroom.

Combs looked at family members and tapped his heart several times as Wednesday’s hearing began, then sat stoically as he listened to arguments. Afterward, as federal agents led him away, his relatives somberly embraced and exchanged hand slaps.

Prestige

Combs, 54, is accused in an indictment of using his “power and prestige” to induce female victims and male sex workers into drugged-up, elaborately produced sexual performances dubbed “Freak Offs” that Combs arranged, participated in and often recorded on video. The events would sometimes last days and Combs and victims would often receive IV fluids to recover, the indictment said.

The indictment alleges Combs coerced and abused women for years, with the help of a network of associates and employees, while using blackmail and violent acts including kidnapping, arson and physical beatings to keep victims from speaking out.

Arguing to keep Combs in jail, prosecutor Emily Johnson told Carter that the once-celebrated rapper has a long history of intimidating both accusers and witnesses to his alleged abuse. She cited text messages from women who said Combs forced them into “Freak Offs” and then

threatened to leak videos of them engaging in sex acts.

Johnson said Combs’ defense team was “minimizing and horrifically understating” Combs’ propensity for violence, taking issue with his lawyer’s portrayal of a 2016 assault at a Los Angeles hotel as a lovers’ quarrel. Security video of the event, which only came to light in May, showed Combs hitting and kicking his then-girlfriend, the R&B singer Cassie, in a hotel hallway.

“What’s love got to do with that?” an incredulous Carter asked.

Johnson also seized on a text message from a woman who said Combs dragged her down a hallway by her hair. According to Johnson, the woman told the rapper: “I’m not a rag doll, I’m someone’s child.” “There is a longstanding pattern of abuse here,” Johnson said.

Combs’ Florida house is on Star Island, a man-made dollop of land in Biscayne Bay near Miami Beach, reachable only by a causeway or boat. It is among the most expensive places to live in the United States. Combs’ request echoed that of a long line of wealthy defendants who have offered to post multimillion-dollar bails in exchange for home detention in luxurious surroundings.

If he had been granted bail, Combs would have been confined to his home, with visits restricted to family, property caretakers and friends who are not considered co-conspirators, his lawyers said. After prosecutors said they served a search warrant Tuesday on Combs’ private security chief, his lawyers offered to hire a new firm to monitor him and ensure he abided by the proposed agreement.

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ARABIC TIMES

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This image released by Apple TV+ shows Brad Pitt, (left), and George Clooney in a scene from 'Wolfs.' (AP)

Film

Two actors’ on-screen chemistry steals the show

Clooney, Pitt carry the fixer caper ‘Wolfs’

By Jake Coyle

The overriding tension in “Wolfs,” starring George Clooney and Brad Pitt as rival fixers brought in to clean up the same crime, isn’t so much the threat of police arrest or Albanian mob assassination - both of which are concerns. It’s that Clooney and Pitt aren’t pals.

The two start out as strangers to one another. It’s a testament to Clooney and Pitt’s jovial on-and-off screen chemistry, and their bond in shared movie-star charisma, that it’s genuinely discomfuting to hear Pitt tersely call Clooney “sir” as he does in the opening scenes of Jon Watts’ winning, clever caper.

Pitt and Clooney first acted together in 2001’s “Ocean’s Eleven.” And like that remake riff on the Rat Pack original, “Wolfs” is as much, if not more, about its movie stars as it is anything else. The movie’s appeal is mostly in their easy charm and chemistry - the little eye rolls and games of one-upmanship that accrue until, finally, they’re buddies, like we want them to be.

Clooney is 63 and Pitt is 60, and there are few bits about back pain and Advil in Watts’ film. But “Wolfs,” which opens in limited theaters Friday and streams next week on Apple TV+, is designed to show you that they can still, without ever really breaking a sweat, get the job done.

When their characters meet, they are both standing in the penthouse of a luxury New York hotel where a tough-on-crime district attorney (Amy Ryan) is in desperate need of a cover up. A young, nearly naked man is seemingly dead on the floor. She’s frantically searched her phone for a number once given for such emergencies. That brings the first never-named fixer (Clooney) to the door. Not long after, the second, also unnamed fixer (Pitt) knocks. After a moment of confusion, he points to a small camera at the ceiling. He’s been dispatched by the hotel owner (an unseen Frances McDor-

mand) who doesn’t want any bad press.

The two fixers are spiritual descendants, you might say, from Harvey Keitel’s Winston Wolfe, the fast-driving cleaner of “Pulp Fiction.” Each is a specialist, supposedly the only man who can do what they do. “Wolfs” - with an awkwardly spelled title that represents the pained collaboration of these two solo freelancers - is a little bit like the pointing Spider-Man meme brought to life. Fitting, then, that it comes from Watts, director of the three Tom Holland Spider-Man films. He also wrote the script.

Entertainment

There are more movies that “Wolfs” has some kinship with, too, like Tony Gilroy’s “Michael Clayton,” a high point for Clooney in which he played the clean-up man of a malicious law firm. “Wolfs” doesn’t measure up to anything like “Michael Clayton” - what does? - and isn’t trying to, anyway. This is more of an old-school movie-star-driven entertainment featuring two actors with skills as rarified as their characters’, the kind of movie that was once regularly at home in theaters but now has instead been built for the streaming era.

Informed that they have to finish the job together, the two fixers begin to go about the business of getting rid of the body. They eye each warily, disinterested in giving away any tricks of the trade. This mostly falls to Clooney’s character, whose creative way of lifting the body onto a luggage rack begins to earn the respect of Pitt’s character. They turn out to have much, maybe everything, in common. Slowly, reluctantly, they inch toward a partnership. It’s a credit to Watts’ keen sense of rhythm and his stars’ subtlety that it more or less takes the whole movie to get there. Once outside the hotel, “Wolfs” unspools over the course of one night, shot sleekly in the shadows of downtown Manhattan by cinematographer Larkin Seiple. Things get a jolt when the body in question turns

out to be alive, and kind of a hoot, too. The kid, credited only as “Kid,” is roused from a drug-induced stupor, and quickly, in tighty whities, goes escaping down the street, forcing the two fixers on an extensive chase leading up to the Brooklyn Bridge. The kid is played with a lot of goofy moxie by Austin Abrams (“Euphoria,” “The Walking Dead”), and his account of how he got into this mess, delivered in a cheap motel, may be the film’s best sequence. Along with Sean Baker’s upcoming “Anora,” it’s turned into a surprisingly good season for New York nocturnal odysseys propelled by mop-haired kids who end up in Brighton Beach.

But the kid’s perspective on his two captors also pushes “Wolfs” along. He’s naive enough to think they’re his friends, even though they would seem duty-bound to dispatch him. Regarding Clooney and Pitt, both in leather jackets, from the back seat of the car, he otherwise correctly assesses them, calling them “like the two coolest people I’ve ever met.”

Thankfully, someone has come to the not-hard-to-deduce realization that Clooney and Pitt are good together. A sequel has already been announced. “Wolfs” turns out to be both the beginning and the coda of a beautiful friendship.

“Wolfs,” an Apple Studios release is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for language throughout and some violent content. Running time: 108 minutes. Three stars out of four.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: **Joey King** stars in Netflix’s adaptation of **Scott Westerfeld’s** “Uglies,” about a future society in which everyone is required to have beautifying cosmetic surgery at age 16. Currently streaming, **McG** directed the film, in which King’s character inadvertently finds herself in the midst of an uprising against the status quo. “Outer Banks” star **Chase Stokes** plays King’s best friend. (AP)

the manager of a barbecue restaurant. And while it’s unclear whether she’s playing a character or herself in “Christmas on Call,” her role is to ensure one of the leads “orders her Cheesesteak the authentic way - ‘whiz wit.’”

The cameo announcements follow Travis Kelce’s own forays into Hollywood - having hosted “Saturday Night Live” in early



Kelce



Carter

2023, before his relationship with Taylor Swift sent his profile stratospheric, he’s now set to act in **Ryan Murphy’s** “Grottesquerie” and host “Are You Smarter Than a Celebrity?” He also earned his first producer credit this year. (AP)

SAN FRANCISCO: A US district judge has dismissed a federal law-

suit by a woman who alleged that New York Knicks owner **James Dolan** sexually assaulted her a decade ago and then set her up to be molested by jailed movie mogul Harvey Weinstein.

US District Judge **Percy Anderson** on Tuesday dismissed the lawsuit filed by **Kelley Croft** in Los Angeles in January. Anderson said that Croft had failed to plausi-

bly allege a commercial sex act in which she was paid for sex under the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act.

The judge also declined to hear her claims based on state - and not federal - law against Dolan of sexual battery and aiding and abetting sexual assault and against Weinstein of sexual assault and attempted rape. (AP)

People & Places

Fashion

Couture innovations

'Supermodels' pay homage to Cavalli

MILAN, Sept 19, (AP): Milan designers dipped into neutrals and muted tones for next summer - reflecting both a conservative streak in troubled times and a move toward thoughtful production of garments that can anchor any wardrobe.

Boss revamped its trademark suiting with a more relaxed, even deconstructed, vibe that can take men and women from day to after hours. Antonio Marras created joyous silhouettes that hearkened to the 1950s, an era long depicted as fun and carefree. Even **Roberto Cavalli** opened with white, ivory and ecru cotton dresses before exploding, inevitably, into bright hues.

Here are some highlights from runway preview shows Wednesday, the second day of Milan Fashion Week of mostly womenswear for Spring-Summer 2025:



Cavalli

A cadre of 1990s and 2000s supermodels, including Eva Herzigova, Joan Smalls and Alex Wek, ramped up the energy at the Roberto Cavalli show wearing vintage gowns in tribute to the late designer.

During the finale, Cavalli designer Fausto Puglisi plucked Cavalli's widow and longtime collaborator, Eva Cavalli, from the front row, and the supermodels took her in a warm embrace. Arm-in-arm, they walked backstage, wearing archival looks bearing Cavalli hallmarks: bright asymmetrical animal print gowns, deep, leg-baring slits, black leather, chiffon and feathers.

"For the first fashion week without Roberto, I wanted to involve Eva to celebrate through what I consider seven iconic pieces from the archives, involving the women who most represented Cavalli's glorious period," Puglisi said backstage. Cavalli died in April at age 83.

While paying homage to the Cavalli heritage, Puglisi's runway collection aimed to push the brand to a younger generation. He already has done significant outreach in that direction by dressing Taylor Swift during the Eras tour in an ever-shifting color combination of Cavalli bejeweled and sequined mini-skirts and bustier combos.

"Today's woman is not the woman of 25 years ago. She is very independent, she knows when she wants to be sexy and when she wants to be covered. Above all, she doesn't need the judgment of men," Puglisi said.

Collection

The collection progressed from cotton and linen seaside dresses with cutouts and rope detailing and elaborate macrame weaves to slinky skirts and dresses in fiery sunset and volcano prints, finishing with body-hugging gowns in bright hues or covered in crystals.

Backstage, Eva Cavalli praised Puglisi for his "great work to continue our legacy."

German-born Milan-based designer Daniel Del Core launched his first all ready-to-wear collection, but he left room for one couture piece, modeled by Naomi Campbell.

Del Core, a Gucci alum who launched his brand during the pandemic, said he had been exchanging Instagram messages with the supermodel, when she said she wanted to wear his creations.

"I thought it was a joke," Del Core said backstage. But there she was, closing the show in a white gown with a satin bustier, long skirt trailing.

The ready-to-wear collection was inspired by women scientists who in turn take inspiration from female writers, smart women who want to be smart dressers. Del Core created for her a translucent lab coat that was reinterpreted throughout the collection, paired with protective shoe coverings, and latex gloves in bubblegum pink or bright blue against otherwise soft palette.

Eveningwear had some couture touches, like pleating that framed the neckline and anchored draping sleeves. Del Core said he will break out couture with a presentation in Paris in January.

Boss designer Marco Falcioni is sending a message to the fashion universe: Get out of the office.

"Being the boss means taking time off to rest. Resting is the ultimate luxury," Falcioni, senior vice president of creative direction at the German brand, said backstage.

To encourage a better work-life balance in a frenetic world, Falcioni has relaxed the business suit, subtracting shoulder pads and jacket linings, and layering generously, for a less button-down vibe.

Trousers for men were at times cut off just below the knee, and for women cuffed to a cropped length. Worried about a summer chill? Then layer with leggings. Drawstring detailing on trousers and blouses gave the garments technical functionality. Women's jackets wrapped prettily around the middle. Flat or heeled mules finished the looks, for him and her. A neutral color palette was offset by muted shades of green and blue.

Bags were left open, to show off the utilitarian compartments within, for keys, reading glasses and pens. They could be carried alongside a leather racket case or yoga mat strap, letting the world know the workday is done.

Destinations

Swing dancers and a four-piece saxophone-led band set an upbeat tone at Antonio Marras' runway show, which featured a summery collection celebrating picture postcard destinations.

Marras took a cue from the life of Italian actress Anna Maria Pierangeli, better known as Pier Angeli, who left her native Sardinia for Hollywood, where she started a romance with James Dean, with whom she often jetted to Acapulco.

Marras' collection is a celebration of a night out on the town, with the female silhouette defined by full skirts, tight waistlines and exaggerated shoulders. Fringe tops and skirts swayed, and layered grass skirts rustled. For men, boldly shaped suits and more casual silky Bermuda short and shirt combos featured big tropical prints.

While putting on a happy front, Pierangeli craved her mother's approval for her romance with Dean, imploring her mother to "think about Jimmy," according to an imagined exchange included with show notes. "I adore him, and he adores me."

Perhaps with this doomed affair in mind, Marras kept the color story muted. Still, he added beading, sequin and shimmering gold and silver accents, a sign of hope.

Fendi honored its upcoming centenary with a Spring-Summer 2025 collection that paid elegant homage to the founding era, from art deco detailing to a flapper silhouette, light on the fringe.



This image released by Disney+ shows Kathryn Hahn, as Agatha Harkness, in Marvel Television's 'Agatha All Along.' (AP)

Television

Show brings new musical magic

Hahn returns as Agatha in new quest

LOS ANGELES, Sept 19, (AP): As she reprises her role as the witch everyone loves to hate, Kathryn Hahn says it "makes total sense" she's continuing the story.

The "Agatha All Along" star, who first introduced Agatha Harkness to the world in the hit 2021 Marvel series "WandaVision," said the rich complexity of her character excites her.

"It's so juicy. You can see her as a simple bad witch, but she's not. No one is bad," Hahn said in a recent interview with The Associated Press. "There's always something that they're covering up that they put all these levels on top of, so the fun was trying to keep the mask on with all these meteors of truth banging at that core."

The Marvel Television series, which premiered Wednesday on Disney+, picks up after "WandaVision" as Agatha forms a makeshift coven to travel down the mythical Witches' Road on a quest to regain her powers. Although Elizabeth Olsen's Wanda Maximoff/Scarlet Witch captured Agatha's magic in "WandaVision," Hahn said she has felt empowered by the role.

A symbol that has become a crucial part of her character is the Neopagan triple goddess - the maiden, mother and crone as depicted on a brooch Agatha wears in both shows. Hahn says those symbols of transformation in the female life cycle have been reflected in her own life.

"I did feel, walking into this, like I was going to be walking through a portal into my crone area, whatever that means, and it did feel very powerful to feel wise while walking through this journey as a woman," Hahn said.

Beyond references to Neopaganism, Wiccan culture and other witchy motifs, "Agatha All Along" is ripe

with allusions. Several films, television shows, musical groups and more permeate the show's otherwise spooky aesthetic, but none appear more prominently than "The Wizard of Oz."

Jac Schaeffer, the series' head writer, director and executive producer who also created and wrote "WandaVision," said the 1939 film felt like a natural touchstone. "We're in the land of witches," she said.

"Early on, it was clear that it needed to be a quest structure. And for me, the movies of my childhood that I love so much are all quests," Schaeffer said. "Once we were sort of locked into that as the structure, it was like, 'How many allusions can we bring in and what makes sense and what's delightful, what's witchy enough for us?'"

Allusions

Schaeffer said the series also alludes to Fleetwood Mac, Kate Winslet in the gritty crime drama "Mare of Easttown" and "Big Little Lies," which she described as a "prestige lady drama soap" where everyone has "sweaters and good hair." She also said the group on that show, led by Reese Witherspoon and Nicole Kidman, are a coven in their own right.

The references work because Agatha is "such a performer," Hahn said - and perform she does. In addition to borrowing from "WandaVision's" propensity for allusions and replicating aesthetics, "Agatha All Along" also features another catchy tune the cast sings throughout the series.

Hahn, along with the ensemble cast including Patti LuPone, Aubrey Plaza, Joe Locke, Sasheer Zamata, Ali Ahn and Debra Jo Rupp, sing a memorable song that opens a door to The Witches' Road. Emmy-winning songwrit-

ter duo Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, who also wrote the viral sensation "Agatha All Along" song for "WandaVision," penned the tune.

Although some cast members said they were initially nervous to sing in front of LuPone, a Broadway legend, the three-time Tony winner insisted everyone in the cast could sing and blend their voices well.

"It's magical to be in a chorus. Sometimes, the fates just align. Each member of this coven did have to pick up instruments or we did have to sing, and it all sounds great," LuPone said. "Sometimes, things are fated. I think this was fated."

The tight-knit bonds of the on-screen coven seem to have transcended off camera, as well. Hahn said the group developed a close bond during the shoot in Atlanta.

"Everybody is such a powerhouse in their own right that it was very easy to come to work. Everyone stepped up because we were all so excited to be working with each other," Hahn said. "We were just sitting in a circle on the stage every day, just telling stories and talking about what food we're going to eat next. It just became a dream."

As the cast and creatives behind the series wait for its two-episode premiere, Schaeffer said she is holding her breath while eagle-eyed fans dissect trailers and theorize about the plot. Although she once thought "WandaVision" would be a "huge flop," Schaeffer said she feels confident in the show.

"What 'WandaVision' taught me is it all kind of shakes out," she said. "Not everyone will be satisfied, but the majority of people, I think what they really want is the ride and I feel confident that's what we're providing with 'Agatha.'"



Amy Ryan, (from left), Brad Pitt, and George Clooney arrive at the premiere of 'Wolfs' on Wednesday, Sept. 18, at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP) — Details Page 11



Souther



Smart

Variety

LOS ANGELES: John David "JD" Souther, a prolific songwriter and musician who helped shape the country-rock sound that took root in Southern California in the 1970s with his collaborations with the Eagles and Linda Ronstadt, has died at the age of 78.

Souther, who collaborated on some of the Eagles' biggest hits, such as "Best of My Love," "James Dean," "New Kid in Town," and "Heartache Tonight," died Tuesday at his home in New Mexico, according to an announcement on his website.

He also worked with James Taylor, Bob Seger, Bonnie Raitt and many more, and also found success as a solo artist. He was about to start a tour with Karla Bonoff on Sept. 24 in Phoenix, now canceled.

When he was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2013, Souther was described as "a principal architect of the Southern California sound and a major influence on a generation of songwriters." He was also at the heart of the social scene, his girlfriends including Ronstadt, Joni Mitchell and Stevie Nicks, who in a 1982 interview with High Times magazine remembered him as "very, very, very male chauvinistic and very sweet and cute and wonderful but very Texas."

Souther was born in Detroit and grew up in Amarillo, Texas. He moved to Los Angeles in the late 1960s, where he met fellow Michigan native Glenn Frey, a founding member and guitarist of the Eagles. The two began a longtime partnership, starting with a band called Longbranch Pennywhistle. Frey would credit Souther with introducing him to country music.

"Our first year together will always seem like yesterday to me," Souther said in a statement after Frey died in 2016. "His amazing capacity for the big joke and that brilliant groove that lived inside him are with me, even now, in this loss and sorrow. ... The music and the love are indestructible."

Souther was so close to the Eagles, he even appeared on the back cover of their 1973 album, "Desperado," with Souther and others reenacting the capture of the legendary Dalton Gang. He described his start with Frey at The Troubadour, the popular West Hollywood music club, as "the best study in songwriting I can imagine."

"So many great songwriters came through - Laura Nyro, Kris Kristoff-

erson, Randy Newman, Elton John, James Taylor, Tim Hardin, Carole King, Rick Nelson, Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, Waylon Jennings, Tim Buckley, Gordon Lightfoot, Taj Mahal and more," he said in a statement on his website. "It seems impossible now to imagine that much music in a year and a half or so, but that was my life and the Troubadour was our university."

"It's also where I met Linda Ronstadt and where Don Henley and Glenn Frey met to form this little country rock band called Eagles that would go on to make musical history," Souther wrote. (AP)

NEW YORK: Fresh off her Emmys win, Jean Smart is taking her comedy to a new audience - she'll kick off "Saturday Night Live's" landmark 50th season.

NBC on Thursday announced the lineup

of hosts for the season, which premieres Sept. 28. Joining Smart on the first show will be Jelly Roll as the musical act. He was also at the Emmys, singing during the ceremony's in memoriam segment.

It will be Smart's first time hosting "SNL" and Jelly Roll's first time performing on the show. Smart shared the news on Instagram, writing that hosting was a "bucket list" item for her.

The rest of the hosts and musical guests - save breakout sensation Chappell Roan, who will make her musical guest debut in November - are returning to the series. Comedian Nate Bargatze, who hosted last October to great success, thanks to a sketch where he played George Washington, will host again Oct. 5, with Coldplay as the musical guest. Coldplay has previously performed on the show seven times, and will ring in the eighth right after the band's

newest album, "Moon Music," releases.

Ariana Grande - who stars in the upcoming "Wicked" film adaptation - will host for the second time Oct. 12. She has previously been the musical guest twice, but Fleetwood Mac icon Stevie Nicks will perform for Grande's episode. Nicks was a musical guest once prior, in 1983.

"Beetlejuice" star Michael Keaton will host on Oct. 19, the last show before Halloween, in his fourth time on the show, and Billie Eilish will be that night's musical guest, also marking her fourth time on "SNL." (AP)

ROCHESTER, N.Y.: The National Toy Hall of Fame is floating the idea of inducting balloons.

Praised for their versatility and universal appeal, balloons made the list Wednesday of 12 finalists being considered for the honor later this year, alongside other first-time contenders including the trampoline and the party game Apples to Apples.

A panel of expert judges and the public will vote on which of the finalists will be inducted in November.

This year's nominees also include the bestselling "Choose Your Own Adventure" gamebooks, which encourage readers to plot stories; Hess Toy Trucks, which have signaled the holiday season since 1964; remote-controlled vehicles and the stick horse.

Rounding out the list are the games Phase 10, Sequence and the Pokemon Trading Card Game, along with two perennial nominees, My Little Pony figures - a seven-time finalist - and Transformers action figures, both of which debuted in the 1980s.

"These 12 toys represent the wide range of play - from strategic to whimsical to physical - and present many playful matchups. The selection judges and public will have some tough decisions this year," predicted Christopher Bensch, vice president for collections and chief curator. (AP)



A model wears a creation as part of the Antonio Marras Spring Summer 2025 collection, that was presented in Milan, Italy, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2024. (AP)

Air pollution tied to over 4.2 million deaths annually

Robots, AI could offer solutions for clean environments

By Mahshid Ahmadi

University of Tennessee

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

Many human activities release pollutants into the air, water and soil. These harmful chemicals threaten the health of both people and the ecosystem. According to the World Health Organization, air pollution causes an estimated 4.2 million deaths annually.

Scientists are looking into solutions, and one potential avenue is a class of materials called photocatalysts. When triggered by light, these materials undergo chemical reactions that initial studies have shown can break down common toxic pollutants.

I am a materials science and engineering researcher at the University of Tennessee. With the help of robots and artificial intelligence, my colleagues and I are making and testing new photocatalysts with the goal of mitigating air pollution.

The photocatalysts work by generating charged carriers in the presence of light. These charged carriers are tiny particles that can move around and cause chemical reactions. When they come into contact with water and oxygen in the environment, they produce substances called reactive oxygen species. These highly active reactive oxygen species can bond to parts of the pollutants and then either decompose the pollutants or turn them into harmless - or even useful - products.

But some materials used in the photocatalytic process have limitations. For example, they can't start the reaction unless the light has enough energy - infrared rays with lower energy light, or visible light, won't trigger the reaction.

Another problem is that the charged particles involved in the reaction can recombine too quickly, which means they join back together before finishing the job. In these cases, the pollutants either do not decompose completely or the process takes a long time to accomplish.

Additionally, the surface of these photocatalysts can sometimes change during or after the photocatalytic reaction, which affects how they work and how efficient they are.

To overcome these limitations, scientists on my team are trying to develop new photocatalytic materials that work efficiently to break down pollutants. We also focus on making sure these materials are nontoxic so that our pollution-cleaning materials aren't causing further pollution.

Photocatalyst

Scientists on my team use automated experimentation and artificial intelligence to figure out which photocatalytic materials could be the best candidates to quickly break down pollutants. We're making and testing materials called hybrid perovskites, which are tiny crystals - they're about a 10th the thickness of a strand of hair.

These nanocrystals are made of a blend of organic (carbon-based) and inorganic (non-carbon-based) components.

They have a few unique qualities, like their excellent light-absorbing properties, which come from how they're structured at the atomic level. They're tiny, but mighty. Optically, they're amazing too - they interact with light in fascinating

ways to generate a large number of tiny charge carriers and trigger photocatalytic reactions.

These materials efficiently transport electrical charges, which allows them to transport light energy and drive the chemical reactions. They're also used to make solar panels more efficient and in LED lights, which create the vibrant displays you see on TV screens.

There are thousands of potential types of hybrid nanocrystals. So, my team wanted to figure out how to make and test as many as we can quickly, to see which are the best candidates for cleaning up toxic pollutants.

Instead of making and testing samples by hand - which takes weeks or months - we're using smart robots, which can produce and test at least 100 different materials within an hour. These small liquid-handling robots can precisely move, mix and transfer tiny amounts of liquid from one place to another. They're controlled by a computer that guides their acceleration and accuracy.

We also use machine learning to guide this process. Machine learning algorithms can analyze test data quickly and then learn from that data for the next set of experiments executed by the robots. These machine learning algorithms can quickly identify patterns and insights in collected data that would normally take much longer for a human eye to catch.

Our approach aims to simplify and better understand complex photocatalytic systems, helping to create new strategies and materials. By using automated experimentation guided by machine learning, we can now make these systems easier to analyze and interpret, overcoming challenges that were difficult with traditional methods. (AP)

'BeiDou-3' launched

China unveils world's first multi-modal LLM AI device

BEIJING, Sept 19, (Xinhua): A geographic sciences multi-modal Large Language Model (LLM), the first of its kind in the world, was unveiled in Beijing on Thursday. It could support the integration of geography and artificial intelligence and help accelerate geographical discoveries.

The model, named Sigma Geography, was developed by a team of researchers from the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research (IGSNRR), the Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research and the Institute of Automation, all under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and other organizations.

Sigma Geography can answer professional geographical questions, analyze geographical articles, undertake querying and in-depth analysis of geographical data and draw thematic maps, said Su Fenzhen, deputy director of IGSNRR.

Compared to general LLMs, Sigma Geography has a deeper understanding of the language patterns, domain-specific terminology and professional knowledge in the field of geography, enabling it to better handle specialized issues, Su said.

In addition to answering geographical questions, Sigma Geography can also match the generated textual answers with geographical landscape photos, thematic maps or schematic charts to help users understand the textual answers in a more visual and imaginative way, he added.

The research assistant function developed by the team, based on Sigma Geography, can complete processes such as concept understanding, data acquisition, information analysis and mapping according to user instructions, and ultimately generate professional geographic charts that users need.

The model could help broaden the general public's understanding of geographic sciences, and support academic research and studies to uncover major geographic scientific discoveries.

So far, Sigma Geography has been cited by over 10 papers published in academic journals such as sub-journals of Nature, The Innovation, and Earth's Future.

The team will continue to upgrade Sigma Geography, aiming to enable it to comprehend maps, and create a platform to facilitate scientists and research teams to collaborate through the sharing of data, models and research ideas.

Navigation satellites: China on Thursday launched two new satellites

Largest ever

Experts discover 'black hole' jets

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (AP): Scientists have discovered the longest pair of jets streaming from a black hole in a distant galaxy.

The jets shooting hot plasma are the largest ever spotted - about as long as 140 Milky Way galaxies lined up end-to-end.

"This one has managed to reach a size that's so big," said Eileen Meyer, who studies black holes at University of Maryland, Baltimore County and who was not involved in the study.

The discovery, made using images from a European radio telescope, was reported Wednesday in the journal Nature.

Black holes eat most space debris that falls their way. Sometimes, heated-up plasma makes a narrow escape by spewing out in thin, high-energy jets.

The jets can break apart soon after their creation, jostled by space turbulence or starved in the absence of new matter. But jets from supermassive black holes can become supersized.

The latest combined jets from a faraway supermassive black hole are around 23 million light-years long. That's about 7 million light-years longer than the previous recordholder. A light-year is 5.8 trillion miles.

Study co-author Martijn Oei said researchers weren't expecting to find long black hole jets so early in the universe's history. The jets date back to when the universe was less than half its current age.

for the BeiDou-3 Navigation Satellite System (BDS-3) from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China's Sichuan Province.

The two satellites, the 59th and 60th satellites of the BeiDou family, were launched at 9:14 a.m. (Beijing Time) by a Long March-3B carrier rocket and the Yuanzheng-1 (Expedition-1) upper stage attached to the carrier rocket.

They are the second group of medium Earth orbit (MEO) satellites launched since BDS-3 was formally commissioned to provide satellite navigation services worldwide. After entering orbit and completing in-orbit tests, they will be connected to the BDS system.

Cases rising sharply among kids, pregnant women

Congo has become mpox hot spot as a new strain spreads

KAMITUGA, Congo, Sept 19, (AP): Slumped on the ground over a mound of dirt, Divine Wisoba pulled weeds from her daughter's grave. The 1-month-old died from mpox in eastern Congo in August, but Wisoba, 21, was too traumatized to attend the funeral.

In her first visit to the cemetery, she wept into her shirt for the child she lost and worried about the rest of her family. "When she was born, it was as if God had answered our prayers - we wanted a girl," Wisoba said of little Maombi Katengey. "But our biggest joy was transformed into devastation."

Her daughter is one of more than 6,000 people officials suspect have contracted the disease in South Kivu province, the epicenter of the world's latest mpox outbreak, in what the World Health Organization has labeled a global health emergency. A new strain of the virus is spreading, largely through skin-to-skin contact, including but not limited to sex. A lack of funds, vaccines and information is making it difficult to stem the spread, according to alarmed disease experts.

Outbreak

Mpox - which causes mostly mild symptoms like fever and body aches, but can trigger serious cases with prominent blisters on the face, hands, chest and genitals - had been spreading mostly undetected for years in Africa, until a 2022 outbreak reached more than 70 countries. Globally, gay and bisexual men made up the vast majority of cases in that outbreak. But officials note mpox has long disproportionately affected children in Africa, and they say cases are now rising sharply among kids, pregnant women and other vulnerable groups, with many types of close contact responsible for the spread.

Health officials have zeroed in on Kamituga, a remote yet bustling gold mining town of some 300,000 people that attracts miners, sex workers and traders who are constantly on the move. Cases from other parts of eastern Congo can be traced back here, officials say, with the first originating in the nightclub scene.

Since this outbreak began, one year ago, nearly 1,000 people in Kamituga have been infected. Eight have died,



Emile Miango, 2, who has mpox, lies in the hospital, on Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024, in Kamituga, South Kivu province, which is the epicenter of the world's latest outbreak of the disease in eastern Congo. (AP)

Virus harmless to humans

Norway reports first case of 'bluetongue' since 2009

AAS, Norway, Sept 19, (Agencies): Norway reported Thursday dozens of confirmed and suspected cases of bluetongue, an insect-borne virus that is harmless to humans but can be fatal to sheep and other livestock, for the first time in the country since 2009.

The Norwegian Veterinary Institute said the virus known as bluetongue serotype 3, or BTV-3, was first detected in livestock in southern Norway on Sept. 6.

The institute said the cases followed outbreaks of bluetongue in several European countries. Cases have also recently been reported in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and France. The disease is spread by

midges and ticks that are typically found in warmer weather.

half of them children. Last month, the World Health Organization said mpox outbreaks might be stopped in the next six months, with governments' leadership and coopera-

tion.

But in Kamituga, people say they face a starkly different reality. There's a daily average of five new cases at the general hospital, which

is regularly near capacity. Overall in South Kivu, weekly new suspected cases have skyrocketed from about 12 in January to 600 in August, according to province health officials.

Even that's likely an underestimate, they say, because of a lack of access to rural areas, the inability of many residents to seek care, and Kamituga's transient nature.

Locals say they simply don't have enough information about mpox.

Before her daughter got sick, Wisoba said, she was infected herself but didn't know it.

Painful lesions emerged around her genitals, making walking difficult. She thought she had a common sexually transmitted infection and sought medicine at a pharmacy. Days later, she went to the hospital with her newborn and was diagnosed with mpox. She recovered, but her daughter developed lesions on her foot.

Nearly a week later, Maombi died at the same hospital that treated her mother.

Wisoba said she didn't know about mpox until she got it. She wants the government to invest more in teaching people protective measures.

Local officials can't reach areas more than a few miles outside Kamituga to track suspected cases or inform residents. They broadcast radio messages but say that doesn't reach far enough.

Also:

DAKAR, Senegal: The global vaccine alliance Gavi will buy 500,000 doses of mpox vaccine to battle outbreaks of the disease in African countries, the organization said on Wednesday.

The vaccine doses - manufactured by the Danish company Bavarian Nordic - will be available this year, Gavi said, without giving any specific dates.

Gavi said the full costs, including the transportation, delivery and administration of the doses, amounting to \$50 million, would be covered by the group's First Response Fund, a new financial mechanism created in June 2024.

Since the beginning of the year, there have been over 25,000 confirmed mpox cases and 723 related deaths, the vast majority in Congo, and the World Health Organization declared it a global health emergency.

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Sporting KC beats Rapids

Miranchuk on target as Atlanta holds Inter Miami

ATLANTA, Sept 19, (AP): Another big Atlanta crowd finally got a chance to see Lionel Messi in an MLS match. They nearly watched United pull out a much-needed win over league-leading Inter Miami.

Alexey Miranchuk scored with a booming shot in the 84th minute and the home team pressed hard for the winning goal in stoppage time, only to settle for a 2-2 tie with Messi's Miami club before an announced crowd of 67,795 on Wednesday night.

After making a triumphant return to the Miami lineup with two goals and an assist last weekend, Messi started this game on the bench. Coach Gerardo Martino wanted to manage the minutes of his 37-year-old Argentine star, who is coming back from national team duties and an ankle injury with the club in the midst of a busy stretch.

Messi trotted on the field in the 61st to a big roar, shortly after Leo Campana scored off a deflected free kick to put the Herons in front. But the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner couldn't find the net in his limited time on the field, drawing plenty of attention from the United defenders.

Alan Pulido and Erik Tommy each scored two goals to help Sporting Kansas City beat the Colorado Rapids 4-1.

Pulido beat goalkeeper Zack Steffen with a rolling shot from the top of the penalty area to give Sporting KC a 1-0 lead in the ninth minute. He doubled the lead in the opening minutes of the

second half when, after a Rapids turnover, he split a pair of defenders in the center of the area and scored on a sidenecker in the 49th.

Tommy added goals for Kansas City (8-15-7) in the 69th minute and another that capped the scoring in the 82nd.

Michael Edwards, a 24-year-old defender, scored his first MLS goal in the 75th minute to pull the Rapids to 3-1.

Yuya Kubo and Luca Orellano scored first-half goals and FC Cincinnati held off Minnesota United 2-1.

Kubo, making his club-record 150th appearance for Cincinnati (17-8-4) across all competitions, found the net in the 34th minute for a 1-0 lead. It was his 10th goal of the season. Defender Chidozie Awaziem picked up his sec-

SOCCER

ond assist in his fourth career appearance, all starts.

Sam Surridge scored a goal in the 19th minute, Joe Willis had three saves the Nashville SC beat the Chicago Fire 1-0.

Surridge played a header, off an arcing entry from Hany Mukhtar, that went high above the crossbar before dropping inside the post to give Nashville a 1-0 lead.

Nashville (8-13-8) has won back-to-back games following an eight-game losing streak.

Fluminense beat Mineiro in Copa quarterfinals

RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept 19, (AP): Vinicius Moreira de Lima came off the bench to score a goal in the second half on Wednesday and reigning champion Fluminense defeated fellow Brazilian side Atletico Mineiro 1-0 in the first leg of their Copa Libertadores quarterfinal.

Moreira de Lima, who entered the match in the 64th minute as a substitute for Matheus Martinelli, scored in the 87th minute with a header on a cross from Marcos Da Silva to secure the win.

The match was played at Maracana stadium while the second leg will be held at Belo Horizonte next Wednesday.

The winner of the series will play either Chile's Colo Colo or River Plate, who are facing off in another quarterfinal.

The Fire had 58% possession and outshot Nashville 10-5. Facundo Torres scored a goal in the 52nd minute, Duncan McGuire added a late goal and Pedro Gallese had two saves to help Orlando City beat Charlotte FC 2-0.

Orlando City (12-10-7) has won three games in a row - all shutouts - after beating both Nashville SC and the New England Revolution 3-0 at home.

Juan "Cucho" Hernández had a goal and an assist after subbing in to begin the second half, sparking the Columbus Crew to a 2-0 victory over Toronto FC.

Paul Marie scored in the 89th minute for San Jose on Wednesday night, Amahl Pellegrino added a goal for the Earthquakes in a 2-2 tie with the Seattle

Sounders. Jordan Morris scored two first-half goals, his second multi-goal game this season, for Seattle.

San Jose (5-21-3) has lost five of its last seven. The Earthquakes have 17 points and a minus-31 goal differential, both are the worst in MLS. The New England Revolution are second worst with 27 points and a minus-24 goal differential.

Tom Pearce and Nathan Saliba scored in the second half - the first goals of their careers - and CF Montreal rallied for a 2-2 draw with the New England Revolution.

Brian White scored in the second half to rally the Vancouver Whitecaps to a 1-1 draw with the Houston Dynamo.

Houston (12-9-8) took a 1-0 lead

The Argentinians lead the matchup 1-0.

Fluminense won the title in 2023 for the first time and gave Brazil the fifth Copa Libertadores crown in a row. Fla-

SOCCER

mengo (2019 and 2022) and Palmeiras (2020 and 2021) won it before them.

into halftime after Ezequiel Ponce scored on a penalty kick in the seventh minute of stoppage time. Ponce's third goal this season came after Amine Basi drew a foul on Whitecaps midfielder Pedro Vite following a video review. It was Ponce's sixth career appearance, all starts.

Vancouver (13-8-7) scored the equalizer in the 73rd minute when White, who entered in the 60th, used assists from Fafá Picault and Ryan Gauld to find the net for the 13th time this season. Picault's assist was his fifth, matching his career high for a single season. Gauld's assist gives him a career-best 13 on the season.

Yohei Takaoka, who had clean sheets in his last three starts, finished with one save in goal for the Whitecaps.

Also on Wednesday, Sao Paulo had a 0-0 draw visiting Botafogo in Rio de Janeiro.

Sao Paulo won the tournament in 1992, 1993 and 2005 but it has not made it to the final four since 2016. The second leg will be played next Wednesday in Sao Paulo, where the team is undefeated in four matches this tournament.

Steve Clark saved three shots for the Dynamo, who remain one point behind Vancouver in the Western Conference standings.

Houston, which was coming off a 4-1 victory over Real Salt Lake, has allowed just 33 goals this season.

Vancouver - 6-2-2 in its last 10 matches overall - leads the all-time series 10-9-6.

Teenager David Martínez scored early in the second half to help Los Angeles FC rally for a 1-1 draw with Austin FC.

Austin (9-12-8) took a 1-0 lead into halftime when Jäder Obrian used the first career assist from Osman Bukari to score in the second minute of stoppage time - his sixth netter this season. Bukari made his fifth appearance, all starts.

Englishman takes on Dubois

Joshua bids to emulate Ali as 3-time world champion

LONDON, Sept 19, (AP): Muhammad Ali. Evander Holyfield. Lennox Lewis.

Three boxers from an elite club of heavyweight greats to have been three-time world champions.

Anthony Joshua can put his name on that exclusive list by disposing of a British rival who sees himself as the future of the sport's marquee category. He can do it on quite the stage, too.

Joshua, a darling of British boxing ever since winning Olympic gold at the London Games in 2012, is looking to complete his late-career rebuild by beating Daniel Dubois to reclaim the IBF belt in front of around 96,000 fans at Wembley Stadium in London on Saturday.

BOXING

It is one of the biggest crowds for any British sporting event - and that's something Joshua is used to after selling out the UK's biggest stadia for years. Indeed, it was at Wembley where he produced his greatest performance in defeating Wladimir Klitschko in epic fashion in 2017 to become a two-belt world champ.

As for the 27-year-old Dubois, a somewhat accidental world champion after taking the IBF crown vacated by Oleksandr Usyk, this is fairly new territory. It's his first title defense and second world championship fight - Joshua has had 12 of them, of which 10 have been for unified titles - as he looks to establish his name atop the heavyweight scene.

A win for Dubois (21-2, with 20 KOs) and it will be seen as a definitive changing of the guard. The pretender will then be the big man in town, with huge riches in the offing in potential future fights against Usyk or Tyson Fury, who meet in a rematch on Dec. 21 in Saudi Arabia for Usyk's WBA, WBC and IBO heavyweight belts.

For Joshua (28-3, with 25 KOs), it would mean climbing the mountain once again - or even hanging up his gloves.

"I've been to the well," Joshua said. "Dan's fighting someone who is willing to die in there." The 34-year-old from Watford, just outside London, faced a career reset after losing back-to-back fights against Usyk, soon after

his first pro defeat - a shocker to Andy Ruiz Jr. in 2019.

Joshua got rid of his long-time trainer, set up camps in the U.S. instead of England, and tried to change his strategy. He had lost twice to Usyk, a smaller man, and it made him realize boxing is as much about skill and ring craft as power and brutality.

The rebuild has seen him win four straight fights - against Jermaine Franklin, Robert Helenius, Otto Wallin and then former UFC champion Francis Ngannou - and each performance has been better than the last.

His devastating punching power is still there, too. Just ask Ngannou, who was knocked out cold in the second round with an unblocked right hand.

Questions are still being asked of Joshua, however. Does he belong back in the first tier of the heavyweights? Will that long-awaited fight with Fury - trailed for almost a decade now - ever happen? "Everything I've done in the past, we have to draw a line (through) because I can't take that with me on Saturday night," Joshua said. "In that moment, that's all that matters." Dubois, nicknamed "Dynamite," told The Associated Press this week he is looking to legitimize his status as the newest world heavyweight champion with what would be the biggest win of his career. He only gained the IBF belt in late-June after Usyk relinquished it, to no longer be undisputed champ.

"I need to show them on the night what I'm all about and then make the world respect me," Dubois told the AP, "and make them put some respect to my name." Joshua is a bigger puncher and Dubois' reputation might still be wounded after he took a knee and was counted out against another Brit, Joe Joyce, in 2020 for his first loss.

Dubois' loss to Usyk in Wroclaw, Poland, is his only experience of big-time boxing and he said it made him grow "from a boy to a man." Joshua made that leap a long time ago and quickly became a national treasure, unbeaten for his first six years as a pro - three of them as a world champion - and establish an aura of invincibility.

After a chastening few years, he can reach those heights again on Saturday when the challenger, unusually, will start as the favorite.

Kane warns Bavarians

Bayern needs to tighten up

MUNICH, Sept 19, (AP): Harry Kane and Bayern Munich are scoring a torrent of goals under new coach Vincent Kompany, but the England striker still thinks they're vulnerable.

Despite netting four times in Bayern's record-breaking 9-2 win over Dinamo Zagreb in the Champions League on Tuesday, Kane seemed more concerned with the two soft goals the team conceded just after half-time.

"We need to learn. We spoke about, already this season, continuing the performance from the first half. Each first half we've played has been really good this season. The second half has kind of dropped off," Kane told broadcaster DAZN after the game. "We got away with it today be-

cause we were able to step up another gear but against the top opposition we could get punished for that, so we need to try and iron that out."

Bayern has scored a scarcely believable 24 goals in five games in all competitions under Kompany - nine of them by Kane - but hasn't faced top-class opposition yet.

That means it's still an open question whether Kompany's Bayern is a better team than the one that finished an underwhelming third in the Bundesliga last season.

Against Zagreb, there were echoes of how Bayern played under Kompany's predecessors Julian Nagelsmann and Thomas Tuchel - lots of goals, but fragile under pressure.

Tottenham 'fashions out' a late comeback vs Coventry



Atlanta United defender Derrick Williams (3) and Inter Miami midfielder Benjamin Cremaschi (30) battle for the ball during the second half of a MLS soccer match. (AP)

Wolves' troubled start to season continues

COVENTRY, England, Sept 19, (AP): Tottenham avoided a shock defeat in the third round of the English League Cup after scoring two late goals to beat second-division Coventry 2-1.

Djed Spence evened the score in the 88th minute at Coventry Arena after Brandon Thomas-Asante had fired the home team ahead in the 63rd.

Brennan Johnson completed Spurs' comeback with the winner

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in the second minute of stoppage time.

Coventry had come agonizingly close to upsetting Manchester United in the semifinal of the FA Cup last season - losing on penalties after a 3-3 draw at Wembley. And it was another heartbreak

Lamour made chief operating officer

FIFA hires top executive from UEFA

GENEVA, Sept 19, (AP): FIFA made a high-profile signing from UEFA on Wednesday, hiring one of the most respected executives in European soccer.

Kevin Lamour, currently UEFA's deputy general secretary, will join FIFA as chief operating officer on Nov. 1, soccer's world body told staff in an email seen by The Associated Press.

The 44-year-old French official has worked at UEFA in two different spells since 2007 and gained a

reputation as an advocate for good governance in soccer bodies.

The move to FIFA reunites Lamour with its president Gianni Infantino and secretary general Mattias Grafström. They worked together for several years at UEFA and on Infantino's successful election campaign in 2016.

Lamour declined the chance to work for FIFA then, and soon returned to UEFA which he had left in 2015 after his longtime boss Michel

Platini was investigated in financial wrongdoing with then-FIFA president Sepp Blatter.

Lamour was not implicated in that case and was back running the UEFA president's executive office for the new incumbent, Aleksander Čeferin.

Though FIFA and UEFA have often had tense relations under Infantino and Čeferin, the FIFA message to staff noted a "smooth and friendly transition while making Kevin available to us so quickly."

Postecoglou said.

Elsewhere, Wolverhampton's troubled start to the season continued with a 3-2 loss at Brighton that saw it eliminated from the competition.

Carlos Baleba and Simon Ad-

ingra gave Brighton a 2-0 lead at Amex Stadium and Goncalo Guedes pulled one back for Wolves before halftime.

Ferdi Kadioglu made it 3-1 in the 85th and Tommy Doyle scored a consolation for Wolves in the 90th.

34 NOCs have registered for Games

Significant progress achieved in preparations for Asian Winter Games

HARBIN, Sept 19, (Xinhua): Construction activities have been bustling in Harbin and Yabuli Ski Resort, as preparations for the 9th Asian Winter Games have reached a significant milestone.

The Games are scheduled to take place from February 7 to 14, 2025.

With less than five months remaining

until the Games, Harbin is working diligently to adhere to the tight schedule. The city boasts a robust infrastructure of winter sports facilities, providing a solid foundation for the preparations.

The Harbin Ice Hockey Arena, which previously served as a venue during the 1996 Asian Winter Games, is one of the

key competition sites for the upcoming event. Recent renovations have been completed, and the arena is now ready for test events.

Qin Xulin, the head of the engineering department at the Harbin Urban Development Investment Group, has been diligently working with his colleagues to pre-

pare for the upcoming test competitions.

Following the principles of frugality and post-event utility, the organizing committee has designated two main competition zones: the Harbin city ice sports area and the Yabuli snow sports area.

He further mentioned that five opera-

tional teams, consisting of 152 highly capable local personnel, have been established for the competition venues.

Moreover, a record-breaking number of 34 National Olympic Committees have registered for the Harbin Games, indicating the highest participation in the history of the Asian Winter Games.

Change Name

I, THOPUGUNTA NAGESWAR, (old name) W/o. Late THOPUGUNTA NAGESWARA, Passport No. M6424370 resident of H.No. 3-28/A, Vallurupalli, Kommanavaripalli, Pullampet, Cuddapah, Andhra Pradesh - 516107, India., have changed my name as (New Name) THOPUGUNTA SANKARAMMA W/o. Late THOPUGUNTA NAGESWARA., Hereafter my name is known as THOPUGUNTA SANKARAMMA for all purposes.

Kazma, Al-Qadsiya look to revive title hopes

Al-Nasr aims for redemption in Farwaniya Derby against Al-Tadamon

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The fifth round of the Zain Premier League kicks off today with Farwaniya Derby match between Al-Tadamon and Al-Nasr at Nasser Al-Osaimi Stadium, scheduled for 7:35 pm.

Al-Tadamon seeks a second consecutive win to distance itself from the danger zone, while Al-Nasr aims for its second victory, hoping to recover from a crushing 5-1 defeat to Kuwait Club in the previous round.

The action continues tomorrow with two key fixtures. Al-Salmiya faces Al-Fahaheel at Thamer Stadium at 6:10 pm, followed by a highly anticipated clash between Kazma and Al-Qadsiya at Al-Sadaka Wal-Salam Stadium at 8:25 pm.

The round will conclude on Sunday, with Khaitan hosting Al-Arabi and Al-Yarmouk taking on Kuwait



Al-Qadsiya is looking for its second victory.

Club at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium.

Currently, Kuwait Club leads the standings with 12 points, edging out Al-Arabi on goal difference.

Al-Salmiya holds third with 9 points, followed by Al-Fahaheel in fourth with 6 points. Al-Tadamon

and Khaitan share fifth place with 4 points each, while Al-Qadsiya, Kazma, and Al-Nasr are tied at 3 points apiece. Al-Yarmouk sits at the bottom with 2 points.

The Kazma vs. Al-Qadsiya matchup carries extra weight as both teams desperately need the

three points to revive their title hopes. A loss could significantly dent their chances of remaining in contention.

Both clubs have had similar struggles this season, with just one win and three losses each. Al-Qadsiya's new coach, Montenegrin Zeljko Petrovic, failed to

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make a strong debut, losing 1-0 to Al-Salmiya last round. Similarly, Kazma's Tunisian coach, Lassad Chaabi, couldn't secure a win in his first game, with the team suffering a 2-1 defeat to Al-Tadamon.

In the other match, Al-Salmiya, buoyed by its victory over Al-Qadsiya, will aim for their third consecutive win to stay in contention for the top spot. Meanwhile, Al-Fahaheel will look to bounce back from a heavy 3-0 loss to Al-Arabi.

Kuwait launches new squash season



Hamed Al-Omran presided over the tournament draw.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Squash Federation will kick off its 2024-2025 on Saturday, with the 16th National Championship (Individuals), running until October 2nd. This championship will feature competitors across all age groups and the women's general category.

The draw for the national championship was conducted last Tuesday, with Secretary-General and Vice-Chairman of the Competitions Committee, Hamed Al-Omran, and Competitions Committee member Abdul Hadi Al-Aryan present, along with representatives from various clubs.

The updated squash season schedule has been released, which in-

cludes five major events: the General League (split into two divisions), the Federation Cup with a knockout format, and three individual championships.

Hamed Al-Omran also shared that the Competitions Committee proposed to the Arab Federation the reintroduction of club championships for league champions in three categories: under 13, under 17, and general. This proposal was approved by the General Assembly of the Arab Federation and will be implemented starting next season. The inclusion of these championships is expected to heighten the competition in local tournaments and enhance participation in Arab championships.

Ashwin & Jadeja dig India out of trouble against Bangladesh

Host reaches 339-6 in 80 overs

CHENNAI, India, Sept 19, (AP): Ravichandran Ashwin scored his sixth test hundred as he and Ravindra Jadeja dug India's cricketers out of trouble against Bangladesh on day one of the first test on Thursday.

Ashwin hit 102 not out in 112 balls - his second test century on his home ground in Chennai - as the home team reached 339-6 in 80 overs.

He put on an unbeaten 195-run stand with Jadeja for the seventh wicket - the highest for India against Bangladesh - to rescue the team from a precarious 144-6.

Jadeja finished the day unbeaten on 86 off 117 balls.

Ashwin said: "It is always a special feeling to score in front of the

home crowd. It is a ground I've completely loved to play cricket in. I played a domestic T20 tournament here earlier and have been working on my batting. The bounce was good and at times I was trying to hit the ball hard."

Paceman Hasan Mahmud was the chief destroyer as Bangladesh reduced India to 88-3 in the morning session, with skipper Rohit Sharma, Shubman Gill and Virat Kohli all falling for single figures.

Then post lunch, Rishabh Pant was caught at slip off Mahmud for 39 after he and opener Yashasvi Jaiswal had shared a stand of 62.

Lokesh Rahul returned to test cricket for the first time since January and scored 16 runs in a fifth-wicket partnership of 48 with



Bangladesh's Nahid Rana bowls a delivery on the first day of the first cricket test match between India and Bangladesh, in Chennai, India. (AP)

Jaiswal.

Jaiswal, though, was caught off paceman Nahid Rana for 56, while Rahul was removed by spinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz to a catch at short leg for 16.

Ashwin and Jadeja then attacked the Bangladesh bowling. Ashwin was the main aggressor, hitting 10 fours and two sixes as he sped to 50 off 58 balls.

His second 50 came at a run-a-ball, reaching 100 off 108 deliveries. Ashwin also scored a century on this ground against England in 2021.

Jadeja was solid at the other end, going to his 50 off 73 balls with his trademark swordplay celebration. He hit 10 fours and two sixes in all.

The second test will be played in Kanpur and begins on Sept. 27, with three Twenty20 matches to follow.

CRICKET



India's Ravindra Jadeja plays a shot on the first day of the first cricket test match between India and Bangladesh, in Chennai, India. (AP)

Latham, Williamson lead New Zealand to 255-4

GALLE, Sri Lanka, Sept 19, (AP): Half-centuries by Tom Latham and Kane Williamson led New Zealand's cricketers to 255-4 on day two of the first Test against Sri Lanka on Thursday.

Replying to Sri Lanka's first innings 305, Latham and Devon Conway gave New Zealand a solid start by putting on 63 for the first wicket before the opener then added 73 for the second wicket with Williamson.

CRICKET

Latham looked comfortable against the spinners until he fell on 70. Attempting to sweep Prabath Jayasuriya, the ball came off his top edge and he was caught at square leg.

Williamson batted with authority and was on 55 when a lapse of concentration saw him glove a Dhananjaya de Silva delivery for wicketkeeper Kusal Mendis to take a terrific diving catch.

De Silva also bowled Rachin Ravindra for 39 when he failed to read the spinner's straight ball and shouldered arms.

An unbroken 59-run stand for the



New Zealand's Kane Williamson runs between the wickets on the second day of the first cricket test match between New Zealand and Sri Lanka in Galle, Sri Lanka. (AP)

fifth wicket between Daryl Mitchell (41) and Tom Blundell (18) then took New Zealand to stumps.

Latham said: "It's been a great day for us. Superb effort by the bowlers

to get three wickets early and then the partnerships have been able to get us to that total. We put their spinners under pressure."

Earlier, New Zealand did well to clean up the Sri Lankan tail. The last four wickets fell for three runs, fast bowler Will O'Rourke finishing with 5-55.

The morning session was ruined by rain as only 4.5 overs were possible. Play will get underway 15 minutes early on day three.

Craig Howard, Sri Lanka's spin bowling coach, said: "We felt we were in a very good position yesterday. Ideally we would have liked to get another 40 runs today. If we had bowled like we generally do, we could have been better off."

New Zealand had a warm-up test last week against Afghanistan in India washed out after five days without a ball being bowled. Sri Lanka is coming off a three-match test series in England which the hosts won 2-1.

The teams will play a second test in Galle, beginning on Sept. 26.

Real Madrid plays Espanyol

Endrick quickly proves worth and gets chance to earn more minutes

MADRID, Sept 19, (AP): When Endrick joined Real Madrid after turning 18, many questioned whether he could fit in with the main squad or if it would be better to send him out on loan or to the "B" team to gain experience.

Madrid decided to keep him close, and only a few matches into the season, the only doubt surrounding the Brazil forward is about when he will get a chance to earn a first start with Carlo Ancelotti's first team.

Endrick has made the most of his minutes off the bench and quickly proved his worth, gaining the trust of his teammates and exciting fans who now want to see more of the young sensation.

He remains in a secondary role with a star-studded squad that includes already established forwards such as Vinicius Junior, Rodrygo and Kylian Mbappé, but the Brazilian has put himself among the first in line to earn more chances.

SOCCER

And Endrick may get just that - and even his first start with the Spanish powerhouse - as Madrid begins a series of matches that could prompt Ancelotti to start rotating his squad more often.

The series will begin on Saturday with a match against Espanyol in the Spanish league, where Madrid is already four points behind Barcelona after a lackluster start. There will also be a few Champions League matches coming up, and it should be a matter of time before Endrick gets his opportunity.

"He has this gift, which is very effective, and in training you can see that he has something special," coach Ancelotti said. "He's very effective, with a very strong and very quick shot. He has proved to be very brave in all senses of the word."

Endrick impressed Ancelotti and his teammates with a stoppage-time goal against Stuttgart in the Champions League on Tuesday, when he decided to deliver a long-range shot instead of taking advantage of a breakaway with Mbappé and Vinicius by his side.

"He had courage because the best approach was to take advantage of the three-on-one situation, but he was confident of scoring and he did that very well because the ultimate goal is to score," Ancelotti said. "It was the



Real Madrid's Endrick celebrates after scoring his side's third goal during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Real Madrid and VfB Stuttgart at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium, in Madrid. Real Madrid won 3-1. (AP)

most difficult option. He's capable of doing things that nobody can think of. Nobody thought he'd be able to shoot in that situation."

That goal in a 3-1 win at the Santiago Bernabeu made Endrick the youngest Champions League scorer for Madrid, surpassing former great Raul Gonzalez. He gained points with the fans when he approached them by going behind the net during his celebration.

"Nice to meet you, Endrick," the Brazilian wrote on Instagram later.

Endrick needed only 10 minutes to make an impression on his Spanish league debut against Valladolid last month, registering a late goal as a substitute to become the youngest foreign player to score for Madrid in the competition. He played in four other matches after that, every time coming off the bench.

Endrick, who a few days ago announced he got married, was only 16 when he was sold to Madrid by Brazilian club Palmeiras for more than 40 million euros (about \$45 million), plus add-ons, in 2022, but had to wait until he turned 18 before he could start playing for the team. League leader Barcelona will try to extend its perfect record to 6-0 when it visits fourth-place Villarreal on Sunday. Villarreal is one of three teams four points behind the Catalan club, along with Madrid and Atletico Madrid. Atletico visits Rayo Vallecano on Sunday.

American Magic endures 'brutal' exit

BARCELONA, Spain, Sept 19, (AP): American Magic's comeback fell short and it bid farewell to the 37th America's Cup after Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli secured a decisive fifth win in their playoff series on Thursday.

The same Italian team had eliminated the representative of the New York Yacht Club in the same challengers' semifinal three years prior in Auckland by a 4-0 score. This time, after trailing 4-0, the boat skippered by Tom Slingsby had rallied with three straight wins before finally succumbing 5-3.

The Americans faced adversity this time around when experienced helmsman Paul Goodison was unable to race against Luna Rossa after he fell on the boat and cracked some ribs. Lucas Calabrese took his place and performed admirably, according to Slingsby, despite his limited hours in the super foiling yacht.

Hutchinson applauded the effort

of his team but said that another exit against an admittedly "well-polished" Luna Rossa was not the plan. He also rued some what-could-have-beens in the series, which included one loss by just two seconds.

American Magic needed to win the two races scheduled on Thursday to advance, but Luna Rossa wrapped it up after a flawless and fast regatta that

SAILING

it finished a minute ahead. INEOS Britannia awaits the Italians in the Louis Vuitton Cup challenger's final that will begin on Sept. 26. That will be a rematch of the 2021 challenger's final that Luna Rossa also won.

The winner of the first-to-seven-wins series will face defending champion Team Emirates New Zealand in the America's Cup final next month.



The organizing committee for the Asian Youth Cup Under-20 qualifiers holds meeting, chaired by Dr. Saleh Al-Majroub to fine-tune preparations for the qualifiers.

Sports

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City, Inter rematch ends in stalemate



Players in action during the Arab Clubs Championship match between Kuwait Club and Al Salmiya in Kuwait.

Kuwait Club turns attention to Al-Karkh after thrilling victory

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Arab Handball Clubs Championship, hosted by Kuwait Club at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex Hall until September 26, features an exciting Kuwaiti-Iraqi clash today in the fourth round of the preliminary stage. Al-Qadisiya faces Al-Hashd at 6:00pm in the second group, followed by Kuwait Club taking on Al-Karkh in the first group. Al-Qoton from Yemen will compete against Al-Ahly from Qatar, and Maliha from the UAE will battle Al-Bank Al-Ahly from Egypt at 2:00 pm.

HANDBALL

The preliminary round will wrap up on Saturday, with four more matches: Al-Gharafa of Qatar will go up against Al-Hashid, Al-Salmiya will play Al-Karkh, Al-Qadisiya will face Maliha, and Kuwait Club will meet Al-Ahly of Qatar.

On Sunday, the match for ninth and tenth places will be held between the fifth teams from both groups. Quarter-final matches are scheduled for Monday, followed by the semi-

finals on Tuesday, with the championship concluding on Thursday.

In the third round of the preliminary stage, Al-Karkh defeated Al-Qoton 46-25, Al-Gharafa of Qatar overcame Maliha 30-22, Al-Qadisiya edged out Al-Ahli Bank 26-24, and Kuwait Club narrowly beat Al-Salmiya 31-29.

The standings are as follows: In Group A, the defending champion and host, Kuwait Club, leads with four points, followed by Al-Salmiya with the same points. Al-Karkh holds three points, Al-Ahly has one point, and Al-Qoton remains without point.

In Group B, Al-Gharafa leads with four points, equal to Al-Hashd but ahead on goal difference. Al-Qadisiya and Al-Ahli Bank each have two points, while Maliha is yet to score.

The top four teams from each group will advance to the quarter-finals on Monday, with the matchups determined as follows: the first team from Group A will face the fourth team from Group B, the second team from Group B will compete against the third team from Group A, the second team from Group A will go up against the third team from Group B, and the first team from Group B will play against the fourth team from Group A.

UAE locks horns with Lebanon

Kuwait U20 team eyes winning start in qualifiers

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Kuwait Under-20 team to kick off its 2025 Asian Cup qualifiers campaign against Northern Mariana Islands on Saturday, at 8:30 pm at Abdullah Al-Khalifa Stadium. This opening match will be preceded by a game between the UAE and Lebanon at 5:30 pm, as part of the Group 3 matches, which also features South Korea.

The qualifiers consist of 10 groups, with the top team from each group securing a spot, along with the best five second-place teams.

Kuwait has undergone an extensive preparation program for this tournament. This summer, it participated in several friendly matches, started with a camp in Kuwait, and then moved to Egypt. It also competed in the West Asian Championship and held external camps in Serbia and Turkey.

The technical staff, led by Croatian coach Dario Bacic and his assistant Mohammed Al-Fulaikawi, is focused on optimizing player readiness for a successful start.

The squad for the tournament in-



Kuwait U-20 team intensifies training for the opening match against Northern Mariana Islands on Saturday.

cludes 23 players: Muqdad Safar, Talal Al-Matroud, Jassim Shamouh, Hussein Kankouni, Hussein Al-Aryan, Abdullah Fares, Abdullah Al-Ayoub, Khaled Al-Kharqawi, Abdullah Al-Sarraf, Mohammed Arhama, Mohammed Al-Suraie, Ahmed Bodi, Jassim Al-Matar,

Fadel Al-Sarraf, Turki Al-Yousef, Mohammed Al-Omran, Abdullah Al-Basri, Ahmed Al-Rashidi, Montaser Suleiman, Omar Al-Azmi, Eid Talal, Jassim Al-Enezi, and Bandar Nawaf.

Despite this being the Northern Mariana Islands team's debut in the qualifiers, the Kuwaiti technical staff acknowledges the match will be challenging. It aims to make a strong impression and secure a win, which is crucial for a successful start in the qualifiers. Coach Bacic and assistant Al-Fulaikawi are confident in their ability to select the best lineup from a team rich in promising talent.

SOCCER

Meanwhile, The organizing committee for the Asian Youth Cup Under-20 qualifiers convened recently, chaired by Dr. Saleh Al-Majroub, Acting Secretary-General of the Kuwait Football Association. The meeting was also attended by Engineer Sarah Fleitah, Acting Deputy Director of the Public Authority for Sports for the Facilities, Maintenance, and Facilities Sector, along with representatives from various government bodies and committees involved in organizing the event.

The discussions focused on finalizing preparations for the qualifiers, which are set to begin tomorrow at Abdullah Al-Khalifa Stadium, located at Al-Yarmouk Club.

PSG scores late to beat Girona

GENEVA, Sept 19, (AP): Where did all the goals go? The 0-0 draws between Manchester City and Inter Milan in their rematch of the 2023 final, after Bologna and Shakhtar Donetsk also could not find a goal, capped an untypically goal-shy evening for the Champions League.

Just 13 were scored in six games one day after 28 were fired, including nine by Bayern Munich alone.

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How unusual was this? Two 0-0 draws after just 12 of 144 games to be played in the new league phase is already halfway to the total of four in 96 games one year ago in the group-stage format that is now abolished. The entire competition averaged three goals per game last season.

Paris Saint-Germain and Girona also were heading for a blank until a horrible 90th-minute error by the Spanish debutant's goalkeeper, Paulo Gazzaniga - spilling a cross by Nuno Mendes through his own legs - gifted a 1-0 win.

"We won't get to where we want to overnight," Girona coach Michel said. "It requires hard work." Borussia Dortmund needed late goals from substitutes Jamie Gittens, twice, and Serhou Guirassy with a stoppage-time penalty to win 3-0 at Club Brugge.

The new format has welcomed new faces and long-absent friends in European soccer's marquee competition.

Sparta Prague rose to the challenge of its first game for 19 years at this stage of the Champions League by



Manchester City's Rodrigo, left, is challenged by Inter Milan's Hakan Calhanoglu during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Manchester City and Inter Milan at the Etihad Stadium, in Manchester, England. (AP)

beating Salzburg 3-0.

Bologna waited 60 years to return and deserved more for its attacking ambition against Champions League veteran Shakhtar. The Ukrainian champion had a penalty saved in the fourth minute by Bologna goalkeeper Lukasz Skorupski.

Slovan Bratislava was overmatched in its first game since 1992-93, the first season of the Champions League rebrand from the old European Cup, and with Georgia defender Guram Kashia making his competition debut at age 37.

They could not keep out Celtic, which won 5-1 in Glasgow. Ireland internationals Liam Scalen and Adam Idah, Japan forwards Kyogo Furuhashi and Daizen Maeda, and Arne Engels of Belgium scored for the champion of Scotland.

"The quality of the goals was sensational," Celtic coach Brendan Rodgers said after just a fourth win in 33 Champions League games for the 1967 European Cup winner.

Six games on each of three straight nights are launching the new format. Now, 36 teams each play eight different opponents through January and are ranked in a single league table to decide which teams advance to the knockout phase.

There was nothing to separate the champions of England and Italy, 15 months after Man City beat Inter 1-0 in Istanbul to lift the European Cup trophy for the first time.

Ilkay Gundogan wasted two late chances for manager Pep Guardiola's team, failing to convert two headed chances.

It was the first time City had failed to score at home in Europe's elite tournament since being held 0-0 by Sporting Lisbon in March 2022, and just the second time at home in all competitions since then. The other was a 0-0 draw with Arsenal in the Premier League in March.

But the result saw City extend its six-year unbeaten home run in European games to 32, dating to a 2-1 loss to Lyon.

"I'm pleased with our performance, I liked everything," Guardiola said.

Dortmund's defense had a Champions League-best six clean sheets last season on its way to the final, where Real Madrid found two late goals to take the title.

Somehow, goalkeeper Gregor Kobel kept out Brugge despite 18 goal attempts including a close-range shot by Hugo Vetlesen that rattled the cross bar in the 12th minute. Vetlesen's effort ended a manic series of four shots in a matter of seconds from a corner including a diving save by Kobel.

The Switzerland 'keeper's five saves meant Dortmund did not pay for its own wastefulness in front of goal until taking the lead in the 76th from a Gittens shot that deflected off two defenders before looping past Simon Mignolet into the Brugge net.

Few clubs will play more international games this season than Salzburg, under its new coach Pep Lijnders, the former long-time assistant to Jürgen Klopp at Liverpool.

Salzburg had to advance through two Champions League qualifying rounds in August - because its 10-year title run in Austria was ended by Sturm Graz - and will play at least three more games in June at the Club World Cup in the United States.

Salzburg qualified among 12 European teams going to the relaunched FIFA club event because of its consistent results in the past four Champions League seasons, but was upstaged in Prague.

"A few of our players were playing their first game for the club," Lijnders said. "It's a new team we need to build it." Sparta came through three qualifying rounds, and six games already, to reach this stage and made a sharp start Wednesday scoring within two minutes to set the tone for an easy win.

Jovovic remains positive after Kuwait Club 0-0 draw

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Kuwait Club's coach, Montenegrin Nebojsa Jovovic, expressed frustration over missed opportunities in their recent match against Nasaf, highlighting the numerous chances his team failed to capitalize on.

Kuwait Club drew 0-0 with Uzbekistan's Nasaf at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium in the first round of Group 4 of the AFC Champions League 2. In the same group, Shabab Al-Ahli of the UAE defeated Al-Husseini Irbid of Jordan 3-1.

In the post-match press conference, Jovovic noted that the "Whites" delivered a solid performance across both halves but lacked the finishing touch, particularly in the second half.

Jovovic remained optimistic, stating, "The journey to qualify for the second round is still long, and I have faith in our players' ability to perform better in the upcoming matches."

Nasaf's coach, Ruzikul Berdiyev, acknowledged the challenging con-

ditions of the match, citing the hot weather as one of the most difficult the players have faced in a long time. He viewed the draw as a positive result against a team of Kuwait Club's caliber.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Club Board Member and Vice President of the Football Department, Adel Aqla, criticized the Asian Football Confederation for not implementing video assistant referee (VAR) technology in the group stage of the AFC Champions League 2. Aqla commented, "We are surprised that VAR is only used in the elite Champions League. We should learn from other federations and apply it across all AFC tournaments."

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He also mentioned, "The referee missed a clear penalty kick," but praised the team's performance in the match, expressing confidence in their ability to advance further in the tournament.

Kuwait Club's Ahmed Al Dhafiri experienced intestinal flu during

his team's AFC Champions League opener against Uzbekistan's Nasaf. He was taken to the hospital, where his condition improved significantly after undergoing necessary tests.

Kuwait Club President Khaled Al Ghanem, along with Board Member

and Vice President of the Football Department Adel Aqla, and member Deen Al Dhafiri, visited Al Dhafiri to check on his health. He remained under observation for further tests before being discharged after receiving the required treatment.



Kuwait Club officials led by Khaled Al Ghanem pay visit to Ahmed Al Dhafiri.