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NEARLY 60,000 KUWAITIS YET TO COMPLETE BIOMETRIC FINGERPRINTING
Transaction freeze as deadline passes

Opinion

Amiri speech is faster than the govt's march

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

BEFORE May 10, parliamentary pressure was being used to influence the Council of Ministers through a game of interests. As a result, when His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah made his firm decision, things changed; but the crises and problems remain the same. This is where we must be honest.

Due to the significant Amiri step four months ago, the Council of Ministers was forced to switch from an executive body to a legislative workshop in order to carry out its reform role and draft the necessary laws.



Al-Jarallah

It is common knowledge that numerous committees carry out their advisory functions concerning the legislation that require development. However, this has not been evident until recently. It seems we have been freed from the irritation of the lawmakers, only to be confronted with yet another irritation and slow progress.

More than two years ago, I used a poetic verse that goes: "Like camels in the desert, thirsty, yet they carried water on their backs" to criticize the State's numerous waste management practices. Although there are solutions, they are often disregarded in order to appease those with influence. This means that reform is merely a catchphrase.

This is clearly evident in the financial waste on support and subsidies, or the poor medical care in the health sector in general, or services such as electricity and others; whereas the past summer months exposed their flaws.

It seems that officials are more comfortable with being "thirsty", so as not to exert effort in drinking water on the backs of camels in this dusty desert with a lot of erratic dust.

We also lament the lack of pay raises and the loans that have ravaged citizens' finances. Regarding housing care, feel free to discuss it openly. Nothing has changed in this regard. Neither the salary increase nor the loan crisis offers any suggestions on how to break the deadlock.

Furthermore, for a long time, everyone has been demanding a solution to these problems that do not cost much in terms of effort or money. For example, there should be companies in which the State and the people have a share; similar to cooperative societies, and that the citizen should be the owner and consumer at the same time in the service sectors. In this manner, the large bill that the State pays in vain, without any benefit to the citizen, is reduced.

Therefore, for instance, would it not be better to have a non-public sector administration, for Jaber Hospital and other health facilities, and to employ the world's top doctors; instead of sending citizens abroad for treatment, or the corruption practiced in health insurance that has many question marks, especially after the corruption appeared in 'Afiya'? Experience has proven that it was a big gate for squandering funds; and it is for the benefit of private hospitals and clinics, more than serving the pensioners.

Since other Gulf states are already years ahead in reaping the benefits of contemporary legislation and boosting their overall economic and productive activities, the Council of Ministers is obligated to stop those who are trying to thwart development and its requirements.

In many countries, governments seek the private sector in the field of development, granting it land; and then the sector has to build and employ local manpower, and invest in the field in which it works.

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K-Net, Visa, MasterCard suspended after Oct 15

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Director of the Criminal Evidence General Department in the Interior Ministry Major General Eid Al-Awaihan has revealed that a total of 59,841 citizens did not complete the biometric fingerprint procedures by the end of the deadline on Monday.

In a televised interview, Al-Awaihan stated that the ministry will suspend all the transactions of those who failed to complete the biometric fingerprint procedures. He added that all the biometric devices were transferred from the shopping malls to the service centers affiliated with the department on Sunday night.

He revealed the abovementioned citizens can do the biometric fingerprint procedures in these centers in order to complete their transactions in government institutions and

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A Kuwaiti citizen completes biometric fingerprinting on the final deadline day, September 30.

Photo by Rezk Taufiq

Kuwait elevates foreign policy at UNGA meetings

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait's participation in the UN General Assembly's session and related meetings in New York was yet another milestone in the Gulf nation's diplomacy as an active player in international affairs.

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's participation in the UNGA meetings and consultations contributed to further cooperation with international partners.

The State of Kuwait sent messages at the regional and international levels which reflected aspirations of peoples to overcome regional and global tensions and conflicts, as well as security, stability, sustainable development and human rights.

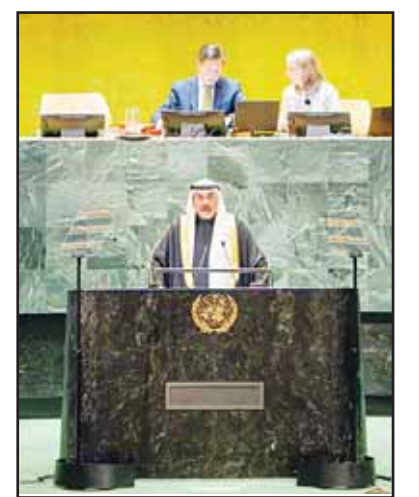
The Arab Gulf country highlighted its support to international peace and security, and its preventive policy as a major pillar of its foreign policy.

Kuwait called for comprehensive reforms of UN and international financial institutions in order to address growing challenges and repeated violations of UN Charter and international law.

His Highness the Crown Prince said the UN, established some 79 years ago, should be modernized especially the Security Council (UNSC) which failed to preserve international peace and security.

"We are surrounded by danger and no one is immune from the consequences of this danger, we have no other way but to cooperate and unite towards common objectives," he said.

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KUNA photo His Highness the Crown Prince speaks at the United Nations General Assembly.

Hezbollah acting leader vows to fight on

KRCS funds Gaza medical care

CAIRO, Sept 30, (Agencies): Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) signed two agreements with Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) to cover the costs of the treatment of Palestinians who were wounded in the attacks by the Israeli occupation forces on Gaza Strip.

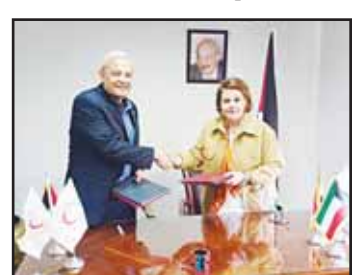
The two documents were inked by KRCS Secretary-General Maha Al-Barjas and PRCS President Dr. Younes Al-Khatib in Cairo on Sunday.

Speaking to KUNA following the signing ceremony, Al-Barjas said KRCS was keen on helping the Palestinian health facilities to alleviate the suffering of the victims of the brutal aggression of the Israeli occupation forces.

"Under today's deals, KRCS will contribute to the funding of the accommodation and the treatment of wounded Palestinians at Palestine hospital in Cairo and the rehabilitation of KRCS field hospital in Gaza," she said.

"Since the start of the war on Gaza, the Kuwaiti leadership, government and people have been keen on offering full support to our Palestinian brothers and providing medical supplies to the Palestinian health sector.

"The Kuwaiti government and non-government aid agencies spare no effort in providing relief supplies to the Palestinians to help them overcome the ongoing crisis," Al-Barjas added.



KUNA photo Photo taken during the signing of agreements between the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS).

Later today, she paid an inspection tour of Palestine hospital - an affiliate of PRCS, and called on injured Palestinians on medication at various wards.

Built in 1976, the nine-story hospital has 85 beds, 12 ICUs, four surgery rooms and wards for various medical specializations.

In other news, Hezbollah's acting leader vowed Monday to keep battling Israel and said the Lebanese militant group was prepared for a long fight even after much of its top command was wiped out, including its leader, Hassan Nasrallah.

Israeli strikes have killed Nasrallah and six of his top commanders and officials in the last 10 days, and have hit what the military says are thousands of militant targets across large parts of Lebanon. Over 1,000 people have been killed in the country in the past two weeks, nearly a quarter of them women and children, according to the Health Ministry.

Early Monday, an airstrike hit a residential building in central Beirut, wiping out one apartment, damaging others, and killing three Palestinian militants, as Israel appeared to send a clear message that no part of Lebanon is out of bounds.

Despite the heavy blow Hezbollah has suffered in recent weeks, acting leader Naim Kassem said in a televised statement that if Israel decides to launch a ground offensive, the group's fighters are ready. He said the commanders killed have already been replaced.

"Israel was not able to affect our (military) capabilities," Kassem said in a televised statement, the first time any senior Hezbollah figure has been seen since Nasrallah was killed. "There are deputy commanders and there are replacements in case a commander is wounded in any post."

He added that Hezbollah, which fought Israel to a stalemate in their monthlong war in 2006, anticipated "the battle could be long."

Day by Day

BRITISH playwright and critic George Bernard Shaw once said: "One of the shortcomings of democracy is that it forces you to listen to the opinion of the fool. It gives the chance to 51 percent of the people to humiliate 49 percent."

This poignant statement encapsulates a fundamental tension within democratic systems: the inherent conflict between majority rule and minority rights.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Kuwait makes strides in GCC clean energy talks

DOHA, Sept 30, (KUNA): The 18th meeting of Undersecretaries of the GCC Ministries of Oil kicked off on Monday in Qatar with the participation of Kuwait.

In his speech, Director of Energy Policies and International Relations in Qatar Sheikh Mishaal Bin Jabr Al-Thani said that the importance of the meeting is as important as the strategy that the energy sector has.

He pointed out that the participation of the undersecretaries reflects the joint commitment to continue teamwork to enhance the energy sector in general and the oil and gas sector in particular, as it represents a main pillar for economic and social growth and stability in the GCC countries that have become providers of energy for international economy.

He mentioned that these meetings come in a very important time for international economy that is witnessing several developments, affirming the importance of focusing on coordination and cooperation in facing those challenges of the international energy sector.

He pointed out that cooperation between the GCC countries has always been an example for joint coordination and effort to confront various challenges, indicating that the meeting comes as an opportunity to exchange ideas and proposals about strengthening this cooperation and anticipating the future to develop the energy sector in line with global changes, especially due to the nature of the topics presented on the meeting's agenda.

After his participation in the meeting, Kuwait Undersecretary of the Oil Ministry and head of the Kuwaiti delegation Sheikh Nimr Fahad Al-Malik Al-Sabah said in a statement for KUNA that it has been agreed to rename the president of the energy team for the upcoming period and agreed to hold coordination meetings with member states ahead of the Gulf-China seminar on climate.

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Merging agencies could slash government spending by 50%

By Mohammad Ghanem and Mohammad Al-Musleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: A study carried out by the Ministry of Finance on 39 government entities revealed that the estimated expenditures for these entities could be reduced by up to 50 percent through the merger or abolition of government agencies, authorities and institutions with overlapping functions.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the study, which was referred to the Council of Ministers; indicating the merger or abolition will reduce government spending by 20 percent in the near term, and by 50 percent in the medium and long terms, as a result of the elimination of middle and leadership positions and bonuses.

A decrease of 25 percent is also expected through

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Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The State of Kuwait condemned on Monday the attack on the headquarters of the Ambassador of United Arab Emirates in Khartoum, rejecting such violations of international laws and norms.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed importance of respecting the sanctity of diplomatic missions and providing them with full protection, in accordance with the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961. (KUNA)

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has been receiving updates

from and providing guidance to his team throughout the weekend on the latest developments in the Middle East, Pentagon said Sunday.

A statement by Pentagon Press Secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder said that Austin and DoD leaders remain focused on the protection of US citizens and forces in the region, the defense of Israel, and the de-escalation of the situation through deterrence and diplomacy.

Secretary Austin stressed that the United States is determined to prevent Iran and Iranian-backed partners and proxies from exploiting the situation or expanding the conflict, Ryder carried on saying. (KUNA)

Major proposals on housing, accessibility, regulations set for Municipal Council talks

Al-Amir to lead discussions

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Technical Committee at the Municipal Council will discuss the allocation of a permanent headquarters for the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development at its meeting that will be presided over by Munira Al-Amir on Tuesday.

The committee will also refer to

the executive body the proposal of members Abdullatif Al-Daai and Sherifa Al-Shalfan on determining the locations of medium-density housing in the existing urban area, proposal of the committee's chairperson on determining the architectural identity of government buildings and proposal of Alia



Al-Amir

Al-Farsi to prevent delivery bikes from stopping and plying through sidewalks.

It will also discuss Abdullatif Al-Daai's proposal on allowing a covered setback for commercial activities, proposals related to building regulations, delay in the response of the executive body to Al-Farsi's proposal regarding the formation of a joint committee to follow up the implementation of the requirements for people with disabilities and the Kuwait Code for Accessibility according to the general design.

In a related context, the Legal and Financial Committee will hold its meeting on Wednesday, to be presided over by Fahad Al-Abdul Jader.

The agenda includes the following:

■ Farah Al-Rumi's proposal on preparing a sustainability regulation and guidelines for rehabilitating and preserving archaeological sites and historical buildings.

■ Sherifa Al-Shalfan's proposal on preparing a regulation for dismantling buildings based on a field study of the types of extracted buildings and the local market.

■ Letter of the Public Utilities Company regarding the advertising regulations.

■ Proposals of Fahad Al-Jader to form a committee specialized in studying proposals and requests for naming cities, suburbs, regions, roads, streets and squares; and amendment of some fees stipulated in Advertising Regulation no. 599/2023.

Ahmadi Committee to review fodder market and infrastructure proposals

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Ahmadi Governorate Committee in the Municipal Council will hold a meeting to be presided over by Nasser Al-Seyassah daily.

Items in the agenda of the meeting include the following:

■ Proposal of council member Fahd Al-Khenin to establish a joint market for fodder and livestock, as well as a slaughterhouse in Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential City;

■ Request to add a part of the public square to one of the plots in Mangaf, Block 52;

■ Request of the Ministry of Social Affairs to allocate a site for a walkway, three playgrounds, children's games center, lighting, landscaping and an irrigation network in Fahaeel, Block Four;

■ Request of members Nasser

Al-Jadaan and Nassar Al-Azmi to allocate a site for a walkway in Fahaeel, Block One;

■ Request of Kuwait National Petroleum Company to allocate a site for Fuel Filling Station No. 49 in Mahboula, Block Three;

■ Request of the Ministry of Social Affairs to amend the Municipal Council's decision to allocate a site for a Mini Central Market in Hadiya, Block One;

■ Request of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to allocate sites for basins, water channels and connections to collect and drain rainwater in Ahmadi and Mangaf;

■ Request of PART to allocate sites for 10 basins with seven water channels and an earthen barrier to collect and drain rainwater in Sabah Al-Ahmad and South Sabah Al-Ahmad residential areas.

Advancements in medical research

Ministry of Health launches 1st ENT training course for doctors

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The Ministry of Health organized the first training course for doctors of the Kuwaiti Board of Otorhinolaryngology (ENT) and participants from various specialties on the mechanism of conducting scientific research, with practical training on how to perform research and develop the necessary skills.

Head of the Otorhinolaryngology Department at Farwaniya Hospital and Director of the Otorhinolaryngology Program at the Ministry, Dr. Ahmad Al-Rashidi, said in a press statement on Saturday that the aim of the course, organized by the administration of the Kuwaiti Board of the Otorhinolaryngology Program, is to teach all the requirements and techniques needed to publish scientific research, both locally and internationally. Al-Rashidi emphasized that this initiative is part of the ministry's

ongoing efforts to develop and enhance the capabilities of its doctors. He also highlighted the continuous encouragement of the Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, to support ongoing medical education and raise the scientific and professional levels of doctors in Kuwait. The course was held with the support of officials from the Postgraduate Studies Department at the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specializations.

Scientific research

He added that Dr. Ahmed Haraz delivered a lecture on the principles and basics of scientific research and how to structure it to ensure its acceptance for international publication. The course saw notable participation from Kuwaiti Board doctors and other ministry doctors with an interest in scientific research.

Consultant Otorhinolaryngologist and Head of the College of Otorhi-



KUNA photo

Number of participants in the training course.

laryngology, Dr. Abdul Mohsen Al-Turki, explained that scientific research is essential for progress and improvement in medical services, keeping pace with medical advancements globally. He also indicated that similar scientific and research events would be organized in the future.

Al-Turki emphasized the impor-

tance of encouraging doctors to engage in medical research to enhance their skills and improve their ability to provide highly accurate diagnostic and treatment services, as well as the best health practices for society.

For his part, Consultant Otorhinolaryngologist and Scientific Research Officer at the Kuwaiti Board of

Otorhinolaryngology, Dr. Tamim Al-Ali, said that the interest of Kuwaiti Board doctors in scientific research and their efforts to learn its foundations is a clear sign of raising the level of future medical services and elevating Kuwait's medical standing among other nations.

Al-Ali stated that the ministry

places great importance on medical education and training programs and supports scientific activities and training courses to encourage the adoption of the latest global and local developments. This, he said, helps exchange knowledge and expertise, positively impacting patient care and the overall health system.



October

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Al-Seyassah photo

The launching of the, 'Their Future is a Trust 2' campaign.

Over 3K individuals to receive financial aid

'Their Future is a Trust 2' campaign launched to support needy students

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Chairman of the Union of Charitable Societies and Foundations Saad Al-Otaibi on Sunday announced the launching of the, 'Their Future is a Trust 2' campaign, which aims to provide financial support to the neediest students in Kuwait, as part of the ongoing efforts to support education and promote social responsibility.

Al-Otaibi stressed that the initiative stems from a deep belief in the importance of education in building a strong and sustainable future.

In his speech during the press conference held Sunday to announce the launching of the campaign, Al-Otaibi pointed out that "through this campaign, we seek to bridge the financial gaps for students whose families are unable to pay tuition fees to ensure that they continue their education without interruption. Education is the foundation upon which the future of Kuwaiti society is built."

He affirmed there is direct coordination with schools to ensure that donations reach the neediest students with complete transparency.

He praised the values embodied by this campaign, saying, "we do not only provide financial support, but we also establish the values of mercy and cooperation that distinguish our Kuwaiti society."

He said the campaign conveys a broader message than just financial support, as it contributes to strengthening community

partnership and building a generation capable of facing future challenges and contributing to the renaissance of Kuwait.

He pointed out that the Ministry of Social Affairs is fully supervising the campaign, while appreciating the Ministry of Information for its support of the campaign.

He also urged the schools hosting the beneficiaries of the campaign to cooperate with charitable societies by granting discounts for student fees, calling on those with money to support the students and orphans.

Meanwhile, campaign manager and member of Kuwait Charitable Societies Union (KCSU) Abdullah Al-Haider stated that "education is a fundamental pillar for advancing societies. The progress of countries is measured by the level of education, its quality and the number of learners in it. Interest in education is also reflected in society in all aspects of life -- economically, culturally, politically, socially and security-wise."

Al-Haider explained this is a continuation of last year's campaign. He cited statistics indicating that more than 3,000 students are unable to pay their tuition fees.

Moreover, Sinan Al-Ahmad, a member of KCSU, said: "One of the necessities for the stability of education is maintaining the student's attendance and not dropping out for any reason. This is what the initiative seeks by providing the required financial support for students whose parents are unable to pay their tuition fees."

News in Brief

Clinic tender announced: The Ministry of Health has announced its plan to float the tender for completing the remaining works for the construction and maintenance of the Farwaniya Specialized Health Clinic building according to a number of conditions, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The ministry called on the contractors to visit its Financial Affairs Department to obtain a compact disc containing the tender documents and submit a 'To Whom It May Concern' certificate issued by the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), confirming the absence of a suspension in the contractor's file for government contracts registered in the authority. It also emphasized that bids without this certificate will be rejected.

It added that the last date for submitting

bids is on Nov 11, through the bidding box at the Purchasing Department; stating the bids are valid for 90 days starting from the closing date.

Scholarships open: The Secretariat General of the Private Universities Council has announced the opening of electronic registration for the unified national admission test for those wishing to apply for internal scholarships in engineering courses from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm on Oct 1-7.

The Secretariat General also set the dates for the unified national test as a requirement for admission to engineering specializations courses as follows:
Saturday Oct 26, 2024, Saturday Nov 9, 2024, Saturday Nov 23, 2024.

10 tons of aid for displaced Sudanese

Kuwait Society for Relief launches 14th humanitarian flight to Sudan

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The 14th relief plane of the Kuwaiti airbridge took off, Monday, to Port Sudan International Airport, carrying ten tons of tents, organized by Kuwait Society for Relief (KSR), to shelter displaced people affected by rains, floods and ongoing conflicts in Sudan.

The Society's Director General Abdulaziz Al-Obaid told KUNA that the plane load comes at a time when the internal conflicts and natural disasters have increased in Sudan, including floods that hit many areas, resulting in hundreds of victims and thousands of displaced people.

KSR is working in parallel with the increasing urgent humanitarian needs due to the ongoing conflicts in Sudan to cooperate with official bodies inside and outside Kuwait to deliver various materials to those who need them, stressed Al-Obaid.

He praised the efforts made by the official supervising and supporting bodies, headed by the Kuwaiti Min-

istries of Social Affairs, Defense, Information and Foreign Affairs, which helped in facilitating the Kuwait air-bridge flights.

He appreciated the role of Kuwaiti charitable societies and organizations that are partners in the joint Kuwaiti humanitarian work, including the societies participating in the campaign for Sudan, as well as Kuwaiti people's efforts and charitable social institutions.

For his part, the society's head of relief and projects sector Mahmoud Al-Misbah affirmed to KUNA that the current flight comes within the campaign launched by KSR in partnership with eight Kuwaiti charitable societies and institutions, to fill the gap in urgent and pressing humanitarian needs in Sudan.

Al-Misbah noted that the organizations participating in the campaign include Charitable Organization, Society of the Revival of Islamic Heritage, Namaa Charity, Al-Najat Charity, Al-Nouri Charity, Direct Aid, Patient Aid, and Global Mercy.



KUNA photo
The 14th relief plane from the Kuwaiti Air Bridge carrying ten tons of tents to shelter displaced people affected by rains, floods and ongoing conflicts in Sudan.

Jahra Governor reiterates strong support for student-centric activities & exhibitions

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi reiterated his strong support for student-focused activities and exhibitions, particularly those that emphasize the teachings of Islam and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He was speaking at the "Prophet's Biography" exhibition, sponsored by him and organized by the Kuwaiti Teachers Association (Jahra Branch).

The event, held in the presence of numerous supervisors, teachers, and students from Jahra Governorate schools, fea-

tured a documentary film that highlighted the life and legacy of the Prophet.

Governor Al-Habashi expressed his deep appreciation for the efforts of the Teachers Association's President and members, acknowledging their dedication to fostering Islamic teachings through such educational initiatives.

He commended the creativity and innovation displayed at the exhibition and stressed the importance of continuing similar events to promote valuable educational messages to students.



Al-Seyassah photo
Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi with the teachers, and students from Jahra Governorate schools.

Amiri speech

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This is what Saudi Arabia and the Emirates have done; as well as the United States, Germany, France and many other countries where corruption is almost non-existent, because they have put in place modern legislation. They do not work with quotas and favoritism.

Today, the ministers of Finance, Commerce, Municipality and the rest of the service ministries must develop executive plans to address problems in their jurisdiction.

In fact, since His Highness the Amir outlined a reform roadmap in his speech, the Council of Ministers as a whole needs to take these issues more seriously in order to resolve them. Otherwise, people will lose faith in the government, while the number of crises will increase.

Kuwait makes

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He noted that the meeting tackled several topics related to Circular Carbon Economy and transition towards renewable energy instead of displaying Carbon neutrality strategies that GCC countries seek to achieve within the framework of international guidelines to reduce carbon emissions.

He stressed that Kuwait played a pivotal role at the meeting by submitting a number of important proposals, as Kuwait was among the countries supporting the development of the petroleum media strategy for the GCC countries, which aims to unify the Gulf media discourse on oil issues and enhance public awareness of the impor-

ance of the transition towards clean energy and Circular Carbon Economy.

Kuwait elevates

Continued from Page 1

The State of Kuwait called for solidarity among UN members, who should have a serious political will to reform international action including UNSC on the basis of democratic decision-making and fair representation of member countries as well as better deal with a world that is different than it was in 1945.

It will be illogical to meet aspirations of people, Kuwait argued, without punishing those who violated UN Charter, international law and international humanitarian law. "Justice and equality will not be achieved amidst double standards."

Kuwait, reaffirming its respect of countries' sovereignty and non-interference in their affairs, called for resolution of conflicts among countries through dialogue and peaceful means.

It reiterated support for just causes, foremost the Palestinian question and affirmed that peace in the region would only be achieved through establishment of the independent Palestinian State on the June 4, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital in accordance with UN resolutions and Arab peace initiative.

His Highness the Crown Prince, in a speech before the Summit of the Future, highlighted the UNSC's failure to stop the genocide in Palestine which "reflected the double standards in implementing the international law."

The UN commended the State of Kuwait for its support of UN agencies to achieve their objectives.

His Highness the Crown Prince, meanwhile, held a series of meetings with heads of state and government

Turkiye-Kuwait diplomacy marks 60 years of friendship

Turkish Embassy, UN-HABITAT Kuwait organize special Golden Mosque tour



Türkiye Ambassador Tuba Nur Sönmez and Dr. Amira Al-Hassan, the Head of the UN-HABITAT Kuwait (GCC) Office, pose for a group photo inside the Golden Mosque

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Turkish Embassy in Kuwait and UN-HABITAT Kuwait (GCC) Office held a special tour of the Golden Mosque, organized as part of a series of events marking the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Türkiye and Kuwait.

This beautiful mosque, completed in 2020, showcases a harmonious blend of Ottoman and Kuwaiti architecture. Designed by engineer Muhammad Amr and inspired by the renowned Ottoman architect Sinan Pasha, the mosque's golden domes and intricate details reflect the rich heritage of both nations. Spanning 1,600 square meters, the mosque features a grand prayer hall that accommodates 1,000 people and a women's section for 400. The Badriya Nasser Al-Jeyan Mosque, also known as the Golden Mosque, was established in 2020 as a donation from Sheikh Miteb Al-Sabah and bears the name of his mother.

The mosque's construction involved

materials imported from various regions of Türkiye, including: Travertine stone from Afyon and Denizli, Ceramics from Iznik and

Konya, Stained glass from historic periods of Istanbul, Wooden doors from Edirne, Chandeliers from Istanbul, Carpets from Gaziantep, Mihrab and

Minbar from Bursa.

The Golden Mosque stands as a powerful symbol of the strong and ever-growing ties between Türkiye and Kuwait.



Ambassador Tuba Nur Sönmez speaks at special tour of the Golden Mosque.

Ambassador Tuba Nur Sönmez and Dr. Amira Al-Hassan, the Head of the UN-HABITAT Kuwait (GCC) Office, were joined by members of the diplomatic corps, academics from the College of Architecture at Kuwait University, and cultural envoys in exploring the mosque's unique architectural and cultural style. Mr. Muhammad Amr, the mosque's designer, guided the guests throughout the tour.

Ambassador Sönmez emphasized the significance of the Golden Mosque as a symbol of the enduring and growing friendship between Türkiye and Kuwait. The event, part of a series of celebrations marking this milestone anniversary, underscored the historical and cultural connections between the two nations.

Awqaf Ministry strengthens anti-Islamophobia strategy

Al-Wasmi updates summer work for experts

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Director of the Civilization Communication Department at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Salah Aba Al-Khail confirmed that the department is improving its strategy to encourage ideological diversity and combat Islamophobia, reports Al-Anba daily.

Al-Khail affirmed these efforts are within the framework of Kuwait's global leadership in Islamic work; as reflected in the performance of the departments, centers and sectors of the ministry as a whole, in order to highlight the humanitarian role of the State in supporting Muslims in western countries, especially in light of the challenges they are facing in those countries. He pointed out that the valuable project adopted by the department aims to change the misconceptions about Islam at the local, regional and international levels.

He explained that this goal requires comprehensive social reforms to narrow the cultural and civilization gaps between peoples, especially those stemming from religious and cultural differences. He said building bridges of understanding between different peoples is on top of the priorities of the department, which is keen on spreading the values of societal and religious tolerance. He stressed that correcting misconceptions hindering cooperation between civilizations is essential in the department's path towards enhancing understanding and cultural dialogue.

He added that combating Islamophobia -- an excessive

and unjustified fear of Islam -- is one of the main axes in the strategy of the department. He affirmed the department remains committed to highlighting the humanitarian values of Islam and enhance the role played by Kuwait in supporting Muslims around the world, in line with the new world trends that reject violence and extremism.

He stated that the participation of the department in the Gothenburg International Exhibition in Sweden is part of efforts aimed at developing cultural and civilization communication. He added the distribution of the "Divine Calls" booklet in the Swedish language reflects the tolerant humanitarian values of Islam.

Meanwhile, Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi issued a ministerial decision regarding the assignment of experts for summer work.

The decision states that Article Two of Ministerial Resolution No. 233/2011 shall be replaced with the following text: "If the number of experts who meet the conditions for assignment to summer work exceeds one-third, they shall be assigned in the following order of priority:

- 1. Experts who have not previously been assigned and granted summer work bonus in the previous year,
 - 2. Experts who have been assigned the least number of times and received a summer work bonus,
 - 3. Occupants of the highest position stipulated in the Kuwaiti Experts Job Schedule attached to Civil Service Commission Resolution No. 6:1993 as follows:
 - Senior Expert, - First Expert, - Second Expert, - Third Expert, - Assistant Expert A, - Most senior in terms of appointment to the Experts Department, - The oldest in terms of age.
- The decision added: "All competent authorities must implement this decision, according to their capacity."

regarding the further promotion of relations and cooperation in political, development, investment, security, diplomatic and sport domains.

At the Gulf level, the State of Kuwait expressed determination to continue the march of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and to continue strategic partnerships with regional and international organizations.

The GCC has proven to be a foundation of stability and prosperity in "our region, and the GCC will always remain a voice of wisdom and moderation, and a beacon of constructive dialogue in a region engulfed in challenges and strategic transformations," said His Highness the Crown Prince.

His Highness the Crown Prince's meetings focused on development, economy and investment, reflecting his desire to see big companies transfer knowledge and expertise to the State of Kuwait.

His meeting with World Bank President Ajay Banga focused on development of services and consultations, and training programs for Kuwaitis.

His Highness the Crown Prince's meeting with Ruth Porat, President and Chief Investment Officer of Alphabet and its subsidiary Google, LLC, touched upon the framework agreement, the data center and transfer of knowledge and expertise to Kuwaitis.

The State of Kuwait tabled its development vision to its partners with the objective of transforming the nation into a trade and commercial hub.

Merging agencies

Continued from Page 1

The research findings indicate that subsequent to the merger, several new authorities and institutions were established. These include the Central

Agency for Information Technology, Public Authority for Communications and Information Technology, National Center for Cybersecurity, and the Communications Sector at the Ministry of Communication.

The study revealed the following proposals:

- Establishment of the Public Authority for Food Security after merging the Public Authority for Agriculture and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) and the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN),
- Abolish the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) and merge it with the Ministry of Public Works,
- Merge Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) with the Ministry of Information,
- Merge the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) and Kuwait Credit Bank (KCB) to become the Housing Finance and Welfare Authority in order to solve the housing issue,
- Abolish the Supreme Council for Planning and Development due to the existence of the Secretariat General for Planning and Development,
- Merge Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), Public-Private Partnership Authority, Privatization Authority and Small Projects Fund with the aim of attracting local and foreign capital,
- Merge the Public Authority for Civil Information and the Central Statistics Bureau to unify official statistics in the country,
- Put the Expropriation Department and Financial Controllers Authority under the management of the Ministry of Finance,
- Merge the Youth Authority, Sports Authority and Kuwait Anti-Doping Agency due to the similarity in the nature of work,
- Merge the Financial Investigations Unit and the National Bureau for Hu-

man Rights to be under the Ministry of Justice,

- Transform Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) as affiliated bodies instead of being independent entities,

- Merge or abolish the Ministry of Awqaf, Public Authority for Printing and Publishing the Holy Quran and the Secretariat General of Awqaf,

- Separate the judiciary from the Ministry of Justice and become an independent body called the Judicial Authority.

The study explained that the procedures for merging the entities will contribute to reducing expenses and stopping the inflation of the State's administrative structure.

Transaction freeze

Continued from Page 1

banks, urging them to quickly complete the procedures to avoid being subjected to investigation. He explained such an investigation is aimed at determining the reasons for not doing the biometric fingerprint procedures.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior, through the General Department of Criminal Evidence, announced that working hours at all biometric fingerprint centers and select shopping malls across various governorates will be extended until midnight today, Monday.

In a statement, the General Department of Security Relations and Media explained that this extension is aimed at easing the process for citizens to complete their biometric fingerprinting, as today marks the final deadline.

The ministry urged all citizens to complete the biometric fingerprint procedure to avoid suspension of their civil ID cards and all government and

banking transactions.

Starting tomorrow, October 1, 2024, biometric fingerprinting services at shopping malls will cease, but criminal evidence centers will continue to offer the service daily from 8 AM to 8 PM.

With the deadline for citizens to complete their biometric fingerprinting Monday, banking sources disclosed to Al-Rai that the duration for banks to freeze the accounts of Kuwaitis who fail to comply has been shortened to 30 days.

This new directive means that a "block" will be imposed on the accounts of non-compliant citizens, preventing any access to their bank balances starting November 1, rather than at the end of December as previously planned.

According to the banking plans, beginning October 1, access to all electronic channels and payment systems for customers who have not completed the biometric fingerprinting will be stopped.

This includes restrictions on viewing account balances, obtaining account statements, transferring money, and making payments via financial links or services such as "Wamd." In essence, all electronic transactions for those who have failed to fulfill the biometric fingerprint requirement will be suspended.

Furthermore, all bank cards -- including the K-Net, Visa, and MasterCard -- for non-compliant customers are expected to be deactivated by October 15.

This means these cards will no longer function for both withdrawals and deposits. During this time, customers will be forced to visit their banks in person to withdraw any funds from their accounts.

However, starting November 1, even in-person withdrawals will be prohibited, effectively barring customers from accessing their funds altogether.

INTERNATIONAL

'Potentially very destructive'

Powerful typhoon lashes Philippines

MANILA, Philippines, Sept 30, (AP): A powerful typhoon was lashing the northernmost islands of the Philippines Monday, prompting officials to evacuate villagers, shut down schools and inter-island ferries and warn of "potentially very destructive" damage to coastal villages.

Typhoon Krathon was last tracked over the coastal waters of Balintang island off the provinces of Cagayan and Batanes with sustained winds of up to 175 kph (109 mph) and gusts of up to 215 kph (133 mph), according to government forecasters.

The slow-moving Krathon was blowing westward and could strengthen into a super typhoon when it veers northeastward Tuesday toward Taiwan, they said.

There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage.

Gulmar Cabejo, a police officer on the island of Sabtang in typhoon-prone Batanes, said the streets were deserted in the town of more than 1,800 people

as the ferocious wind rattled roofs, walls and trees.

"There's nobody outside, zero, because the wind is so strong," Cabejo told The Associated Press by cellphone. "Nobody could stand normally outside in this wind, it will force anybody down to the ground."

Residents, locally renowned for their resilience against seasonal storms, strengthened their roofs with ropes, covered windows with wooden boards and secured their fishing boats away from the sea two days before the typhoon hit, he said.

The weather agency warned of "moderate to high risk of life-threatening storm surge" in the next 48 hours in the coastal villages of Batanes, the nearby Babuyan islands and Cagayan province and said fierce winds could rip off roofs, topple trees, damage farmlands and whip up high waves.

"The situation is potentially very destructive to the community," it said.

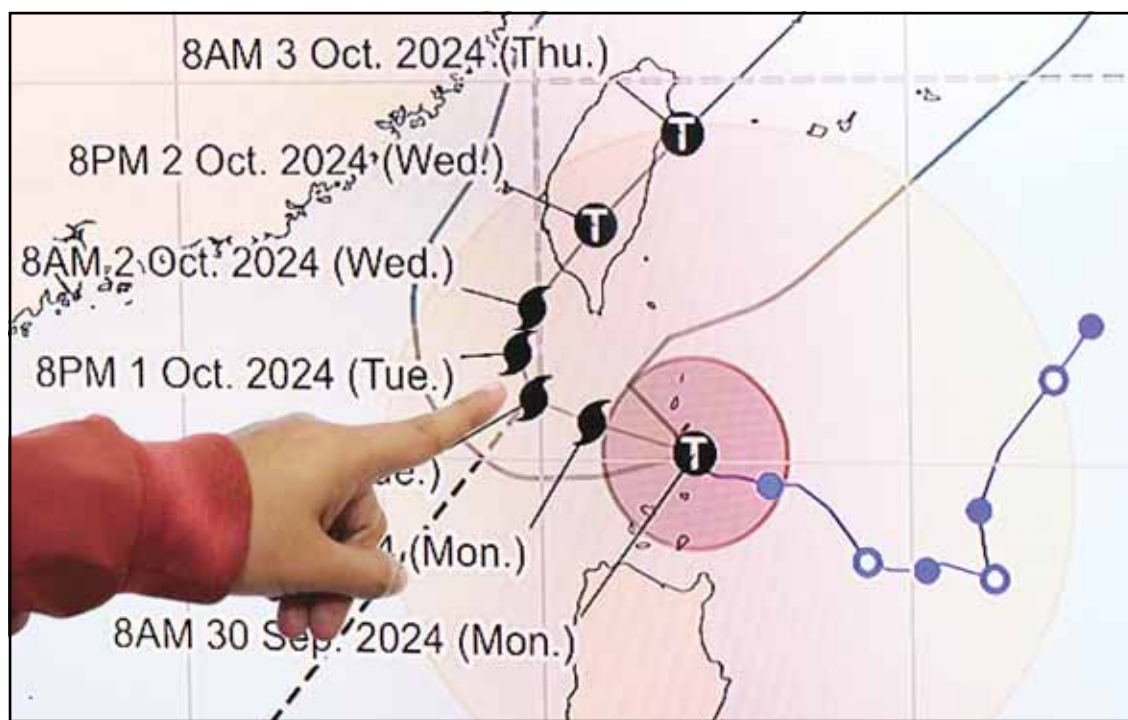
Hundreds of villagers were evacu-

ated away from the coast and flood-prone communities in Cagayan province, where power outages were reported. Classes in all levels were suspended Monday in several northern provinces as a precaution, officials said.

Sea voyages were also halted in northern towns and provinces being battered or threatened by the typhoon, locally called Julian, officials said.

About 20 storms and typhoons batter the Philippines each year. The archipelago also lies in the "Pacific Ring of Fire," a region along most of the Pacific Ocean rim where many volcanic eruptions and earthquakes occur, making the Southeast Asian nation one of the world's most disaster-prone.

In 2013, Typhoon Haiyan, one of the strongest recorded tropical cyclones in the world, left more than 7,300 people dead or missing, flattened entire villages, swept ships inland and displaced more than 5 million in the central Philippines.



Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration weather specialist Veronica Torres points at the path of powerful Typhoon Krathon on Sept 30, in Quezon city, Philippines as it is projected to go towards Taiwan the next day after hitting northern Philippines. (AP)

Top party leadership lineup unveiled

Ishiba to call Japan poll for Oct 27 once he takes office

TOKYO, Sept 30, (AP): Shigeru Ishiba, the head of Japan's governing party, plans to call a parliamentary election to be held on Oct. 27 after he is elected as prime minister on Tuesday.

Ishiba was chosen as the Liberal Democratic Party's leader on Friday and is assured to also succeed Fumio Kishida as prime minister because the party's coalition controls parliament.

Ishiba mentioned the election date as he announced his top party leadership lineup Monday ahead of forming his Cabinet. The plan is not official since he is not prime minister yet, but Ishiba said he mentioned the date early for the logistical convenience of those

who have to prepare on relatively short notice.

"I believe it is important to have the new administration get the public's judgment as soon as possible," Ishiba said.

He appointed former Environment Minister Shinjiro Koizumi, who came in third in the party leadership race, to head the party's election task force.

He is expected to name defense experts and his longtime confidantes Takeshi Iwata as foreign minister and Gen Nakatani as defense chief once he takes office.

Ishiba has proposed an Asian version of the NATO military alliance and more discussion among regional

partners about the use of the U.S. nuclear deterrence. He also suggested a more equal Japan-U.S. security alliance, including joint management of US bases in Japan and having Japanese Self Defense Force bases in the United States.

The LDP has had a nearly unbroken tenure governing Japan since World War II. The party members may have seen Ishiba's more centrist views as crucial in pushing back challenges by the liberal-leaning opposition and winning voter support as the party reels from corruption scandals that drove down Kishida's popularity.

Ishiba on Friday stressed Japan needs

to reinforce its security, noting recent violations of Japanese airspace by Russian and Chinese warplanes and repeated missile launches by North Korea.

He pledged to continue Kishida's economic policy aimed at pulling Japan out of deflation and achieving real salary increases, while tackling challenges such as Japan's declining birthrate and population and resilience to natural disasters.

Ishiba, first elected to parliament in 1986, has served as defense minister, agriculture minister and in other key Cabinet posts, and was LDP secretary general under former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.



Shigeru Ishiba, the head of Japan's governing party, the Liberal Democratic Party speaks during a press conference at the party's headquarters in Tokyo on Sept 30 to announce that he plans to call a parliamentary election on Oct 27 after he is formally elected as prime minister. (AP)

South Korea gives prison sentences to 3 officers over 'Halloween crush'

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 30, (AP): A South Korean court gave three police officers prison sentences on Monday over their botched handling of a 2022 Halloween crush in a Seoul nightlife district that killed nearly 160 people.

It was the first conviction of officials over the failure by authorities to prevent or adequately respond to the overcrowding that occurred in the popular Itaewon district. No top-level officials have been charged or held accountable, prompting criticism from bereaved families and opposition politicians.

The crush, one of the biggest peacetime disasters in South Korea, caused a nationwide outpouring of grief. The victims, who were mostly in their 20s and 30s, had gathered in Itaewon for Halloween celebrations.

The Seoul Western District Court sentenced Lee Im-jae, the former chief of Seoul's Yongsan police station, whose jurisdiction includes Itaewon, to three years in prison. It sentenced another Yongsan police officer to two years in prison and gave a third officer a suspended two-year term.

The three officers were convicted of professional negligence result-

ing in death. The court ruled that the crush wasn't a natural disaster and could have been prevented or the toll reduced if the three officers had prepared properly for the crowd, alerted others of the danger quickly and supervised other police officers appropriately.

The police officers and prosecutors can both appeal the ruling.

The court also ruled that Park Hee-young, head of the Yongsan ward office, and three other ward officials were not guilty. It said a ward office was unlikely to have a legal right to control or break up a crowd of people.

Bereaved family members criticized the acquittal of Park and the other ward officials.

"Does this make sense? We can't really accept this," Lee Jeong-min, a representative of the families, told reporters.

In early 2023, a police special investigation concluded that police and municipal officials had failed to formulate effective crowd control measures despite anticipating a huge number of people in Itaewon. Investigators said police also ignored hotline calls by pedestrians who warned of swelling crowds before the surge turned deadly.



Bereaved family members of the victims of the Halloween crush in 2022 react at the Seoul Western District Court in Seoul, South Korea on Sept 30. (AP)

Lat/Am

8 dead in Colombia copter crash: Eight people were killed after a Colombian Air Force helicopter crashed Sunday morning during a humanitarian mission in the eastern department of Vichada, said President Gustavo Petro.

Petro offered "a hug of solidarity" for the bereaved families as the country mourns the deceased in the tragedy, according to the president's social media account on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Earlier, the Colombian Air Force said that the Huey II helicopter, with registration number FAC-4441, had lost contact while on a medical mission. Search and rescue operations were immediately launched after the crash. (Xinhua)

Colombia police kills crime leader: Colombian police have shot and killed Juan Carlos Rodriguez, alias "Zeus," one of the country's most dangerous criminals and the leader of the organized crime ring Clan del Golfo, the National Police of Colombia (PNC) confirmed Sunday.

Rodriguez, an ex-military man and fugitive, was killed on Saturday along

with seven of his men during a gunfight with police in the northwest Colombian department of Antioquia.

"In the development of Operation Agamemnon, Juan Carlos Rodriguez, leader of the Magdalena Medio Block of the 'Clan del Golfo,' died," announced PNC General Director William Salamanca on X.

The joint operation to capture Rodriguez involved the police, army, air force and the Attorney General's Office. (Xinhua)

Brazil lake shocks park visitors: The lake in Sao Paulo's iconic Ibirapuera Park has turned green in recent weeks, as Brazil grapples with a historic drought, both amusing and alarming parkgoers.

Its verdant color stems from a combination of an algal bloom, abundant nutrients, high temperatures and a lack of rain in the Brazilian metropolis, City Hall said in a statement Thursday. It added that the lake's low water level makes it harder for a pump to remove the algae.

Sidney Cardoso, a 49-year-old photographer, said he had never seen the lake's water look so green. (AP)



In this aerial image of the Kathmandu valley, Bagmati River is seen flooded due to heavy rains in Kathmandu, Nepal on Sept 28. (AP)

Recovery work stepped up

Nepal flood deaths reach 193

KATHMANDU, Nepal, Sept 30, (AP): The number of people killed by flooding and landslides triggered by heavy rainfall over the weekend in Nepal reached 193 while recovery and rescue work stepped up Monday.

Many of the deaths were in the capital, Kathmandu, which got heavy rainfall, and much of southern part of the city was flooded. Police said in a statement that 31 people were still reported missing and 96 people were injured across the Himalayan nation.

A landslide killed three dozen people on a blocked highway about 16 kilometers (10 miles) from Kathmandu. The landslide buried at least three buses and other vehicles where people were sleeping because the highway was blocked.

Kathmandu had remained cut off all weekend as the three highways out of the city were blocked by landslides. Workers were able to temporarily open up the key Prithvi highway, removing rocks, mud and trees that had been washed from the mountains.

The home minister announced temporary shelters would be built for people who lost their homes and monetary help would be available for the families of those killed and to the people who were injured by the flooding and landslides.

Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli was returning home Monday from attending the U.N. General Assembly meeting and has called an emergency meeting, his office said.

Improved weather has allowed rescue and recovery work to be stepped up.

Residents in the southern part of Kathmandu, which was inundated on Saturday, were cleaning up houses as water levels began to recede. At least 34 people were killed in Kathmandu, which was the hardest hit by flooding.

Police and soldiers were assisting with rescue efforts, while heavy equipment was used to clear the landslides from the roads. The government announced it was closing schools and colleges across Nepal for the next three days.

The monsoon season began in June and usually ends by mid-September.

Meanwhile, in northern Bangladesh, about 60,000 people were affected by flooding in low-lying areas because of rains and rising water from upstream India.

People have taken shelter on roads and flood protection embankments in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts, the English-language Daily Star reported.

The River Teesta that crosses the border was overflowing at some points and the Dharala and Dudhkumar rivers in the Rangpur region were rising but remained below danger levels, the Dhaka-based Flood Forecasting and Warning Center said Monday. Waters could start receding in a day or two, it said.

Bangladesh is a low-lying delta nation crisscrossed by about 230 rivers, including more than 50 that cross borders.

Region votes in final phase of polls

India silenced dissenting voices: top Kashmir leader

SRINAGAR, India, Sept 30, (AP): Ahead of the final phase of a local election in Indian-controlled Kashmir, a key resistance leader says the regional polls to choose a local government will not resolve the decades-old conflict that is at the heart of a dispute between New Delhi and Pakistan.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who has spent most of the last five years under house detention, said the polls are being held as political voices contesting India's sovereignty over the region remain silenced after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government stripped the region of its long-held semi-autonomy in 2019.

The detained leader said in a phone interview with The Associated Press that the election, touted by the Modi government as a "festival of democracy" in the region, cannot be an alternative to resolving the dispute.

"These elections cannot be the means to address the larger Kashmir issue," said Mirwaiz, who is also an influential Muslim cleric and custodian of the six-century-old grand mosque in the region's main Srinagar city, the urban heartland of anti-India sentiment.

The multistage election, the last phase of which is being held Tuesday, will allow Kashmir to have its own truncated government and a regional legislature with limited powers. It is the first such vote in a decade and the first since 2019, when New Delhi downgraded and divided the former state into two centrally governed union territories - Ladakh and Jammu-Kashmir - both ruled directly by New Delhi through unelected bureaucrats.

Authorities have said the election will bring democracy to the region after more than three decades of strife, but many locals see the vote as an opportunity not only to elect their own representatives but also to register their protest against the 2019 changes they fear could dilute the region's demographics.

India's clampdown following the 2019 move "has silenced people" in the region who "feel dispossessed and disempowered," Mirwaiz said.

"You may not see active turmoil like before 2019 but there is a strong, latent public resistance to all this," he said. "We have been forcibly silenced, but silence is not agreement."

India's sudden move, which largely resonated in India and among Modi supporters, was mostly opposed in Kashmir as an assault on its identity and autonomy.



Supporters assemble to welcome top Kashmiri separatist leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq (center) as he arrives to offer Friday prayers outside the Jamia Masjid or Grand Mosque in Srinagar, Indian controlled Kashmir, Sept. 22, 2023. (AP)



Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, and the trainees in a group photo.



Trainees explaining the details of various projects during the PR Academy.

Offering hands-on experience in PR and Media for university students and fresh graduates

Kuwait Finance House concludes first edition of PR Academy program

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) recently concluded its inaugural PR Academy program. Designed to educate undergraduate students and recent graduates, the program focused on the foundational principles of public relations and media, as well as their practical application within KFH departments. This initiative aligns with KFH's commitment to social responsibility and the development of young talent.

On this occasion, KFH held a closing ceremony to honor the trainees. During the ceremony, the participants presented their projects they developed throughout the program to the Bank's executive management represented by Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar.

In his speech, AlOmar commended the trainees for the exceptional skills they acquired through the program and the distinctive practical projects they created as a result.

He emphasized that KFH is committed to offering the most advanced training programs, utilizing the latest and highest quality standards. This enables young people to develop their skills and invest their time effectively. He pointed out that the four-week program included comprehensive lectures, workshops, and seminars, as well as visits to KFH's strategic partners and several government agencies.

AlOmar stressed KFH's role in supporting students, youth and national cadres and offering the best training programs in line with its social responsibility. Additionally, KFH continues to hone the talents and skills of young people and harness all efforts to enhance their capabilities and provide them with technical and practical expertise.

Meanwhile, KFH Deputy General Manager for Public Relations and Media, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, commended the success of the PR Academy. This initiative, conceived and executed by the Public Relations and Media team at KFH, received further support from executive management and the relevant departments under the bank's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy and as part of its support for youth.

Al-Ruwaieh added that the program had successfully achieved its goals of training students and young people in the fundamentals of public relations and media. This was clearly demonstrated by the impressive projects presented by the trainees. He commended their innovative ideas and meticulous attention to detail, highlighting the depth of their understanding of the knowledge gained through the workshops they had attended.

He pointed out that 20 trainees were selected out of 400 applicants. The selection process was rigorous, involving careful evaluation and personal interviews with KFH representatives from the Public Relations and Media, and Human Resources departments. He also commended the trainees for their enthusiastic participation in the program and the valuable hands-on experience they gained in

understanding the functions of public relations and media, both in general and specifically within the private sector.

Al-Ruwaieh explained that the program involved important aspects of PR and media (i.e. public relations, sustainability, social responsibility, media relations, journalistic writing skills, communication with various media outlets, event management, social media content management, communicating with the public, government relations and communicating with official authorities). The program also included photography and film editing, in addition to other media skills.

He went on to say that the training program focused on key aspects of a public relations and media employee's work. This included appearing on camera, interacting with the public, engaging with customers through official media platforms, and other practical exercises. These exercises offered trainees the opportunity to discover their potential in various fields.

Al-Ruwaieh revealed that KFH will continue to host similar training programs that contribute to the development and empowerment of youth in the PR and Media. He revealed that the upcoming editions will be developed to include new ideas.

He also stressed the importance of public relations and media as a key factor of success for any institution, noting that public relations have a major role in supporting the strategic objectives of the organization.

Anil Kapoor to inaugurate expanded showroom

Malabar Gold & Diamonds to inaugurate 'revamped' Al Rai showroom on Oct 3rd

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the 6th largest jewellery retailer globally with over 360 showrooms across 13 countries, is gearing up for the grand inauguration of their expanded and renovated showroom at Lulu Hypermarket in Al Rai. The revamped showroom will be launched by Bollywood actor and brand ambassador of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Anil Kapoor. The grand inauguration, which is set for the 3rd October at 7.30 pm, will unveil a stunning new look of the showroom to jewellery lovers in Kuwait, with an enhance portfolio of jewellery designs and amenities.

The newly revamped showroom will showcase an extensive selection of over 20,000 exquisite designs in gold, diamonds, and precious gems curated from 20 countries. Catering to every jewellery lover's taste, the showroom features a vast array of options for daily wear, office wear, special occasions, and bridal collections. In addition to an exclusive 'Zoul-lifestyle jewellery' corner and dedicated Mine area, the showroom proudly showcases Malabar Gold & Diamonds' various exclusive brands such as Era-Uncut diamond jewellery, Viraaaz-Royal



Anil Kapoor

Polkijewellery, Ethnix-handcrafted designer jewellery, Precia-Gem jewellery, Divine-Indian Heritage jewellery and Starlet-Kids jewellery. As part of the showroom's inaugural offers, customers shopping at the Al Rai showroom on the 3rd of October, will be eligible for assured gold coins on purchase of diamond & precious gem jewellery.

"The showroom at Al Rai, which was originally launched in 2011, marked Malabar Gold & Diamonds debut in Kuwait. Since then, we have made remarkable strides, expanding

to eight world-class showrooms with more on the horizon, cementing our position as the leading jewellery retailer in the country. The showroom at Al Rai has undergone a tremendous transformation, in terms of both the variety of jewellery that is available and amenities, ensuring that our valued customers can indulge in a jewellery shopping experience like never before. The presence of the iconic Anil Kapoor to inaugurate this showroom makes the occasion even more special, as he has been a true ambassador for our brand on a global scale. We warmly welcome everyone to celebrate this achievement with us", commented Mr. Shamlal Ahmed, MD-International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds has an expansive presence of 8 world-class showrooms in Kuwait, located across Al Rai, Dajejj, Mailya, Fahaheel, Mahboula, Salmiya, Jeleeb Al Shuyuoukh and Jahra.

In line with the brand's aim of expanding its retail footprint across the globe, Malabar Gold & Diamonds has charted an expansive expansion plan for the coming months, with 20 new showrooms launches planned before Diwali across the UAE, Qatar, KSA, USA & India.

Reinforcing customer rewards & environmental sustainability

Gulf Bank offers free premiere of 'The Wild Robot' for 'Neo' account holders

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: As part of its efforts to reward customers, Gulf Bank, in collaboration with Vox Cinemas, is offering Neo account holders and their children a free opportunity to attend the premiere of the children's movie The Wild Robot. The film teaches children valuable skills about wildlife, including how to protect the environment, avoid risks, and communicate with animals.

This initiative is one of many ongoing collaborations with Vox Cinemas, giving Gulf Bank customers across different segments the chance to attend film premieres either for free or at exclusive discounts.

The event reflects Gulf Bank's ongoing commitment to offering enjoyable experiences for children and families. Neo account holders will have the chance to attend the premiere of The Wild Robot and take part in fun activities, including playing new games and face painting.

As part of its commitment to environmental sustainability and customer satisfaction, Gulf Bank regularly organizes events for different customer groups. The bank places a strong emphasis on teaching the younger generation the value of saving and the importance of protecting the environment.

The Neo Account offers parents a simple and secure way to build their children's financial future, while teaching them the importance of saving and



Mascot of the Neo Account interacts with children outside the cinema.

financial responsibility from a young age. Available for children up to 14 years old, the account can be opened by parents with no minimum balance or fees at any Gulf Bank branch.

Gulf Bank's rewards program stands out as the most efficient and rewarding in Kuwait, offering customers the ability to redeem points for airline tickets across all airlines and book stays at over 300,000 hotels around the world.

Gulf Bank aims to be Kuwait's leading bank, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace to deliver exceptional customer service while contributing sustainably to the community. Through its extensive branch network

and innovative digital services, the bank empowers customers to conduct banking transactions conveniently and efficiently, ensuring a seamless experience.

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



Photos during the event.



Dr. Sameer Humad elected new president for 2024-2026

Indian Doctors Forum, Kuwait conducts Annual General Meeting

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Indian Doctors Forum is one of the most reputed and elite expatriate organisations in Kuwait. It has completed two glorious decades of serving all the expatriate communities in Kuwait by conducting Health Screening Camps, Awareness Programs and Teleconsultations.

On 27th September 2024, Indian Doctors Forum conducted its Annual General Meeting at Regency Hotel. The objective of the meeting was to form a newly elected body of Office bearers. Dr Diwakara Chaluvaiah, President of the tenure of 2022 to 2024, handed over the charge to Dr Sameer Humad, the newly elected President for the tenure of 2024-2026. The other new office bearers are- Vice Presidents Dr Mohan Ram and Dr Sushovana Sujit Nair, General Secretary Dr Phillipose George, Joint General Secretary Dr Rajendra

Mishra, Treasurer Dr Sunny Joseph Varghese, Joint Treasurer Dr Jibin John Thomas, Community Secretary Dr Rayavaram Raghunandan, Joint Community Secretary Dr Shriram Nathan, Membership Secretary Dr Imtiyaz Nawaz, Joint Membership Secretary Dr Mohd Umar Tak, Cultural Secretary Dr Anila Albert, Joint Cultural Secretary Dr Fibisha Nidal, Communication Secretary Dr Shahed Khan Pathan and Joint Communication Secretary Dr Rajesh Vasudeva.

There was a huge turn up of the members and their families. The meeting was extremely well organised anchored by Dr Soumya Shetty. The outgoing team furnished their annual report in a very professional manner. Some necessary amendments of the constitution were accepted and passed.

Two eminent doctors, Dr Ramesh Pandita, consultant haematologist and Dr Abdul Mohammed Sukkur consultant cardiologist were warmly felicitated as they are leaving Kuwait after their long and illustrious careers of practice in Kuwait.

Some extremely talented and meritorious students of tenth and twelfth grade were felicitated by offering them Certificate of Merit.

A magic show was organised to keep the kids busy while the meeting was going on.

The meeting was followed by a heartwarming soulful cultural event of songs and dances participated by the doctors and their families. Overall, it was an event which will be remembered for a long time.

Colón's new single 'La Señora' honors Guzmán's wife

'El Chapo' lawyer turns narco-fame into music career

MEXICO CITY, Sept 30, (AP) — Riding in a black SUV with tinted windows, lawyer Mariel Colón rolls up to the gates of a remote mansion, strolling past a security guard side-by-side with Emma Coronel, the wife of notorious drug lord Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán.

Sporting suits and sunglasses, the pair stride into a dimly lit room full of slickly dressed men smoking cigars.

All to the roar of trumpets. The scene is from "La Señora," the latest music video from Colón, who spent several years working as a defense lawyer for Guzmán while he faced trial in a US court. Now, at a time when regional Mexican music is becoming a global phenomenon, the 31-year-old is leveraging her association with the former leader of the Sinaloa Cartel to launch her music career under the stage name of "Mariel La Abogada" (Mariel, the Lawyer).

"La Señora" features — and pays tribute to — Guzmán's wife, who was released from prison last year and has struggled to find work. It paved the way for the two to model together last weekend during Milan Fashion Week, raising eyebrows in Italy and beyond.

"(My work) opens doors for me because of the morbid, because of people's curiosity ... They want to understand this," Colón told The Associated Press. "I've always told people that Mariel is a singer who became a lawyer."

The Puerto Rican daughter of a music director grew up listening to Mexican ballads, loving the brokenhearted pas-

sion infused in the music. She always wanted to be a singer, but her family pushed her to pursue a law degree.

She began working for Guzmán's defense team in 2018 after graduating from law school in the US and stumbling upon a Craigslist ad seeking a part-time paralegal to help prepare a Spanish-speaking client for trial.

It was only later that she learned she would be working with Guzmán, taking him and Coronel as clients full time. She saw it as a "great opportunity professionally" and said she wasn't easily intimidated.

Once among the most wanted men in the world, Guzmán led his Sinaloa Cartel in a bloody war for control of the international drug trade, gaining a cinematic level of notoriety for his dramatic prison escapes before his extradition to the US in 2017. Now his sons, known as "Los Chapitos," are locked in a deadly power struggle with another faction of the cartel, leaving mutilated bodies around the state capital.

"(People ask) how I can do this job, that I'm part of the mafia, how can I sleep at night?" Colón said. "I don't care what they say about me. I sleep very well at night."

Colón is one of few people who maintain regular contact with Guzmán. She visits him three times a month in the maximum security prison in Colorado where he's serving a life sentence. She declined to discuss details of Guzmán's cases, citing attorney-client privilege.

Seeking to build a rapport, Colón sings to Guzmán and other clients, who have included other Mexican drug traf-



Mariel Colón wears a creation as part of the April Black Diamond Spring Summer 2025 collection, in Milan, Italy, Sunday, Sept. 22. (AP)

fickers and, for a brief time, Jeffrey Epstein, who killed himself in 2019 while awaiting trial on sex-trafficking charges. Colón serenades Guzmán with Mexican classics from bands

including Los Alegres del Barranco and Tucanes de Tijuana. To this day, she said, he's among the first to hear her new music.

"Whatever genre, anything that was coming out that I liked, I would sing it to him because he doesn't have a radio," she said.

Her musical career began little more than a year ago, when she released her first video, "La Abogada," which features Colón dressed in a pink suit, crooning to law enforcement from a courtroom. Like much of the genre, her music is diverse, ranging from percussion-heavy banda to character-focused ballads known as corridos.

"La Señora" features a table sprinkled with diamonds, Guzmán's wife astride a trotting horse and strolling beside a pool.

Colón said the song was based on Coronel's life, sending a message of redemption and second chances. It was also a way to offer the 35-year-old work, a condition of her probation.

Coronel, a former beauty queen, was released from prison last year after completing her three-year sentence for drug trafficking and money laundering in relation to her husband's drug empire. Coronel declined to be interviewed.

"A small waist and beautiful eyes. A brain for business and a strong voice for the bad boys. She only shows her affectionate side to El Chaparrito," Colón belts out in her ballad. "El Chaparrito," meaning "the little shorty," plays with Guzmán's nickname.

Film



This image released by Universal Pictures shows a scene from DreamWorks Animation's 'Wild Robot.' (AP)

A soulful tale of kindness and survival

'Wild Robot' is stunning and moving

By Mark Kennedy

In the opening scenes of "The Wild Robot," a chirpy metal android with a state-of-the-art processing unit wanders around a forest asking confused animals if it can help them, offering discount codes and stickers for future customers. "Did anyone order me?" it asks.

We did, it turned out. This adaptation of Peter Brown's winning middle grade novel is an absolute movie triumph, a soulful sweet-sad animated journey that may have your kids asking why you're tearing up so much. It is destined to be ordered and reordered.

Chris Sanders, the writer-director of "How to Train Your Dragon," "The Croods" and "Lilo & Stitch," is the writer and director here. The assignment is daunting: Turn a beloved book with a few illustrations into a full-length movie without losing its tangy heart. Sanders didn't just nail it; he lasered it.

"The Wild Robot" is the fish-out-of-water tale of a futuristic helper robot who ends up marooned on an island when a storm sinks its container ship. It learns to adapt and connect with critters it has no programming for, even adopting the cutest gosling you'll ever see (sorry, Ryan).

The robot - ROZZUM unit 7134, or "Roz" for short - is voiced by Lupita Nyong'o in a spectacularly nuanced performance, sprightly robotic at first and eventually natural and wry. The other voice actors - Pedro Pascal, Catherine O'Hara, Bill Nighy, Kit Connor, Stephanie Hsu, Mark Hamill, Matt Berry and Ving Rhames - aren't just hired guns that other animated movies use to entice an audience. Each is wonderfully calibrated.

The movie keeps the basic structure of the book but ups some characters - like elevating the importance of Pascal's red fox - and has a tendency to go a little Hollywood, like sending a robot army after Roz and setting everything on fire. But it never lags, the visual effects are startling, and



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Roz, voiced by Lupita Nyong'o (background), and Brightbill, voiced by Kit Connor, in a scene from DreamWorks Animation's 'Wild Robot.' (AP)

its soul is intact.

"The Wild Robot" is often a story about programing - natural and artificial - and how that can help and hinder. "I do not have the programing to be a mother," Roz tells a mother possum (a superb O'Hara). She replies: "None of us does."

Roz has ended up on an island where survival of the fittest and instinct are the rule, where animals don't sing and dance but struggle and hunt each other. "Kindness is not a survival skill," our robot is told by the fox.

"The Wild Robot" is also a celebration of adoption and found families. The push-and-pull of being a par-

ent is there, as is the celebration of friendship. And there is death, an honest reminder of the struggle to stay alive.

Visually, it is stunning, a textured world that is almost painterly. You can see snowflakes settle on mottled fur, moss on rocks, individual leaves in a den. The images of a tree covered in butterflies is so spectacular it should be a poster we all can frame. No offense to Roz, but regular computer-generated efforts - "Transformers One," we're looking at you - look lackluster in comparison.

Roz accidentally causes the death of a goose family, save for an unbroken egg. That orphan is now Roz's obligation - she must teach it to eat, swim and fly, culminating in winter migration. And she must face tough questions - about how a robot came to raise a little goose. "He found where he belongs," Roz says with cheerful sadness when her gosling swims to a group of geese.

What is home is another theme: Roz feels the pull to return to her factory but only out of obligation. Her heart is on this island and the friends she has made, especially after making a safe place for all creatures during a freezing winter. Her kindness changes the way the animals see each other, even if it cannot change their appetites.

Being a mother changes Roz, too, unmooring her from her ones and zeroes, making her improvise and even willing to break some rules, like learning to lie to create a creative bedtime story. A busted-up robot from the shipwreck is stunned by what Roz has become when she stops by to consult: "You should not feel anything at all."

As for you? You're going to have all the feels. Surrender. Is this the best animated movie of the year? Totally, so far. It might even be the best movie of the year. See you at the Oscars, Roz.

"The Wild Robot," a Universal release in theaters Friday, is rated PG for action/peril and thematic elements. Running time: 101 minutes. Four stars out of four. (AP)

Variety

NEW DELHI: The Indian government on Monday conferred the film-industry's highest award, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, to veteran actor **Mithun Chakraborty**, 74.



Chakraborty

The actor-turned-politician has also been a lawmaker in the Indian parliament's upper house Rajya Sabha. Currently, he is a member of the country's main ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Chakraborty made his acting debut in the mid-1970s and contributed immensely to the country's film industry for over four decades by acting in more than 350 films in different languages.

He rose to fame in 1982 after he acted in the film "Disco Dancer." His inimitable dance moves made him a household name in the country.

The actor will be given the award at the 70th National Film Awards ceremony in New Delhi next week. (Xinhua)

LONDON: Actor **Damian Lewis** drove a flock of sheep across the River Thames on Sunday in homage to a centuries-old tradition.

Lewis is among thousands of people granted the honorary title of Freeman of the City of London, which in medieval times came with the right to bring livestock across the river to market without paying tolls.

More than 1,000 freemen exercised that right on Sunday in the annual London Sheep Drive, many wearing black hats and red cloaks. Lewis wore his grandfather's wool coat and carried a crook as he led the throng herding the animals over Southwark Bridge.

"It was fabulous," said Lewis, star of "Band of Brothers," "Homeland" and "Wolf Hall." (AP)

Lewis was asked to represent the Worshipful Company of Woolmen, a trade guild dating to the 12th century. He said he was pleased to be part of "this eccentric, very British day, honoring an old tradition." (AP)



This image released by Lionsgate shows Nathalie Emmanuel in a scene from 'Megalopolis.' (AP)

Family film 'Inside Out 2' powers box office recovery

'Megalopolis' flops, 'The Wild Robot' soars at box office

NEW YORK, Sept 30, (AP) — Francis Ford Coppola's decades-in-the-making, self-financed epic "Megalopolis" flopped with moviegoers, while the acclaimed DreamWorks Animation family film "The Wild Robot" soared to No. 1 at the weekend box office.

"The Wild Robot," Chris Sanders' adaptation of Peter Brown's bestseller, outperformed expectations to launch with \$35 million in ticket sales in US and Canada theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday. "Wild Robot" was poised to do well after critics raved about the story of a shipwrecked robot who raises an orphan gosling. Audiences agreed, giving the film an A CinemaScore. "Wild Robot" is likely set up a long and lucrative run for the Universal Pictures release.

Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for Comscore, predicts "The Wild Robot" "may take a page from the 'Elemental' playbook by opening to respectable box office and

then looking toward long-term playability." Pixar's "Elemental," which like "The Wild Robot" wasn't a sequel, debuted with a modest \$30 million but went on to gross nearly \$500 million worldwide.

Genre (cross head)

Family movies, led by the year's biggest hit in "Inside Out 2," have particularly powered the box office this year. David A. Gross, a film consultant who publishes a newsletter for Franchise Entertainment, said the genre should reach \$6 billion worldwide in 2024 - which, he noted, "is back to pre-pandemic levels."

"Megalopolis," Coppola's vision of a Roman epic set in modern-day New York, was never expected to perform close to that level. But the film's \$4 million debut was still sobering for a movie that Coppola bankrolled himself for \$120 million. Following its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival, critics have been mixed on Coppola's first film in

13 years. Audiences gave in a D+ CinemaScore.

By any financial measure, "Megalopolis" was a mega-flop. But from the start, the 85-year-old Coppola maintained money wasn't his concern. Coppola fashioned the film, which he first began developing in the late 1970s, as a grand personal statement about human possibility.

"Everyone's so worried about money," Coppola told The Associated Press in an interview ahead of the film's release. "I say: Give me less money and give me more friends."

Studios passed on "Megalopolis" after Cannes. Lionsgate ultimately stepped forward to distribute it, for a fee. Coppola also picked up the tab for most of its \$15 million in marketing costs. The film, which stars Adam Driver, Nathalie Emmanuel and Aubrey Plaza, also played in about 200 IMAX locations, which accounted for \$1.8 million of its ticket sales.



Kris Kristofferson performs in concert at The American Music Theatre, April 12, 2019, in Lancaster, Pa. (AP)

Obituary

Country music superstar and A-list actor

Kris Kristofferson, Hollywood icon, dies

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 30, (AP) — Kris Kristofferson, a Rhodes scholar with a deft writing style and rough charisma who became a country music superstar and an A-list Hollywood actor, has died.

Kristofferson died at his home on Maui, Hawaii on Saturday, family spokeswoman Ebbe McFarland said in an email. He was 88.

McFarland said Kristofferson died peacefully, surrounded by his family. No cause was given.

Starting in the late 1960s, the Brownsville, Texas native wrote such country and rock 'n' roll standards as "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down," "Help Me Make it Through the Night," "For the Good Times" and "Me and Bobby McGee," which became his best-known song as a posthumous hit for Janis Joplin.

He starred opposite Ellen Burstyn in director Martin Scorsese's 1974 film "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore," starred opposite Barbra Streisand in the 1976 "A Star Is Born," and acted alongside Wesley Snipes in Marvel's "Blade" in 1998.

Kristofferson, who could recite the poems of William Blake from memory, wove folk music lyrics about loneliness and tender romance into popular country music. He represented a new breed of country songwriters along with such peers as Willie Nelson, John Prine and Tom T. Hall.

"There's no better songwriter alive than Kris

Kristofferson," Nelson said at a 2009 BMI award ceremony for Kristofferson.

Kristofferson retired from performing and recording in 2021, making only occasional guest appearances on stage.

Nelson and Kristofferson would join forces with Johnny Cash and Waylon Jennings to create the country supergroup "The Highwaymen" starting in the mid-1980s.

Kristofferson was a Golden Gloves boxer, rugby star and football player in college; received a master's degree in English from the University of Oxford; and flew helicopters as a captain in the US Army but turned down an appointment to teach at the US Military Academy at West Point, New York, to pursue songwriting in Nashville. Hoping to break into the industry, he worked as a part-time janitor at Columbia Records' Music Row studio in 1966 when Dylan recorded tracks for the seminal "Blonde on Blonde" double album.

Legend

At times, the legend of Kristofferson was larger than real life. Cash liked to tell a mostly exaggerated story of how Kristofferson landed a helicopter on Cash's lawn to give him a tape of "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down" with a drink in one hand. Over the years in interviews, Kristofferson said with all respect to Cash, the Man in Black

wasn't even home at the time, the demo tape was a song that no one ever actually cut and he certainly couldn't fly a helicopter holding a drink.

He later said he might not have had a career without Cash.

"He kind of took me under his wing before he cut any of my songs," Kristofferson said in a 2006 interview with The Associated Press. "He cut my first record that was record of the year. He put me on stage the first time."

One of his most recorded songs, "Me and Bobby McGee," was written based on a recommendation from Monument Records founder Fred Foster. Foster had a song title in his head called "Me and Bobby McKee," named after a female secretary in his building. Kristofferson said in an interview in the magazine, "Performing Songwriter," that he was inspired to write the lyrics about a man and woman on the road together after watching the Federico Fellini film, "La Strada."

In 1973, he married fellow songwriter Rita Coolidge and together they had a successful duet career that earned them two Grammy awards. They divorced in 1980. The formation of the Highwaymen, with Nelson, Cash and Jennings, was another pivotal point in his career as a performer. He told the AP in 2005 it was "unreal" to be a peer with men who'd been his heroes.

Nostalgic journey

The Best of Bubl  a tribute to his work

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 30, (AP) — For Michael Bubl  aficionados, "The Best of Bubl " is a gift - a celebration of the Canadian singer's best work, with a couple previously unreleased songs thrown in.

Bubl  rose to fame in the early '00s for his capacity to take staple songs from the worlds of jazz, blues and the Great American Songbook and make them his own, through his angelic and controlled vocal tone. He was quickly celebrated, too, for his original hits, many of which are present on this album: "Home," "Haven't Met You Yet" and "Everything."

But this greatest hits collection does more than rehash the past. "The Best of Bubl " welcomes in the new through two unreleased songs, illustrating his range and elastic approach to genre.

"Don't Blame It On Me" brings out the cheery side of Bubl . Beneath his voice are lively horns that fill a room, handclaps and acoustic guitars, a dance that makes it absolutely impossible to hear without smiling.

While "Quiz s, Quiz s, Quiz s," a cover of a Cuban classic written by Osvaldo Farr s and made famous by Bobby Cap , opens Bubl  to show off in Spanish.

Those songs placed next to his best-known material makes "The Best of Bubl " the perfect present for his diehard followers, and an accelerated crash course for any newcomers wanting to familiarize themselves with his particular talents.

"The Best of Bubl " is a beautiful and nostalgic journey, one best consumed while sipping a dirty martini in an art nouveau bar, channeling a past time. His bossa nova takes the listener on a journey.

The only thing missing for this release - the only thing that could make it a truly in-depth visitation of his career - would be the inclusion of some of his Christmas songs. After all, he's the King of Christmas - a role second only to Mariah Carey. But holiday feelings aside, "The Best of Bubl " is one to place under the tree, a delightful catalogue representing a modern classic voice.

Eclectic festival

Global talents shine at NY Fall for Dance

NEW YORK, Sept. 30, (AP) — The eclectic annual Fall for Dance festival is a beloved tradition among dance fans, not least for its \$30 tickets - still quite a deal in New York, even if they began at \$10 two decades ago. But the best thing about it is still the variety it brings to the stage, with 15 acts over 11 days this year from artists around the world. This year's highlights have come from as far as the Kyiv Opera House in Ukraine, and as close as a few blocks away.

You could call it a veritable United Nations of dance - which is exactly how the president of New York City Center, Michael Rosenberg, described it this week, introducing the third of five programs. He didn't explicitly refer to the ongoing UN General Assembly happening a bit further east, wreaking its usual traffic chaos.

There was a happier chaos happening onstage, a mishmash of extremely different styles of dance. As usual, the audience seemed to love it all - especially the more out-there elements, like dancers stalking the stage on stilts in the first program, courtesy of choreographer Andrea Miller and her Brooklyn-based Gallim company.

Fall for Dance has always lured a mix of known names - some of them trying out something new - with names unknown to most of the crowd. Among the familiar faces this year so far have been much-loved ballet stars Tiler Peck of New York City Ballet and Herman Cornejo of American Ballet Theatre, both choreographing this time (with Cornejo dancing, too).



A model wears a creation of Valentino. (AP)



Greta Gerwig, (left), and Natalie Portman attend the Stella McCartney SS 2025 collection presented in Paris. (AP)



A model presents Valentino's creation. (AP)



A model wears a creation as part of the Valentino Spring/Summer 2025 collection presented Sunday, Sept. 29, 2024 in Paris. (AP)

Alexander McQueen's sophomore show shines

Valentino's new designer shows maximalist style

PARIS, Sept. 30, (AP) — Alessandro Michele's eagerly awaited ready-to-wear Paris Fashion Week debut at Valentino was unveiled in a setting that hinted at a transformation - a living room in flux. Stools, ladders, and lamps shrouded beneath white blankets evoked a house renovation, signaling not just change, but a conscious revival of past glories. The scene, poetic and subdued, perfectly set the stage for a "maximalist-lite" spectacle that was equally haunted by history and illuminated by Michele's unique flair.

Meanwhile, under the soaring ceilings of the  cole des Beaux Arts, overlooking the Seine, Sean McGirr's sophomore ready-to-wear show for Alexander McQueen arrived with a palpable sense of relief. The shift in setting - from a bleak industrial warehouse outside Paris to this iconic venue - reflected a fresh start for McGirr, whose uncertain debut had left critics shivering, both literally and figuratively. Now, with the benefit of more time to prepare, McGirr appeared more at ease, though hints of his sometimes overly simplistic approach still lingered.

Here are some highlights of spring-summer 2025 ready-to-wear shows:

The mood was set with haunting music and the steady beat of a drum, creating an ambiance charged with drama and anticipation. Michele, who made headlines earlier this year after being named the new creative director of Valentino, following his successful reign at Gucci, brought with him much of his recognizable style. Yet there was a distinctive evolution in his vision - less overtly ostentatious, but still unmistakably eclectic.

Feathers floated on hats, soft and playful. Lingerie peeked through delicate layers. Flowers, fortune tellers' hats, sparkling embellishments - all coalesced into an eclectic wardrobe that carried a vintage feel. Michele, it seemed, was teasing apart the DNA of both houses he knows intimately: the exuberance of Gucci and the ethereal heritage of Valentino.

Some of the pieces felt familiar to longtime Valentino admirers: the feminine nipped-waist dress, the floppy floral gown with its tiered skirt, and the iconic Valentino red that made its dramatic entrance.

Yet in Michele's hands, these classics were playfully twisted - feathers replaced fur on a billowing stole, and the result was a softer, more modern take that eschewed excessive luxury.

Jared Leto was among the VIPs who sat in the front row, a testament to Michele's continued draw among Hollywood's elite. The designer, who had risen to international recognition by infusing Gucci with his beloved "Geek-Chic" aesthetic, seemed to bring a similar ethos to Valentino, though filtered through a more graceful, couture lens.

Tenure

Throughout his tenure at Gucci, Michele was celebrated for prioritizing his personal vision over the often suffocating codes of heritage houses, and Sunday's show echoed that defiant spirit.

The opening tailored suit, its lapels rolled as if to ward off an unexpected London downpour, seemed a pointed metaphor - perhaps a shield against the relentless skepticism that followed his first runway outing. This season, McGirr turned to a reference steeped in both his heritage and McQueen's early days: the dark romance of the "Banshee" show. In doing so, he anchored his own identity more deeply in the label's legacy, embracing a Gothic allure that was more commercially viable this time around.

It was a collection of contrasts. The precise tailoring echoed McQueen's subversion of British suiting, twisting and clutching fabric in ways that seemed as though it had been caught in a sudden gust.

However, this wasn't always effective. One such example - a jagged, off-white tuxedo - felt more like a cos-

tume of restraint. This overly simplistic take on tailoring lacked the subtle layering and tension that distinguished Sarah Burton's previous work for the house.

Where McGirr truly shone, however, was in his eveningwear - an area that has become increasingly vital in the era of celebrity-driven fashion. The shimmering embroideries and featherlight silks, frayed and distressed in lilac georgette, signaled his understanding of red carpet glamour.

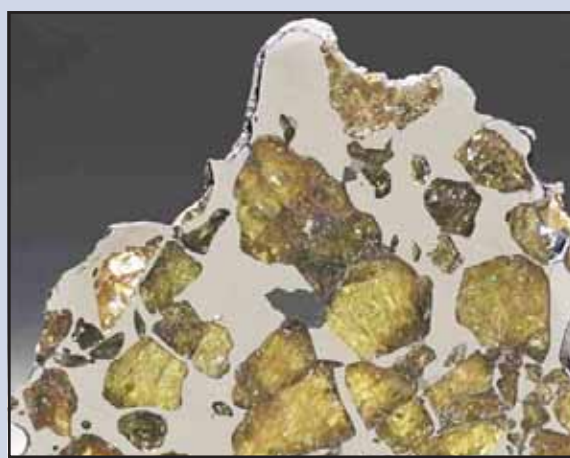
The brushed white chiffon minidress, paired with a gold beaded and sequined jacket, made a convincing case for the designer's growing confidence. And when the silver chains traced the body's lines, their intricate embroidery brought a level of audacity that was finally worthy of McQueen.

The night's high point was a look of pure excess: an extreme gown embroidered with glistening silver chains that seemed to catch every glimmer of light in the venue. It was an ensemble that Daphne Guinness herself - who watched approvingly from the front row - might have worn in a heartbeat. Despite his strides, McGirr's sophomore effort still carried the weight of a designer learning the ropes of a storied brand.

Akris' Sunday collection had the audience leaning in, not for any over-the-top spectacle, but for the luxurious subtleties that Albert Kriemler so masterfully crafts. The designer, true to form, took the trench coat idea - a staple of the wardrobe - and transformed it into something distinctly Akris.

With utilitarian detailing threaded through every seam, this was an exercise in functional luxury, the kind that Kriemler has long perfected. His designs don't shout; they whisper.

The collection opened with takes on trenches, each reimagined to fuse practicality with fashion-forward flair. Minimalism, too, reigned supreme, with looks that kept embellishments at bay to let the craftsmanship shine.



KUNA photo

Ancient stones on display at Erbil Museum.

Erbil's stones, gems museum

Erbil Stones and Gems Museum is a small museum located within the Citadel of Erbil, at the heart of the city.

Founder of the museum geologist Sarbast Majeed, stated to KUNA that he gathered his 40 year collection of gemstones from different parts of the world and originally displayed it in a house located in a city of Shaqlawa in 2014, and relocated to the Citadel of Erbil in 2016.

The museum displays a multitude of common and rare stones and gems from within Iraq and many other countries. Majeed explained that the stones are all aged millions of years, as well as meteorite fragments aged billions of years, fossils aged almost 600 million years and a variety of other items. (KUNA)

Smoking linked to 43 pct of cases

7,600 heart attack cases in Kuwait in 15 months

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Secretary-General of the Heart Association, Dr. Rashid Al-Awish, has announced that the Association has conducted a significant study on 'heart diseases in Kuwait' covering the period from May 15, 2023, to August 2024. The study uncovered a total of 7,600 cases of heart attacks, strokes, and angina pectoris.

In a press statement released in conjunction with World Heart Day, which is celebrated annually on September 29 in collaboration with the Sabah Al-Ahmad Cardiac Center, Dr. Al-Awish detailed the findings. He reported that of the 7,600 cases, 6,239 were male, ac-

counting for 82%, while 1,363 were female, representing 18%.

The statistics indicated a troubling trend, with 43% of those affected being current smokers, while 13% were former smokers. The study also found that 2,206 cases, or 29%, involved Kuwaiti nationals, while approximately 5,396 cases, representing 71%, were among residents. The death rate associated with these cases stood at 1.9%, which is consistent with global averages. Notably, 70% of the patients were hospitalized for only three days, and 15% required ambulance transportation to medical facilities.

Dr. Al-Awish emphasized the concerning fact that 51% of those diagnosed with heart diseases also had diabetes, with an average age of 56 years among the patients studied. He announced that the Heart Association will continue its observance of World Heart Day from September 29 to October 26, providing free blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol tests to the public. The celebration aims to raise awareness about heart health and promote collaborative efforts to combat cardiovascular diseases while reducing health complications for individuals and society.

Dengue cases rise

India confirms third case of monkeypox

NEW DELHI, Sept 30, (Agencies): One more case of monkeypox (mpox) was detected Friday in India, taking the tally to three in the country.

According to state-run broadcaster All India Radio (AIR), a 38-year-old man has been confirmed to be infected with the mpox virus in Kerala, the second case in the state so far. "Sources said the man, who returned to Kochi from abroad, has been admitted to a private hospital for treatment. Tests of his body fluids confirmed the case to be positive," AIR said.

Kerala local health minister Veena George Friday convened a high-level meeting in Thiruvananthapuram to take stock of the situation. The health department has prepared a contact list of the infected person and strengthened preventive measures. She said those with symptoms should ensure the virus is not spread to others.

"Those coming from foreign countries should seek treatment and inform the health department if they develop any symptoms," George said.

On Monday, mpox clade 1b strain was detected in a 38-year-old man from Malappuram district of Kerala.

The earlier case of mpox that emerged in Delhi was of a 26-year-old resident of Haryana's Hisar who had tested positive for the West African clade 2 strain.

India's federal health ministry on Thursday asked all states to identify facilities and trained human resources for taking care of both suspected and confirmed mpox cases.

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Dengue: A total of 1,221 people were diagnosed with dengue fever in Bangladesh in the past 24 hours on Sunday, the highest number in a single day so far this year, according to the Ministry of Health.

In the same period, eight people died due to the mosquito-borne disease, raising the death toll to 158 so far this year.

With the fresh infections, the number of dengue cases surged to 29,786 in Bangladesh, the ministry said.

In order to fight the rising number of dengue cases, Bangladesh health authorities have strengthened measures to check the breeding of mosquitoes and conduct anti-larval operations.

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Cholera: Sudan is witnessing a stifling health crisis with the widespread outbreak of cholera since August 12.

Infections exceeded 15,000 in 11 states, causing the death of more than 500 persons.

This crisis's aggravation is attributed to difficult humanitarian conditions, the ongoing war, and the torrents and floods that have hit the country.

Health experts have warned of a cholera outbreak in the country, stressing the importance of rapid intervention to provide the necessary treatment for those infected.



In this image made from a NASA livestream, the two astronauts stuck at the International Space Station since June 2024, Butch Wilmore, (far left), and Suni Williams, (far right), welcome two new residents who flew up on SpaceX, NASA's Nick Hague, front left in blue, and the Russian Space Agency's Alexander Gorbunov, front right in blue, Sunday, Sept. 29, 2024. Behind them, from left in black, are NASA's Jeanette Epps, Russia's Alexander Grebenkin, NASA's Mike Barratt and NASA's Matthew Dominick. (From left), wearing red, are Russia's Ivan Vagner, NASA's Don Pettit and Russia's Alexei Ovchinnin. (AP)

'Dragon' to remain at ISS until Feb

NASA astronauts welcome SpaceX capsule for return

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., Sept 30, (AP): The two astronauts stuck at the International Space Station since June welcomed their new ride home with Sunday's arrival of a SpaceX capsule.

SpaceX launched the rescue mission on Saturday with a downsized crew of two astronauts and two empty seats reserved for Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams, who will return next year. The Dragon capsule docked in darkness as the two craft soared 265 miles (426 kilometers) above Botswana.

NASA switched Wilmore and Williams to SpaceX following concerns over the safety of their Boeing Starliner capsule. It was the first Starliner test flight with a crew, and NASA decided the thruster failures and helium leaks that cropped up after liftoff were too serious and poorly understood to risk the test pilots' return. So Starliner returned to Earth empty earlier this month.

The Dragon carrying NASA's Nick Hague and the Russian Space Agency's Alexander Gorbunov will remain at the space station until February, turning what should have been a weeklong

trip for Wilmore and Williams into a mission lasting more than eight months.

Two NASA astronauts were pulled from the mission to make room for Wilmore and Williams on the return leg.

"I just want to say welcome to our new comrades," Williams, the space station commander, said once Hague and Gorbunov floated inside and were embraced by the nine astronauts awaiting them.

Hague said it was a smooth flight up. "Coming through the hatch and seeing all the smiles, and as much as I've laughed and cried in the last 10 minutes, I know it's going to be an amazing expedition," he said.

NASA likes to replace its station crews every six months or so. SpaceX has provided the taxi service since the company's first astronaut flight in 2020. NASA also hired Boeing for ferry flights after the space shuttles were retired, but flawed software and other Starliner issues led to years of delays and more than \$1 billion in repairs.



In this Oct. 8, 2014 photo, a medical worker from the Infection Prevention and Control unit wearing full protective equipment carries a meal to an isolation tent housing a man being quarantined after coming into contact in Uganda with a carrier of the Marburg Virus, at the Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya. (AP)

'Virus can be 88% fatal'

Rwanda confirms eight deaths tied to Ebola-like Marburg virus

RWANDA, Sept 30, (Agencies): Rwanda says eight people have died so far from the Ebola-like and highly contagious Marburg virus, just days after the country declared an outbreak of the deadly hemorrhagic fever that has no authorized vaccine or treatment.

Like Ebola, the Marburg virus originates in fruit bats and spreads between people through close contact with the bodily fluids of infected individuals or with surfaces, such as contaminated bed sheets. Without treatment, Marburg can be fatal in up to 88% of people who fall ill with the disease.

Rwanda, a landlocked country in central Africa, declared an outbreak on Friday and a day later the first six deaths were reported.

So far 26 cases have been confirmed, and eight of the sickened people have

died, Health Minister Sabin Nsanzimana said on Sunday night.

The public has been urged to avoid physical contact to help curb the spread. Some 300 people who came into contact with those confirmed to have the virus have also been identified, and an unspecified number of them have been put in isolation facilities.

Most of the affected are healthcare workers across six out of 30 districts in the country.

"Marburg is a rare disease," Nsanzimana told journalists. "We are intensifying contact tracing and testing to help stop the spread."

The minister said the source of the disease has not been determined yet. A person infected with the virus can take between three days and three weeks to show symptoms, he added.

Researchers discover gene linked to 'rare eye' disorder

LOS ANGELES, Sept 30, (Agencies): US researchers have identified a gene responsible for some inherited retinal diseases (IRDs), which are a group of disorders that damage the eye's light-sensing retina and threaten vision, according to a study published Thursday.

IRDs affect more than 2 million people worldwide. Each individual disease is rare, complicating efforts to identify enough people to study and conduct clinical trials to develop treatment, according to the US National Institutes of Health (NIH).

In the study sponsored by NIH, researchers linked the gene UBAPIL to different forms of retinal dystrophies,

including maculopathy, cone dystrophy or cone-rod dystrophy.

The findings paved the way for genetic testing, clinical trials, and therapy development, according to the study published in JAMA Ophthalmology.

Meanwhile, Americans can once again order COVID-19 tests, without being charged, sent straight to their homes.

The US government reopened the program on Thursday, allowing any household to order up to four at-home COVID nasal swab kits through the website, covidtests.gov. The tests will begin shipping, via the United States Postal Service, as soon as next week.

Ukraine's medical facilities under pressure

Hospital clowns bring joy to young cancer patients

KYIV, Ukraine, Sept 30, (AP): Their costumes are put on with surgical precision: Floppy hats, foam noses, bright clothes, and a ukulele with multicolored nylon strings.

Moments later, in a beige hospital ward normally filled with the beeping sounds of medical machinery, there are bursts of giggles and silly singing.

As Ukraine's medical facilities come under pressure from intensifying attacks in the war against Russia's full-scale invasion, volunteer hospital clowns are duck-footing their way in to provide some badly needed moments of joy for hospitalized children.

The "Bureau of Smiles and Support" (BUP) is a hospital clowning initiative established in 2023 by Olha Bulkina, 35, and

Maryna Berdar, 39, who already had more than five years of hospital clowning experience between them. "Our mission is to let childhood continue regardless of the circumstances," Bulkina, told The Associated Press.

BUP took on new significance following a Russian missile strike on Okhmatdyt Children's Hospital in Kyiv in July. The attack on Ukraine's largest pediatric facility forced the evacuation of dozens of young patients, including those with cancer, to other hospitals in the capital - and the clowns did not stand aside.

Together with first responders, Berdar and Bulkina helped with clearing the rubble after the attack and attended to the children

who were relocated to other medical facilities. But even for them, the real heroes there were young patients.

"When the children were evacuated from Okhmatdyt after the missile attack, many of them were in extremely difficult medical conditions, but even in this situation they tried to support the adults," said Berdar, recalling the events after the strike.

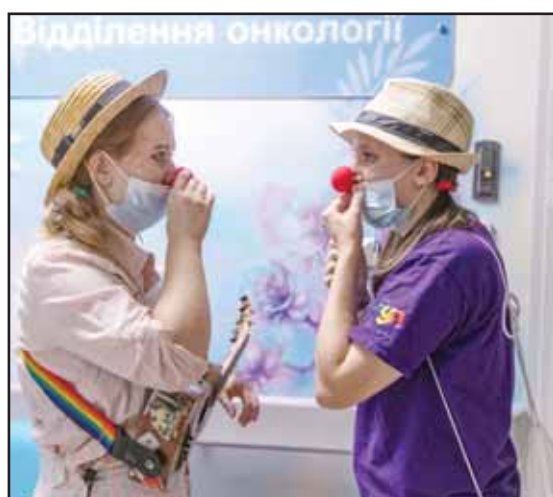
The hospital clowns, who use traditional clown noses and bright costumes, are now visiting multiple hospitals in the Ukrainian capital region, including the National Cancer Institute, where patient numbers have surged after the Okhmatdyt attack.

Tetiana Nosova, 22, and Vladyslava Kulinich, 22, are volunteer hospital clowns

who go by Zhuzha and Lala and joined BUP more than a year ago. For them, hospital clowning is as challenging as it is rewarding.

"I volunteer so that children don't think about their illness, even for a short moment, so that laughter replaces tears, and joy replaces fear, especially during medical procedures," Kulinich said. In her practice, she stays together with children, sharing all their feelings, whether they are fear, pain, or joy.

For Nosova, the process itself is what made her start clowning. "I am motivated by joy. I simply enjoy it. All my life I studied to be an actress, all my life I enjoyed making people laugh. That's enough motivation for me," she said.



Vladyslava Kulinich, (right), Tetiana Nosova, who have the clown names Lala and Zhuzha, prepare to perform at Okhmatdyt children's hospital in Kyiv, Ukraine, Thursday Sept. 19, 2024. (AP)

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Australia's Steven Smith bats during the fifth one day international match at the Seat Unique Stadium, Bristol, England. (AP)

Australia clinches ODI series

Rain arrives too late for England

BRISTOL, England, Sept 30, (AP): The rain arrived too late for England as Australia won the deciding fifth one-day international to clinch the series 3-2.

Australia finished on 165-2 in 20.4 overs, appearing to be comfortably on track to reaching the original winning target of 310 before rain stopped play at Bristol's County Ground. No further play was possible and Australia won by 49 runs under the DLS method which sets revised targets for interrupted cricket matches.

Australia struggled with injuries and illness during the series, and fielded a different starting lineup in each game and a stand-in captain - Steve Smith - in the decider when Mitch Marsh withdrew because of soreness. The teams entered the game tied at 2-2 and the match would have been abandoned as a no-result, with the series ending 2-2, if Australia had not batted for 20 overs - the minimum for a win to be declared.

England could have stretched out the innings further had it not bowled four overs of spin but Harry Brook insisted his overriding ambition was on making inroads into the batting of Australia. Brook saw the positives from an entertaining series.

Australia raced to 103-1 after only 10 overs, losing Travis Head to Brydon Carse for 31. Matthew Short's 58 off 30 balls got Australia ahead of the run rate and, despite apparent stalling tactics from England as the 20-over mark hovered into view, Australia eased to the series win.

Steve Smith was 36 not out, with Josh Inglis undefeated on 28 when stumps was called. Ben Duckett earlier hit 107 in 91 balls and Brook contributed a 52-ball 72 with seven sixes in England's 309 all out in 49.2 overs after losing the toss and having to bat first.

England was on course for a huge total before Brook holed out to Adam Zampa, after hitting him for five sixes, sparking a collapse from 202-2 in the 25th over. Liam Livingstone, who launched a brutal onslaught against Australia in England's 186-run win in the fourth ODI at Lord's, was this time caught behind off Zampa for a three-ball duck. Duckett was one of four wickets to fall to Head, the fifth spinner Australia used, on a wearing pitch. Head took 4-28 in 6.2 overs, and Aaron Hardie, Zampa and Glenn Maxwell took two wickets each.

Australia, the World Cup champion in the 50-over format, had a 14-game winning streak ended when England won the third game of this series to keep it alive.

Pakistan captain Masood hopes to capitalize on home advantage

KARACHI, Pakistan, Sept 30, (AP): Struggling Pakistan captain Shan Masood feels the test team has an opportunity to capitalize on home advantage against strong England and end its long drought of 10 winless home matches.

England, led by Ben Stokes, will arrive on Wednesday for back-to-back test matches at Multan, starting next week. Rawalpindi will host the third test from Oct. 24-28.

"We all have a huge opportunity to turn this around against England and hopefully we can take a good start in Multan," Masood told reporters in southern port city of Karachi on Monday. "We're all very excited and hope we get memorable results against England."

Pakistan's long winless home streak includes a 3-0 whitewash at the hands of England when it last toured to the country in 2022.

Masood's performances - both as a top-order batter and captain - are also under the scanner after suffering five successive losses since being elevated to test skipper last year.

Under his captaincy, Pakistan lost 3-0 in Australia and last month suffered a shocking 2-0 defeat against Bangladesh at home. Pakistan's last

home test win came against South Africa in early 2021. Since then it has lost to England, Australia and Bangladesh, while drawing against New Zealand.

"It's not acceptable for Pakistan to not win a home test for that long and we accept the responsibility for that," Masood said. "The players are hurt, we're all hurt. As a cricketing nation, as people that follow cricket, whether that's the media, whether that's the fans, whether that's the cricketers themselves and the cricket board, everyone's hurt right now."

The selection committee, which also includes Masood and red-ball head coach Jason Gillespie, has kept faith in the same team which had a woeful series against Bangladesh with only 37-year-old left-arm spinner Noman Ali getting recalled in the 15-member squad.

Pakistan's batting woes at the top had let the team down against Bangladesh with Babar Azam and Masood failing to convert good starts, while opening batter Abdullah Shafique also struggled upfront.

Left-handed young opener Saim Ayub showed occasional brilliance but was guilty of throwing away his wicket after scoring two half centuries against Bangladesh.



Australia's Josh Inglis in action during the fifth one day international match between England and Australia, at the Seat Unique Stadium, Bristol, England. (AP)

'He is very straightforward'

Arteta talks up Enrique's 'unbelievable power' as Arsenal hosts PSG

LONDON, Sept 30, (AP): Days after professing his "love" and "respect" for Pep Guardiola, Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta has spoken in an equally effusive manner about another influential Spanish coach he will face in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Luis Enrique takes his Paris Saint-Germain team to Emirates Stadium for the most high-profile fixture in the second round of games in the new-look competition.

Arteta and Enrique go way back, having been together at Barcelona in the late 1990s and early 2000s when Arteta was starting out his professional career and Enrique was coming toward the end of his.

Arteta said he "learnt a lot of things" from Enrique as a player and now as a coach, saying Monday his compatriot "brings a smile on my face." "I am a huge admirer of him," Arteta said. "I remember his personality, huge character, huge energy, very supportive of his young players. What I love about him is that wherever he has been, as a player or as a manager, his fingerprints are all over place. You can see it's his team. You can see PSG is his team."



PSG's head coach Luis Enrique gives instructions during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Girona at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris, France. (AP)

"He has this unbelievable power ... Then there's his approach to life, his profession - it's something to really look at and I learnt a lot of things

from him." Arteta spent much of last week talking about Guardiola and Manchester City amid the fallout from Arsenal's feisty 2-2 draw at the Premier League champions that appears to have ignited a rivalry between the teams.

He has long been viewed as a protégé of Guardiola, yet it seems that Enrique has been an influence, too.

"I love his honesty - he is very straightforward, he looks you in the eyes and tells you what he thinks," Arteta said. "I think in the end, players appreciate that." Arteta described PSG, where he enjoyed a spell on loan in 2000-01 alongside players like Ronaldinho and Nicolas Anelka, as a team "probably at the highest level you can find in European football." Enrique's side leads the French league with five wins and a draw from the opening six games of its title defense and began the Champions League with a 1-0 win over Girona - albeit courtesy of a 90th-minute own-goal.

Arsenal started with a 0-0 draw at Atalanta.

Arteta said Arsenal will check on the fitness of fullbacks Ben White and Riccardo Calafiori on Monday.



Arsenal's Raheem Sterling, right, challenges for the ball with Leicester's James Justin during the English Premier League soccer match between Arsenal and Leicester City at the Emirates Stadium in London. (AP)

Szczesny closes in

Big names back for Barca for vital Champions League tie



Barcelona's Ferran Torres fights for the ball against Osasuna's Juan Cruz during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Osasuna and Barcelona at El Sadar stadium in Pamplona, Spain. (AP)

Flamengo fires ex-Brazil coach Tite

RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept 30, (AP): Former Brazil coach Tite was fired on Monday by Flamengo, his first job after taking the national team to the past two World Cups. His replacement for the rest of the year will be former Atletico Madrid defender Filipe Luis, a multi-champion at the Rio de Janeiro club and coach of one of its youth divisions.

Flamengo announced the move in a statement, less than a day after its 1-0 home win over Athletico Paranaense

in the Brazilian league. Tite's contract ran until the end of the year.

Last week, Flamengo was knocked out by Uruguay's Penarol in the quarterfinals of the Copa Libertadores. It is currently fourth in the Brazilian league with 48 points in 27 matches, 11 points behind leader Botafogo.

Flamengo will face Corinthians in the semifinals of the Brazilian Cup on Wednesday, in a tournament that provides its high spending squad a last chance to win a major trophy this year.

MADRID, Sept 30, (Xinhua): FC Barcelona have a vital Champions League tie at home to Swiss side, Young Boys on Tuesday as they look to kickstart its European campaign and put a bad weekend behind it.

Barca coach Hansi Flick rested players such as Lamine Yamal, Inigo Martinez and Raphinha away to Osasuna on Saturday night and saw how a team with a high percentage of B-teamers was outmuscled by Osasuna in a 4-2 defeat to emphatically end their 100 percent start to the campaign.

Yamal, Martinez and Raphinha will all return to the starting 11 on Tuesday when Young Boys visit Montjuic, to give the lineup a more familiar look.

Both sides lost their opening game in the new-look Champions League, with Barcelona going down 2-1 in Monaco, while its rival was beaten 3-0 at home to Aston Villa.

Gavi, Andreas Christensen, Ronald Araujo and Marc Andre Ter Stegen are all out for Barca, while Eric Garcia is suspended after the red card he saw in the opening minutes in Monaco, that was so costly to Barcelona's hopes.

Meanwhile Inaki Pena continues in goal as he covers for Ter Stegen, who is out for the season after having a knee operation last week.

It increasingly looks as if Wojciech Szczesny will be tempted out of retirement to provide cover for Ter Stegen, but after hanging up his gloves after the European Championships, the former Arsenal, Roma and Juventus goalkeeper, will need time to get to match fitness.

Flick will face a selection dilemma when the Polish international is fully fit, as making him first choice would effectively signal to Pena that the club doesn't think he is good enough to play on a regular basis, while Szczesny is unlikely to be happy to spend his time warming the subs' bench.

With only the top eight of the 32 sides in the Champions League assured a place in the knockout stages, there isn't a lot of room for error and Barca need to win on Tuesday to help put Saturday's disappointment behind it.

Relief might have come at the right time for two-time German Cup winner RB Leipzig.

Following weeks of drought coming along with a series of goalless draws in the national league, the side of head coach Marco Rose enjoyed their striker's goals festival taking the East-German club to a convincing 4-0 over Augsburg.

Ahead of the UEFA Champions League encounter on home soil against Italian giant Juve this Wednesday evening, RB's attackers such as Dutch international Xavi Simons, Belgian international Lois Openda, and Slovenian international Benjamin Sesko gained desperately needed confidence.

Only eight scored goals in five league encounters following the narrow 2-1 defeat against Atletico in the Champions League seemed to rest like a dark shadow over the team's progress.

"The boys must get rid of that heavy burden on their shoulders. I hope, the Augsburg game is encouraging them to continue," Rose said.

While having secured the club's Champions League participation through their goal supply in the previous season (46 of 77), easiness seems lost to some extent.

Following an energy-taking 2024 UEFA Euro tournament, a late preparation start for the club season seemed to collide with high expectations. For a reason, Leipzig was always mentioned when fans and pundits talked about possible title challengers for reigning German champions Leverkusen.



Al-Hilal players preparing for their match against Al-Shorta.

Al Hilal seeks back-to-back wins in AFC Elite Champions League

RIYADH, Sept 30: Al Hilal continues its campaign in the 2024-2025 AFC Elite Champions League as it hosts Iraq's Al-Shorta today in the second round of the tournament's newly introduced format.

After defeating Qatar's Al-Rayyan 3-1 in the previous round, Al Hilal is aiming for its first home win of the season. Both teams are part of the West Group, consisting of 12 teams, each playing four home and four away matches, with the top eight teams advancing to the round of 16.

In its opening round, Al Hilal impressed with a 3-1 victory over Al-Rayyan in Qatar, with standout performances, especially from Portuguese star João Cancelo.

The team's recent training session saw the return of midfielder Rūben

Neves, who has recovered from a muscle injury. Neves, a crucial figure in Al Hilal's midfield since his 2023 move from Wolverhampton Wanderers, missed recent victories over Al-Bukayriyah and Al-Khulud due to his injury but are now fit to face Al-Shorta.

Meanwhile, Al Hilal defenders Ali Al-Bulaihi and Hassan Tambakti, both of whom sustained injuries in the match against Al-Khulud, are not expected to miss significant time. Al-Bulaihi was substituted at halftime due to a knee issue, and Tambakti left in the 74th minute after a shoulder injury. However, Saudi reports suggest their injuries are not serious, with Portuguese coach Jorge Jesus managing their fitness for upcoming games.



Napoli's Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, top, and Monza's Armando Izzo fight for the ball during the Italian Serie A soccer match between Napoli and Monza at the Diego Armando Maradona Stadium in Naples, Italy. (AP)

Sports

Al-Felakawi calls for improved qualifying system

Kuwait U-20 Asian Cup journey ends with UAE stalemate

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Kuwait's U-20 team secured third place in Group Three after a goalless draw against the UAE in its final match of the Asian Cup qualifiers, hosted at Abdullah Al-Khalifa Stadium, Al-Yarmouk Club.

Assistant coach Al-Felakawi acknowledged the players' visible physical fatigue, particularly in the latter stages of the tournament.

He highlighted that the intense schedule and the strength of their opponents hindered Kuwait's chances of qualifying for the finals, falling short of the team's ambitions.

Al-Felakawi called on the Asian Football Confederation to reconsider the current qualification system, noting that the existing format could result in unfair outcomes for certain teams.

He emphasized the potential of the Kuwaiti U-20 team, urging for better care and support

to prepare it for future competitions, including training camps and friendly matches.

He concluded by stressing the importance of nurturing this talented squad, which boasts strong individual players across all positions and has the capability to make a significant impact in future tournaments.

South Korea topped the group with four consecutive wins, while the UAE finished second with seven points, edging Kuwait on goal difference.

Lebanon placed fourth with

three points, and Northern Mariana Islands ended the qualifiers with zero points.

According to the tournament rules, the top team from each of the ten groups qualifies, along with the five best second-placed teams. The teams qualifying for the 2025 finals are Qatar, Jordan, Syria, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Australia, North Korea, Indonesia, Yemen, Iran, Iraq, Thailand, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, with China automatically qualifying as the host nation.



Al-Felkawi gives instructions to a Kuwaiti player.

Atletico, Real share heated derby spoils



Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior in action in front of Atletico Madrid's Rodrigo De Paul during the La Liga soccer match between Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid at the Metropolitano stadium in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

Kuwait prepares for WC qualifiers with Dubai training camp

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DUBAI, Sept 30: Kuwait kicked off its first training session at the Police Officers Club Stadium in Dubai, UAE, marking the beginning of its external training camp. The team is preparing for its upcoming matches against Oman and Palestine, scheduled for October 10 and 15 in Muscat and Doha, respectively. These matches are part of the third and fourth rounds of Group Two qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup, set to be hosted by the United States, Mexico, and Canada.

Coach Juan Pizzi has announced the national team roster for these two critical fixtures. The squad includes Suleiman Abdul Ghafoor, Saud Al-Hoshan, Abdulrahman Al-Fadhli, Mishari Ghannam, Khaled Sabah, Rashid Al-Dosari, Khaled Ibrahim, Sami Al-Sanea, Sultan Al-Enezi, Hamad Harbi, Reda Hani, Hussein Ashkanani, Mahdi Dashti, Moaz Al-Aseema, Abdul Mohsen Al-Turkmani, Faisal Zayed, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Yousef Nasser, Salman Al-Awadhi, Mohammed Daham, Eid Al-Rashidi, and Yousef Majed.

Notable in the squad is the return of goalkeeper Saud Al-Hoshan, alongside the inclusion of Talal Al-Ansari from Al-Tadamon, as well as the return of Mohammed Daham and Mishari Ghannam, both of whom missed the previous game against Jordan.

Meanwhile, Oman's coach Rashid Jaber has also revealed his squad for the matches against Kuwait and Jordan. His roster features Ibrahim Al-Mukhaini, Faiz Al-Rashidi, Ibrahim Al-Rajhi, Mohammed Al-Musalmi, Ahmed Al-Khamis, Mohammed Ramadan, Khaled Al-Buraiki, Ghanem Al-Habshi, Ali Al-Busaidi, Ahmed Al-Kaabi, Amjad Al-Harhi, Abdul Aziz Al-Sham-ousi, Mulham Al-Sunaidi, Harb Al-Saadi, Abdullah Fawaz, Arshad Al-Alawi, Sultan Al-Mar-zouq, Jameel Al-Yahmadi, Yazid Al-Maashani, Abdul Rahman Al-Mishfri, Zaher Al-Aghbari, Ahmed Al-Riyami, Nasser Al-Rawahi, Salah Al-Yahyaeci, Omar Al-Maliki, Mohsen Al-Ghassani, Essam Al-Subhi, and Hatem Al-Rushdi.

Match interrupted after objects thrown on the field

MADRID, Sept 30, (AP): Angel Correa scored in stoppage time and Atletico Madrid drew 1-1 with Real Madrid in a tense Spanish league derby that was interrupted for more than 15 minutes in the second half after Atletico fans threw objects onto the field.

Correa equalized for Atletico in a breakaway five minutes into added time with a goal that was initially disallowed for offside but

was awarded after video review. Éder Militão had given Madrid the lead in the 64th.

The draw left Madrid in second place, three points behind leader Barcelona, which lost 4-2 to Osasuna to end its seven-game winning streak. Atletico was third, two points behind Madrid after eight rounds.

"I always think positively," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "We moved closer to the leader and we have been playing well."

The derby was interrupted shortly after Madrid's goal at the Metropolitano, with the referee sending the players to the locker rooms after Atletico fans kept throwing objects onto the field.

Militão had celebrated near the sideline in front of Atletico fans, and Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois was seen appearing to provoke Atletico fans after Militão scored.

"What the fans did wasn't right but we are not helping when we provoke them," Atletico coach Diego Simeone said. "I'm not justifying what the fans did, but we need to help as well." It was Courtois who alerted the referee about the objects - including lighters - being thrown onto the field near him.

Atletico defender José María Giménez and midfielder Koke Resurrección went to talk to the fans in the section behind Courtois' goal. That section is where usually the more radical Atletico

supporters are located. Atletico coach Diego Simeone also asked several times for the fans to behave.

A message over the stadium loudspeakers said the match was being interrupted for 15 minutes, and that it would be suspended if the problem continued.

The interruption came a day after the Spanish league said it would ask police to act against the promoters of a social media campaign which the league said was aimed at promoting racist acts against Madrid star Vinicius Júnior at the derby.

The social media campaign was based on a hashtag encouraging Atletico fans to wear face masks, apparently

to make it more difficult for authorities to identify individuals who participate in racist chants or insults.

Social media videos showed Atletico fans before the match chanting "Vinicius is different."

Vinicius occasionally clashed with Atletico players at the Metropolitano.

Atletico's Marcos Llorente was sent off in stoppage time.

Fourth-place 10-man Athletic Bilbao conceded a stoppage-time equalizer in a 1-1 draw with Sevilla at home, while Giovanni Lo Celso scored an 85th-minute goal in Real Betis' 1-0 home win over Espanyol. Iago Aspas got an 81st-minute equalizer for Celta Vigo in a 1-1 draw against visiting Girona.

Ravichandran Ashwin shines

India sets new benchmark against Bangladesh in rain-hit test



India's Ravichandran Ashwin bowls a delivery on the fourth day of the second cricket test match between Bangladesh and India in Kanpur, India. (AP)

KANPUR, India, Sept 30, (AP): India launched a calculated assault on Bangladesh on day four of the rain-interrupted second test, bringing the game to life in an abrupt change of events.

The host recorded the highest run-rate ever for a test innings by clocking 200-plus runs - 8.22 per over - to finish with 285-9 declared in 34.4 overs. This was after Bangladesh was bowled out for 233 runs in 74.2 overs in its first innings.

Bangladesh then went down to 26-2 in its second innings with off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin picking 2-14 in five overs. At stumps, the Tigers were trailing by 26 runs.

Day four finished with a staggering 437 runs and 18 wickets across 85 overs. Play resumed after the past two days were abandoned without a ball bowled due to rain and a wet outfield and Mominul Haque's 107 not out, his 13th test hundred, helped Bangladesh reach 205-6 at lunch.

In the second session, India rounded off Bangladesh's lower order quickly, picking the last four wickets for 28 runs. Mominul stayed unbeaten after facing 194 deliveries, hitting 17 fours and a six. Jasprit Bumrah picked up two wickets - Mehidy Hasan Miraz was out caught for 20, while Taijul Islam (5) was bowled. The lead Indian pacer finished with 3-50.

India's reply sped off from the start and blitzed Bangladesh's bowling, recording the fastest 50 in tests off only 18 deliveries.

Openers Yashasvi Jaiswal scored 30 off 13 balls and Rohit Sharma hit 19 off six balls to liven up the game. They put on 55 runs off only 23 balls for the first wicket, before Sharma fell for 23 off 11 balls. Jaiswal carried on to score 72 off 51 balls, hitting 12 fours and two sixes, recording the fourth fastest Indian half-century in tests off only 31 balls.

The other Indian batters followed suit as India hunted for an improbable result in the game in light of its potential World Test Championship 2025 final qualification.

Shubman Gill scored 39 off 36 balls, with Rishabh Pant - promoted to number four - the sole top-order failure with nine runs. Jaiswal and Gill added 72 off 63 balls, notching up the fastest 100 in tests off only 10.1 overs. And there was more to come despite losing Jaiswal, Gill and Pant in the span of five overs, down to 159-4 from 127-1.

Virat Kohli and Lokesh Rahul then came together to inflict further damage to Bangladesh. They put on 87 off 59 balls for the fifth wicket as India regained momentum in its first innings.

Kohli scored 47 off 35 balls, including four fours and a six, while Rahul scored 68 off 43 balls, hitting two sixes and seven fours. Bangladesh's bowlers went for plenty in a short span of time, with Mehidy Hasan the most successful bowler (4-41) going at only 6.1 runs per over.



Saud Al-Hoshan