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## Opinion

# Achieve our dreams ... We are in the era of a determined leader

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

THE Minister of Health has popped the balloon by announcing that his ministry is considering the cancellation of some overseas health offices. These offices have been deemed "wasteful" of public funds, as they have been benefiting opportunists and contributing to corruption, with one of the office's debts reaching USD 800 million.

Also, lawsuits have been filed against Kuwait in the United States. In certain cases, some Kuwait Airways planes and other assets were put up as collateral in case of unpaid debts.



Al-Jarallah

This is just a glimpse of the waste left behind by the nation's corrupt system, which has provided exorbitant salaries to former legislators and ministers, along with many others who have evaded accountability due to "wasta."

The overseas health offices represent the last remaining avenues for the misallocation of public funds, costing the country approximately KD 1.9 billion, which is equivalent to the loans taken out by citizens.

Whenever loud voices are raised to call for writing off loans, those who are envious start giving excuses, claiming that borrowers took loans for travel, car renewals, and other non-essentials. They forget that many borrowers acted out of genuine necessity.

Debt is a burden that brings distress at night and humiliation during the day. It is hard to imagine that any sane person would willingly accept such a situation. This is why Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) used to pray, saying: "... and I seek refuge in You (Allah) from being heavily in debt and from being overpowered by (other) men."

If the state believes it cannot afford to repay these loans, we could probably understand. However, it could at least consider rescheduling the debts, lowering interest rates, and including the exceptional salaries and overseas health offices in its budget as a safety net to alleviate the hardship faced by citizens who are borrowing money.

By the way, we must thank the Court of Cassation for lifting the travel ban on borrowing citizens. This is their country, and they will undoubtedly return, regardless of their debts of either KD 20,000, KD 100,000, or even a million dinars or more.

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## Dialogue key to preserve cultural harmony: union

MOSCOW, Sept 22, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Union of Women's Associations has underlined the importance of dialogue in preserving cultural commonalities among different peoples.

Speaking at the 4th Eurasian Women's Forum in the Russian city of St. Petersburg, Board Member of the Kuwaiti Union of Women's Association Dr. Hayla Al-Mekaimi said culture is an important gateway for industry, trade, economic and social cooperation between countries and serves peoples' interests.

She called for preserving the commonalities between Arab and Russian cultures.

Al-Mekaimi, also Professor of Eurasian studies at Kuwait University, expressed admiration of the Russian women's pivotal role in developing their national economy.

There is a need for exchanging experience between Russian women and their Kuwaiti and Arabian Gulf peers in this regard, she said.

In statements to KUNA on Saturday, Al-Mekaimi said that women worldwide have contributed greatly to promoting the concept of sustainability and boosting environment-friendly industries.

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# All-out war feared as Israel and Hezbollah trade blows

US warns citizens to exit Lebanon as conflict intensifies

'Amir, Crown Prince have no social media accounts'

## Amir Rep says keen to take part in 'Summit of Future'



Left: 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 meets President of the United Nations General Assembly Philemon Yang. Right: Amir's Representative His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.



Crown Prince Diwan photos

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): The Amir Diwan announced on Sunday that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah did not have any social media accounts, adding that all legal measures would be taken against fake accounts.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received First Deputy Prime Minister, Interior Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, 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 reaffirmed keenness to participate in the Summit

of the Future and all meetings during UN General Assembly's 79th Session. His Highness the Crown Prince, during a meeting with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on the sidelines of UNGA 79th Session, called on member countries to join hands, develop the UN and promoting its role to boost international security and stability, as well as achieve the sustainable development goals.

He conveyed greetings of His Highness the Amir and his support of the UN's "important and vital" role, as well as his recognition of endeavors of Guterres.

Guterres commended Kuwait's "active and historic" support of the UN's activities, and affirmed importance of backing international peace and security.

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## Industry sees major rebound

### Travel ticket sales hit KD 244 mln

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Recent statistics from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) revealed that approximately 1.7 million air tickets issued from Kuwait in the first half of this year, which indicates an increase in travel, particularly since travelers are returning from summer vacation.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the statistics; stating that 294,000 air tickets were issued in January; 254,000 in February; 237,500 in March; 283,000 in April; 348,800 in May – the highest so far; and 299,200 in June.

The Kuwait Travel and Tourism Agencies Association reported that ticket sales revenues in the country, through International Air Transport Association (IATA)'s bank reconciliation system, reached KD 244 million (approx. USD 797.6 million) in the first eight months of 2024.

Association's chief of board of directors, Mohammad Al-Mutairi, told KUNA that the sales represent more than 2.3 million travel tickets issued, not including seasonal trips and low cost flights.

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## MEW is heading for total Kuwaitization

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: According to figures and statistics from the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, 1,133 Kuwaitis have been appointed in the technical and administrative sectors during the last eight months of 2024.

The statistics reveal that the Kuwaitization rate in the ministry increased to 97.6 percent in August from 97.5 percent in January. This brings the total number of employees to 35,506, which included 34,666 Kuwaitis and 840 non-Kuwaitis, as of August 2024.

In January this year, the total number of employees was 34,395, comprising 33,533 Kuwaitis and 862 non-Kuwaitis. This means there was a decrease of 22 expatriates due to Kuwaitization policy, and retirements during the mentioned period.

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## Principals, admin quit plan to retire after assurances by MoE

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Some school principals and assistant principals have apparently withdrawn their resignations and abandoned their early retirement plans after receiving assurances from the Ministry of Education, the Civil Service Commission (CSC), and the Public Institution for Social Security regarding rumors of reduced end-of-service bonuses.

Also, the Ministry of Education has been actively working to address employee concerns on this matter.

According to informed sources, the Ministry of Education, currently led (by proxy) by the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal, is facing unprecedented challenges related to administrative vacancies and the management of positions in acting capacities, which has led to widespread concern in the educational sector.

With approximately 300 open positions in senior and middle management at the Ministry of Education, including roles such as Minister, Undersecretary, Assistant Undersecretaries, Directors, and Supervisors of Educational Affairs, the crisis of temporary assignments and vacancies poses a serious challenge that demands urgent resolution to prevent further destabilization of the educational system.

This situation has intensified pressure on the educational process, exacerbating the instability within the educational and supervisory sectors.

The sources confirmed that the Ministry of Education has denied rumors about a move to reduce staff or rewards, but these rumors appear to be aimed at creating anxiety within the educational community, adding that the shortage of qualified leaders in supervisory positions has left the field in a state of confusion.

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KUNA photo  
Kuwaiti and Iranian foreign ministers meet in the presence of their teams.

## Kuwait, Iran FMs hold talks

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya on Saturday met with his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly in New York.

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that the

two sides discussed bilateral relations between the two countries in various sectors. The discussions also touched on developments on the regional and international arenas and issues of joint concern. (KUNA)

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## Kuwait must cap expenses at KD 24.5b in 3 fiscal years

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Kuwait faces significant economic challenges due to its heavy reliance on oil revenues, which exposes the state to fluctuations in the global oil market, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

A recent report from Al-Shall emphasize the urgent need for Kuwait to impose a ceiling on public expenditures, recommending a limit of 24.5 billion dinars over the next three fiscal years.

This strategy aims to mitigate risks and promote fiscal discipline during uncertain times.

The report highlights Kuwait's economy as heavily dependent on volatile oil market conditions. Despite substantial savings amassed during previous oil booms, the country has struggled to diversify its income sources.

Fitch Ratings reaffirmed Kuwait's sovereign rating at AA- with a stable outlook, noting strong external buffers from these savings but highlighting weaknesses in economic reform and public finance restructuring.

Fitch anticipates that Kuwait will need to tap into the global debt market by fiscal year 2025/2026 to cover around 30 percent of the projected budget deficit.

The report suggests that enhancing economic structure and financial governance could potentially lead to a higher credit rating. The direct impact of oil price fluctuations on Kuwait's budget is alarming.

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## Cams zero in on seat belt, phone use among drivers

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): The Ministry of Interior, through its Traffic and Operations Sector, announced on Sunday the launch of a new camera system aimed at monitoring traffic violations, specifically focusing on drivers not wearing seat belts and using mobile phones while driving.

In a press release issued by the General Department of Security Relations and Media, the ministry stated that advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence, will be utilized for automatic monitoring of these violations. This initiative is in line with the directives of First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah. The primary goal is to reduce traffic accidents and enhance road safety across the country.

The ministry emphasized that this new technology is designed to improve road safety by accurately identifying and recording violations, thus ensuring better compliance with traffic regulations. It urged drivers to follow traffic laws, wear seat belts, and refrain from using mobile phones while driving to protect their own safety and that of others.

The statement highlighted that the introduction of this system is part of a broader strategy aimed at improving

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## KUNA 1st step

### Bid to verify news and tackle rumors

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): The Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) launched Sunday KUNA's Observatory for



Dr. Al-Salem

Verifying News and Responding to Rumors, in an initial and preliminary step for its official launch on October 6. In a press release, KUNA's Director-General Dr. Fatima Al-Salem said that this step comes as a continuation of the steps taken by KUNA towards enhancing transparency, credibility and media responsibility.

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## NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Amir Diwan on Sunday issued the following statement, "On behalf of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the gracious Al-Sabah family, the Diwan extends deep gratitude to the citizens and residents of the country, who took part in offering condolences on demise of Sheikh Meshal Abdulaziz Al-Malek Al-Sabah". (KUNA)

NEW YORK: Leaders of the Quad group stated that the massive loss of civilian lives and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza are unacceptable, urging the release of hostages, which they believe could lead to an immediate and long-term ceasefire.

In a joint statement issued Saturday following their summit, held at US President Joe Biden's home in Delaware, the Quad members – representing the US, Australia, India, and Japan – expressed deep concern over the deteriorating situation. (KUNA)

See Also Page 7



## Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 04:17 Asr ..... 15:08  
 Sunrise .. 05:36 Maghrib .. 17:45  
 Zohr ..... 11:41 Isha ..... 19:02

# Local

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

## Weather

## Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h.

**By Night:** Rather hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h.

tively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	40	28
Kuwait Airport	41	27

Abdaly	43	27
Bubyan	35	24
Jahra	43	30
Failaka Island	37	24
Salmiyah	35	32
Ahmadi	40	24
Jal Aliyah	42	28
Nuwaisib	39	27

## National Day greetings sent

## HH the Amir congratulates Mali

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Sunday a cable of congratulations to Mali Transitional President Colonel Assimi Goita, on the occasion of his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished the president well-being, and Mali and its friendly people further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince

Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to Mali Transitional President Colonel Assimi Goita, on the occasion of his country's National Day.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to Mali Transitional President Colonel Assimi Goita, on the occasion of his country's National Day.

## GCC ambassadors in Brussels hold talks with EU Council chair on Oct 16 summit

BRUSSELS, Sept 22, (KUNA): Ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states have held talks with President of the EU Council Charles Michel on preparations for the GCC-European summit due in Brussels on October 16.

Content of the talks was revealed by the State of Kuwait Ambassador to Belgium and the head of its mission to the European Union and North Atlantic Organization (NATO), Nawaf Al-Enezi, in a statement to KUNA on Saturday.

Ambassador Al-Enezi said the meeting with Michel had been held in the aftermath of his tour to the GCC states where he held talks with the Gulf countries' leaders on preparations for the first Gulf-European summit.

Al-Enezi said Michel expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality he was accorded during his recent visit to the State of Kuwait and expressed satisfaction at outcome of meetings with 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 His Highness the Prime

## Kuwaiti envoy reveals content of talks



KUNA photo  
The Head of the State of Kuwait's Mission to the European Union meets with the President of the European Council.

Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

The forthcoming summit will address a host of files related means of boosting the Gulf-European partner-

ship in investment, commerce and energy, green transformation and visa relief.

During his visit to Kuwait, earlier this month, Michel said in an inter-

view with KUNA that the leaders of the 27 EU member states are motivated to hold the upcoming GCC-EU Summit, due in Belgium on October 16.



KUNA photos

The Kuwaiti Charitable Society for Elderly Care is one of the projects in the Alzheimer's disease awareness workshop.

## Symptoms, care, prevention in focus

## 'Health' organizes 2-day awareness workshop on World Alzheimer's Day

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA): The Health Services Department for the Elderly, under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, organized a two-day awareness workshop in recognition of World Alzheimer's Day.

Dr. Ibrahim Al Hammadi, head of the department, emphasized the importance of raising awareness about Alzheimer's disease, a common form of dementia, especially in September month, which is globally dedicated to this cause.

The workshop shed light on ways to alleviate Alzheimer's symptoms and offer guidance on the prevention and care of patients, benefiting both medical professionals and family caregivers.

Dr. Al Hammadi noted the increasing prevalence of Alzheimer's disease worldwide, especially as the elderly population grows due to advances in medical science.

Since its establishment in 2014, the Department of Health Services for the Elderly has been committed to providing an integrated care system for dementia patients and their

caregivers.

He highlighted the department's focus on training doctors and healthcare providers, many of whom attended the workshop, in offering optimal care for Alzheimer's patients.

Moreover, the department is working to establish comprehensive assessment clinics and integrated care systems for early detection of dementia, while at the same time providing medications that help slow the progression of the symptoms.

Dr. Ali Al-Qattan, head of the Geriatric Diseases Unit, also spoke during the workshop, discussing the latest developments in Alzheimer's research, early symptoms, and the various medications available to help manage the condition.

He emphasized the importance of daily care models for patients. He also noted that vascular dementia is the most common type of dementia in Kuwait, driven by the high prevalence of diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension among the population.



Dr. Al-Hammadi



Dr. Al-Qattan

## Other Voices

## English system and notary public

By Ahmed alsarraf

The judicial system in England has a rich history spanning over a thousand years, and has evolved over time to become one of the most influential legal systems, for several reasons.

The beginning of the system dates back to the Anglo-Saxon period, when William the Conqueror, after conquering England, formed a more centralized judicial system, establishing royal courts, and working with and developing common law, based on judicial decisions and precedents rather than local customs.



alsarraf

During the 12th and 13th centuries, the judicial system developed during the reign of Henry II, who established the common law system and appointed traveling judges who succeeded in spreading royal justice throughout the country.

From that stage, the idea of practicing judicial precedents arose, meaning that the rulings or decisions of past cases have a role in guiding future rulings, and that was the beginning of the emergence of a unified legal system.

In 1215, the Magna Carta, a document issued by King John, which included basic legal rights and the principle of the king's submission to the law, and the charter established the basis for legal accountability and protection from arbitrary rule, was more than 800 years ago.

By the 14th and 15th centuries, and a little earlier, the main courts were established: the King's Court, the Court of Appeal, the Court of the Treasury, and permanent courts, each dealing with different types of cases, criminal, civil, and financial, respectively. The Court of Chancery also emerged to deal with cases on the basis of justice and fairness, to deal with the subjects of common law, which were characterized by extreme strictness.

In 1688, a "non-violent" revolution took place in England, as a result of religious and political tensions between Parliament and King James II, the last Catholic king, due to his tyranny and disregard for the laws.

The Parliament called on William of Orange, the husband of Mary, daughter of James II, to intervene, so he invaded England with his forces, and the king became constitutional, which gave the judiciary great independence, so that the judge could not be removed except by order of Parliament, while limiting the monarchy to Protestantism. This led to the Hanoverian Germans taking over the British throne later, and until today.

As the role of the judiciary expanded, the jury system was introduced, increasing the public's role in the judicial process. The Supreme Court was established in 2009, replacing the House of Lords as the highest court.

The occasion to talk about the British judiciary is due to the status and role of the "notary public" in Kuwait, where this position does not receive the importance it deserves.

Although it provides confidence and reassurance regarding the integrity and validity of legal documents, and has a vital role in the legal system and commercial transactions, the notary public, in the opinion of many, is the preventive judge, the contract judge and the contracts expert, and his documents are subject to confidentiality, privacy and secrecy.

Article 190 of the Evidence Law on the Executive Document also states that notaries have the right to issue the executive document, the latest of which was the Rental Law, and what is related to the necessity of documenting it and appending it with the executive formula.

These documents issued by him enjoy adequate protection and immunity, but this protection does not extend to include the person who issues them.

In most countries around the world, the notary public enjoys almost complete independence, away from government agencies, while remaining under their supervision.

Therefore, we must consider placing this profession at the disposal of professionals in the private sector, so that there are "notary public" offices in every main street and mall. This is what we find in most countries around the world, including Lebanon, where, despite the difficult circumstances, the system has never been misused, to the best of my knowledge.

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## Cash car purchase ban seen as 1st step in money laundry fight

'Check requirement imposed by MoJ is insufficient'

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The decision issued by the Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel last Wednesday to "prohibit the sale of vehicles of all types for cash, allowing payment only through banking channels" has received widespread approval from financial and economic circles.**

This move is seen as a measure to reduce suspicions surrounding money laundering and financial crimes in the country.

This decision, part of an ongoing campaign by Al-Seyassah daily to cut off sources of money laundering and crack down on those involved, is regarded by experts as "the first step" in a long journey that needs to be followed by additional measures.

They advocate for expanding the ban to include cash transactions in the real estate sector, gold trade, electrical appliances, and durable goods, emphasizing that restrictions should encompass all real estate transactions. They argue that the check requirement imposed by the Ministry of Justice is insufficient.

Khaled Al-Anzi, an economic and real estate expert and head of the Al-Mutlaa Residents Committee, strongly supports the minister's decision.

He noted that this initiative will effectively eliminate illogical money laundering practices. He further urged the minister to extend the cash ban on real estate transactions throughout all stages, not just the initial bank check process, as this could lead to circumvention.

He highlighted the ongoing money laundering issues in the real estate market, which have inflated property prices significantly -- homes that should sell for half a million dinars are now priced over a million, disrupting buying and selling operations.

Al-Anzi also pointed out that many auctions for valuable items are witnessing money laundering activities, necessitating new regulations to restrict trading in these auctions to banking transactions only, thereby tightening the grip on money laundering networks.

Lawyer Ali Al-Attar emphasized that the decision benefits the national economy and called for the generalization of the "cash transaction ban" to other economic sectors, including money exchange companies.

He stressed that all financial transfers should utilize bank cards, arguing that allowing cash transactions of up to 3,000 dinars could perpetuate money laundering activities.

Dr. Salah Boursali, head of the Contractors Union, stated that the cash ban in the car market is a key step in addressing money laundering suspicions.

He supported applying this principle to all economic and commercial activities in the country, including contracting companies, ensuring that payments to contractors are made through banking transactions.

He added that the gold market, electronic and electrical goods, wholesale food trade, and furniture should all be subject to banking transactions to further restrict money laundering activities.

## Kuwait Cultural Week runs until Sept 24

## NCCAL boosts Kuwait cultural presence in Russia

MOSCOW, Sept 22, (KUNA): The activities of Kuwait Cultural Week in Moscow continued on Friday evening with the screening of "Zerri" documentary and holding "Hivarat Lawniya" (color dialogues) art exhibition at Poklonka Cinema Hall at the Victory Museum.

The cultural week is organized by Kuwait's National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NCCAL) in collaboration with Kuwait Embassy in Moscow and the Russian ministries of foreign affairs and culture between September 17 and 24.

The art exhibition showcases 17 paintings by Mahmoud Ashkinani while Zerri documentary, directed by Habib Hassan, deals with Ashkinani's biography and sheds light on the traditional embroidery in Kuwait.

Speaking to KUNA, Ashkinani said the documentary is a tribute to his own mother who used to be an embroiderer, sewing patterns onto cloth to produce amazing traditional Kuwaiti garb.

He noted that the creative products, made by his mother or first teacher, inspired him to explore and practice the formative art.

On the art exhibition, Ashkinani said it features the outcome of nearly five decades of tracking the Kuwaiti cultural legacy and his own artistic experience.

After the documentary, the Kuwaiti chef Abdullah Al-Hakimy served "the Kuwaiti Table" or cuisine to the guests of the embassy in Moscow, including diplomats and prominent figures.

As part of Kuwait cultural week in Moscow, Al-Ameri folklore troupe, of Kuwait, gave a heritage



KUNA photo

Al-Ameri folklore troupe performing during the event.

performance featuring 'Al-Nahmah' (local fishermen's songs) and poetry at the Maly Theatre on Thursday.

Dr. Khalaf Al-Khaledi read an Arabic poem titled 'bin al-odabaa wa al-olama' (between men of letters and scientists) during the performance.

The cultural week is organized by Kuwait's National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature between September 17 and 24, said NCCAL's Assistant Secretary-General and head of Kuwait delegation to Moscow Mosaed Al-Zamel.

The week-long event aims to give the Russian people an insight into the cultural herit-

age and arts of Kuwait, he told KUNA on the sidelines of the performance.

The bilateral ties between Kuwait and Russia have kept growing in all areas since the establishment of the diplomatic relations in 1963 and the signing of an agreement on economic and artistic cooperation in the following year, Al-Zamel noted.

He thanked Kuwait Ambassador to Russia Dr. Rashed Al-Adwani for contributing to the success of the cultural week in Moscow which also included an art exhibition and feature film on Mahmoud Ashkinani, and a symposium by Dr. Hilah Al-Mekimi on Kuwait-Russia relations.

## Program dedicated to support Kuwaiti students

## US mission launches 'Take a Step' campaign

By Paulo Francisco X. Fernandes  
Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The US Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Karen Sasahara and the entire US Embassy team send congratulatory messages to all students in Kuwait on the start of the 2024-2025 academic year.

In her message, the US envoy said, "Your dedication to your studies and hard work in the classroom are the beginning of a journey from high school to college and into a professional career."

"We believe that higher education is key for unlocking future success, and we are thrilled to unveil the 'Take a Step' campaign," a program dedicated to supporting Kuwaiti students who are applying to colleges and universities in the United States of

America.

She went on to say, the United States offers an unparalleled quality of education, renowned for its innovation, diversity, and excellence.

Whether you plan to become an engineer, a doctor, a lawyer, a scientist, a writer, an entrepreneur, an artist, or even a diplomat, she said,

the US colleges and universities are world-class institutions, with cutting-edge research facilities, that are designed to equip you with critical thinking skills for the world of tomorrow.

She stressed, with access to distinguished faculty, extensive

resources, and a vibrant campus life, students are prepared for professional success and encouraged to make a significant impact as well-rounded, global citizens. "You are the future leaders and visionaries who will shape our world for the better."

She added, "As we launch this campaign, which will run until the end of October, we envision a future where Kuwaiti students are not just participants in their own success but active architects of their country's progress."

"The road ahead is filled with opportunities, and with 'Take a Step,' we are excited to be part of your journey towards making a significant impact," she said.

For more help or information about study in the United States, contact EducationUSA Advisers at [KuwaitCity@EducationUSA.org](mailto:KuwaitCity@EducationUSA.org), and follow @USEmbassyQ8 on Instagram and X.



Sasahara



## ... The reality for ordinary families in conflict zones

"IN ORDER to understand the current state of affairs in the Middle East, one must first grasp the historical events that have shaped its modern landscape, especially concerning the influence Iran has managed to exert globally," columnist **Badr Khaled Al-Bahr** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"While Tehran's allies within the Arab world champion their cause as righteous, many see their actions as distortions -- turning defeat into a perceived victory, and elevating misguided heroes over the dire reality of destruction.

"For over two decades, it's been said that politics is largely about alliances with adversaries, betrayal of allies, agreements between competitors, and a balancing act of interests. This certainly holds true for the Arab world, where the ultimate beneficiary has often been Israel.

"The Zionist movement, founded in 1897 in Basel under Theodor Herzl's leadership, remains at the heart of the Middle Eastern political chessboard today. The strength of Israel lies not only in its military prowess but also in the contrast between its disciplined leadership and the political class of many Arab nations.

"The loyalty of Israeli leaders to the Hebrew state stands in stark contrast to the tangled alliances within the Arab political scene.

"While Israeli leaders such as Menachem Begin, Shimon Peres, and Yitzhak Rabin managed Israel's conflict with the Arab world while maintaining a relatively simple lifestyle, their Arab counterparts often grew wealthy while their people suffered.

"Even in times of loss, Israeli leaders have shown humility and accountability. Golda Meir, for example, resigned after the early setbacks of the 1973 war, while leaders like Ariel Sharon faced internal scrutiny for not preventing allied forces from committing atrocities.

"On the other hand, Arab leaders have often claimed victory despite devastating losses. Leaders from groups like Hamas or Hezbollah continue to declare triumph even as their people face annihilation, while Israel's leaders acknowledge their failures and resign when necessary.

"In the aftermath of Gaza's destruction and southern Lebanon's devastation, this dichotomy is starkly visible. Israel's advanced military technology and strategic intelligence have consistently outmaneuvered their enemies, yet the cycle of violence continues.

"The tragic irony is that while Arab leaders proclaim their dead as martyrs for Jerusalem, they themselves remain far removed from the city they claim to liberate. Instead, they engage in regional conflicts in Syria, Lebanon, and beyond, causing untold suffering to their own people.

"Now, these same forces face the wrath of Israel, a powerful adversary they once sought to challenge, but whose strength and unity have prevailed across decades of conflict. As the region continues to burn, it is the people -- ordinary men, women, and children -- who suffer the most, trapped between the rhetoric of their leaders and the reality of war."

### Also:

"Many retirees complain about the difficulty of dealing with the 'Sahel' electronic application or program, which has shortened many government procedures for citizens and residents, and reduced the number of official visits to citizens and employees," columnist and former deputy director-general of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) **Iqbal Al-Ahmed** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"The 'Sahel' program also eliminated all illegal methods and ways that some employees use illegally to facilitate the completion of some transactions in their ministries, which is a good and beautiful thing.

"It is natural that some elderly or retired people still feel a barrier between them and the electronic use of mobile phones, and their use of them is considered to be minimal, and they feel that the 'Sahel' program has become a necessity in their lives, but unfortunately they have not trained on it.

"Why aren't there simplified and quick courses in all governorates or regions, dedicated to this category of users of this wonderful system, so that it is easy for them to dispense with the help of children or grandchildren, or even friends and acquaintances, when needed?

"This type of course speaks in their simple language, and the instructions are simplified and easy for the basic matters that a retiree or elderly person needs when they want to learn about something through Sahel.

These courses can be held in cooperative societies' halls or in wedding halls.

"Text messages can be sent to the retirees, according to their residential areas, which I believe the Public Institution for Social Security (PISS) has all the necessary information about, to notify them of the dates, locations and providers of the courses.

"This will make the retiree or senior feel like they can rely on themselves without having to embarrass themselves by asking others for help to figure out the easiest things in this app.

"Those who find it difficult to deal with some applications that have become part of our lives must be involved in the fun and benefits of using these programs and applications that make life easier for them in every field.

"I hope that my proposal will be ac-

cepted by the concerned authorities, and most importantly, implemented."

"The poor level of organization we witnessed at Jaber Stadium is the epitome of farce. This venue, which was meant to uphold a high standard and represent the pinnacle of Kuwaiti projects in both design and execution, fell short. Those responsible have failed to meet the expectations, resulting in significant shortcomings and glaring errors that tarnish its reputation," columnist **Sheikh Ali Al-Jaber Al-Ahmad** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The black mark on this football festival is the glaring failure of organization in every aspect. If we struggled to host a single team for one match, how can we possibly manage the Arabian Gulf Cup Championship? Clearly, we must learn from this experience to avoid a repeat of such failures in the future.

"As for the audience, they fulfilled their national duty by supporting their team, which performed admirably given its limited resources against the visiting side.

"In the end, every official in the government or private sector must prioritize the interests of Kuwait above all else; this is the foundation of their loyalty and commitment. Those who fail to uphold this principle should consider replacing their position with a seat at home.

"This expectation applies equally to the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Football Association. The government must move beyond the notion that a gentle approach is best when addressing the shortcomings and mistakes of officials. Instead, it should take decisive action to hold individuals accountable, as our Gulf neighbors do, and follow through with appropriate measures, including dismissal when necessary.

"Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health should organize visiting hours for patients in all its hospitals, specifying times in the afternoon to ensure patient comfort. Morning visits should be prohibited to allow doctors the opportunity to examine their patients without interruptions. This policy should apply universally, as is practiced in many European countries. Currently, the chaotic visiting situation, where diwanis are held in patients' rooms, often with meals as if they were on a trip, creates an inappropriate environment, especially in general wards with multiple patients."

"The situation in the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs is increasingly at odds with the direction of the state, according to the consensus of neutral and non-affiliated observers. The state has no inclinations towards the party that controls this ministry and considers it as a chicken that lays golden eggs for it, due to which it maintains a tight grip on the ministry", columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Whenever a party member leaves the ministry, another member quickly takes their place. The party has prepared its cadres for this purpose, with succession plans extending from the top ranks down to the second, third, and even tenth ranks. Those who oppose the party will face coordinated efforts to restrict their movements, often forcing them to either retire or flee. Conversely, those who ally with the party get part of the golden eggs.

"The situation of the ministry can be explained by two possible scenarios - either the minister is unable to eliminate corruption because the party controlling or occupying the ministry is much stronger, resulting in a situation where the problem is greater than the solution, or the minister's hands are tied, preventing any meaningful reform, but such a scenario seems unlikely.

"Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled, who served as the acting minister of Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs for six months, achieved what others could not in four years, which caused significant tremors within the bases of the Muslim Brotherhood Group.

"The ministry is dominated by expatriates who are affiliated with the party, and their positions are effectively untouchable. No one can remove them, replace them, or alter their roles, as the party has decreed that they are beyond reproach.

"These individuals have control over everything, including the sermons delivered in mosques, which they have turned into platforms for promoting the party's agenda. Reform efforts are stymied by the need to review these sermons, which frequently contradict state policies.

"Recently, prayers were offered for the absent, followed by curses directed at those who have normalized relations with Israel. This criticism disregards the fact that Qatar, the UAE, and Bahrain - countries with which we share close sisterly ties - have also normalized relations with the Jews. Are we expected to condone such disparagement of our brothers?

"A close look into most of our mosques will reveal meeting tables and offices inside, which raises suspicion. Further scrutiny of the rooms attached to the mosques shows they are being used for purposes other than their intended functions.

"Recently, the salary of a deceased employee was deposited into the account of an expatriate, with no clarity on who else might be benefiting from it. Even if the minister were to establish an investigation committee, corruption has permeated every level, including the very supplies purchased for the mosques. It seems the system is akin to a chicken that lays golden eggs, with corruption deeply embedded."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes and Mahmoud Ateyeh



Chief of Staff of Kuwait Army, Lt. Gen. Al-Muzain during his inspection visit to a number of military units and sites.

### Army Chief of Staff evaluates combat preparedness

Chief of Staff of the Kuwait Army Lieutenant General Pilot Bandar Al-Muzain conducted inspection visits to several military units and sites on Saturday. During these visits, he assessed their readi-

ness and received briefings on the progress of operations, reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

In a press statement, the Chief of Staff affirmed the importance of maintaining the highest levels of

combat readiness. He expressed his appreciation for the efforts exerted by personnel from various units of the Kuwaiti Army in fulfilling their responsibilities to ensure the security and safety of the nation.

## Court sentences Al-Arabi Club's chief to 1-yr jail with hard labor

One dead, 3 injured in road accident

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: The Misdemeanor Court yesterday sentenced the President of Al-Arabi Club Abdulaziz Ashour to one-year imprisonment with hard labor for offending a judge.**

The Court of Cassation previously ruled to release Ashour, who had been sentenced to six-month imprisonment for assaulting a member of the judiciary. The execution of the sentence was suspended pending the outcome of his appeal in the Court of Cassation.

However, the Public Prosecution decided to continue his detention due to another case filed by the same victim. This action was prompted after Ashour reposted the video on his account, prompting the complainant to file a second lawsuit against him.

□ □ □

**Ex-MP released on bail:** The Court of Appeals has decided to release on bail of KD 1,000 former MP Abdullah Fuhad who was accused of insulting the judiciary, for which he was sentenced to six-month imprisonment by the Criminal Court. The court also set the session of October 13 to announce the verdict in the case.

The appeal session witnessed the trial of former MP Abdullah Fuhad after his arrival in Kuwait to implement the ruling issued to imprison him for six months on charges of offending the judiciary.

He denied the accusations leveled against him, and his defense requested his release on any bail amount that the court deems fit.

The Criminal Court had previously sentenced Fuhad to six-month imprisonment with hard labor and imposed a fine of KD 500 on the interviewer following a televised press interview.

□ □ □

**One die in accident:** A two-vehicle collision on Ratqa Road in Abdally resulted in the death of one person and injuries to three others, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) confirmed that its team efficiently dealt with the accident, indicating the dead was referred to Forensics and the injured were taken to Jahra Hospital.

The Ministry of Interior opened an investigation into the causes of the accident.

□ □ □

**Detention ordered:** The Public Prosecution has ordered the detention of the President of the Kuwait Football Association, his deputy, and the Secretary-General for 21 days in connection with a State Security case of "harming the country's interests and broadcasting false news" following the events of the Kuwait-Iraq match.

□ □ □

**Individual acquitted of drug use:** The Court of Appeals has acquitted an individual of possessing psychotropic substances for the purpose of trafficking and personal consumption, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Case files indicate that the incident officer headed a team of detectives in searching the residence of one of the accused with the permission of the Public Prosecution. This led to the discovery of a bag containing a number of transparent nylon bags with a white substance suspected to be psychotropic substances and a bag containing capsules in white and blue colors.

During interrogation, the accused admitted to possessing the substances for personal consumption and that he obtained these substances from another accused who was with the first accused when the latter was arrested. A precautionary search resulted in the discovery of a substance suspected to be shabu. The second accused admitted that he owns the substance for personal consumption.

Then, the officers went to the house of the third accused where they found a transparent nylon bag containing an undisclosed quantity of white substance suspected to be psychotropic substances, a weighing scale and KD515 cash. He also admitted ownership of the substances for personal consumption.

Attorney Bashar Al-Nassar, who represented the second accused, argued that the search was invalid; pointing out that the presence of his client with the first accused who was searched legally according to the officer in charge of the incident did not prove the charge of psychotropic substance possession for his client.

### Kuwait joins the union of tax authorities of Islamic nations

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** Kuwait has officially become a member of the Union of Tax Authorities in Islamic Countries, following the issuance of a decree approving its membership and the associated statute, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

This move is part of Kuwait's broader strategy to enhance its tax frameworks and foster international cooperation.

Additionally, several decrees were issued to amend existing tax agreements, including:

Protocol with Switzerland -- Amending the 1999 agreement to avoid double taxation on income and capital Agreement with Iraq -- A new agreement to prevent double taxation and fiscal evasion regarding income and capital taxes

## KM 'asked' to give dev plan

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** Minister of Municipal Affairs Abdullah Al-Meshari has asked the Director General of Kuwait Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous to provide a development plan within a couple of weeks which should include an execution schedule, defined targets, and performance evaluation criteria, reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

He also requested information on the sites allocated for camping for the 2024/2025 season, as well as coordination with the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) regarding designated grazing areas.

Meanwhile, sources said Al-Dabbous has responded to a letter sent earlier by Al-Meshari, in which the minister requested regular reports on waste disposal using eco-friendly practices.

They revealed that these reports included a memorandum of understanding signed between Kuwait Municipality and the Chinese National Committee for Development and Reform concerning waste recycling and a low-carbon waste disposal system.



One of the officers being honored.

## Facilities Security dept honors 'outstanding' force members

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** The General Department of Facilities Security honored a group of outstanding force members in a ceremony attended by Assistant Undersecretary for Special Security Affairs, Major General Abdullah Al-Mulla and Director General of Facilities Security, Brigadier Talal Al-Mansour, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

Al-Mulla awarded certificates of appreciation to the honorees, expressing gratitude

for their dedication and excellent performance in fulfilling their duties.

He emphasized that this recognition serves as motivation for further commitment to work, praising the efficiency with which they carry out their responsibilities.

Al-Mulla urged them to continue their vigilance in ensuring the security and safety of the nation, noting that the honor reflects the sector's commitment to encouraging and supporting its security personnel.

## 5-year-old child drowns in swimming pool

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** A five-year-old Kuwaiti child drowned in a swimming pool in Abdally, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to a security source, the Operations Unit at the Ministry of Interior received information about the drowning incident and that the child was in a critical condition.

An ambulance was immediately dispatched to the location and the child was taken to Jahra Hospital, where attempts to revive him through Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) failed. The attending physician announced the child's death.

A case was registered at Jahra Police Station.

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# MoSA suspends transactions of 5 charities over non-compliance

Ministries unite for better disability care

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA):** Abdulaziz Al-Ajmi, Director of the Charitable Societies and Endowments Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs, announced the suspension of transactions related to five charity societies for failing to submit required financial and administrative reports.

Al-Ajmi emphasized that cooperation from these organizations could lead to a review of their data by a dedicated inspection team, which will then recommend either lifting or continuing the suspension.

He further noted that the Ministry's strict audit process reflects a commitment to transparency, ensuring donors' trust and that their contributions reach their intended recipients.

Al-Ajmi highlighted the Ministry's use of digital monitoring systems to enhance transparency in managing donation funds. Specialized courses are being offered to ministry employees to keep pace with ongoing technological developments.

Al-Ajmi also introduced the Ministry's new QR Code project, designed to streamline the electronic advertising process for charitable



KUNA photo  
Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs with Sheikhha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Sabah, the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Human Rights Affairs.

organizations. The project aims to facilitate registration procedures, promote transparency, and ensure equal opportunities for all applicants.

The automated system, available through the Ministry's website, simplifies the submission of advertising requests and adheres to governance principles in reviewing applications.

Once applications are submitted and re-

viewed, decisions -- whether to approve or reject -- will be communicated to the applicants via email.

Organizations whose registration is approved will fall under the Ministry's oversight, while rejected applicants will receive a detailed explanation of the decision.

In a related effort, Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, discussed with Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs, Sheikhha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Sabah, the follow-up on implementing recommendations related to persons with disabilities, in line with the Cabinet's decision regarding the recommendations of the relevant United Nations committee.

In a press statement on Saturday, the Ministry of Social Affairs mentioned that the meeting between the two sides focused on coordinating efforts among various state agencies according to their specializations, aiming to ensure the implementation of all recommendations related to persons with disabilities.

The goal is to provide the best services and integrated care for this essential segment of Kuwaiti society, empowering them, facilitating their integration into society, and ensuring their active participation in sustainable development efforts.

## Community feedback invited within 30 days

### Block 3 in Sharq set for reorganization

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** Kuwait Municipality has announced that the Municipal Council has granted initial approval for the reorganization of a part of Block Three in Sharq, as per Decree Law No. 40/1978 on the organization of regulatory plots -- remaining part of the property as per document no. 1973/1863, plot 1A/1 of the survey plan no. M/26742.

The Municipality's announcement, which was published in the Official Gazette, stated that the reorganization will result in three plots -- one measures 1,332.60 square meters, the second measures 1,332.57 square meters and the third measures 1,332.59 square meters, so the total size of the reorganized part is 3,998.2 square meters.

It called on those concerned to submit

their comments and objections, if any; indicating that a copy of the project will be displayed on the ground floor of the Municipality branch in the Capital Governorate building in the area where the regulatory plots are located.

Those concerned will be given a period of 30 days from the date of publication of the announcement in the Official Gazette to review the project and submit objections in writing to Director General of the Municipality Saud Al-Dubos.

On the other hand, the Municipality confirmed the extension of the period for receiving offers for a consultancy study to develop a waste and debris dumping site in the landfills affiliated to it. Therefore, the last day for submitting bids in the designated box in the Tenders and Contracts Department at the main Al-Wazir Building will be at 12:00 noon on Oct 3, instead of Sept 23.



KUNA photo  
Jahra Governor during his participation in the environmental campaign to clean Al-Khuweisat Beach.

## Governor calls for environmental curriculum

### MoE must play crucial role in fostering culture of environmental conservation

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** Jahra Governor Hamad Jassim Al-Habashi has emphasized on the crucial role of the Ministry of Education to motivate the Kuwaiti youth and foster a culture of environmental conservation, reports Al-Rai daily.

He proposed the introduction of a specialized subject focusing on environmental laws and preservation techniques, along with engaging students in clean-up campaigns supported by civil society organizations.

In a statement following his sponsorship of the beach cleaning campaign at Al-Khuweisat, organized by the Kafo platform in conjunction with World Cleanup Day, Al-Habashi highlighted the governorate's full support for initiatives aimed at maintaining cleanliness in Kuwait.

He noted that the campaign's goal is to educate children and youth about the importance of protecting Kuwait's environment, instilling positive behaviors regarding cleanliness among citizens and residents.

Al-Habashi remarked on the significance of volunteer and diplomatic participation in the beach cleanup as a reflection of a societal commitment to environmental preservation.

He expressed hope that the Ministry of Education would implement a curriculum that instills principles of patriotism and

## Higher Committee sets tree planting in motion

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** The recently formed Higher Committee for Green Urban Development Initiatives has started laying down a comprehensive tree planting plan; focusing on the need to accelerate the implementation of the plan due to its vital role in putting aesthetic and civilized touches to general view of governorates, reducing temperatures and dust, developing agricultural methods and providing a healthy environment, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources confirmed that all concerned parties in the government, private sector and academic institutions have taken into consideration the need to immediately start planting trees on streets, facilities, external roads, borders and strategic bridges.

Sources stated that cooperating societies will adopt the tree planting plan as part of their corporate social responsibility and their belief in the importance of planting trees for beautification and environment protection purposes.

environmental stewardship in students, encouraging their involvement in activities like beach and desert cleanups to nurture a love for maintaining the homeland's environmental integrity.

## New hotline yields key insights

### Transparency Society receives 18 reports of corruption, 6 identified

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** Chairman of the Kuwait Transparency Society Majeed Al-Mutairi revealed that the society received 18 reports since March through the hotline service activated on the society's new website. However, upon review, only six were identified as corruption cases, while others involved violations of the right to access information and various arbitrary measures, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press statement, Al-Mutairi explained that the society will present these reports to a legal advisory committee composed of three legal experts for their opinions. One of the reports has been submitted to the Public Prosecution under the complainant's name, and the society will continue to follow up on its progress.

Regarding cases concerning access to information, Al-Mutairi said the society communicates with the relevant minister or government agency to encourage professional handling of these matters.

He highlighted that the society is a member of the Supreme Coordination Committee of the National Strategy for Combating Corruption.

Al-Mutairi explained that receiving reports is not a new practice for the society, which has operated a center called "Rescue and Legal Guidance" since 2008 in collaboration with the ALAC organization to protect whistleblowers.

This center continued its work until the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority was established in 2012, after which the society focused on providing support and legal consultations. This year, the new website was launched, incorporating a mechanism for receiving reports in line

## Awqaf updates libraries in correctional facilities

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** The Rehabilitation and Evaluation Department at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs has announced the completion of updates to the educational libraries in its affiliated centers, in collaboration with the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The libraries have been stocked with a diverse range of books -- religious, psychological, educational, historical, craft, documentary and grammatical references.

These resources have been provided to correctional institutions, craft workshop incubators, addiction treatment centers, the Kuwait Center for Mental Health and the social care home for boys and girls at the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The department emphasized its commitment to carefully selecting materials that promote awareness and foster critical thinking among inmates, helping to build their personalities in alignment with correct Islamic values and principles.

Moreover, the ministry focuses on including essential educational books in the Arabic language for children in nurseries affiliated with correctional institutions.

with the international standards set by Transparency International.

Al-Mutairi said, "We serve as a support arm for regulatory bodies, led by the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha). The volume of reports indicates a need for these regulatory bodies to enhance their administrative capabilities and improve their processes for receiving reports. The society will issue a report on International Anti-Corruption Day that includes details about the complaints received."

## Chairman outlines strategy to transfer ownership to creditors

### Dar Al-Istithmar submits debt restructuring plan

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** Nasser Al-Enezi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Dar Al-Istithmar Company, announced that the company has submitted a request to register its debt restructuring plan with Kuwait's Bankruptcy Department, which has been filed under No. 3/2024, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The proposal was previously presented to creditors during a meeting on August 28, 2024.

The restructuring plan involves transferring ownership of all Dar Al-Istithmar's assets to a new company, where creditors will hold a 90 percent stake and Dar Al-Istithmar will retain a 10 percent share.

The creditors are set to receive 40 percent of their owed debts within 30 months from the sale of these assets.

However, if Dar Al-Istithmar fails to meet

the 40 percent payment obligation within this period, the company will lose its 10 percent stake in the new entity.

The company is currently awaiting the approval of the creditors to move forward with the plan.

Once approved, the plan will be overseen by the Bankruptcy Administration, with additional governmental supervision from the Bankruptcy Committee.



# September

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## LOCAL

# Kuwait Teachers Society celebrates Amir's support for 45th Educational Conference

Al-Houli emphasizes significance for educators

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** Chairman of the Kuwait Teachers Society Hamad Al-Houli expressed appreciation and gratitude, on behalf of the society, teachers, and field workers, for the generous patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad for the 45th Educational Conference. The conference is set to take place at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center from October 14 to 16, reports Al-Seyasah daily.

In a press statement, Al-Houli explained that the conference, titled "Education in Kuwait - Current Problems and Future Paths", is a source of honor and pride for educational professionals and the society. It highlights His Highness and Amir's great interest in the welfare of teachers and his commitment to providing a stable environment for them to fulfill their mission effectively.

This patronage underscores His Highness the Amir's dedication to addressing educational issues and strengthening efforts to develop the education sector. It is expected to encourage extensive discussions and collaboration among all stakeholders in the educational system, including researchers, specialists, field workers, educational leaders, and relevant institutions.

Al-Houli said, "It is fortunate that the conference will take place in October, coinciding with the full resumption

of school life for the new academic year and the upcoming celebration of World Teachers' Day on October 5. The conference is regarded as one of the most prominent and long-standing educational forums at both local and Arab levels.

Kuwait Teachers Society has been committed to holding the conference regularly to present scientific studies and draw on experiences and expertise that enhance the educational process. The goal is to contribute to finding effective solutions to educational challenges and to provide well-considered recommendations to the relevant authorities, and develop cooperation among those involved in the education sector to help enhance the educational system."

Meanwhile, the society announced that the preparatory committee is continuing its preparations for the conference.

A board member Nafeh Al-Tawala explained that the conference will highlight key strategies for developing the essential elements of the educational process, including teaching methods, educational activities, and technology. These improvements aim to cultivate a generation equipped with knowledge and creative thinking, and to identify the challenges facing Kuwait's educational system in light of contemporary developments.

The conference will also explore global educational trends and their modern applications, and discuss the educational, psychological, and societal issues arising from these changes.

Discussions will also focus on how to confront these challenges, and figure out ways for exchanging local, regional, and international experiences in reforming areas of deficiency within the educational system.

Effective recommendations and proposals will be formulated and presented to contribute to the educational reform process in Kuwait.

Al-Rubaian misquoted on issue of fingerprint

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** Issam Al-Rubaian, the head of the Civil Service Bureau, clarified that recent discussions about withdrawing the "triple fingerprint" system stemmed from a misinterpretation of an old statement he made prior to his current role, reports Al-Seyasah daily.

Government spokesman Amer Al-Ajmi emphasized that Al-Rubaian was misquoted, leading to inaccuracies in the ongoing discourse.

## Achieve our

Continued from Page 1

Indeed, travel can provide them with opportunities to pay off their debts, but users and those with selfish interests refuse this, as their aim is to control or humiliate the citizens. These are the same individuals who pressure successive governments to deny needy citizens any hope of a decent life.

What caught my attention regarding this sensitive matter is that it was recently published that the Civil Service Commission is studying amendments to the end-of-service benefits for retired employees. This sparked considerable controversy, prompting the government to clarify the issue.

We need to reflect on some of the rumors affecting a large segment of citizens. These often stem from those impacted by Amir's measures aimed at curbing political, financial, and economic chaos, along with the ongoing crisis faced by borrowers.

These rumors undermine the efforts of the Council of Ministers, which has a duty to show compassion toward debtors. It is essential to adhere to the Islamic principle that relieving the distress of the poor is a primary responsibility of the state administration, while creditors should bear the consequences for squandering their money and giving to those who are unable to pay.

Therefore, the primary responsibility of all governments is to resolve citizens' crises and work to prevent them. They also have an obligation to remove obstacles that hinder their constituents. At this point, the Council of Ministers must prioritize alleviating the burden on citizens who carry the shame of debt, a significant number of whom find themselves in this situation.

With our determined Amir, His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, at the helm today, it is clear that the people of Kuwait are concerned about these issues, as stability and dignity are of utmost importance to him. Will the Council of Ministers accept this message?

## MEW is

Continued from Page 1

Informed sources from the ministry noted that appointments are being made in line with the annual requirements of the ministry's sectors and their needs for specific technical and administrative roles. These appointments are processed through the Civil Service Commission, based on the established frameworks and regulations.

## Principals, admin

Continued from Page 1

Many teachers and administrators have expressed concerns about the slow pace of decision-making due to the lack of permanent leadership, which hampers the educational process and increases pressure on those working in the field.

The sources explained that this crisis has raised worries among educators regarding the impact of these vacancies and assignments on the future of education.

If the current situation continues, there may be a decline in educational quality and heightened pressure on schools, especially as teachers face increased responsibilities in the absence of stable leadership.

The sources urged the minister to fill the open positions to facilitate the efficient and organized administration of teaching and learning activities.

They explained that the decision-maker in the education field must address pending issues, which is inherently linked to the minister's ability to close the large number of vacancies, including those for educational leaders such as the Undersecretary and Assistant Undersecretaries. This is necessary for mitigating the negative impacts of these unfilled roles on the resolution of other urgent matters due to the lack of leadership.

There are supervisory position vacancies that urgently require a new operational mechanism in the next phase. The key focus should be on filling these vacancies, which have

significantly harmed all aspects of the educational process.

The Ministry of Education is currently managed in an acting capacity due to these vacant leadership and supervisory positions. Filling them is important for stabilizing operations and effectively managing the ministry's affairs.

In addition, there are vacant general manager positions in three educational zones - Jahra, Ahmedi, and Farwaniya - each of which plays a vital role in overseeing thousands of students, teachers, administrators, and hundreds of schools.

## Travel ticket

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait has around 591 authorized tourism and travel agencies -- 6.25 percent of the total in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA); while 85 airlines are operating at Kuwait International Airport.

In terms of ticket sales, the statistics showed that the aviation industry experienced a notable economic rebound, with earnings from ticket sales totaling approximately KD 180 million from January to June. May recorded the highest ticket sales at KD38 million, followed by June with KD33 million and January with KD30.6 million.

Airport sources said most travelers are now returning from their summer vacation. In order to maintain regular traffic and prevent congestion, particularly during peak hours, the devices at the airport fully operate based on the performance of the operational sectors and efforts to improve the services offered to passengers.

Sources affirmed that the necessary steps have been taken to optimize passenger services and increase productivity to handle the growing volume of travelers.

The Association is keen on cooperating with local airlines, especially as Kuwait Airways sticks to diversifying destinations and increasing number of high demand flights, Al-Mutairi stated.

He hailed Kuwait Airways' adherence to take off and landing schedules, and their efforts in decreasing wait time and preventing crowding by permitting travelers to deposit baggage 12 hours prior to flight.

## Cams zero

Continued from Page 1

traffic safety and decreasing the number of accidents, which claim many lives each year. The ministry expressed optimism that this technology would help achieve the desired goal of making roads safer for everyone.

## Kuwait must

Continued from Page 1

A \$10 drop in oil prices can shrink the budget by about 4 percent of GDP, while a reduction in oil production by 100,000 barrels can lower the budget by approximately 1.5 percent of GDP. This stark dependency illustrates Kuwait's precarious economic position globally.

Al-Shall's conclusion is straightforward that Kuwait's reliance on oil creates a scenario where external conditions dictate financial stability.

The lack of diversified income sources exacerbates this vulnerability. Instead of borrowing from global markets -- which may only delay financial issues -- the report advocates for setting a public expenditure cap as a prudent measure.

Establishing this ceiling at 24.5 billion dinars could help the government navigate fiscal risks and stabilize the economy.

While modest, this approach represents a necessary step towards responsible fiscal management. The report warns that without meaningful reforms and diversification, Kuwait risks deepening its financial challenges and continuing its dependence on oil revenues, leaving its economy exposed to global market fluctuations.

## Bid to

Continued from Page 1

The importance of the observatory is in its mission to tackle rumors and misleading news as well as confronting misinformation campaigns that affect the reputation of government work, achievements and contributions, she added.

Dr. Al-Salem stressed that the idea of launching the observatory comes in light of the importance of the digital economy, receiving information from its correct sources, limiting the spread of misleading information, and combating rumors that could negatively affect public opinion.

## Dialogue key

Continued from Page 1

As Kuwait moves towards diversifying its national economy, Kuwaiti women have to be aware of the role played by their peers in other countries to achieve this goal, she clarified.

Held every three years since 2015, the Eurasian Women's Forum aims to promote the role of women in all fields for the target of building a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world.

This year's edition, themed "Women for strengthening trust and global cooperation", drew the participation of 1,500 delegates from 126 countries and international organizations, including many female leaders.

Al-Mekaimi represented the Kuwaiti Union of Women's Associations at the event.

## Amir Rep

Continued from Page 1

The two sides discussed regional and international developments, UN role in promoting international peace and security and achieving sustainable development.

The UN said in a statement the two leaders discussed Kuwait-UN strong partnership, and exchanged views over the Middle East, Sudan, peace and security in the Gulf region.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs at Diwan of Crown Prince Mazen Al-Essa, Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Tareq Al-Bannai and Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah.

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 met with President of the United Nations General Assembly Philemon Yang on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Yang.

He also congratulated Yang on assuming the Presidency of the 79th UN General Assembly, wishing him further success and affirming Kuwait's support to his efforts in coordinating with member states in finding solutions to cases discussed in the General Assembly.

For his part, Yang thanked Kuwait's leadership and people on their continuous support to the United Nations and its bodies.

During the meeting, both sides discussed the latest regional and international developments and the role of UN in maintaining peace and stability in the middle east and internationally, and implementing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

The meeting was attended by Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya, Foreign Affairs Undersecretary at the Crown Prince Diwan Mazen Al-Essa and Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah.

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 met with Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, at

## Crown Prince, PM extend best wishes

# Kuwait HH Amir congratulates Saudi Arabia on National Day

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22.** (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Sunday a congratulatory cable to Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, on the occasion of the national day, in which he commended the depth of the firm fraternal relations, and recalled Saudi's steadfast stances by Arab and Islamic causes.

His Highness the Amir also voiced pride in all that Saudi Arabia has achieved under the leadership of King Salman, wishing the King good health and wellbeing to continue leading Saudi to further growth and prosperity, flanked by the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud. His Highness the Crown Prince

Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent Sunday a congratulatory cable to Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, on the occasion of the national day, in which he commended the country's developmental achievements across various sectors.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished King Salman good health and wellbeing and for Saudi Arabia to achieve further progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of the King, flanked by the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent Sunday a congratulatory cable to Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, on this occasion.



KUNA photo

Group photo during the Al-Assima Governorate's clean-up campaign.

## Al-Assima launches clean-up campaign

Al-Assima Governorate organized on Saturday a cleaning campaign for Kuwait Towers beach marking the National and World Cleanup Day.

The Assima Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, who sponsored and participated in the activity, said in a press statement that he encourages all such voluntary initiatives and promotion of public environmental awareness.

Personnel from several public departments, a num-

ber of volunteers, citizens and expatriates participated in the cleaning campaign.

"We were keen on coinciding the cleaning campaign with the National and World Cleanup Day which is one of the international days celebrated annually by civil communities," Sheikh Abdullah said.

The governorate will launch campaigns intended to inspire the citizens and residents of the country to preserve the land and marine environments. (KUNA)

## Free Trade Zone sewage link tender launched

# Road tender talks get CAPT approval

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyasah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has approved the request of the Ministry of Public Works to hold a negotiation session with those whose offers for 18 road repair tenders were accepted on Tuesday.

Sources revealed the ministry sent a letter to CAPT on Aug 19, requesting to set the date for negotiations regarding prices and some technical issues pertaining to the tenders.

Sources said the tenders are divided into two groups: one group will be implemented by the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) and the other group by the ministry's Roads Engineering Sector, which is responsible for internal roads.

Sources added CAPT also decided to ask the bidders to extend the initial insurance for all companies participating in the tenders as per Article 46 of Public Tenders Law no. 49/2016, indicating a number of companies were excluded due to failure to meet the conditions.

On the other hand, the ministry announced the launching of a tender for connecting the sewage network of the future free trade zone with the minis-

## PAFN uncovers 27 food violations in Capital Governorate inspection

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) remains committed to ensuring consumer safety and providing safe food for all. Mohammad Ahmad Al-Kandari, Head of the Mubarakiya Center at the Authority, revealed that a recent inspection tour in the Capital Governorate led to the issuance of 27 violation reports, reports Al-Anba daily.

In his statement, Al-Kandari outlined the types of violations uncovered, which ranged from selling food products deemed unfit for human consumption due to spoilage, deterioration, or changes in color, shape, and smell, to displaying food items outside the designated facility. Other infrac-

tion's network. CAPT set Monday as the date for the preliminary meeting for companies wishing to bid to respond to all inquiries. Then, a date will be set to open the bids and to hold a negotiation session.

Sources said the project aims to

include the operation of a food facility with an expired health license and the unauthorized transportation of food products without a license from the authority.

He also noted that some workers were handling food without the required health certificates, while employers were found to have hired staff without ensuring they had the necessary documentation. Additionally, violations of general hygiene rules, including personal hygiene standards, were observed. Al-Kandari emphasized the Authority's dedication to safeguarding consumers and ensuring food safety. He reiterated that those who compromise food safety or harm consumers will face strict accountability.

preventing sewage flows from being diverted to Kuwait Bay through the connection of the sewage network for the multi-purpose service area -- former Shuwaikh Free Trade Zone -- with the ministry's network.

his place of stay in New York city. His Highness the Crown Prince relayed the greetings of His Highness the Amir to President Abbas.

Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah asserted Kuwait's unwavering solidarity and support to the Palestinian people in their quest to attain their legitimate rights, including the establishment of an independent state.

His Highness the Crown Prince recalled the United Nations General Assembly resolution in its emergency 10th special session, which had garnered a sweeping majority, and had relied on the International Court of Justice' ruling regarding Israeli occupation's practices in occupied Palestinian lands and their illegal settlements.

The two deliberated the sturdy Kuwaiti-Palestinian relations and modes of developing them to serve both nations and boost joint Arab work.

The meeting was attended by Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya, Foreign Affairs Undersecretary at the Crown Prince Diwan Mazen Al-Essa, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Minister of Foreign Affairs Office Bader Al-Tunaib, Kuwait Permanent Envoy to UN Ambassador Tariq Al-Bannai and Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah.

## All-out

Continued from Page 1

"I ran without shoes, without a shirt, only with pants. I ran in this house when everything was still on fire to try to find if there are other people," he said.

Lebanon's Health Ministry said that three people were killed and another four wounded in Israeli strikes near the border, without saying whether they were civilians or combatants.

The barrage came after an Israeli airstrike in Beirut on Friday killed at least 45 people, including one of Hezbollah's top leaders and several other fighters, as well as women and children. Hezbollah was already reeling from a sophisticated attack that caused thousands of paggers and walkie-talkies to explode just days earlier.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel would take whatever action was necessary to restore security in the north and allow people to return to their homes.

"No country can accept the wanton rocketing of its cities. We can't accept it either," he said.

Hezbollah legislator Hassan Fadlallah, speaking at a funeral for a Hezbollah member on Sunday, said the war had entered a "new phase" and the militant group would keep up its attacks until there is a cease-fire in Gaza.

"We have a strong and capable resistance," he said. "All of its options are on the table, and it is prepared for any scenario, war or confrontation."

The Israeli military said it carried out strikes across southern Lebanon over the past 24 hours, hitting about 400 militant sites, including rocket launchers. Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani, an Israeli military spokesman, said those strikes had thwarted an even larger attack.

"Hundreds of thousands of civilians have come under fire across a lot of northern Israel," he said. "Today we saw fire that was deeper into Israel than before."

The military also said it had intercepted multiple aerial devices fired from the direction of Iraq, after Iran-backed militant groups there claimed to have launched a drone attack on Israel.

School was canceled across northern Israel, and the Health Ministry said all hospitals in the north would begin

moving operations to protected areas within the medical centers.

Meanwhile, the US urged its citizens not to travel to Lebanon and those who are there to depart "due to unpredictable nature of the ongoing conflict".

The US State Department updated its travel warning to Lebanon to level 4 Saturday and called on US citizens to depart Lebanon while commercial options still remain available.

"If the security situation worsens, commercial options to depart may become unavailable. The US Embassy (in Lebanon) may not be able to assist US citizens who choose to remain," it cautioned.

It added that those who choose to remain in Lebanon, should be prepared to shelter in place if the situation deteriorates further.

It strongly encourages US citizens in Southern Lebanon, near the borders with Syria, and/or in refugee settlements to depart those areas immediately.

It advised citizens "Do Not Travel to Lebanon due to crime, terrorism, civil unrest, kidnapping, unexploded landmines, and the risk of armed conflict. Some areas, especially near the borders, have increased risk".

In a separate development, Israeli forces raided the West Bank bureau of Al-Jazeera, which it had banned earlier this year, accusing it of serving as a mouthpiece for militant groups, allegations denied by the pan-Arab broadcaster.

Israel and Hezbollah have traded fire since the outbreak of the war in Gaza nearly a year ago, when the militant group began firing rockets in solidarity with the Palestinians and its fellow Iran-backed ally Hamas. The low-level fighting has killed dozens of people in Israel, hundreds in Lebanon, and displaced tens of thousands on both sides of the frontier.



## World News Roundup

## Europe

## UK's Labour gathers

## Russian strike on Kharkiv hurts 21

KYIV, Ukraine, Sept 22, (AP): Russian strikes hit high-rise apartment blocks in Ukraine's city of Kharkiv, leaving dozens wounded in a second consecutive nighttime attack this past week.

The bombs fell Saturday night on the district of Shevchenkivsky, north of the center of Kharkiv, the second largest city, local Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said. Nine residential buildings sustained varying degrees of damage, including 16- and nine-story blocks, he added.

Twenty-one people were wounded, including an 8-year-old, according to Syniehubov and Kharkiv Mayor **Ihor Terekhov**. Terekhov said 60 residents were evacuated from one of the buildings.

Kharkiv has been a frequent target of Russian attacks since Moscow launched its all-out invasion of neighboring Ukraine in February 2022.

The attack came after another late Friday that wounded 15 people, including a 10- and 12-year-old, as Russian airstrikes hit three Kharkiv neighborhoods, Terekhov said.

According to Ukrainian officials, KAB-type aerial glide bombs were used in both attacks, a retrofitted Soviet weapon that has for months laid waste to eastern Ukraine.

Russia also launched 80 Shahed drones and two missiles at Ukraine overnight into Sunday, the Ukrainian air force said. Ukrainian air defense shot down 71 drones, and another six were lost on location due to electronic warfare countermeasures, the statement said.

Farther south, a 12-year-old girl and a woman died after a Russian drone struck a passenger car in the city of Nikopol, local Gov. Serhii Lysak reported. Two others, including a 4-year-old, suffered wounds.

## Grinding

A Russian artillery strike also killed one person in the eastern town of Kurakhove, regional prosecutors said, as Russian forces continue their grinding advance westwards through Ukraine's industrial Donetsk province.

Russian drone strikes on Sunday also damaged energy infrastructure in Ukraine's central Poltava region and the northern city of Shostka, local officials reported.

Shostka lies in the Sumy region, across the border from Russia's Kursk province - the target of a startling Ukrainian military incursion launched last month. Weeks into the incursion, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said its aim is to create a buffer zone to prevent further Russian cross-border strikes that have for months wreaked havoc in Sumy.



**UK Labour Party gathers:** This should be a time of celebration for Britain's Labour Party, which opens its annual conference Sunday less than three months after winning power in a landslide after 14 years in opposition.

But it's no victory lap for Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

His government is facing a reckoning with a battered economy and an electorate impatient for change. The mood among Labour members gathering in the northwest England city of Liverpool has been further dampened by a tempest over Starmer's acceptance of freebies at a time when the millions of people are struggling with the cost of living.

Starmer insists he followed the rules when he took clothes and designer eyeglasses from Waheed Alli, a media entrepreneur and longtime Labour donor. But after days of negative headlines, the party now says Starmer won't accept any more free outfits.

"I get that people are angry," said Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, who also accepted donations to pay for clothing.



**Kate makes 1st public appearance:** Kate, the Princess of Wales, made her first public appearance Sunday since she announced she had completed chemotherapy and would return to some public duties.

Kate and her husband, Prince William, were seen Sunday attending church with King Charles III and Queen Camilla near their royal Balmoral estate in Scotland.

Kate, 42, announced on Sept. 9 that she had completed treatment six months after revealing she had an undisclosed type of cancer. Her announcement came six weeks after Buckingham Palace announced that the king was being treated for cancer.



**Czech's ANO wins big:** The main opposition party dominated Czech regional elections and was ahead in the first round of voting for Parliament's upper house, according to results released Saturday.

With almost all the votes counted, the ANO (YES) movement led by former populist Prime Minister Andrej Babis won 10 of the 13 regions contested in the election on Friday and Saturday, the Czech Statistics Office said.

The result reflected a stable support for ANO, which also won 10 regions in 2020 and nine in 2016, and a boost for Babis ahead of next year's general election.

ANO also has the most candidates advancing to the runoff for 27 seats in the 81-seat Senate. The top two finishers in each district will face each other in a head-to-head vote next weekend.

With ballots from 99% of stations counted, ANO had 19 candidates advancing to the runoffs.



**Naples building collapse kills 2:** A two-story building collapsed in the southern Italian province of Naples early Sunday, killing two young siblings and burying their mother and another woman in the rubble, firefighters said.

The firefighters said on their official Telegram channel that a gas explosion likely caused the collapse.

Rescuers in the town of Saviano recovered the bodies of a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. Their 2-year-old brother was found alive and the father was hospitalized in Naples in serious condition.

Firefighters' spokesman Luca Cari said that rescuers had to be "very careful and move slowly, to avoid new collapses" as they searched for the two women.

Mayor Vincenzo Simonelli was at the scene and told reporters that the building appeared "crumpled up on itself," adding it was "a very serious situation."

Media reports said a gas leak could have caused the explosion that rocked the second floor of the building, which crumbled down, covering the lower floor with rubble.



US Republican presidential nominee former president Donald Trump holds his granddaughter Carolina Trump as he speaks at a campaign event at Wilmington International Airport in Wilmington, NC on Sept 21. (AP)

## Politics

## Harris to skip Al Smith dinner

## Trump appeals to women in N. Carolina

WILMINGTON, NC, Sept 22, (AP): Donald Trump returned to North Carolina on Saturday, stumping in the southern battleground state with direct appeals to women, claiming he would be a better champion for them than Vice President Kamala Harris, who is vying to become the first female president.

Trump campaigned in Wilmington, along the state's southern coast, without Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson, the GOP gubernatorial nominee and one of the former president's top surrogates in the state, following a CNN report about his alleged posts on a pornography website's message board. He did not mention Robinson during a speech that lasted just over an hour.

Robinson has denied writing the posts, which include lewd and racist comments, saying Thursday that he wouldn't be forced out of the race by "salacious tabloid lies." Trump's campaign has appeared to distance itself from Robinson in the wake of the CNN reporting, which the AP has not independently verified, saying in a statement that Trump "is focused on winning the White House and saving this country" and calling North Carolina "a vital part of that plan," without mentioning Robinson.

## Highlight

Democrats have seized on the opportunity to highlight Trump's ties to Robinson, with billboards showing the two together, as well as a new ad from Harris' campaign highlighting the Republican candidates' ties as well as Robinson's support for a statewide abortion ban without exceptions. According to Harris' campaign, it's their first ad effort related to tying Trump to a down-ballot race.

Both abortion rights and Robinson are electoral liabilities for Trump in a state he previously won twice. Already before CNN's report, Robinson was trailing in several recent polls to Democratic nominee Josh Stein, the state's attorney general. Polls show Trump and Harris locked in a close race here and nationally.

In his first outdoor rally since the second apparent attempt to assassinate him, Trump argued women would be safer and more prosperous with him as president and would "no longer be thinking about abortion."

"I will protect women at a level never seen before. They will finally be healthy, hopeful, safe and secure," Trump said. "Their lives will be happy, beautiful, and their lives will be great again. So women, we love you. We're going to take care of you."

## Decisions

The former president said women won't have to think about abortion because decisions about regulating it are now left to the states. Many Republican-led states have taken steps to restrict or eliminate abortion access after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in 2022. Trump nominated three of the six justices who voted to overturn Roe.

North Carolina banned most abortions after 12 weeks last year, with Republicans in the state legislature overriding Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper's veto.

Voters overwhelmingly say they trust Harris to do a better job handling abortion policy, with 55% favoring her while 27% favored Trump in a new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Harris and Democrats running down ballot have highlighted stories of women who faced severe medical complications or death because they didn't get proper medical care from doctors worried about the impact of abortion laws. Harris on Friday blasted Trump as a threat to women's freedoms and their lives, warning in a speech in Georgia that Republicans would continue to target access to abortion if he returns to the White House.

"Trump is scared out of his mind that women will vote like our freedoms and our lives are on the line this November - and he should be, because that's exactly what we will do," Harris campaign Sarafina Chitika said in a statement after Trump's rally.

Trump also showed a gentler side,

inviting two of his young grandchildren on stage. The former president lifted Carolina to the microphone, where she said "Make America great again" to cheers, followed by her older brother, Luke Trump, who said, "Vote for Grandpa." They're the children of Eric Trump, the former president's second son, and his wife, Lara Trump, a North Carolina native who is now serving as co-chair of the Republican National Committee.

Bulletproof glass surrounded Trump as he spoke, a new precaution for outdoor venues the Secret Service implemented after a bullet grazed Trump's ear during a rally in Butler, Pennsylvania.

## Also:

**PHOENIX:** US Vice President Kamala Harris will skip this year's Al Smith charity dinner in New York, breaking with presidential tradition so she can campaign instead in a battleground state less than three weeks before Election Day.

The dinner benefitting Catholic Charities traditionally has been used to promote collegiality and good humor, with presidential candidates from both parties appearing on the same night and trading barbs.

Harris' team wants her to spend as much time as possible in the battleground states that will decide the election rather than heavily Democratic New York, a campaign official said Saturday, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss campaign plans and confirming a decision first reported by CNN. Her team told organizers that she would be willing to attend as president if she's elected, the official said.

Donald Trump's campaign did not immediately respond to a question about whether he would attend the dinner. This year's white-tie gala is scheduled for Oct. 17. The Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner is named for the former New York governor, a Democrat and the first Roman Catholic to be nominated for president by a major party in 1928.

"We were lucky to have him - and I have no doubt his legacy will live on for generations to come."

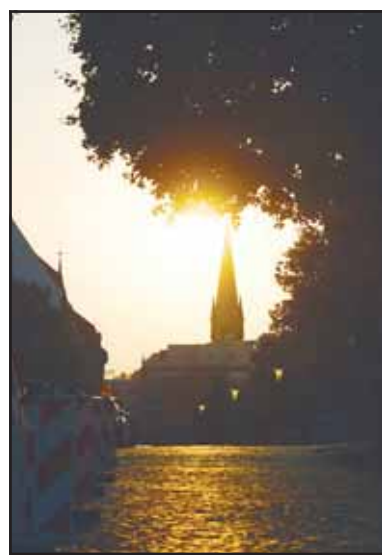
Evans was a dominant force in Washington politics for decades and, until current Gov. Jay Inslee, he was the only person to be elected governor three times. In a statement posted to the social platform X, the Democrat said it was difficult to think of another resident who had such a positive impact on so many aspects of the state. (AP)

**Driver killed in police chase:** A police pursuit that began in New York City ended on Long Island with the shooting death of the driver, and seven police officers and a civilian were taken to hospitals for treatment, police said.

Patrick Ryder, commissioner of the Nassau County police department, told reporters Saturday that the chase began after New York City officers tried to stop a driver in the Jamaica neighborhood in the borough of Queens shortly after 11 pm Friday. The driver tried to ram the two police officers, striking them before fleeing, Ryder said.

Officers in Nassau County boxed in the driver at one point, but he hit two police cars and forced two officers to dive out of the way, he said. The vehicle went further down the road, hitting another police car, turned around and went the wrong way before turning around again and hitting a civilian car.

The driver's vehicle went out of control and stopped on a berm in Massapequa, Ryder said. Officers tried to get the driver to get out of the car, but he refused to comply and was killed by gunfire, Ryder said. (AP)



This photo shows a sunset view in the city of Frankfurt (Oder) in Germany near the Polish border on Sept 17. (Xinhua)



Evans



Donlon

## America

**Birmingham shooting kills 4:** Four people have died and more than 20 were wounded in a shooting in a nightlife area in Birmingham, Alabama, according to police and news reports.

There were multiple people shot on 20th Street near Magnolia Avenue in the Five Points South area, the Birmingham Police Department said in a social media post.

Birmingham Officer Truman Fitzgerald said the shooting with up to 21 people wounded happened shortly after 11 p.m. in the 2000 block of Magnolia Avenue South, AL.COM reported.

Fitzgerald said there were "dozens of gunshot victims" and at least four had "life-threatening" injuries, AL.COM reported.

Birmingham Fire and Rescue Service pronounced the three victims dead on the scene and a fourth person was pronounced dead at University of Alabama at Birmingham Hospital, AL.COM reported. Police said the victims found dead at the scene included two men and a woman, WBMA-TV reported.

Other victims were transported to hospitals in private vehicles, police told WBMA.

The Birmingham police did not immediately respond to an email from The Associated Press seeking additional information. (AP)



**Feds raid police chief's homes:** New York City's interim police commissioner revealed late Saturday that federal authorities had executed search warrants at his homes the previous day.

Thomas Donlon, who became the interim commissioner just one week ago after the resignation of his predecessor, issued a statement on the search through the police department.

"On Friday, September 20, federal authorities executed search warrants at my residences. They took materials that came into my possession approximately 20 years ago and are unrelated to my work with the New York City Police Department," the statement said.

"This is not a department matter, and the department will not be commenting," he added. The statement did not address what the investigation was about, which federal authorities were involved or what "materials" had been seized.

The unexplained and surprising search comes as the administration of New York City Mayor Eric Adams has been reeling from other federal law enforcement investigations. (AP)



Emergency services workers move rubble after a Russian strike on a residential building in Kharkiv, Ukraine on Sept 22. Russian strikes hit high-rise apartment blocks in Ukraine's city of Kharkiv, leaving dozens wounded in a second consecutive nighttime attack this past week. (AP)



## Africa

## 600 inmates freed

## Kenya President Ruto visits Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, Sept 22, (Agencies): Kenya's President William Ruto arrived in Haiti on Saturday, claiming that because of a Kenyan police force battling gangs "the country's security has significantly improved."

Ruto's claim was contradicted by a United Nations security expert, who just days earlier warned that violence in the country was worsening as gangs expand their control over the Caribbean nation.

Ruto stepped off the plane, walking past armed officers on a small patch of red carpet flanked by other officials. He headed to a Kenyan base at the airport where he met with police tasked with battling the gangs and a number of high-ranking Haitian and Canadian officials.

"You have represented the people of Kenya with courage, professionalism, selflessness, compassion and sufficiency," Ruto told Kenyan police surrounding him as he stood at a podium.

He claimed that Kenyan forces have boosted security infrastructure and allowed displaced Haitians to return home

after fleeing violence, though many Haitians say violence is just as bad, if not worse, than it was when the police were deployed in June.

## Deployed

Ruto said he hoped to listen to members of the Kenyan forces deployed and hear about their progress before he heads to New York to meet with UN leaders. They are grappling with how to best support resource-strapped Kenyan and Jamaican forces who have struggled to contain the gangs terrorizing the Caribbean nation.

Kenya was the first nation to send forces as part of a larger effort by the UN to offer international support to Haiti, which has spiraled into conflict and political turmoil since the 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse.

About 400 Kenyan police are in Haiti. Earlier this month, about two dozen police and soldiers from Jamaica arrived in the country. But the United States and other countries have said that the forces aren't enough and lack resources to take on gangs, which control about 80% of the capital, Port-au-Prince.

Meanwhile, UN human rights expert William O'Neill, who visited Haiti this week, warned Friday that gang violence is only spreading across Haiti and that Haiti's National Police still lack the "logistical and technical capacity" to fight gangs, which continue to encroach on new territory.

## Displaced

"Humanitarian consequences are dramatic," he said, and warned of galloping inflation, a lack of basic goods and "internally displaced people further increasing the vulnerability of the population, particularly children and women."

The security mission is expected to reach a total of 2,500 personnel, with the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin and Chad also pledging to send police and soldiers, although it wasn't clear when that would happen.

While the US has floated the idea of a UN peacekeeping force, the idea would be far-fetched and controversial given the introduction of cholera and sexual abuse cases that occurred the last time U.N. troops were in Haiti.

Ruto's visit also comes days after Haiti created a provisional electoral council long sought by the international community to facilitate the first general election held in the country since 2016.

## Also:

**YAOUNDE:** Chad on Saturday denied reports that it has agreed on the return of American Special Forces to the Central African nation.

On Friday, American media, citing US Major General Kenneth Ekman, reported that the United States and Chad had reached an understanding for the return of a limited number of Special Forces personnel.

"No decision of this nature has been taken by the Chadian authorities," Chad's Foreign Minister Abderraman Koulamallah said in a statement.

"It is important to remember that Chad, as a sovereign state, remains master of its decisions in matters of national security and military cooperation with its international partners," Koulamallah added.

Nearly five months ago, the United States Department of Defense announced the withdrawal of its military presence from Chad.

**KINSHASA, Congo:** Authorities in Congo said they released 600 prisoners in the country's main prison on Saturday as part of a process aimed at decongesting overcrowded prisons.

Justice Minister Constant Mutamba announced the move during a ceremony at Makala Central Prison in Congo's capital, Kinshasa.

There are plans for construction of a new prison in Kinshasa, he said, without giving more details.

Makala prison, Congo's largest penitentiary with a capacity for 1,500 people, holds more than 12,000 inmates, most of whom are awaiting trial, Amnesty International said in its latest country report.

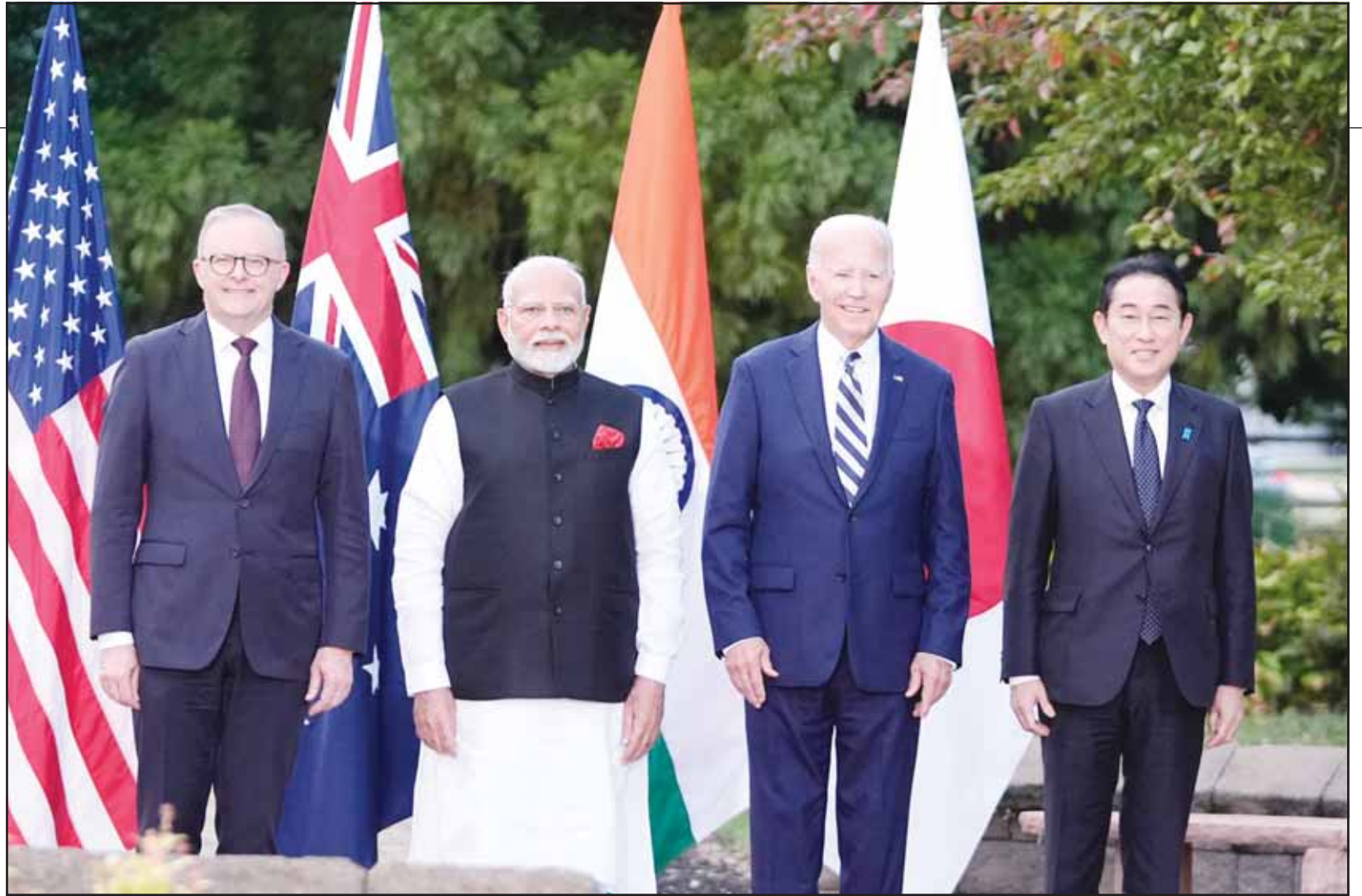
Earlier this month, an attempted jailbreak in the prison left 129 people dead, including some who were shot by guards and soldiers and others who died in a stampede at the overcrowded facility, according to authorities. Emmanuel Adu Cole, a prominent prison rights activist in Congo and president of the local Bill Clinton Peace Foundation, put the death toll at more than 200.

There were also several cases of women raped during the attempted jailbreak, Congolese Interior Minister Jacquemin Shabani posted on X earlier this month, without elaborating.

"We have had a difficult time in recent days with everything that was happening here, there were rapes, we were victims, many of us died," said Prisca Mbombo, one of the freed prisoners. The 22-year-old Mbombo spent two months in the prison after being arrested following a fight in a bar.

"We really thank this gesture from the minister and I will never return to this place," she said.

Inmates had increasingly grown frustrated with the poor conditions in the facility, including inadequate beds, poor feeding and poor sanitation. However, authorities failed to act despite warnings, said Cole, whose foundation has visited the prison in the past.



US President Joe Biden, joined by Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stand for a group photo before speaking about a Quadrilateral Cancer Moonshot initiative on the sidelines of the Quad leaders summit at Archmere Academy in Claymont, Del on Sept 21. (AP)

## Asia

## Cambodia pulls out of regional development pact

## China testing us, Biden tells Quad allies

CLAYMONT, Del., Sept 22, (AP): President Joe Biden told Indo-Pacific allies on Saturday that he believes China's increasing military assertiveness is an effort to test the region at a turbulent moment for Beijing.

Biden's comments were caught by a hot mic after he and fellow leaders of the so-called Quad delivered opening remarks before the press at a summit he's hosting near his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware. He said his administration sees Beijing's actions as a "change in tactic, not a change in strategy."

China is struggling to pull up its economy that was pummeled by the coronavirus pandemic and has seen an extended slowdown in industrial activity and real estate prices as Beijing faces pressure to ramp up spending to stimulate demand.

## Focus

"China continues to behave aggressively, testing us all across the region, and it's true in the South China Sea, the East China Sea, South China, South Asia and the Taiwan Straits," Biden told Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. He added, "At least from our perspective, we believe (Chinese President) Xi Jinping is looking to focus on domestic economic challenges and minimize the turbulence in China's diplomatic relationships, and he's also looking to buy himself some diplomatic space, in my view, to aggressively pursue China's interest."

Starting with a trade war that dates back to 2018, China and the United States have grown at odds over a range of issues, from global security, such as China's claims over the South China Sea, to industrial policy on electric vehicle and solar panel manufacturing.

The administration has repeatedly spoken out about concerns about Chinese aggression toward Taiwan and more recently on the frequent clashes between Chinese and Philippine vessels in disputed areas of the South China Sea.

At the summit, the leaders agreed to expand the partnership among the Quad nations' coast guards to improve interoperability and capabilities, with Indian, Japanese and Australian personnel sailing on U.S. ships in the region. But US officials would not say

if those transits would include the contested South China Sea.

China also has longtime territorial disputes involving other claimants including Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei. US officials worry about China's long-stated goals of unifying Taiwan with China's mainland and the possibility of war over Taiwan. The self-ruled island democracy is claimed by Beijing as part of its territory.

The leaders in a joint declaration issued following their talks expressed "serious concern about the militarization ... and coercive and intimidating maneuvers in the South China Sea."

Biden last month dispatched his national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, to Beijing for three days of talks with Chinese officials. Sullivan during that visit also met with Xi.

Both governments are eager to keep relations on an even keel ahead of a change in the US presidency in January. And both sides have said they remain committed to managing the relationship, following up on a meeting between Xi and Biden in San Francisco last November.

The concerns about China were raised as Biden showed off a slice of his Delaware hometown to the leaders of Australia, Japan and India as he hosted what is likely the last gathering of the Indo-Pacific partnership that has grown in prominence under his White House tenure.

When Biden began his presidency he looked to elevate the Quad, which until then had only met at the foreign minister level, to a leader-level partnership as he tried to pivot U.S. foreign policy away from conflicts in the Middle East and toward threats and opportunities in the Indo-Pacific. This weekend's summit is the fourth in-person and sixth overall gathering of the leaders since 2021.

**Cambodia pulls out of pact:** Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said he was pulling his country out of a development agreement with neighboring Vietnam and Laos following protests that it was benefiting foreign interests.

Critics on social media have focused on land concessions in border areas particularly with Vietnam, a highly sensitive issue because of Cambodia's historical antagonism toward its larger eastern neighbor.

Authorities had arrested at least 66

people ahead of a planned August rally to condemn the Cambodia-Laos-Vietnam Development Triangle Area - or CLV-DTA. Most were later released but leaders are facing charges.

The agreement, formalized in 2004, intended to facilitate cooperation on trade and migration in four northeastern provinces of Cambodia and border areas in Laos and Vietnam.

Hun Manet called groups that opposed the agreement extremists and said they were using the issue to slander and attack the government and confuse the public.

"For instance, allegations that the government ceded the territory of the four northeastern provinces to foreign countries, etc.," he wrote in a post late Friday.

He said that in the past 25 years Cambodia had built many achievements for the development of the four provinces but his government decided to pull out of the agreement, "taking into account people's concern on territory and the need to withdraw weapons out of the hands of extremists to prevent them from using CLV-DTA to further cheat people."

**Crews search for 6 missing:** Rescue workers searched for at least six people missing Sunday after heavy rain pounded Japan's northcentral region of Noto, triggering landslides and floods and leaving one person dead in a region still recovering from a deadly Jan. 1 earthquake.

The Japan Meteorological Agency on Saturday issued the highest alert level for heavy rain across several cities in the Ishikawa prefecture, including hard-hit cities Suzu and Wajima on the northern coast of the Noto peninsula.

The agency has since downgraded the heavy rain alert, and kept landslide and flooding warnings in place.

In Suzu, one person died and another was missing after being swept in floodwaters. Another went missing in the nearby town of Noto, according to the prefecture.

In Wajima, rescue workers were searching for four people missing following a landslide at a construction site. They were among 60 construction workers repairing a tunnel damaged by January's quake.

The FDMA said another person was missing due to floods at a different location in the city.

The fires "have caused 165 people injured due to burns and unfortunately have claimed the lives of 18 people so far this year," while some 2,000 hectares of crops have been affected, said Cesar Sierra, Indeci's response director.

At a meeting held Friday at the National Emergency Operations Center headquarters, the institutional head of Indeci, Juan Urcariegui, said that 83 percent of the fires in the country "have already been controlled and extinguished."

The government on Wednesday declared a state of emergency in the regions of Amazonas, San Martin and Ucayali due to severe fires.

Urcariegui added that two command posts have been deployed in the cities of Tarapoto and Pucallpa to coordinate actions in the affected areas.

UN data showed that nearly 60 percent of Peru's territory is covered by tropical forests. Forest fires have been occurring more frequently and in a broader scope in the country, due to human activity such as the burning of dry grasslands for agricultural purposes, as well as the effects of climate change. (Xinhua)

**Environmentalist slaying hit:** The US State Department and other global leaders denounced the slaying of another environmental leader in rural Honduras, adding to mounting concern of ongoing violence against environmentalists in Latin America.

Honduran President Xiomara Castro confirmed the killing of Juan López in the rural Caribbean region of Colón, where a number of environmentalists battling mining projects have been slain in recent years. Castro called his death a "vile murder" and promised to investigate the slaying.

"I express my solidarity with his family, comrades and friends. Justice for Juan López," she posted on X. (AP)



Sanitation workers clear road surface in Shanghai, east China on Sept 20. China's financial hub, Shanghai, had evacuated 112,000 people as of Friday morning due to Typhoon Pulasan, which brought record-breaking rainfall to parts of the city. (Xinhua)



Maduro



Guterres

## Lat/Am

**Quake hits El Salvador:** An earthquake with a magnitude of 5.0 jolted El Salvador at 0225 GMT on Sunday, the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences said.

The epicenter, with a depth of 85.1 km, was initially determined to be at 13.21 degrees north latitude and 89.32 degrees west longitude. (Xinhua)

**Brazil bus accident kills 3:** A bus carrying a Brazilian football team flipped on a road south of Rio de Janeiro on Saturday, killing three people and injuring at least six, authorities said.

Local media reported the three dead were players from the American football team the Coritiba Crocodiles of the southern Brazilian city of Curitiba.

The team was headed Saturday to Rio de Janeiro, where they were set to play in the country's American football championship. But the game was canceled following the deadly accident. Photos circulating on local news sites and social media show the damaged bus laying on its side in the middle of the road.

"Our hearts are heavy with grief, and we ask everyone to send their prayers and positive energy," the Coritiba Crocodiles said in a statement Saturday. "In the face of this tragedy, all our efforts are focused on supporting the team members and their loved ones."

The injured were being treated in a hospital and local authorities said they will investigate the cause of the crash. (AP)

**UN chief talks with Maduro:** UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres spoke to Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro on Friday morning by phone, a UN spokesman said.

In the phone call, Guterres and Maduro discussed the political situation in Venezuela, said Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the UN chief, at a daily briefing.

Dujarric said the secretary-general expressed concern over reports of post-election violence and allegations of human rights violations in the South American country.

"He stressed the need to resolve any political dispute peacefully, through genuine and inclusive dialogue," said the spokesman, adding that the UN chief also took note of the positions of the Venezuelan president regarding the situation in the country. (Xinhua)

**Peru fires toll rises to 18:** The death toll from Peru's forest fires increased to 18, the National Institute of Civil Defense (Indeci) said Friday.



Kenya's President William Ruto, center, left, visits Kenyan police, part of a UN-backed multinational force, at their base in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on Sept 21. Ruto arrived in Haiti on Saturday, claiming that because of a Kenyan police force battling gangs "the country's security has significantly improved." (AP)



	Change	Closing pts
SAUDI	- Tadawul	+49.15 12,129.62
EGYPT	- EGX 30	+100.72 31,038.41

Change Closing pts

# Business

## Kuwait's Fifth LPG Train aims to 'boost' hydrocarbon production

Project supports KNPC 2040 strategy for clean energy

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22, (KUNA):** The Fifth Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) Train, an ambitious project by the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), will aim at bolstering Kuwait's hydrocarbon assets as well as boosting natural gas production.

The project is working on gathering outputs of fields affiliated with the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC) in addition to petroleum gas produced by KNPC's own refineries, which in turn boost hydrocarbon wealth, meet demands for clean energy resources and provide job opportunities for national cadres.

The Fifth LPG Train project is of great importance due to it being within the KNPC 2040 Strategy aimed at discovering and producing associated and unassociated petroleum gas in addition to other petroleum derivatives highly demanded by the global market and are environmentally friendly.

The LPG factory in Mina Al-Ahmadi Refinery produces high-quality hydrocarbon gas byproducts used in locally to fill gas canisters for homes and production of vehicle fuel. The factory also exports products abroad.

The factory, with its five lines, covers the local need for liquefied petroleum gas, providing the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy with its fuel needs, which in turn produces electricity.

The production of gases plays a crucial role in several industries including petrochemicals; thus, the production of Liquefied Petroleum Gas would boost profits at KNPC.

According to the KNPC, the Fifth Gas Train includes an additional sub-unit for the production of clean fuel gases to meet KEPA regulations. This unit serves the fourth and Fifth Gas Trains by treating the fuel gas to reduce H2S levels from 2,400 ppm to a maximum 50 ppm.

Speaking to KUNA in this regard, Shujaa Al-Ajmi

-- Deputy CEO of KNPC Mina Al-Ahmadi Refinery -- said that the daily production capacity of the Fifth Gas Train has a production capacity of 805 mmscfpd and 106,000 bpd of condensate, pushing the total production capacity of the five Gas Trains into a record 3,125 mmscfpd of gas, and 332,000 bpd of condensate.

He noted that the construction of the Fifth Gas Train required 6,900 workers at peak times. The full total number of working hours from the beginning of the Project until the initial commissioning date reached close to 58 million hours without lost time incidents. This was a result of the concerted efforts of the team supervising the Project from KNPC together with the contractor's labor.

More than 100 Kuwaiti engineers from various Departments and Divisions took over 60 training courses that took place in two phases, one at the Headquarters of manufacturers and the other at the work site, he added.

Al-Ajmi revealed that the project cost around KD 428 million (USD 1.39 billion), indicating that the private sector contributed around 29.7 percent to the sum, a matter considered as an addition to the local economy.

He affirmed that the project faced some difficulties in execution and elements outside of control such as the heavy rainfall in 2018 that delayed construction and led to rescheduling.

The COVID-19 pandemic also presented a challenge due to a slowdown in most of the global activities, he noted, adding that the KNPC had in mind the safety of construction staff physically and mentally assisting workers to overcome this daunting task.

The Fifth LPG Train saw the use of 14,000 tons of steel in construction, he revealed, pointing out that the projects saw the installation of huge towers weighing over 1,400 tons. The length of pipes used amounted to 3.67 million meters.

The project saw the installation of 589 machinery weighing around 19,000 tons and around 37 cubic meters of concrete were poured to create foundation for machinery and pipe holders.

## Fed cuts rates by 0.5% to 4.75%-5% range

## US retail sales exceed expectations in Aug despite labor market 'slowdown'

By National Bank of Kuwait

**North America**  
New York Empire State Manufacturing Index

The NY Empire State Manufacturing Index surged to 11.5 in September 2024, the highest since April 2022, up from -4.7 in August and beating forecasts of -4.1. This marks the first growth in business activity in New York state in nearly a year, driven by higher new orders (9.4 vs -7.9) and shipments (17.9 vs 0.3). Delivery times and supply availability were stable, while inventories leveled off. However, the labor market remained weak, with employment contracting slightly and the workweek steady. Input and selling prices saw little change. Despite a dip in capital spending, firms were more optimistic about future conditions.

**US Retail Sales**

Retail sales exceeded expectations in August, indicating that consumers are still spending despite the labor market slowdown, driven by rapid wealth gains and falling energy prices. Retail sales rose 0.1% in August compared to economists' forecast of a 0.2% decrease, while July sales were revised upward to a 1.1% increase from a previous reading of 1%. Excluding auto and gas, sales rose 0.2% in August, slightly below estimates, but the control group increased 0.3%, aligning with expectations.

**Federal Funds Rate**

The Federal Reserve enacted its first interest rate cut since the early COVID-19 pandemic, reducing benchmark rates by 0.5 percentage points to a range of 4.75%-5%. This decision, driven by softening inflation and labor market concerns, aligns with recent market expectations. The move is seen as a response to prevent a labor market slowdown and signals potential additional rate cuts through the end of 2025. The cut was the largest since 2008 (outside of COVID-related reductions), and Chair Jerome Powell emphasized the Fed's commitment to stabilizing inflation without significantly raising unemployment. Al-

though the rate cut follows steady GDP growth and inflation above the Fed's 2% target, the central bank remains cautious, noting job gains have slowed, and unemployment has edged higher to 4.2%. The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) vote was 11-1, with dissent from Governor Michelle Bowman, who favored a smaller 0.25 percentage point cut. Market reactions were volatile, with stocks initially rising before leveling off. Powell made it clear that the cut is not part of a series of large reductions.

**Canada Inflation**

The inflation rate in Canada slowed down to 2% on an annual basis, hitting the Bank of Canada's target, and bolstering expectations for aggressive rate cuts. The reading marked the slowest increase since February 2021. The deceleration was driven by a drop in energy and gas prices, while the main contributor to inflation remains housing costs. The print comes amid a time of slowing growth and a weakening labor market, with the unemployment rate rising to 6.6% in August. Bank of Canada governor Tiff Macklem stated that the central bank is open to steeper cuts if "growth does not materialize as expected." Markets are pricing in 50 bps worth of cuts by year-end.

The USD Dollar Index closed the week at 100.723.

**England**

**Official Bank Rate**

The Bank of England (BoE) has kept interest rates at 5% following steady inflation in August but hinted at a potential rate cut in November. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted eight-to-one to maintain rates after a quarter-point cut last month. The BoE indicated it would adopt a gradual approach to easing monetary policy if economic conditions remain stable, though it remains cautious about reducing rates too quickly. Sterling briefly rose to its highest against the dollar since March 2022. BoE Governor Andrew Bailey noted that inflationary pressures were easing, and the

economy was progressing as expected. The BoE's decision comes after the US Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank also cut rates. UK inflation held steady at 2.2% in August, down from a peak of over 11% in 2022 but slightly above the BoE's 2% target. Inflation is expected to rise to 2.5% by year-end. Despite the easing of underlying inflation, services price inflation remains a concern.

The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.3321.

**Asia Pacific**

**Bank of Japan Policy Rate**

The Bank of Japan (BoJ) kept its benchmark interest rate steady at around 0.25%, the highest since 2008, following a two-day meeting. This decision aligns with expectations, and economists anticipate another rate hike by year-end as the BoJ moves to normalize its monetary policy after years of ultra-low rates. While Japan's economy has recovered moderately, some weaknesses remain. The BoJ expects the economy to grow above its potential growth rate, driven by a cycle of income and spending, with core inflation forecasted to rise through fiscal year 2025. Despite global central banks easing policies, the BoJ remains focused on tightening, having raised rates to 0.25% in July after abandoning negative rates in March. Inflation continues to climb, providing room for further rate hikes. Japan's core consumer price index increased by 2.8% year-on-year, with inflation excluding fresh food and energy rising to 2.0%. The BoJ's next rate decision is expected in October. Analysts caution that rate hikes could slow growth or trigger a downturn. Japan's GDP growth for Q2 was revised down to an annualized 2.9%, below forecasts, indicating a weaker recovery than expected.

The USD/JPY currency pair closed the week at 143.91.

**Kuwait**

Kuwaiti Dinar USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30500.

## Non-listed firms can challenge exclusion from KPC tender

## KPC invites 18 companies for LNG filling tender

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has publicly announced the list of 18 companies invited to participate in the tender for the provision of labor for the maintenance and operation of the LNG filling branch in the Shuaiba Industrial Area, which is affiliated with Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC).

According to the notice, any company that is not listed in the tender announcement published in the official gazette Kuwait Alyoum may submit a request to challenge

their exclusion or to apply for participation in the tender, provided they include the necessary documentation. Also, the tender will be released 30 days after the publication date.

Meanwhile, KOTC has announced an extension for the final meeting regarding the supply of all navigational charts, notices, and publications for its fleet ships.

In addition, Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) announced the awarding of a tender for connecting a fiber optic cable between the data centers in Ahmedi and Zour. The contract was awarded to a private company with the lowest bid of KD 164,777.

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.1161	1.1135	1.1181	1.1162	1.1080	1.1330	1.1200
GBP	1.3284	1.3265	1.3340	1.3321	1.3210	1.3530	1.3320
JPY	142.62	141.72	144.49	143.91	141.75	145.50	142.23
CHF	0.8476	0.8449	0.8517	0.8501	0.8400	0.8475	0.8418

## Bitcoin jumps 3.26% to \$62,000

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** Bitcoin jumped 3.26 percent, reaching \$62,000 after briefly touching \$63,000, following a 50-basis point interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve, marking the largest US monetary policy shift in four years, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The overall cryptocurrency market capitalization surged to \$2.150 trillion, representing a 3.44 percent in-

crease, according to CoinMarketCap. Solana emerged as the top performer among the top 10 cryptocurrencies by market value, rising 3.34 percent to \$135.79, while other major cryptocurrencies saw gains between 0.5 percent and 3.34 percent.

The financial advisors anticipate that risky assets, including cryptocurrencies, will benefit from the Fed's decision to cut interest rates.

## General market index up, Main 50 index down

## GCC financial markets show positive performance

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22:** The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries financial markets have recorded a generally positive performance during a significant week for the global economy, with six out of seven market indices closing higher, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In Kuwait, the stock market showed mixed results. The General Market Index rose by 0.19 percent to close at 7,172.47 points, supported by strong performances from key stocks like KFH (Kuwait Finance

House) and Watani (National Bank of Kuwait). However, the Main 50 index dropped by 1 percent, highlighting a contrast in market segments.

The Bahrain Financial Market led the gains, surging by 3.85 percent and surpassing the 2,000-point mark, closing at 2,027.62 points. This gain boosted its year-to-date growth to 3 percent.

This performance came during a crucial economic period, driven by the decision to shift monetary poli-

cies in the United States, with interest rates seeing their first significant cut after 11 months at a peak of 5.5 percent. The interest rate cut, by half a percentage point, helped boost global markets and commodities like gold and oil, which are closely tied to economic growth and demand.

Saudi Arabia's market index benefited significantly from this policy shift, rising by 2.01 percent to close at 12,080.47 points.

## 'Real estate and infrastructure provide stable income'

## Real Assets: Diversification, inflation protection and investment strategies

By NBK Wealth

**Introduction**

Real assets are physical/tangible assets with intrinsic value, independent of market conditions. They include properties, land, agriculture, natural resources, and infrastructure. Investors are drawn to real assets for diversification, protection against inflation, and income generation through sources like rental payments and capital appreciation. For example, real estate can provide rental income while appreciating in value. Additionally, commodities like gold can hedge against inflation. Overall, real assets are essential for a stable and diversified investment strategy, especially in uncertain economic conditions.

**Types of Real Asset Investments**

Real assets investments can be classified into four main categories, each with its own unique sectors, which are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Description of Real Asset Categories and Investments Investment Vehicles

Major Category	Real Asset Investments
Real Estate	Residential properties, Commercial properties, Industrial properties, Retail properties, Hotel properties, [...]
Infrastructure	Toll roads, Airports, Ports, Power plants, Telecommunication towers, [...]
Natural Resources	Agriculture land, Timberland, Water rights, Mineral rights, Oil and Gas fields, [...]
Commodities	Gold, Copper, Oil, Natural Gas, Agriculture products (e.g., cocoa, wheat, corn), [...]

Investors can participate in both public and private markets to gain exposure to real assets. However, it is important first to understand the main factors influencing risk and expected returns for each type of investment and how they relate to an investor's time horizon, risk tolerance, availability of capital, and liquidity constraints. Depending on these factors, exposure to public markets, private markets, or a combination of both may then be suitable.

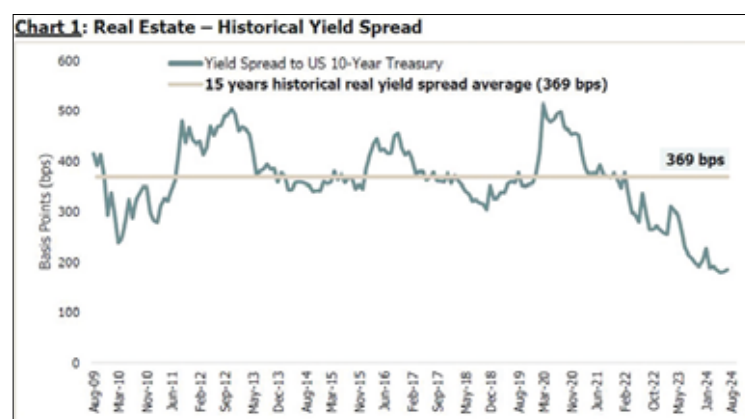
**Public Markets:** Typically, investors with short-term horizons and needing immediate liquidity can take advantage of publicly traded equity in companies related to real estate, infrastructure or natural resources. This exposure can be accessed through sector-specific mutual funds, real estate investment trusts (REITs), or exchange-traded funds (ETFs) using active or passive approaches, respectively. While these strategies offer liquidity, they are also subject to volatility, similar to the overall equity market.

**Private Markets:** For investors with substantial capital and a long-term horizon, allocating capital to private investments in real assets can offer benefits. These investments often exhibit lower volatility and more accurately represent desired characteristics compared to public market counterparts. However, building and managing a private market portfolio requires significant research resources for due diligence and monitoring, and the elevated minimum commitment size may restrict the flexibility to create a diversified portfolio.

**Income Generation in Real Assets**

Real assets like real estate and infrastructure are great options for investors looking for both income and capital appreciation. These assets generate income through rent payments and offer predictable and resilient cash flows. Real estate investors have earned a long-term yield premium of 3.7% compared to US govern-

ment bonds, while infrastructure investors have earned a premium of 3.6% over the past 15 years (measured against listed real estate and infrastructure).



- Infrastructure and real estate investments typically offer higher yields compared to US government bonds.
- As of mid-2022, the yield spreads for these investments narrowed or turned negative, indicating reduced attractiveness in a low-risk context.
- Despite this, other factors such as capital appreciation, diversification, and inflation protection make a strong case for investing in real assets.
- The historically high yield premiums of real assets suggest potential for strong income generation.

**Performance of Real Assets in Varying Economic Conditions**

Real assets play a crucial role in investment strategies, especially during economic downturns and inflationary periods. They act as a strong defense against rising prices and can help retain or increase their value when equities and bonds

are vulnerable to inflation. Real assets, such as real estate and commodities, derive their value from physical assets and serve as effective inflation hedges. They also provide further diversification in an investor's portfolio due to their lower correlation with traditional asset classes.

**The Benefits of Real Assets in a Diversified Portfolio**

Introducing real assets to a traditional 60/40 portfolio (consisting of equities and bonds) can enhance portfolio diversification by providing both income generation and capital growth, eventually contributing to a more stable return expectation. The benefits of real assets in a mixed portfolio, inter alia, are derived in part from their historically low correlation to bonds. For example, natural resources exhibited over the past 20 years, a nearly uncorrelated relationship with bonds at 0.02, while infrastructure and real estate investments also demonstrated a low correlation of 0.30 (see Table 2). However, all real assets displayed stronger correlations with equities over the same period. Despite their high correlations with equities, it is important to highlight that, real assets in general, enhance diversification in a traditional 60/40 portfolio and provide unique advantages not found in equities, which could offset their positive correlation with equities.

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Equity	1.00				
2 Bond	0.12	1.00			
3 Infrastructure	0.79	0.30	1.00		
4 Natural Resources	0.70	0.02	0.74	1.00	
5 Real Estate	0.73	0.30	0.72	0.48	1.00

**Summary Of the Key Takeaways**

Common Factors	Infrastructure	Real Estate	Natural Resources
<b>Income Generation</b>	Steady cash flows via long-term contracts	Reliable income from dividends and rental income	Income potential through appreciation and market demand
<b>Potential for Growth</b>	Income growth as demand increases	Capital appreciation over time	Driven by global economic growth and increased demand
<b>Hedge Against Inflation</b>	Revenues rising with inflation	Rising property values and rents	Typically rise in value during inflationary periods
<b>Risk Mitigation</b>	Stability from government policies	Low correlation with other asset classes	Low correlation to traditional asset classes
<b>Diversification Benefits</b>	Enhancements through public-private partnerships (variety of projects)	Mitigates overall risk in diversified portfolios	Provides diversification within an investment portfolio



### BP, Azerbaijani company sign MoU for oil exploration

BP and the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Friday to formalize BP's intention of joining agreements for the exploration and development of two oil blocks in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea, BP reported.

The MoU was announced during a ceremony in Baku, marking a significant step in expanding the long-

standing partnership between the two companies, and coinciding with the 30th anniversary of the "Contract of the Century," a landmark agreement that laid the groundwork for Azerbaijan's oil industry.

The first block involved is the Karabagh oil field, situated approximately 120 km east of Baku and 20 to 25 km from the Gunashli field. It operates at water depths of 150 to 200 meters. An existing risk service

agreement (RSA) for the development of this field was signed in 2018 with SOCAR currently holding a 100 percent interest.

The second block encompasses the Ashrafi -- Dan Ulduzu -- Aypara (ADUA) area, located 90 to 110 km northeast of Baku at depths ranging from 80 to 180 meters. This area includes existing discoveries and prospective structures. An exploration and production sharing agreement

(PSA) for the ADUA area was also signed in 2018, with SOCAR holding full rights.

Rovshan Najaf, SOCAR's president, expressed enthusiasm about the partnership: "We are delighted to further expand our strategic partnership with BP through this MoU, particularly on the 30th anniversary of the signing of the 'Contract of the Century'."

Gary Jones, BP's regional president for Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tur-

kiye, highlighted the significance of the agreement: "We see this as another great opportunity to work jointly with SOCAR adding to our 30-year-long exceptionally successful partnership."

In addition to the agreements related to the Caspian Sea, SOCAR and BP also announced their intention to explore potential cooperation in international oil and gas upstream projects aimed at enhancing security of energy supplies. (Xinhua)

### Republicans say move would force EV sales

# House backs measure to overturn Biden auto emissions rule

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22, (AP) — The GOP-controlled House approved a resolution Friday that would overturn a new Biden administration rule on automobile emissions that Republicans say would force Americans to buy unaffordable electric vehicles they don't want.

The rule issued by the Environmental Protection Agency in March would impose the most ambitious standards ever in the United States to cut planet-warming emissions from passenger vehicles.

The actions come as EV sales, needed to meet the standards, have begun to slow.

While former President Donald Trump and other Republicans have lambasted the rule as an EV "mandate," the rule would not force all sales of EVs. Under the regulation, industry could meet the limits if 56% of new vehicle sales are electric by 2032, the EPA said. The standard also would require at least 13% plug-in hybrids or other partially electric cars by 2032, as well as more efficient gasoline-powered cars that get more miles to the gallon than cars currently on the road.

The projected EV sales rate would be a huge increase over current sales, which rose to 7.6% of new vehicles last year, up from 5.8% in 2022.

"The EPA's latest tailpipe emissions rule is not really about reducing air pollution. It's about forcing Americans to drive electric vehicles," said Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R-Washington, the chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

She called the rule "unreasonable" and "just another example of how the Biden-Harris administration's rush-to-green agenda is handing China the

key to America's energy future, jeopardizing our auto industry and forcing people to buy unaffordable EVs they don't want."

New Jersey Rep. Frank Pallone, the top Democrat on the energy panel, called the House measure "yet another Republican effort to attack the Clean Air Act and roll back commonsense air pollution protections."

The GOP action "puts the profits of corporate polluters over the health and safety of the American people," Pallone said, adding that resolution is "ripped right out of Trump's extreme Project 2025 playbook."

Instead of focusing on funding the government, which is set to shut down at the end of this month, "Republicans are wasting time by bringing up this resolution they know has zero chance at becoming law," Pallone said, noting that even if the measure passes in the Democratic-controlled Senate it faces a certain veto from President Joe Biden.

"This is yet another example of Republicans failing to be serious about governing or working to implement policies that actually benefit the American people," Pallone said.

The House passed the measure, 215-191. Eight Democrats voted in favor, while one Republican, Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania, voted no.

Republican Rep. John James of Michigan, who sponsored the resolution, said the "out-of-touch regulation" would "crater the Michigan auto industry and decimate our middle-class and most vulnerable" citizens.

"Folks in my district simply can't afford to spend an additional \$12,000 on an expensive, unreliable EV," James said. "Allowing the Biden-Har-

Confab attracted 178 political & business leaders

# China high-level manufacturing: A 'new magnet' for global investors

HEFEI, Sept. 22, (Xinhua) — Eyeing opportunities emerging from the opening-up and upgrading of China's manufacturing sector, multinational companies gathered at a conference on Friday that was held as part of the ongoing 2024 World Manufacturing Convention in Hefei, the capital of east China's Anhui Province.

Their discussions focused on how the country's advancements in manufacturing are opening doors for enhanced global cooperation and investment, signaling the industry's growing appeal to international investors.

The conference was a key event at the convention, attracting 178 political and business leaders from 19 countries

and regions, including representatives of 92 Fortune 500 and multinational companies.

"The coordinated digital and green transformation of traditional manufacturing is an inherent requirement for the development of new quality productive forces, and it has created new advantages for China's high-quality economic growth. This new model aligns closely with Honeywell's strategic objectives," William Yu, president of Honeywell China, said at the conference.

With over 50 years of expertise in industrial automation, the U.S. multinational has steadily increased its investment in China in recent years. Its focus spans key sectors such as au-

tomation, energy transformation and aviation.

In July, Honeywell China signed a strategic cooperation agreement with BBKA Group to develop sustainable aviation fuel and other initiatives in the city of Bengbu in Anhui, aiming to support green and low-carbon development.

Honeywell is among a growing number of foreign companies expanding their investment in the world's second-largest economy, driven by rising optimism about China's economic outlook and recognition of the high-level opening-up of its manufacturing sector.

According to China's Ministry of Commerce, a total of 36,968 new for-

eign-invested firms were established across China in the first eight months of 2024 -- an increase of 11.5 percent year on year.

During the period, foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Chinese mainland, in actual use, totaled 580.2 billion yuan (about 82.1 billion U.S. dollars).

The high-tech manufacturing sector attracted 12.4 percent, or 72.1 billion yuan, of the total FDI inflow, which was up 1.9 percentage points from the same period last year.

Additionally, China's top economic planner announced earlier this month that restrictions on foreign investment in the manufacturing sector would be lifted.

Biden, who has made fighting climate change a hallmark of his presidency, cited "historic progress" on his pledge that half of all new cars and trucks sold in the U.S. will be zero-emissions by 2030. "We'll meet my goal for 2030 and race forward in the years ahead," Biden said when the rule was issued in March.



A hiring sign is displayed at a retail store in Buffalo Grove, Ill., Friday, Sept. 6, 2024. (AP)

### Drop lowest in 4 months

## Weekly applications for US jobless benefits fall

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22, (AP) — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell to their lowest level in four months last week.

Jobless claims slid by 12,000, to 219,000, for the week of Sept. 14, the Labor Department reported Thursday. That's fewer than economists' expectations for 230,000 new filings.

Weekly filings for unemployment benefits, considered largely representative of layoffs, had risen moderately since May before this week's decline. Though still at historically healthy levels, the recent increase signaled that high interest rates may finally be taking a toll on the labor market.

In response to weakening employment data and receding consumer prices, the Federal Reserve on Wednesday cut its benchmark interest rate by a half of a percentage point as the central bank shifts its focus from taming inflation toward supporting the job market. The Fed's goal is to achieve a rare "soft landing," whereby it curbs inflation without causing a recession.

"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," said Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management.

It was the Fed's first rate cut in four years after a series of rate hikes in 2022

and 2023 pushed the federal funds rate to a two-decade high of 5.3%. Inflation has retreated steadily, approaching the Fed's 2% target and leading Chair Jerome Powell to declare recently that it was largely under control.

During the first four months of 2024, applications for jobless benefits averaged just 213,000 a week before rising in May. They hit 250,000 in late July, supporting the notion that high interest rates were finally cooling a red-hot U.S. job market.

U.S. employers added a modest 142,000 jobs in August, up from a paltry 89,000 in July, but well below the January-June monthly average of nearly 218,000. Last month, the Labor Department reported that the U.S. economy added 818,000 fewer jobs from April 2023 through March this year than were originally reported. The revised total was also considered evidence that the job market has been slowing steadily, compelling the Fed to start cutting interest rates.

This week's Labor Department report showed that the four-week average of claims, which even out some of weekly volatility, fell by 3,500 to 227,500.

The total number of Americans collecting jobless benefits fell by 14,000 to about 1.83 million for the week of Sept. 7, the fewest since early June.

ris administration to continue stifling consumer choice will only harm the American people."

The EPA rule applies to model years 2027 to 2032 and would avoid more than 7 billion tons of planet-warming carbon emissions over the next three decades, providing nearly \$100 billion in annual net benefits, including

lower health care costs, fewer deaths and more than \$60 billion in reduced annual costs for fuel, maintenance and repairs, the EPA said.

Cars and trucks make up the largest single source of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

The new standards are designed to be technology-neutral and per-

formance-based, EPA Administrator Michael Regan said, noting that there are "multiple pathways companies can choose to comply" with the rule. The EPA could achieve its carbon pollution goals even if sales of battery electric vehicles are as low as 30% in 2032, as long as stringent standards for gas-powered cars are met, he said.

Biden, who has made fighting climate change a hallmark of his presidency, cited "historic progress" on his pledge that half of all new cars and trucks sold in the U.S. will be zero-emissions by 2030. "We'll meet my goal for 2030 and race forward in the years ahead," Biden said when the rule was issued in March.

# US solar industry declines despite government efforts

Wave of business closures reported

SACRAMENTO, the United States, Sept. 22, (Xinhua) — The U.S. solar industry is grappling with a sharp downturn and a wave of business closures, despite the government's attempt to bolster domestic solar supply chains through financial incentives and other measures.

This year has already seen a series of solar company bankruptcies and massive closures.

Home security giant ADT exited the solar business in January, followed by Titan Solar shutting down in June. August witnessed the bankruptcy of SunPower, one of the nation's oldest and largest solar installers, while Lumio, another major installer, filed for bankruptcy in September.

These business failures reflected a broader decline in residential and utility-scale solar installations, even though U.S. solar panel production capacity has increased.

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), passed in 2022, allocated hundreds of billions of U.S. dollars to strengthen the clean energy economy in the country, including substantial support for solar component manufacturing.

However, Michelle Davis, head of global solar at the energy research and consulting firm Wood Mackenzie, warned that "future solar growth is being hindered by broader power sector challenges."

The obstacles included interconnection backlogs, shortages of electrical equipment, and constraints on labor availability, said Davis, lead author of the U.S. Solar Market Insight Q3 2024 report, released by the Solar Energy Industries Association and Wood Mackenzie this month.

The residential solar market has



Photo taken on June 26, 2017 shows the 16.4 Megawatt (DC) Westmont Solar Energy Project in San Pedro, about 40 km south of Los Angeles, the United States. A just-completed rooftop solar project will power nearly 5,000 homes in southern California, making it the most powerful of its kind in the world, officials said Monday. (Xinhua)

been hit particularly hard, with the Wood Mackenzie report projecting a 19-percent nationwide installation decline this year.

In the second quarter, the residential solar capacity added 1.1 GW, down 37 percent year over year, marking the lowest quarter in nearly three years, according to the report.

Other segments of the solar industry also experienced declines in the second quarter. Commercial solar installations fell 5 percent from the first quarter, while the community solar segment logged a 12-percent decrease both quarter over quarter and year over year. The utility-scale segment recorded a 23-percent decline from the first quarter.

The report attributed these declines to policy changes in California and high interest rates nationwide. California's transition to net billing, which reduces the rates utilities pay residents for excess power from new home solar systems, has had a significant impact. The state's residential solar installations dropped 36 percent from the first quarter, with volumes expected to fall 41 percent compared with 2023.

California is the biggest solar market in the United States, as it accounted for over 30 percent of residential solar capacity additions in 2023. For all other states in the country, the report predicted an 8-percent decline in residential installations this year.

The broader economic environment

has also contributed to the industry's struggles. High inflation led to rising interest rates, making borrowing more expensive for solar companies whose business models often rely on upfront financing.

While the IRA included a 30-percent tax credit for rooftop solar systems, the incentive was dampened by the Federal Reserve's (Fed) interest rate hikes, which began in March 2022.

The Fed's decision to cut its key interest rate by half a percentage point on Wednesday, the first such cut in years, is generally seen as positive for solar companies. However, experts cautioned that rate cuts may not come as quickly or significantly as the industry hopes.

# AI boom may give Three Mile Island new life supplying power to Microsoft's data centers

HARRISBURG, Pa., Sept. 22, (AP) — The owner of the shuttered Three Mile Island nuclear power plant said Friday that it plans to restart the reactor under a 20-year agreement that calls for tech giant Microsoft to buy the power to supply its data centers with carbon-free energy.

The announcement by Constellation Energy comes five years after its then-parent company Exelon shut down the plant, saying it was losing money and that Pennsylvania lawmakers had refused to subsidize it.

The plan to restart Three Mile Island's Unit 1 comes amid something of a renaissance for nuclear power, as policymakers are increasingly looking to it to bail out a fraying electric power supply, help avoid the worst effects of climate change and meet rising power demand driven by data centers.

The plant, on an island in the Susquehanna River just outside Harrisburg, was the site of the nation's worst commercial nuclear power accident, in 1979. The accident destroyed one reactor, Unit 2, and left the plant with one functioning reactor, Unit 1.

Buying the power is designed to help Microsoft meet its commitment to be "carbon negative" by 2030.

Microsoft wouldn't say which of its data centers will be powered by the nuclear plant, but the mid-Atlantic electricity grid spans from Virginia, a data center hub for Microsoft and other tech giants, to Ohio, where Microsoft has plans for a new data center complex outside Columbus.

Constellation said it hopes to bring Unit 1 online in 2028. Restarting the reactor will require approval from the U.S.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission, as well as permits from state and local agencies, Constellation said.

To restart Unit 1, Constellation will spend \$1.6 billion to restore equipment including the turbine, generator, main power transformer and cooling and control systems. It is not currently seeking state or federal subsidies to help, it said.

Microsoft and Constellation didn't release terms of their agreement.

Jacopo Buongiorno, a nuclear science and engineering professor and director of MIT's Center for Advanced Nuclear Energy Systems, said Microsoft will likely pay above market price for electricity that is both carbon-free and reliable. Restarting the plant is realistic, but not easy, Buongiorno said.

"It all depends on what's the state of the components,

the systems," Buongiorno said. The process will go fairly smoothly if they were maintained well while it was shut down, Buongiorno said. A Constellation spokesperson said the plant itself is in excellent condition.

The closest example of restarting a nuclear plant is underway in Michigan, Buongiorno said. There, the federal government has promised a \$1.5 billion loan to restart the Palisades nuclear plant, shut down in 2022.

The business model of the Constellation-Microsoft agreement makes sense for both sides, Buongiorno said. Plus, it is cheaper to restart a nuclear power plant than build one from scratch, he said. Already intact are transmission lines, cooling towers, the control buildings and concrete containment structures, he said.



## Award recognizes Zain's excellence in data lifecycle management

# Zain Group wins Cloudera Data Impact Award for modern architectures

DUBAI, Sept 22: Zain Group, a leading provider of innovative technologies and digital lifestyle communications operating in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, has been named a Cloudera Data Impact Award winner in the category of "Modern Architectures" at the recent annual ceremony held in Dubai. The recognition reflects Zain's Data Office, in collaboration with ZainTECH, excellence in designing and implementing innovative data architectures that effectively support the full data lifecycle – from ingestion to analytics, empowering innovation and digital transformation.

The Cloudera Data Impact Awards recognize organizations that have harnessed data to drive remarkable innovation, impact, and transformation in their industries and in how they solve their most pressing data issues. Zain was selected by a panel of expert judges and scored highly on its achievements in leveraging data to drive significant business outcomes across its footprint.

A statement from Zain Group said, "This prestigious award validates Zain's data strategy focus on becoming a leader in the ICT industry by embracing a data-driven approach. This involves recognizing data as a key asset, adopting data management best practices to maximize its value, and fostering a culture of data literacy and analytical capability throughout our operations."

The statement added, "Data is the ultimate enabler for AI, turning potential into reality by empowering AI systems to learn, adapt, and drive innovation. Our data practices are helping business users within Zain access the right information at the right time, to make the right decisions."

Ahmad Shakora, Group Vice-President, Dubai at Cloudera said, "Zain's commitment to data-driven innovation demonstrates leadership and has had a transformative impact in the ICT arena. Through their visionary use of Cloudera's platform, Zain has achieved outstanding business outcomes that are shaping the future of the company."

Through the partnership with Cloudera, Zain's Data Office in collaboration with ZainTECH, has been able to eliminate data silos and is taking a holistic approach to analysis across the organization. By standardizing a Data



Ms. Nadia Saif, Head of Data at Zain Group receives the award from Cloudera senior executives.

- Data is the ultimate enabler for AI, turning potential into reality
- Zain's Data Office firmly establishing itself as an ICT leader by embedding world-class data governance practices and analytics to the heart of the business
- Driving innovation and helping business users make the right decisions

Management framework, facilitating data literacy initiatives, and enforcing data stewardship, Zain's Data Office

team fosters a data culture throughout the company that effectively drives innovation, business efficiency and uti-

lization of customer-centric services across Zain.

### Key benefits of the Zain Data Office

1. Improved Data Governance and Compliance- data is managed in line with regulatory requirements and internal policies, thus reducing risks associated with data privacy, security breaches, and legal penalties.

2. Enhanced Data Quality: setting standards for data accuracy, consistency, and completeness to make more informed and strategic data-driven decisions to optimize network performance, understand customer behavior, and marketing strategies.

3. Efficient Data Utilization: A centralized data office enables cross-functional teams to access the right data efficiently, eliminates data silos and promotes collaboration between marketing, customer service, and network operations departments.

4. Cost Optimization: By analyzing usage patterns, this helps optimizing network investments and operational costs as well as identifying revenue leakage points and opportunities for cost reduction.

5. Innovation and Competitive Edge: Leveraging advanced analytics, AI, and machine learning, the data office can identify new business opportunities, such as offering personalized customer services or predictive maintenance for network equipment.

6. Better Customer Experience: By analyzing customer data and feedback, helps tailor services to individual needs thus improving customer satisfaction and retention.

7. Scalability and Future Readiness: As telecoms increasingly move into areas like IoT, 5G, and digital services, having a data office ensures that data management practices are scalable and ready for the future.

8. Risk Management: Identifying and mitigating risks through better data insights, whether it's financial risks, operational risks, or security threats.

9. Support for Business Agility: With centralized data governance and streamlined data pipelines, the data office enables faster access to real-time data supporting quick decision-making, to respond to market trends and customer demands more efficiently and stay ahead of competitors.

Ten winners each receive KD 1,000 in draw

## Warba announces winners of weekly Al Sunbula draws

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Warba Bank - the best bank in corporate and investment banking services in Kuwait - announced the winners of the weekly Al Sunbula draws. Warba Bank will continue to hold weekly draws for ten winners of Al Sunbula account, in the presence of a representative of Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Warba Bank employees.

Each of the 10 lucky winners of the Sunbula weekly draw of Warba Bank received KD 1,000, and the winners are: Hana Saad Talaa Al-Ghadiri, Hajar Khalaf Awad Al-Rashidi, Alaa Essam Abdul Jabbar Hassan, Salem Qannas Soud Al-Nimran, Ali Hussein Ikeid Al-Khesili, Jamal Ahmed Mohammed Abdul Rasool, Haif Feihan-Haif Al-Jumeili, Amina Farid Rizvi, Ali Sami Ali Al-Mousa, and Dalal Sayer Bader.

As for the Sunbula account, it is the ideal choice for all those wishing to save money and achieve appropriate financial returns on their accounts at the same time, in addition to the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year.

Regarding the conditions, Mr. Abdulaziz Saud Al-Bakhait, Area Manager Retail Banking Group said: "KD 100 is now required to enter the weekly Sunbula draws and major draws, and the client still gets one chance for every KD 10 in the account, and the chances are counted according to the lowest balance in the account during the month. Therefore, a full month must have passed in the account to qualify for the weekly draw, and two full months for the major draws to count the chances. There are no restrictions or limits for withdrawal and deposit, the higher the deposited amount,



Abdulaziz Saud Al-Bakhait

the greater the client's chances to win".

Warba Bank launched its latest banking solutions service, "Customer Onboarding", in accordance with the terms of its ambitious five-year strategy, which enables non-Warba Bank clients to apply for opening a Sunbula account in an easy digital way via the Bank's website without the need to visit any of the Bank's branches, and within only five minutes - through the new and unique automated system used to enable this service - new clients will be able to complete the request to open an account at any time and any place.

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, and is one of the local banks with the largest number of shareholders, and these are among the most prominent elements that make the Bank close to all members of society.

### 'Parents encouraged to attend'

## IMA Ladies Wing Kuwait organizes program on children's screen time

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Cell Phone and Internet De-addiction Centers are on the rise around the world. Earlier, parents worried about the careers and the future of their children, but with the advancement of technology, even a 3 year old can successfully operate the internet and navigate through the apps easily, leaving parents confused, whether to worry about it or to be proud of their child's accomplishment.

It is more important than ever for parents to understand how to set healthy boundaries around Children's screen time and device usage. To help families navigate these challenges, Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Ladies Wing Kuwait is organizing a special program designed to raise awareness about the impact of excessive gadget use on children.

This event will be led by Dr. Susovana Sujit Nair, a Medical Specialist, who will share valuable insights on managing digital addiction and its effects on family dynamics. Both parents are encouraged to attend for maximum benefit.

Date: Saturday, September 28, 2024  
Time: 3:45 PM  
Venue: Al Najat Typical Private School, Mangaf Block 3

Don't miss this opportunity to gain expert guidance on a pressing issue that affects the wellbeing of families.

Join us to learn how to take control of technology and foster healthier habits for your children.

All Families in Kuwait are invited!  
For further details and queries,  
Contact: 97939101

## Mariam Al-Nasser highlights KIB's commitment to community financial education

# KIB boosts banking culture at Public Institution for Social Security

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the setup of a special booth at the Public Institution for Social Security with the aim of raising banking awareness and financial literacy among the institution's employees and visitors alike. This effort aligns with KIB's ongoing and dedicated initiatives to support the directives and recommendations of the "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) financial awareness campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) in cooperation with local banks. It also comes as part of KIB's commitment to its leading role in guiding customers, helping them make sound financial decisions, and protecting the security of their banking data.

In this regard, Mariam Al-Nasser, Area Manager of Retail Banking at KIB said: "We at KIB are always keen on actively contributing to initiatives that promote financial awareness in the community. Being present at the Public Institution for Social Security is an extension of our ongoing efforts to educate the public on sound banking practices. We aim to create a community that is well-informed and capable of making secure and smart financial decisions."

Al-Nasser added: "Setting up this special booth is part of our broader mission to ensure that our customers, and the public at large, are aware of how to protect their banking data, understand the importance of saving, and have the knowledge to utilize banking services effectively. The booth featured KIB representatives who were on-site to engage with the institution's visitors, answer their queries, and provide useful information on a variety of banking topics. The discussions focused on crucial subjects such as managing personal finances and protecting personal banking information against fraud and cyber threats. Additionally, they highlighted the role of banking institutions in financing, particularly Islamic financing. Moreover, visitors were introduced to our diverse



KIB's Mariam Al-Nasser



'Let's Be Aware' campaign

and innovative range of products and services, designed to enhance their experience amid the rapid advancements in the financial and banking sector."

It is worth noting that KIB is committed to its leading and effective role in raising community awareness, which is considered an essential part of its comprehensive social responsibility strategy. The Bank constantly strives to launch initiatives that broadly enhance financial literacy and to participate in events that support the goals of the "Let's Be Aware" campaign, embodying its main slogan, "Bank for Life".

**About KIB**  
Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made



Public Institution For Social Security Diraya booth.

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 commu-

nity, 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.

## Seven US cities account for nearly half of nationwide gentrification

# Study reveals most low-income neighborhoods did not gentrify from 2000-2013

By Sarah Mayorga  
Brandeis University

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

Gentrification has become a familiar story in cities across the United States. The story line typically goes this way: Middle- and upper-income people start moving into a lower-income or poor neighborhood. Housing prices rise in response, and longtime residents and businesses are driven out.

As the U.S. population becomes increasingly urban, gentrification can seem inevitable. However, scholars have found that it's actually pretty rare.

For example, a study by the nonprofit National Community Reinvestment Coalition that examined neighborhood change from 2000 through 2013 found that most low- and moderate-income neighborhoods across the United States did not gentrify during that period. Just seven cities - New York, Los Angeles, Washington, Philadelphia, Baltimore, San Diego and Chicago - accounted for almost half of all neighborhood gentrification nationwide.

Why is gentrification less common than many people fear? In our book, "A Good Reputation: How Residents Fight for an American Barrio," we argue that conflicts over neighborhood reputation are an important factor.

We examined disputes among residents of Northside, a predominantly Latino neighborhood, or barrio, in Houston, over how their neighborhood was perceived. We found that those who thought outsiders stigmatized the barrio, or who stigmatized it themselves, avoided engaging with the neighborhood, its institutions and its residents. This group supported measures that would facilitate gen-

trification, such as monitoring local bars to file nuisance complaints. By contrast, those who perceived the barrio as a welcome, desirable space worked to cultivate the neighborhood's institutions and connect its people, pushing back against attempts to gentrify the area.

Common understandings of gentrification and urban development often frame these urban processes as natural, linear and even inevitable for low-income neighborhoods. The argument goes that once you see a new Starbucks, or a light rail station in the case of Northside, gentrification is sure to follow.

Based on our research, however, we argue that when politicians, developers and even residents themselves attempt to develop or redevelop marginalized urban neighborhoods, they spur neighborhood conflicts that, in turn, can greatly influence the redevelopment process.

Northside is one such neighborhood. Located just north of downtown Houston, it has been majority Latino for more than 60 years. It has also been a high-poverty area, with 23% to 38% of its residents living beneath the federal poverty line over this time period.

About one-third of its residents are foreign-born, many of them originating from Mexico or Central America. But most Latino Northsiders are second-, third- or later-generation Mexican Americans or Latino Americans.

The neighborhood consists mainly of single-family homes on small, densely packed urban lots. Some streets have sidewalks and covered drainage systems, while others have open ditches and lack sidewalks. Although the METRO red line train travels along the barrio's western border and a few busy thoroughfares crisscross the neighborhood, much of the area has a small-town, quiet, residential feel.

As we describe in our book, we found two widespread and conflicting views of Northside among its residents. Interestingly, these

views did not easily map onto individual characteristics, such as racial identity or class. People would sometimes change their viewpoints depending on the conflict in question.

One group wanted to cleanse the barrio of what its members saw as negative features, transform the area and prepare the way for gentrification to occur. The other group was intent on celebrating the barrio as it already was and on preserving its character and supporting its residents.

Residents who wanted to remake Northside often believed that it had too many features that they felt were associated with Black or low-income people, such as public housing, cantinas or bars, and services for people without homes. For example, one woman we spoke with cited neighborhood cantinas and housing shelters as evidence that Northside was dangerous.

These Northsiders wanted to purge and clean the neighborhood to improve what they perceived as its marred image. They sought to remove facilities, such as a Salvation Army shelter, which they believed attracted undesirable people; called for increased police presence in the neighborhood; and avoided local places such as parks and grocery stores, often driving to other neighborhoods instead.

They also attempted to curate what they viewed as respectable behavior, through steps such as installing video cameras and calling on residents to report neighbors whom they believed were dumping trash or failing to neuter and spay their pets.

In contrast, other residents believed that their neighborhood was a welcoming and desirable place. They were proud of its parks, churches, public schools and Mexican restaurants, and they spoke of pivotal moments in Northside's past to argue for its desirability in the present. One such event was an uprising at Moody Park in 1978 that spurred reforms in the Houston police department and capital improvements to the park. (AP)



# Tourists can now visit the 'Oval Office' as replica opens

WASHINGTON, Sept 22, (AP) — Washington is getting a new tourist stop that offers visitors the next best thing to being in the Oval Office: an identical replica of President Joe Biden's office, right down to his desk, the armchairs in front of the fireplace and the weathered family Bible resting on a side table.

And when Biden's successor takes office next year, the full-scale replica Oval Office at "The People's House: A White House Experience" will be redecorated to look exactly like the new president's office, said Stewart McLaurin, president of the White House Historical Association, which is opening the doors of its technology-driven education center to the public on Monday.

A separate space in the center called the "Immersive Theater" uses technology to transform into some of the more notable rooms in the White House every five minutes.

"A terrific thing about this Oval Office, unlike the current Oval Office, is if you're visiting us you can come and you can sit in this chair and be the president of the United States," McLaurin said, talking about the desk chair as he led The Associated Press on a tour of the center before Monday's opening.

Few people ever set foot in the Oval Office. It is not on the White House public tour route. But at "The People's House," not only will visitors get to see what one of the most famous offices in the world looks like, they can experience it, too.

"You can take a call from Mr. Putin or anybody you'd like to receive a call from, have your photo taken there," McLaurin said. "You can sit on the sofas or in the president's chair as you've visualized him sitting

there and you see him on the news talking with a visitor or a head of state. You can do the same thing right there in front of the fireplace."

The wallpaper, draperies, rug, furniture, paintings and other artwork are exact replicas of the furnishings as they are currently in the Oval Office. The plan is to change the decor with each future president.

"It is exactly like President Biden's, exactly," McLaurin said. "Even the family Bible with the weathered elements are duplicated."

Except for the "digital column" in the center of the room that shows visitors how the physical office has evolved throughout the presidency. It also turns into a mirror so visitors can see themselves standing in the Oval Office.

## Technology

Technology is also used to transform the "Immersive Theater" every five minutes into each of the five rooms on the White House State Floor: the East Room, the Red, Blue and Green Rooms, and the State Dining Room. Images on the walls in each room were chosen by the association's historians. Visitors can touch the walls to unlock information about the art, furniture or other history that happened there.

"We want people to feel they are in that room of the White House," McLaurin said.

Leaving the theater, visitors will walk to the replica Oval Office along a stone path resembling the White House colonnade with a view of art made to represent the Rose Garden.

Another exhibit shows how presidents use the White House for work, family and social functions. Visitors can attend Cabinet meetings and

vote on a course of action for the president, sit at a table set as it would be for a state dinner to learn how presidents use these glitzy events to conduct diplomacy, or settle into a seat in the family movie theater.

In a separate gallery, the head groundskeeper, florist, lead military aide and chief usher are among White House staff members featured on video explaining what they do.

After entering the education center, visitors will come upon a large model of the south side of the White House, listen to an audio greeting from First Lady Jill Biden and watch an orientation film narrated by Martin Sheen, who played a president on television's "The West Wing."

The back side of the model looks like a dollhouse, exposing cutaways of the ground, state and residence floor rooms. Visitors can tap electronic kiosks to learn more about the rooms.

The education center covers three floors of an office building at 1700 Pennsylvania Ave., one block from the White House. Technology is used throughout to help teach the history of the executive mansion, the presidents and the families who have lived there, and the staff whose work keeps it functioning in its multiple roles as a workplace, a residence and a museum.

Admission is free, but visitors must request timed tickets. The association is planning for 800 visitors every day, with most staying a little over an hour.

The association raised \$60 million for construction and initial operating costs, and is working to build a \$50 million endowment to sustain operations, McLaurin said.

Travel

## Variety



This image released by IFC Films shows Noah Wiseman, (left), and Essie Davis in a scene from the film 'The Babadook.' (AP)

## Film

Kent's horror milestone re-released in theaters

# Why does 'The Babadook' still haunt?

NEW YORK, Sept 22, (AP) — "The Babadook," when it was released 10 years ago, didn't seem to portend a cultural sensation.

It was the first film by a little-known Australian filmmaker, Jennifer Kent. It had that strange name. On opening weekend, it played in two theaters.

But with time, the long shadows of "The Babadook" continued to envelop moviegoers. Its rerelease this weekend in theaters, a decade later, is less of a reminder of a sleeper 2014 indie hit than it is a chance to revisit a horror milestone that continues to cast a dark spell.

Not many small-budget, first-feature films can be fairly said to have shifted cinema but Kent's directorial debut may be one of them. It was at the nexus of that much-debated term "elevated horror." But regardless of that label, it helped kicked off a wave of challenging, filmmaker-driven genre movies like "It Follows," "Get Out" and "Hereditary."

Kent, 55, has watched all of this - and those many "Babadook" memes - unfold over the years with a mix of elation and confusion. Her film was inspired in part by the death of her father, and its horror elements likewise arise out of the suppression of emotions. A single mother (Essie Davis) is struggling with raising her young son (Noah Wiseman) years after the tragic death of her husband. A figure from a pop-up children's book begins to appear. As things grow more intense, his name is drawn out in three chilling syllables - "Bah-Bah-Doook" - an incantation of unprocessed grief.

Kent recently spoke from her native Australia to reflect on the origins and continuing life of "The Babadook."

**AP:** Given that you didn't set out to in any way "change" horror, how have you regarded the unique afterlife of "The Babadook"?

**Kent:** I've always been a lover of horror of all kinds. It's a tradition that dates back to the beginning of cinema, with Carl Dreyer's "Vampyr" and so many horror films in that early part of cinema. So I think I was just following a tradition that was firmly established in terms of what they now call "elevated hor-

ror," which doesn't make sense to me. I don't think I invited anything new. I just told my version.

**AP:** You can see some those influences - Dreyer, Murnau - in the film's production design.

**Kent:** I really wanted a world where the thing could reliably spring from. So while we didn't to make it a fake world, we wanted to heighten it just to the point where it wasn't silly or questionable that this energy or entity appeared in the house. We were very particular about the colors. The house and everything in the world had to be a certain color. I remember Radek (Ładczuk), my DP, laughing because I was annoyed that the grass was too green.

**AP:** Have you watched it again recently?

**Kent:** No, I haven't. Even when I watched the trailer I was like: "Mistakes, mistakes." I might slip in and watch it (during the rerelease) and see how it feels. I rarely think of it. I'm very grateful to that film but I rarely - never - refer back to it.

**AP:** Why is that?

**Kent:** I don't think filmmakers tend to sit down and want to watch their own film. It's kind of my idea of a nightmare to go back and watch it.

**AP:** You also probably didn't want to be defined by one work. Your 2018 follow-up, "The Nightingale," was a brutal, searing drama about rape in colonial Australia.

**Kent:** Totally. It feels like my slightly less popular child who I say, "Would you like to meet 'The Nightingale'?" I'm enormously proud of that film because it took so much of us to make it and it was so uncompromising. We didn't go to a National Park with a car park next to it. We sort of went into the wilderness.

**AP:** Have your thoughts about "The Babadook" changed over time?

**Kent:** To me, the film is very pure. I really fought to make it pure. Even though it was a low-budget film - I think it was \$1.6 to \$2 million US - it was very uncompromising. Because I hadn't made a film, I was an untested entity, so everyone had their two cents worth. They wanted to change the end or make a sequel or make it more gory, and I was just adamant about keep-

ing it pure. So when I think of that film, I'm really proud that me and my team were able to protect it.

And I wonder if in the current marketplace if it would have gotten made. It's much harder to make films now. It was hard then, though I think it's even harder now. I hope people can continue to protect their work because we need original, independent films. Where I live, there's been a Robert Bresson retrospective and I've gone to a lot of his films. It's just lifechanging to see films like that that are so old now but feel like they were made yesterday.

**AP:** That kind of repertory cinema experience has traditionally been an arthouse thing, but revivals like yours for "The Babadook" seem to be a new, broader extension of it. What do you think has changed?

**Kent:** I feel like we're in this very dark age of art or cinema. And I feel like people crave that experience. I went to see on the weekend Dreyer's "Ordet" and Bergman's "The Seventh Seal." Especially in "Ordet," it's such a transcendent film. The audience, we were collectively experiencing it. I could hear people crying at the end. It's the reason that we went to the cinema in the first place - to have an experience. Not to sit on our couch while we're looking at our phones watching some sort of content. It's not bringing out the best in us or in the work. For me, I take it very seriously because I think we need it.

**AP:** Rewatching "The Babadook," I was struck by how much care you take in pulling the horror out of repressed emotions. It's nearly an hour before the Babadook materializes, which he does after the mother shouts "Just be normal!" at her son.

**Kent:** It also comes out of a point where he's desperately trying to warn her of the truth, and then he's medicated. I'm not saying medication is bad, but in this case it's very bad. That's when the energy become a reality. I was fascinated at the time, and still am, at how people can push down so much on a world of pain and grief and continue to function. I think it brings a half life, unfortunately. I think we have to, on some level, face those painful experiences so we can enjoy the fullness of life.

# Features

ARABIC TIMES

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2024

**LOS ANGELES:** Kathryn Crosby, who appeared in such movies as "The 7th Voyage of Sinbad," "Anatomy of a Murder," and "Operation Mad Ball" before marrying famed singer and Oscar-winning actor Bing Crosby, has died. She was 90.

She died of natural causes Friday night at her home in the Northern California city of Hillsborough, a family spokesperson said Saturday.

Appearing under her stage name of Kathryn Grant, she appeared opposite Tony Curtis in "Mister Cory" in 1957 and Victor Mature in "The Big Circus" in 1959. She made five movies with film noir director Phil Karlson, including "Tight Spot" and "The Phenix City Story," both in 1955.

Her other leading men included Jack Lemmon in "Operation Mad Ball," James Darren in "The Brothers Rico," and James Stewart in "Anatomy of a Murder," directed by Otto Preminger.

Born Olive Kathryn Grandstaff on Nov. 25, 1933, in West Columbia, Texas, she graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in fine arts. She came to Hollywood and began her movie career in 1953.

She met Bing Crosby while doing interviews for a column she wrote about Hollywood for her hometown newspaper. They were married in 1957, when she was 23 and he was 54.

She curtailed her acting career after the wedding, although she appeared often with Crosby and their three children on his Christmas television specials and in Minute Maid orange juice commercials. She became a registered nurse in 1963.

In the 1970s, she hosted a morning talk show on KPIX-TV in Northern California. (AP)

**NEW YORK:** Last year, five people hoping to view the Titanic wreck died when their submersible imploded in the Atlantic Ocean. This week, a Coast Guard panel that's investigating the Titan disaster listened to four days of testimony that has raised serious questions about whether warning signs were ignored. The panel plans to listen to another five days of testimony next week.

Here's what witnesses have been saying so far:

When testifying about a dive that took place several years before the fatal accident, lead engineer Tony Nissen said he felt pressured to get the Titan ready and he refused to pilot it.

"I'm not getting in it," Nissen said he told Stockton Rush, the co-founder of OceanGate, the company that owned the Titan. Nissen



Crosby



Lemmon

said Rush was difficult to work for, made demands that often changed day-to-day, and was focused on costs and schedules. Nissen said he tried to keep his clashes with Rush hidden so others in the company wouldn't be aware of the friction.

Scientific director Steven Ross said that on a dive just a few days before the Titan imploded,

the vessel had a problem with its ballast, which keeps vessels stable. The issue caused passengers to "tumble about" and crash into the bulkhead, he said.

"One passenger was hanging upside down. The other two managed to wedge themselves into the bow," Ross testified.

He said nobody was injured but

it took an hour to get the vessel out of the water. He said he didn't know if a safety assessment or hull inspection was carried out after the incident.

A paid passenger on a 2021 mission to the Titanic said the journey was aborted when the vessel started experiencing mechanical problems. (AP)



## People &amp; Places

## Books

## 'The Power Broker'

## After 50 years, Caro's dreams coming true

NEW YORK, Sept 22, (AP): **Robert A. Caro** stands between two giant columns in a second-floor library of the New-York Historical Society, looking out on dozens of friends, family members and colleagues. A research room named for him looms behind. Portions of his archives are on display nearby.

"The most honest thing I could possibly say tonight is also possibly the corniest, and that is having my archives here is, in a way, a dream come true," the historian said during a recent dinner tribute at the Society, a 200-year-old institution located opposite Central Park that he would visit often as a child who already imagined becoming a writer.

"I won't say I dreamed of being a well-known writer," he added. "But my dreams were of being a writer. So now, I am a writer and my papers are here, and you could say it's a dream come true."



Caro

The 88-year-old author spends most of his days writing - the fifth and final volume of his Lyndon Johnson series, more than a decade in the making, is still without a scheduled release date. But in recent weeks, he has been looking back to his first book, to the biography that made him famous, and, for some, infamous: "The Power Broker." His Pulitzer Prize-winning chronicle of Robert Moses is a page-turning - around 1,300 pages - appraisal of the New York City municipal builder, portrayed by Caro as a man of historic vision and talent whose ego and disregard for others made him a cautionary tale for unchecked authority.

A New Yorker for much his life, Caro is the Society's unofficial laureate, subject of one exhibit - "Turn Every Page" - about his famously thorough research and a new one dedicated to "The Power Broker," published 50 years ago. "Robert Caro's The Power Broker at 50" includes typescript pages, notebook entries, letters, press clippings, a draft of the book's introduction and samples of Caro's reporting, including a tally sheet that he and his wife, Ina, amassed of commuters to Long Island's Jones Beach, Moses' first major public project.

## Symbol

Caro's book remains widely purchased, taught and discussed, and so much a symbol of serious thought that it turned up in the background of many Zoom interviews with journalists and public figures during the height of the pandemic. The Society not only sells signed copies of his books, but also offers ceramic mugs that read: "I Finished The Power Broker."

Although "The Power Broker" is among the longest one-volume books in existence, Caro obsessives - and the author himself - have wondered about the material left out. Caro's original manuscript was around 1 million words, and some 300,000 had to be removed by Caro and editor Robert Gottlieb just so the book wouldn't require an extra edition. Missing or drastically cut sections include one on community activist Jane Jacobs, who helped stop Moses' efforts to build a highway through Greenwich Village, and one on tenants of a Bronx neighborhood uprooted by the Cross Bronx Expressway.

Caro himself has long forgotten what happened to the old manuscript pages, boxed up and placed in filing cabinets decades ago and opened only after the Society acquired his papers in 2020. The exhibit, and his archives, now open to the public, offer few clues.

According to Valerie Paley, senior vice president and director of the society's Patricia D. Klingenstein Library, virtually all "The Power Broker" papers have been sorted and no sign of a full draft or extensive section of the Jacobs chapter or One Mile sequel has been found. The society's online site dedicated to the archive lists thousands of "Power Broker"-related materials, but nothing specific about Jacobs or the lives of the Bronx tenants after they left.

During a recent interview at his writing office, a short walk from his apartment and the Society, Caro noted one artifact in the exhibit - a napkin on which he had scrawled a few thoughts about "Fiddler on the Roof" and a line about growing up knowing everyone you meet. He had been speaking with some Bronx women displaced by Moses' highway and noted how their fates could be compared to those driven out in Russia by the czar. But what he had hoped would be a long chapter on what happened to them ran just 10 pages.

"I remember writing pages of that chapter over and over again," he said. "I thought it was good, but we were coming down to the end and we had to cut another 40,000 words and it had to go."

## Ambitions

"The Power Broker" set the template for Caro's grand ambitions and flexible deadlines. He thought he would spend a few months on the book, but needed more than seven years, taking so long that he and Ina ran out of money and had to sell their home. His background was in journalism; he was a Pulitzer-winning investigative reporter for Newsday.

But "The Power Broker" was also influenced by some of the 19th century novelists he admired, notably Anthony Trollope, whom his wife first told him about.

Caro's narrative has the kind of scale, moral underpinning, political insights and outsized characters - Moses above all - that he admired in such Trollope works as "The Prime Minister." Asked if "The Power Broker" could almost be called a nonfiction 19th century novel, Caro responded: "Not almost."

When "The Power Broker" was published, Moses issued a 23-page statement denouncing it as full of "mistakes, unsupported charges" and "random haymakers" and accused Caro of listening too closely to "a few bellyachers on street corners" and "disgruntled truck drivers." But most critics regarded the book as a revelation and continue to rank it as essential for those interested in politics, urban planning or New York history. Admirers include President Barack Obama, who recalled being "mesmerized" by it when he awarded Caro a National Humanities Medal in 2010.

Even Jacobs forgave him for not mentioning her. In a 1974 letter displayed in the exhibit, she thanked Caro for sending her a copy and expressed gratitude for his efforts.

"I have no doubt that many readers are going to feel the way I do - we owe you a tremendous debt for all those years of hard work, good sense, unflinching curiosity, and compassion," she wrote. "What an account it is of human predicaments; it ranks with the great novels."



Models wear creations as part of the Bottega Veneta Spring Summer 2025 collection, that was presented in Milan, Italy, Saturday, Sept. 21. (AP)

## Fashion

## Madonna makes veiled entrance

## Iconic fashion, celebrity glamour blend in Milan

MILAN, Sept 22, (AP): Celebrities swarmed Milan Fashion Week on the last big day of runway shows on Saturday, sending crowds of adoring fans from venue to venue.

Madonna sat in a front-row seat at Dolce & Gabbana, along with Naomi Campbell and Victoria De Angelis of Manekin. Her bandmate, Manekin frontman Damiano David, showed up at Diesel, one of the season's hottest tickets, across town. Jacob Elordi took a seat on a bunny-shaped bean bag chair to take in the Bottega Veneta show.

Highlights from Milan Fashion Week's mostly womenswear previews for next spring and summer on Saturday.

Madonna attempted a semi-stealth entrance to the Dolce & Gabbana runway show draped in a black veil for a runway show referencing her 1990s heyday.

Models in bleach-blond wigs strutted in Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana's signature corsets and fitted jackets in a collection that notes said "pays homage to an ironic and powerful female figure."

Madonna wasn't cited specifically, but the stars of the Milan designers and pop star have been aligned ever since they made costumes for her 1993 Girlie Show tour. The tour promoted Madonna's album launched alongside her taboo-breaking coffee table book.

"Madonna has always been our icon. It's thanks to her that a lot of things in our lives changed," the

designers said in a note.

The collection, dubbed "Italian Beauty," perfectly captured that moment in time. Cone bras peeked out of cropped jackets with a pencil skirt, garters swung from corsets and coats sculpted the body. Floral prints returned, accenting a color scheme of black, nude, red and white. Oversized cross earrings finished the looks. Heels were unapologetically high.

After taking their bows, the designers walked down the runway to greet their guest of honor. Madonna, still covered by the Chantilly long lace veil fastened by a gold and crystal crown, stood to embrace them both.

## Intersection

Bottega Veneta's sometimes misproportioned, sometimes crinkled, always provocative collection explores the intersection between the real world and fantasy, adulthood and childhood. Creative director Matthieu Blazy's meaning is simple: To delight.

"We need beauty. We need joy," Blazy said backstage. "We need that experimental act. It is also an act of freedom."

In this universe, a dental clinic receptionist wears a skirt with a trouser on just one leg, which Blazy asserts as a playful act. In a familiar scene, a well-dressed father carries his daughter's pink and purple school bag. "Do we like the bag? I don't know. Does it tell a story? Yes," Blazy said.

Strait, fostering a cultural bridge through the participation of young people and art professionals, said **Cherry Zhou**, curator of the exhibition. (Xinhua)

**WELLINGTON:** The "Silk Road Artists' Rendezvous" art exhibition, featuring 63 works created by 60 artists from 33 coun-



Johnson



Young Dolph

tries, kicked off in **New Zealand** on Friday.

Since 2009, hundreds of artists from nearly 100 countries have participated in "Silk Road Artists' Rendezvous" visits to **China**, which were organized by China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

**Ye Su**, minister counselor of the Chinese embassy in New Zealand, said at the opening ceremony that hosting the exhibition in New Zealand would help deepen the friendly relations between the two countries and foster mutual understanding between the two peoples.

**Xia Shangzhou**, deputy director of the Museum of Contemporary Art of the China Academy of Art, said that when artists bring their artistic experiences to China, the colors of different cultures blend on this land, making every gathering a bold brushstroke in the picture of cultural and artistic exchange that the exhibition aims to paint. (Xinhua)

## People

## Public scrutiny

## Questions raised on Combs legacy

LOS ANGELES, Sept 22, (AP): **Sean "Diddy" Combs** created a hit-making empire with big name performers, earning his place as a savvy music mogul and becoming a three-time Grammy winner while securing high-profile deals across other industries.

But now, Combs' kingdom is collapsing under charges of sex trafficking and racketeering. He was arrested in New York on Sept. 16 and accused in an indictment of using his "power and prestige" to induce female victims and male sex workers in "Freak Offs" along with allegations of abuse dating back to 2008.

If convicted, Combs could face at least 15 years in prison. He is awaiting trial after pleading not guilty.

Since several allegations surfaced last year, Combs' public image has taken a nosedive as major deals slipped away: He stepped



Combs

down as Revolt TV chairman then later sold off his majority stake in the company. He reportedly lost a reality show with Hulu and his influential fashion line Sean John no longer can be found on the Macy's department store website.

After footage emerged from 2016 of Combs' hotel hallway attack of then-girlfriend R&B singer Cassie, he lost the key to the city of New York. Peloton paused the usage of his music and he saw his honorary degree from Howard University evaporate in disgrace. His charter school, Capital Preparatory School in Harlem, also cut ties with him.

Earlier this year, Combs withdrew a lawsuit filed last year against Diageo as part of a settlement with the London-based spirits giant, making the company the sole owner of Ciroc and DeLeon.

Combs may have lost his major deals but his music remains untouched, at least for now. While awaiting further details, let's delve into Combs' music and his public image in the wake of the indictment.

Combs' Bad Boy Records might be associated with 1990s artists like Notorious B.I.G., Faith Evans, Ma\$e and 112, but his label was still in the mix with recent releases by a couple of popular performers.

Last year, Combs released his first solo studio album since 2006 with "The Love Album: Off the Grid" and Janelle Monae put out "The Age of Pleasure" through his label. Both projects were Grammy nominated including Monae's album, which earned a nomination in the record of the year category.

In 2022, Machine Gun Kelly dropped his album "Mainstream Sell-out" under the Bad Boy umbrella too.

## Future

Despite his arrest, Combs' music is still available on several major streaming services including Spotify, Apple Music and Amazon Music. The streamers have yet to comment on their plans for how his music will be featured on their platform in the future.

Before the release of "The Love Album," Combs reassigned his Bad Boy publishing rights back to artists and songwriters. The move came after some criticized him over the years for mistreating his artists.

Some expressed concern for Combs' children, while others feel shame over his alleged missteps and actions, which have become the subject of jokes.

Entertainers from 50 Cent, LL Cool J, Shyne, Aubrey O'Day, Charlamagne and the Notorious B.I.G.'s mother have publicly shared their thoughts on Combs.

"I feel for his kids," LL Cool J told The Associated Press in a recent interview. He and Combs collaborated on the 1997 album "Phenomenon."

While LL Cool J showed concern, 50 Cent took a jab in a social media post. The rapper turned TV mogul trolled Combs after he learned law enforcement seized bottles, videos and more than 1,000 bottles of baby oil and lubricant during raids at his Los Angeles and Florida homes.

50 Cent posted his thoughts after a recent appearance on the Drew Barrymore talk show.

"Here I am keeping good company with @thedrewbarrymoreshow and I don't have 1,000 bottles of lube at the house," said 50 Cent, who often has criticized Combs during the accusations. He expects to release a docuseries on Netflix about the allegations against Combs.

Shyne, a former Bad Boy artist, said he finds no satisfaction in seeing Combs potentially facing prison time despite past trouble between them.

"This is someone who destroyed my life," said Shyne, who was convicted of assault and other charges stemming from a Manhattan nightclub shooting that injured three people in 1999. Combs' then-girlfriend, singer and actor Jennifer Lopez, also was there when shots rang out.



## New front-of-package labeling could transform consumer choices

## TRUTH in Labeling Act warns shoppers on sugar, salt and fat

By Kimberly Baker  
Clemson University

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

With rising rates of obesity in the US and increasing attention being paid to the health harms of processed foods, it's clear that far more could be done to help consumers make healthy food choices.

A bill known as the TRUTH in Labeling Act has been sitting before Congress since late 2023. If passed, it would require US food manufacturers to add a second nutrition label to the front of product packages, in addition to the ones currently found on the back or side panel. It would also require the label to highlight any potentially unhealthy ingredients in the product, such as the amount of sugar, sodium and saturated fat it contains.

The proposed legislation would provide consumers with a standardized, easy-to-read and quick way to decide whether a product is a healthy choice. Should the bill, which is still in committee, become law, the front-of-package label would be regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration.

The current nutrition facts label, typically featuring more detailed nutritional information and found on a product's side panel, would remain unchanged.

As a food safety extension specialist who works with farmers, entrepreneurs, manufacturers and the government to help bring healthy food to shoppers, I believe that consistent front-of-package labeling would greatly benefit consumers by offering a straightforward way to compare multiple products, helping them make more informed choices.

Even if passed, it will take time for the FDA to interpret the law and standardize the design and format. And it might be years before all food manufacturers are required to use the new label. In the meantime, more than 175 million Americans are overweight or obese, and with each passing day, that number grows.

The newly proposed legislation is the latest effort by lawmakers to educate the public about smart food choices. Congress began requiring standardized nutrition labels on food packages through the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act of 1990.

#### Obesity

But in the 34 years since that first label appeared, the obesity rate has more than tripled; 40% of Americans are now obese. Another 31% are overweight, and diet-related chronic illnesses, including heart disease, stroke, cancer, hypertension and Type 2 diabetes are rampant. About 60% of US adults - 130 million people - have at least one of these chronic illnesses.

All of these diseases are associated with consuming too much sugar, sodium or saturated fat - three key ingredients the front label will focus on.

There's another reason to require a second, easy-to-notice, easy-to-comprehend label. Only about 40% of Americans frequently read the existing nutrition facts label; some shoppers say they don't understand it. A simpler label with a more direct message might help those consumers. In fact, some studies suggest front-of-package labels do assist shoppers in making smart choices.

Research shows that those who frequently read the current label tend to have healthier diets than those who don't. For example, frequent readers are almost four times more likely than rare readers to meet the recommended daily fiber intake.

Now the bad news: Even the frequent readers met their fiber goals only about 13% of the time. That isn't good, but it's an improvement over the rare readers, who meet their goals a paltry

## Parental consent required

## Calif enacts law to combat child social media addiction

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Sept. 22. (AP) - California will make it illegal for social media platforms to knowingly provide addictive feeds to children without parental consent beginning in 2027 under a new law Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Friday.

California follows New York state, which passed a law earlier this year allowing parents to block their kids from getting social media posts suggested by a platform's algorithm. Utah has passed laws in recent years aimed at limiting children's access to social media, but they have faced challenges in court.

The California law will take effect in a state home to some of the largest technology companies in the world. Similar proposals have failed to pass in recent years, but Newsom signed a first-in-the-nation law in 2022 barring online platforms from using users' personal information in ways that could harm children. It is part of a growing push in states across the country to try to address the impacts of social media

on the well-being of children.

"Every parent knows the harm social media addiction can inflict on their children - isolation from human contact, stress and anxiety, and endless hours wasted late into the night," Newsom said in a statement. "With this bill, California is helping protect children and teenagers from purposely designed features that feed these destructive habits."

The law bans platforms from sending notifications without permission from parents to minors between 12 a.m. and 6 a.m., and between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. on weekdays from September through May, when children are typically in school. The legislation also makes platforms set children's accounts to private by default.

Opponents of the legislation say it could inadvertently prevent adults from accessing content if they cannot verify their age. Some argue it would threaten online privacy by making platforms collect more information on users.

## Workplace mental health

## Scientists discover new way to fight Alzheimer's

LISBON, Sept. 22. (Xinhua) - A team led by neuropharmacologist Maria Jose Diogenes has confirmed the therapeutic potential of a new compound for treating Alzheimer's, marking a major step in combating the most common form of dementia, Lusa News Agency reported Friday.

The compound, named TAT-TrkB, was tested on mice models that simulate Alzheimer's disease, where it successfully "prevented memory loss and learning deficits without showing any side effects," said Diogenes, a researcher at the Institute of Pharmacology and Neurosciences at the University of Lisbon's Faculty of Medicine.

The innovative compound works through a unique mechanism, distinct from existing Alzheimer's treatments. It protects brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), a crucial molecule for memory and learning, whose effects are diminished in Alzheimer's patients, Lusa reported. It restores BDNF's function by preventing damage to its receptor, TrkB-FL, which is often cleaved in Alzheimer's, impairing the molecule's neuroprotective actions.

"Our results demonstrate that TAT-TrkB can improve memory and learning in Alzheimer's model mice in a significant way without adverse effects," Diogenes was quoted by Lusa as saying on the eve of World Alzheimer's Day, which is celebrated annually on Sept. 21.

The study's findings, published in the journal "Molecular Therapy," are part of ongoing efforts to better understand and combat Alzheimer's disease. Diogenes and her team are now working on refining the compound's de-

3.7% of the time.

For the record, the daily recommendation for fiber is 25 grams for women and 38 for men under 50; its slightly less for those over 50.

It's possible you've already seen some front-of-package nutritional labels on food products. But these labels are not regulated by the government. Known as

livery methods and exploring related compounds, with the aim of advancing toward clinical trials.

**Mental wellness:** Kenya's Ministry of Health said Friday that it will enhance partnerships with industry to boost mental wellness in the workplace and curb suicides and depression, which negatively impact economic productivity.

Debra Mulongo Barasa, cabinet secretary for the Ministry of Health, said that the government has prioritized mental health in the workplace, recognizing its pivotal role in improving economic outcomes for the country. Speaking at a forum in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, Barasa said that 3.7 million Kenyans out of a national workforce of about 24.9 million are living with a mental disorder, and alcoholism and drug abuse have worsened mental health issues among working adults.

She said that a government-appointed task force on mental health in 2020 identified workplace-related challenges as major risk factors for mental disorders among employed adults in Kenya. "Mental health problems not only affect individuals but also impact families, caregivers, colleagues, communities, and society as a whole," Barasa said.

She cited the Kenyan Mental Health Investment Case of 2021, which found that mental health conditions cost the country's economy about 62 billion Kenyan shillings (about 480.6 million U.S. dollars), or 0.6 percent of GDP, in 2020.

the "facts-up-front" labeling system, it's strictly voluntary and a choice of the individual food manufacturer, with label designs and formats provided by the Consumer Brands Association, a trade association representing the food industry. Only a small number of manufacturers have chosen to put these labels on their products. (AP)



In this photo provided by ISF/Meeting, competitors climb stairs during a race of Stairclimbing World Championships in Osaka, western Japan, on Nov. 19, 2023. (AP)

## Ultimate cardio exercise

## Climbing stairs effective exercise to burn calories

TOKYO, Sept. 22. (AP) - If you're trying to lose weight and want a new way to do it, stair-climbing as a regular exercise - or just adding a few flights a day - might be for you.

It's accessible, and research shows it's more effective than walking on level ground.

"Overall, it is a fact that stair-climbing gets you fit faster and consumes more calories," said Lauri van Houten, vice president of the International Skyrunning Federation, which oversees a wide range of disciplines that involve vertical climbing.

This includes disciplines like mountain running above 2,000 meters (about 6,500 feet) or events like the Stairclimbing World Championships.

## Competitions

These competitions are for the very fit, but we're talking here about adding a few minutes of stair-climbing as a daily routine and raising awareness about its effectiveness for all ages.

"How many calories will I burn is the question everyone wants to know," van Houten said. "Here's the good news: The overall energy expenditure of the exercise depends on your weight. Therefore, the more you weigh, the more you burn."

Research shows you burn about 20 times more calories going up stairs than walking on flat ground. Even going down stairs you burn roughly five times more, the muscles being worked to slow the body's descent.

That might be all you need to know if you are trying to lose weight.

Dr. Alberto Minetti, a physiologist and biomechanist at the University of Milan, has done extensive research of human locomotion - including stair-climbing.

"It is an exercise everybody can do," Minetti told The Associated Press. "You always have stairs nearby you - free of charge compared to a gym."

Minetti did the math to explain why going up stairs is so effective for burning calories in a short amount of time. "To move 1 kilogram of body mass over 1 horizontal meter, you expend 0.5 calories," he said. "If you move 1 kilogram of body mass vertically on stairs it's 10 calories. So it's 20 times the calories moving vertically rather than horizontally."

Trained as a physician, Minetti has spent his career in research rather than treating patients. He suggested "watching your speed" for the not-so-young and beginners. He does his own stair-

climbing at his third-floor residence in Milan. He said he often takes a few deep breaths before ascending, which makes him feel fresher at the top.

In a scientific study, Minetti makes the point that using the arms in stair-climbing adds extra power. Handrails offer safety, too.

The journal notes that handrails are available in most stairwells in skyscrapers, which maximizes "the muscle mass involved and, consequently, the mechanical/metabolic power of the ascent" by getting the arms involved.

"They are relatively small muscles in the arms, but better than nothing," Minetti said.

If stair-climbing was an Olympic sport, Suzy Walsham would own a handful of gold medals.

She's won 10 races up New York's Empire State Building - officially 1,576 stairs. She's claimed titles in more than 100 international stair races, and was once regarded as the No. 1 woman in the discipline.

Five times, the Australian has won climbs up the Eiffel Tower.

This was all too easy, apparently. When she was living in Singapore, Walsham climbed up her 29-story building - 37 consecutive times. It took over four hours, riding the elevator down each time after reaching the top with short breaks for coffee or water. She covered a vertical distance of 3,200 meters (10,500 feet).

## Impact

But let's get grounded. What are the advantages of stair-climbing as a regular exercise routine for the rest of us?

"You get a lot of bang for your buck," Walsham told the AP. "Many people struggle to run as they age. The impact of running gets harder on the joints. But stair training is a great alternative."

Stairs are everywhere - one flight, two flights at home, inside skyscrapers, in stadiums and arenas, at work, in shopping malls, in the subway.

One giant advantage of stair-climbing is it doesn't take much time. It's easy to build up, adding a few flights of stairs every day or week, and it improves balance.

On the down side, it's not very scenic, particularly in the stairways of towering skyscrapers.

Yuri Yoshizumi won last year's women's division of the Stairclimbing World Championships in her native Osaka, Japan, a 285-meter (935 feet) climb - 1,610 stairs - that she finished in 10 minutes, 20.06 seconds.

## Concerns raised

## Climate protests demand 'action'

NEW YORK, Sept. 22. (AP) - Six years after a teenage Greta Thunberg walked out of school in a solitary climate protest outside of the Swedish parliament, people around a warming globe marched in youth-led protest, saying their voices are being heard but not sufficiently acted upon.

Emissions of heat-trapping gases and temperatures have been rising and oil and gas drilling has continued even as the protests that kicked off major weeklong climate events in New York City have become annual events. This year, they come days before the United Nations convenes two special summits, one concentrating on sea level rise and the other on the future.

The young people who organized these marches with Fridays for Future said there is frustration with inaction but also hope. People marched in Berlin, Rio de Janeiro, New Delhi and elsewhere, but the focus often is in New York City because of Climate Week NYC. Diplomats, business leaders and activists are concentrating their discussions on the money end of fighting climate change - something not lost on protesters.

"We hope that the government and the financial sector make polluters pay for the damage that they have imposed on our environment," said Uganda Fridays for Future founder Hilda Flavia Nakabuye, who was among a few hundred marching in New York Friday, a far cry from the tens of thousands that protested in a multi-group mega-rally in 2023.

## Concern

The New York protest wants to take aim at "the pillars of fossil fuels" - companies that pollute, banks that fund them, and leaders who are failing on climate, said Helen Mancini, an organizer and a senior at the city's Stuyvesant High School.

"A lot of older people want to make sure the economy is intact and that's their main concern," said Julia Demairo, a sophomore at Pace University. "I think worrying about the future and the environment is worrying about the economy."

On a day that was at least 8 degrees warmer than average, protest signs included "This is not what we mean by Hot Girl Summer," while others focused on the theme of fighting the coal, oil and gas industries: "Youth Didn't Vote for Fossil Fuels," "Don't Be a Fossil Fool" and "Climate Crisis = Extinction by Capitalism."

Nakabuye said she was in New York to represent Uganda "that is bearing the brunt of the climate crisis."

"We feel like we are creating an impact in the community. However, we are not listened to enough; there is more that needs to be done, especially right now when the climate catastrophes are intensifying," said Nakabuye. "We need to even raise our voices more to demand change and to demand that fuels should end."

In the six years since Thunberg founded what became Fridays for Future, global carbon dioxide emissions from the burning of fossil fuels has increased by about 2.15%, according to Global Carbon Project, a group of scientists who monitor carbon pollution. The growth of emissions has slowed compared to previous decades and experts anticipate peaking soon, but that's a far cry from the 43% reduction that a UN report said is needed to keep temperature increases to an agreed-upon limit.

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## Newcomers lead St. Louis City to 2-1 victory

## Rapids clinch playoff berth with 2-0 win over Toronto

COMMERCE CITY, Colo., Sept 22, (AP) — Reggie Cannon scored a goal in the 53rd minute. Djordje Mihailovic converted a penalty kick in stoppage time and the Colorado Rapids beat Toronto FC 2-0 Saturday night to clinch a berth in the MLS Cup playoffs.

Colorado (15-10-5) is third in the Western Conference with 50 points, behind Real Salt Lake (51) and the LA Galaxy (58).

Cannon, who subbed on and played 16 minutes in his debut with the Rapids in a 4-1 loss to Sporting Kansas City on Wednesday, made his first start for the Rapids and his one-touch finish from just outside the area gave Colorado a 1-0 lead early in the second half.

Cedric Teuchert had a goal and Marcel Hartel scored on a penalty kick in the first 13 minutes and St. Louis City held on for a 2-1 victory over the San Jose Earthquakes.

Teuchert staked St. Louis City (6-11-13) to the lead in the 4th minute, using assists from defender Jannes Horn — the first of his career — and Hartel to score his fourth goal in his sixth appearance, all starts.

Hartel's PK netter came after he drew a foul on San Jose's Antônio Jesenildo Rodrigues de Oliveira. It was

his second goal in his fifth career appearance, all starts.

Jeremy Ebobisse pulled San Jose (5-22-3) within a goal in the 40th minute with his fifth netter of the season. Defender Carlos Akapo earned his first assist this season and the fifth of his career.

Petar Musa scored a first-half goal, rookies Patrickson Delgado and Logan Farrington scored two minutes apart in the second half and FC Dallas earned a 3-1 victory over Los Angeles FC.

## SOCCER

Musa netted his 15th goal in his first season in the league when he scored unassisted in the 28th minute and Dallas (10-13-7) took a 1-0 lead into halftime.

Delgado used assists from Farrington, who subbed in for Musa 10 minutes after he scored, and Paul Arriola to score in the 60th minute. Farrington took a pass from Jesús Ferreira and scored for a 3-0 lead in the 62nd. It was the fourth goal for both Delgado and Farrington, who has eight assists. Ferreira's helper was his sixth as was Arriola's.

## Lanzini guides River to victory over Boca Juniors

BUENOS AIRES, Sept 22, (Xinhua) — A first-half goal from former Argentina international midfielder Manuel Lanzini fired River Plate to a 1-0 away victory over rivals Boca Juniors in Argentina's Primera Division on Saturday.

Lanzini put his side ahead with a first-time effort from inside the six-yard box after Facundo Colidio's ef-

fort was parried clear by goalkeeper Sergio Romero at La Bombonera.

It marked Lanzini's first goal for River Plate since he returned to his original club in August last year.

"To come here for the first time in 10 years and score the winning goal is incredible," the 31-year-old former West Ham player said.

but, a 3-2 loss to the Seattle Sounders on Aug. 24.

Gabriel Pec, Riqui Puig combine for 2 goals, 3 assists as Galaxy beat Whitecaps 4-2.

Gabriel Pec scored a goal with two assists, Riqui Puig added a goal and an assist and the LA Galaxy beat the Vancouver Whitecaps 4-2.

Vancouver (13-9-7) defender Ranko Veselinović poked the ball away from the Galaxy's Dejan Joveljic near the corner of the 6-yard box but Pec ran onto the loose ball and scored on a

"I needed this goal. I have been giving 100% but sometimes things

## SOCCER

don't go your way, even when you prepare yourself the best you can." River Plate are now fifth in the

one-touch shot to make it 1-0 in the 35th minute.

LA (17-7-7) took a 2-0 lead on an own goal by Vancouver's Sebastian Behalter in the 50th but Brian White put away a feed from Behalter in the 63rd minute.

Pec slipped behind the defense and ran onto a ball played by Pulg, from well-beyond midfield, at the edge of the area and the tapped a cross to Joseph Paintsil for the finish for point-blank range into a wide open net in the 69th.

Primera Division standings with 24 points from 15 games, six points behind leaders Velez Sarsfield. Boca are 11th, three points further back.

In other fixtures on Saturday, Newell's Old Boys won 1-0 at home to Tigre, Barracas Central prevailed 1-0 at Instituto Cordoba, and San Lorenzo drew 0-0 at Defensa y Justicia.

Luca Orellano scored off a free kick in the second half to rally FC Cincinnati to a 2-2 draw with Nashville SC.

Orellano found the net for the equalizer in the 52nd minute for Cincinnati (17-8-5) after Nicholas Gioacchini was fouled by Nashville's Joshua Bauer. It was his ninth goal this season.

Nashville (8-13-9) jumped in front early when Sam Surridge used assists from defender Taylor Brennan Washington — his second — and Jonathan Pérez — his first — to score.

## Larson wins as 2 former NASCAR champs eliminated from playoffs



Kyle Larson, (center back, right), celebrates with his son Owen, (center front, right), and Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny Morris, (center left), after a NASCAR Cup Series auto race in Bristol, Tenn. (AP)

## Kyle dominates the 1st elimination race

BRISTOL, Tennessee, Sept 22, (AP) — Just minutes after Kyle Larson crossed the finish line on the most dominating victory ever for a Hendrick Motorsports driver, his team rushed his 9-year-old son to the winning Chevrolet.

## CAR RACING

Owen Larson was placed on the window, half in the car, half out, as his dad drove a victory lap around Bristol Motor Speedway with his son holding the No. 1 finger in the air. He later joined his dad atop the car during Saturday night's victory lane celebration.

"We had a little boys' weekend here this weekend," Larson said. "We'll bring some hardware home tonight, too."

Larson dominated the first elimination race of NASCAR's 10-race playoff portion of the season by leading all but 38 of the 500 laps at the track in Bristol, Tennessee — the most laps led ever in a race by a Hendrick driver. It easily moved him into the second round of the playoffs, while former NASCAR champions Brad Keselowski and Martin Truex Jr., as well as Ty Gibbs and Harrison Burton, were eliminated from the 16-driver field.

"I've had a lot of good cars since I've come to Hendrick Motorsports, but man, that was just great execution all weekend by the team," Larson said. "We dominate a lot of races but we might not close them all out, so it feels really good to close one out here."

The first of three elimination races in the 10-race playoffs began with Denny Hamlin, Truex, Keselowski and Burton all below the cutline and facing elimination from the 16-driver field.

Hamlin, a three-time Daytona 500 winner with four career wins at Bristol, was never really worried and finished fourth.

"My aspiration was winning," Hamlin said. "It's as good as what we've been here the last couple times. It's all offense from this point forward."

Burton, who used a surprise win at Daytona last month to qualify for the playoffs in the final few weeks before he loses his seat with Wood Brothers Racing, was doubtful to recover enough to advance and finished 35th. Keselowski, the 2012 Cup champion, and 2017 champion Truex had a better shot at salvaging their playoffs but both came up empty.

Truex was penalized for speeding on pit road, taking him out of contention to advance, and Keselowski just didn't have the pace. Joe Gibbs Racing had two of its four cars eliminated from the playoffs as Ty Gibbs was also penalized for speeding.

"That was just unfortunate there,"

said Gibbs, who finished 15th. "Speeding penalty is on me. It's my fault."

Keselowski finished 26th and lamented the lack of speed in his RFK Racing Ford.

"Didn't have the pace we wanted. We ran as hard as we could, there just wasn't anything there," Keselowski said. "Just gotta be faster."

Truex is retiring from full-time racing at the end of the season.

"That kind of screws up your whole season," Truex said of the speeding penalty. "It's on me. It was my mistake. Just really sad for my guys. We had a really good car. I hate I screwed it up, would have at least tried to see what we could do."

Larson, meanwhile, led 462 of 500 laps, the most since Cale Yarborough led 495 laps in 1977. Larson's laps led is the most ever by a Hendrick driver and marked the fifth win of the season for the driver of the No. 5 Chevrolet.

It's an impressive stat considering the Hendrick team has fielded cars for Hall of Famers Jeff Gordon, Jimmie Johnson, Terry Labonte and Dale Earnhardt Jr., among others.

"That's pretty awesome because there's been some legendary Hall of Famers race for Hendrick Motorsports, and we've all grown up watching Jeff Gordon and Jimmie Johnson dominate," Larson said. "So pretty cool to get my name on another record at Hendrick Motorsports." Daniel Suarez, who finished four

laps down in 31st, squeezed out the final spot into the second round of the playoffs by 11 points over Gibbs.

Also advancing were Chase Elliott, who finished second, Christopher Bell, who finished fifth, regular-season champion Tyler Reddick, Ryan Blaney, Joey Logano, Chase Briscoe, William Byron, Austin Cindric and Alex Bowman.

Hendrick's entire four-car Chevrolet lineup advanced, as did all three Ford drivers from Team Penske. But Toyota lost a pair of JGR entries, and Ford lost two cars in Keselowski and Burton.

Corey LaJoie had already been told by Spire Motorsports it was not bringing him back next year, which gave him the rest of this season to finish out strong.

Then Spire threw him a lifeline with an unusual driver swap with Rick Ware Racing that will move Justin Haley into the Spire No. 7. LaJoie will replace Haley at RWR starting next week at Kansas Speedway.

While Haley's deal guarantees him the seat in 2025, LaJoie will have to earn the RWR ride. But in the meantime, he wanted one final good finish with Spire. He qualified ninth and was running 11th when he was involved in a crash that essentially ended his career with Spire.

NASCAR opens the second round of the playoffs at Kansas Speedway, where Reddick won last fall and Larson won in May. Bell takes a six-point lead over Larson into Kansas.

## Venezia ends drought

## Conte booed as Napoli, Juve settle for 0-0 draw

MILAN, Sept 22, (AP) — Antonio Conte's return to Juventus and into a packed stadium started with jeers for the former Bianconeri hero.

It ended 0-0 between Juventus and Conte's Napoli, which created the better chances in Turin.

A third straight goalless draw for Juventus in Serie A ended a run of three wins for Napoli.

Conte, who also played for Juventus for 13 years, led the Bianconeri to the first three of its nine consecutive Serie A titles before leaving in acrimonious circumstances in 2014.

He has been back to Allianz Stadium as coach of Juve's fierce rival Inter Milan but on all three occasions there were no fans present because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The 55-year-old now coaches another Bianconeri enemy. There were loud boos when the Napoli team was read out, and that seemed to increase when Conte's name was announced.

Former Manchester United midfielder Scott McTominay was given his first start by Conte and he almost broke the deadline in the 29th minute but Juventus goalkeeper Michele Di Gregorio did well to parry his effort and smother the Romelu Lukaku follow-up.

Di Gregorio did even better in first half stoppage time with a fantastic fingertip save to keep out a Matteo Politano free kick.

Politano almost scored a sublime goal early in the second half. He surged down the right and cut inside but his finish was just over the bar from the edge of the area.

## SOCCER

Juve's best chance came in the 70th when Teun Koopmeiners curled narrowly over the bar.

United States midfielder Gianluca Busio helped Venezia to its first victory of the season, 2-0 over Genoa, which was shaken by a terrible injury to Ruslan Malinovskyi.

The Genoa midfielder sustained a horrific-looking lower-leg fracture early in the second half when he caught his studs on the turf and his right ankle turned under him.

Players put their heads in their hands after seeing Malinovskyi's foot facing the wrong way.

Busio won a penalty in the 58th when he was bundled over by Genoa defender Koni De Winter. Joel Pohjanpalo's spot kick was powerful and precise but was fantastically saved by Pierluigi Gollini.

However, Venezia took the lead five minutes later in somewhat fortunate circumstances. Busio put what was definitely a cross into the box but no one managed to get on the end of it and it bounced off the turf and in off the right post.

It was Busio's second Serie A goal and his first since a stoppage-time equalizer against Cagliari almost three years ago.

Pohjanpalo all but secured the win five minutes from time when he tapped in John Yeboah's cross at the far post.

Parma scored two goals in stoppage time at Lecce to snatch a 2-2 draw. Both teams finished with 10 men.

Lecce thought it won but former



Lazio's Tijjani Noslin, left, and Fiorentina's Pietro Commuzzo in action during the Serie A soccer match between Fiorentina and Lazio at Artemio Franchi Stadium, Florence, Italy. (AP)

## Leverkusen rallies past Wolfsburg 4-3

LEVERKUSEN, Germany, Sept 22, (AP) — Victor Boniface's added-time goal lifted Bayer Leverkusen to a 4-3 comeback win over Wolfsburg in the Bundesliga on Sunday as the German champion produced another of its trademark late breakthroughs ahead of facing Bayern Munich next week.

It seemed Xabi Alonso's team might have missed its chance when Granit Xhaka rattled the goalpost with a stoppage-time curling shot, but soon after Boniface made the breakthrough.

All of Wolfsburg's players — down by one thanks to a red card for Yannick Gerhardt — were packed into the penalty area but Boniface, fresh from showing off an eye-catching skill in Leverkusen's 4-0 win over Feyenoord, suddenly found space in a crowd of three opponents to turn and shoot past goalkeeper Kamil Grabara.

It was the second time in four Bundesliga games this season that Leverkusen has won in added time. That followed an almost unbelievable series of dramatic finishes in its title-winning season.

Lecce winger Pontus Almqvist pulled one back in the third minute of stoppage time and Antoine Hainaut headed in the equalizer three minutes later.

Lecce was leading through a first-half goal from Patrick Dorgu when defender Frédéric Guilbert was shown a straight red card for what appeared to be a slap on Parma forward Matteo Cancellieri shortly after the interval.

However, Cancellieri was sent off 10 minutes later for a poor tackle on Dorgu just outside the area as he was sprinting clear on the counter. Nikola Krstović's resulting free kick was deflected in.



Juventus' Bremer, left and Napoli's Giovanni Simeone vie for the ball, during the Serie A soccer match between Juventus FC and SSC Napoli in Turin, Italy. (AP)

## Seize the Grey bags \$1 mln Pennsylvania Derby for 89-yr-old trainer

BENSALEM, Pa., Sept 22, (AP) — Seize the Grey led all the way in winning the \$1 million Pennsylvania Derby by 3 3/4 lengths on Saturday for 89-year-old Hall of Fame trainer D. Wayne Lukas.

Ridden by Jaime Torres, Seize the Grey ran 1 1/8 miles in 1:51.89 at Parx Racing. He paid \$10.60 to win as the 4-1 third choice in the field of 11 3-year-olds.

Santa Anita Derby winner Stronghold finished second. Dragoon Guard

was another head back in third as the co-favorite at 5-2 odds, snapping his four-race winning streak.

Seize the Grey won the Preakness in May before going to Saratoga, where he was seventh in the Belmont and fourth in the Jim Dandy Stakes.

"The thing about him is that after the debacle in Saratoga he trained brilliantly ever since. It never changed. He was really sharp every day. This is very gratifying," Lukas said. "I was very confident. I

have been that confident with him three times and all three times he won." Seize the Grey has five wins in 13 career starts and earnings of \$2,415,938. The colt is owned by

## HORSE RACING

MyRaceHorse Stable, which includes 2,570 members with micro shares. Several hundred of them jammed the winner's circle, forcing

the celebration to be moved onto the track.

"I don't know if I have ever been involved with that many people who are crying and hugging and jumping up and down," Lukas said. "Racing is calloused a little bit but not with these people. They were driving all night to get here." Next up for Seize the Grey could be the Breeders' Cup at Del Mar in November, either in the Dirt Mile or Classic at 1 1/4 miles.



## A new era of driving experience

## AABC invites customers to explore the all-new Renault Arkana



Left-right: The All-New Renault Arkana.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babbain Co. (AABC), the authorized and exclusive dealer of Renault cars in Kuwait, recently invited customers, media representatives and social media influencers to discover the all-new Renault Arkana at an exclusive event held at the Renault showroom in Al-Rai.

The event offered attendees an exciting opportunity to experience the Arkana up close, exploring its sleek design, advanced technology, and performance features in person. Guests were able to enjoy interactive presentations and get a closer look at the unique design elements that make the Arkana stand out in its class, and opens the door for a new era of driving experience.

The new Renault Arkana, showcases a sleek, fluid design with a strong, commanding presence, reflecting Renault's "Nouvelle Vague" identity. The front grille features the distinctive Nouvel'R logo at the center, surrounded by a dynamic 3D diamond pattern that adds depth and elegance. The aerodynamic blade, a signature element

of previous performance models, is now included in the Techno and Esprit Alpine trims, enhancing its sporty character. The rear design is completed with a smooth, modern look, featuring subtle details that contribute to the car's premium feel.

The Arkana's bold exterior, powerful performance, and advanced safety features are set to redefine the driving experience for modern motorists. With its dynamic design and spacious interior, it offers an unparalleled blend of comfort, technology, and style, making it a standout choice for today's drivers.

This exclusive event reflects Renault Al Babbain's commitment to bringing innovative and stylish vehicles to the Kuwaiti market, continuing the legacy of over 75 years of dedication. The all-new Renault Arkana is now available at the Renault Al Babbain showroom in Al-Rai.

For more information or to schedule a test drive, customers can visit Renault Al Babbain showroom in Al-Rai or contact customer service at 1804888.



Left-right: The interior of the All-New Renault Arkana.

## Kuwait karate team 'wins' big at Asian Championship

Hangzhou, Sept 22, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Karate team achieved remarkable success at the 2024 Asian Karate Federation Senior Champion-

ship held in Hangzhou, China, from September 19-22, securing one gold, one silver, and two bronze medals, the Karate Federation announced on Sunday.

Fayez Al-Daihani, Chairman of the Kuwait Karate Federation, told KUNA that Kuwaiti athletes Salman Al-Mosawi, Mohammad Bader, Mohammad Al-Mosawi, and Saqer Al-Dabasi clinched the gold medal in the group Kata competition. He also highlighted that Salman Al-Mosawi earned the silver medal in the individual Kata event, while Salem Al-Ajmi and Abdullah Sha'aban each took home bronze medals in the under 55 kg and under 60 kg Kumite categories.

Al-Daihani emphasized the team's readiness to face challenges and excel in their discipline, expressing gratitude to everyone who contributed to this recent success.



Fayez Al-Daihani

## French leader PSG 'drops' first pts after 1-1 at Reims

PARIS, Sept 22, (AP): Defending champion Paris Saint-Germain dropped its first points in the French League when it was held 1-1 at Reims.

After comfortably winning its first four games, PSG needed an equalizer from substitute Ousmane Dembélé in the 68th minute.

## SOCCER

The France winger latched onto a pass from midfielder João Neves and got ahead of defender Sergio Akieme to net from a narrow angle. It was his fourth league goal compared to three in 26 league games last season.

Reims led from the ninth minute when Junya Ito found space down the right and crossed to Japanese countryman Keito Nakamura, who got the better of central defender Marquinhos before shooting home.

Reims almost won the game on a counterattack deep into stoppage time but defender Nhoa Sangui shot

over.

Also, Kosovo winger Edon Zhegrova found his scoring touch with two first-half goals but it wasn't enough as Lille drew at home with Strasbourg 3-3.

The visitors rallied from 2-0 down to lead 3-2 thanks to goals from Brazilian midfielder Andrey Santos, Dutch striker Emanuel Emegha and in-form Swedish forward Sebastian Nanasi.

But prolific Canada forward Jonathan David held his nerve to convert a late penalty for Lille, rolling the ball softly down the middle as the goalkeeper dived to his left.

Elsewhere, forward M'Bala Nzola scored six minutes into stoppage time to earn Lens a 1-1 draw at Rennes.

The goal was somewhat the fault of veteran Rennes goalkeeper Steve Mandanda, who rushed off his line to punch a cross clear but failed to do so and Nzola pounced.

Striker Arnaud Kalimuendo put Rennes ahead from the penalty spot midway through the first half.

## Ashwin takes 6 wickets as India crushes Bangladesh in first test

Tourists bowled out for 234 runs in second innings

CHENNAI, India, Sept 22, (AP): Ravichandran Ashwin took his 37th five-wicket haul as India beat Bangladesh by 280 runs in the first test on Sunday.

Ashwin took 6-88 as Bangladesh was bowled out for 234 runs in its second innings chasing an improbable 515 for victory. Ravindra Jadeja picked up 3-58 as the spin duo consigned the Tigers to an early defeat on the morning of the fourth day.

India take a 1-0 lead in the two-match series, with the second match to begin on Friday in Kanpur.

## CRICKET

Ashwin, who also scored his sixth test hundred in the first innings, was named player of the match in his hometown test.

"I have watched a lot of international cricket at this venue (as a kid), so it's a special feeling every time I play here," 38-year-old Ashwin said. "I am enjoying my game right now. The first innings was an opportunity to dig deep and Jadeja helped get through the tough phases of that innings. It was a special knock and didn't sink in until day two. I am glad I ended up with a few wickets today as well."

Starting from overnight 158-4, Bangladesh put up strong resistance in the first hour of play.

Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and veteran all-rounder Shakib al Hasan put on 36 runs as India went wicketless in the first hour.



India's Ravichandran Ashwin shows the ball in his hand as he celebrates his 5-wicket haul on the fourth day of the first cricket test match between India and Bangladesh, in Chennai, India. (AP)

Shakib survived a stumping chance off Jadeja, as Rishabh Pant couldn't grasp the ball cleanly, but otherwise the Bangladesh pair applied themselves to deny India early inroads into the lower order.

Things changed around quickly in the second hour. Four balls after the drinks' break, Ashwin had Shakib caught at short leg to provide the breakthrough. Shakib scored 25 off 56 balls, including three fours.

Jadeja then had Litton Das caught at slip for one, and Ashwin completed his five-for with Mehidy Hasan

Miraz holding out to long on for eight.

Shanto went for a big swipe off Jadeja as he ran out of patience, falling for 82 runs. He faced 127 balls, and hit eight fours as well as three sixes to top score for the tourists.

Ashwin got his sixth as Taskin Ahmed (5) quickly followed his captain, while Jadeja rounded off the lopsided victory in the 63rd over, bowling Hasan Mahmud (7).

Bangladesh lost its last six wickets for 40 runs across 45 deliveries, crashing to a big defeat 10 minutes short of lunch on this fourth day.

The visitors had won the toss and opted to bowl, reducing India to 144-6 on day one. Ashwin led India's recovery with 113 runs as Jadeja (86) helped add 199 runs for the seventh wicket to lift India to 376 runs in its first innings.

Bumrah's 4-50 helped bowl out Bangladesh for just 149 in reply.

Centuries from Rishabh Pant (109) and Shubman Gill (119 not out) helped India post 287-4 declared in its second innings.

Later, the India team announced it had retained the same squad for the second test.

## High technical standard lauded

## Excitement builds for Kuwait Club, Al-Ahli Bank of Egypt showdown

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Arab handball fans are eagerly anticipating the key quarter-final match between Kuwait and the Al-Ahli Bank of Egypt at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex Hall tonight at 8:15 pm in 39th Arab Handball Clubs Champions Championship, currently taking place in Kuwait until September 26.

The significance of this match stems from Kuwait Club being the defending champion, having defeated the National Bank of Egypt 29-27 in the semi-finals of the previous tournament. Kuwait Club went on to claim the title by narrowly defeat-

## HANDBALL

ing Zamalek 31-30 in the final held in Dammam, marking its first Arab championship win. Now, the National Bank of Egypt is looking for revenge and hopes to prevent Kuwait Club from progressing further in the tournament, while Kuwait Club aims to defend its title.

Al-Gharafa from Qatar will face Al-Karkh from Iraq at 2:00 pm, followed by Al-Salmiya's against Al-Hashd from Iraq at 4:00 pm. At 6:15, Al-Qadisiya will take on Al-Ahli from Qatar.

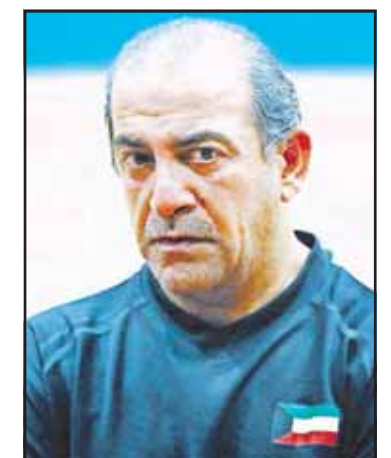
In the preliminary round matches held recently, Al-Gharafa defeated Al-Hashd 37-29, Al-Salmiya triumphed over Al-Karkh 38-29, and Al-Qadisiya won against Malhia from the UAE 35-23. The Kuwait Club also secured a win against Al-Ahli of Qatar with a score of 32-25. The teams advancing to the quarter-finals include Kuwait Club, Al-Ahli Bank of Egypt, Al-Karkh, and Al-Salmiya from Group One, while Al-



Ismail Abdul Quddous



Naif Al-Rundi



Salem Mahmoud

Ahli Bank, Al-Gharafa, Al-Qadisiya, and Al-Hashd qualify from Group Two.

Former athletes have lauded the high technical standard and intense competition displayed by clubs in

this year's championship. They emphasized that the event showcases significant progress in Arab handball, with expectations for continued improvement in the coming years.

Former national coach Salem Mahmoud expressed his enjoyment of the tournament, highlighting the presence of many professional players with exceptional skills. He noted that Kuwait Club and Al-Gharafa SC stand out as strong contenders for the final due to their experienced lineups and cohesive teamwork.

Naif Al-Rundi, a former player and current youth team coach, remarked on the impressive technical level of the teams, attributing much of this to the professionals who have raised the overall standard of play. He encouraged Kuwaiti fans to support their teams by attending the matches in large numbers.

Ismail Abdul Quddous, another former national coach, praised the quality of the tournament despite the absence of Saudi and Bahraini teams, noting the strong performances from the Kuwaiti clubs and their potential to advance to the final rounds.



Players fighting for the ball during the preliminary match.





Manchester United's Noussair Mazraoui, left, vies for the ball (unseen) with Crystal Palace's Will Hughes during the English Premier League soccer match between Crystal Palace and Manchester United at Selhurst Park in London. The match ended 0-0. (AP)

# Sports

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## Kuwait poised for Korean challenge after 'hitting' 6 past Northern Mariana Islands

UAE overcome Lebanon



Kuwait players celebrate after scoring against Northern Mariana Islands.

Dubois retains IBF title with brutal 5th-round knockout

## Joshua suffers another devastating loss

LONDON, Sept 22, (AP) — Daniel Dubois is no longer an accidental world heavyweight champion.

With a brutal fifth-round knockout of Anthony Joshua in front of 96,000 fans at Wembley Stadium, Dubois showed he might be the real deal - and the future of boxing's marquee division.

"Are you not entertained?" Dubois roared to the crowd after dominating the all-British title fight to complete his quest to legitimize his status as a heavyweight titleholder, three months after gaining the IBF belt vacated by Oleksandr Usyk.

The 27-year-old Dubois entered the ring first - an unusual twist given he was the champion - to strengthen the feeling this was being treated as a homecoming for Joshua, the decade-long darling of British boxing who was bidding to emulate the likes of Muhammad Ali and Lennox Lewis as a three-time heavyweight champ.

### BOXING

Dubois left the ring as the heavyweight's next big thing, having floored Joshua in the first and third rounds before ending the fight 59 seconds into the fifth with a counter right that sent Joshua face first into the canvas.

Joshua's corner threw in the towel but that wasn't needed. There was no coming back for a boxer whose best days look behind him.

"This is my time, my redemption story," said Dubois, who put himself in position to potentially fight the winner of the Dec. 21 rematch between WBA, WBC and WBO champion Usyk and Tyson Fury. "I'm not going to stop until I reach my full potential."

As for the outclassed Joshua, he vowed to continue boxing after a fourth defeat over the last five years. His promoter, Eddie Hearn, said he wanted to exercise the rematch clause.

This was the worst of all those losses, though. Joshua was saved by the bell in the first and third rounds after the knockdowns and put in a ragged performance throughout, with Dubois getting through his defense with ease.

Joshua never recovered from an overhead right late in the first round that knocked him down. He stuck out his tongue toward Dubois as he returned to his stool but he was clearly hurt, disorientated and vul-

## Super sub Vinicius sparks Real recovery

BARCELONA, Spain, Sept 22, (AP) — Joan Garcia showed why he is an up-and-coming goalkeeper - until Vinicius Junior got the Real Madrid scoring machine going.

Vinicius went off the bench to assist Rodrygo and score one of his own and Kylian Mbappé added a late penalty as Madrid topped a tenacious Espanyol 4-1 in the Spanish league.

Garcia made several saves for the visitors before the Olympic gold medalist started an attack with a long pass from his box that ended with an own goal by counterpart Thibaut Courtois in the 54th minute.

But Garcia's only slip of the match let Dani Carvajal equalize four minutes later when Jude Bellingham's low pass squirmed under the goalie. The Madrid right back had to only push it over the line for 1-1.

Vinicius rested in the first half as Carlo Ancelotti rotated his attacking bunch. But the coach sent the Brazil forward on immediately after Espanyol went ahead. Vinicius then took control, curling in a perfect cross with the outer tip of his left boot for Rodrygo to score in the 75th.

Vinicius beat Garcia in the 78th for his goal after Espanyol lost the ball and Mbappé played his attack partner clear on the break.

Mbappé converted a 90th-minute

nerable.

The knockdown late in the third, off a big left from Dubois, dumped



Anthony Joshua, left, and Daniel Dubois, fight in the IBF World Heavyweight bout at Wembley Stadium, in London. (AP)



Real Madrid's Jude Bellingham, left, and Espanyol's Alvaro Tejero fight for the ball during a Spanish La Liga soccer match at Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

spot kick after Endrick went on late and earned a penalty from Carlos Romero.

Madrid pulled to one point behind leader Barcelona before it plays at Villarreal on Sunday.

Bellingham had a scare when he fell awkwardly on his right shoulder in the first half, but after briefly being seen by

Joshua onto his backside through the ropes.

"I had a sharp opponent, a fast op-

ponent," Joshua said. "But a lot of the mistakes were mine."

A record post-war boxing crowd in Britain witnessed a changing of the guard.

Joshua has been a marketing phenomenon for the past decade, selling out U.K. stadiums and making hundreds of millions of dollars mainly because of his punching power. He might be back, but surely not as a realistic title contender after slipping to 28-4.

Dubois (22-2, 21 KOs) is undoubtedly the future. He said after the fight that he wanted another shot at Usyk, to whom he lost in Wroclaw, Poland, last year - but only after sending the Ukrainian to the canvas with a disputed low blow from which Usyk was given time to recover.

Otherwise, there's potentially a money-spinning fight with the 36-year-old Fury in the offing.

"I'm a gladiator. I'm a warrior to the bitter end," Dubois said. "I want to go to the top level of this game."

And he showed his quality at the

### SOCCER

Santiago Bernabeu.

Garcia made at least eight saves before he turned playmaker with a booming kick from his box that launched Jofre Carreras down the left flank. Jofre won the end line before his low pass hit Courtois' leg and turned into the net.

But once Madrid started clicking, even an inspired Garcia couldn't keep them out.

Two similar goals within three minutes of one another lifted Valencia to a 2-0 win over Girona at home.

A pair of shots by Luis Rioja and Dani Gómez in the 56th and 58th both took deflections off Girona defender Juanpe Ramirez before skirting past goalkeeper Paulo Gazzaniga.

By Hassan Musa  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Kuwait kicked off its campaign in the Group C qualifiers for the 2025 AFC U-20 Asian Cup with an impressive 6-0 victory over the Northern Mariana Islands at Abdullah Alkhalifa Al-Sabah Stadium.**

The host wasted no time, taking the lead just one minute into the game with a goal from Eid Al-Ruqbah. Turki Al-Yousef doubled its advantage shortly after. The team continued to dominate, with Yosef Al-Shammari scoring a brace in the 10th and 17th minutes, giving Kuwait a commanding lead at halftime.

Al-Yousef showcased his talent by adding another goal in the 49th minute, before completing his hat trick just four minutes later, effectively putting an end to any hopes of a comeback for the visitor.

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The UAE team secured a 3-2 win against Lebanon in another match.

The Kuwaiti youth football team faces a tough challenge against South Korea at 8:30 pm at Abdullah Al Khalifa Stadium, Al Yarmouk Club, in the second round of Group C.

Before the Kuwait-South Korea match, the United Arab Emirates will face the Northern Mariana Islands at 5:30 pm at the same venue. The Lebanese team will be absent from this round of games.

Kuwait's technical staff, led by Croatian coach Dario Pasic and his assistant Mohammed Al-Fulajjawi, are aware of the daunting task. South Korea brings considerable experience at the continental level. However, Pasic believes that if the Blue players execute their game plan and follow the coaching instructions, they can achieve a positive result and remain strong contenders for a spot in the finals.

Meanwhile, the UAE team will aim for its second win in the group, with a good opportunity to collect another three points against a modest Northern Mariana Islands side. The UAE displayed resilience in their first-round victory over Lebanon, playing most of the match with ten men after an early red card.

A total of 45 teams are competing in the Asian Cup qualifiers, divided into 10 groups. Five groups have four teams, while the other five have five. The group winners and the five best second-placed teams will qualify for the finals in China in 2025.

## Kuwaiti Wushu star Al-Mutairi set for World Youth Championship in Brunei

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM, Sept 22: Azzam Al-Mutairi, a talented member of the Kuwaiti Wushu Kung Fu team, is gearing up to participate in the 2024 World Youth Wushu Championship, taking place from September 24 to 29 in Brunei Darussalam.

The Kuwaiti delegation departed yesterday for the championship, led by Nasser Al-Loughani, head of the Kuwaiti Wushu Kung Fu Committee and representative of the International Wushu Federation. The delegation also includes Coach Dhari Al-Tamimi and athlete Azzam Al-Mutairi.

Nasser Al-Loughani emphasized that Al-Mutairi's participation in this prestigious global event is a significant source of pride for Kuwaiti sports, particularly given the recent growth of Wushu Kung Fu in Kuwait. He expressed confidence in Al-Mutairi's skills, highlighting his potential to elevate Kuwait's profile on the international youth stage.

Al-Loughani noted that Al-Mutairi has a rich history in the sport, having competed in numerous championships since childhood. He also participated as a "Sanda" player in the World Wushu Youth Championship held in Indonesia in 2022 and has engaged in various Wushu Kung Fu training and officiating courses.

He stated, "The participation in the

## Qadsiya and Kazma title hopes dwindle

By Hassan Musa  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 22: Qadsiya and Kazma's chances of competing for the Zain Premier League title have significantly diminished, as both teams remain at four points after five rounds, falling well behind leaders Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi, who each have 12 points from four matches.

Kazma and Qadsiya played to a 0-0 draw at the Friendship and Peace Stadium in their latest match, leaving both teams with a mountain to climb. While there are still 18 rounds left in the tournament, the performances of both teams have been underwhelming, showing little indication of improvement

### SOCCER

in the near future.

Montenegrin coach Zeljko Petrovic of Qadsiya highlighted his team's struggles with finishing, noting they squandered several scoring opportunities. He described the draw as feeling "like a loss" but emphasized that his team remains determined to turn things around, starting with their upcoming match against Al-Tadamon.

Al-Qadsiya's manager Mosaed Neda expressed frustration with the officiating; criticizing the referee for failing to award a penalty after Khaled Sabah was obstructed by Kazma's Khaled Shaman inside the penalty area.

Kazma's Tunisian coach, Saad Al-Shabi, believed his team could have secured a significant victory, claiming it had the chances to score three goals in the first half. He acknowledged that it relied on counterattacks in the second half to defend against Qadsiya's offensive efforts. Al-Shabi pointed out that they missed crucial counterattacking opportunities and stressed the need to address the shortcomings evident in their recent matches if it hopes to improve its standing.



Kazma and Al-Qadsiya players challenge for the ball during the Zain Premier League game.



Azzam Al-Mutairi with coach Dhari Al-Tamimi.