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## Amir Rep meets US President Biden, NATO chief



Crown Prince Diwan photo

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 during his meeting with the NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg.

NEW YORK, Sept 26, (KUNA): Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met with US President Joe Biden during a reception on the sideline of the 79th session of UN General Assembly in New York.

The reception, honoring heads of delegations taking part in the UNGA, was held in American Museum of Natural History (AMNH).

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled conveyed greetings from His Highness the Amir to President Joe Biden, reiterating during the occasion the historic stance of the US towards the state of Kuwait and its people.

The meeting between the two reflected the strong and historic nature of relations linking the State of Kuwait and the United States.

His Highness Amir Representative wished President Biden and the American people more progress and development during the meeting.

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 NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly in New York on Wednesday.

Both sides discussed aspects of security cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the NATO.

Attending the meeting were Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya, Undersecretary of Crown Prince Diwan for Foreign Affairs Mazen Al-Isa and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Tareq Mohammad Al-Bannai.

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, also received Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian at his residence in New York on Wednesday.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly, currently held in New York.

His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed greetings of His Highness the Amir to President Peshkian.

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## Banks shareholder dividends hit KD 1.5 bln in 2023: report

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26, (KUNA): The annual Financial Report released by the Central Bank of Kuwait on Thursday disclosed that the banks shareholders dividends grew by 25 percent on annual basis reaching KD 1.5 billion (USD 5.9 billion) in the end of the year 2023.

The continuous profit earning in the sector was affected with high interests improvement of the assets quality, while the allocations declined by 15 percent, as compared to the year 2022.

The banking sector assets grew by 3.1 percent in the end of 2023, reaching KD 110.4 billion (USD 364 billion).

The sector profitability was affected with hike of the noticeable net interest margin amounting to 2.7 percent, while interest free profits rose accounting 32 percent of the whole sector, buoyed by the increase in investments earnings, by 126 percent.

The earnings; improvement over the past year reflected on the profitability indexes and financial efficiency. The average asset proceeds rose by 1.5 percent and that of the equity by 11.1 percent, also in contrast to 2022.

The financial sector maintained its bullish financial solvency, where capital adequacy climbed by 19.9 percent, due to the banks' profits and rose of capital of some.

The loans portfolio grew by 2.6 percent reaching KD 69.2 billion (USD 228.3 billion), buoyed by growth of the funding granted to mega companies. Meanwhile, the local currency maintained the lion's share in the portfolio 64.2 percent.

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## Kuwait, ICI two decades on aim to reinforce ties

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26, (KUNA): Over the past two decades, since Kuwait joined the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) launched by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Gulf state and the organization have been keen to strengthen cooperation in many fields with the aim of solidifying the foundations of security and stability in the region.

Since Kuwait joined the ICI in December 2004 as the first Gulf country, many steps have been taken to strengthen ties, the most important of which was the opening of the headquarters of the NATO Regional Center and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative in Kuwait on January 23, 2017.

This made the center the first country outside the Euro-Atlantic region to host a regional center for NATO.

This center is the first of its kind in the Arabian Gulf region, and a training headquarters through which representatives of NATO members carry out specialized training and advisory tasks in all technical fields for government agencies in Kuwait and the GCC countries who are members of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.

Since joining the initiative, Kuwait has contributed to various activities organized by NATO until it became a key partner in the initiative, hosting the (NATO and the Gulf States Confronting Common Challenges through the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative) conference in December 2006 and joined the Partners Program for Individual Cooperation, which was held and adopted in 2014.

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## Kuwait backs int'l efforts for right to potable water

GENEVA, Sept 26, (KUNA): Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office and other international organizations Naser Abdullah Al-Hayen affirmed Kuwait's commitment to effectively contributing to global efforts to improve access to clean water and sanitation services and promote human rights.



Al-Hayen

Kuwait Permanent Mission to the UN Office in Geneva organized a symposium on the sidelines of the 57th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, Ambassador Al-Hayen said in post-event statements to KUNA on Wednesday.

The symposium gathered many representatives of diplomatic delegations and international organizations, and high-level guests.

Ambassador Al-Hayen affirmed Kuwait's keenness to enhance international cooperation in confronting the water shortage crisis and its prominent role in alleviating the suffering of millions of people in areas witnessing severe crises, such as the Gaza Strip. Statistics show that many residents suffer from severe water shortages.

He explained that the choice of the water topic comes due to its close connection to the human rights system, noting Kuwait's prominent role at the regional and international levels through its support of clean water and sanitation projects through the Kuwait Fund for Development and non-governmental organizations.

The Special Rapporteur on the right to water and sanitation, Pedro Arrojo Agudo, praised Kuwait's role as a donor country in this field during his speech at the symposium via video.

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# Kuwait's internet on the mend, full restoration within 24 hours

KPC unscathed by outage, plans 2025 expansion



Photo by Rizk Taufiq

Visibility was low in many parts of the country during the dust storm.

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: The Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) announced the restoration of 30% of internet service via international cables as an alternative to the severed Falcon cable, effective at 2:00 a.m. on Thursday.

In a statement on its official account on X, CITRA indicated that efforts are ongoing to fully restore internet service within the next 24 hours.

Earlier, the authority reported that the Falcon submarine cable, operated by GCX, had been cut in the section linking Kuwait to Al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia, in an area outside Kuwaiti territorial waters, resulting in a decline in internet service quality across the country.

The weak internet connection caused by a damaged submarine communication cable on Wednesday did not affect the operations of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries.

Sources confirmed that the corporation and its subsidiaries are good in dealing with technological crises through the application of the best standards in this regard, especially since they use the latest operational technological support systems and the most secure technologies to protect their electronic network from cyber attacks, as the corporation is fully aware of the importance of cyber security.

Sources disclosed the corporation regularly strengthens the protection of its database, in addition to conducting training courses for its employees in the technology sector; while it constantly develops and maintains its technological systems in order to quickly address technological crises.

Sources also affirmed that in 2025, KPC will focus on major foreign projects through partnerships

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NewsWatch

## Major joint initiatives advance

# Kuwait, China fortify 53-year ties

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: Minister of Finance, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, and Acting Minister of Oil Noura Al-Fassam expressed her pride in participating in the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

In the speech she delivered at the event, the minister conveyed her highest appreciation and gratitude to the government and people of China, affirming the strength of the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Minister Al-Fassam stated, "I am honored to be with you today to celebrate this historic day. I would like to thank the Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei for the kind invitation.

"On behalf of the government and people of Kuwait, we congratulate China and its friendly

people on this important occasion, and wish them continued progress and prosperity.

"The strong bilateral relationship between Kuwait and China, which has flourished for 53 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, is a clear testament to the mutual trust and cooperation between our countries. Our partnership has deepened through the Belt and Road Initiative and joint agreements, enhancing economic and developmental ties between Kuwait and China."

Minister Al-Fassam affirmed Kuwait's desire to strengthen cooperation with China on several vital projects, particularly the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port and the Shaqaya Renewable Energy Projects.

She said these projects are essential components of Kuwait's development vision and are in line with the aspirations of the political leadership.

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## Mol cautions care in freak dusty weather

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26, (Agencies): The General Department of Public Relations and Security Media at the Ministry of Interior has urged citizens and residents to exercise caution due to the dust wave and adverse weather conditions currently affecting the country. These conditions have resulted in reduced visibility on some roads and high sea waves.

The department advised the public to contact the Emergency No. (112) for security or traffic assistance, available 24/7. Additionally, sea-goers are encouraged to reach out to the Coast Guard Operations Department at (1880888) in case of any emergencies at sea.

Meanwhile, the Meteorological Department has forecasted hot weather for the weekend, with daytime heat and temperatures gradually cooling to moderate levels by night.

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## Aid sent to relocated Lebanese

# Joint statement by US, allies calls for ceasefire in Mideast

By Abdulrahman Al-Shimmari  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

WASHINGTON, Sept 26: The United States, Arab and Western countries called on Wednesday for an immediate 21 day ceasefire across the Lebanon-Israel border to avoid a regional war.

This came in a joint statement by the US, Australia, Canada, European Union, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and Qatar.

"The situation between Lebanon and Israel since October 8th, 2023 is intolerable and presents an unacceptable risk of a broader regional escalation. This is in nobody's interest, neither of the people of Israel nor of the people of Lebanon", the statement issued by the White House said.

"It is time to conclude a diplomatic settlement that enables civilians on both sides of the border to return to their homes in safety. Diplomacy however cannot succeed amid an escalation of this conflict", it added.

"We call for an immediate 21 day ceasefire across the Lebanon-Israel border to provide space for diplomacy towards the conclusion of a diplomatic settlement consistent with UNSCR 1701, and the implementation

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## Fast-track completion of port, says minister

BEIJING, Sept 26, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, and her high-level delegation held talks in Beijing Thursday with China's Minister of Transport Li Xiaopeng, focusing on boosting bilateral cooperation, especially in accelerating the completion of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project.

According to a statement from the Ministry of Public Works (MPW), the meeting -- also attended by Director of International Cooperation at China's Ministry of Transport (MoT) Cen Yanqing -- highlighted the longstanding strategic ties between Kuwait and China.

Al-Mashaan conveyed Kuwait's leadership's determination to expedite major development agreements with China, which are expected to greatly contribute to the nation's growth.

Central to these agreements is the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, with seven cooperative deals in place, all aimed at accelerating completion, she explained.

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KUNA photo

Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya at the ministerial meeting.

## Focus on GCC, US ties

Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya took part in a ministerial meeting on Wednesday that featured GCC Foreign Ministers and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations

General Assembly, currently held in New York. During the meeting, the ministers reviewed, and focused on, close relations and strategic partnership between the GCC member states and the United States.

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DOHA: The GCC Committee of Postal and Telecommunications Undersecretaries held the 30th meeting on Wednesday, with the participation of Kuwait, in Doha.

Head of the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) in Qatar, Ahmad Al-Muslemani, said that cooperation in the field of postal and communication is important in light of the rapid technological development, stressing the importance of exchanging expertise between the GCC in this field. (KUNA)

TUNIS: The bodies of 13 migrants from sub-Saharan Africa were found washed up on Tunisia's Mediterranean coast this week as authorities struggle to stem unauthorized boat crossings from North Africa to Europe.

Tunisia's Coast Guard said the bodies were recovered on Wednesday near Mahdia, a coastal Tunisian town about 142 kilometers (88 miles) from the Italian island of Lampedusa, which is closer to North Africa than the Italian mainland. (AP)

## Prayer Timings

Fajr .....	04:19	Asr .....	15:05
Sunrise ..	05:38	Maghrib ..	17:40
Zohr .....	11:40	Isha .....	18:57

# Local

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

## Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-45 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas.

**By Night:** Rather hot with light

to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-32 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	39	27
Kuwait Airport	43	31
Abdaly	43	27

Bubyan	41	20
Jahra	43	29
Failaka Island	40	25
Salmiyah	38	31
Ahmadi	36	24
Jal Aliyah	42	27
Nuwaisib	43	28

## HH Amir's Rep receives Al-Burhan on the sidelines of 79th UNGA session

# Rep of HH Amir receives leaders of Kosovo, Eswatini and Armenia



Crown Prince Diwan photo

Kuwait Amir's Rep receives Kosovo Premier in New York.

NEW YORK, Sept 26, (KUNA): Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Wednesday Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly, currently held in New York at Kuwait's permanent mission at the UN.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed relations between Kuwait and Kosovo, and means of supporting and boosting them in a way that serves the two countries and their nations' interest, in addition to the latest developments on regional and international arenas.

### Eswatini

Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled received on Wednesday, Russell Dlamini, Prime

Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini, on the sidelines of the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York.

Both sides discussed the friendly relations between Kuwait and Eswatini and ways to enhance the mutually-beneficial cooperation as well as major regional and international issues.

### Armenia

The Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled, on Wednesday, received Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly, currently held in New York.

During the meeting, the two sides explored the solid and brotherly relations between the State of Kuwait and friendly Republic of Armenia, means of beefing up these ties, regional and international developments.

### Transitional Council of Sudan chief

The Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled, on Wednesday, received Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, Chairman of the Transitional Council of Sudan, on sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly, currently held in New York, as His Highness conveyed greeting of His Highness the Amir.

During the meeting, the two sides explored the solid and brotherly relations between the State of Kuwait and brotherly Republic of Sudan, means of beefing up these ties, regional and international developments.

The meetings were attended by the Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, Director General of the Direct Investment Authority Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Foreign Affairs Undersecretary at the Crown Prince Diwan Mazen Issa Al-Issa and the Assistant Foreign Minister for the Minister's Bureau Affairs, Ambassador Bader Saleh Al-Tunai.

## Other Voices

### Friday, 13th Sept and Strasbourg Class

By Sheikhha Hessa Al-Hamoud Al-Salem Al-Sabah

'Stand up for the teacher and honor his position ... for a teacher is almost a prophet', with this magnificent verse, Ahmad Shawqi, the Prince of Poets, started his famous poem, in which he praises the teacher, and praises the value of education in our lives, as individuals and societies.

This poem was translated into English, drafted, and presented as a gift to the administration of Strasbourg University, by my daughter, Sheikhha/Sarah Sabah Fahad Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, may God protect her, during her graduation ceremonies, upon finishing International Business Management Course, in the inveterate Strasbourg University Palace.

This significant training course was attended by a group of Kuwait's finest young people, graduates of Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST).

Actually, accompanying my daughter Sheikhha Sarah, may God protect her, was a great opportunity to closely get to know the French city of Strasbourg, and its ancient history, as well as to meet the university administration, and talk about the university history, which extends for about five centuries, back to the Renaissance era. During the 1970s, the university was divided into three educational institutions. Later, these divisions were remerged into one institution, making one of the biggest, oldest, and best world universities. It is enough that many Nobel Prize laureates have graduated from it.

It was a great honor to visit the inveterate Strasbourg University Palace, built by the famous German architect Otto Warth, upon the orders of the German Emperor Wilhelm I. This great construction has turned into a symbol of power and knowledge, whereas its architect was inspired by the spirit of the European Renaissance in its design, through statues on the façade, honoring the pioneering figures in science and art, from the Renaissance to the nineteenth century.

Our second stop was a visit to the headquarters of the European Parliament, which is one of the three bodies, representing the legislative authority in the European Union. The significance of the Strasbourg headquarters is due to its location in the Alsace region, which was historically the subject of a dispute between France and Germany, and it turns to symbolize reconciliation between the two states.

Our third stop inside the ancient city was at the European Council in the Palace of Europe, which is an international organization, with the stated goal of supporting human rights, democracy, and the rule of law; whereas its most important body is the European Court, concerned with the application of human rights conventions.

With the last stop, I return once again to my daughter, Sheikhha/Sarah, may God protect her, and her graduation ceremony, which coincided with the birth anniversary of my beloved late son, the forgiven, God willing, Sheikh/Nasser Sabah Fahad Al-Sabah, may God have mercy on him and make Paradise his abode. It seems as if fate combined the two occasions in one day, the blessed Friday, as a consolation for me, in the company of my dear students. How badly I wished that my son Sheikh/Nasser, may God have mercy on him and make Paradise his abode, would be



with them, as a student and researcher, still, praise be to God for God's decree and will.

On this date every year, I would be at the Grand Mosque in Makkah, reciting the Holy Qur'an. Alternatively, this year I was in the Strasbourg University campus, with my dear

Kuwaiti students, attending the scholarship. They were a model of effort and dedication, and an honorable face for Kuwait, acting as the shield of the future and the soldiers of the homeland. Despite the weather fluctuations, they spared no effort and encouraged each other, in an atmosphere of gratitude and praise for the university administration, and their accompanied supervisors of the training course, the academic researcher/Sarah Hertzog, and Dr. Ahmed Al-Meligy, from GUST. This drew the attention of the university administration to this exceptional and distinguished class, which they described as having the morals of knights and the weapon of knowledge.

Actually, the university administration's sophisticated and courteous treatment deserves the highest thanks and appreciation. I presented them with a Kuwaiti-made rosary, adorned by the logo of Kuwait, as a symbol of tolerance between all beliefs and religions.

I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to the administration of GUST, as one of the important educational foundations in Kuwait, for their effort and planning for a bright future for our beloved country, and for giving us the opportunity to be present and get to know closely this ancient city and its famous university.

Finally, I would like to say that peoples and nations live with education and knowledge, and that caring for the youth and mobilizing their energy is the engine for progress and development, to serve society, and support its progress and integrity. I would like to assert that combating corruption in any society begins with caring for creative young people and providing the opportunity for them to learn about other peoples' cultures and sciences, so as to break the tribal stagnation and religious extremism that obstruct the renaissance of the Middle East nations in general. We need to remember the words of the Tunisian poet Abu Al-Qasim Al-Chebbi, "If the people one day wanted to live ... then fate must respond."

# 'Al-Baghli Hall' ... a unique venue showcasing Kuwait's rich heritage

Minister Al-Huwailah celebrates handover of 29 wedding halls

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah has confirmed the handover of 29 wedding halls to the donor owners who will manage these halls -- 19 halls were handed over to the cooperative societies and 10 halls to individuals, increasing the total number of such halls to 69.**

Speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of Ibrahim Taher Al-Baghli Hall, Al-Huwailah praised the hall since it is distinguished as the first hall in the country to include the heritage of the desert, the heritage of the sea and a heritage exhibition. She hopes other halls will follow suit in highlighting the Kuwaiti heritage and culture. She affirmed the ministry plays a fundamental role in achieving community partnership by issuing ministerial and administrative decisions regulating such projects.

She added the Planning and Follow-up Department in the Planning and Administrative Development Sector at the ministry closely monitored the implementation of the project, starting from the handover of land to the donor. She said the department approved the plans and followed up all stages of implementation until the electricity connection and the final operation, followed by the handover of the hall.

### Heritage

She also lauded the participation of the Expo 965 team for heritage and craft exhibitions and creators in the opening ceremony, stressing that the team always contributes to promoting national heritage and presenting a bright image of the creativity of Kuwaiti youths.

Meanwhile, Ibrahim Al-Baghli expressed his happiness over the opening of the hall after fully equipping it to welcome citizens and meet their need for venues.

In a speech delivered by his son Raed Ibrahim on his behalf, he stated: "We believe and support the role of the Ministry of Social Affairs in activating community partnership with all individuals and institutions -- civil society, government and private. We are happy to support the work of our colleagues, wishing them success in such sincere efforts and effective contributions to establishing the foundations of social work towards comprehensive development in the State of Kuwait. We were honored to donate for the establishment of Ibrahim Taher Al-Baghli Hall to meet the needs of individuals and institutions in general, and the Rumaitiyya residents in particular, to keep pace with the growth of various social and community events in coordination with the concerned sectors in the Ministry of Social Affairs and other ministries. We pray to Allah Almighty that this social and community edifice will achieve the desired goals."



Photos by Iehab Qurtal

Top and above: Some photos from the Chinese Embassy's celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

## Intisar Charity hosts discussion panel on crisis impacting Arab women in conflicts

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** The Intisar Charity Foundation hosted a discussion panel titled "The Current Crisis of Arab Women Affected by War and Violence, Especially Palestinian Women," at the Modern Art Exhibition sponsored by Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya.

In her speech, the founder of Intisar Charity Foundation Sheikhha Intisar Salem Al-Ali affirmed the urgent need to integrate mental health initiatives into peace-building efforts.

She called for the implementation of trauma-sensitive interventions to effectively support those affected by conflicts, and the development of policies, volunteering, and raising awareness to ensure that mental health support becomes a necessity rather than a luxury.

Sheikha Intisar said, "More than one in five people living in conflict-affected areas suffer from mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder, according to United Nations statistics." She expressed her strong belief that "Women are the cornerstone of every home and the basic fabric that binds our societies together in peace."

Regarding the "Women in War - Palestine" exhibition, Sheikha Intisar explained that it is one of the largest art exhibitions in the Middle East and North Africa.



Photo by Rizk Taufiq

A photo from the panel discussion.

The event coincides with the celebration of the International Day of Peace, and features over 100 of the most talented and renowned artists from the Arab world, all of whom have generously donated their artworks to support women in Palestine.

The exhibition will not only showcase art but also serve as a purposeful call to inspire everyone to make a difference and stand in solidarity with Palestinian women.

Sheikha Intisar encouraged participation from people around the world to "join this peace movement and help create a better reality for Palestinian women".

Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij affirmed the mechanisms for protecting women in armed conflicts. She said, "The burden of wars,

displacement, human rights violations, loss of loved ones, the collapse of communities, and the violence endured by women worldwide is unimaginable."

In addition, Secretary-General of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Maha Al-Barjas highlighted the serious humanitarian challenges facing the world today, particularly in the Arab region, which is grappling with catastrophic conditions that require collective action.

She revealed that, at the onset of the recent events in the Gaza Strip, KRCS was at the forefront of responding to the humanitarian crisis by providing food, medical supplies, and humanitarian aid, and sending ambulances and mobile clinics to support the people in Gaza.

## Jahra Hospital celebrates World Pharmacist Day

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** The Jahra Hospital commemorated World Pharmacist Day, emphasizing the significant contributions of pharmacists to the healthcare system, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Dr. Jamal Al-Duaij, Director of the Jahra Health District, stated that the Ministry of Health is dedicated to enhancing medical services and providing access to the latest medications available globally. In his remarks during the celebration, Dr. Al-Duaij highlighted the ministry's commitment to supporting pharmaceutical professionals across various specialties.

He noted that efforts are ongoing to streamline operations and eliminate obstacles faced by healthcare providers to better serve citizens and residents alike.

The celebration of World Pharmacists Day aims to raise public awareness about the essential role of pharmacists and to encourage initiatives that promote and defend their crucial contributions to improving healthcare.

Dr. Al-Duaij underscored that pharmacists have evolved beyond merely dispensing medications; they are now fundamental pillars of the healthcare system.

## 'Hold accountable everyone involved in nationality fraud'

"INDEED, the actions of the Supreme Committee for Nationality, led by First Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, Minister of Interior, and Minister of Defense, represent an unprecedented historic national effort," columnist and former deputy director-general of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) **Iqbal Al-Ahmed** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"This is a comprehensive purification process aimed at restoring the integrity of the national identity, which has been compromised by individuals and entities whose collective responsibility spans across various sectors.



Iqbal Al-Ahmed

"The forgers who manipulated the system have already been, and will continue to be, punished. Their unlawfully obtained citizenship, acquired through forgery and deception, are being revoked – a process that will undoubtedly persist, God willing.

"However, the pressing question on everyone's mind is: What about the other side involved in this citizenship forgery? Where are those who signed off on these illegal documents?"

"Who approved the granting of citizenship to individuals who did not meet the required criteria? Who gave the green light to violate the law, abuse their power, and tarnish the national identity? Who authorized the opening of citizenship records to include those who were undeserving?"

"Where are those responsible within the government, those in administrative roles with the power to prevent such violations but failed to do so?"

"The term 'responsible' encompasses multiple levels of authority -- individuals who have the power to make decisions and who opened the doors to forgery only upon their signal.

"It is relatively straightforward to hold accountable those who unlawfully benefited from a nationality they were not entitled to, even though they knew it was undeserved.

"But the real issue lies in the decisions made by higher authorities -- those in command, under whose leadership employees and officials operate, yet lack the power or authority to question such decisions.

"These decisions were not made by ordinary citizens, but by individuals with substantial influence and control.

"Everyone involved must be held accountable. Please, ensure justice is served at all levels."

**Also:**

"Examining parliamentary systems reveals a significant phenomenon that warrants careful consideration and analysis, as it may highlight inherent flaws or structural issues within these systems," columnist, constitutional expert **Dr. Mohammed Al-Muqati** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"This phenomenon illustrates that the actual functioning of parliamentary systems often produces outcomes contrary to their intended objectives.

"The foundational premise of the parliamentary system is the rotation of power, particularly concerning the executive authority.

"However, this emphasis on the executive branch points to a structural problem: the rotation of power should ideally extend to all branches of government to effectively fulfill its intended goals, which are intrinsically linked to the concept of the 'rotation of power.'

"This broader rotation should encompass all authorities, aligning with the principle of separation of powers.

"One of the primary aims of this principle is to establish a system of mutual oversight among the different authorities, thereby fostering a balance of power and preventing any single authority from overshadowing the others.

"Such balance is essential to guard against tyranny, individualism, and the encroachment of one branch over another.

"Despite the pivotal role of the 'theory of rotation of power' in the objectives of parliamentary systems, the reality observed in most parliamentary practices today does not support or facilitate its realization.

"A critical observation made in this study is the failure to effectively achieve the 'theory of rotation of power' concerning the executive authority. Instead of exhibiting stability and logical continuity throughout a parliamentary term -- typically spanning four to five years -- governments are often subject to frequent instability and discontinuity.

"This instability manifests in the form of multiple government formations within a single parliamentary term, with some parliaments witnessing as many as three to seven different governments.

"Such a pattern contradicts the principles of stability and ministerial continuity that are supposed to underpin the parliamentary system, where the executive authority is deemed its cornerstone.

"As noted by Jennings in his seminal work, 'The Cabinet Government,' and echoed by the late Professor Othman Abdulmalik Al-Saleh in his analysis of Kuwait's constitutional system, the essential function of government

necessitates a degree of stability and continuity.

"This stability is crucial for implementing the fundamental principle of the rotation of executive authority.

"However, if maintaining stability and continuity within the executive authority proves impossible -- as the reality in many parliamentary systems suggests -- then the foundational theory of rotating executive authority collapses.

"Consequently, the very theoretical framework upon which the parliamentary system is built becomes fundamentally compromised."

□ □ □

"A hashtag recently became popular on social media, calling for the government to resign under the banner 'The Government's Departure is a Popular Demand.' This has sparked huge engagement among followers. We encourage all Kuwaiti citizens to express their views on government performance, especially in the absence of the National Assembly, which typically oversees the work of the Council of Ministers. Since its dissolution, public oversight has become prominent, with opinions being expressed either directly or through social media, with the support of the Kuwaiti Constitution's guarantee of freedom of expression," columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"However, we must stop and think about this hashtag. Is the government's performance truly poor, warranting such a demand for its departure? Is this call based on solid reasoning, considering the government has had ample opportunity to prove itself? Or are these demands driven by recent government actions regarding citizenship, particularly the need to uphold national identity and address issues like the withdrawal of citizenship from fraudsters? Some had registered children who are not their own under their name in order for them to get citizenship on the basis of being children of Kuwaiti citizens. There are many such troubling stories that we keep hearing which can turn a newborn baby's hair white.

"Those affected by these measures and tremble when they think about what lies ahead are often the ones calling for the government's departure, believing it will halt citizenship withdrawal and scrutiny of citizenship files.

"This is a wrong conclusion. Even if the government were to resign, the minister of interior remains committed to completing his project. If he were to leave, the next minister could be even stricter, as safeguarding national identity has become a rallying point for loyal citizens. The concerns of the national majority have often been drowned out by the chaos and noise from dissolved councils.

"Today, the vision has become clear. It is essential to address the grievances of citizens who were wronged by forgery and improper naturalization, as they risk losing their national identity amidst the crowd.

"The re-examination of citizenship files is not just Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef's initiative or that of the current government. It is an ongoing national project aimed at achieving its goals. Demanding the government's resignation or the minister of interior's departure will not alter the project's course. Such calls do not reflect a true popular demand."

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"No one sympathizes with criminals. Everyone who falls afoul of the law bears responsibility, including the bank employee arrested for allegedly stealing from depositors' accounts, despite the fact that no verdict has been issued yet," columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Through social media, we are inundated with daily updates about this bank employee, detailing her case to such an extent that many of us can easily narrate the story by heart. It is important to note that she is still merely accused, and the charges against her have yet to be proven.

"What stands out is how her story dominates social media, repeated every morning as if she were the only person in Kuwait accused of theft, or as if she alone had reached into people's pockets, should the charges be validated.

"So, why is this particular employee the sole focus of such relentless attention?"

"If someone wants to discuss theft or the full story of embezzlement of public funds, why not focus on the 'theft' minister who was proven guilty, sentenced to prison, and ordered to return the stolen funds to the state treasury, along with a fine? He is not alone, as many former officials share a similar fate and could serve as important examples for discussion.

"Why is the spotlight only on this bank employee, whose story continues to dominate social media? It is clear that we contribute to this narrative by endlessly supporting certain weak-willed officials, allowing them to believe they are above accountability. They overstepped and misappropriated public funds, yet even now, while incarcerated, they receive little attention.

"Meanwhile, the saga of the bank employee goes on. Why not hold all parties accountable?"

— **Compiled by PFX Fernandes**

and **Mahmoud Ateyieh**



Governor Sheikh Athbi poses for a photo with Al-Duaij.

## Farwaniya gov discusses sustainable development initiatives with Al-Duaij

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser met with Qusay Al-Duaij, Deputy Head of the UN-Habitat Mission to Kuwait and the Gulf, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Al-Duaij provided an update on several projects aimed at enhancing sustainable development for human settlements in the region.

These initiatives, carried out in collaboration with various government institutions and civil society organizations in Kuwait, reflect the continued efforts to improve living conditions and promote sustainable urban development.

Both meetings underscored the importance of cooperation between local authorities and international organizations in advancing human rights and sustainable development in Kuwait.

In a separate meeting, Al-Nasser met with Ambassador Sheikhah Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij, Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs.

During their meeting, both sides explored avenues to strengthen the promotion of human rights culture in Kuwait. The discussions also emphasized ongoing efforts to advance human rights and foster a deeper understanding within society.

**'Tax awareness'**

## MoE's new educational initiative sparks debate

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: In a move that has sparked considerable discussion, the Ministry of Education is launching a new initiative aimed at increasing tax awareness among students, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Amid ongoing debates regarding the government's potential tax reforms -- especially those linked to agreements within the Gulf Cooperation Council -- the ministry plans to allocate specific schools in each governorate for awareness lectures on the topic.

The Department of School Activities has tasked educational directors with selecting four schools from each educational district: two secondary schools and two intermediate schools.

This initiative is part of a broader effort by the Ministry of Finance to foster community understanding of taxation, reaching various segments of society, including young students.

On July 30, the Ministry of Finance reached out to the Ministry of Education, requesting assistance to facilitate this mission, emphasizing the importance of collaboration between state institutions.

However, this initiative has not gone unnoticed by critics as former MP Mohammed Hayef expressed concerns that the government's approach reflects a broader crisis of confidence within Kuwaiti society.

He attributed this sentiment to a series of hasty and poorly considered decisions that have created confusion and negatively impacted the economy and citizens' livelihoods.

Hayef questioned the rationale behind targeting school children to promote tax understanding, suggesting that efforts would be better spent engaging wealthy individuals in discussions about financial contributions, such as zakat, which could effectively address state funding needs.

He argued that the government should prioritize the affluent in financial matters rather than increasing the burden on the economically vulnerable, who already face significant challenges.

This initiative and the surrounding debate underscore the complexities of introducing tax reforms in Kuwait and the differing opinions on the best approach to fiscal responsibility and education.

# Mother's 47-years jail, lover's 15 years upheld in child abuse case

Man accused of kidnap, sexual assault on 2 girls acquitted

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: The Court of Appeals has upheld the verdict issued by a lower court which sentenced a Kuwaiti woman to 47-year imprisonment, and her lover to 15-year imprisonment, with hard labor for injecting her 13-year-old daughter with insulin with the intent to kill her, and facilitating her friend's sexual assault of her daughter after discovering their illicit relationship.

The mother admitted during the investigations that the reason for committing the crime was to take revenge on her daughter after discovering her illicit relationship with her lover, and as a result, she deprived all her children of their basic rights.

The Public Prosecution demanded in its indictment report that the maximum penalty be imposed on the mother and her lover for the crime they committed, which is considered one of the most heinous crimes against humanity.

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**Man acquitted in kidnap case:** The Criminal Court has acquitted an individual, known only as Al-Mazyoun, of abducting two girls, sexually assaulting them and trafficking them after he tricked them into accepting a job in exchange for an alluring monthly salary.

## Expat fraudster held facing KD 14,000 fine with multiple travel bans imposed on him

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: The Capital Investigation Department has arrested an expatriate wanted by law. 18 travel bans were imposed on him for involvement in fraud cases and has been obligated by the concerned court to pay about KD 14,000, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

A security source revealed that the department received information about a 41-year-old expatriate implicated in a number of fraud cases staying in an apartment in the East. He said securitymen went to the apartment and arrested the expatriate.

The source added that a final court ruling obligated the accused to pay KD 13,962 under misdemeanor case no. 366/2024, indicating a total of 18 travel bans were imposed on the accused and has debts to many companies for issuing dud checks.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendant with human trafficking, and transporting the victims from their homes with the intent to exploit their vulnerabilities.

The first victim was seeking a job with a good monthly salary, and the second wanted to relocate. He reportedly sexually exploited them for several days before his arrest.



Al-Qattan

The defense counsel Lawyer Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan, representing the defendant, stated that the testimony of the incident investigation officer in court revealed no new evidence to support the charges against the defendant.

On the contrary, the testimony of the incident investigation officer provides

evidence supporting the defendant's denial of kidnapping the two complainants, and depriving the second complainant of her freedom. Most of the officer's responses were negative, as reflected in the session minutes.

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**4-year jail term quashed, fined:**

The Court of Appeals has overturned the ruling of a lower court that sentenced an individual to four years in prison with hard labor and fined him KD1,000 for driving under the influence of drugs with an undisclosed quantity of morphine in his possession; in addition to the withdrawal of his driving license, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The higher court then acquitted the defendant.

Case files indicate that the car of the accused collided with other vehicles, which led to his injuries and he was taken to the hospital. After undergoing medical tests, the initial medical report proved his unusual condition and he was suspected of taking nar-

cotics and some medications.

The accused fled from the hospital without completing the treatment, and then he surrendered to police who referred him to the Criminal Investigation General Department at the Interior Ministry.

In view of the medical report and the traffic accident, the investigator referred him to the Forensic Medicine Department that found traces of morphine from the sample taken from him.

Attorney Bashar Al-Nassar, who represented the accused at the Appeals Court, argued that the sample taking, arrest and search procedures were null and void. He presented the evidence that his client is innocent; stressing that the arrest and search procedures were invalid, because the defendant was excluded from the accusation of causing the accident. He added the medical report stated that the defendant was suspected of using narcotics, but it does not prove his client committed a flagrant crime as a justification for the arrest and search procedures.

## 'Technicians' list secures 3 seats in KITS elections

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: The Kuwait Information Technology Society (KITS) has announced that the "Technicians" list has secured three seats in its supplementary elections for the Board of Directors, which will serve for the remaining two-year period from 2022 to 2024, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Fahad Fayrouz led the list, winning first place with 175 votes, while Ahmed Mandani followed closely in second place with 174 votes, and Bashar Al-Kandari took third with 172 votes.

The election also included reserve candidates, with Ali Al-Saleh receiving 9 votes as the first reserve, Faleh Al-Abdeli as the second reserve with 5 votes, and Saud Al-Ajmi with 4 votes.

Zuhair Al-Mutawa, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Information Technology Society, expressed his appreciation for the efforts of those involved in organizing the by-elections.

He noted that the efficient voting mechanism contributed positively to the speed, smoothness, and transparency of the electoral process.

## Blaze in Jahra Ind City tackled

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: Wednesday afternoon, firefighting teams controlled and extinguished a fire that broke out in several carpet and sponge shops in the Jahra Industrial City, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Swift response, by the firemen prevented the firemen prevented the blaze from destroying the entire area without any significant injuries.

The acting head of the Kuwait Fire Force, Major General Khaled Abdullah Fahd, and Deputy Head of the Firefighting Sector, Brigadier General Ahmed Haif Hamoud, were present at the scene to oversee the firefighting efforts.

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**Road rage:** The Ministry of Interior has announced recently that the concerned authorities registered Case No. 467/2024 against those involved in the recent road rage -- when the parties involved in a two-vehicle collision exchanged blows on a public road and damaged a vehicle, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The ministry confirmed that all those involved in the incident are now detained, pending investigation and their referral to the competent authorities for the necessary legal measures.



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Audit Bureau requests breakdown of winning bidder's prices

CITRA to launch KD 3.2 mln frequency spectrum analysis project

Council revises South Saad Al-Abdullah expansion, Qairawan proposal on hold

Committee approves fee increases in 3rd meeting

**By Inaas Awadh**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** The Land Liberation Committee approved, in its first meeting yesterday headed by the Vice Chair of the Municipal Council Khaled Al-Mutairi, a request from the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) to amend the Municipal Council's decision regarding the allocation of land for the eastern expansion of South Saad Al-Abdullah residential city and reducing the expansion area with some adjustments based on technical opinions.

The committee returned to the executive body a proposal submitted by the Municipal Council Chair, his deputy, and several members for the allocation of land in west of Qairawan to PAHW.

It also referred a proposal submitted by Khaled Al-Mutairi and other Municipal Council members to allocate land in southwest of Abdullah Al-Mubarak near Fifth and Sixth ring roads, to PAHW for a housing project in order to coordinate with the relevant authorities for the metro station.

Lastly, the committee reserved the proposal submitted by member Alia Al-Farsi for the allocation of land to plant date palms in north of Kuwait.

Kuwait's Dr. Al-Jarallah partakes at IFSO

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** Dr. Mohammed Al-Jarallah, a consultant in obesity surgery and former Minister of Health, recently participated in the International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity (IFSO) conference held in Melbourne, Australia, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In a press statement, he said the conference focused on advanced technical innovations, including the integration of artificial intelligence, robotic devices, modern medications, and minimally invasive surgical techniques to enhance treatment outcomes for obesity patients.

Dr. Al-Jarallah noted the promising future developments that could significantly transform the field of obesity treatment. The conference featured distinguished lectures from global experts, who shared insights on

Meanwhile, the Legal and Financial Affairs Committee at the Municipal Council held its third meeting for the third round on Wednesday.

Fahad Al-Abdul Jader presided over the meeting that led to the approval of a proposal to increase fees for registration in the bidders registry, and review the prices of auction documents and company pre-qualification brochures.

The committee retained two requests in its agenda as follows:

■ Request of council members Saud Al-Kandari, Fahd Musaed Al-Abdul Jader, Ismail Behbehani and Dr. Hassan Kamal, and Deputy Chairman of



Dr. Al-Jarallah

the latest advancements in obesity and metabolic surgery.

One key topic discussed was the impact of metabolic bariatric surgery on fertility and pregnancy. The conference emphasized that women should ideally wait 12 to 18 months post-surgery before attempting to conceive to ensure their health condition is stable.

For men, undergoing bariatric surgery may lead to improvements in

hormone levels and sperm quality, thus increasing the likelihood of successful conception.

Additionally, the issue of recurrent weight gain after bariatric surgery was addressed, recognizing it as a common challenge.

The conference examined various causes of this phenomenon, which include behavioral, medical, and psychological factors. Strategies to combat this issue were discussed, including behavioral and nutritional interventions, corrective surgeries when necessary, and the use of medications to assist with weight loss.

Dr. Al-Jarallah's participation underscores the ongoing efforts to improve obesity treatment and patient care through innovation and collaboration within the medical community.

the council Khaled Al-Mutairi to license basements designated for storage in investment buildings with conditions.

■ Request of some council members to present the draft budget of the Kuwait Municipality for fiscal 2025/2026 to the council.

The committee referred four requests to the executive body for study:

■ Request of some council members to provide sufficient storage land for all types of activities as the prices of warehouses are high due to their scarcity.

■ Request of some council mem-

bers to address the problems related to mobile vehicles including the lack of organization that affected private residential areas.

■ Request of Kuwaiti Teachers Association regarding the parking spaces for teachers in schools.

■ Request of the children of Sheikh Salem Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to name a main street in the country after him.

It also deferred the response of the executive body to the proposal of a citizen on numbering investment buildings and the grievance of a private company.

**By Mohammed Al-Muslih**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** The Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) is preparing to implement an automated system project for frequency spectrum analysis.

According to informed sources, CITRA has requested regulatory authorities to contract with a company to execute the project, valued at KD 3.2 million, for completion within 16 months. The project aims to enhance the organized and effective performance of various wireless services by measuring the wireless monitoring systems of the frequency spectrum.

The frequency spectrum is considered a natural resource essential for providing a range of wireless communication services, including personal and public communications, wireless navigation, air and maritime communications, broadcasting, public safety, relief operations, and radio location determination.

Meanwhile, the State Audit Bureau (SAB) recently requested CITRA to provide a detailed breakdown of the winning bidder's prices, including all quantities, equipment, devices, and systems, along with the technical requirements and specifications.

CITRA indicated that SAB requested clarification regarding the bidder's experience of five years or more in monitoring the frequency spectrum. The experience documents submitted by the winning bidder did not include copies of the contracts mentioned in the disclosure, nor did they provide quantity and price schedules for those contracts.

Sources said SAB also sought an explanation of the reason behind preparing the tender for the second phase of the project to measure the coverage of mobile telecommunications networks.

The tender for measuring the frequency spectrum includes systems for assessing the coverage and performance of mobile telecommunications networks, which SAB deemed a redundancy and overlap of work between the two tenders.

1,133 new hires boost workforce

MEW hits 97.6% Kuwaitization rate

**By Mohammad Ghanem**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** According to statistics from the Ministry of Electricity and Water, 1,133 Kuwaitis were appointed in the technical and administrative sectors in the last eight months of 2024.

The Kuwaitization rate reached 97.6 percent in August, up from 97.5 percent in January. The total number of employees reached 35,506, including 34,666 Kuwaitis and 840 non-Kuwaitis as of August

2024. In comparison, the total number of employees in January was 34,395, comprising 33,533 Kuwaitis and 862 non-Kuwaitis. This reflects a decrease of 22 expatriates due to replacements and retirements during the specified period.

According to informed sources, appointments are proceeding in accordance with the annual requirements of the ministry's sectors, and their need for specific technical and administrative specializations and available job grades.

Event scheduled for Oct 27 and 28

Kuwait to host int'l conference on smoking and conflicts of interest

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** The Kuwait Society for Combating Smoking and Cancer has announced the upcoming international conference titled 'The scourge of smoking and conflict of interest', scheduled for Oct 27 and 28, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The conference will be held under the patronage of the Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi.

Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Association and Conference Chairman, stated that the event will focus on the economics of tobacco, highlighting how it incentivizes many companies to promote smoking, particularly among vulnerable groups such as children. This poses significant risks for future generations.

Dr. Al-Saleh noted that the World Health Organization (WHO) has conducted workshops on this topic, emphasizing the need to curb tobacco promotion through economic and media strategies. He pointed out that Kuwait is among the pioneers in adopting this global initiative.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, approximately 5.8 million tons of tobacco were produced worldwide in 2022.

The WHO has classified the smoking epidemic as one of the most severe public health threats globally, with an estimated 1.25 billion tobacco users. Smoking results in over 7 million deaths each year from direct use and an additional 1.3 million from passive smokers.

Dr. Hessa Al Shaheen, a board member of the association, confirmed that the conference will feature renowned scientists focused on combating smoking from various countries, particularly regarding tobacco economics at Gulf, Arab, and international levels.



Dr Al-Saleh

North West Sulaibiya Coop holds Sept Fest

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** The North West Sulaibiya Cooperative Society announces the launch of September Festival at the Central Market, featuring discounts of up to 70 percent on over 400 food and consumer items, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Fahd Abdullah Shehab, Chairman of the Cooperative Society, shared details of the festival during a recent press statement.

He emphasized that this event is part of an ongoing series of marketing initiatives designed to boost sales while alleviating the financial burdens faced by local residents and shareholders.

Shehab highlighted that all items included in the festival will be available throughout the exhibition period, ensuring that shoppers have access to a wide variety of goods.

Special care was taken in selecting products that are particularly in demand among visitors to the coop, making the festival a valuable opportunity for the community to stock up on essential items at significant savings.

The September Festival promises to be an exciting event for the residents of North West Sulaibiya, offering not only great deals but also fostering a sense of community engagement and support.

The program will include sessions covering public health protection from the tobacco industry, governmental and non-profit efforts against these industries, and successful experiences from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Arab countries in raising awareness, providing psychological support, and offering treatment for smokers.

KU to celebrate 'World Space Week'

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** The Engineering Training and Graduates Center at the College of Engineering and Petroleum, in collaboration with the Kuwait Investment Company, is set to organize the Kuwait Space Hackathon 2024, coinciding with World Space Week, which runs from October 4 to 10, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This annual event celebrates the contributions of space science and technology to enhancing human conditions.

The hackathon will take place at the College of Engineering and aims to showcase the creativity and skills of students in space sciences, engineering, and modern technology. Its objectives include fostering a vibrant scientific, technological, and innovative culture for a sustainable Kuwait by highlighting the talents of both male and female students interested in this field.

Cleanup day revives Mubarak Al-Kabeer

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** As part of the ongoing efforts to maintain the aesthetic appearance and remove violations and encroachments on State properties, the Kuwait Municipality branch in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate participated in the World Cleanup Day at Sabah Al-Salem Charity under the patronage and in the presence of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governor Sheikh Sabah Bader Sabah Al-Salem, reports Al-Anba daily.

The campaign resulted in the removal of large quantities of waste, with a number of Municipality workers cleaning the internal and main squares and roads throughout the governorate.

# September

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# LOCAL

## Kuwait's internet

Continued from Page 1

with major international oil companies and the acquisition of oil projects, in addition to the expansion of its external refining capabilities to dispose huge quantities of Kuwaiti oil. Source said it is currently studying the possibility of increasing the refining capacity of its foreign refineries – Milazzo in Italy and Duqm in the Sultanate of Oman.

Sources added the Nghi Son Refinery in Vietnam increased its production capacity, as it is has been operating at a rate of not less than 115 percent of its previous production since the completion of maintenance works. Sources stated the refinery is also polishing its marketing policy in a bid to export Kuwaiti oil to other refineries in various markets in Europe and Asia.

Sources revealed KPC has succeeded in entering the African markets and it is now working hard to increase its share in Africa, particularly in selling diesel and jet fuel.

Sources stated the corporation is currently studying various ways to increase its profits and that of its subsidiaries in the coming years, as well as allowing the private sector to enter the manufacturing industries and promising investment opportunities that the corporation will provide in partnership with the private sector.

## Kuwait, China

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, the Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei said, "China and Kuwait are like-minded friendly countries and stable partners moving forward side by side. Kuwait was the first Gulf Arab country to establish diplomatic relations with China, and our bilateral ties have consistently been at the forefront of China's relations with other countries in the region."

The two successful meetings between the Chinese President Xi Jinping and His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah have provided a strong impetus for the future growth of China-Kuwait relations in this new era.

"Currently, both sides are working diligently to implement the important agreements reached between the leaders of the two countries, and are actively pushing major cooperative projects, including the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port.

"In addition, exchanges between media institutions and youth and students from both countries are flourishing.

"Many Chinese art troupes have delivered outstanding performances in Kuwait. Also, the Chinese language is gaining popularity in the country, fostering a stronger foundation for understanding and friendship between the two peoples.

"Over the past 75 years, the Communist Party of China has united people of all ethnic groups across the country,

leading them with strong and resolute efforts in pursuit of the Chinese dream. This has enabled China to successfully embark on the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, transforming the nation from a poor country into the world's second-largest economy, and achieving a great leap forward for the Chinese nation from self-sufficiency to becoming prosperous and powerful.

"In the process, the size of the Chinese economy grew from \$30 billion to \$17.8 trillion last year. China has achieved remarkable progress, becoming the largest country in terms of manufacturing, commodity trade, and foreign exchange reserves. "It also constructed the world's longest high-speed railway network, the longest expressway network, and the largest number of 5G base stations. It accounts for over 50 percent of the world's new energy vehicles."

See Also Page 2

## Joint statement

Continued from Page 1

of UNSCR 2735 regarding a ceasefire in Gaza", the statement said.

The joint statement stressed that the US and its allies are prepared to fully support all diplomatic efforts to conclude an agreement between Lebanon and Israel within this period, building on efforts over the last months, that ends this crisis altogether.

Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has pursued its urgent humanitarian campaign to relieve families who have been displaced due to the ongoing Israeli occupation attacks on various regions of the country.

The KRCS campaign, carried out in coordination with the Lebanese Red Cross, has continued for the third day in a row on Thursday, delivering relief supplies to the relocated people who have taken shelter in schools and other facilities, said Yousef Boutros, the Red Cross relief coordinator in a statement to KUNA.

The campaign targeted locations of high density presence of the displaced in Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Zahle in eastern Lebanon and Akkar in the north, Boutros said.

The relocated were handed food, hygiene materials, blankets and mattresses, totally sufficient for up to 10,000 families.

Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati denied on Thursday circulating news regarding the signing of a ceasefire proposal after a meeting with US Secretary of State Antoni Blinken and American mediator Amos Hochstein.

A statement by Mikati's office utterly refuted the news, adding that Mikati's announcement, after the joint statement of the US and allies calling for a ceasefire, that his country was in principle agreement to the notion; however, it remains to be seen whether the Israeli occupation would abide by international law regarding this particular situation.

Mikati took part earlier in an urgent meeting for the UNSC held on Wednesday

on the request of France to discuss developments in the Israeli aggressors attack against Lebanon.

Lebanon, since Monday morning, had been subjected to heavy Israeli bombardment of towns in the south of the country, which caused the loss of lives and destruction to properties.

Charge de Affaires of Kuwait Embassy in Lebanon Ahmad Arafa affirmed on Thursday that Kuwait has vital role in supporting the Lebanese people. This came in a statement for KUNA after his meeting with Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Chairman Anwar Al-Hasawi.

Arafa said that Kuwait never held back from helping the Lebanese people, and have always stood next to it during their historic relationship between the two countries.

He praised KRCS's efforts in aiding the displaced people due to the bombing of the Israeli occupation forces of Lebanon.

He noted that the Kuwaiti assistance is appreciated and praised by the Lebanese people, who always remember Kuwait's positions and support for Lebanon under all circumstances.

Arafa mentioned that during his meeting with Al-Hasawi, both sides discussed the necessary needs of displaced people of Lebanon who suffer from harsh humanitarian conditions.

## Focus on

Continued from Page 1

They further discussed varied domains of cooperation between the two sides in all political and security issues, in addition to regional topics of mutual interest mainly the current developments and their repercussions in the region.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Al-Yahya also attended the joint ministerial meeting between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Benelux Union -- comprising of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg.

The meeting focused on the relations between the countries, cooperation, and coordination between the GCC and the Benelux Union, exploring ways to enhance ties in political, economic, and investment sectors. (KUNA)

## Amir Rep

Continued from Page 1

The two sides discussed, during the meeting, relations between Kuwait and Iran, and means of backing and enhancing them to serve the two countries and their nations' interests, in addition to the latest developments on regional and international arenas.

The meeting featured Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, Director General of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah,

## KD2.158 million contract faces SAB scrutiny

# KPA seeks yearly health insurance extension amid oversight concerns

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA) has started taking steps to extend the health insurance contract for its employees and their families -- work injuries and life insurance -- for one year valued at KD 2.158 million.

Sources revealed that KPA has asked the State Audit Bureau (SAB) to extend the contract with the company that provides health insurance for em-

ployees and their families; indicating the bureau will not address the request unless KPA responds to its inquiries about the extension, especially since this will be the fifth extension.

Sources said SAB has confirmed that KPA did not abide by the rules governing entities subject to its oversight; such as the need for prior oversight and adherence to the guidelines for preparing tender documents, contract projects, engagements and agreements.

On the other hand, sources affirmed

that SAB has agreed to extend the contract for the appointment of sailors in Shuwaikh, Doha and Shuaiba ports; as well as the marine operations, marine pollution and external and internal marine anchorage departments, for a period of 180 days at a total cost of KD 509,000.

Sources pointed out this is the second extension and it began on June 11; adding that SAB stressed the need to complete the bidding, awarding and contracting of the new tender before the extended period ends.

## Kuwait, ICI

Continued from Page 1

Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs at His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Mazen Al-Issa, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Minister's Office affairs Ambassador Bader Saleh al-Tu-naib and Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Tareq Al-Bannai.

## Banks shareholder

Continued from Page 1

Non-performing loans maintained the level at 1.4 percent in 2023, maintaining the level of the two previous years, while coverage of these loans continued to rise, hitting 312 percent in the end of the year.

The sector's deposits continued to rise last year reaching KD 73.5 billion (USD 245.5 billion), a 4.4 percent proportion on annual basis, while the foreign assets grew accounting to 32.5 percent of the overall assets amid expansion of the banks' external operations.

The banks have continued to depend on the private sector's deposits as a main source of funds, with private sector's depositing accounting to 56.5 percent of the total deposits.

## Fast-track

Continued from Page 1

Al-Mashaan underlined China's renowned expertise in construction, port management, and operations, stressing the importance of completing the project in a timely manner.

Expressing her satisfaction with the talks, Al-Mashaan noted the positive momentum in strengthening economic relations between the two nations.

As part of the visit, the Kuwaiti delegation toured a state-owned Chinese company that is associated with MoT, overseeing the port's construction.

## Kuwait, ICI

Continued from Page 1

In November 2018, Kuwait and NATO member states took another important step to strengthen bilateral relations in November 2018, as Kuwait opened its first diplomatic mission with NATO in the Belgian capital, Brussels. It also hosted, mid-December 2019, events celebrating the 15th anniversary of the launch of Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.

The past twenty years have witnessed many visits between senior Kuwait officials and NATO to enhance joint cooperation in several areas, the most important of which are energy, maritime security, cyber defense, disaster management, and combating terrorism, in addition to coordinating common positions on regional and global issues.

The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative was launched during the Summit of Heads of State and Governments held in the Turkish capital, Ankara, in June 2004, with the aim of contributing to enhancing security and stability, especially in the Middle East, through a presentation of practical cooperation between the countries of the region and NATO countries in various security fields.

## Kuwait backs

Continued from Page 1

Agudo explained that the global water crisis, which affects more than 100 million people, is a global governance crisis, and its solution requires an international agreement.

In the same context, the Special Rapporteur denounced during his speech the use of water as a weapon in the war on Gaza, describing it as a silent bomb. It was also noted that the per capita

share of potable water in the Gaza Strip does not exceed 4.7 liters daily. The representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Michael Telhami, praised Kuwait's role in international efforts to provide clean water.

He also stressed during his speech the importance of securing the infrastructure for delivering water and sanitation services, especially in areas affected by conflicts. Talhami pointed out that the world is witnessing a rapid increase in population while water is declining sharply.

This will deepen the crisis and its impact on education, health, agriculture, and stability, especially in the most affected African countries, and cause increased migration and displacement.

## Mol cautions

Continued from Page 1

Yasser Al-Balushi, Head of the Marine Forecasting Department, told KUNA that Kuwait is currently influenced by the seasonal Indian depression, bringing in a hot and relatively dry air mass. This system is accompanied by moderate to strong north-westerly winds, causing dust storms, reduced visibility in some areas, and elevated sea waves, especially on Thursday.

Al-Balushi stated that Thursday's daytime weather will be particularly hot, with northwesterly winds ranging from 25 to 65 km/h, resulting in dusty conditions and limited visibility. The maximum temperature is expected to range between 40 and 42 degrees Celsius, while sea waves could reach heights between 3 and 7 feet. By evening, the weather will cool slightly, and the dust will begin to settle. Winds are expected to decrease to between 15 and 42 km/h, with minimum temperatures dropping to 26-28 degrees Celsius. The sea will remain moderate, with waves between 2 and 6 feet.

## الطرق السيارة بالمغرب Autoroutes du Maroc

NATIONAL COMPANY OF THE HIGHWAYS OF MOROCCO (ADM)

### Construction of the Rabat Casablanca Continental highway OPEN INVITATION TO TENDER N°70 / 24 / S

In accordance with ADM's provisional purchasing program for the year 2024 which was published in the newspaper "Al Bayane" on March 12, on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 10:00 am, it will be proceeded in the offices of the National Company of Motorways of Morocco, with the opening of the envelopes relating to the call for tenders opened for construction of the Rabat Casablanca Continental highway.

The opening sessions will be held in public session.

This invitation to tender is divided into six lots :

- Lot n° 1 : Casablanca bypass - Oued Lmaleh ;
- Lot n° 2 : Oued Lmaleh - Oued Nfifikh ;
- Lot n° 3 : Oued Nfifikh - Oued Elghbar ;
- Lot n° 4 : Oued Elghbar - Oued Charrate ;
- Lot n° 5 : Oued Charrate - Oued Yquem ;
- Lot n° 6 : Oued Yquem - RP 4022.

ADM makes its market portal available to competitors available at: <https://achats.adm.co.ma>. The terms of use of the ADM Markets Portal are accessible from said portal.

Competitors can consult and download free of charge, and only from the ADM portal, the files of calls for tenders and competitions, as well as the documents and additional information relating thereto.

The provisional guarantee is set at :

- Four million dirhams (4.000.000,00) for lot n°1
- Seven million dirhams (7 000 000,00) for lot n°2
- Six million dirhams (6 000 000,00) for lot n°3
- Eight million dirhams (8.000.000,00) for lot n°4
- Six million five thousand dirhams (6.500.000,00) for lot n°5
- Two million dirhams (2.000.000,00) for lot n°6

The content as well as the presentation of the bidding documents should be in conformity with the provisions of ADM Contract Regulations.

The electronic submission of envelopes is the only way to participate in the invitation to tender. Receipt of paper submissions is not authorized. Competitors are required to submit their submissions only electronically through the ADM Marketplace Portal. Only envelopes submitted through ADM's dematerialized purchasing platform will be taken into consideration.

The procedures for submitting envelopes are defined in the consultation files.

The supporting documents to provide are those stipulated under Article 23 of ADM Contract Regulations and specified in the Consultation Regulations.

Moroccan candidates shall submit the certificate of qualification and classification delivered by the Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport, Logistics and water.

This certificate completes the technical file for Moroccan competitors.

The qualification and classification required according to the system of qualification and classification of the construction and public works are given in the Table below :

Sector	Qualification	Rank
B- Road works	B2 - special road earthworks B3 - Road sanitation works and environmental treatment B5 - Untreated seats and surface coatings B6 - Hot treated and coated seats	5
D-construction of structures	D2 - Exceptional reinforced concrete structures D3 - Standard prestressed concrete structures D4 - Exceptional structures in prestressed concrete	1

View our notices of calls for tenders and competitions at: [www.adm.co.ma](http://www.adm.co.ma).  
ADM market regulations can be downloaded from the same address.

## الطرق السيارة بالمغرب Autoroutes du Maroc

NATIONAL COMPANY OF THE HIGHWAYS OF MOROCCO (ADM)

### Construction of the viaducts on rivers HASSAR, EL MALEH, N'FIFIKH, ELGHBAR, MHASSER, CHARRATE and YQUEM located on Rabat Casablanca Continental highway OPEN INVITATION TO TENDER N°71 / 24 / S

In accordance with ADM's provisional purchasing program for the year 2024 which was published in the newspaper "Al Bayane" on March 12, on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 12:00 am, it will be proceeded in the offices of the National Company of Motorways of Morocco, with the opening of the envelopes relating to the call for tenders opened for construction of the viaducts on rivers HASSAR, EL MALEH, N'FIFIKH, ELGHBAR, MHASSER, CHARRATE and YQUEM located on Rabat Casablanca Continental highway.

The opening sessions will be held in public session.

This invitation to tender is divided into four lots :

- Lot 1 : One viaduct on river Hassar
- Lot 2 : Two viaducts on rivers El Maleh & N'fifikh
- Lot 3 : Two viaducts on rivers Elghbar & Mhasser
- Lot 4 : Two viaducts on rivers Charrate & Yquem

ADM makes its market portal available to competitors available at: <https://achats.adm.co.ma>. The terms of use of the ADM Markets Portal are accessible from said portal.

Competitors can consult and download free of charge, and only from the ADM portal, the files of calls for tenders and competitions, as well as the documents and additional information relating thereto.

The provisional guarantee is set at :

- One million five thousand dirhams (1.500.000,00) for lot n°1
- Three million dirhams (3.000.000,00) for lot n°2
- One million dirhams (1.000.000,00) for lot n°3
- Two million dirhams (2.000.000,00) for lot n°4

The content as well as the presentation of the bidding documents should be in conformity with the provisions of ADM Contract Regulations.

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Sector	Qualification	Rank
D-construction of structures	D2 - Exceptional reinforced concrete structures D3 - Standard prestressed concrete structures D4 - Exceptional structures in prestressed concrete	1

View our notices of calls for tenders and competitions at: [www.adm.co.ma](http://www.adm.co.ma).  
ADM market regulations can be downloaded from the same address.

## World News Roundup

## Europe

**Russian missiles target Kyiv for 5 hours:** Ukraine's air defenses battled an overnight Russian aerial attack on the capital Kyiv for five hours, officials said Thursday, as missiles and drones again hammered the Ukrainian power grid.

The Kyiv attack injured at least two people, Ukraine's Emergency Service said. A kindergarten, a gas pipe and around 20 cars were damaged in the city, said the Kyiv Military Administration.

Long-range strikes have been a hallmark of Russia's military campaign in Ukraine, now deep in its third year, often hitting civilian areas. Attacks on the electricity network have knocked out around 70% of Ukraine's energy generation capacity, according to the United Nations, bringing blackouts as winter approaches.



Onyshchuk

Energy infrastructure was hit in Ukraine's western Ivano-Frankivsk region, causing a blackout in parts of the regional capital of the same name, regional Gov Svitlana Onyshchuk said.

The power grid was also targeted in the southern Mykolaiv region, local authorities said without immediately providing further details.

Russia launched six missiles and 78 Shahed drones at Ukraine overnight from Wednesday to Thursday, Ukraine's air force said. Defenses destroyed four of the missiles and 66 drones in the air, it said. In the south, a missile killed a 62-year-old woman in the Odesa region, where homes and cars were damaged, regional Gov Oleh Kiper said. (AP)

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**Far-right party looks for historic win in Austria:** Austria's far-right Freedom Party could win a national election for the first time when Austria votes on Sunday, tapping into voters' anxieties about immigration, inflation, Ukraine and other concerns following recent gains for the hard right elsewhere in Europe.

Herbert Kickl, a former interior minister and longtime campaign strategist who has led the Freedom Party since 2021, wants to become Austria's new chancellor. He has used the term "Volkskanzler," or chancellor of the people, which was used by the Nazis to describe Adolf Hitler in the 1930s. Kickl has rejected the comparison.

And a win isn't certain, with recent polls pointing to a close race. They have put support for the Freedom Party at 27%, with the conservative Austrian People's Party of Chancellor Karl Nehammer on 25% and the center-left Social Democrats on 21%. (AP)

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**UK probes cyberattack on Wi-Fi networks:** UK transport officials and police said Thursday they are investigating a "cyber-security incident" that hit the public Wi-Fi networks at the country's biggest railway stations.

Passengers trying to log onto the Wi-Fi at stations including Manchester Piccadilly, Birmingham New Street and 11 London terminuses on Wednesday evening were met by a page reading "We love you, Europe," followed by an anti-Islam message listing a series of terror attacks.

Network Rail, which manages the stations, said the Wi-Fi had been switched off and no passenger data was taken.

"British Transport Police are investigating the incident," Network Rail said in a statement. "This service is provided via a third party and has been suspended while an investigation is under way." (AP)

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**Labour members deal a blow to Starmer:** Members of Britain's governing Labour Party dealt Prime Minister Keir Starmer a blow on Wednesday, rejecting his decision to cut payments that offset winter heating costs for millions of retirees.

The vote on the final day of Labour's annual conference is not binding, but it's a setback to Starmer's efforts to unite his center-left party around the contentious measure.

Since winning office in July, Starmer has cautioned that the dire state of the public finances inherited from the last Conservative government means he must make hard choices such as ending the winter fuel allowance, worth between 200 and 300 pounds (\$262 and \$393), for all but the poorest pensioners.

Trade unions that are among Labour's funders and allies organized resistance to the cut at the conference in Liverpool, northwest England. They forced a vote on a demand for the decision to be reversed. It was narrowly passed in a show-of-hands vote amid cheers and jeers in the conference hall. (AP)

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**Czech PM proposes dismissal of minister:** Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala announced Tuesday that he will propose to President Petr Pavel the dismissal of Ivan Bartos from the post of Deputy Prime Minister for Digitization and Minister for Regional Development as of Sept. 30.

Fiala said Bartos is not able to bring the digitalization of construction procedures to a successful conclusion. According to a government statement, a special team led by the Minister of Transport Martin Kupka will be responsible for digitalization from Wednesday. The announcement came after Bartos said on Sunday that he would resign as the leader of the Pirate Party due to the party's poor performance in the regional elections held over the weekend. (Xinhua)

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**EU fails to dissuade African migrants:** The European Union is failing to dissuade migrants from Africa leaving for Europe without authorization and could do more to limit abuses against people trying to make the journey, the EU's financial watchdog warned on Wednesday.

The findings come in a European Court of Auditors report into the bloc's Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, a multi-billion-euro program hastily set up in 2015 after more than 1 million migrants arrived on Europe's shores, many of them fleeing war in Syria, overwhelming services in Italy and Greece.

It was meant to help tackle the root causes of migration in Africa, like poverty, conflict or unemployment. At first, 1.8 billion euros (\$2 billion) was available to distribute on hundreds of projects, but that amount has swelled to about 5 billion euros (\$5.6 billion) today. (AP)

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**Norway detains man of inciting crimes:** Norwegian police said Wednesday that they had detained a German national of Cameroonian heritage for allegedly inciting crimes against humanity in war-torn Cameroon, the first time Norway was embarking on legal proceedings for such crimes.

The man, who is in his 50s, lives in Norway but has not been named. He was detained because the National Criminal Investigation Service, known in Norway as KRIPOS, said that they believed he "had a central role in an ongoing armed conflict in Cameroon."

Anette Berger, the prosecutor in the case, said, "We are in an early phase of the investigation, and there are several investigative steps that remain."

On Wednesday, KRIPOS would seek his custody from the Oslo District Court "on the basis of the risk of tampering with evidence." (AP)

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**'Hand over gunmen who attacked police':** Kosovar Prime Minister Albin Kurti on Tuesday held Serbia accountable for trying to annex part of Kosovo following an incursion of Serb gunmen who killed a police officer in a shootout last year that raised tensions between the sides.

Kurti called on the international community to press Belgrade to hand over the gunmen who retreated to Serbia following a 12-hour standoff at a Serbian Orthodox monastery at Banjska, 55 kilometers (30 miles) north of the capital Pristina. "Serbia is responsible and Serbia should be held accountable," said Kurti. Kurti said the paramilitary group was "orchestrated and financed from Serbia" and had earlier brought to Kosovo a large quantity of weaponry "for a wider and longer conflict." (AP)



Owners secure their boats at the Davis Islands Yacht Club ahead of Hurricane Helene on Sept 25 in Tampa, Fla. Inset: Florida Gov Ron DeSantis, (second from right), speaks to linemen before a news conference on Wednesday at the Tampa Electric Company offices. (AP)

## Helene upgraded to Category 2 hurricane as it barrels toward Florida

Fast-moving Hurricane Helene was advancing Thursday across the Gulf of Mexico toward Florida, threatening an "unsurvivable" storm surge in northwestern parts of the state as well as damaging winds, rains and flash floods hundreds of miles inland across much of the southeastern US, forecasters said.

Helene was upgraded Thursday morning to a Category 2 storm and is expected to be a major hurricane - meaning a Category 3 or higher - when it makes landfall on Florida's northwestern coast Thursday evening. As of early Thursday, hurricane warnings and flash flood warnings extended far beyond the coast up into south-central Georgia. The

governors of Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas have all declared emergencies in their states.

The storm was expected to make landfall in the Big Bend region, where Florida's panhandle and peninsula meet, according to Jack Beven, senior hurricane specialist at the National Hurricane Center in Miami. (AP)

## Politics

## Harris campaign office damaged by gunfire

## Trump says Ukraine 'demolished'

WASHINGTON, Sept 26, (Agencies): Former US president Donald Trump described Ukraine in bleak and mournful terms Wednesday, referring to its people as "dead" and the country itself as "demolished," and further raising questions about how much the former president would be willing if elected again to concede in a negotiation over the country's future.

Trump argued Ukraine should have made concessions to Russian President Vladimir Putin in the months before Russia's February 2022 attack, declaring that even "the worst deal would've been better than what we have now."

Trump, who has long been critical of US aid to Ukraine, frequently claims that Russia never would have invaded if he was president and that he would put an end to the war if he returned to the White House. But rarely has he discussed the conflict in such detail.

His remarks, at a North Carolina event billed as an economic speech, come on the heels of a debate this month in which he pointedly refused to say whether he wanted Ukraine to win the war. On Tuesday, Trump touted the prowess of Russia and its predecessor Soviet Union, saying that wars are "what they do."

The Republican former president, notoriously attuned to slights, began his denunciation of Ukraine by alluding to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's recent criticism of Trump and running mate JD Vance.

## Also:

**WASHINGTON:** The Biden administration said Wednesday that the US will send Ukraine an undisclosed number of medium-range cluster bombs and an array of rockets, artillery and armored vehicles in a military aid package total-

## Congress passes temporary bill to avoid government shutdown

WASHINGTON, Sept 26, (AP): Congress on Wednesday passed a temporary measure that keeps government agencies funded into December, avoiding a shutdown for now while punting final spending decisions until after the Nov 5 election.

The Senate approved the measure by a vote of 78-18 shortly after the House easily approved it. The bill generally funds agencies at current levels through Dec. 20. But an additional \$231 million was included to bolster the Secret Service after the two assassination attempts against Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump. Money was also added to aid with the presidential transition, among other things.

The bill now goes to President Joe Biden's desk to be signed into law.

"This bipartisanship is a good outcome for America," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said mo-

ments before the vote. "I hope it sets the tone for more constructive, bipartisan work when we return in the fall."

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., billed the measure as doing "only what's absolutely necessary," a statement directed at members of his own conference concerned about spending levels.

Still, it was a no-go for some Republicans, which forced House GOP leadership to rely on Democratic votes to pass the bill through a process that requires at least two-thirds support from voting members. The final vote was 341-82, with Republicans supplying all the no votes in both chambers. Johnson said the only alternative to the continuing resolution at this stage would have been a government shutdown. "It would be political malpractice to shut the government down," Johnson said. "I think everyone understands that."

The bill now goes to President Joe Biden's desk to be signed into law.

"This bipartisanship is a good outcome for America," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said mo-

ing about \$375 million; a US official also said billions more in assistance over the coming months would be announced Thursday.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced the \$375 million package as global leaders met at the UN General Assembly this week and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy used his appearance there to rally support.

The package announced by Blinken includes air-to-ground bombs, which have cluster munitions and can be fired by Ukraine's fighter jets, as well as munitions for the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS), Jave-

lin and other anti-armor systems, Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, bridging systems and other vehicles and military equipment.

**WASHINGTON:** An office used for US Vice President Kamala Harris's campaign in the state of Arizona was damaged by gunfire Monday, according to a report by NBC News on Tuesday.

Police are investigating the incident, which caused damage. No injuries were reported.

Harris has scheduled to visit Arizona a few days later as she campaigns for president, the report said.

free on bond and was immediately taken into custody. (AP)

**Suspect detained after blast:** A man set off an explosive device in the lobby of a

California courthouse on Wednesday, sending five people to the hospital with minor injuries and prompting the shutdown of the court complex and other city buildings, officials said.

A 20-year-old man was detained follow-

ing the explosion that was reported shortly after 8:45 a.m. at the Santa Maria Courthouse in Santa Maria, sheriff's officials said. The city of about 110,000 people is in Santa Barbara County, in California's central coast region.

Santa Barbara Undersheriff Craig Bonner said the suspect had been arrested for illegal gun possession and was headed to court Wednesday morning for his arraignment when the Santa Maria resident entered the courthouse and threw a bag at the screening station, causing the bag to explode.

Authorities arrested the suspect outside the courthouse while he was trying to enter his car. (AP)

**3 local officials acquitted:** Three county officials from upstate New York accused of conspiring to commit ballot fraud in 2021 local elections were found not guilty of all charges by a federal jury Wednesday.

The three Rensselaer County officials were charged by federal prosecutors last year of conspiring to use their positions to obtain absentee ballots in voters' names through fraud and intimidation. The trio, who were involved in strategy for Republican candidates, then allegedly conspired to cast false and illegal votes in those voters' names.

The conspirators were trying to prevent Democratic candidates from appearing on the Working Families Party line in the general election, according to prosecutors. (AP)



US Republican presidential nominee former president Donald Trump speaks at a campaign event in Mint Hill, NC on Sept. 25. (AP)



Adams



Goines

## America

**NYC Mayor Adams indicted:** New York City Mayor Eric Adams has been indicted by a grand jury on federal criminal charges, according to two people familiar with the matter, an extraordinary culmination to weeks of searches, subpoenas and resignations of top officials that have thrust the city's government into crisis.

The indictment detailing the charges against Adams, a Democrat, was expected to be unsealed Thursday, according to the people, who spoke with The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly. The U.S. attorney's office in Manhattan declined to comment.

In a speech recorded at his official residence, Adams said he would remain in office, describing any charges he may face as "entirely false, based on lies."

Federal investigators had seized Adams' electronic devices nearly a year ago as part of an investigation focused, at least partly, on campaign contributions and Adams' interactions with the Turkish government. (AP)

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**Ex-officer convicted of murder:** A former Houston police officer was convicted Wednesday of murder in the deaths of a couple during a 2019 drug raid that revealed systemic corruption problems within the police department's narcotics unit.

A jury found Gerald Goines guilty of two counts of murder in the January 2019 deaths of Dennis Tuttle, 59, and his 58-year-old wife Rhogena Nicholas. The couple, along with their dog, were fatally shot after officers burst into their home using a "no-knock" warrant that didn't require them to announce themselves before entering.

Goines faces up to life in prison. The same jury that convicted him after deliberating for less than a full day will also decide his sentence after hearing additional testimony and evidence during the punishment phase set to begin Thursday.

Goines looked down and did not visibly react as the verdict was read. He had been



The Institut de France is pictured in Paris, France on Sept 22. The two-day European Heritage Days kicked off Saturday, during which nearly 20,000 historical sites in France were opened to the public for free. (Xinhua)

## Africa

## 'Free political prisoners'

## AU expresses concern over security in Sudan

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia, Sept 26, (Agencies): African Union (AU) Commission Chairperson **Moussa Faki Mahamat** expressed concern over the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in Sudan.

The chairperson of the 55-member organization, in a statement issued Tuesday, expressed "grave concern" regarding the security and humanitarian situation in the conflict-affected Sudan, with particular emphasis on the situation in El Fasher, Darfur.

Condemning the recent escalation of the crisis and the spread of violence, Faki called for an immediate cessation of the fighting across Sudan.

He further reiterated the AU's conviction that there can be no military solution to the crisis in Sudan. He said the ongoing "unjustified fighting" only prolongs the suffering of all Sudanese people and the devastation of the country after decades of conflict and forced displacement.

Sudan has been embroiled in a deadly conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces since mid-April 2023.

Faki urged the two warring parties and their allies "to immediately and unconditionally embrace a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire."

He said a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire would pave the way for an inclusive all-Sudanese political dialogue to address the deep-rooted causes of the conflict and reset Sudan toward constitutional democratic order and stability.

He further reiterated the AU's commitment to contribute with all means at its disposal to ending the conflict through various African mechanisms, including the High-Level Panel on Sudan and the AU Special Envoy for the Prevention of Genocide.

As the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly convenes in New York, the AU Commission chairperson also renewed the call for effective unification of efforts for collective international action to solve this extremely dangerous crisis in Sudan.

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**S. Africa fighters remains arrive home:** The remains of 42 South African freedom fighters who died while exiled in Zimbabwe and Zambia during the struggle against white minority rule arrived in their home country Wednesday.

The remains were received by government officials and family members at Waterkloof Air Force Base in the capital Pretoria after being exhumed for reburial in the country of their birth.

This was part of a government program to bring closure to families, whose loved ones died away from home while serving in the underground structures of both the African National Congress and Pan Africanist Congress, according to officials.

Before the apartheid system ended in South Africa in 1994, many activists left the country to receive military training elsewhere with the aim of returning home to wage an armed struggle.

Others left the country to avoid being arrested by the apartheid regime for their involvement in anti-apartheid activities, and chose Zimbabwe and Zambia where the underground structures were the strongest.

After it was banned in South Africa, the African National Congress party of Nelson Mandela, shifted its headquarters to the Zambian capital, Lusaka.

Many died in exile and were buried in those countries.

Among the remains returned to South Africa were those of freedom struggle stalwarts Duma Nokwe, Florence Mophosho and Basil February.

Speaking during a Heritage Day event in South Africa on Tuesday, South Africa's Deputy President Paul Mashatile said the repatriation was part of efforts to teach future generations about the role played by many in the struggle against apartheid.

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**Free political prisoners in Congo:** Hundreds protested in front of Congo's top court Wednesday to demand the release of political prisoners, including the country's three most prominent opposition figures imprisoned on charges the opposition says are politically motivated.

Felix Tshisekedi, the president of the central African country which has a history riddled with political turmoil, was reelected in December with results questioned by the opposition. He has spent much of his time in office trying to gain legitimacy after a disputed 2018 election while struggling to quell violence in the country's east to the disquietment of many.

Protesters in the capital, Kinshasa, held banners that read, "Release political prisoners", with some chanting "Tshisekedi, you have killed our country!" Others barricaded and occupied the court's entrance.

After the protest ended, representatives of several opposition parties handed the minister of justice a statement that accused Tshisekedi of trying to "muzzle the opponents" and to "silence dissenting voices." "We came to see the minister of justice to tell him that it is not normal that in a state governed by the rule of law, there are political prisoners who are imprisoned unjustly," Fiston Mayas, a member of the main opposition party Together for the Republic, told The Associated Press.

The parties called for the release of Jean-Marc Kabund, leader of the Alliance for Change party, Mike Mukebany, a former member of the provincial parliament for Together for the Republic and Seth Kikuni, a candidate in the presidential elections last year.

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**'Eswatini main opp'n leader poisoned':** Eswatini's main opposition leader was poisoned in an assassination attempt, his party claimed Wednesday, putting renewed scrutiny on the southern African country that is one of the last remaining absolute monarchies and where authorities have for years moved to quash pro-democracy movements.

The People's United Democratic Movement party (PUDEMO) said its president, Mlungisi Makhanya, was hospitalized after being poisoned in neighboring South Africa on Tuesday. It said he was under security protection but gave no more detail on his condition or the circumstances of the alleged poisoning.

Makhanya had recently said there would be new pro-democracy protests in Eswatini next month. Eswatini government spokesperson Alpheous Nxumalo denied any involvement.

King Mswati III rules Eswatini, a country of 1.2 million, with power over all branches of the government. The 56-year-old has been king since he succeeded his father in 1986 at the age of 18.



Tourists visit Zhongchun Garden in Dingzhou, north China's Hebei Province on Sept. 26. The renovated Zhongchun Garden is officially opened to the public on Thursday in north China's Hebei Province. The garden, covering an area of 458 mu (30.53 hectares), is a comprehensive scenic spot integrating study tour, entertainment, shopping and catering. Originally built in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1126), Zhongchun Garden was an early public garden of ancient China. (Xinhua)

## Asia

## HK court sentences editor to 21 months

## 9 LDP candidates vie to replace Kishida

TOKYO, Sept 26, (AP): A record nine candidates are running in Japan's ruling party election Friday to replace outgoing Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

A former defense minister who is a longtime veteran, the relatively young son of a popular former prime minister and the economic security minister who would be the country's first woman prime minister are considered top contenders.

No candidate is likely to win a majority in the first round, so the top two vote-getters will advance to a second round to be held immediately after the first on Friday afternoon.

Ishiba, a 67-year-old former banker, is running in the leadership race for a fifth time and said this will be his "final battle."

First elected to parliament in 1986, he has served as defense minister, agriculture minister and other key Cabinet and party posts.

Despite his longstanding popularity among voters, the outspoken idealist has struggled to win enough support from fellow party lawmakers.

But now, Ishiba's experience, stability and expertise is increasingly considered a strength for the party as it prepares to face the main opposition Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan's new leader, former Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda, a veteran known for gripping speeches.

Koizumi, the son of popular Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, has been considered a potential candidate for the top position since he was elected to parliament in 2009 and at 43 would be Japan's youngest prime minister.

Considered a political blue blood, he has been popular despite his relative lack of experience, and is backed by a former prime minister, Yoshihiko Suga. But some of his popularity has eroded as policy debates have heated up, displaying his lack of expertise.

Takaichi, 63, is the economic security minister and is making her second bid to become Japan's first female leader. A protégé of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, she is a staunch conservative and attracts the right wing.

In the 2021 party leadership vote, she finished third in a runoff.

Yoshimasa Hayashi, 63, is chief Cabinet secretary and a former foreign minister who is known as Kishida's confidante and for his all-round policy expertise.

Takayuki Kobayashi, 49, a former

## 'NKorea may be able to produce double-digit number of N-weps'

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 26, (AP): North Korea has likely enriched enough uranium to build a "double-digit" number of bombs and is making progress in its efforts to develop more powerful and accurate missiles targeting rival South Korea, Seoul's spy agency told lawmakers on Thursday.

The closed-door parliamentary briefing by the National Intelligence Service came after North Korea offered a rare glimpse into a secretive facility to produce weapons-grade uranium earlier this month as leader Kim Jong Un reiterated his goal to "exponentially" increase his stock of nuclear weapons.

The South Korean agency assessed that Kim's disclosure of the facility was likely a statement of defiance toward Washington ahead of the U.S. presidential election and

meant to domestically showcase his military accomplishments amid deepening economic struggles, according to Lee Seong-kweun, one of the lawmakers who attended the briefing.

When asked about North Korea's bomb fuel capacity, the agency said North Korea likely has about 70 kilograms (154 pounds) of plutonium and an unspecified but considerable amount of weapons-grade uranium that would be enough to build "at least a double-digit number" of weapons, Lee said.

While North Korean state media did not disclose the location of the uranium enrichment facility that Kim visited on Sept. 13, the South Korean agency said it was likely to be a site in Kangson, near the North Korean capital of Pyongyang, said Park Sun-won, another lawmaker who attended the briefing.

economic security minister, is a rising policy guru among the younger generations and a conservative who backed Takaichi in 2021.

Toshimitsu Motegi, 67, is the LDP's secretary general who has served as foreign minister and trade minister and who is known as a tough negotiator.

Yoko Kamikawa, 71, is the former minister. She is a Harvard-educated former think tank analyst known as low-key and diligent, and has pushed a U.N. initiative of "women, peace and security."

Taro Kono, 61, is the digital minister who is known as a maverick for criticizing party policies, but has reversed his opposition to nuclear energy citing growing power demands for data centers and AI.

Katsunobu Kato, 68, is a former health minister who was close to Abe and shares his conservative views.

**Also:**  
**HONG KONG:** A Hong Kong court sentenced a former editor of a shuttered news publication to 21 months in prison on Thursday in a sedition case that is widely seen as an indicator of media freedom in the city, once hailed as a beacon of press freedom in Asia. A

second editor was freed after his sentence was reduced because of ill health and time already served in custody.

Former Stand News editor-in-chief **Chung Pui-kuen** and former acting editor-in-chief **Patrick Lam** are the first journalists convicted under a colonial-era sedition law since the former British colony returned to Chinese rule in 1997. Chung was sentenced to 21 months, while Lam was also sentenced but allowed to go free.

The news outlet was one of last in Hong Kong that dared to criticize authorities as **Beijing** imposed a crackdown on dissidents following massive pro-democracy protests in 2019.

The closure came months after the demise of pro-democracy newspaper **Apple Daily**, whose jailed founder **Jimmy Lai** is battling collusion charges under a tough national security law imposed by Beijing in 2020.

Last month, the court found Chung and Lam guilty of conspiracy to publish and reproduce seditious materials, along with Best Pencil (Hong Kong) Ltd., Stand News' holding company. They faced up to two years in prison and a fine of 5,000 Hong Kong dollars (about \$640).



Political activists join in a sit-in protest calling for the release of opposition political prisoners in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo on Sept 25. (AP)



Abinader



Obrador

## Lat/Am

**DomRep to take measures:** The president of the Dominican Republic warned Wednesday that his administration would take "drastic measures" to protect the country if a UN-backed mission in neighboring Haiti targeting gang violence fails.

**Luis Abinader** did not provide details of what action he might take during his speech at the UN General Assembly in New York.

Gangs in Haiti control 80% of the capital, Port-au-Prince, and they have grown more powerful since the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse. More than 3,600 people have been reported killed during the first half of this year, a more than 70% increase compared with the same period last year. The violence also has left nearly 700,000 Haitians homeless in recent years and thousands have fled Haiti, which shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic.

Abinader thanked Kenya, which is leading the mission in Haiti with nearly 400 police officers from the East African country recently joined by nearly two dozen police and soldiers from Jamaica and two senior military officers from Belize. Another 300 police from Kenya are expected to deploy within a month.

The personnel, however, falls significantly short of the 2,500 pledged by various countries for the mission, which the US government warns is lacking resources as it considers a possible U.N. peacekeeping mission.

Abinader said the current mission needs to be fully established so that free and transparent elections can be held. Haiti has not held elections since 2016, and a transitional presidential council was ordered to do so by February 2026.

"Practically one year from the holding of elections, the conditions are still not in place to do so," Abinader said as he expressed concern over the future of the mission. "We cannot allow the effort made to date to fail. If that were to happen, Haiti's collapse would be imminent."

Earlier this year, gangs launched coordinated attacks targeting critical government infrastructure. They raided more than two dozen police stations, opened fire on the main international airport, forcing it to close for nearly three months, and stormed Haiti's two biggest prisons, releasing roughly 4,000 inmates. (AP)

□ □ □

**Quito declares state of emergency:** A state of emergency was declared on Wednesday in Ecuador's capital Quito as wildfires continue to devastate parts of the city, said Mayor Pabel Munoz.

The decision was made by Quito's Emergency Operations Committee after assessing damage from a massive fire in the Gua-

pulo area in the eastern part of the city.

The fire, which began on Tuesday, has been the most destructive one the city has faced in recent years, scorching large swaths of vegetation, destroying six homes

in central-northern Quito, and engulfing the city in thick smoke.

"This declaration may help us secure at least half a million dollars from international cooperation agencies, which will be



Mexican National Guards march in the Independence Day military parade through the capital's main square, the Zocalo, in Mexico City on Sept 16. Mexico's Senate approved on Sept 25 putting the National Guard under the command of the military despite widespread criticism over deepening the country's militarization. (AP)

critical for the reconstruction and recovery of damaged ecosystems," Munoz said.

Emergency response efforts are underway as authorities work to contain the remaining fire hotspots. (Xinhua)

**Nat'l Guard under army command:** Mexico's Senate approved early Wednesday putting the National Guard under the command of the military despite widespread criticism over deepening the country's militarization.

It's the second constitutional change in two weeks, giving outgoing President **Andrés Manuel López Obrador** another victory days before his exit. The Congress passed on Sept. 11 a contentious judicial overhaul he pushed that forces all the country's judges to stand for election, raising concerns of politicizing the judiciary.

The National Guard was a security force proposed as civilian and run by the Public Safety Ministry.

After debating through the night, the governing Morena party and its allies overcame opposition fueled by concerns from human rights organizations and the United Nations. They denied the change would militarize the country, instead saying the military would help the National Guard become a more effective security force.

The president had tried before to put the National Guard under military command, but it was declared unconstitutional last year by the Supreme Court. (AP)

## oil soars

The price of Kuwaiti oil went up 11 cents reaching USD 76.32 per barrel on Wednesday compared to USD 76.21 pb on Tuesday, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Thursday.

At the global markets, Brent crude fell USD 1.71 to settle at USD 73.46 pb, while the West Texas Intermediate fell USD 1.87 to USD 69.69 pb. (KUNA)

## OAPEC chief highlights role of critical minerals in low-carbon transition

The Secretary-General of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), Jamal Al-Loughain, has emphasized the crucial role of critical minerals in the transition to a low-carbon economy, particularly for supporting renewable energy technologies such as batteries and electric vehicles, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement to KUNA on the occasion of the organization's release of a new study titled "The reality and future prospects of critical minerals and the role of Arab countries in securing supply chains," Al-Loughain called for the enhancement of national and regional strategies to ensure the supply of these minerals and to develop

the necessary infrastructure for their utilization.

He pointed out that critical minerals like nickel, lithium, cobalt, and copper are the backbone of the clean energy sector, as they are essential for manufacturing storage batteries, wind turbines, and other requirements of the clean energy industry.

Al-Loughain noted that global investments in critical minerals are not keeping pace with the rising global demand.

The required investments between 2022 and 2030 are estimated to range between \$360 billion and \$460 billion, indicating a significant investment gap of between \$180 billion and \$270 billion.

Regarding geopolitical and economic risks, he mentioned that the concentration of supplies of many critical minerals in a limited number of countries exposes supply chains to risks.

Therefore, there is a need to strengthen international cooperation and develop more flexible trade policies to mitigate these risks and achieve sustainable supply chains.

Concerning the increasing demand and future forecasts, he stated that projections indicate a significant rise in global demand for critical minerals by 2050, driven by the growing reliance on low-carbon clean energy technologies.

## Market Movements

26-09-2024

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
SAUDI - TASI	+30.58	12,374.30	PAKISTAN - KSE 100	-652.28	81,614.00
DUBAI - DFMGI	+37.92	4,526.61			
JAPAN - Nikkei 225	+1,055.37	38,925.63			
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+96.12	7,458.74			
EGYPT - EGX 30	+26.27	31,276.91			

# Business

## Kuwait Oil Company reveals key organizational changes

Ahmad Al-Eidan leads major leadership appointments at KOC

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26:** In a significant move aimed at enhancing operational efficiency, the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) has announced extensive organizational changes across seven of its directorates.

CEO Ahmad Al-Eidan led this initiative, which includes a series of strategic appointments to key leadership positions.

Among the notable changes, Nasser Al-Hajri has been appointed as the head of the Maintenance and Reliability Support Team for North Kuwait within the North and West Kuwait Directorate.

Khaled Habib will take on the role of head of the Operations Support Team in West Kuwait, where he will be instrumental in streamlining operations and support.

In the South and East Kuwait Directorate, Mohammed Rashid Al-Rashidi has been appointed as the Head of the Maintenance and Reliability Support Team.

He will report directly to the Director of the Operations Support Group in that region.

Meanwhile, in the Gas and Environment Directorate, Mohammed Naif Al-Khashan will lead the Occupational Health and Safety Team, with Abdul Rahim Abdul Rahman Ali stepping in as the head of the Health, Safety and Environment Team based in Ahmadi.

The Exploration Directorate has welcomed Walid Al-Baghli as a Senior Specialist, who will work closely with the Director of the Technical Support Group.

In the Administrative and Financial Affairs Directorate, several appointments have been made to

### 'Four bids submitted'

## Bids unveiled for Khairan Power Plant feeder lines & fuel systems

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: The Central Agency for Public Tenders has announced the opening of bids for the 'Supply, Implementation, Initial Operation, and Maintenance of the Works of Constructing the Feeder Lines for the Khairan Thermal Power Plant, and Developing the Infrastructure for the Fuel Reception Systems for the Al-Zour South Power Plant tender' reports Al-Jarida daily.

A total of four bids were submitted, as outlined in the pricing list. The submitted documents have been forwarded to the Ministry of Electricity and Water for evaluation, with recommendations expected within 30 days.

The Al-Khairan Station Project (Phase One) is strategically located in the Al-Khairan area, adjacent to the southern borders of the current Al-Zour South Station site, approximately 100 km south of Kuwait City.

enhance financial oversight, including -- Ali Al-Mutairi as Senior Specialist; Faisal Sabti as Head of the Contractors and Suppliers Accounts Team; Mohammed Tarahib Al-Ajmi as Head of the Employees Accounts Team; Faisal Al-Loughaini as Head of the Financial Payments Team; Hind Al-Hajri as Head of the Budget and Costs Team and Ali Al-Qallaf as Head of the Financial Reports and Policies Team

In the Planning and Innovation Directorate, Abdulrahman Al-

The Public-Private Partnership Projects Authority stated that the project is designed to follow the design, build, finance, operate, and transfer (DBFOT) model for an electric power generation station, which will have a production capacity of 1,800 megawatts utilizing combined cycle technology.

Moreover, it includes a water desalination facility capable of producing 33 million imperial gallons.

The Khairan Station Project aims to address the increasing demand for electrical energy in Kuwait, thereby enhancing the existing network and providing essential infrastructure for other state projects within the national development plan.

The project is structured through a public joint stock company in compliance with Law No. 39 of 2010 and its executive regulations, as well as Law No. 116 of 2014 and its executive regulations.

Turkait has been appointed as the Head of the Capital Budget Monitoring Team, responsible to the Director of the Planning Group.

Lastly, in the Commercial and Shared Services Directorate, Abdullah Al-Mansouri will lead the Community Services Team.

The KOC has also emphasized that its hiring processes are governed by specific and meticulously planned standards and policies, which align with the employment systems of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and its subsidiaries.

## Gold award highlights bank's social learning initiatives

## Burgan Bank wins Brandon Hall Gold Award for learning and development

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: Following last year's commendation, Burgan Bank announced receiving the prestigious Brandon Hall Group Human Capital Management (HCM) Gold Award of Excellence in the "Learning and Development" area under the "Best Use of Social/Collaborative Learning" category. With entrants participating from different countries around the world, Burgan Bank's latest accolade testifies to its world-class human resource (HR) practices and its market-leading human capital development strategy, which centers on innovation and fosters a culture of continuous learning.

"We are honored to be recognized for the second consecutive year by the esteemed Brandon Hall Group for our unwavering efforts to adopt the latest learning and development technologies and engage our employees in a culture of collaborative growth," said Mr. Naqeeb Amin, General Manager - Human Resources and Development for the Group at Burgan Bank. "Building a robust learning and development program is a mandate for success in a market that is advancing at super-sonic speed. At Burgan Bank, we take pride in offering our employees state-of-the-art learning tools that enhance their personal and professional growth experience and enable them to seamlessly weave development into their demanding careers."

Upon the review and evaluation of an impartial panel of veteran, independent senior industry experts, Brandon Hall Group analysts, and executives, Burgan Bank earned the "Learning and Development - Best Use of Social/Collaborative Learning" Gold Award in recognition of its innovative methodology for reinforcing cooperation and the exchange of knowledge across the organization. The judgment criteria included the alignment of the Bank's learning and development program to its overall business needs and environment, in addition to program design that adopts integrated adoption methods. Furthermore, entries were judged for the overall user experience and its effectiveness in achieving the desired outcomes.

The prestigious accolade sheds light on the Bank's adoption of various tools and digital channels including the blog series about Burgan Bank's ethics and codes of conduct, the Burgan podcast, the Bank's LinkedIn-affiliated digital learning platform, knowledge exchange sessions, mentoring and coaching



Mr. Naqeeb Amin, General Manager - Human Resources and Development for the Group at Burgan Bank.



Brandon Hall Gold Award recognizes Burgan Bank's learning initiatives.

programs, and short learning clips. These learning and development initiatives focus on unconventional social learning methods that are tailored to the dynamic and ever-evolving industry, ingraining effective and bite-sized learning into the Burgan professional experience and reinforcing the cross-functional team spirit.

In addition to the diverse learning channels and tools, Burgan Bank also utilizes AI-powered, data-driven insights about employees' growth trajectories, areas of expertise, preferences, and skills to tailor a personalized, self-paced learning and development plan that encourages autonomy and ownership. Besides individual development, the insights, analytics capacity, and adaptive technology enable team leaders to spot skill gaps and new opportunities for collaboration among the Bank's different departments.

As a winner of the 32nd annual HCM Excellence Awards, Burgan Bank is invited to attend the HCM Excellence Conference and Awards Gala on January 28-30, 2025, in Florida, USA where it will be honored on stage among a cohort of leading global businesses at the forefront of innovative, forward-looking human capital management.

On its mission to remain a top employer of choice, Great Place to Work® certified Burgan Bank continues to lead with innovation to attract and retain Kuwait's top talents and future leaders. In line with its committed human capital development strategy, Burgan Bank offers its staff numerous learning and development programs that address their different needs and varying aspirations. These programs include the Bank's flagship develop-

ment plan, Ro'ya, as well as others such as Entelaqah, Retail Banking Academy, Investment and Wealth Management Academy, and Burgan Lab Academy. Moreover, the Bank remains committed to championing women's empowerment and development through various initiatives under the "Empower Her" umbrella, such as the Lean In Circle, the Female Summer Internship Program, and the Empower Her Seminar.

**About Burgan Bank**  
Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is a Kuwait-based conventional bank with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institution sectors. From its earliest days, the Bank has significantly sought to diversify its offering to cater to its growing retail and private banking customer base.

Burgan Bank has majority-owned subsidiaries, collectively known as the "Burgan Bank Group", in the MENA region. This Group is supported by one of the largest branch networks across the region and includes: Gulf Bank Algeria - AGB (Algeria), Tunis International Bank - TIB (Tunisia), and Burgan Bank Turkey. Furthermore, Burgan Bank has a presence in the UAE through its corporate office, Burgan Financial Services Limited.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years, through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Moreover, Burgan Bank's brand has been built on a foundation of real values - trust, commitment, excellence, and progression - which serve as a reminder of the high standards to which the Bank always aspires. In fact, the Bank's core philosophy of 'Driven by You' is the foundation on which its products and services are continuously developed.

## Experts warn of market risks

## Gold hits all-time high amidst global uncertainty

NEW YORK, Sept 26, (AP): The rush for gold just keeps coming.

Gold hit another all time high this week. Recent gains for the precious metal are largely credited to ongoing economic uncertainty, geopolitical tensions and strong demand from central banks around the world.

If trends continue, analysts have bullish outlooks on the price of gold for the months ahead. But the future is never promised. Here's what you need to know.

The New York spot price of gold closed Tuesday at just over \$2,657 per Troy ounce - the standard for measuring precious metals, which is equivalent to 31 grams - the highest recorded to date, per FactSet. That would make a gold bar or brick weighing 400 Troy ounces worth more than \$1.06 million today.

This week's record high means that the price of gold has climbed hundreds of dollars per Troy ounce over the last year. Tuesday's price is up nearly \$145 from a month ago and more than \$740 from this time in 2023.

The price of gold is up nearly 30% year to date, analysts note - outpacing the benchmark S&P 500's roughly 20% gain since the start of 2024.

There are a few factors behind the recent gains.

Interest in buying gold often comes at times of uncertainty - with potential concerns around inflation and the strength of the U.S. dollar, for example, causing some to look for alternative places to park their money. Gold also surged in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among sources of uncertainty today are geopolitical tensions - which escalated over recent days

with Israel's deadly strikes in Lebanon. And the ongoing wars in Gaza and Ukraine have continued to fuel fears about the future worldwide.

In markets like the U.S., there's also particular concern about the health of the job market. Last week's larger-than-usual half-point cut by the Federal Reserve signals a new focus on slowing employment numbers, and more rate cuts are expected before the end of the year. And such action arrives in the midst of a tumultuous election year - which could prove crucial to economic policy in the road ahead, too.

In the near future, people are considering "any case of turbulence in the economy," FxPro senior market analyst Michel Saliby explained. "This is why they're keeping a decent portion of gold in their portfolio as a 'safe haven.'"

Analysts also point to strong demand from central banks around the world. Joe Cavatoni, senior market strategist at the World Gold Council, noted last month that central bank demand was well-above the five year average - reflecting "heightened concern with inflation and economic stability."

Recent stimulus measures in China aimed at boosting consumer spending are also expected to up retail investments, Saliby added, further boosting gold's performance.

Advocates of investing in gold call it a "safe haven," arguing the commodity can serve to diversify and balance your investment portfolio, as well as mitigate possible risks down the road. Some also take comfort in buying something tangible that has the potential to increase in value over time.

Experts caution against putting all your eggs in one basket.

Both retail and institutional investors shouldn't be influenced by the "FOMO effect," or fear of missing out, Saliby notes - explaining that people should not risk all their money just because they are seeing others rake in gains. He advises investors to watch the market and always have a clear risk management strategy for their position.

If geopolitical tensions cool, Saliby expects the price of gold to correct slightly, perhaps falling around \$50 to \$80. But he remains bullish overall for the near future - expecting gold's spot price to soon surpass the \$2,700 mark previously predicted for 2025, and perhaps reach as high as \$2,800 or \$2,900 if trends continue.

Still, future gains are never promised and not everyone agrees gold is a good investment. Critics say gold isn't always the inflation hedge many say it is - and that there are more efficient ways to protect against potential loss of capital, such as through derivative-based investments.

The Commodity Futures Trade Commission has also previously warned people to be wary of investing in gold. Precious metals can be highly volatile, the commission said, and prices rise as demand goes up - meaning "when economic anxiety or instability is high, the people who typically profit from precious metals are the sellers."

If you do choose to invest in gold, the commission adds, it's important to educate yourself on safe trading practices and be cautious of potential scams and counterfeits on the market.

## Banks boost market liquidity with substantial loan

## Financial market sees increased liquidity amidst new trading tools

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: Recent reports indicate a significant surge in liquidity within the financial market, attributed to various factors, most notably the adoption of the 'Netting' service by a segment of professional investors, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This service has provided a level of flexibility that has allowed investors to expand their financial dealings effectively.

Financial sources emphasized that, despite the availability of new trading tools, many have stagnated without clear reasons for their lack of uptake.

The market is currently in need of simple, flexible financial instruments that can cater to a broader base

of investors, as complex options are primarily utilized by a limited group of professionals.

Additionally, some companies are actively promoting "margin" trading options, which serve to attract a more dynamic group of investors and enhance the total amount of capital available for market activities.

This competitive landscape is further bolstered by the banks, which are offering substantial loans and contributing to overall market liquidity.

The current conditions reflect a growing demand for more accessible investment tools, underscoring the financial market's thirst for options that can meet the needs of various investor segments.

## 88 real estate contracts registered in Kuwait

## Kuwait real estate contracts total KD 40.05 million from Sept 16-19

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: Between Sept 16 and 19, 2024, the total value of real estate contracts registered with the Ministry of Justice in Kuwait reached approximately 40.05 million dinars, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to the Real Estate Registration and Documentation Department statistics, a total of 88 contracts were executed during this period, with transactions occurring across all six governorates.

The breakdown of the contracts included 64 private real estate contracts valued at 30.17 million dinars, 22 investment properties worth 6.33 million dinars, a

craft sector property at 1.7 million dinars, and an exhibition sector property valued at 1.85 million dinars.

However, there were no recorded transactions for commercial, industrial, coastal strip, or warehouse real estate during this week. In comparison, the total value of real estate contracts registered from Sept 8 to 12, 2024, was about 86.52 million dinars.

Additionally, the local banks' financing for the real estate sector saw an increase of 125.1 million dinars (or 23.8 percent) in July, bringing the total to 649.6 million dinars.



## BUSINESS

## ASEAN+3 trade reaches over USD 1 trln in '23

Laos' Minister of Industry and Commerce, Malaythong Kommasith revealed Tuesday the trade between ASEAN and its key partners, China, Japan and South Korea, reached more than USD 1 trillion in 2023, representing 32.1 percent of ASEAN's total trade value.

This was revealed in Kommasith's opening remarks during the 27th ASEAN+3 Consultation, held in Vientiane, stressing that the Plus Three countries are not only

ASEAN's top trading partners, but also the second-largest foreign direct investors.

In 2023, foreign direct investment (FDI) from China, Japan and South Korea amounted to USD 42.8 billion, accounting for 18.6 percent of FDI in ASEAN.

"Our trade and investment links with the Plus Three countries are solid, and we hope to further strengthen these ties with the implementation of our new eco-

nomics cooperation plans," added Kommasith.

In the meeting, discussions on deepening economic integration, promoting participatory and sustainable development, and advancing digital technology to enhance regional trade took place.

The meeting also reviewed the progress of the 2023-2024 economic cooperation plan and discussed new initiatives for 2025-2026. (KUNA)

## 3 OpenAI execs are leaving the ChatGPT maker

A high-ranking executive at OpenAI who served a few days as its interim CEO during a period of turmoil last year said she's leaving the artificial intelligence company.

Mira Murati, OpenAI's chief technology officer, said in a written statement Wednesday that, after much reflection, she has "made the difficult decision to leave OpenAI."

"I'm stepping away because I want to create the time and space

to do my own exploration," she said.

Two other top executives are also on their way out, CEO Sam Altman announced later Wednesday. The decisions by Murati, as well as OpenAI's Chief Research Officer Bob McGrew and another research leader, Barret Zoph, were made "independently of each other and amicably," Altman said in a note to employees he shared on social media.

They are the latest high-profile departures from San Francisco-based OpenAI, which started as a nonprofit research laboratory and is best known for making ChatGPT. Its president and co-founder, Greg Brockman, said in August he was "taking a sabbatical" through the end of the year. Another co-founder, John Schulman, left in August for rival Anthropic, founded in 2021 by a group of ex-OpenAI leaders. (AP)

## Warning on risks from trade sanctions

## Asian Development Bank raises growth forecast for region

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 26, (AP): Developing economies in Asia are forecast to grow at a 5.0% annual pace this year, helped by a strong U.S. economy and surging demand for computer chips that power artificial intelligence, the Asian Development Bank said in a report Wednesday.

The forecast was revised upward slightly from the ADB's April estimate of 4.9% growth.

However, the regional lender warned of the potential threat of more protectionist measures, such as higher tariffs on exports from China, depending on the outcome of the U.S. presidential election.

The report highlighted several positive trends, including a rebound in exports from Asia of computer chips and other advanced electronics this year due to rapid adoption of artificial intelligence. It also noted that energy and food prices are moderating, though inflation remains painfully high in countries such as Pakistan, Laos and Myanmar.

The upturn in global demand for semiconductors

and related electronics materials and components has helped drive stronger growth in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea, and to a lesser extent, the Philippines and Thailand, and that trend is expected to continue.

The report cited data from World Semiconductor Trade Statistics projecting that spending on memory chips, vital for AI applications, will expand 77% this year.

Other types of exports, especially autos from China and South Korea, also are growing quickly, it said.

The U.S. presidential election is a major source of uncertainty.

"The election could result in higher blanket tariffs by the U.S. on all global imports, and a broad-based and steep increase in tariffs on all U.S. imports from the PRC (China)," the report said. "This would significantly escalate U.S.-PRC trade tensions, with potential negative spillovers to developing Asia through real and financial channels."

Former President Donald Trump has pledged to stop U.S. businesses from shipping jobs overseas and to take other countries' jobs and factories away by relying heavily on sweeping tariffs. Vice President Kamala Harris has criticized Trump's plan to impose large tariffs on most imported goods, which she says would severely raise the cost of goods.

Asia's developing economies are also vulnerable to other U.S. moves that might affect their currencies or the cost of borrowing on foreign loans, the report said.

China's ailing property market remains a key risk and the report kept its forecasts for growth for the world's second-largest economy at 4.8% in 2024 and 4.5% next year. The ADB's chief economist, Albert Park, welcomed a flurry of fresh measures announced Tuesday by Beijing to cut borrowing costs and encourage more home purchases.

"It's good to see. Certainly there's room for monetary policy expansion," he told reporters in a briefing before

the report's release. "Whether that will work remains to be seen."

Among other positive developments, the report noted that energy inflation has returned to levels seen before the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020. That alleviates pressures on some economies that depend heavily on imports of oil and other fuels, such as Sri Lanka, China and Japan.

Food inflation is still slightly higher, but falling. Rice prices fell by 12% to \$589 per metric ton in late August after hitting a 16-year peak of \$669 per metric ton in late January, the report said.

They are expected to fall further, as rice harvests are projected to hit record levels in the 2024-2025 growing year, and prices for wheat and maize also have declined. Crops are likely to benefit from the La Nina climate phenomenon, which could bring beneficial higher rainfall to some regions though it also could cause destructive flooding in others.

## Case before EU's antitrust watchdog

## Google complains about 'Microsoft' cloud tactics

LONDON, Sept 26, (AP): Google escalated a feud with Microsoft over cloud computing on Wednesday with a European Union antitrust complaint accusing its tech rival of anticompetitive practices.

In a blog post, Google alleged that Microsoft's licensing practices lock business customers into using its Azure cloud computing platform.

It said Microsoft is the only cloud provider that uses such tactics, which stifles competition, costs businesses more and exposes them to bigger security risks.

Google, which competes against Microsoft with its Google Cloud services, said it filed a formal complaint with the European Commission, the 27-nation bloc's executive branch and top antitrust enforcer.

Microsoft said that it already amicably settled similar concerns raised by European cloud providers, "even after Google hoped they would keep litigating."

Those providers, part of the trade group Cloud Infrastructure Services Providers in Europe, said in July that

they withdrew their own complaint after signing a deal with Microsoft.

"Having failed to persuade European companies, we expect Google similarly will fail to persuade the European Commission," Microsoft said in a prepared statement.

A commission spokesperson said it has received the complaint and will assess it "under our standard procedures."

Google said Microsoft changed its licensing terms in 2019 to impose "extreme financial penalties" on businesses that want to use Windows Server software on rival services like Google Cloud and Amazon Web Services. That's despite there being no technical barriers to switch services.

Locking in users to a single technology platform brings heightened security risks, Google said, pointing to a global tech outage in July stemming from a faulty software update by cybersecurity company CrowdStrike that grounded flights and knocked banks and hospital systems offline.

## India and Australia aim to achieve \$100b trade by '30

NEW DELHI, Sept 26, (KUNA): India and Australia decided, during the 19th session of the Joint Ministerial Commission, to achieve USD 100 billion trade by 2030.

Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal led the Indian delegation to meeting held in the Australian city of Adelaide, the Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a statement on Wednesday.

He met with Minister of Trade and Tourism of Australia Senator Don Farrell to discuss ways of boosting bilateral trade and investment.

Noting that there are the tremendous trade and investment opportunities yet to be explored jointly by both countries, the Indian minister announced the opening of an investment, trade, technology and tourism office in Sydney.

The primary mandate of this office with representation from both private and public sectors would be facilitating trade issues between investors and businesses on both sides, accord-

ing to the statement.

He also stated that 'Make in India' initiative launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi helped achieve groundbreaking advancement in key sectors like manufacturing, technology, and infrastructure and proposed possible collaboration with Future Made in Australia initiative.

He stressed India's strengths in decisive leadership, demand of 1.4 billion aspirational Indians, demographic dividend with average age of Indian being 28.4 years, and democracy.

Goyal emphasised India's advantage in being able to offer an array of aspirational and highly skilled workforce with cutting edge knowledge that could meet Australia's demand in professional service.

Both the sides aimed for expediting the conclusion of Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement with a greater flow of goods and services along with increased investment for people and businesses on both sides.

## China's firms sustain momentum

BEIJING, Sept 26, (Xinhua): China's listed companies have seen improvement in performance quarter by quarter since the beginning of this year, with service consumption, export growth and new economic drivers contributing to the recovery trend.

A total of 5,104 companies listed on the Shanghai and Shenzhen bourses saw their combined profits decrease by only 0.4 percent from a year earlier in the second quarter, significantly improving from a drop of 4.5 percent in the first quarter, according to their latest half-year financial reports.

Listed firms have seen narrowing declines in profits and a drop in the proportion of loss-making companies, their reports showed. Nearly 80 percent of the listed firms reported profits while around 50 percent of the companies experienced profit growth in the first half.

Experts held that Chinese listed firms, whose revenue accounted for 56.5 percent of the country's GDP in the first six months, serve as a window to observe new trends in the country's economic development.

Recovery in consumption and exports

Despite rising challenges from home and abroad, China's economy expanded 5 percent year on year in the first half, putting the country on track to hit its full-year economic growth target of around 5 percent.

During this period, service consumption has continued to recover, supported by robust travel and tourism growth. Airport companies reported a year-on-year rise of 20.7 percent in revenue.

Commodity consumption has also seen positive signs, with net profits of listed companies in sectors such as food and beverage, consumer electronics and automobile rising by 14.1 percent, 24.4 percent and 22.7 percent, respectively.

Moreover, listed companies have increasingly tapped into international markets, with improving competitiveness in overseas markets. In the first six months, China's exports in goods rose 6.9 percent year on year, while the overseas revenue of listed companies surged by 13.4 percent.

## Global economy growth stabilizes at 3.2 percent in 2024, 2025: OECD

GDP rise in US is projected to slow down to 2.6% this year

PARIS, Sept 26, (Xinhua): Global gross domestic product (GDP) growth is projected to stabilize at 3.2 percent in both 2024 and 2025, while inflation should continue to ease, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said on Wednesday in its latest economic outlook.

According to the OECD economic outlook, annual GDP growth in the United States is projected to slow down to 2.6 percent in 2024 and further down to 1.6 percent in 2025, but be cushioned by monetary policy easing.

For Euro area, the OECD said that GDP growth is projected to be 0.7 percent in 2024 and speed up to 1.3 percent in 2025, with activity supported by a recovery in real incomes and an improvement in credit availability.

Headline inflation has continued to fall this year in most countries, partly due to further declines in food price inflation and low or negative energy and goods price inflation, the organisation noted, adding that the recent steep fall in oil prices, and the ongoing easing of global food prices could place further downward pressure on headline inflation in the short-term.

"Oil prices have declined by over 10 percent since July, amid expectations for excess supply next year and market concerns about weakening oil demand growth ... If oil prices remain at their current level, global headline inflation could be reduced by around 0.5 percentage points over the coming year," the OECD explained.

According to the OECD, declining consumer price inflation has supported household spending, providing a counterbalance to the negative impact from restrictive financial conditions and the uncertainty about the ongoing Ukraine conflict and the evolving crisis in the Middle East.

Along with stable GDP growth and further disinflation, the OECD also said that real incomes would improve and less restrictive monetary policy in many economies would help underpin demand.

The recovery in real incomes could provide a stronger boost to consumer confidence and spending, and further oil price declines would hasten disinflation.

Headline inflation is projected to ease from 5.4 percent in 2024 to 3.3 percent in 2025 in the G20 economies.



An aerial drone photo taken on Feb. 2, 2024 shows the smart zero-carbon terminal of Tianjin Port in north China's Tianjin. (Xinhua)

## Deal goes ahead

## Steelworkers lose bid to block US Steel sale

PITTSBURGH, Sept 26, (AP): An arbitration board has ruled that U.S. Steel may proceed with its proposed acquisition by Nippon Steel, a deal that faces strong opposition from its workforce.

The board, which was jointly chosen by U.S. Steel and the United Steelworkers to decide disputes between them, said Wednesday that U. S. Steel has satisfied each of the conditions of the successorship clause of its basic labor agreement with the union. It determined that no further action under the agreement was necessary in order to proceed with the closing of the proposed transaction with Nippon Steel.

USW had filed a series of grievances in January alleging that the successorship clause had not been satisfied. The union has previously stated that it doesn't believe Nippon fully understands its commitment to steelworkers, retirees and its communities. USW has expressed concern about the enforcement of its labor agreements, having transparency into Nippon's finances, as well as national defense, infrastructure and supply-chain issues.

The arbitration board heard evi-

encing and arguments from U.S. Steel and USW last month. The board said Wednesday that it recognized the repeated written commitments Nippon made to fulfill the requirements of the successorship clause and that no further actions were required by the company. The written commitments include Nippon's pledge to invest at least \$1.4 billion in USW-represented facilities, not to conduct layoffs or plant closings during the term of the basic labor agreement, and to protect the best interests of U.S. Steel in trade matters.

"With the arbitration process now behind us, we look forward to moving ahead with our pending transaction with Nippon Steel," U.S. Steel President and CEO David Burritt said in a statement.

USW said in a statement on Wednesday that it disagreed with the arbitration board's result.

"Nippon's commitment to our facilities and jobs remains as uncertain as ever, and executives in Tokyo can still change U.S. Steel's business plans and wipe them away at any moment," the union said. "We're clearly disappointed

with the decision, but it does nothing to change our opposition to the deal or our resolve to fight for our jobs and communities that hang in the balance in this transaction."

President Joe Biden has previously voiced his opposition to Nippon Steel buying U.S. Steel, but the federal government appears to be in no hurry to block the deal.

Earlier this month White House officials did not deny that the president would formally block the acquisition. But the necessary report from the government's Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States has yet to be submitted to the White House.

The proposed takeover carries some heavy political weight in Pennsylvania, a state that both Vice President Kamala Harris and Donald Trump view as a must-win in November's presidential election. U.S. Steel is headquartered in Pittsburgh.

Biden, Harris and Trump have all come out against the deal. Harris spoke at the Economic Club of Pittsburgh on Wednesday where she pledged to build an economy that is both pro-business and helps the middle class.

## IMF approves a \$7 billion loan for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Sept 26, (AP): The executive board of the International Monetary Fund has approved a new \$7 billion loan for cash-strapped Pakistan, authorities said Wednesday, more than two months after the two sides said they had reached an agreement.

The loan - which Islamabad will receive in installments over 37 months - is aimed at boosting Pakistan's ailing economy, officials added.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a statement hailed the deal that his team had been negotiating with the IMF since June. He thanked Kristalina Georgieva, the head of the IMF and her team, for the approval.

The global lender said its immediate disburse-

ment will be about \$1 billion.

In a statement issued Thursday, it praised Pakistan for taking key steps to restore economic stability. Growth has rebounded, inflation has fallen to single digits, and a calm foreign exchange market have allowed the rebuilding of reserve buffers.

But it also criticized authorities. The IMF warned that, despite the progress, Pakistan's vulnerabilities and structural challenges remained formidable.

It said a difficult business environment, weak governance, and an outsized role of the state hindered investment, while the tax base remained too narrow.

"Spending on health and education has been

insufficient to tackle persistent poverty, and inadequate infrastructure investment has limited economic potential and left Pakistan vulnerable to the impact of climate change," it warned.

The development comes more than two months after the IMF reached a staff-level agreement with Pakistan for the new loan. It also came a day after officials said the global lender's executive board would approve the loan on Wednesday, adding that Pakistan had met all the conditions set by the lender.

Pakistan for decades has been relying on IMF loans to meet its economic needs.

Sharif thanked China and other friendly countries for facilitating Pakistan's deal with the IMF.



Photos during the event.

## 'LuLu World Food' a celebration of global foods and cuisines

LuLu Hypermarket, Kuwait's leading retailer, announced the launch of its highly anticipated 'LuLu World Food' promotion at all its outlets in the country. From 25 September to 8 October shoppers can embark on a culinary journey around the globe, exploring a diverse range of international flavors, as well as shop for global food products at unbelievable competitive prices.

The grand opening ceremony at the LuLu Hypermarket Al Rai outlet on 25 September kicked off the festivities with a star-studded event. Renowned South Indian actress Anarkali Marikar and Kuwaiti Arabic Chef Lina Jbeili graced the occasion and added a touch of celebrity excitement to the opening ceremony, which was attended by LuLu Kuwait's top management and representatives of event sponsors.

During the promotion period, shoppers can indulge in a world of culinary delights as the hypermarket offers incredible deals and discounts on an extensive array of food categories, including a wide variety of fresh meat cuts and fresh seafood with 'Meet A Meat' and 'Go Fish' sections. From fresh produce and groceries to even home appliances and kitchen essentials, there is something to satisfy every taste bud and cooking need.

The promotion is also packed with exciting contests and competitions for all ages and tastes. Aspiring chefs can showcase their skills in the 'Wow the Master Chef' competition, while young culinary enthusiasts can participate in the 'Cake Decoration Contests for Kids' and 'Junior Chef' contests. All participants will receive consolation prizes, and winners will be rewarded with exciting rewards.

The two-week long 'LuLu World Food' is transforming LuLu Hypermarket outlets into a showcase for food products and cuisines from around the world. Visitors have the opportunity to explore dedicated sections featuring culinary delights from various countries, including Indian, Mexican, Korean, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, and Continental cuisines. The specially curated 'Global Foodie' section offers an even more diverse international culinary experience.

Customers can indulge in a delectable selection of freshly baked goods at the 'Best Bake' section, and a variety of savory and sweet snacks served at the 'Snack Time' section. Additionally, 'Desi Dhaba' and 'Naadan Thattukada' let the customers discover North and South Indian flavors.

Also during the promotion period, shoppers will have the chance to witness a host of record-breaking 'longest' and 'biggest' food items, including 'Longest Shawarma', 'Biggest Burger', 'Biggest Pizza', 'Biryani Dhamaka', 'Longest Sandwich', 'Longest Cakes', and setting several other new culinary records.

The 'LuLu World Food' promotion is made possible by the support of esteemed sponsors like Alwazan, Bayara, Afia, Betty Crocker, Kitco, IFFCO, Noor, London Dairy, Tiffany Biscuits, Americana, Seara, Lurpak, Puck, Kraft, ETI, Maggi, Nestle, Sadia, Lamb Weston, McCain, President, Altayeb, Panasonic, Kenwood, and Philip.

With a wide range of delicious foods, exciting contests, and incredible offers, there is something for everyone to enjoy at the LuLu World Food festival.

## Central Bank of Kuwait partners with NBK for financial awareness initiative

# NBK warns against bank impersonation scams

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues promoting the "Let's Be Aware" campaign introduced by the Central Bank of Kuwait, in cooperation with local banks and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), which aims to enhance financial literacy and awareness among customers from all sectors.

NBK intensifies awareness by sharing educational material including video clips, text messages, and tips across its social media platforms and other digital channels, as well as reposting CBK's communications. This aims to raise awareness among all people and familiarize them with different fraud schemes and the required precautions to steer clear of banking scams.

NBK calls to verify individual and corporate identities before sharing sensitive information or making transactions involving personal or banking information. This is particularly crucial in view of the rapidly evolving fraud schemes using AI and advanced technology.

One of the most common schemes used by scammers is to impersonate bank employees by calling from apparently local numbers to trick victims into thinking the call is from the bank to obtain bank-



Diraya logo

ing information.

In this context, the bank affirms that it will never ask customers for personal information through phone calls, warning them of responding to these calls which are scams to obtain their banking information to steal their money or information.

The bank also advises customers to follow the tips shared on all its digital channels, including being careful when dealing with links, and saving any sensitive information like debit/credit card number on the phone, writing down the PIN on the card or sharing it with any other person, which also applies to OTP. It also advises customers to log

out of online or mobile banking once transactions are completed.

NBK employs its strong customer communication capabilities as well as all its digital channels, which are the most popular among all Kuwaiti banks, to support the Central Bank's endeavors to protect customers and the national economy.

It is worth mentioning that NBK is a key supporter and partner in all CBK's campaigns and initiatives aiming to increase financial and banking awareness among different segments of society. As a leading financial institution in Kuwait, NBK frequently organizes various activities to raise awareness on all topics related to the banking sector, as well as various training courses for its employees to enhance their experience in the areas of combating fraud and financial crime.

The "Let's Be Aware" campaign is the largest across the GCC region focusing on raising banking and financial awareness among banks' customers. The campaign covers a variety of crucial topics including: anti-fraud tips, raising awareness on high-risk investments, maximizing benefit from banking services, promoting savings and investment culture, as well as other related topics.

## Six chefs compete for culinary glory

# US Embassy hosts 'The Ultimate Burger Challenge'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: The US Embassy in Kuwait organized 'The Ultimate Burger Challenge' at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Al-Bustan Terrace.

Six renowned chefs based in Kuwait showcased their culinary talents in a highly anticipated cooking competition, where the media and invited guests gathered to witness the exciting event. Before the competition began, the rules were announced, and the contestants were introduced to the judges and audience.

Competing for two prestigious prizes were chefs Dexter Quibin, Paul Mark Tambangan, Davis Antony Fernandez, Lulwa Al-Tanak, Atef Habchy, and Hessa Al-Hunaiyyan.

First Prize Winner: Chef Hessa Al-Hunaiyyan captivated the judges with her creation, The All American burger, featuring a beef patty topped with cheese, raspberry bacon jam, fried onions in a peanut butter pickle dressing, all nestled between brioche buns. Hessa, a full-time chef at Grand Hyatt,

is known for her passion for global cuisines and bold flavors.

Second Prize Winner: Chef Lulwa Al-Tanak impressed with her K-Town Burger, which combined Kuwaiti truffles with classic burger elements like cheddar cheese and Worcestershire sauce. The burger was served with a side of mixed potato chips and truffle-infused sauces. Lulwa, a Kuwaiti chef, is also a social media influencer and cooking show presenter.

**Other participants included:**

Chef Davis Antony Fernandez, who presented his Slice of Life burger, a flavor-packed creation featuring caramelized onions, smoked cheddar, and pickled jalapeños. While his dish wowed the audience, it didn't take home a prize. Davis is a talented chef from India specializing in Continental cuisine.

Chef Dexter Quibin created the Minute Burger, a simple yet flavorful dish focusing on the pure taste of beef. Dexter is a sous chef at Texas Roadhouse Kuwait, continuing his family's legacy of great cooking.

Chef Paul Mark Tambangan offered Kyleigh's Burger, a classic patty with American cheese, pickles, and a tangy sauce. Paul, a chef at Texas Roadhouse Kuwait, views cooking as an expressive art form.

Chef Atef Habchy crafted the Truffle Mushroom Burger, a luxurious combination of grilled beef patty and truffles. Atef, head chef at BBQ Bros Hotel Argan Al-Bidaa, is known for his expertise in grilling and smoky flavors.

The competition was judged by a distinguished panel including Chef Adrian Lipscombe, Valerie Brown (USDA), Steven R. Butler (Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait), Chef Mubarak Mahmoud Razouki, and Chef David Harnois.



Photo during the inauguration.

## IAK hosts vibrant Onam celebration 'Onavesham-2024'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: The Idukki Association Kuwait (IAK) hosted its annual Onam celebration, "Onavesham-2024," at ICSK School in Salmiya, Kuwait, on September 20. The event was a vibrant showcase of Kerala's rich cultural heritage, featuring a variety of traditional performances, activities, and a grand feast.

The program commenced with melodious songs by Aneesh Ragasudha and Anoop Johny, setting a festive tone for the day. This was followed by heartfelt thanks to the event sponsors, acknowledging their generous support.

One of the highlights of the event was the Thalappoli Ghoshayatra, coordinated by Biju Jose and team, which brought the essence of Kerala's traditional festivities to life. The audience was also treated to a captivating Chen-

damelam and Pulikali performance, with Ouseppachan as Maveli making a grand appearance on stage.

The cultural programs included a beautiful Thiruvathira dance, a family skit, a couple dance, a series of dance performances, and a couple fashion show performed by members of IAK led by Vinitha Ouseppachan. The public meeting was inaugurated by James Jacob, Second Secretary and Head of Chancery at the Embassy of India. Notable speeches were delivered by IAK President Abin Thomas, Joy Alukkas Group Country Head Vinod Kumar, Chairman of Royal Seagull Nil Parakkapadath, Program General Convener Anish Prabhakaran, Women's Forum Chairperson Raji Shaji Mathew, and Advisory Board Chairman Jiji Mathew. General Secretary Jobins Jo-

seph offered the welcome speech, and Treasurer Bijo Joseph offered the vote of thanks.

Arun Guinness, the versatile singer, enthralled the audience with various types of songs, from melodic femininity to dynamic medleys and powerful vocals. The celebration continued with a series of vibrant dances performed by Swastika Bharatanatyam Dance Academy, Nrithyadhee School of Dance and Music, and Jas Dancing School, Mangaf, as well as community members.

The Sadya, a traditional feast, was a highlight of the Onavesham-2024 celebration. Served on banana leaves, it featured an array of delicious vegetarian dishes, showcasing the rich culinary heritage of Kerala. A team led by Lalgi George and Babu Sebastian arranged the feast.



Photos during the event.

## People &amp; Places

## Fashion

## Contrasting styles

## Balmain's whimsy meets minimalism of Courrèges

PARIS, Sept 26, (AP): **Olivier Rousteing** opened Balmain's Wednesday show at Paris Fashion Week with an audacious angular micro-gown - a glittering number featuring peaked shoulders, humped hips and a massive clasping hand motif. It was clear from the start: this season's Balmain was not going to be a study in subtlety.



Rousteing

Meanwhile, **Nicolas Di Felice's** latest offering for Courrèges took the audience into a futuristic world. Here are some highlights of Wednesday's shows:

Rousteing, ever the showman, leaned into extremes, delivering a collection that unapologetically fused boldness with a dose of camp.

Prints of half-painted women's faces guided the eye down floor-length gowns, while disembodied eyes, lips, noses and nails formed the visual leitmotifs of the evening. At its core, this collection's identity hinged on the sculptural, almost scaffolded, shoulders - a signature of Balmain's power dressing reimagined yet again. The peaking effect extended to the hips in gold-striped chain mini-dresses, evoking an exaggerated 1980s glamour.

Not every look hit the mark, however. A pink-beige conical suit suffered from wonky asymmetry, with a bustline that seemed comically repelled by the garment itself, a reminder of Rousteing's tendency to overindulge in his maximalist ambitions. As with past collections, the lack of restraint occasionally detracted from the overall coherence, a critique that has followed him across seasons.

That said, there were moments of pure fun and theatricality, such as a cream skirt with a 3D face peering out, a delightful nod to Rousteing's penchant for surrealism. This playful audacity keeps the Balmain faithful coming back, even when some pieces falter under the weight of their own excess. Rousteing's balancing act between bold experimentation and structural precision remains his triumph and Achilles' heel.

## Silhouettes

In many ways, this collection echoed themes in his archive: an obsession with exaggerated silhouettes, a love for sculptural shoulders, and a desire to embed his personal narrative into the fabric of his designs. But as always with Balmain, the risk and

spectacle are as much a part of the show as the clothes themselves. This time, Rousteing leaned heavily into both. Whether all his risks paid off is up for debate, but one thing is certain: subtlety was never on the agenda.

Di Felice took the audience into a space-age world, with models circling a black abyss inside the Carreau du Temple in Paris' Marais. The minimalism that has become his signature was on full display, but the subtle and unexpected touches provided a signature off-kilter, fashion-forward kick. In a collection starting with black and charcoal hues, trapeze silhouette dresses featured slits instead of sleeves, allowing models to reveal their arms in a cool, confident gesture. The looks exuded a slick, rebellious sensuality, paired with black turtlenecks and knee-high, skintight boots. Ubiquitous wrap-around shades made the models seem un-touchable, too cool for school.

## XXXXX

Yet, this wasn't just a simplistic exercise in minimalism. Di Felice's knack for combining sensuality with technical prowess elevated the collection. The geometric halter necks and precise cuts in the dresses - often with lopped-off shoulders - gave the silhouettes a surgical quality, while unexpected lengths in the backs of skirts and thick, loosely flapping hems kept the collection fresh.

The spirit of André Courrèges, the '60s visionary who defined the Space Age, was alive. Di Felice's nod to that era came in nipped, slim-shouldered gowns in white and slightly flared pants - echoes of Courrèges' legacy reimagined. Exposed midriffs, another '60s reference, were revisited with a modern, daring twist: a simple strap across the bust like a fashion hyphen, elegant in its minimalism.

Di Felice's style lies in his ability to evoke a sense of intimacy without jumping on the "naked dressing" trend, which has been the talk of the fashion world. Instead, he stays true to his slyly-coded version of Parisian chic, subtly provocative without being over the top.

Dries Van Noten's first collection since the eponymous designer stepped down in June dared to walk the tightrope between innovation and heritage. The runway was a testament to Van Noten's influence, weaving together historical references with futuristic silhouettes in a display that felt both familiar and fresh.

The show opened with a loose silhouetted snake-print coat, its deconstructed 1920s vibe setting the tone for the collection. This was no mere nostalgia trip, though. A trench coat, accentuated by bold black hems, recalled the graphic sensibilities of a video game or an animated classic like "Tintin."



Todd Phillips, (from left), Lady Gaga, and Joaquin Phoenix pose for photographers upon arrival at the premiere for the film 'Joker: Folie à Deux' on Wednesday, Sept. 25, in London. (AP)

## Film

## This time there's singing, dancing and mayhem

## 'Joker' is back with Lady Gaga

VENICE, Italy, Sept 26, (AP): "Joker" is a hard act to follow. Todd Phillips' dark, Scorsese-inspired character study about the Batman villain made over a billion dollars at the box office, won Joaquin Phoenix his first Oscar, dominated the cultural discourse for months and created a new movie landmark.

It wasn't for everyone, but it got under people's skin.

Knowing that it was a fool's errand to try to do it again, Phillips and Phoenix pivoted, or rather, piroquetted into what would become "Joker: Folie à Deux." The dark and fantastical musical journey goes deeper into the mind of Arthur Fleck as he awaits trial for murder and falls in love with a fellow Arkham inmate, Lee, played by Lady Gaga. There is singing, dancing and mayhem.

If Phillips and Phoenix have learned anything over the years, it's that the scarier something is, the better. So once again they rebelled against expectations and went for broke with something that's already sharply divided critics.

As with the first, audiences will get to decide for themselves when it opens in theaters on Oct. 4.

Any comic book movie that makes a billion dollars is going to have the sequel talk. But with "Joker" it was never a given that it would go anywhere: Joaquin Phoenix doesn't do sequels. Yet it turned out, Phoenix wasn't quite done with Arthur Fleck yet either.

During the first, the actor wondered what this character would look like in different situations. He and the on-set photographer mocked up classic movie posters, like "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" and "Yentl" with the Joker in them and showed them to Phillips.

## Explore

"Sometimes you're just done with something and other times you have an ongoing interest," Phoenix said. "There was just more to explore. ... I just felt like we weren't done."

So Phillips and his co-writer Scott Silver got to work on a new script, one that leaned into the music in Arthur Fleck's head. Then his dreary Arkham life turns to Technicolor when he meets and falls for Lee, a Joker superfan.

"Joaquin Phoenix is not going to do a line drive. He's not going to do something that's fan service," Phillips said. "He wanted to be as scared as he was with the first movie. So, we tried to make something that is as audacious and out there and hopefully people get

it." One decision that's already sparking debate is casting someone with a voice like Lady Gaga's and not using that instrument to its full power. Phillips, who was a producer on "A Star is Born," wanted someone who "brought music with them." But Lee isn't a singer.

"Singing is so second nature to me, and making music and performing on stage is so inside of me. Especially this music," Gaga said. "I worked extensively on untraining myself for this movie and throwing away as much as I could all the time to make sure I was never locking into what I do. I had to really kind of erase it all."

Phoenix, who wasn't quite sure what it would be like working with someone who has such a larger-than-life superstar persona, found Gaga to be refreshingly unpretentious and available. And as an actor, he admired her commitment to the character.

"Her power is in singing and singing a particular way," he said. "For her to sacrifice that through character, to do something that people would call a musical, but to not be performing it in the way that would sound best as a singer but to approach it from the character was a very difficult process. I was really impressed with her willingness to do that."

In addition to writing a "waltz that falls apart" for the film, Gaga is releasing a companion album, "Harlequin" on Friday with song titles including "Oh, When the Saints," "World on a String," "If My Friends Could See Me Now" and "That's Life."

Much like Phoenix's Joker isn't Heath Ledger's or Jack Nicholson's, Gaga's Lee is not the Harley Quinn of "Birds of Prey."

"We're never going to outdo what Margot Robbie did," Phillips said. "You have to do something 180 degrees in the other direction."

Sure, Lee will still casually light something on fire to get some time alone with Joker, but the tumult is more internal. And Gaga threw herself into making Lee something new: A real person, grounded in a reality that came before her.

## Ensemble

"I spent a lot of my time on developing her inner life (which) for me had a lot to do with her storm and what thing was always making her about to explode," Gaga said. "There's a particular kind of danger that she carries with her, but it's inside and it's kind of explosive."

Brendan Gleeson didn't have much hesitation about joining the ensemble. He'd worked with Phoenix before on "The Village" and

was in awe of what he'd done on the first movie.

"He has an absolute relentless integrity and curiosity and drive," Gleeson said. "He won't just plough the same furrow for its own sake."

But he also didn't want to play the simple version of an Arkham prison guard. "I said, look, do you just want a brute? Because I'm not sure I just want to do a brute," Gleeson said. "He wanted something more. We tried to find layers in this guy."

Anyone who has worked with Phoenix knows that he likes to keep things fresh. That may mean something as small as changing the location of a prop or as big as throwing out choreography that you've been rehearsing for months at the last minute.

"I think we both love mayhem and not just in movies but on the set," Phillips said. "It had to feel like anything can happen."

With the crew 95% the same as the first, everyone was ready to be flexible. Gaga, too, dove right in, suggesting that they sing live on camera.

"It changed the whole making of the film," Phillips said. "We were not only singing live, we were singing live differently every take."

## Curiosity

Since Arthur killed Robert De Niro's talk show host Murray Franklin on live television in the first film, he's become a kind of icon and curiosity thanks in no small part to an oft-referenced, but never seen, television movie that was made about him. Now, the trial is going to be televised as well.

"Underneath it all, there's this idea of corruption and how everything is corrupt in the system, from the prison system to the judicial system to the idea of entertainment, quite frankly," Phillips said. "This idea that in the States at least, everything is entertainment. A court trial could be entertainment, and a presidential election can be entertainment. So, if that's true, what is entertainment?"

It's easier to be the insurgent, not the incumbent, Phillips said. Although a Joker film is never going to fly completely under the radar, the spotlight is undoubtedly more intense this time around.

"You do feel like you have a larger target on your back," Phillips said.

While much of the film was made on Warner Bros. soundstages in Los Angeles, the production did go back to New York to film again on the Bronx staircase (which now come up on Google Maps as the Joker Stairs) and outside a Manhattan courthouse.

over a week prior to Combs' arrest in New York and the unsealing of an indictment against him. It's alleged to be based on Porter's diary and notes.

Porter's children, Quincy, Christian, Jessie and D'Lila, denounced the book as a complete fabrication in a collective statement on Instagram late Tuesday. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Anna Sorokin, the convicted con artist who swindled banks, hotels and friends under the guise of being a "heiress" named Anna Delvey, has reached the end of her run on "Dancing With the Stars."

As a controversial casting choice on the competition reality series, Sorokin had to don an ankle monitor on stage. Described as the "notorious ankle bracelet fashionista" in the announcement of her casting, Sorokin is under house arrest for an impending deportation case. (AP)

## Variety

SANTA FE, N.M.: A judge is planning to hear arguments in court Thursday over whether to dismiss a criminal conviction against a movie armorer in the shooting death of a cinematographer by actor Alec Baldwin.

Hannah Gutierrez-Reed has requested a retrial or dismissal of her March conviction for involuntary manslaughter in response to allegations that prosecutors failed to share evidence including ammunition that might have been exculpatory in the shooting death that occurred on the set of the Western movie "Rust" in 2021.

Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer is reconsidering the armorer's conviction after throwing out an involuntary manslaughter case against Baldwin midtrial on similar grounds. (AP)

NEW YORK: Although it's a bestseller on Amazon, the late Kim Porter did not write a tell-all memoir detailing an abusive relationship with her longtime partner Sean "Diddy" Combs, her children said in a statement Tuesday.



Baldwin



Combs

## MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY



## RECALL VEHICLES



YARIS (MY-2023)

VIN:MR2BF8C3XP0016141 to MR2BF8C38P0039109

## RECALL REASON

The side airbag is designed to deploy during certain crashes by supplying an electric current to the side airbag through a wire harness connector. If force is applied to the connector portion of the side airbag as the occupant sits in the front seat, the wire harness connector may dislodge. If this occurs, the SRS airbag warning light will illuminate, and the side airbag will not deploy in the event of certain crashes.

## REMEDY

Owners of mentioned vehicles above will be contacted by Al Sayer and are asked to make an appointment to replace the connector, free of charge.

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## SPECIAL REPORT

## HBOT: A game-changer for chronic health conditions

## OXYBARICA looking to foray into Mideast

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

OXYBARICA a forward-thinking leader poised to revolutionize the healthcare landscape in the Middle East with the advanced field of Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) and committed to enhancing patient care and promoting wellness dedicated to bringing cutting-edge HBOT solutions is looking to make a foray into the Middle East region to address a growing demand for innovative and effective treatments.

By leveraging state-of-the-art equipment and adhering to the highest standards of safety and efficacy, Oxybarica aims to provide transformative therapeutic options for a range of conditions, from chronic wounds and infections to sports injuries and beyond.

At Oxybarica, the company representative, Ricardo Algaba says, "Our mission is to elevate the standard of care in the Middle East through the integration of Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy into mainstream medical practice. We are excited to collaborate with healthcare providers and stakeholders to foster a healthier future, driven by innovation and excellence in therapy."

In an exclusive interview with the Arab Times newspaper he says, "We are thrilled to introduce Oxybarica to the region, particularly to Kuwait, since our team combines deep expertise in medical technology with a profound understanding of regional healthcare needs to deliver HBOT solutions that not only meet but exceed expectations."

**Arab Times:** Can you provide an overview of the benefits of hyperbaric oxygen therapy?

**Ricardo Algaba:** Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) is a medical treatment in which patients breathe pure oxygen in a pressurized chamber at levels higher than normal atmospheric pressure. This increases the amount of oxygen in the blood and tissues, promoting a range of health benefits such as acceleration of wound healing, reduction of inflammation and edema, improvement in sports injury recovery, treatment of severe infections, improvement in brain function and neuroprotection, detoxification from carbon monoxide and poisoning, support in radiotherapy, improvement in overall health and well-being, treatment of decompression sickness and promotion of tissue and blood vessel regeneration.

HBOT enhances the body's ability to heal wounds, particularly those that are difficult to treat, such as diabetic ulcers, radiation injuries, complex surgical wounds or severe infections, the increase in oxygen promotes tissue regeneration and the formation of new blood vessels (angiogenesis), which accelerates the healing process.

High-pressure oxygen helps reduce swelling and inflammation in various conditions, such as sports injuries or trauma. The additional oxygen supply promotes a controlled inflammatory response, which can help relieve pain and stiffness.

Athletes use HBOT to speed up the recovery from muscle injuries, sprains, and fractures. The increase in oxygen in damaged tissues enhances the ability of muscles and bones to repair themselves and reduces recovery time.

HBOT can help combat resistant bacterial infections by improving immune function and enhancing the effectiveness of certain antibiotics. It is particularly useful in cases of — Anaerobic bacterial infections (such as tetanus or gas gangrene) and Chronic infections like osteomyelitis (bone infection).

Hyperbaric therapy can benefit patients who have suffered from Head trauma, Stroke (CVA), Hypoxic brain injuries (lack of oxygen). By increasing brain oxygenation, it promotes neuronal recovery, improves cognitive function, and reduces cellular damage.

HBOT is a standard treatment for carbon monoxide poisoning as it helps to quickly eliminate the gas from the body and restore normal function to the affected tissues.

For patients who have received radiotherapy, HBOT can be beneficial in treating complications such as Radiation necrosis (tissue damage caused by radiotherapy) and Damage to soft tissues and bones due to prolonged radiation exposure.

Although not clinically proven for all applications, many people have experienced improvements in — physical capacity and endurance, immune system function and energy and mental clarity, making some consider it useful for enhancing overall well-being.

Divers who experience decompression sickness after a rapid ascent can benefit from HBOT. The therapy helps reduce gas bubbles in the bloodstream and tissues, mitigating the dangerous symptoms of this condition.

HBOT promotes angiogenesis (formation of new blood vessels) and the regeneration of damaged tissues, which is crucial for the healing of chronic wounds and vascular diseases.

Common Conditions Treated with HBOT include sports injuries, diabetic ulcers and diabetic foot, chronic infections (such as osteomyelitis), gangrene, radiation injuries, carbon monoxide poisoning and decompression sickness

**AT:** What inspired your interest in expanding your business into the Middle East?

**RA:** Expanding my hyperbaric chamber business into the Middle East holds great potential due to the growing demand for advanced medical treatments, developing healthcare infrastructure, increasing chronic diseases, and the high purchasing power of the population. With the rising importance of medical tourism and government support for health innovation, the region provides a fertile ground for growth and success for your business.

**AT:** Which countries in the Middle East do you consider key markets for your services and why?

**RA:** United Arab Emirates — Dubai and Abu Dhabi are leaders in medical tourism and wellness; both local and expatriate populations can afford advanced treatments; they offer tax incentives for international businesses.

**Saudi Arabia:** massive investments in healthcare, focusing on advanced medical technologies; growing demand for treatments like hyperbaric therapy for chronic complications; wealthy population seeking premium medical care.



OXYBARICA aims to transform healthcare in the Middle East with innovative Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) solutions, enhancing patient care and wellness.



OXYBARICA's Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) chamber for two.



The interior of OXYBARICA's HBOT chamber



OXYBARICA's Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy chamber

**Qatar:** Qatar invests in advanced healthcare infrastructure, such as Sidra Medicine; the population can access cutting-edge treatments.

**Kuwait:** Kuwait offers free healthcare to its citizens and is modernizing its healthcare infrastructure; similar to other Gulf countries, there is a demand for treatments for chronic wounds and diabetes complications; Kuwait also has a strong economy and a population seeking advanced medical services.

**Bahrain:** Bahrain is positioning itself as a medical tourism center in the Gulf; the government is expanding medical infrastructure and promoting investment in advanced technology; although smaller than other Gulf countries, Bahrain has a population with access to high-quality healthcare services.

These five countries offer an ideal combination of economic growth, favorable policies, and increasing demand for advanced medical technology, making them key markets for expanding a hyperbaric chamber business.

**AT:** What challenges do you anticipate when entering the Middle Eastern market and how do you plan to overcome them?

**RA:** In terms of regulatory and bureaucratic barriers we sense complex licensing and permit processes. However, the solution lies in collaboration with local consultants and partners familiar with

regulations. However, some of the challenges may rest in cultural differences — language and business practices. However, this may be overcome by training our team on local culture and hiring local staff to facilitate relationships.

In terms of competition, I can say we have to compete with established local and foreign companies which can be overcome by differentiating our product with advanced technology and strong after-sales service; establishing partnerships with hospitals, distributors, or governments, and participate in industry events.

**AT:** How do you plan to adapt your marketing and operational strategies to fit the culture and dynamics of the Middle Eastern market?

**RA:** Cultural Customization — Adapt messages to respect and reflect local values and sensitivities. Use Arabic in communications to better connect with the population. Ensure content avoids sensitive topics and focuses on positive aspects like health and wellness.

Use of Local Influencers — Collaborate with influencers or recognized personalities in health and wellness to build trust in your product. Local influencers can help reach specific audiences and build credibility.

Marketing Channels — Invest in digital advertising on popular social media platforms such as In-

stagram, Snapchat, and TikTok, which are widely used in the region. Also, consider traditional media such as television and radio, especially in countries where they still have a significant impact.

**Pricing Strategy** — Adapt pricing structures to cater to both high-purchasing-power markets (such as the UAE and Qatar) and more price-sensitive segments. Offer different service levels or packages to meet the economic needs of various customers.

**Local Partners** — Establish partnerships with distributors and local partners already established in the healthcare sector. This will help overcome cultural and operational barriers and leverage their market knowledge to facilitate entry and expansion.

**AT:** What market research have you conducted on the demand for hyperbaric oxygen therapy in the Middle East?

**RA:** The Middle East, especially the UAE and Qatar, is experiencing growth in medical tourism. These countries are investing in advanced healthcare infrastructure, attracting international patients seeking innovative treatments, including hyperbaric chambers.

The region is also seeing an increase in demand for wellness and recovery treatments, including hyperbaric therapy, used for rejuvenation and physical performance enhancement.

Continued on Page 13

Demand soars for innovative health solutions

# Hyperbaric therapy aids manage diabetes complications, injuries

Continued from Page 12

The prevalence of diabetes in the Middle East is high, with particularly high rates in countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Hyperbaric chambers are useful for treating complications such as diabetic ulcers and healing issues.

With the rise in popularity of sports and sporting events in the region (such as the World Cup in Qatar), there is increased demand for treatments that aid in injury recovery, including hyperbaric therapy.

The Gulf countries are investing in modernizing their healthcare systems. The UAE and Saudi Arabia are at the forefront with state-of-the-art hospitals and clinics and are open to new technologies and medical treatments.

Cities like Dubai and Abu Dhabi already have advanced medical centers that may be interested in incorporating hyperbaric chambers as part of their treatment offerings.

The hyperbaric chamber market in the Middle East is growing but not as saturated as in other regions. This presents a good opportunity to introduce new technologies if market entry is managed appropriately.

Compliance with local health regulations and obtaining necessary certifications is crucial. Approval and compliance may vary from country to country, so it is important to work with local consultants and understand specific requirements.

Reviewing market studies and industry reports on healthcare in the Middle East can provide more detailed data on the demand for hyperbaric chambers. Sources such as Frost & Sullivan, Markets and Markets, and Grand View Research often publish reports on market trends and demand in the medical equipment sector.

Conducting interviews with doctors and hospital administrators in the region can offer qualitative insights into the demand and treatment needs that hyperbaric chambers could address.

**AT:** What differentiates your HBOT services from existing options in the Middle East?

**RA:** Our hyperbaric chambers feature state-of-the-art technology to ensure optimal performance and superior treatment experiences. This includes advanced pressure control systems, precise monitoring, and automatic adjustments for enhanced safety and efficacy.

We use the highest quality materials in constructing our chambers to ensure durability and safety. Our chambers are designed to withstand extreme conditions and guarantee a long lifespan, meeting the most rigorous international standards.

Our chambers are designed with a focus on patient comfort, offering a spacious and well-ventilated environment. They also include advanced safety features such as communication systems and emergency protocols to ensure a safe and comfortable treatment experience.

The chambers we provide are certified with international quality and safety standards, ensuring they meet the highest industry benchmarks. This guarantees that our equipment is reliable and approved for use in demanding clinical environments.

We conduct rigorous and regular maintenance of our chambers to ensure they operate under optimal



A person examines the OXYBARICA's HBOT chamber

conditions. Additionally, we are committed to continuously updating our equipment to incorporate the latest technological innovations and design improvements.

**AT:** How do you plan to educate potential clients and healthcare providers in the region about the benefits of HBOT?

**RA:** Host seminars and workshops at medical centers, hospitals, and health conferences. Invite HBOT experts to present case studies, recent research, and patient testimonials.

Offer training courses for doctors and healthcare professionals, highlighting the clinical applications of HBOT and how it can be integrated into their current practices.

Collaborate with hospitals and clinics to conduct pilot studies or demonstration programs that allow healthcare professionals to experience the benefits of HBOT firsthand.

Work with universities and research centers to develop educational materials and conduct studies on HBOT that can be published and shared with the medical community.

Create educational materials in Arabic and English that clearly explain the benefits, applications, and scientific evidence of HBOT. Distribute these materials in clinics, hospitals, and health centers.

Publish articles and studies in local medical journals and specialized health blogs to reach a broader audience.

Participate in health fairs and exhibitions in the region to showcase your equipment and provide presentations on the benefits of HBOT. These events are excellent opportunities to network with potential providers and clients.

**AT:** Are there specific medical conditions or wellness trends in the

Middle East that align well with your therapy services?

**RA:** With a high prevalence of diabetes in the region, there is a significant need for treatments addressing complications such as diabetic ulcers. HBOT can be beneficial in promoting healing and managing chronic wounds.

There is a growing interest in treatments for sports-related injuries due to the increasing number of sporting events and activities. HBOT can aid in quicker recovery and enhance athletic performance.

There is a rising trend towards wellness and physical performance improvement. HBOT fits well with this trend by offering advanced recovery and rejuvenation options, which can attract individuals seeking to enhance their overall health and performance.

**AT:** Are you looking to partner with local health providers or institutions in the Middle East?

**RA:** Yes, we are open to collaborating with local health centers and institutions. Establishing partnerships can help us integrate our services into the local healthcare system and provide valuable benefits to patients.

**AT:** How do you plan to build trust and credibility with local patients, considering cultural differences and medical standards?

**RA:** We plan to build trust and credibility by highlighting the scientific studies and clinical evidence supporting the effectiveness of HBOT; by providing state-of-the-art hyperbaric chambers that meet international standards for quality and safety and understanding and respecting local cultural norms and medical practices to ensure our services are well-received and aligned

with local expectations.

**AT:** Have you had discussions with any regulatory authorities in the region regarding approvals and compliance?

**RA:** No, we have not yet engaged with regulatory authorities regarding the approval and compliance of hyperbaric chambers in the region. This will be an essential step to ensure that our products meet local regulations and standards.

**AT:** What is your pricing strategy for the Middle Eastern market, and how does it compare with your offerings in Spain?

**RA:** Our pricing strategy will generally align with the prices in Spain, with adjustments made primarily for transportation costs. We understand that the purchasing power in Spain may differ, but our aim is to maintain consistency in pricing while accommodating regional logistics.

**AT:** Do you plan to open physical clinics in the region or will you focus on partnerships and collaborations?

**RA:** Currently, our focus is on selling our high-quality chambers in the Middle East. However, in the future, we may consider collaborations to establish a dedicated HBOT center if there is sufficient demand and opportunity.

**AT:** What are your long-term growth objectives for the Middle East, and how does this region fit into your global expansion plan?

**RA:** At this stage, our goal is to introduce our HBOT chambers to the Middle Eastern market and allow many people to benefit from them. Long-term, we hope to expand our presence in the region and explore further growth opportunities as we gain traction and build relationships.

**AT:** How do you see HBOT contributing to the healthcare landscape in the Middle East?

**RA:** HBOT can make a significant impact on the healthcare landscape in the Middle East by offering effective treatments for complications associated with chronic conditions like diabetes; accelerating recovery from sports injuries and improving athletic performance; complementing the growing focus on wellness and physical rejuvenation; contributing to the diversification and modernization of healthcare services in the region and helping to prevent complications and reduce costs associated with chronic conditions and prolonged treatments.

In summary, HBOT can strengthen the healthcare system in the Middle East by providing advanced solutions for chronic conditions, supporting sports recovery, meeting the demand for wellness treatments, and enhancing medical infrastructure.

**AT:** Are there any Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives you plan to launch in the region to promote health and wellness?

**RA:** At this moment, we do not have specific CSR initiatives planned. However, we are open to exploring opportunities to contribute positively to health and wellness in the region through community engagement and support programs in the future.

For more information contact Ricardo Algaba at Oxybarica; Av. de la Industria, 55, 45200 Illescas, Toledo, España  
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Anh Nguyen prepares to administer a COVID-19 vaccine for Kelly Vazquez at a pharmacy in New York, Tuesday, Sept. 24. (AP)

## RSV shot urged for seniors

## It's time to roll up sleeves for new COVID, flu shots

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26, (AP) — Fall means it's time for just about everybody to get up to date on their flu and COVID-19 vaccines — and a lot of older adults also need protection against another risky winter virus, RSV.

Yes, you can get your flu and COVID-19 shots at the same time. Don't call them boosters — they're not just another dose of last year's protection. The coronavirus and influenza are escape artists that constantly mutate to evade your body's immune defenses, so both vaccines are reformulated annually to target newer strains.

"Right now is the best time" to get all the recommended fall vaccinations, said Dr. Mandy Cohen, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as she got her flu shot Wednesday. She has an appointment for her COVID-19 shot, too. It's "the single most effective thing you can do to protect yourself, your family, your community."

While they're not perfect, vaccinations offer strong protection against a bad case of flu or COVID-19 — or dying from it.

"It may not prevent every infection but those infections are going to be less severe," said CDC's Dr. Demetre Daskalakis. "I would rather have my

grandmother or my great-grandmother have a sniffle than have to go to the emergency room on Thanksgiving."

The challenge: Getting more Americans to roll up their sleeves. Last year, just 45% of adults got a flu vaccination and even fewer, 23%, got a COVID-19 shot. A survey released Wednesday by the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases shows an equally low number intend to this fall.

And the coronavirus still killed more Americans than flu last year.

"Maybe we believe that it's not going to be me but let's not take a chance," said Dr. Michael Knight of George Washington University. "Why not get a vaccine that's going to help you reduce that risk?"

The CDC urges both an updated COVID-19 shot and yearly flu vaccine for everyone ages 6 months and older. If you recently had COVID-19, you can wait two or three months but still should get an updated vaccination because of the expected winter surge.

Both viruses can be especially dangerous to certain groups including older people and those with weak immune systems and lung or heart disease. Young children also are more vulnerable. The CDC counted 199 child deaths from flu last year.

## Hope for new anti-AIDS drugs

## Type 1 diabetes patient cured with new stem cell transplant

BEIJING, Sept. 26, (Xinhua) — Chinese scientists have realized the clinical cure of a type 1 diabetes patient by transplanting islet cells derived from chemically induced pluripotent stem cells (CiPSC-islets), according to clinical research published on Wednesday in the journal Cell.

This CiPSC-islets therapy aimed at curing type 1 diabetes, the first of its kind, was performed by medical scientists from Tianjin First Central Hospital, Peking University, Changping Laboratory and Hangzhou Reprogenix Bioscience.

Diabetes is a major disease that threatens human health — with type 1 diabetes being one of the more severe forms. It is difficult to achieve precise blood sugar control through current treatment methods, leading to various complications that severely affect patients' quality of life.

According to Wang Shusen from Tianjin First Central Hospital, one of the corresponding authors of the paper, traditional islet transplant therapy can alleviate these problems and has shown clear progress as an alternative treatment strategy, but a shortage of pancreas donors means its application is limited.

During the study, a female patient who had type 1 diabetes for 11 years was completely dependent on insu-

lin treatment and suffered from poor blood sugar control. After the transplant of CiPSC-islets, she regained the capability to autonomously regulate her blood sugar.

Seventy-five days after the transplant, she became insulin independent and has remained insulin injection-free for over a year. All her diabetes-related indicators have reached the levels of a healthy person, confirming the clinical cure of this type 1 diabetes patient.

Also:

**NANJING:** A Chinese research team has isolated an antibody from alpacas that can effectively inhibit HIV, providing a promising avenue for the development of new anti-AIDS drugs.

The findings were recently published in the international academic journal Nature Communications.

Antiretroviral therapy is currently the primary clinical approach to inhibiting HIV replication, according to **Wu Zhiwei**, professor at the School of Medicine, Nanjing University.

While this treatment effectively extends the lifespan of patients, it may lead to significant drug resistance in the virus. Therefore, there is an urgent need to explore new therapies, said Wu, who is also a co-corresponding author of the research.

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## Frenchman grabs 12th major trophy

# Giroud, Lloris propel LAFC to victory over Sporting in US Open Cup final

LOS ANGELES, Sept 26, (AP): Olivier Giroud and Hugo Lloris reached the pinnacle of soccer's mountaintop by helping France win the 2018 World Cup.

On Wednesday night, they said they celebrated just the same after helping Los Angeles Football Club take home the Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup with a 3-1 victory over Sporting Kansas City in extra time.

Giroud and Lloris were just as surprised to be feeling the same emotion, but adding another trophy can do that.

"It is different when you have to play in a final. You just go for it. I'm really proud of the team," said Giroud, who opened the scoring in the second half.

It is the 12th major trophy for Giroud, who turns 38 on Monday. Lloris joined LAFC this year, becoming the first World Cup winner to play

for the club.

Omar Campos and Kei Kamara scored in extra time to give LAFC its fourth trophy since starting play in 2018. The club captured Major League Soccer's Supporters Shield as the top club in the regular season in 2019 and '22, and beat the Philadelphia Union on penalty kicks to win the MLS Cup in 2022.

### SOCCER

LAFC's first appearance in the Open Cup championship snapped a run of four straight title matches across various competitions without a victory. It was the 109th Open Cup, America's oldest national soccer competition.

By advancing to the finals of the Leagues Cup and U.S. Open Cup, LAFC is on pace to play 46 matches

in the regular season. It played 53 last year, including advancing to the final of the CONCACAF Champions League and MLS Cup.

With Wednesday's win, LAFC is 48-25-21 in all competitions over the past two seasons.

"We're happy to win. We were due," LAFC coach Steve Cherundolo said. "The boys made it difficult on themselves. They understood the job and got it done." Erik Thommy scored for Sporting KC, which had won its four previous Open Cup finals, the last in 2017.

Sporting KC goalkeeper Tim Melia made three saves that helped keep the game scoreless in the first half.

Giroud broke through for LAFC in the 53rd minute, catching Melia out of the goal and beating two defenders.

It was Giroud's second goal in 10 matches for LAFC. His other goal

came in the Leagues Cup final loss to Columbus.

Thommy tied it up in the 60th with a blast inside the near post off a cross from Dániel Sallói.

Campos, a second-half substitute, scored in the 102nd from atop the box for his first goal with LAFC.

Kamara, the second-leading goalscorer in MLS history, added an insurance goal on a header in the 109th.

It is the second time Kamara has won the U.S. Open Cup. Ironically, the other time was in 2012 with Sporting KC.

The 40-year old striker has a unique perspective when it comes to winning this competition.

LAFC is fourth in the Western Conference going into the home stretch of the MLS regular season. Sporting KC will not qualify for the postseason.



Vancouver Whitecaps' Ryan Gauld, front center, prepares to hoist the Voyageurs Cup after the team defeated Toronto FC in penalty kicks during the Canadian Championship final soccer match, in Vancouver, British Columbia. (AP)

## Botafogo, Mineiro advance to Copa Libertadores semifinals

SAO PAULO, Sept 26, (Xinhua): Matheus Martins converted the decisive spot-kick as Botafogo advanced to the Copa Libertadores semifinals on Wednesday by defeating Brazilian rivals Sao Paulo on penalties.

After a goalless draw in the first leg of the quarterfinal in Rio de Janeiro, Botafogo went ahead in the

### SOCCER

15th minute at Morumbi stadium when Argentine midfielder Thiago Almada headed home from close range.

Sao Paulo dominated possession thereafter and looked more dangerous in attack as Botafogo deployed a low defensive block.

The hosts were rewarded for their

dominance three minutes from time when Jonathan Calleri thumped a majestic header past goalkeeper John Furtado after Andre Silva's cross.

With no extra time, the match advanced straight to penalties and Calleri went from hero to villain by missing his side's opening spot-kick.

Vitinho failed to convert Botafogo's fourth shot before Furtado denied Rodrigo Nestor with Sao Paulo's sixth attempt as the visitors prevailed 5-4 in the shootout.

In Wednesday's other all-Brazilian quarterfinal second leg, Deyverson scored two second-half goals to fire Atletico Mineiro to a 2-0 home win over Fluminense.

The result gave the Belo Horizonte outfit a 2-1 victory on aggregate over the 2023 champions.

### Liverpool beats West Ham 5-1

## Nwaneri scores twice for Arsenal in rout of Bolton

LONDON, Sept 26, (AP): Arsenal teenager Ethan Nwaneri scored twice in a 5-1 win over third-division Bolton in the English League Cup.

The 17-year-old Nwaneri made a statement in his first senior start, while new signing Raheem Sterling also scored his first goal since joining from Chelsea.

On a night when some of Arsenal's next generation showcased their talent, goalkeeper Jack Porter became the youngest player to start for the London club aged 16 years, 72 days. Porter broke the record of club icon, Cesc Fabregas, who was 16 years, 177 days when he made his first start.

But Nwaneri holds the record as the youngest player to appear for Arsenal's first team, having come on as a substitute aged 15 years, 181 days in September 2022.

He registered his first senior goal in the 37th minute at the Emirates Stadium after Declan Rice had given Arsenal the lead in the 16th.

Nwaneri struck his second four minutes into the second half.

Aaron Collins pulled a goal back for Bolton in the 53rd, but Sterling struck in the 64th and Kai Havertz completed the rout in the 77th.

Liverpool got its defense of the League Cup off to a flying start with a 5-1 rout of West Ham.

But Arne Slot's team had to come from behind after Jarell Quansah's own goal in the 21st at Anfield. It didn't take long, though. Diogo Jota scored four minutes later. He added his second four minutes after the break.

Mohamed Salah made it 3-1 in the 74th and West Ham's task was made even more difficult when Edson Alvarez was sent off two minutes later.

Cody Gakpo sealed an emphatic win with goals in the 90th and then the third minute of stoppage time.

Manchester City was drawn away to Tottenham in the pick of the fourth-

round ties, while Liverpool also faces Premier League opposition with a trip to Brighton.

Arsenal travels to second-division Preston and Manchester United is at home against Leicester.

Tottenham forward Son Heung-min has become the latest soccer star to publicly raise concerns over the number of games players are being asked to play.

The South Korea international said there was a "massive" risk of injury to players in the face of the demands being placed on them.

His comments came after Manchester City midfielder Rodri said last week that players were close to taking strike action. Days later, Rodri sustained knee ligament damage.

"You don't want to see players struggling with injuries. No one wants to see it," Son said Wednesday. "A lot of games, a lot of traveling. We've got to look after ourselves, which sometimes is very hard."

### SOCCER

"Mentally, physically, you're not ready. Then going on to the pitch and then the risk of injury is massive. We're not robots. Don't get me wrong, we love playing football. That's clear."

Rodri has ligament damage in his right knee, City said Wednesday without giving a time frame for his potential absence. He was injured during City's Premier League game against Arsenal on Sunday when jostling with Thomas Partey in the box at a corner.

Son said he agreed with Rodri's concerns.

"Rodri said the right things. We play 50, 60 games and not more than 70 games. When the fixtures come, the players have to play. There's a lot going on," he said.



Bolton's goalkeeper Luke Southwood, center, makes a save on the shot by Arsenal's Kai Havertz, left, during the English League Cup third round soccer match between Arsenal and Bolton Wanderers at the Emirates stadium in London. (AP)



Phoenix Mercury center Brittney Griner (42) works between Minnesota Lynx forwards Myisha Hines-Allen, left, and Cecilia Zandalasini (9) in the first quarter of Game 2 of a WNBA basketball first-round playoff game in Minneapolis. (AP)

# Collier ties playoff record for points, Lynx sweeps Mercury

Sun eliminate Clark and Fever

MINNEAPOLIS, Sept 26, (AP): Napheesa Collier scored 42 to tie a WNBA playoff record for points in a game, and the Minnesota Lynx swept the Phoenix Mercury 101-88.

Collier tied Breanna Stewart and Angel McCoughtry for the 42-point record when she made 1 of 2 free throws with 3:18 left in the fourth quarter. It was one of just two misses from the free-throw line in 14 attempts for Collier, who was subbed out with 58.3 seconds left.

Collier, who scored a career-high 38 points in Game 1, became the first player in WNBA history with 38-plus points in back-to-back playoff games. She also set a WNBA record for the most points (80) through the first two games of a playoff series. Collier

### BASKETBALL

reached 38 points in Game 2 with 5:55 left in the fourth.

Minnesota plays again on Sunday against Connecticut, which advanced to its sixth consecutive semifinals after an 87-81 victory over Indiana earlier Wednesday. Alyssa Thomas and the Connecticut Sun were happy to finally close out an opening round series at home in two games.

Thomas had 19 points and 13 assists to help the Sun sweep Caitlin Clark and the Indiana Fever out of the playoffs with an 87-81 win.

Since the league changed its playoff format in 2022 the Sun have needed to win a decisive third game on the road in the first round to advance, which they did both years. This time were able to do it at home.

The third-seeded Sun will now face Minnesota in the semifinals which begin Sunday.

Clark played much better in Game 2 than she did in her postseason debut Sunday. The AP Rookie of the Year finished with 25 points and nine assists, but it wasn't enough.

Aliyah Boston added 16 points and 19 rebounds. Her layup with 2:05 left gave Indiana a 77-75 advantage but DeWanna Bonner, who was playing in her WNBA record matching 82nd playoff game to match Lindsay Whalen,

answered with a 3-pointer 14 seconds later.

Neither team scored on their next few possessions until Marina Mabrey hit a 3-pointer from the wing with 45.5 seconds left to give the Sun an 81-77 lead.

Collier tied Breanna Stewart and Angel McCoughtry for the 42-point record when she made 1 of 2 free throws with 3:18 left in the fourth quarter. It was one of just two misses from the free-throw line in 14 attempts for Collier, who was subbed out with 58.3 seconds left.

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Connecticut Sun guard Veronica Burton (22) drives to the basket as Indiana Fever guard Lexie Hull (10) defends during the second half in Game 2 of a first-round WNBA basketball playoff series in Uncasville, Conn. (AP)

## Historic father-and-son season awaits

# LeBron, Bronny scrimmaging with LA

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., Sept 26, (AP): LeBron James and his son, Bronny, are already scrimmaging with the rest of the Los Angeles Lakers during voluntary offseason workouts. JJ Redick and his coaching staff are planning and discussing the moment early in the new season when a father and son will share an NBA court for the first time.

While the specifics of that historic day aren't set yet, Redick shares the basketball world's anticipation of the chance to watch the top scorer in NBA history playing alongside the Lakers' new second-round draft pick. No father and son have ever played in the NBA simultaneously, let alone on the same team.

"We don't have anything planned, per se, in terms of a commitment to do it this way," Redick said. "We obviously have talked about it as a staff, and we've gotten into some specifics of what that might look like, but we haven't committed to anything, and

obviously there's a discussion to be had once we're all together, with Bronny and LeBron, too. They should be a part of that discussion as well."

Redick and general manager Rob Pelinka expressed excitement for the team-up Wednesday during a pre-season news conference. Redick sees only positive aspects in pairing the duo

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on the court, and he doesn't anticipate any friction or concerns in the family dynamic.

"I don't look at it as a challenge that's unique from any other challenge of coaching a player or coaching a relationship," Redick said.

Pelinka then humorously interjected an anecdote from a recent workout scrimmage: "Maybe the challenge is on Bronny, when like in our pickup game, he got switched on to LeBron,

and LeBron took him baseline, up and under off the glass. The words exchanged afterwards were probably more challenging than anything else."

The Lakers haven't announced or decided how long Bronny, who will turn 20 during training camp, will be on the NBA roster with his famous father, who turns 40 in December.

Although the front office hasn't confirmed it, Bronny James seems likely to spend much of the upcoming season in the G League developing his skills. He played in only 25 games during his sole season at the University of Southern California after recovering from cardiac arrest during an offseason workout.

Pelinka and Redick are still extremely bullish on the 6-foot-2 Bronny's ability to become an NBA contributor.

"Bronny, I feel very fortunate that I get to coach him, because he's young and he's hungry and he's got a lot of inherent skill sets that we can really mold into a really good NBA player," Redick said. "On top of that, he's a fantastic kid. He's extremely coachable. He's got the right spirit and energy every single day."

LeBron James took a vacation after leading the U.S. to a gold medal at the Paris Olympics, but he has been back in the gym for the past two weeks, Redick said.

The Lakers' front office didn't make any bold moves over the summer, constrained by their top players' contracts and the new league system that has made it much more difficult to upgrade rosters, according to Pelinka.

So the Lakers roster around the James family will be largely the same group that made the Western Conference finals in 2023, but then finished eighth in the West last spring before losing to Denver in the first round. Those Lakers weren't an elite team even with excellent health for LeBron and Anthony Davis, two high-mileage veterans who have struggled with major injury problems in previous seasons.

# Barcelona extends perfect start to league

Lewandowski scores 7th goal

**MADRID, Sept 26, (AP):** With Robert Lewandowski on target again, Barcelona extended its perfect start to the Spanish league season.

Lewandowski scored his seventh goal in as many matches and Barcelona won its seventh

earned at the start of the 2017-18 season. The Catalan club won eight straight to start the 2013-14 season.

Barcelona has outscored its opponents 23-5 in its first seven games this season. It has a four-point lead over defending champion Real Madrid, which on Tuesday beat Alaves 3-2.

Lewandowski got his league-leading seventh goal from close range in the 19th minute. He picked up a loose ball inside the area after Getafe goalkeeper David Soria couldn't hold on to a high cross into the area.

The Poland striker, who had scored twice in a 5-1 rout of Villarreal on Sunday, was replaced by Pedri in the 77th.

Lewandowski's goal was Barcelona's 6,500 in 3,035 league matches, according to the club.

Iñaki Peña started in goal in place of Marc-André ter Stegen, who sustained a serious knee injury in the team's previous league match. Barcelona players entered the field with a T-shirt with words of support for Ter Stegen, who is one of the team's captains.

Getafe, which nearly equalized with Borja Mayoral from close range in stoppage time, remains winless and in second-to-last place.

Girona and Rayo Vallecano drew 0-0 in Girona.

Barcelona plays at Osasuna on Saturday. It then visits Alaves the following weekend.

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in a row in the league by defeating Getafe 1-0 at home.

The triumph gives Barcelona its second-best league start ever, equaling the seven victories it also



Barcelona's Lamine Yamal, front, duels for the ball with Getafe's Alex Sola during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Barcelona and Getafe at the Olympic stadium in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)



Khalil Nadoum, Vice President of the Asian Sports Press Association with other officials.

## Nadoum joins 25th Asian sports press meeting in Nepal

Khalil Nadoum, Vice President of the Asian Sports Press Association, took part in the 25th meeting of the Association, held in Nepal. The meeting focused on addressing various issues and challenges con-

fronting sports journalism across the Asian region, while also reviewing recent successes and developments within the sector.

Also, the participants explored ways to strengthen cooperation

among member countries and develop strategies aimed at supporting sports journalists in the region.

Nadoum emphasized the significance of this meeting in fostering

communication and experience-sharing between Asian nations, highlighting the need for collaborative efforts to tackle future challenges and support journalists in all circumstances.

Dortmund reeling from loss to Stuttgart

## Alonso and Leverkusen aim to spoil Bayern party mood

DUESSELDORF, Germany, Sept 26, (Agencies): What better way for Bayern Munich to add to the Oktoberfest mood than to humble the reigning Bundesliga champion? And what better way for Bayer Leverkusen to spoil the party than by beating Bayern again?

With the world's most famous beer festival in full swing, Vincent Kompany's Bayern welcomes Xabi Alonso's Leverkusen for a game which could shape the entire German league campaign. Bayern's players, including Harry Kane, dropped in at Oktoberfest in traditional lederhosen outfits on Sunday and had plenty to celebrate after scoring 20 goals in their last three games, including a 5-0 demolition of toothless Werder Bremen the day before.

This game pits together two young coaches who were great players in their own right. Alonso has showed he belongs among the top coaches in Europe by leading Leverkusen to a stunning unbeaten domestic league and cup double last season.

The Bayern job is the chance for Kompany, whose Burnley team was relegated from the English Premier League last season, to show he belongs at this level, too.

"We know how much potential Bayern Munich has, now too with the new coach, Kompany, who's bringing in new ideas," Leverkusen midfielder Granit Xhaka told broadcaster Sky in comments aired on Wednesday.

"We've obviously analyzed their game and everything seems to be working out well so far. Almost every shot has been a goal for Bayern.



Wolfsburg's Sebastian Bornauw, center, and Leverkusen's Patrik Schick jump for the ball during the German Bundesliga soccer match between Bayer Leverkusen and VfL Wolfsburg at the BayArena in Leverkusen, Germany. (AP)



Munich's head coach Vincent Kompany gestures during the German Bundesliga soccer match between SV Werder Bremen and Bayern Munich in Bremen, Germany. (AP)

They're very strong offensively and don't concede many goals either."

Leverkusen is back in its groove of dramatic, last-minute goals after coming back from a goal down twice to beat Wolfsburg 4-3. These miraculous recoveries have delighted Leverkusen's fans - though a 3-2 loss to Leipzig certainly didn't, and the defensive lapses that make those recoveries necessary remain a concern.

The last time these teams met it was a party occasion of a different sort, carnival season in the Rhineland, as Leverkusen's costume-wearing fans watched their team brush aside Bayern 3-0 in February.

It was a turning point in last season's title race, and not just in terms of the points table. Bayern wasn't just outplayed. Its then-coach Thomas Tuchel was out-thought by Alonso's tactical tweaks. From then on, all the momentum was with Leverkusen.

Alonso's first priority on Saturday

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will likely be to keep Kane quiet. The England captain has racked up five goals and four assists in four Bundesliga games. Across all competitions for club and country in 2024-25, Kane has a barely believable 12 goals already.

For Kompany, Bayern's occasionally shaky defense may be a concern. Bayern is scoring a lot of goals but it has yet to face a team which finished higher than eighth in the Bundesliga last season.

Kane raised concerns after Bayern conceded two soft goals against Dinamo Zagreb, even if it was a 9-2 win, that Bayern could "get punished for that" against top teams. The response against Bremen in the following game was much more encouraging. Bremen didn't have a shot all game.

Also this weekend, Borussia Dortmund is reeling from a 5-1 loss to Stuttgart as it hosts local rival Bochum on Friday. Stuttgart visits Wolfsburg on Saturday as Leipzig hosts Augsburg. German internationals Florian Wirtz and Jamal Musiala will be the center of attention.

Over the past few days, the futures of both gifted youngsters have come under scrutiny. Bayern attacker Musiala is reportedly in advanced talks to extend his contract, which currently runs until 2026.

It is widely speculated that the name of Leverkusen's midfielder played a key role when Bayern officials met with Musiala's management.

Media reports suggest Bayern is planning to make a move for Wirtz next summer to bring together the country's two most promising talents.

Bayern president Herbert Hainer has spoken of Musiala as the rightful successor to Thomas Muller, calling him the club's figurehead "for the upcoming 20 years." The 21-year-old forward, however, is keenly watching how Bayern will develop in the years to come. Securing Wirtz for a reported 150 million euros (about 167 million U.S. dollars) could be the motivation Musiala needs to commit to a long-term contract.

Musiala's presence at Bayern may give the club an advantage in the race for Wirtz, as European competitors such as Real Madrid, Arsenal, and Manchester City are also said to be seriously interested.

Wirtz, whose current contract with Leverkusen expires in 2027, has not yet made a decision about his future. Insiders believe next year could be the time for his next career move.

## Tsitsipas eliminated

# Sinner survives scare, Fritz loses opener

BEIJING, Sept 26, (AP): Top-ranked Jannik Sinner overcame a scare from Nicolas Jarry to begin his defense of the China Open title with a 4-6, 6-3, 6-1 first-round victory on Thursday.

The Italian extended his win streak to 12 after titles at Cincinnati and the U.S. Open, his second Grand Slam title this year. Sinner's record over the past 52 weeks stands at 76-6.

Jarry won their only previous match on grass in 2019 at 's-Hertogenbosch and the Chilean overpowered Sinner in the first set in Beijing with 11 winners.

"In the first set I was struggling to return his serve and he broke me," Sinner said. "I just tried to stay there mentally. The first round at any tournament is never easy and playing against him is very tough. But I am happy about the performance and how I ended the match."

Sinner raised his game to level the sets and broke Jarry twice in a dominant third set. He next faced wild card Stan Wawrinka or lucky loser Roman Safullin.

Adrian Mannarino also rallied from a set down to beat Lorenzo Sonego 1-6, 6-2, 6-3 for his 300th win on tour, 16 years after his first.

No. 3-ranked Carlos Alcaraz, seeded second in Beijing, begins against No. 51 Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard of France on Friday.

Winners of women's first-round matches included Kamilla Rakhimova, Croatian qualifier Jana Fett, Camilla Osorio, Elisabetta Cocciaretto, and Nadia Podoroska.

The 32 seeds received first-round byes, including U.S. Open champion and top seed Aryna Sabalenka.

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek was not playing this week for personal reasons.

Top-seeded Taylor Fritz was up-

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set by No. 24-ranked Arthur Fils of France 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 in Tokyo.

Fils peeled off 32 winners in a power-hitting display against Fritz,

who made his first Grand Slam singles final at the U.S. Open this month. Fils has former top-10 player Matteo Berrettini in the second round.

Defending champion Ben Shelton shook off a rusty first set to beat countryman Reilly Opelka 3-6, 6-1, 6-4. Shelton, along with Fritz, came from the Laver Cup in Berlin where they represented Team World in a loss to Alcaraz's Team Europe.

"I felt like I was struggling a little bit and getting rhythm," the eighth-seeded Shelton said. "Reilly was serving and returning extremely well."

No. 12-ranked Stefanos Tsitsipas, who was at the Laver Cup for Team Europe, lost to Alex Michelsen of the U.S. 4-6, 6-1, 6-2.

Brandon Nakashima won another all-American tie against U.S. Open semifinalist Frances Tiafoe 7-5, 6-3. Nakashima, ranked 36th, fired 12 aces.

Fifth-seeded Tommy Paul rolled to a 6-3, 6-2 win over Italy's Matteo Arnaldi. Other winners included U.S. Open semifinalist Jack Draper, Tomas Machac, and Yoshihito Nishioka, who outlasted Felix Auger-Aliassime 7-6 (5), 3-6, 7-6 (5) in a three-hour match.



Italy's Jannik Sinner returns a shot to Chile's Nicolas Jarry during the China Open tennis tournament held at the National Tennis Center in Beijing. (AP)

## African Super Cup on the line in Riyadh

# Egyptian giants Al-Ahly, Zamalek face off

## Al-Nassr looks to extend strong start under Pioli

RIYADH, Sept 26: The highly anticipated clash between Egyptian football giants Al-Ahly and Zamalek will take place today at King Abdullah Sports City Stadium in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. This showdown marks another chapter in the dominance of Egyptian and Arab clubs in the African Super Cup since the competition's inception in 1993.

The African Super Cup is contested in a single match between the winners of the African Champions League and the African Cup Winners' Cup, which was later merged with the Confederation Cup under its current name.

Egyptian clubs have a stronghold on the African Super Cup, with 12 victories - Al-Ahly leading with 8 titles and Zamalek with 4. Al-Ahly has been runners-up on three occasions: losing to Zamalek in 1994 and to ES Sétif (2015) and USM Alger (2023) of Algeria, while Zamalek has only lost once, in 2001, to Ghana's Hearts of Oak.

Beyond Al-Ahly and Zamalek, 15 other teams have won the African Super Cup. TP Mazembe of the Democratic Republic of the Congo leads this group with 3 titles, while Étoile du Sahel (Tunisia), Raja Casablanca (Morocco), and Enyimba (Nigeria) have each won twice. Other winners include Espérance de Tunis, Wydad Casablanca, and Africa Sports, the inaugural winner in 1993, along with Hearts of Oak, Renaissance Berkane, Maghreb de Fès, ES Sétif, USM Alger, Mamelodi Sundowns, Orlando Pirates, and ASEC Mimosas.

On the other side, 9 clubs have narrowly missed winning the title, including CS Sfaxien (Tunisia), Motema Pembe (DR Congo), JS Kabylie (Algeria), and Egypt's El Mokawloon. Others such as Fath Rabat, Royal Army (Morocco), Kaizer Chiefs (South Africa), Stade Malien, and Congo's Leop-

whelming results.

Al-Wehda, currently 14th with four points, received a confidence boost after beating Al-Faisaly in the Saudi Professional Football League's fifth round today. Italian manager Pioli kicked off his tenure with a 3-0 win over Al-Ettifaq, handing Steven Gerrard's team its first loss of the season. Cristiano Ronaldo scored from a penalty and celebrated by waving to his son, who was watching from the stands.

Al-Nassr is seeking its third win in five matches after two draws under former coach Luis Castro, who parted ways with the club due to under-

ards have also come close.

Moroccan clubs trail Egyptian teams with 5 African Super Cup titles, followed by 3 titles for Tunisian and Congolese teams. However, Tunisian

clubs have lost the final more than any other nation, with 10 defeats, followed by Morocco (8), Egypt (5), and the DR Congo (3). Espérance holds the record for the most losses (4), followed by



A file photo of players in action.

Coach Laurent Blanc hopes to halt his team's negative league results after a difficult start. Al-Ittihad secured last-minute victories against Al-Khulud and Al-Taawoun in the first two rounds but is wary of repeating last season's slump after a strong start, which led to the dismissal of coach Nuno Espirito Santo and the appointment of Marcelo Gallardo, who couldn't reverse the decline.

In another match, Al-Ahly will visit Al-Qadisiyah following a shocking exit from the King's Cup at the hands of Al-Jandal, a second-division team, which has put coach Matthias Jaisle in a difficult position.

Étoile du Sahel, Sfaxien, Al-Ahly, and Wydad, who have each lost 3 times.

Morocco boasts the highest number of different clubs to win the African Super Cup (4), while 17 teams in total have lifted the trophy, with 6 teams winning it more than once.

Over the years, the African Super Cup has undergone significant changes in terms of venue and prize money. Ini-

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tially, the champion received \$100,000 and the runner-up \$75,000, but these amounts have since risen to \$500,000 and \$250,000, respectively. CAF experimented with neutral venues in the tournament's early years, holding the 1994 Al-Ahly vs. Zamalek match at Johannesburg's National Bank Stadium and the 1995 Espérance vs. Motema Pembe final at Alexandria Stadium in Egypt. However, this practice was short-lived.



Twente players celebrate after the Europa League opening phase soccer match between Manchester United and Twente at the Old Trafford stadium in Manchester, England. (AP)

# Sports

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Al-Fatat basketball delegation welcomed home.

## Al-Fatat Club returns to Kuwait after strong showing in Championship

The Al-Fatat Club basketball team returned to Kuwait after competing in the Arab Women's Clubs Championship in Jordan with a newly formed lineup of players.

Fadhila Al-Shuwailan, the club's president, expressed pride in the team's performance, stating, "The players delivered an admirable level of competi-

tion and fought for top positions. Although this was the team's first participation, it achieved positive results, thank God."

Al-Shuwailan also mentioned, "We look forward to more distinguished future participations," while extending gratitude to Jordan for its successful organization of the tournament and its warm hospitality.

In the third-place playoff, Al-Fatat was defeated by Algeria's Kosider, while the Jordanian Al-Fuheis Youth Team claimed the championship title with an 84-60 victory over Saudi Arabia's Al-Ula team.

Notably, the title of Best Professional in the championship was awarded to Al-Fatat Club's Nigerian player, Uchendu.

# Kuwait revives qualification hopes

South Korea delivers resounding 10-0 win

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: The Kuwait U-20 team rekindled its hopes of securing one of the two qualification spots for the Asian Cup finals in China next year by defeating Lebanon 3-0 in the third round of Group 3 matches.**

The Blues showcased their prowess with goals from Bandar Al-Barazi in the third minute and a brace from Youssef Majed, who scored in the 72nd and 80th minutes.

From the outset, Kuwait dominated the match, launching multiple attacks on the Lebanese goal and translating its control into three goals, which earned them 6 points from three matches.

Currently, the team is tied with the UAE and South Korea, with the UAE leading the group on goal



Kuwaiti players celebrate their victory over Lebanon.

difference, while Lebanon and the Northern Mariana Islands remain without points.

Kuwait is set to face the UAE in its final match on Sunday, and a win is essential for it to remain in contention for qualification.

In another match, South Korea delivered a resounding 10-0 victory over the Northern Mariana Islands.

Today marks the fourth round of matches, with the UAE going up against South Korea and Lebanon facing the Northern Mariana Islands.

The qualifying system dictates that the group winner advances directly to the finals, along with the best five second-placed teams from the ten groups.

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Team manager Jarrah Al-Atiqi emphasized the importance of fan support in the decisive match against the UAE, hoping that the Blues will receive strong backing. He noted that the early goal against Lebanon was pivotal in establishing its dominance and securing the three points, describing the upcoming match against the UAE as a "final."

Player Bandar Al-Barazi echoed this sentiment, stating that while the match against the UAE will be decisive, it will be approached like any other game, with the team aiming for a positive outcome.

Al-Qadsiya looks to turn season around

## Battle for 'supremacy' as Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi square off in Zain Premier League

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 26: The Friendship and Peace Stadium hosts the highly anticipated clash between Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi today at 1:30 pm, marking the summit of the sixth round of the Zain Premier League.**

The round will continue tomorrow with two exciting matches: Al-Qadsiya will face Al-Tadamon at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium, while Al-Fahaheel will go head-to-head against Kazma at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium.

The round will conclude the day after tomorrow with two additional matches: Al-Nasr will meet Al-Yarmouk at Thamer Stadium, followed by Khaitan taking on Al-Salmiya at Nasser Al-Osaimi Stadium.

Fans are eagerly looking forward

to the matchup between the league leaders, Kuwait and Al-Arabi, who have shared the top spot since the first round, both boasting perfect records so far. The "Whites," currently leading on goal difference, aim to secure their victories and solidify their position at the top before heading to Jordan for their AFC Champions League 2 match against Al-Hussein Irbid.

Kuwait Club excels in multiple aspects, having the league's strongest attack with 17 goals scored and the best defense, conceding only twice.

On the other hand, Al-Arabi is determined to break its partnership with Kuwait Club and claim the top spot outright. Despite facing instability due to recent issues, including Sultan Al-Enezi's controversial move to Dhofar in Oman and the absence of Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, the "Greens" are progressing positively in the tournament.

In their last league encounter last May, Kuwait Club defeated Al-Arabi 3-0.

In tomorrow's matches, Al-Qadsiya will be aiming for victory after its recent struggles, having garnered only four points and sitting in sixth place. The team seeks to appease dissatisfied fans and hopes to turn the tide in tonight's match against Al-Tadamon, who currently sit fourth with seven points.

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Meanwhile, in the second match, Kazma, in seventh place with four points, is also looking for a win to escape the danger zone and secure its second victory, while Al-Fahaheel, fifth with seven points, aims to capitalize on Kazma's circumstances and achieve their third win of the tournament.

Lazio cruises past Dynamo

## Twente holds Man Utd in revamped Europa League

**MANCHESTER, England, Sept 26, (AP): Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag questioned his players' killer instinct after they were held to a 1-1 draw by his old club FC Twente in the revamped Europa League.**

Sam Lammers capitalized on a mistake by Christian Eriksen in the second half at Old Trafford and raced away to fire an equalizer for the Dutch underdog.

Eriksen had put United ahead with a stunning first-half strike but was caught in possession by Lammers, whose goal secured an unexpected point for the visitors.

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Ten Hag had spoken before the game of his affection for the team he supported as a boy in the Netherlands and represented as a player. He said it was "not nice to have to hurt something you love."

Instead it was United fans left in pain, despite Eriksen seemingly putting the home team on course for victory.

United has won just three of seven games in all competitions this season and Wednesday's draw came after a 0-0 draw at Crystal Palace in the Premier League on Saturday.

Eriksen swept United ahead in the 35th with a first-time shot into the top corner. Connecting with a loose ball just inside the box, the playmaker didn't break stride as he whipped his effort past Twente goalkeeper Lars Unerstall with power and preci-

sion. With one fist clenched, he ran to the corner to celebrate in front of the home fans.

But it was Twente's supporters left cheering the loudest after Lammers' goal in the 68th when beating Andre Onana at his near post.

Like the Champions League, the second-tier Europa League has a new format and 36 teams instead of 32. It features a league system in which each team plays eight games against different opponents through January, replacing the old group stage.

In a clash between the Turkish and



Galatasaray's Abdulkemir Bardakci, second right, and PAOK's Magomed Ozdoyev, jump for a header during the Europa League opening phase soccer match between Galatasaray and PAOK at the Ali Sami Yen stadium in Istanbul, Turkey. (AP)

Greek champions, Galatasaray beat PAOK 3-1. Victor Osimhen, who moved from Napoli to Galatasaray earlier in September, made his presence felt. The Nigeria striker's goal-bound header was deflected by defender Abdul Rahman Baba into his own net early in the second half.

Giannis Konstantelis equalized on a rebound before Osimhen set up Yunus Akgün to net the winner. Mauro Icardi added a stoppage-time goal.

Lazio cruised past Dynamo Kyiv 3-0. Boulaye Dia struck twice and Fisayo Dele-Bashiru added one. Both teams ended the game with 10 men.

Real Sociedad, struggling in La

Liga, got a goal from Ander Barrenetxea at Nice but the home team salvaged a 1-1 draw thanks to Pablo Rosario's goal late in the first half.

Another team struggling domestically, Bundesliga's Hoffenheim took home a point from Denmark in a 1-1 draw with Danish Superliga's leader Midtjylland. Darío Osorio put the hosts ahead late in the first half before substitute Max Moerstedt leveled it in the final minute.

In Brussels, Anderlecht struck twice in the span of five minutes in the second half on the way to a 2-1 victory over Ferencváros. Yari Verschaeren scored on the hour and Kasper Dolberg added the second from the spot.

Slavia Prague scored in each half for a 2-0 win at Bulgaria's Ludogorets.

Norwegian club Bodø/Glimt and Dutch side AZ Alkmaar became the first teams to claim victories earlier on Wednesday.

Jens Petter Hauge's two goals guided 10-man Bodø/Glimt from a goal down to a 3-2 win over Porto while Troy Parrott netted the winner from the penalty spot for Alkmaar to beat Sweden's Elfsborg 3-2.

Porto, a two-time champion in Europe's second-tier league, got an early goal from Samu. Kasper Høgh's equalized and Hauge netted twice for a 3-1 lead. Porto reduce the deficit to one in the final minute through substitute Deniz Güll.

Alkmaar answered Timothy Ouama's opener with two goals from Ruben van Bommel on both sides of the interval. Simon Hedlund made it 2-2 before Parrott's late penalty.



A file photo of Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi players battling for the ball.

Sri Lanka dominates NZ in 2nd test

**GALLE, Sri Lanka, Sept 26, (AP): Dinesh Chandimal's 16th century helped Sri Lanka dominate a careless New Zealand by 306-3 to begin the second test on Thursday at their Galle fortress.**

Chandimal was supported well by Angelo Mathews, 78 not out, Kamindu Mendis, 51 not out, and Dimuth Karunaratne's 46.

Sri Lanka and England share the record for the most test wins at a single venue, 25, at Galle and Lord's respectively. And Sri Lanka has made a great start to surpassing England's tally.

Chandimal and Karunaratne combined for 122 for the second wicket until a mix up saw Karunaratne run out. He hit to square leg and attempted a quick single after a misfield but was sent back by Chandimal and didn't make it.

Chandimal remained composed, going on to score his first test hundred against New Zealand and his sixth in Galle. Only Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene, with seven cen-

turies each, have scored more at the iconic ground.

Chandimal and Mathews added 97 runs for the third wicket before Glenn Phillips broke through. Chandimal, who had been using his footwork expertly against spin, misjudged the off-spinner and was bowled while attempting another aggressive shot. His 116 came off 208 balls, featuring 15 boundaries.

The in-form Mendis joined Mathews and began to score with ease. Mendis finished the day unbeaten on 51 from 56 balls, laced with eight boundaries and one towering six. In the past month, Mendis has three fifties and a first-test century.

Mathews, solid as ever, ended the day on 78 not out from 166 deliveries, with six boundaries. He passed 2,000 test runs in Galle.

The pair has 85 runs for the fourth wicket.

On a hot and humid day, New Zealand's bowlers toiled. Their efforts were hampered by some poor fielding.