



Soccer  
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## KUWAIT CONDEMNS ISRAELI AGGRESSION, CALLS FOR U.N.S.C. ACTION

# Amir Rep calls out global apathy on Gaza genocide

'Attack on Lebanon breaches international norms and laws'



His Highness the Crown Prince at the third summit of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) in Doha.

**DOHA, Oct 3, (KUNA):** Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Thursday stringently criticized the international community over its silence on the ongoing genocidal war against the Palestinian people.

Addressing the third summit of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), held in Doha under the theme: "Sports Diplomacy", Sheikh Sabah Khaled explained that this world inaction is due to double standards regarding the enforcement of international law and international humanitarian law.

Citing the Palestinian issue as a key challenge haunting the Asian continent, he regretted that the State of Palestine, which is a member of this forum, has been under a blatant aggression by Israeli occupation forces for nearly a year, which

has now claimed the lives of more than 41,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children.

In this context, he restated Kuwait's emphatic condemnation and denunciation of this continued aggression on Palestine, echoing the call on the international community, particularly the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), to live up to its due responsibility by stopping this aggression immediately.

He underlined that it is essential to keep standing up with the Palestinian people and their just cause and self-determination, chiefly an independent Palestinian statehood on the June 4, 1967 border, with Jerusalem being its capital.

His Highness the Amir's representative stressed that failure to bring Israel, which is an occupying forces, to accountability has emboldened it to commit more crimes and expand its aggression, a thing which "we have already warned of and its consequences on the region's countries".

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### GCC ministers tackle threats

## Escalation in Lebanon, Palestine undermines global peace efforts

DOHA, Oct 3, (KUNA): The Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council discussed, in its 45th extraordinary meeting in Doha on Wednesday, the serious escalation of hostilities in the Middle East and the threats posed by the Israeli occupation authorities to the holy sites in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The meeting was chaired by Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassem Al Thani - the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar and current chair of the Ministerial Council, according to the final statement read by GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi and carried by Qatar News Agency (QNA).

Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya took part late Wednesday in the 45th meeting of the GCC Foreign Minister Council held in Doha, Qatar.

The meeting explored ways to boost cooperation amongst GCC countries and also discussed the alarming developments in the Middle East.

The officials focused on possible measures to divert war from the region to protect innocent lives and safeguard regional security.

The Ministerial Council reviewed the serious developments and escalating tensions that undermine the security and stability of the region, including those in the sisterly Republic of Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, the serious violations in the West Bank, the threats to the Al Aqsa Mosque and religious sanctities, and the situa-

tion between Israel and Iran. The Council condemned the escalation in Lebanese and Palestinian territories and warned of the serious repercussions of this escalation, which extend beyond this region to a wider circle, posing a threat to international peace and security and undermining efforts for peace and security in the region and the world.

It emphasised the necessity of protecting the region's security and preventing the expansion of the conflict. The Council called on all parties involved in this escalation to exercise restraint, cease violence, and prioritise dialogue.

It also urged the international community to fulfill its responsibilities to maintain security and stability in the region and to implement international legitimacy resolutions related to the area. Regarding Lebanon, the Ministerial Council affirmed the GCC's support for the brotherly Lebanese people in all its components during this critical phase.

It called for intensifying international and regional efforts to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to Lebanon to alleviate the suffering of civilians and protect them from any serious repercussions.

The Council also urged restraint, avoiding involvement in regional conflicts, and preventing the expansion of the conflict in the region.

The Council stressed the necessity of implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1701, related international resolutions, and the Taif Agreement, to restore lasting security and stability in Lebanon and ensure respect for the integrity of its territory, political independence, and sovereignty within its internationally recognised borders.

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Participants of the Third Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit gather for a group photo.

KUNA photo

### Kuwait envoy highlights humanitarian crisis

## More evacuation warnings in Lebanon signal wider offensive

CAIRO, Oct 3, (Agencies): Kuwait condemned on Thursday the Israeli occupation forces aggression on Lebanon and renewed its call for the international community to stop these attacks that threaten the stability of the region.

This came during the speech of Kuwait's Permanent Delegate to the Arab League Ambassador Talal Al-Mutairi in the urgent meeting to discuss ways to ignite Arab unity with Lebanon against this dangerous aggression.

"The meeting is being held under dangerous circumstances as escalation of the Israeli occupation against Leba-

non rises, which has resulted in a large number of casualties, injuries and the displacement of hundreds of thousands, including innocent children and women, some of whom are homeless under the continuous and criminal bombardment by the occupation forces," said Al-Mutairi.

"Kuwait affirms its rejection and denunciation of the aerial military operations launched by the Israeli occupation forces against the brotherly Lebanese people, as well as its condemnation of the ongoing attacks carried out against the brotherly Palestinian people," he added.

Al-Mutairi said that these acts are a blatant violation of international law and international humanitarian law as they threaten the security and stability of the region.

He stressed on Kuwait's firm stance in calling for the international community and security council to take political, legal and humanitarian responsibilities for these attacks and provide international security for the people in Lebanon and Palestine.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military on Thursday warned people to evacuate a city and other communities in southern

Lebanon that are north of a U.N.-declared buffer zone, signaling that it may widen a ground operation launched earlier this week against the Hezbollah militant group.

Israel has told people to leave Nabatieh, a provincial capital, and other communities north of the Litani River, which formed the northern edge of the border zone established by the U.N. Security Council after the 2006 war in a resolution that both sides accuse the other of violating.

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### Newswatch

## 133 individuals lose citizenship

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3, (KUNA): The First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah on Thursday chaired a meeting of the Supreme Committee to Investigate the Kuwaiti Citizenship.

The Ministry of Interior said in a statement that the commission decided to strip 133 individuals of the Kuwaiti citizenship, indicating that the decision would be submitted to the Cabinet.

**STOCKHOLM:** The Right Livelihood Award was awarded Thursday to three activists from the Palestinian territories, the Philippines and Mozambique and to a U.K. pioneering research agency who "have each made a profound impact on their communities and the global stage."

Issa Amro, a human rights activist in the occupied West Bank and his group, Youth Against Settlements, were awarded the prize "for their steadfast non-violent resistance to Israel's illegal occupation, promoting Palestinian civic action through peaceful means."

In the Philippines, Indigenous activist Joan Carling was cited "for raising Indigenous voices in the face of the global ecological breakdown and her leadership in defending people, lands and culture." (AP)

## Geopolitical tensions, Iran-Israel conflict hurt regional economies

By Mahmoud Shendi and Mohamed Al-Musleh  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3: Widespread disagreements and intense debates among observers and analysts regarding the strength and impact of the missile strikes launched by Iran on several cities in Israel the night before last and amid growing international concerns about the conflict escalating into a broader regional war have resulted in significant losses on the economic and financial fronts.

The strikes by Iran were Iran's response to the assassination of Hezbollah's Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah and other prominent leaders in the organization -- including Ismail Haniyeh, the head of

Hamas's political bureau in Iran. These losses have not only affected Israel but have also impacted a large number of countries in the region, including Kuwait, which experienced sharp declines in its stock market yesterday.

Kuwait's stock exchange recorded a loss of 509 million dinars, bringing its market value down to 41.808 billion dinars from 42.317 billion dinars in the previous session.

The general stock index fell by 86.1 points, a decrease of 1.2 percent, closing at 7,070 points. A considerable number of investors rushed to liquidate their positions by selling off shares, exiting the market in search of clarity regarding the geopolitical developments in the region.

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## Kuwait ensures adequate stock amid concerns about shortages

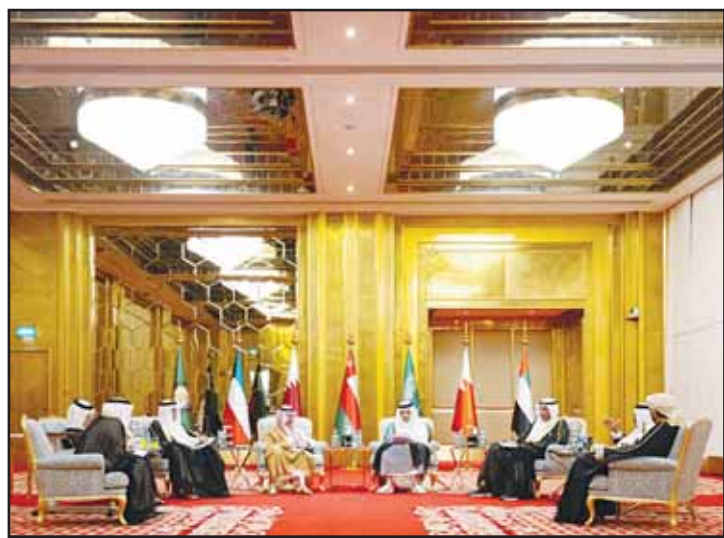
By Fares Al-Abdan  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthar Al-Huwailah has stressed the importance of maintaining the aesthetic appearance of cooperative societies and the need for the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies to ensure the provision of the best services to shareholders, and enhance their satisfaction and approval.

In a press statement, the ministry disclosed that the minister reaffirmed this commitment during her meeting with the chairman of the union Musab Al-Mulla and his accompanying delegation, reflecting a strong interest in advancing cooperative work for the benefit of shareholders.

The meeting addressed several key topics, including challenges in the sector; such

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Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya participates in the 45th meeting of the GCC Foreign Ministers Council in Doha, Qatar.

## Iraq to engage in dialogue with Kuwait over outstanding issues

BAGHDAD, Oct 3, (KUNA): Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein said Thursday that his country is set to have dialogue with Kuwait soon to look into outstanding issues, voicing his country's genuine willingness to reach understandings thereof.

Hussein made the remark while meeting with US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Barbara Leaf in Washington, focusing on bilateral relations and joint cooperation, along with several regional matters, said the Iraqi Foreign Ministry in a press release.

During the meeting, both sides touched upon ways of settling unresolved issues with the State of Kuwait and the necessity of returning to the negotiating table, it said.

The Iraqi minister added that the recent meetings of both Iraqi and Kuwaiti delegations during the UN General Assembly in New York had underlined the significance of dialogue as "the right way to resolve problems".

For her part, the US official vowed that Washington would utterly back the Iraqi government's endeavors to contain crises, according to the release.

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Kuwait Amir's Rep meets  
Qatar's Father Amir  
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### Business

Bursa Kuwait general  
index falls 0.49 pct  
— See Page 8

### Features



14-meter artwork brings  
Kuwait's timeless wedding traditions to life  
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## Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 04:23 Asr ..... 15:00  
 Sunrise .. 05:42 Maghrib .. 17:32  
 Zohr ..... 11:37 Isha ..... 18:49

# Local

## Two-weeks extension to upload 'post-12' degree

Severe consequences, warns Info

By **Mohammad Al-Musleh**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The Ministry of Information has extended the deadline for its employees to upload post-secondary academic certificates issued from Jan 1, 2000 till date for two weeks from the previous deadline of Sept 30.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the circular, in which the ministry emphasized that this extension aims to facilitate the procedures for employees -- citizens and expatriates -- regarding the examination of academic certificates.

The circular outlines the steps for uploading certificates as follows:

■ The employees should access the ministry's official website, particularly the page dedicated for certificate examination.

■ They must authenticate their identity through the Kuwait Mobile ID application.

■ They should upload a photocopy of their academic qualification, which must be issued only by government educational institutions in Kuwait. For qualifications obtained outside Kuwait, they should upload their academic credentials along with the equivalency certificate issued by the Ministry of Higher Education.

The ministry warned that employees, who fail to submit the required documents within the new deadline, will bear full responsibility for any measure that will be taken by the authorities in charge of the qualification process.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education (MoE) has approved an initiative from the University of California, Berkeley aimed at integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into Kuwait's education and training mechanisms, reports local Arabic daily Al-Rai.

This initiative includes the establishment of AI laboratories in secondary schools across the country.

Kuwaiti Ambassador to the United States Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah met with the faculty members and coordinators of Berkeley's AI program, during which they discussed the initiative.

At the meeting; acting General Technical Supervisor for Computers Mona Salem presented a report on the ministry's commitment to develop the youths' skills in this vital field.

The ministry affirmed full support for the university's goals while emphasizing the importance of integrating AI in education to equip students with essential skills for a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

The proposed programs will cover foundational AI concepts, creativity enhancement through AI, using AI as an educational tool, and fostering research and innovation in the field; thereby, allowing students to benefit from the university's expertise.

Salem asserted that collaboration with the university will greatly benefit the students and improve the overall educational system in Kuwait. She proposed forming a joint working group with representatives from both the ministry and the university as members in order to lay down a detailed implementation plan. This group will assess student needs and allocate necessary resources; including infrastructure, technology and funding, as well as ensure ongoing evaluation of the programs to enhance their effectiveness.

### 'Written tests mandatory'

## Around 80 top job slots lie vacant in MoCI



Al-Seyassah photo

US Ambassador to Kuwait Karen Sasahara during her visit to expats shelter center.

## US envoy praises efforts after visit to expats' shelter center

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The Public Authority for Manpower announced that the US Ambassador to Kuwait, Karen Sasahara, conducted a field visit to the expatriate workers' shelter center, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The purpose of the visit was to gain insights into the center's operations, including the procedures for receiving expatriate workers and the role of government agencies in providing essential services to the residents. Ambassador Sasahara was briefed on various services available at the center, including health care, psychological support, and legal assistance, with a particular focus on the sup-

port provided to female residents.

She was also presented with data and statistics concerning the number of residents and the procedures in place for their care and rehabilitation.

The Public Authority for Manpower noted that Ambassador Sasahara expressed her appreciation for the center's efforts in providing social and psychological protection, legal rights, and dignified living conditions to the female inmates.

She extended her gratitude to the staff for their ongoing dedication and commitment to enhancing the residents' well-being and accommodation.

## Study on allowing citizens, expats to set up spring camps has begun

By **Inaas Awadh**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The Public Relations Department of the Kuwait Municipality has announced that the committee responsible for studying and updating camping sites for the 2024/2025 season has officially commenced its work, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This initiative is part of the municipality's preparations to grant licenses for establishing spring camps for both citizens and residents.

Led by Faisal Al-Otaibi, the committee is currently engaged in a series of meetings

aimed at finalizing preparations ahead of the official start date of November 15.

Key topics of discussion include identifying the permitted camping sites for the upcoming season and establishing the terms and conditions for setting up spring camps based on new regulations.

Additionally, the committee is determining the timeline for accepting applications from cooperative societies, which will be facilitated through the Kuwait Municipality's official website.

This proactive approach aims to ensure a smooth and organized camping experience for all participants in the upcoming season.

## 'Link KU majors to labor market needs'

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** Dr. Nader Al-Jalal, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Acting Minister of Education, expressed his enthusiasm during his first official visit to Kuwait University, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He met with Acting President Dr. Osama Al-Saeed and university leaders to discuss academic and student-related matters, focusing on ensuring the university has the necessary resources, such as budget and student cadres, to meet its educational goals.

Al-Jalal stressed the importance of aligning the university's programs with labor market demands and job requirements, emphasizing the need to enhance the university's international ranking by aligning with global standards.

He also highlighted the significance of

scientific research and updating academic programs to better prepare students for future careers.

The minister further discussed the potential for increasing the university's revenues through investments in Sabah Al-Salem University City, in coordination with regulatory authorities, as a means of enhancing the state's resources.

He encouraged student participation in cultural, sports, and artistic activities while promoting stronger cooperation and partnerships with state institutions.

In response, Dr. Al-Saeed welcomed Al-Jalal's visit and praised his dedication to improving Kuwait University's educational system, hoping the visit would lead to positive outcomes for the university's future development.

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The Minister of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) Khalifa Al-Ajeel issued a ministerial decision on amending the regulations and conditions for filling vacant leadership positions in the ministry, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The daily obtained a copy of the ministerial decision stating that Article One of Ministerial Resolution No. 128/2023 shall be amended to add the following conditions for filling leadership positions stipulated in Civil Service Commission Resolution No. 25/2006:

1. The announcement of vacant supervisory positions in the ministry shall be through its website and the bulletin board at the Administrative Affairs Department on the same day. The department shall receive applications within 15 days from the date of the announcement.

2. The applicant should obtain a total score of at least 80 percent in the written exam and personal interview -- 70 percent for the written exam and 10 percent for the interview.

3. The applicant should be currently working in the sector, where a vacant leadership post must be filled. If none of such applicants are qualified for the post, then those working outside the sector can apply.

All the other articles in Ministerial Resolution No. 128/2023 shall remain effective.

### Revealed

Meanwhile, sources revealed that the number of vacant leadership positions in the ministry exceeds 80, including director, supervisor and department head.

Sources pointed out that for the first time, those applying for leadership positions in the ministry are now required to pass the written exam, which will be prepared by the Institute of Banking Studies. Sources revealed the exam questions will be formulated according to the description of job duties in each sector, administration and department. Sources said this makes efficiency and familiarity with the concept of public service part of the criteria for assessing applicants.

Sources reiterated that the decision limits the nomination to leadership positions to the employees of the sector, stressing that outsiders will be considered only if there are no qualified applicants from the sector. Sources explained this move is aimed at maintaining the hierarchy and smoothness of promotion procedures in the ministry.

Sources pointed out this amendment will give competent and experienced employees an opportunity to assume leadership posts in the same sector where they gained the experience.

### Weather

**Expected weather for next 24 hrs:**

**By Day:** Hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 10-45 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas.

**By Night:** Rather hot to mild

with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-38 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	37	26
Kuwait Airport	39	29
Abdaly	39	23

Bubyan	36	25
Jahra	40	30
Faialaka Island	36	25
Salmiyah	35	30
Ahmadi	37	23
Jal Aliyah	40	26
Nuwaisib	41	28

## Amir congratulates newly elected Japanese PM

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3, (KUNA):** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a cable of congratulations to Shigeru Ishiba on being elected Japan's Prime Minister.

In the cable, His Highness wished him all the success in carrying out his duties, and Japan further progress and prosperity, stressing the deep historical relations between the two countries and keenness on strengthening them.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of congratulations to Shigeru Ishiba, Japan's newly elected Prime Minister, wishing him long-lasting health and Japan further progress and prosperity.

### Germany

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a cable of congratulations to President of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier on his country's national day on Thursday.

His Highness wished him a long

healthy life and more development and prosperity for the people of Germany.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of congratulations to President of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier on his country's national day.

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His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier on his country's national day.



Crown Prince Diwan photo

The Representative of His Highness the Amir (of the State of Kuwait) Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah (left) meets His Highness the Father Amir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani.

## Kuwait Amir's Rep meets Qatar's Father Amir

**DOHA, Qatar, Oct 3, (KUNA):** The visiting Representative of His Highness the Amir (of the State of Kuwait) Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Thursday visited His Highness the Father Amir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, at Al-Wajba Palace in the Qatari capital.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled conveyed greetings from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal to Qatar's Father Amir, who in turn requested that his salutes be relayed to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal.

Earlier today, His Highness Sheikh

Sabah Khaled met Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra on sidelines of the third summit of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), held in Doha on Thursday.

During the meeting, they discussed Kuwaiti-Thai relations, ways of developing them to serve the interests of both countries and their friendly peoples, latest regional and international developments.

The Representative of His Highness the Amir (of the State of Kuwait) Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, met on Wednesday the State of Qatar Deputy

Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Thani at the Amiri Diwan in the Qatari capital.

The two sides explored the solid fraternal relations between the two brotherly countries and peoples, means of reinforcing these bonds in diverse domains, and held discussions on various regional and international topics of common interest.

A dinner banquet was held in honor of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation on Wednesday. The banquet was held by Qatar Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al Thani at the Amiri Diwan in Doha.

### Kuwait, Turkey send aid to Sudan

## KRCS launches med camp in Yemen's Marib

**ADEN, Yemen, Oct 3, (KUNA):** Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) launched a free medical camp for urinary tract surgery in Marib governorate, central Yemen, on Wednesday.

The camp aims to perform 100 surgical interventions at Kari General Hospital in the governorate as part of the "Kuwait by Your Side" campaign, which entered its 10th year.

Director-General of the Ministry of Health and Population Office in the Governorate Ahmed Al-Abadi highlighted the importance of establishing such medical camps to enhance the capabilities of the health sector in the governorate and alleviate the difficulties patients face due to the high waves of displacement.

Al-Abadi extolled Kuwait Amir, government and people for their continuous support of the Yemeni people and the groups they affected during the civil war, especially in the health sector.

Deputy Director of Kari General Hospital Ahmed Al-Faqih said the camp will help alleviate patients' suffering and provide specialized surgical services.

He thanked KRCS for its generous support for this vital project and the Response Foundation for Relief and Humanitarian Works for its efforts. Mohammad Salim, the Director of the Office of the Response Foundation Marib, which is implementing the project, confirmed that the (KRCS) pays excellent attention to implementing health projects that contribute to changing the lives of many patients.

Salim explained that the camp aims to perform 100 urinary tract surgeries, extract stones, implant ureteral stents, and perform other surgical interventions. In addition, it will dispense medicines and conduct medical examinations free of charge.



KUNA photo

Doctors conducting an operation in Yemen's Marib governorate.

He pointed out that this project comes within the framework of the continuous humanitarian efforts of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society to provide health care to patients in need in Yemen.

Meanwhile, a ship loaded with desperately-needed 2,500 tons of Kuwaiti and Turkish relief aid arrived at the Port of Port Sudan on Tuesday to be distributed to flood and civil conflict-affected people in Sudan.

The ship was received at the port by Sudanese Minister of Culture and Information and Government Spokesperson Dr. Garham Abdulqader and Minister of Transport Abubaker Al-Qassem, Charge d'Affaires of Kuwait's Embassy in Khartoum Mohammad Al-Hamad, Turkish Ambassador, several senior government officials and Commissioner of the Sudanese Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) Salwa Baneya.

Speaking at the ceremony, Baneya

expressed Sudan's gratitude to Kuwait and Türkiye for their continuous support to Sudanese people at this delicate time.

For his part, Al-Hamad said that the aid ship embodies Kuwait's solidarity with Sudan in line with the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The ship carried 2,500 tons of aid, worth USD 2.1 million: 2,000 tons donated by the Kuwait Society for Relief and 500 tons donated by the Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation, he said.

He described the ship as the biggest ever Kuwaiti aid ship sent to Sudan.

Kuwait also continues dispatching aid to Sudan through an airlift launched last August, he said, noting that a Kuwaiti aircraft carrying 10 tons of food and tents arrived on Monday.

He affirmed that Kuwait would remain by the side of Sudan till it overcomes the difficult time.

## KNPC and KIPIC set to merge roles of officials

By **Najeh Bilal**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** Wadha Al-Khatib, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) and Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC), is currently working on merging the roles of officials with similar functions in the two companies.

Sources revealed that as part of this initiative, Al-Khatib has appointed Director of the Information Technology

Group at KIPIC Ahmed Abdullah Al-Mulaifi to also serve as director of the Information Technology Department at KNPC.

Sources confirmed as well the appointment of Director of Training and Development at KIPIC Dhari Al-Gharaballi in the same capacity in the Training and Career Development Department at KNPC.

These strategic appointments are based on the cooperation agreement that KNPC and KIPIC signed on May

11, 2024 in a bid to facilitate the integration process that Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) announced recently, sources said.

Sources went on to say that the official merger related to the gas plants of Kuwait Oil Tankers Company (KOTC) will be announced soon. They affirmed that Al-Khatib is committed to enhancing the capabilities of the national workforce in both companies through intensive training programs, particularly on security and safety measures.



# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'From pagers to cars: the evolving threat of tech in modern warfare'

"ON Tuesday, September 17, 2024, life in Lebanon began just as it had been in recent days, marked by Hezbollah's ongoing threats to Israel and Israel's systematic assaults on innocent civilians," columnist **Faisal Mohammed bin Sabt** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"But suddenly, thousands of pagers carried by Hezbollah fighters and leaders exploded simultaneously across the country.

"Within 24 hours, explosions were reported again, this time from the 'walkie-talkie' communication devices used by Hezbollah personnel.

"The attacks resulted in dozens of deaths and thousands of injuries, with CNN attributing the operation to collaboration between the Israeli intelligence agency, Mossad, and the Israeli military.

"These incidents echoed previous assassinations carried out by Israel against Palestinian leaders using similar tactics.

"In 1972, the Israeli intelligence assassinated Mahmoud al-Hamshari, the Palestine Liberation Organization representative in Paris, by booby-trapping his phone with explosives and detonating it remotely during a call.

"Similarly, in 1996, Yahya Ayyash, a key Hamas leader known for his expertise in explosives, fell victim to a booby-trapped phone loaded with approximately 50 grams of explosives, detonated after Israeli security confirmed his voice on the line.

"The techniques employed by Israeli intelligence to eliminate its adversaries have garnered international attention, leading to widespread shock at the detonation of both pagers and communication devices.

"Questions arose regarding the lack of inspections for explosives or potential eavesdropping devices in equipment distributed to Hezbollah fighters, especially considering the group's constant anticipation of enemy attacks.

"This incident has sparked concerns about the potential for similar attacks involving electric vehicles, which heavily depend on technology and internet connectivity.

"Experts have noted the feasibility of using satellites or internet connections to raise the temperature of lithium batteries in these cars, leading to catastrophic explosions. As technology advances, so do its associated risks, despite its considerable benefits."

### Also:

"The speech delivered by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, the Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, at the United Nations during the 79th session of the General Assembly in New York addressed numerous global issues of significance," columnist **Dr. Issa Mohammed Al-Amiri** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"In his remarks, His Highness emphasized the need for renewed international solidarity, stressing that genuine political will for reform is essential, particularly in the Security Council.

"He called for updating international mechanisms to effectively confront threats to global security and stability. "Regarding technological advancements, His Highness highlighted the rapid pace of innovations and the misuse of artificial intelligence and social media in promoting hate speech, incitement, and false information. He underscored the urgent need to address these cybersecurity challenges.

"His speech outlined the dangers facing the world, noting that no one is immune from their impact. He asserted that cooperation and solidarity towards common goals are crucial for achieving justice and equality, which cannot thrive under double standards. "Additionally, he condemned the

escalating Israeli aggression against Lebanon as a blatant violation of international norms and laws.

"On the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) front, His Highness reaffirmed the commitment of the GCC countries to advancing the GCC process and enhancing strategic partnerships with regional and international organizations.

"Concerning the 'Vision 2035', His Highness stated that Kuwait aims to transform the nation into a financial, commercial and cultural hub that actively engages with its regional and international environment.

"He highlighted that this vision is rooted in a legacy of humanitarian values upheld by generations.

"In conclusion, His Highness's profound and comprehensive speech addressed critical issues affecting the world today and reinforced the importance of unity and cooperation in addressing these challenges."

"The Ministry of Health's position on 'Afia' insurance is confusing. Since the problem surfaced, we have been discovering something different daily. We have heard many justifications. First, the suspension of 'Afia' insurance was due to the insurance company's failure to fulfill its obligations towards extending the contract," **M. Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Then, we heard that there was an attempt to extend the contract for six months, only to be surprised by the cancellation of the insurance for a year through the nullification of the law in this regard. Both the National Assembly and the government agreed on approving this law. It was a popular law that benefited nearly 200,000. It greatly contributed to easing the burden of the public health sector, as well as contributing to the growth of investments in the private medical sector.

"It is no secret that the cancellation of the Afia Insurance Law was disappointing to a large number of citizens who benefited from its services. It was one of the most important healthcare mechanisms provided by the State to citizens covered by it. This type of healthcare, which is supported by the State, is common. Many countries are implementing it, because they put the health of the citizen as a priority. Indeed, it is a priority.

"If this insurance is tainted by exploitation or misuse, then this must be addressed to protect public money. However, the sudden cancellation will lead to confusion for both the private medical sector and the citizen; as most of the beneficiaries have arranged their appointments, especially those with chronic diseases, with doctors and hospitals in the private sector.

"If the ministry's statement confirmed that they are the priority in the government health sector, this confirmation is subject to many doubts regarding the sector's ability to accommodate the growing population.

"The steady population growth and the increasing demand for health services will lead to the weakening of the performance of the government health sector, which is shared by citizens and expatriates. It will also lead to the spread of 'wasta' (influence) and kinship in obtaining healthcare at a time the patient is already suffering from long appointment and waiting periods.

"From another perspective, the cancellation of the Afia Law harmed the investments of the private medical sector, which have grown and expanded, considering the law stimulated them. The private sector has been able to ease the burden on government health services.

"In fact, it is incomprehensible to specify a period of one year after the law was cancelled. It would have been more rational if the ministry, after all this period, identified the problems in the implementation and address them by contracting with national health insurance companies. Nevertheless, it is indeed a confusing matter."

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



Brigadier-General Al-Mikhial with Lieutenant General Frank Patrick.

### Brig-Gen Al-Mikhial hosts US' Lieut-Gen Patrick

Brigadier General Fahd Eid Al-Mikhial, Commander of the Land Forces, welcomed Lieutenant General Frank Patrick, Commander of the US Central Land Forces, along with his accompanying delegation.

During the meeting, held at the General Staff of the Army, the two com-

manders engaged in friendly discussions, focusing on key military topics relevant to the visit.

The talks aimed to strengthen the collaboration and understanding between the two forces, enhancing their operational capabilities and joint initiatives.

Moi photo

# Court moves to re-arrest lawyers tied to social media falsehoods

Appeals acquits alleged drug dealer, citing lack of evidence

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3: The Criminal Court ordered the arrest of two lawyers accused of publishing false news on social media, as well as their detention, pending a State security case.**

The Public Prosecution had earlier investigated the defendants in a State security case, in addition to the charge of publishing false news about Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan on social media platforms TikTok and X.

They were released after the prosecution completed the investigation at the time, but the court on Thursday ruled to arrest them once again.

In its indictment report, the prosecution requested to apply the penalty for publishing false news -- a prison term of up to five years according to the relevant law.

**Drug dealer's life sentence quashed:** The Court of Appeals overturned the ruling of the Criminal Court that sentenced an alleged drug dealer to life imprisonment, and then acquitted him due to the absence of incriminating evidence.

Attorney Enaam Haidar, who represented the accused in court, argued that the arrest and search procedures were invalid; and that the case papers were devoid of any proof that his client was in possession of the seized narcotic and psychotropic substances for the purpose of trafficking.

The higher court explained the grounds of its ruling, indicating the incident officer failed to prove that the accused is guilty in his investigation report and his testimony during the investigations carried out by the Public Prosecution.

It added that the accused was not caught in the act of selling or buying through an entrapment operation arranged by the incident officer, stressing there is no intent to trade in narcotic substances.

**Female phone thief held:** Taima detectives arrested a woman for stealing mobile phones from shops in Jahra.

A security source revealed several reports of mobile phone theft were registered against an unidentified person, so the detectives intensified their efforts until they nabbed a woman with a criminal record who turned out to be an 'expert' in stealing mobile phones from shops.

The source indicated that the woman uses certain tricks to steal a mobile phone, which she hides in her clothes in a way that makes it difficult to detect the stolen item, and then goes to another shop to sell it for less than the market price.

The source said the woman was arrested while trying to sell a stolen phone. Initial investigations revealed she is wanted by law for evading a two-year imprisonment sentence and many cases have been filed against her. She was referred to the concerned authority, the source confirmed.

**'Diamond' case being probed:** A fraud and deception case was registered at Salhiya Police Station after an expatriate working in the field of jewelry trade filed a report; stating that he offered a diamond worth KD24,000 to another expatriate working in the same field as the latter expressed his willingness to buy it, but failed to do his part of the agreement, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

A security source confirmed that the case was referred to the concerned



File photo of gas cylinders.

## Maintenance of gas cylinders vital: KFF

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2:** Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) has advised the public to ensure the periodic maintenance of gas cylinders and their connections to prevent leakage and fire, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

In a public awareness video clip, KFF stressed the need to purchase an approved gas regulator, check its expiration date, ensure the availability of a fire extinguisher, and a fire blanket in the food preparation area.

### Over 3m traffic violations in 1H '24

By **Munif Naif**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The General Traffic Department at the Ministry of Interior revealed that in the first half of 2024 (182 days); a total of 3,100,638 traffic violations were recorded, with speeding violations accounting for the majority at 1,531,625, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The department also highlighted that 93 percent of accidents attributed to inattention are linked to using the mobile phone by hand while driving. In the first half of 2024; a total of 30,868 phone usage violations and 9,472 inattention violations were registered.

## CSC 'nominates' 2,021 Kuwaitis for state jobs

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has announced the nomination of a new batch of 2,021 male and female citizens, representing various specializations, who are registered in the central employment system and are interested in working in state bodies, institutions, and ministries, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Candidates are encouraged to directly contact the employers to which they have been nominated, eliminating the need for prior appointments or additional reviews.

This initiative aims to streamline the employment process and facilitate the integration of qualified individuals into the public sector, enhancing workforce efficiency in government institutions.

**'Flag Salute' initiative:** The Ministry of Interior, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, has conducted field visits to 35 schools across various educational districts as part of the "Flag Salute" initiative, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

During these visits, awareness leaflets were distributed to teachers and students, emphasizing the significance of preserving and respecting the Kuwaiti flag.

This effort is part of a broader joint awareness media campaign involving the ministries of Education, Interior, Information, and the Government Communication Center, and held under the theme 'With our efforts, we achieve our dreams'.

The primary objective of these visits is to strengthen national identity and belonging among students, while underscoring the collective responsibility to protect and uphold the Kuwaiti national flag as a symbol of the state's identity.



Firefighters putting out the blaze to the vehicles.

KFF photo

## No casualties in fire to 3 vehicles

By **Munif Naif**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** Firefighters put out a fire that engulfed three vehicles in Jaber Al-Ahmad.

The Operations Unit at Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) dispatched securitymen and firefighters to the abovementioned location immediately after receiving a report on the fire incident. The firefighting team doused the fire in record time.

No injuries or casualties were reported, only material losses. Also, Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) has started investigations into a fire that engulfed two vehicles near a house in Sabahiya recently, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The investigators aim to determine the cause of the fire and whether it was intentional or not. Both vehicles suffered extensive damage and were fully engulfed in flames.

In a separate incident, firefighting teams extinguished a fire in an apartment building in Salmiya. The teams managed to contain the blaze without any reported injuries or casualties.

authorities for investigation. When the accused was summoned, he confirmed receiving the diamond; adding that he offered it for sale to a third jeweler who expressed his willingness to buy it for KD25,000. After receiving the diamond, the third jeweler said that the seller owed him KD25,000; and that since he received the diamond, his debt is already paid. The seller tried everything to get the diamond back, but his efforts proved futile. However, during interrogation, the third jeweler denied receiving the diamond.

The case file was referred to the Public Prosecution for further investigation.

Boarki participates in Riyadh event

## Global cybersecurity forum a platform for know-how exchange: Kuwaiti official

**RIYADH, Oct 3, (KUNA):** A Saudi Arabia-hosted global cybersecurity forum represents a chance for attendees to share their knowledge on the matter with one another, the chief of Kuwait's cybersecurity center Mohammad Boarki said on Thursday.

Given the magnitude of the global gathering, the Kuwaiti official expected the event to be instrumental in allowing participants to keep abreast of the latest information pertaining to cybersecurity efforts, saying he shared his country's views on the need to protect utilities from potential cyberattacks.

Kuwait's participation in the gathering is a testament to the growing significance of cybersecurity on a national level and beyond, in addition to the need to further develop the necessary skills to deal with the pressing matter, the official underlined, thanking the Gulf Arab kingdom for hosting the initiative.



Part of a dialogue session in which the head of the National Center for Cybersecurity, Mohamed Boarki, participates.

KUNA photo



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## LOCAL

# Preservation rules approved as council defers fee review

Jahra Waterfront project spending questioned

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3: The Legal and Financial Committee of the Municipal Council, chaired by member Fahd Al-Abdul Jader, held its fourth meeting of the third session yesterday.**

During the meeting, two out of five agenda items were approved. These included a proposal by member Farah Al-Roumi to establish sustainability regulations and guidelines for the rehabilitation and preservation of archaeological sites and historical buildings, and a proposal by member Sharifa Al-Shalfan to prepare a regulation for the dismantling of buildings based on a field study of building types and the local market.

Meanwhile, the committee deferred decisions on three other items. These included a proposal to amend the value of fees in Advertisement Regulation No. 599 of 2023, submitted by Fahd Al-Abduljader, a proposal to form a committee to study city and street naming requests, and a letter from the Public Facilities Management Com-

pany regarding advertisement regulations.

In a related development, Municipal Council member Nasser Al-Jadaan submitted questions to the executive body regarding the Jahra Waterfront Development Project.

Al-Jadaan inquired about the consulting agreement worth 880,000 dinars (\$2.9 million) for the design of the project, asking for details on the benefits of the agreement, the sufficiency of the bid process, and the number of consulting agreements concluded by the municipality over the past three years.

He also requested copies of the contract and its appendices, emphasizing the need for timely responses.

## 'Think before you throw'

### PAFN launches awareness campaign on 'food waste'

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) organized an awareness campaign with the theme, "Think about it before you throw it away," as part of its celebration of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, reports Al-Anba daily.

In its campaign, the authority underscored the need to stop food waste; indicating that food wasted at the retail or consumer level in grocery stores, restaurants or consumers' homes is about 17 percent of the food produced, while the waste during harvest, packaging, transportation, storage and before sale is about 14 percent of the food produced.

The authority pointed out that waste can occur in the farm due to inappropriate harvest time, climatic conditions, wrong practices and challenges in marketing the products. It added that good transportation and infrastructure, as well as efficient commercial logistics, are essential elements in preventing food waste, while preparation and packaging play a major role in preserving food.

Food waste could also be attributed to inadequate facilities, technical failure or human error. Waste during storage can result in significant food losses due to incorrect storage conditions and non-compliance with storage requirements, as well as decisions made in the early stages of the supply chain that shorten the shelf life of products.



Al-Seyassah photo

Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi with Kuwaiti artist Abdul Aziz Al-Tamimi.

## Jahra Governor 'honors' Kuwaiti artist Al-Tamimi

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi welcomed Kuwaiti plastic artist Abdul Aziz Al-Tamimi at the governorate's office to congratulate him on being named the honorary president of the Jordanian Plastic Artists Association, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This recognition comes as Al-Tamimi represents Kuwait in the upcoming Jerash Festival for Culture and Arts, where all proceeds will be donated to support the people of the Gaza Strip.

## Collaboration aligned for key reforms

### Engineers' Association, Ministry enhance cooperation for accreditation, job growth

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The Society of Engineers, in collaboration with the Ministries of Municipality and Housing Affairs, reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing cooperation in various fields of professional accreditation and skill development for engineers, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This was emphasized during a meeting between the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Eng. Abdul Latif Al-Mishari, and the Chairman of the Engineers Association, Eng. Faisal Al-Atal.

During the meeting, Eng. Al-Atal congratulated Minister Al-Mishari on his new role, presenting him with the association's medal in recognition of his previous contributions as an active member of the Kuwaiti Architects Association.

Al-Atal expressed the association's readiness to offer technical and professional support to engineers across various sectors, ensuring that work aligns



Al-Seyassah photo  
Eng. Faisal Al-Atal presents Minister Abdul Latif Al-Mishari the association's medal.

with professional standards to achieve high-quality results in state projects, particularly those under Kuwait's development plans.

The meeting also focused on en-

hancing the accreditation processes for supervisory engineers within Kuwait Municipality and collaborating on the development of regulations for the engineering profession.

## Workshop boosts Kuwait's medical capabilities

### Amiri Hospital performs 12 complex surgeries

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** Amiri Hospital performed 12 complex surgeries in its recent Hernia Surgery and Abdominal Wall Repair Workshop; during which it hosted international consultant in hernia surgery and abdominal wall repair Dr. Gregoris Chatzimavrodos, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a statement to the daily, general surgery, advanced obesity and surgical robotics expert Dr. Mufrej Al-Hajri confirmed that "such scientific and practical workshops are in line with the objectives of the Ministry of Health's visiting doctors program to attract international medical expertise in order to provide the best services to patients."

Al-Hajri disclosed the four-day workshop included 12 complex hernia and abdominal wall repair surgeries, indicating the average duration of each operation was about five hours.

He added "although these surgeries are considered high-risk and with complications, we achieved the best



Al-Rai photos  
Photo during the four-day workshop of complex surgeries at the Amiri Hospital.



Al-Rai photos  
Dr. Mufrej Al-Hajri with Dr. Ali Al-Juwaid.

results and minimized the complications through the great capabilities and distinguished medical expertise of the Kuwaiti medical staff, with the participation of the international expert -- Dr. Gregoris Chatzimavrodos who is a pio-

neer in this type of surgery in Europe." Meanwhile, obesity surgery specialist Dr. Ali Al-Juwaid affirmed that "performing such surgeries requires months of preparation including examinations, anesthesia, equipment and techniques."

## Acting Dean emphasizes support programs

### KU hosts inspiring orientation for new scholarship students

By Abdulrahman Al-Shimmari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The Student Housing and International Student Affairs Department, in collaboration with the Academic Guidance Department, hosted an orientation meeting for new scholarship students for the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.

The event took place in the Administrative Building Theater at Sabah Al-Salem University City.

Dr. Jassim Al-Hamdan, the Acting Dean of Student Affairs at Kuwait University, sponsored the meeting and highlighted that the scholarships awarded to these students reflect their excellence and commitment to academic achievement and personal development.

He noted that the Deanship of Student Affairs offers numerous beneficial programs, including the "We Are Proud of You" initiative and a Student Employment program designed for those wishing to assist their peers academically under the guidance of the academic departments, among other activities.

Dr. Lamis Al-Bustan, Director of the Language Teaching Center, emphasized that this experience marks the beginning of a valuable educational journey, fostering an environment rich in diverse cultures and mutual respect.

It is noteworthy that Kuwait University has accepted 254 male and female scholarship students into its colleges for the current semester, along with 142 scholarship students admitted to the Language Teaching Center.



Al-Seyassah photo  
Photo taken during the orientation meeting.

## Governor calls for city beautification

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali has stressed the importance of working on the aesthetic and civilized appearance of the capital of Kuwait, including its markets and historical landmarks, due to the significance and the political and economic status of the main facade of the country, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali made the announcement in his recent meeting with acting Director General of the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Nasser Taqi and the latter's office manager -- Thamer Al-Qafidi. He stated: "We are now facing the challenges of the coming stage; such as the need to implement development and beautification projects that require the involvement of all concerned parties in order to produce aesthetic and civilized outputs for our capital."

The meeting covered a number of topics related to beautifying and greening the entire governorate. The governor emphasized that beautification and greening works shall start in Kuwait



Al-Seyassah photo  
Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali with Nasser Taqi and Thamer Al-Qafidi.

City, specifically the main entrances, and then all the other areas.

In addition, Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi also met with Taqi and Al-Qafidi. They discussed ways to develop the agricultural and recreational services in the governorate; as well as beautifying all areas by planting trees and flowers along the roads, public squares and roundabouts, especially in the new residential areas.

The governor praised the tremendous efforts that the authority is exerting to

beautify the entire country in general, and the governorate in particular. He said the authority is also committed to providing the needs of farmers to activate their role in guaranteeing food security and supporting efforts to develop the agricultural sector.

Meanwhile, Taqi thanked the governor for fully supporting the authority; stressing that this greatly contributes to the removal of obstacles, and ensuring the success of the agricultural and fisheries sectors to better serve the residents of the governorate.



# October

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# Ministry launches Arabic language diagnostic survey

New initiative aims to enhance primary students' skills

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** As part of the steps of the continuous development program for the education system in primary schools, especially in the Arabic language, which is a solid foundation for forming the student's personality and linguistic abilities in the primary stage; the Ministry of Education announced the implementation of a diagnostic survey for Arabic language students in first semester of the 2024-2025 academic year.

This procedure aims to evaluate the basic skills of students, and identify strengths and weaknesses in language skills, with the aim of providing treatment plans that enhance their educational abilities.

The ministry also laid new foundations for evaluating the Arabic language subject in the primary stage.

This step comes in light of the interest in improving the quality of education and ensuring the provision of an evaluation that enhances students' abilities and encourages them to excel academically.

## Diagnostic Survey Mechanism

The memorandum, a copy of which was obtained by the newspaper, includes the mechanism for conducting the diagnostic survey, which is conducted periodically throughout the year, by dividing the process into stages distributed over the first weeks of the semester.

This survey focuses on oral reading skills, writing skills and linguistic expression, in addition to reading and linguistic comprehension skills.

Teachers supervise the implementation of these diagnostic tests, in coordination with the head of the educational department in schools to ensure that the process proceeds properly.

## Results and Outputs

The memorandum specified the analysis of the results of the diagnostic survey, which determines the level of students and classifies them according to their linguistic abilities. Based on these results, a treatment plan is developed specifically for each student whose skills need improvement, as additional sessions are organized to develop the targeted skills. The plan includes more training in reading and writing, with the provision of activities that support strengthening letters and

phonemes, and solving problems related to correct spelling and correct writing.

## The importance of the diagnostic survey

The diagnostic survey contributes to accurately determining the student's level from the beginning of the school year, which allows teachers to provide appropriate educational interventions.

It also contributes to early detection of any educational difficulties that the student may face, ensuring that the educational path is corrected early. In addition, this survey improves the interaction between the student and the teacher by providing additional opportunities for students to improve their linguistic performance.

## Survey criteria

The text of the diagnostic survey is prepared according to specific criteria, including the clarity of the text, the soundness of its vocabulary, and the accuracy of its style to suit the level of the class.

The text must contain words weighted according to the age group for each class, so that the text is an effective tool in measuring the student's linguistic ability.

## Recommendations and guidelines

The guidelines issued by the ministry included the necessity for teachers to commit to reading the diagnostic text in full, taking into account appropriate breaks during reading.

In addition, the directives emphasized the importance of training students to read correctly, taking into account the pronunciation of letters and correct writing, and repeating the training process to ensure achieving the desired goal of the survey.

The diagnostic survey is an important step towards improving the quality of education in primary schools, as it helps in discovering linguistic problems early, which contributes to developing successful solutions that contribute to achieving the educational goals set by the Ministry of Education.

## New foundations for evaluation

This new evaluation comes within the framework of the ministry's efforts to develop the educational process and evaluate students in a way that reflects their actual level of achievement, as the ministry has established new foundations for evaluating the Arabic language subject in the primary stage.

This step comes in light of the interest in improving the quality of education and ensuring the provision of an evaluation that enhances students' capabilities and encourages them to excel academically.

## Evaluation objectives

The new foundations for evaluation in the primary stage included several axes aimed at achieving an advanced level of academic performance for students, as the ministry emphasizes that evaluation is not limited to monitoring grades only, but is a means of developing the level of learning among students.

It also seeks to identify strengths and weaknesses in their language skills by

relying on diverse and comprehensive evaluation methods.

## Evaluation Recommendations and Guidelines

The issued directives emphasize that using appropriate tools in the evaluation process is the basis for ensuring the accuracy of results.

The ministry focuses on taking into account the balance between summative and formative evaluation, while emphasizing the need for continuous follow-up and providing educational support to students.

The directives also emphasize the importance of training teachers on modern evaluation methods and providing rehabilitation programs aimed at enabling them to apply innovative evaluation methods that contribute to developing students' educational performance.

## Its structure and components

The summative evaluation is divided into several components, including classroom activities, written and oral tests, in addition to individual and group projects.

Grades are distributed across these components in specific proportions, as reading, writing, and speaking skills are evaluated.

Special guidelines are taken into account for each of these skills, such as paying attention to clarifying ideas and using vocabulary correctly and accurately.

## Achievement tests and general recommendations

Students must, according to the plans in place, pass achievement tests, which represent an essential part of the evaluation process, as these tests include tasks aimed at measuring the student's ability to understand, express, and think critically.

The ministry focuses on the reading tests to ensure that the texts are written in a manner that is consistent with the student's linguistic and mental level.

It addressed the importance of following specific guidelines in formulating questions to ensure their clarity and avoid repetition, which allows the student to express his knowledge flexibly.

With regard to spelling, guidelines were developed to encourage teachers to use advanced methods in training students on correct spelling.

## Its impact on the quality of education

The impact of this assessment is that these methods contribute to raising the level of student achievement and motivating them to interact with the subject matter more, and they also support teachers in the process of developing educational performance within classrooms.

The ministry relies in its plan on comprehensive assessment that ensures coverage of all aspects of students' language skills, which contributes to preparing a generation capable of communicating effectively in later educational stages.

The memorandum stressed the need for teachers to adhere to the guidelines for assessment and tests, to ensure the achievement of the desired goals of the educational process in the primary stage.

## 20 flag shades to be installed

# MoE activates private partnership

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** Volunteer work advocate Yousef Al-Omran (Abu Jarrah) has unveiled an initiative to install 20 flag square shades in a number of schools, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a statement to the daily, Al-Omran revealed that private sector will bear the cost of the implementation of the project that the Ministry of Education has approved, provided the conditions stipulated in the Ministry of Finance's circular on the rules for accepting donations are met.

He said about 20 private companies have expressed their willingness to participate in this project as part of their corporate social responsibility and commitment to serve in the interest of the country and the students.

He previously presented similar initiatives, including the maintenance of Abbad bin Bishr School in Abu Halifa; confirming there is another initiative for the painting, restoration, modification, maintenance and repair of an entire school, which will be determined later, and it will be financed by the private sector as well.

Meanwhile, the ministry affirmed its commitment to activate its partnership with the private sector in the renovation of school buildings to provide the best services to students, as per the directives of the Council of Ministers to increase State revenues and rationalize spending.

The ministry realized the possibil-



Al-Rai photo  
A model of one of the umbrellas of the flag square in smart schools.

ity of the participation of donors in the maintenance of school buildings, as long as the instructions of the concerned entities are followed during the implementation of the project and in accordance with its regulations; such as obtaining the approval of its finance counterpart to receive donations, specify the type of donation and the beneficiaries, the party in charge of implementation as per the agreement between the donor and the beneficiary.

The Technical Unit in the Educational Facilities and Planning Sector is supervising such projects.

The ministry also underscored the need to complete the required donor's data and to specify the nature of the donation, project name and components of its location, estimated cost; in addition to completing the supporting documents to establish the financial and legal status of the donor, and the person responsible for implementing the project.

## New committee to address autism and other needs

# PADA working to reform education regulations for disabled individuals

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The Educational and Rehabilitation Services Sector of the Public Authority for Disabilities Affairs (PADA), is working to establish a specialized joint committee to reform the educational regulations for persons with disabilities, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This committee will include representatives from the ministries of Education and Social Affairs, along with members from the Federations of Schools and Nurseries that operate under the PADA's oversight. Its primary responsibility will be to make all educational decisions for individuals with special needs.

According to PADA sources, the committee will undertake a comprehensive review of all previous educational decisions to assess their effectiveness in serving individuals with various disabilities.

It aims to address certain unresolved issues impacting the educational development of people with disabilities.

One example that has been cited is the case of autism spectrum disorder. While autism qualifies as an educational disability, current regulations prevent it from being included in cer-

tain needs categories, despite the fact that the intellectual level of some individuals with autism makes them eligible for such inclusion.

This is one of several cases where the committee may propose changes that could positively influence the educational and vocational paths of individuals with disabilities.

The Authority currently oversees approximately 91 educational institutions, distributed as follows -- 17 Arab schools, 21 foreign schools, 31 nurseries, 11 rehabilitation centers and institutions, and 2 institutions that operate during the evening -- the Child Evaluation and Dyslexia centers.

Additionally, there are 9 schools not directly supervised by the Authority, yet they continue to accept students with disabilities. In total, around 13,250 male and female students with disabilities are enrolled in these institutions across various educational stages.

In a separate development, the Acting Director of the PADA, Wafaa Al-Muhanna, signed a cooperation agreement with the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Festivals Association, Tariq Al-Obaid.

This agreement aims to integrate people with disabilities into society by involving them in Kuwait's tourism, entertainment, and cultural activities. The goal is to develop inclusive tourism experiences tailored to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

In addition, the Vocational Rehabilitation Department, under the Rehabilitation and Educational Services Sector, recently held a welcoming event for new trainees for the 2024/2025 training year.

The event was attended by Afnan Al-Hussaini, Deputy Director of the Vocational Rehabilitation Department, recently held a welcoming event for new trainees for the 2024/2025 training year.

Dalal Al-Marri, Supervisor of the Vocational Rehabilitation Department, stated that the purpose of this celebration is to promote social integration for individuals with disabilities by organizing both internal and external activities.

The event also aims to showcase their artistic and creative abilities, which are considered a valuable national asset and an important human resource.

## Amir Rep

### Continued from Page 1

He cited the heinous aggression on Lebanon, where Israeli occupying forces have killed hundreds of people and injured thousands in a blatant breach of all international norms and laws," as clear-cut and unequivocal paradigm in this regard.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled reiterated the vehement condemnation and denunciation of such crimes, a standing side by side with the Lebanese people against anything that could undermine their country's sovereignty and stability.

In this context, he called on the Asian continent to come up with a decisive and open stance defending justice, human conscience, the right of the peoples of Palestine and the region to freedom, dignity and peace.

Regarding the third summit of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), His Highness the Amir's representative said: "Our summit, held today under the theme: 'Sports Diplomacy', is considered a significant tool in public diplomacy and some sort of soft power that is able to bring together all peoples, communities and culture."

He underlined that sports is a crucial way of attaining peace and development, and contributing to inculcating and disseminating the values of cooperation, tolerance, solidarity and people-to-people peaceful coexistence.

He cited Qatar's hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup as a significant model of the concept, purposes and noble goals of sports diplomacy thanks to its eye-catching success in bringing together peoples, cultures and languages all over the world, as well as in promoting Gulf, Arabic and Islamic culture.

Looking forward to Saudi Arabia's hosting of the 2034 FIFA World Cup, he hoped that major regional and international sports gatherings hosted by Asian countries would lead to manifesting the continent's rich cultural diversity to the entire world.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir's Representative emphasized that it is necessary for all Asian countries to work together in an effective and decisive manner in order to address today's enormous security, political, economic, social and climate challenges and risks, chiefly including diseases, abject poverty, illiteracy and unemployment.

However, he said the continent abounds in stupendous human and financial potential and resources that

mark a solid ground for the continent's countries to defeat various challenges and fulfill their peoples' expectations and hopes.

In this context, he called on Asian countries to capitalize on their geographical, human and economic potential to achieve the ACD's six goals of connectivity, science technology and innovation, education and human development, food, water and energy security, culture and tourism and sustainable resources development.

Sheikh Sabah Khaled boasted that the State of Kuwait, since having joined the ACD, has committed itself to working with the member states to upgrade dialogue to broader horizons by hosting the first summit in 2012, as well as the headquarters of the forum's general secretariat only out of eagerness to promote pan-Asian cooperation.

He concluded by restating Kuwait's commitment to the principles and goals of the gathering, while calling for holding serious and intensive discussions purposed to turn the forum into a regional organization that could address swift challenges and crises the Asian continent is facing.

## Escalation in

### Continued from Page 1

The Ministerial Council underscored the contents of the joint ministerial statement issued on September 25, 2024, by the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Qatar, the United States of America, and several other countries, which calls for an immediate ceasefire for 21 days along the Blue Line that marks the southern border of Lebanon, and for pursuing a diplomatic settlement to avert the danger of regional war.

The Council welcomed the statement issued on September 27, 2024, in New York, from the emergency ministerial meeting of the Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation to discuss the escalation of Israeli military attacks against the State of Palestine and the Republic of Lebanon.

Regarding Palestine, the Ministerial Council affirmed the GCC's support for the brotherly Palestinian people, condemning the Israeli aggression against Gaza and the West Bank. It called for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, the lifting of the blockade imposed on the area, and the release of hostages and detainees.

The Council emphasised the importance of opening all crossings immediately and unconditionally, ensuring the delivery of all relief, humanitarian, medical supplies, and basic needs to the residents of Gaza, in accordance with international law and international humanitarian law.

The Council reiterated the contents of the joint statement issued on August 8, 2024, by Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Amir of the State of Qatar, President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi, of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and President Joseph Biden - of the United States of America, regarding the necessity of achieving a ceasefire, the release of hostages and detainees in Gaza, and the call to resume negotiations.

The Council affirmed its full support for ongoing efforts to achieve a ceasefire and address the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in Gaza, praising the constructive role played by the GCC countries with their strategic partners, especially the United States, in de-escalating tensions, enhancing security and stability, protecting maritime navigation in the region, and ensuring its security, stability, and prosperity.

## Kuwait ensures

### Continued from Page 1

as the Kuwaitization of jobs, price control, wedding halls, strategic inventory and other obstacles affecting cooperative operations.

Attendees presented proposals aimed at developing cooperative work to achieve the desired outcomes and support the shareholders' interests. Assistant Undersecretary for the Cooperative Societies Sector Ahmed Fureij and other ministry officials were among the attendees.

In a related statement, Al-Mulla confirmed the union's role as the official coordinator with various government agencies during emergencies. He announced that the union usually liaises with the Civil Defense Department and Kuwait Fire Force to ensure the efficiency of crisis management and emergency situations.

He assured that the strategic stock is sufficient, alleviating concerns about shortages. He stated that the union and cooperative societies are fully prepared to support shelters with essential supplies for families and individuals during emergencies. He also emphasized ongoing coordination with all cooperative societies to meet individual needs effectively, ensuring streamlined delivery plans in crisis situations.

## More evacuation

### Continued from Page 1

At least eight Israeli soldiers have been killed in clashes with Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, where Israel announced the start of what it says is a limited ground incursion earlier this week. The region was meanwhile bracing for Israeli retaliation following an Iranian ballistic missile attack.

The Lebanese Red Cross said an Israeli strike wounded four of its paramedics and killed a Lebanese army soldier as they were evacuating wounded people from the south. It said the convoy near the village of Taybeh, which was accompanied by Lebanese troops, was targeted Thursday despite coordinating its movements with U.N. peacekeepers. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military.

Another Lebanese soldier was killed by Israeli fire at an army post in the southern town of Bint Jbeil, according to the Lebanese military, which said it returned fire. A Lebanese security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity according to regulations, said the army post was hit by artillery fire.

An Israeli airstrike on an apartment in central Beirut late Wednesday killed nine people, including seven Hezbollah-affiliated civilian first responders. Israel has been pounding areas of the country where the militant group has a strong presence since late September, but has rarely struck in the heart of the capital.

There was no warning before the strike late Wednesday, which hit an apartment not far from the United Nations headquarters, the prime minister's office and parliament.

Residents reported a sulfur-like smell following strike in Beirut, and Lebanon's state-run National News Agency accused Israel of using phosphorus bombs, without providing evidence. Human rights groups have in the past accused Israel of using white phosphorus incendiary shells on towns and villages in southern Lebanon. The Israeli military did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Hezbollah has an armed wing with tens of thousands of fighters but it also has a political movement and a network of charities staffed by civilians.

The Israeli military said Thursday that it had struck around 200 Hezbollah targets across Lebanon, including weapons storage facilities and observation posts. It said the strikes killed at least 15 Hezbollah fighters.

Hezbollah said its fighters detonated

a roadside bomb when Israeli forces entered the Lebanese border village of Maroun el-Ras, killing and wounding soldiers. It was not possible to independently confirm the claims made by either side.

So far, ground clashes between Israeli forces and Hezbollah militants have been confined to a narrow strip along the border.

But hundreds of thousands of people have fled their homes, as Israel has warned people to evacuate from dozens of villages and towns in the south, telling them to relocate to areas that are around 60 kilometers (36 miles) from the border and considerably farther north than the Litani River.

Under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701, which ended the month-long 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah, the militants were to withdraw north of the Litani, and Lebanon's armed forces were to patrol the border region along with U.N. peacekeepers.

Neither Lebanon's army nor the peacekeepers were capable of imposing any agreement on Hezbollah by force, and Israel says it defied the resolution and built extensive military infrastructure in towns and villages near the border. Lebanon has accused Israel of violating other parts of the resolution.

Israel says it is targeting Hezbollah after nearly a year of rocket attacks that began Oct. 8 and displaced some 60,000 Israelis from communities in the north. Israel has carried out retaliatory strikes over the past year that have displaced tens of thousands on the Lebanese side.

In recent weeks, Israelis strikes in Lebanon have killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and several of his top commanders. Hundreds more airstrikes across large parts of Lebanon since mid-September have killed at least 1,276 people, according to Lebanon's Health Ministry.

The vast majority of recent strikes have been in areas where Hezbollah has a strong presence, including the southern suburbs of Beirut known as the Dahiyeh. But Israel has also carried out strikes in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, and a strike in central Beirut earlier this week killed three members of a leftist Palestinian militant group.

## Geopolitical tensions

### Continued from Page 1

Market analysts suggest that the escalating conflict will adversely affect global and regional financial

markets. Investors are increasingly worried that disruptions to oil supplies from the Gulf region could lead to a sharp rise in prices, similar to what occurred during previous episodes of heightened tension or severe conflict.

Additionally, Gulf stock markets suffered significant losses yesterday, totaling approximately \$31.2 billion. The Saudi stock index ended its session down 1.7 percent, closing at 12,044 points, a drop of 209 points, with total trading valued at around 8.1 billion riyals.

Meanwhile, Dubai's main index fell by 1.1 percent to 4,427.83 points, and the Abu Dhabi index decreased by 1.078 percent to 9,304.83 points.

Amidst these tensions, some airlines operating at Kuwait International Airport announced the suspension or cancellation of flights to Iran, with one airline stating it had halted flights to Mashhad, Tehran, and Shiraz. The official website of Kuwait International Airport reported the cancellation of seven flights operated by four airlines bound for these cities.

In response, the General Directorate of Civil Aviation took immediate steps to ensure the safety of Kuwaiti air carriers and uphold the highest security standards for their passengers. Abdullah Al-Rajhi, the official spokesperson for the General Directorate of Civil Aviation, confirmed that all Kuwaiti aircraft are being monitored, and flight paths are being adjusted to ensure safety amid the politically unstable airspace.

He also noted that some flights experienced delays upon returning to Kuwait due to the altered flight paths. However, he reassured everyone that "there is no danger to Kuwaiti carriers," as the situation was managed according to protocols designed to ensure secure arrivals at their destinations, whether in Kuwait or other airports.

Simultaneously, cryptocurrencies plummeted at their highest rate in a month during recent trading sessions, with the total market capitalization of the crypto market declining by 7 percent. This loss amounts to approximately \$164 billion, as the total market value fell from \$2.338 trillion in trading on Sunday morning to about \$2.174 trillion in yesterday's trading.

Leading the decline in the cryptocurrency sector was Bitcoin, which experienced a 3.4 percent drop in recent trading sessions.



## Biden visits disaster zones

## Harris consoles families as she surveys Helene devastation in Georgia



Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris greets people who were impacted by Hurricane Helene in Augusta, Ga on Oct 2 (as from left) Sen Jon Ossoff, D-Ga., FEMa deputy director Erik Hooks and Augusta Mayor Garnett Johnson watch. (AP)

AUGUSTA, Ga, Oct 3, (AP): US Vice President Kamala Harris handed out meals, embraced a shaken family and surveyed Hurricane Helene's "extraordinary" path of destruction through Georgia on Wednesday as she left the campaign trail to pledge federal help and personally take in scenes of toppled trees, damaged homes and lives upended.

She visited Augusta, where power lines stretched along the sidewalk and utility poles lay cracked and broken. The vice president spoke from a lectern erected in front of a house with a fallen tree teetering on its roof, acknowledging those who had died in the disaster while also trying to project a tone of unity and hope for communities now facing long and expensive rebuilds.

Harris and President Joe Biden, who visited the Carolinas on Wednesday, were seeking to demonstrate commitment and competence in helping devastated communities after Republican former President Donald Trump's false claims about their administration's response.

Harris said she wanted to "personally take a look at the devastation, which is extraordinary." She expressed admiration for how "people are coming together. People are helping perfect strangers."

The Democratic presidential nominee said that shows "the vast majority

of us have so much more in common than what separates us," an echo of a line she frequently uses on the campaign trail.

Before delivering her remarks, Harris could be seen embracing and huddling with a family of five grappling with the storm's aftermath.

"We are here for the long haul," she said.

Harris also toured a Red Cross relief center and received a briefing from local officials, praising those working to "meet the needs of people who must be seen and must be heard."

"I am now listening," she said.

Brittany Smith, an Augusta resident, walked away from the distribution center with Styrofoam boxes of food and some fruit cups, beaming that she got a photo with the vice president. She said there's a hole in her roof and she had to send her kids elsewhere to live because it wasn't safe.

Harris' visit, she said, "made it better" despite the hardship.

Smith said she was encouraged that Harris traveled to the town instead of just appearing on television. "She's a person. She's not just a voice."

About 200 miles north in the Carolinas, Biden was also surveying the storm's aftermath. With many of the area's roads inaccessible, he flew by helicopter over toppled trees, twisted metal and towering piles of debris in

the normally tourist-friendly downtown of Asheville.

From the air, Biden saw flooded roads, piles of shredded lumber and displaced sandbags, emergency trucks and downed power lines. In one area, homes were partly underwater, and it was hard to distinguish between lake and land.

Visits to disaster zones are a familiar responsibility for Biden, who has frequently been called on to survey damage and comfort victims after tornadoes, wildfires and tropical storms. But this was Harris' first visit to a disaster area as vice president.

Because of the destruction where Biden was on Wednesday, he was unable to walk around and personally comfort people as Harris did in Georgia.

Biden wore a vest and boots and, before his air tour, he hugged and grabbed the hand of Asheville Mayor Esther Manheimer, who was at the airport in Greenville, South Carolina, to meet him. The mayor, with visible emotion, said they could not close down the area's one operable road for Biden's motorcade.

Biden will be back in the region Thursday to visit Florida and Georgia, and Harris plans her own North Carolina trip in coming days - as Helene's aftermath continues to pose a political and humanitarian test for the administration.

## Lengthy redistricting battle

## Figures and Dobson clash in US congressional debate

MONTGOMERY, Ala, Oct 3, (AP): Congressional hopefuls Shomari Figures and Caroleene Dobson clashed in a debate Wednesday punctuated by policy differences and verbal swipes at each other's resume.

Figures, a Democrat, and Dobson, a Republican are running to represent Alabama's 2nd Congressional District, which was redrawn after a lengthy redistricting battle. The two faced off in Montgomery in a candidate forum hosted by the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and broadcast online by WSFA.

Dobson attacked Figures, who worked in the Obama White House and as a former top aide to US Attorney General Merrick Garland, over his background in the nation's capital. Figures said his opponent was opting for a "photo-op" over meaningful solutions.

Dobson repeatedly called Figures a "Washington D.C. insider" and said he was "part of an administration that for the past four years crushed American opportunity."

"He wants to continue the policies

of the last four years, but you and I should ask ourselves: Are we better off than we were four years ago?" Dobson said.

Figures, speaking after the forum, said he does not "run from the fact" that most of his professional career was spent in Washington. Nonetheless, he said, Alabama is his home. "The root of it is: This is home for me. This where I was born, where I was raised," Figures said.

He added that he is the son of two Alabama legislators and grew up in Mobile.

Dobson has made border security, a cornerstone of her campaign. Figures referred to a campaign trip that Dobson took to the Mexico border to highlight immigration issues as a "photo-op" while saying he has been at the border "as a staffer" to work on legislation to provide more resources to border agents.

"My opponent mentions the border, but what she fails to mention about the border is that in her early legal career, she spent time in Texas actually selling millions of acres of our border state

land in Texas to shadow companies owned by Mexican investors," Figures said.

Dobson responded that the transaction involved a Mexican company that was buying office space in Texas as it fled the drug cartel crisis in Mexico. She said Figures was part of the transition team for the Biden administration that "flung open our borders and has resulted in less safe communities."

Alabama's 2nd Congressional District was redrawn after the U.S. Supreme Court agreed Alabama had likely illegally diluted the influence of Black voters when drawing congressional lines. A three-judge panel selected new lines to give Black residents, who now make up nearly 49% of the district's voting-age population, an "opportunity" to elect a candidate of their choice.

The open seat has sparked a heated race for the district that could help decide control of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Some of the sharpest policy contrasts were over abortion and health-care.



This combination of photos shows Alabama's new 2nd Congressional District Republican candidate Caroleene Dobson, left, and Democratic candidate Shomari Figures during the Macon County Day Festival in Tuskegee, Ala, on Aug 31. (AP)

## Firefighters search for survivors

## 12 hurt in Russian airstrike on Kharkiv: Ukraine

KYIV, Ukraine, Oct 3, (AP): A Russian glide bomb struck a five-story apartment block in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, injuring at least 12 people including a 3-year-old girl, local officials said Thursday.

The bomb hit between the third and fourth floors of the building on Wednesday night, igniting blazes, Kharkiv regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said. Firefighters searched for survivors through smoke and rubble.

The city of Kharkiv, located around 30 kilometers (18 miles) from the Russian border, has been a frequent target of aerial attacks throughout the war against Russia that is now deep into its third year.

Glide bombs have become an increasingly common weapon in the war. They have terrorized civilians and bludgeoned the Ukrainian army's front-line defenses.



Rescue workers clear the rubble of a building damaged by a Russian airstrike in Kharkiv, Ukraine on Oct 2. (AP)



Conservative leadership candidates Kemi Badenoch, (from left), Robert Jenrick, James Cleverly and Tom Tugendhat stand on the podium during the Conservative Party Conference at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham, England on Oct 2. (AP)

## 4 contenders to lead Conservatives bash Labour and each other in UK

BIRMINGHAM, England, Oct 3, (AP): The four contenders to lead Britain's Conservative Party took turns in the spotlight, each claiming to be the one who can lead the right-of-center party back from a catastrophic election defeat.

Former Immigration Minister Robert Jenrick, ex-Business Secretary Kemi Badenoch, former Foreign Secretary James Cleverly and ex-Security Minister Tom Tugendhat each made impassioned speeches aimed at persuading party members that they have what it takes to turn around public opinion, trounce the Labour Party of Prime Minister Keir Starmer and return the Conservatives to power at the next election, due by 2029.

That's a tall order. After years of division, scandal and economic tumult, U.K. voters comprehensively rejected the Tories in a July election, leaving the party that had governed since 2010 with just 121 seats in the 650-seat House of Commons. The center-left Labour Party won more than 400.

Jenrick, a former centrist who has shifted to the right with tough talk on migration, and the energetic libertarian Badenoch are considered the front-runners, though Cleverly's upbeat appeal for unity went down well with delegates in the auditorium.

An initial field of six candidates was whittled down by Conservative lawmakers to four before the conference. Legislators will eliminate two more

in voting next week. Party members across the country will then vote to pick a winner, who will be announced Nov. 2.

The candidates agreed that they want a smaller state and a more vibrant economy and that they all revere the late Margaret Thatcher, whose 11 years in power transformed the U.K. They differed on how far to emulate Reform U.K., the hard-right, anti-immigrant party led by populist politician Nigel Farage.

Though Reform won only five seats in the election, it came second in many more, and its rapid rise has scared some Conservatives into moving to the right.

Jenrick leaned furthest towards embracing Reform, saying Britain needed a "New Conservative Party" - an echo of the "New Labour" project that returned that party to power under Tony Blair in the 1990s. He pledged to take Britain out of the European Court of Human Rights, scrap the U.K.'s own Human Rights Act, end mass migration, abolish carbon-emissions targets and "stand for our nation and our culture, our identity and our way of life."

Nigeria-raised Badenoch cast herself as a fearless truth-teller, declaring that "the system is broken," arguing for a low-tax, free-market economy and pledging to "rewire, reboot and reprogram" the British state.

"In government, we did not always keep our promises," she said. "We

promised to lower taxes, they went up. We promised to lower immigration, it went up."

Cleverly, who comes from a centrist section of the party, said there would be "no mergers, no deals" with Reform if he won. He warned that the party must not "wallow in self-pity" or veer to extremes.

He also struck a note of humility, arguing that the party let the electorate down. Before the Conservative Party can reboot, he said, "there's something we need to say: Sorry."

"Let's be more normal," said Cleverly, who urged Conservatives to emulate the optimism of "my political hero," Ronald Reagan.

Tugendhat, widely seen as a long-shot, accused his higher-profile rivals of a "lack of substance ... petty point scoring, and self-service" and said his past as a soldier gave him the leadership qualities to "reconnect with the British people ... restore trust ... win again."

Delegate Belinda Williams said that she went into the speeches with an open mind and came out backing Cleverly.

"Such passion," she said. "He came out with some fantastic ideas."

Another party member, Steven Stanbury, thought Badenoch had best diagnosed "what went wrong" for the party.

"We said one thing and we failed to tal and utterly to deliver," he said.

## America

## Tropical Storm forms in Atlantic:

Tropical Storm Leslie formed Wednesday in the eastern Atlantic Ocean and could strengthen into a hurricane by the weekend, forecasters said.

There were no coastal watches or warnings in effect, and the storm system was not yet deemed a threat to land.

The storm was located 490 miles (790 kilometers) southwest of the southernmost tip of the Cabo Verde Islands and had maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph), the Miami-based U.S. National Hurricane Center said.

The storm formed as many people in the US Southeast still lacked running water, cellphone service and electricity as rescuers searched for people unaccounted for after Hurricane Helene struck last week and left a trail of death and catastrophic damage. (AP)

Firefighters stop blaze: Firefighters have extinguished a massive blaze at a western Wisconsin recycling facility after a battle that went on for more than 20 hours.

The fire broke out at Omaha Track in the town of Campbell on French Island, just outside the city of La Crosse, around 1:30 a.m. Tuesday. The facility grinds scrap railway ties and other materials into chips that can be used as biofuel.

Flames and smoke from the fire could be seen for miles. Four football fields' worth of railway ties and a 30-foot (9.14 meter) high mound of chips burned, Campbell Fire Chief Nate Melby said.

Multiple fire departments battled the blaze throughout the day before finally extinguishing it around 11 p.m. Tuesday, Melby said.

No one was hurt, and no residents had to be evacuated or shelter in place,

Melby said. A north wind blew most of the smoke away from residential areas, he said.

"It was a very large fire with a lot of fuel," the chief said. "The positive aspect is we were able to manage it with other agencies and nobody got hurt."

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

A similar fire erupted at Omaha Track in 2015 after a wood-chipper caught fire, WKBT-TV reported. That blaze released toxins into the air that forced residents to shelter

in place. Omaha Track spokesman Jillianne Gates said in an email to The Associated Press that company won't speculate on the cause of the fire before the investigation is complete.

"Our focus remains on the safety of our employees, the community and the environment as we work through this process," she said. (AP)

5 Chinese nationals charged: US authorities charged five Chinese nationals with lying and trying to cover their tracks, more than a year after they were confronted in the dark near a remote Michigan military site where thousands of people had gathered for summer drills.

The five, who were University of Michigan students at the time, were not charged for what happened at Camp Grayling in August 2023. Rather they are accused of misleading investigators about the trip and conspiring to

clear their phones of photos, according to a criminal complaint filed in federal court.

The FBI noted in the Tuesday court filing that there have been instances of college students from China taking photos of vital defense sites in the United States.

There was nothing in the file revealing the whereabouts of the five men.

"The defendants are not in custody. Should they come into contact with US authorities, they will be arrested and face these charges," Gina Balaya, a spokesperson for the US Attorney's Office in Detroit, said Wednesday.

In summer 2023, the five were confronted after midnight near a lake by a sergeant major with the Utah National Guard. One said, "We are media," before they collected their belongings and agreed to leave the area, the FBI said.

The FBI learned that the men had booked a room at a nearby motel a week before they were spotted outside Camp Grayling, 200 miles (320 kilometers) north of Detroit.

Four months later, one of the men was interviewed by border officers at the Detroit airport before traveling to South Korea and China. He told investigators that he and others had taken a trip to northern Michigan "to see shooting stars," the FBI said.

A check of his external hard drive revealed two images of military vehicles taken on the same night of the encounter with the National Guard officer, the FBI said.

The other four men were interviewed last March after arriving in Chicago on a flight from Iceland. They acknowledged being in northern Michigan in August 2023, but they said it was to see a meteor shower, the FBI said. (AP)



## Iswaran received illegal gifts

## Ex-Singapore minister sentenced to a yr in jail

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia, Oct. 3, (AP) - A former Singaporean Cabinet minister was sentenced Thursday to a year in prison after he pleaded guilty to charges of receiving illegal gifts, in a rare criminal case involving a minister in the Asian financial hub.

Former Transport Minister S. Iswaran had pleaded guilty last week to one count of obstructing justice and four of accepting gifts from people with whom he had official business. He was the first minister to be charged and imprisoned in nearly half a century.

Justice Vincent Hoong, in his ruling, said holders of high office "must be expected to avoid any perception that they are susceptible to influence by pecuniary benefits."

"I am of the view that it is appropriate to impose a sentence in excess of both parties' positions," Hoong said as he handed down a total of 12 months imprisonment for the five charges. The defense had asked for no more than

eight weeks in prison, while the prosecution had pushed for six to seven months imprisonment.

The court approved Iswaran's request to delay the start of his sentence to Monday, Channel News Asia reported. He remains out on bail for now. It is unclear if he will appeal the sentence.

Iswaran was initially charged with 35 counts, but prosecutors proceeded with only five, while reducing two counts of corruption to receiving illegal gifts. Prosecutors said they will apply for the remaining 30 charges to be taken into consideration for sentencing. No reasons were given for the move.

Iswaran received gifts worth over 74,000 Singapore dollars (\$57,000) from Ong Beng Seng, a Singapore-based Malaysian property tycoon, and businessperson Lum Kok Seng. The gifts included tickets to Singapore's Formula 1 race and a luxury Brompton bike. Ong owns the right to the local F1 race, and Iswaran was chair of and

later adviser to the Grand Prix's steering committee.

The Attorney-General's Chambers said it will decide whether to charge Ong and Lum after the case against Iswaran has been resolved.

Singapore's ministers are among the world's best paid. Although the amount involved in Iswaran's case appeared to be relatively minor, his indictment is an embarrassment to the ruling People's Action Party, which prides itself on a clean image. Singapore was ranked among the world's top five least-corrupt nations, according to Transparency International's corruption perception index.

The last Cabinet minister charged with graft was Wee Teon Boon, who was found guilty in 1975 and jailed for accepting gifts in exchange for helping a businessperson. Another Cabinet minister was investigated for graft in 1986, but died before charges were filed.



Former Transport Minister S. Iswaran, (left) and his lawyer Mr Navin Thevar arrive at the High Court in Singapore, July 5. (AP)

## Typhoon batters island's south

## Taiwan hospital fire leaves at least 9 people dead

TAIPEI, Taiwan, Oct. 3, (AP) - A fire at a hospital in southern Taiwan killed at least nine people Thursday as the island was being battered by a typhoon.

The fire occurred in Pingtung county, which has been hit hard by Typhoon Krathon, which made landfall in the afternoon with torrential rains and heavy winds and has brought parts of the island to a standstill.

Those who died inhaled smoke from the fire, the source of which was still under investigation.

Soldiers from a nearby base were mobilized to aid medical workers and firefighters in the evacuation of patients and putting out the flames. Reports said 176 patients were rushed to the front entrance and transferred to ambulances or tarps, used to shield them from the pouring rain. They were moved to shelters nearby.

The typhoon is forecast to move slowly north and weaken into a tropical depression by Friday before it

reaches the capital, Taipei. It appears to be heading across the Taiwan Strait toward the Chinese coast. Winds were strong in Taipei on Thursday, but there was little rain.

Kaohsiung earlier urged its residents to take cover from potentially disastrous winds and rain, which tore down storefronts and flooded car parks but caused no reported loss of life.

The slow-moving typhoon, which has been inching toward Taiwan at a speed of about 4 kph (2.5 mph), doused eastern and southern parts of the island over the past five days, forcing thousands to evacuate from mountainous or low-lying areas. Two days of closures are believed to have taken a significant toll on the high-tech economy that relies heavily on foreign trade.

Gusts and heavy rains pelted the empty streets in Kaohsiung, while life in Taipei, 350 kilometers (217 miles) to the north was only slightly disrupted.

Many residents woke up Thursday to mobile phone alerts urging them to take shelter from the potentially dangerous winds. The weather administration posted a Facebook message warning Kaohsiung and Pingtung County residents to not go outside when the eye of the storm passes above their area and the weather calms briefly, because the winds and storms will pick up again afterward.

Weather-related events attributed to Krathon injured at least 123 people around the island, according to Taiwan's fire department. Two people died - one after driving into fallen rocks on the road in the southeastern Taitung county, and the other while trimming tree branches in the city of Hualien. Two others remained missing.

Thousands were evacuated from areas vulnerable to mudslides and landslides. Almost 40,000 troops were on standby to help with rescue efforts.



In this photo taken Oct. 3, 2024 and released by the Pingtung County Government, a fire breaks out at a hospital in Pingtung county in southern Taiwan. (AP)

## Tokyo gets congratulatory message from Beijing

## Japan's new govt hopes to improve ties with China

TOKYO, Oct. 3, (AP) - Japan's new government said Wednesday it hopes to improve ties with China after receiving a "forward-looking" congratulatory message from Beijing on the election of Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba.

Ties between Japan and China have been strained by a territorial dispute, Japan's wartime history, and most recently, the killing of a Japanese schoolboy in China.

In a message on Tuesday congratulating Ishiba, Chinese President Xi Jinping said it was in the interests of both countries to pursue peaceful cooperation, friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Xi also expressed hope that Japan would work with China to meet each other halfway and build a constructive and stable relationship reflecting the requirements of the new era.

"We take the congratulatory message that came on the day of the inauguration as President Xi's forward-looking message toward Japan-China relations," Japanese chief government spokesperson Yoshimasa

Hayashi said.

Hayashi said Japan and China have many issues and concerns, but Tokyo hopes to build a constructive and stable relationship through mutual effort. He said Japan also wants to promote communication with China at all levels to deepen their relationship.

Separately, new Japanese Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya said Japan needs to balance dialogue and deterrence in dealing with China because of its increasingly assertive military actions and territorial claims.

Iwaya said he hopes to meet with his counterpart, Wang Yi, as soon as possible, though nothing had been scheduled.

Ishiba made his diplomatic debut on Wednesday via telephone, starting with U.S. President Joe Biden, who called to congratulate him.

The two leaders affirmed their commitment to continue strengthening defense cooperation and maintain peace and stability in the region through a network of like-minded partners, including Australia and In-

dia through the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, and through trilateral partnerships with South Korea and the Philippines, according to Japanese and US officials.

Ishiba said he did not bring up his proposal of a more equitable Japan-U.S. security alliance and a revision of the legal status of American military bases and personnel in Japan but would do so later. Japan hosts about 50,000 American troops under a bilateral security pact.

Ishiba said he told Biden he plans to strengthen Japan's defense and diplomatic policies. A national security strategy adopted in 2022 under Ishiba's predecessor, Fumio Kishida, calls for accelerating Japan's military buildup.

Ishiba also held talks on Wednesday by telephone with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in which they agreed to strengthen cooperation in security and other areas, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said.



Japan's new Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba attends a press conference at the prime minister's office in Tokyo, Japan on Oct. 1. (Xinhua)

## Somber mass funeral

## Small town mourns Thailand school bus fire victims

LAN SAK, Thailand, Oct. 3, (AP) - A small town in central Thailand prepared for a somber mass funeral Thursday for the 23 children and teachers who died in a horrific bus fire while on a school trip.

Some residents and monks waited past midnight at Wat Khao Phraya Sangkharam, the Buddhist temple in Lan Sak town in Uthai Thani province, to receive the bodies of the dead returned from Bangkok. Also arriving back were relatives of the dead who went to the Thai capital to help identify the severely burned victims.

The school the children attended is on the temple grounds, a common location for schools in much of rural Thailand.

In the school's assembly hall, florists came early to build a large display of white flowers in front of a line of coffins with portraits of the dead. An elderly woman wept in front of a photo of a 14-year-old boy before limping away, tears streaming down her face and hands tightly clutching a black plastic bag. Relatives put food, snacks and beverages as offerings on top of the coffins - an act of respect symbolically sending nourishment and blessings to those who died.



Noklek Seekham carries a portrait of her grandson and a victim of school bus fire in a procession at Wat Khao Phraya Sangkharam School, Lan Sak, Uthai Thani province, Thailand on Oct. 3. (AP)



People protest against the reelection of President Nicolás Maduro two months after the disputed presidential vote which opposition leaders say they won by a landslide in Caracas, Venezuela on Sept. 28. (AP)

## Poll experts legitimize tally sheets opposition says prove Maduro lost

MEXICO CITY, Oct. 3, (AP) - An independent group of election experts that observed Venezuela's July presidential election on Wednesday legitimized the vote tally sheets the opposition has offered as proof of President Nicolás Maduro's defeat, telling the Organization of American States the electronic balloting system worked and the ruling party as well as other stakeholders "know the truth."

The assertions from an expert with the US-based Carter Center came during a session convened by members of the regional body to address the dispute that emerged from Venezuela's presidential election. The group was one of the two independent panels that the government invited to observe the vote on July 28, which electoral authorities claimed - without offering any proof - favored Maduro.

The dispute has centered on thousands of tally sheets known as actas - printouts that resemble shopping re-

ceipts - that have long been considered the ultimate proof of election results in Venezuela. Each of the 30,000 electronic voting machines used in the July 28 election printed several copies of the sheets, which representatives of participating parties have a right to obtain when the information is transmitted to the National Electoral Council.

Ruling party-loyal electoral authorities declared Maduro the victor hours after polls closed, but they did not publish results broken down by voting machine as they had done in previous presidential elections. They claimed they could not release the detailed information because their website was hacked.

The main opposition coalition, however, secured tally sheets from more than 80% of voting machines and published them online. The government then claimed those records were false and opened an investigation against members of the opposition, including the coalition's candidate Edmundo

González.

"The voting system is electronic, but it offers a paper trail - proof of what the electronic machine reports - and that is what was collected by tens of thousands of poll watchers, not just from the opposition, but also from the government party, the PSUV, that also has the same information," Jennie Lincoln, who led the Carter Center's mission to Venezuela, told diplomats Wednesday before showing them tally sheets.

Lincoln stopped short of declaring González the election winner, telling diplomats that "observers do not pronounce elections" as "that is the responsibility of the electoral authorities."

Lincoln said the Carter Center recently received via international mail the tally sheets she showed during the session. She did not say who sent them, and the organization did not immediately respond to a request from The Associated Press seeking more information on the records.

## Africa

**Over 100 missing in Nigeria:** More than 100 people, mostly women and children, were missing after an overloaded boat bringing them back from an Islamic festival at night capsized in northwestern Nigeria, authorities said Wednesday.

The locally made boat, whose capacity was 100 passengers, had about 300 people onboard along the Niger River when it overturned in Niger state's Mokwa district on Monday night, according to the Niger State Emergency Management Agency.

Such boat disasters are common in Nigeria, especially in remote communities where the lack of good roads leaves many with no alternative routes. This is the fourth tragedy involving more than 100 passengers in northern Nigeria since mid-2023, many of them never accounted for.

Local media reported that 11 bodies, nine men and two women, have been recovered from the river so far.

At least 150 people had been rescued

by Wednesday morning amid a frantic search operation that is being supported by local divers and volunteers, according to Abdullahi Baba-Arah, head of Niger state's emergency services. (AP)

**2 close to Benin prez jailed:** Two men close to Benin's president who were arrested last week on suspicions of plotting a coup in the small West African country were remanded in custody ahead of their trial, one of their lawyers said Tuesday.

Olivier Boko - a businessman and longtime friend of President Patrice Talon - and Oswald Homeky - a former sports minister - were charged with "conspiracy against state security, corruption of public funds and money laundering," according to the lawyer, Ayodele Ahouou.

Both men were arrested after being accused of bribing the commander in charge of the president's security to carry out a coup.

Homeky was caught on Tuesday while

allegedly handing over six bags of money to the head of the Republican Guard, according to Elom Mario Metonou, the special prosecutor at Benin's court for financial crimes and terrorism. (AP)

**Electoral silence in Tunisia:** The electoral campaign for the upcoming Tunisian presidential election ends Wednesday at midnight before entering the electoral silence period on Thursday, reported the Tunis Afrique Presse.

On Tunisian soil, the campaign will continue until Thursday's midnight. During the period of electoral silence, candidates are prohibited from carrying out any electoral activity, and media and citizens are prohibited from broadcasting any electoral or political propaganda messages, by virtue of the provisions of the electoral law of 2014.

All the electoral posters are also required to be removed before the electoral silence. (Xinhua)



	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
JAPAN	-	Nikkei 225	SAUDI	-	TASI
EGYPT	-	EGX 30	DUBAI	-	DFMGI
PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100	PHILIPPINES	-	PSEI
	+743.30	38,552.06		-86.53	11,957.54
	+387.77	31,720.50		-42.03	4,398.24
	+754.76	82,721.76		-13.89	7,388.92

# Business

## Gulf stock markets plunge amid escalating Middle East tensions

Saudi market index falls 1.7%, UAE indices also decline

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** Gulf stock markets experienced significant declines yesterday, with traders reacting to escalating geopolitical tensions in the Middle East following Iran's largest military strike against Israel. The total market value of Gulf stock exchanges plummeted by 31.2 billion

dinars, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Saudi market index closed down 1.7 percent, settling at 12,044 points after a loss of 209 points, with trading volumes reaching 8.1 billion riyals. In the UAE, the Dubai market's main index fell by 1.1 percent to 4,427.83 points, while the Abu Dhabi index decreased by 1.078 percent to 9,304.83 points.

Other markets were similarly affected: Qa-

tar's main index dropped by 0.60 percent to 10,566.43 points, Bahrain's index fell slightly by 0.01 percent to 2,008.30 points, and the Muscat market index declined by 0.40 percent to 4,677.54 points. Conversely, the Oman Stock Exchange index managed a slight gain of 0.08 percent.

The negative sentiment among traders underscores the impact of geopolitical instability on market performance in the Gulf region.

Market closes at 7,036.08 points

## Boursa Kuwait general index falls 0.49 percent

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3, (KUNA):** Boursa Kuwait ended Thursday with the general index down by 34.44 points, or 0.49 percent, closing at 7,036.08 points. A total of 368.2 million shares were traded in 22,028 cash transactions, with a value of KD 61.7 million (USD 188.18 million).

The main market index saw an increase of 8.23 points, or 0.13 percent, reaching 6,254.66 points. This came from 286.6 million shares trading across 12,073 cash transactions, valued at KD 29.7 million (USD

90.5 million). In contrast, the premier market index dropped by 47.42 points, or 0.62 percent, settling at 7,582.95 points, with 81.6 million shares traded in 9,955 transactions, worth KD 31.9 million (USD 97.2 million). Meanwhile, the Main 50 index rose by 24.57 points, or 0.40 percent, closing at 6,171.02 points. A total of 212.4 million shares were traded through 8,363 transactions, amounting to KD 21.6 million (USD 65.8 million).

As part of promoting the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign

## NBK warns against scams using Deepfake technology

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** Underscoring its dedication to raising public awareness and active participation in enhancing financial literacy and inclusion among all people, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues promoting the "Let's Be Aware" campaign introduced by the Central Bank of Kuwait, in cooperation with local banks and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA).

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

In this context, NBK highlights scams using Deepfake, a sophisticated AI technology used to create videos in which a person's face and voice are digitally altered so that they appear to be those of a famous and trusted person. This scam targets convincing people to invest in certain companies, trade on certain platforms, or promote investments.

Deepfake is also used to create convincing fake videos or audio recordings that can deceive individuals into giving away sensitive information or making unauthorized transactions.

NBK advises customers to beware of ads about lucrative investments, especially those appearing on social media, tempting people with cash prizes, or ads impersonating well-known companies aiming to trick them into investing in attractive stocks and bonds with high returns, provide false information about a real investment, or entering trading websites and registering personal information to



Diraya Logo

- The technology aims to convince people of an attractive investment through fake videos of celebrities
- NBK calls on people not to fall for fake investment ads on social media
- Never disclose any banking information to any party or register it on unreliable trading platforms
- NBK's role is not limited to warning, but extends to providing safe and diversified investment and savings alternatives

obtain profits, as all these are scams for identity theft, and obtaining personal and banking information.

NBK also urges customers to avoid communication with unknown parties impersonating official institutions by using the same logo or the same IVR message to trick victims into believing

they are employees of that institution, which may expose the victim to fraud from unknown parties. Therefore, NBK calls to ignore such calls and not disclosing any banking information to any party, in addition to following the bank's tips and instructions to avoid any scams.

Additionally, it affirms that it will never ask customers for personal information via e-mail, SMS or phone calls, warning them of responding to such scam messages trying to obtain their banking information to steal their money.

NBK's role is not limited to warning, but also extends to providing various safe investment and savings alternatives that suit all customer segments.

With the ever-evolving fraud threats using various techniques, NBK is keen to protect customers and increase their awareness of how to steer clear of fraud by following the tips provided on all its digital channels.

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

It is worth mentioning that NBK is a key promoter and participant in all CBK's campaigns and initiatives to increase financial and banking awareness among different segments of society. As one of the leading financial institutions in Kuwait, the bank frequently organizes various activities to raise awareness on all topics related to the banking sector, as well as a wide range of training courses for its employees to enhance their knowledge and expertise in the areas of combating fraud and financial crime.

Brent futures rise to \$73.90

## Kuwaiti oil surges to \$75.40 pb

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3, (KUNA):** Kuwait crude oil surged USD 4.5 during Wednesday's trading to USD 75.40 per barrel compared with USD 70.90 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Thursday.

Brent futures edged 34 cents higher to reach USD 73.90 pb and West Texas Intermediate rose 27 cents to USD 70.10 pb.

Oil prices have increased amidst fears of military escalation in the Middle East which may affect oil supplies.

The joint ministerial monitoring committee of OPEC+ said during its meeting yesterday that member countries should abide by their production quotas, and would be monitoring the compliance.

Next JMMC meeting set for Dec 1, 2024

## OPEC+ reaffirms commitment to voluntary 'output adjustments'

**VIENNA, Oct 3, (KUNA):** The Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) of the OPEC and non-OPEC partners, known as OPEC+, vowed Tuesday to continue monitoring oil producers' adherence to agreed production adjustments and assessing global oil market conditions.

In a press release after its 56th meeting, held today via videoconference, the JMMC said the convening ministers reviewed the crude oil production data for the months of July and August 2024 and current market conditions.

It emphasized the critical importance of achieving full conformity with the agreed upon production quotas.

It affirmed that it will continue to monitor adherence to the production adjustments agreed upon at the 37th OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting (ONOMM) held on 2 June 2024.

"The Committee will also continue to monitor the additional voluntary production adjustments announced by some participating OPEC and non-OPEC countries as agreed upon in the 52nd JMMC held on 1 February 2024," reads the release.

Furthermore, the Committee said it will continuously assess market conditions.

During the meeting, the Republic of Iraq, the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the Russian Federation confirmed that

they had achieved full conformity and compensation according to the schedules submitted for September.

The three countries reiterated their strong commitment to maintaining full conformity and compensation throughout the remaining period of the agreement.

The Committee noted that the final assessments of September crude oil production levels will be based on the approved secondary sources providing data on production of countries participating in Declaration of Cooperation (DoC), which will be available by the second week of October 2024.

It pointed out that the three separate technical workshops between representatives from the Republic of Iraq, the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the Russian Federation and the secondary sources aimed at discussing September production details and submitting their revised compensation plans that include the August overproduction as per the submitted plans to the OPEC Secretariat.

The JMMC said it retains the authority to convene additional meetings or to request an OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting, as established during the 37th ONOMM held on the 2 June 2024.

The next meeting of the JMMC (57th) is scheduled for 1 December, 2024.

Geopolitical tensions prompt safe-haven buying in gold

## Gold stabilizes at \$2,650/oz amid Middle East tensions

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** Gold prices stabilized on Monday, trading around \$2,650 an ounce after a significant rise in the previous session, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This increase followed escalating tensions in the Middle East, particularly after Iran launched approximately 200 ballistic missiles at Israel. In response, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

described the missile strikes as a "grave mistake" and pledged that Iran would face consequences.

The rising geopolitical tensions have spurred safe-haven buying, with investors flocking to gold as a protective measure against market volatility. The United States has also expressed strong support for Israel's defense preparations amid these developments.

Charu Chanana, a strategist at Saxo Capital Markets, noted that while major geopolitical events often prompt immediate reactions in the markets, such movements can be reversed if major assets remain unaffected.

This dynamic illustrates the cautious optimism among traders as they navigate the unfolding situation in the region.

Cybersecurity faces 28% workforce shortage, AI adds complexity

## BCG, GCF unveil 2024 Global Cybersecurity Workforce Report

**RIYADH, Oct 3:** Boston Consulting Group (BCG), in collaboration with Global Cybersecurity Forum (GCF), unveiled its "2024 Global Cybersecurity Workforce Report" at the GCF Annual Meeting 2024. Titled "The Global Cybersecurity Workforce Shortage and Skills Gap: A Threat We Cannot Ignore," the report highlights a significant global shortfall in cybersecurity professionals despite considerable infrastructure and talent development investments. The GCF Annual Meeting 2024, themed "Advancing Collective Action in Cyberspace," focuses on enhancing multi-stakeholder collaboration to address key cybersecurity challenges.

**Cybersecurity Workforce Crisis**  
The report highlights that only 72% of cybersecurity roles are currently filled, leaving organizations vulnerable to rising cyber threats. The global cybersecurity workforce stands at 7.1 million professionals, with Asia-Pacific holding the largest share, while Africa faces severe underrepresentation with fewer than 300,000 professionals.

Amidst this workforce shortage, Generative AI (GenAI) is transforming the cybersecurity landscape, with 70% of organizations already incorporating AI into their cybersecurity frameworks. This shift presents both opportunities and challenges. While AI can help address some workforce gaps, it also introduces new complexities. 58% of cybersecurity leaders express concern about AI-enabled adversarial techniques, such as more sophisticated phishing attacks or automated vulnerability exploitation, which could outpace traditional defenses. To address these evolving challenges, 60% of organiza-

tions are focused on continuous training and upskilling, aiming to equip their limited workforce with the skills needed to leverage AI effectively while defending against AI-enhanced threats.

Shoaib Yousuf, Managing Director and Partner at BCG emphasized the GCC's advancements in the face of an increasingly complex cyber threat landscape: "The region's cybersecurity capabilities have evolved significantly, driven by government initiatives like Saudi Arabia's Cybersecurity Workforce Framework (SCyWF), embedding a strategic focus on capacity building through the recently announced UAE and Qatar national cybersecurity strategies. These initiatives highlight a steadfast commitment to protecting critical infrastructure and safeguarding sensitive data. Through targeted investments, international collaborations, and a proactive planning, the GCC is advancing its cybersecurity landscape and contributing to the evolving standards for a secure global cyberspace. By refining its cybersecurity frameworks and addressing emerging threats head-on, the region is solidifying its position as a global leader in cybersecurity, paving the way for a secure, future-ready digital ecosystem."

**Call to Action: A Roadmap to Success**  
The report emphasizes the urgent need to attract new talent, especially among underrepresented groups such as women, who comprise just 24% of the cybersecurity workforce globally. To address these challenges and build a future-ready workforce, the report outlines key strategic recommendations:  
■ Targeted and strategic outreach to underrepresented groups

- Embedding cybersecurity into organizational DNA
- National & academic campaigns for cybersecurity careers
- Building an inclusive, diverse, and supportive culture
- Clear career progression and development
- Adopting skills-based hiring practices
- Expanding the talent pool with inclusive practices
- Fostering a culture of lifelong learning
- Integrating cybersecurity education from the ground up
- Evolving curriculum to meet industry needs

Vanessa Lyon, Managing Director and Senior Partner at BCG emphasized the importance of collaboration: "To shape the cybersecurity workforce of tomorrow, leaders must collaborate to integrate cybersecurity into education, continuously upskill talent, and create opportunities for underrepresented groups. Building a future-ready workforce means fostering a culture of continuous learning, ensuring we have the skilled defenders to support global security and economic stability in the face of rapidly evolving technologies."

The "2024 Global Cybersecurity Workforce Report" presented at the GCF Annual Meeting 2024 aligns with the Meeting's theme of "Advancing Collective Action in Cyberspace." This collaboration contributes crucial insights into the human capital required to navigate the evolving cybersecurity landscape. The report's findings and recommendations provide a foundation for addressing key challenges in the cybersecurity domain, from talent shortages to integrating emerging technologies.

Ethereum suffers a 6% decline

## 'Crypto' market faces \$164 bln decline amid Mideast tensions

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3:** The cryptocurrency market has faced its most substantial decline in a month, with losses nearing \$164 billion over the past 72 hours, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This sharp downturn follows heightened geopolitical tensions, particularly after Iran launched missile strikes against Israel, triggering widespread fears in the financial sector.

During this period, the total market capitalization of cryptocurrencies plummeted by 7 percent, falling from \$2.338 trillion to approximately \$2.174 trillion. Bitcoin, the leading cryptocurrency, led the market decline with a 3.4 percent drop, trading

at \$61,773. This downturn reflects a weekly loss of 3.2 percent, reducing its market value to \$1,220.8 billion, which constitutes 56.15 percent of the overall cryptocurrency market.

Ethereum, the second-largest cryptocurrency, experienced an even steeper decline, with a 6 percent drop in recent trading. Over the past week, it has seen a total decline of 5.5 percent, with its price falling to \$2,479.

The recent fluctuations in the cryptocurrency market highlight the volatility and sensitivity of digital assets to geopolitical events, prompting traders to reassess their strategies amid increasing uncertainties.

Inflation drops to 25.1% in Aug

## Egypt's external debt drops by \$15 billion in six months

**CAIRO, Oct 3, (Xinhua):** Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly said on Wednesday that Egypt's external debt declined by more than 15 billion U.S. dollars in six months to go below 153 billion dollars, the Egyptian cabinet said in a statement.

"The external debt recorded 168 billion dollars last December and 152.8 billion in June," the cabinet quoted Madbouly as saying in a meeting with Egyptian intellectuals in Cairo.

He attributed the decline to the recent measures taken by the government to reform the country's monetary policy. Over the past few years, Egypt has been suffering from a shortage of foreign currency needed for imports which led to the devaluation of the local currency and high inflation. Egypt's inflation rate reached a re-

cord high of 38 percent last September. It has been gradually declining this year and was recorded at 25.1 percent in August.

With the government's efforts to rationalize spending and increase investments in the new fiscal year, "we are working on reducing the inflation rates to reach less than 10 percent by the end of 2025," Madbouly pointed out.

Egypt's foreign currency reserves increased to 46.6 billion dollars by the end of August, compared to 34.9 billion dollars by the end of August last year, according to the Central Bank of Egypt.

The financial push came after Egypt signed in February a 35-billion-dollar investment deal with the United Arab Emirates to develop Ras Al-Hekma, a new resort town on Egypt's northern coast.



Shoaib Yousuf



Global Cybersecurity Forum Panel.



## Investors await developments in the Middle East

## Asian shares slip and the yen weakens against the dollar

NEW YORK, Oct 3, (AP): Asian shares were mostly lower on Thursday after U.S. stocks stalled as investors awaited developments in the Middle East.

The U.S. dollar gained against the Japanese yen as officials downplayed the likelihood of an interest rate hike soon.

That helped push Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index higher. It gained 2% to 38,552.06, while the dollar traded at 146.51 Japanese yen, up from 146.41 yen late Wednesday.

The dollar had been trading around 142 yen after the ruling Liberal Democrats chose Shigeru Ishiba to head the party and suc-

ceed Fumio Kishida as prime minister. Ishiba had expressed support for the central bank's recent moves to raise its near-zero benchmark interest rate, which stands at around 0.25%. That led traders to bet that the yen would gain in value.

But after a meeting between Ishiba and Bank of Japan Gov. Kazuo Ueda, both officials indicated that the central bank did not view further rate hikes as suitable for the economy at this time. That prompted a flurry of selling of yen, which benefits big export manufacturers.

The meeting between Ishiba and Ueda had not been expected to



A person stands in front of an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei index at a securities firm, Thursday, Oct. 3, 2024, in Tokyo. (AP)

bring major news, however, "when Ishiba hinted that growing global risks should keep the BOJ firmly grounded, yen bulls hit the exits faster than you can say 'sayonara,'" Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

Elsewhere in Asia, Hong Kong's Hang Seng dropped 1.4% to 22,124.37 as investors sold shares to lock in profits after it roared 6.2% higher a day earlier on a wave of investor enthusiasm over recent announcements from Beijing to rev up the Chinese economy.

With Shanghai and other markets in China closed for a weeklong holiday, trading has crowded into

Hong Kong. Markets in South Korea and Taiwan also were closed. India's Sensex fell 1.3%.

Oil prices rose again as the world waited to see how Israel will respond to Tuesday's missile attack from Iran.

U.S. benchmark crude oil gained \$1.00 cents to \$71.10 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, the international standard, was up 94 cents to \$74.84 per barrel.

Israel is not a major producer of oil, but Iran is, and a worry is that a broadening war could affect neighboring countries that are also integral to the flow of crude.

## 75 years after founding republic

## China economic outlook brightens with renewed growth momentum

BEIJING, Oct 3, (Xinhua): Since the founding of the People's Republic of China 75 years ago, the country has evolved from a backward and poor nation into the world's second-largest economy, achieving numerous milestones along the way.

By embarking on a high-quality development path that is innovation-driven, environmentally sustainable and increasingly open, China has continued to offer the world new growth momentum and opportunities. The following figures and facts shed light on how the world's major economic powerhouse transformed and thrived in three-quarters of a century.

**Leapfrog in economy**  
Over the past 75 years, China's rapid economic progress has been nothing short of a miracle.

At constant prices, the total economic output in 2023 has increased 223 times compared to 1952, with an average annual growth rate of 7.9 percent.

Specifically, China's GDP surpassed 126 trillion yuan (about 18 trillion U.S. dollars) in 2023. The GDP in 1952 was just 67.9 billion yuan.

By 1986, it had surpassed 1 trillion yuan, and in 2000, it exceeded 10 trillion yuan. In 2020, the country's GDP surpassed 100 trillion yuan.

In the process, China has secured victories in the continued fight against poverty. By 2020, 98.99 million people in rural China had been lifted out of poverty, and all 832 impoverished counties were officially recognized as having exited poverty.

The living standards of the Chinese people have progressed from mere subsistence to moderate prosperity in all aspects. Over the past 75 years, the per capita disposable income of China's residents has increased 76-fold, adjusted for inflation.

The foundation of the development has become increasingly solid and the nation's food supply remains firmly in its own hands, with total grain output rising from 113.18 million tonnes in 1949 to 695.41 million tonnes in 2023.

Industrial production capacity has been constantly improved. In 2023, the added value of the manufacturing industry topped 33 trillion yuan, remaining the world's biggest in terms of scale for 14 consecutive years.

New industries and business models are emerging one after another, and the services sector has gradually grown to become the largest industry in the national economy.

Over the past 75 years, China's economic influence has steadily increased. In 2023, the total economic output of the country accounted for about 17 percent of the global total. From 2013 to 2023, China's average contribution to global economic growth exceeded 30 percent, making it the largest driving force behind world economic growth.

At present, China is the world's largest trader of goods, the second-largest country in services trade, the second-largest consumer of commodities, and the largest holder of foreign exchange reserves.

In 2023, the actual utilization of foreign direct investment reached 163.3 billion U.S. dollars, an increase of 176 times compared to 1983, maintaining a world-leading scale for several consecutive years.

The Belt and Road Initiative has consolidated and expanded its network of partnerships and 22 pilot free trade zones have been established.

European opinion-maker Modern Diplomacy stated in a recent article that over the past 75 years, China has turned itself from a poor country into the world's second top economy, with the largest manufacturing system in the world. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the national effort has achieved results and historic changes, thus successfully promoting and expanding the stages of modernization.

**New growth momentum**  
In particular, since the 18th National Congress of the CPC in 2012, China has been committed to implementing the new development philosophy, unlocking the dynamics, vitality and

potential of high-quality development while effectively addressing various risks and challenges along the way.

China has witnessed continuous optimization of its economic structure. In 2023, the contribution rate of final consumption expenditure to economic growth reached 82.5 percent, further enhancing the role of consumption as the main engine.

By the end of 2023, the urbanization rate of the permanent resident population had increased by 13.06 percentage points compared to the end of 2012, further narrowing the development gap between urban and rural areas.

As an innovation-oriented country, China has continuously strengthened its growth momentum. In 2023, China's total expenditure on research and experimental development ranked second in the world, increasing 2.2 times compared to 2012. China's ranking in the Global Innovation Index rose from 34th in 2012 to 12th in 2023, making it the only middle-income economy among the top 30.

A number of intelligent and green industries have rapidly taken shape. Electric vehicles, solar batteries and lithium-ion batteries, categorized as China's tech-intensive and green "new three," reported a combined export value of 150 billion dollars in 2023, jumping 29.9 percent year on year.

China also achieved fruitful outcomes in green development. Over the past ten years, the newly installed capacity of renewable energy has accounted for 40 percent of the world's total. For nine consecutive years, China has been leading the world in the production and sales of new energy vehicles.

Over the past decade, China has supported average annual economic growth of over 6 percent, with a 3 percent increase in energy consumption, and has reduced its energy consumption per unit of GDP by 26.8 percent.

The country has set the ambitious targets of peaking its carbon emissions by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2060. These goals have spurred enormous demand for traditional industry upgrades and green consumption, leading China to become the world's largest green market.

New China's journey of 75 years showcases its resilience, growth and unwavering progress toward an even brighter tomorrow.

At the third plenary session of the 20th CPC Central Committee in July this year, China rolled out a slew of specific reform measures, presenting a clear blueprint for promoting high-quality development and high-standard opening up to advance Chinese modernization.

It is believed that China will continue to bring greater stability and certainty to the turbulent world while providing more opportunities for cooperation along with its own development.

## OpenAI raises \$6.6b, marks shift from non-profit model



Open AI Chief Executive Officer Sam Altman, center, speaks at the Advancing Sustainable Development through Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy AI Event on Sept. 23, 2024, in New York. (AP)

## Investment ranks among top in US history

NEW YORK, Oct 3, (AP): OpenAI said Wednesday it has raised \$6.6 billion in venture capital investments as part of a broader shift by the ChatGPT maker away from its non-profit roots.

Led by venture capital firm Thrive Capital, the funding round was backed by tech giants Microsoft, Nvidia and SoftBank, according to a source familiar with the funding who was not authorized to speak about it publicly.

The investment represents one of the biggest fundraising rounds in U.S. history, and ranks as the largest in the past 17 years that doesn't include money coming from a single deep-pocketed company, according to PitchBook, which tracks venture capital investments.

Microsoft pumped up OpenAI last year with a \$10 billion investment in exchange for a large stake in the company's future growth, mirroring a strategy that tobacco giant Altria Group deployed in 2018 when it invested \$12.8 billion into the now-beleaguered vaping startup Juul.

OpenAI said the new funding "will allow us to double down on our leadership in frontier AI re-

search, increase compute capacity, and continue building tools that help people solve hard problems." The company said the funding gives it a market value of \$157 billion and will "accelerate progress on our mission."

The influx of money comes as OpenAI has been looking to more fully convert itself from a non-profit research institute into a for-profit corporation accountable to shareholders.

While San Francisco-based OpenAI already has a rapidly growing for-profit division, where most of its staff works, it is controlled by a nonprofit board of directors whose mission is to help humanity by safely building futuristic forms of artificial intelligence that can perform tasks better than humans.

That sets certain limits on how much profit it makes and how much shareholders get in return for costly investments into the computing power, specialized AI chips and computer scientists it takes to build generative AI tools. But the governance structure would change if the board follows through with a plan to convert itself to a public-benefit corporation, which is a type of corporate entity that is supposed to help society as well as turn a profit.

Along with Thrive Capital, the funding backers include Khosla

Ventures, Altimeter Capital, Fidelity Management and Research Company, MGX, ARK Invest and Tiger Global Management.

Microsoft said in a brief statement Wednesday that it looks forward to continuing its OpenAI partnership. Nvidia, a leading designer of the chips needed to build and run AI systems, declined to comment. The amount of each funder's investment has not been disclosed.

Not included in the round is Apple, despite speculation it might take a stronger interest in OpenAI's future after recently teaming up with the company to integrate ChatGPT into its products.

Brendan Burke, an analyst for PitchBook, said that while OpenAI's existing close partnership with Microsoft has given it broad access to computing power, it still "needs follow-on funding to expand model training efforts and build proprietary products."

Burke said it would also help it keep up with rivals such as Elon Musk's startup xAI, which recently raised \$6 billion and has been working to build custom data centers such as one in Memphis, Tennessee. Musk, who helped bankroll OpenAI's early years as a nonprofit, has become a sharp critic of the company's commercialization.



75 years on, China's economy emerges stronger with new growth momentum. (Xinhua)

## KLM plans 'painful' cost-cutting

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, Oct 3, (AP): Dutch airline KLM announced a "painful" round of cost-cutting and other measures Thursday aimed at boosting the carrier's finances as it continues to recover from the COVID pandemic that grounded planes worldwide.

CEO Marjan Rintel said KLM, along with many other airlines, "is suffering from high costs and shortages of staff and equipment. Our aircraft are full, but our capacity is still not back to pre-corona levels."

The Dutch carrier is part of the Air France-KLM group that had a 7.1 billion-euro (\$8.4 billion) loss in 2020 as the global pandemic grounded planes and halted travel plans worldwide, causing a 67% slump in passenger numbers.

KLM said the package of measures is intended to improve its operating result by 450 million euros (\$497 million) in the short term. It did not reveal if the changes would lead to staff cuts, but said it aims to "protect jobs across the company as much as possible."

"This is painful for every KLM colleague, but it is necessary, and it has to be done now," Rintel said in a statement.

The cost-cutting will also help clear the way for investments in rejuvenating KLM's fleet to buy quieter and more fuel-efficient planes, said chief financial officer Bas Brouns.

Among the planned measures, KLM said it wants to increase productivity, reduce the impact of pilot shortages and achieve a better balance between European and long-haul flights and look at the option of outsourcing some maintenance.

It also is reconsidering or postponing many planned investments and exploring options to outsource, divest or halt "activities that do not directly contribute to flight operations."

Hacer Karadeniz, director of the FNV KLM Ground Personnel labor union, said it "will closely monitor whether these plans have consequences for staff and we will also discuss this with KLM."

## Amazon, Target and other retailers ramping up hiring for the holiday shopping season

NEW YORK, Oct 3, (AP): Retailers are ramping up hiring for the holiday season, but fewer seasonal employees are expected to be taken on this year to help customers in stores and assemble online orders in warehouses.

E-commerce giant Amazon said Thursday it will hire 250,000 full, part-time and seasonal workers for the crucial shopping period, rounding out a series of announcements made in recent weeks by the country's top retailers.

Amazon is hiring the same number of employees it did last year, similar to Bath & Body Works and Target, which said in September it will bring in roughly 100,000 seasonal employees and offer current employees the option to work extra hours during the holiday shopping period.

Meanwhile, the department store Kohl's encouraged people to apply for positions but stayed mum on its plans, mirroring Walmart, which said it's been hiring store associates throughout the year and will tap into its own staff when needed during the busy season.

Others have indicated they will scale

back their hiring. Macy's said it will add more than 31,500 seasonal positions this year across its Macy's, Bloomingdale's and Bluemercury stores, as well as its distribution centers. Last year, the com-

pany added 38,000.

The holiday shopping period is the busiest time of year for online and brick-and-mortar retailers, some of which have already announced

discount events to entice consumers planning to shop early for gifts.

The consulting firm Deloitte forecasts U.S. retail sales will increase between 2.3% to 3.3% during the November to January timeframe and reach a total of \$1.59 trillion. EY-Parthenon, the consulting arm of Ernst & Young, forecasts a similar 3% jump in sales during the traditional November-December period. However, it says price increases due to inflation are likely to account for a big chunk of that growth, noting real volume sales will only rise 0.5% year-over-year.

Online sales, a growing segment of retail, is expected to increase 8.4% and reach a record \$240.8 billion, according to Adobe, which tracks e-commerce transactions.

"At the moment, retailers appear optimistic for a strong holiday shopping season, which is being reflected in the hiring plans of major retailers and warehouses," said Andy Challenger, senior vice president at the outplacement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas.



Amazon employees load packages on carts before being put on trucks for distribution to customers for Amazon's annual Prime Day event at an Amazon's DAX7 delivery station on July 16, 2024, in South Gate, Calif. (AP)





Photos during the event.

## KPC and Korea sign MoU on crude oil storage

# Korea celebrates National Foundation and Armed Forces Day in Kuwait

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3: The Republic of Korea on Oct 2, celebrated its National Foundation Day and the Armed Forces Day at the Jumeirah Messilah Hotel, which was attended by a large gathering of diplomats accredited to Kuwait, members of the business community, invited guests and members of the media fraternity.

The chief guest on this occasion was Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari and Major General Khaled Daraj Al-Shaie'a'an, Commander of Air Defense Force, Representative of Chief of Staff.

In his address to the gathering, the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Kuwait Park, Chong Suk said, "This year marks the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the Republic of Korea and the State of Kuwait, as well as the 60th anniversary of energy cooperation between the two countries.

"In 1964, he said, "Korea imported 330,000 barrels of oil from Kuwait, which became the cornerstone for the development of Korea's heavy chemical industry. Currently, Korea imports around 100 million barrels of oil annually."

He disclosed, with the commencement of energy cooperation, Korean construction companies began to expand into Kuwait's market.

Following the signing of the first contract in 1975, these companies participated

in the construction of the 1st and 6th Ring Road, Highway 30, the Port of Shuaiba, clean fuel projects, the Al-Zour refinery project, power plants, and the Jaber Causeway, a landmark in Kuwait that opened in 2019.

Recently, collaborative efforts have also extended to various sectors, including airport operations, medical treatment, the construction of new cities, and smart farming.

A few weeks ago, Kuwait and Korea inaugurated the country's first-ever fiber optic cable factory, which is expected to enhance Kuwait's internet infrastructure.

With these developments, both countries are eager to advance towards achieving Kuwait's Vision 2035 through continued partnership.

Recently, the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Korea National Oil Corporation for a project for crude oil storage in Korea.

In commemoration of this significant year, a photo exhibition that has been prepared showcases the history of energy cooperation between the two nations, and called on the guests at the gathering to explore and share in the pride of this partnership.

The Korean envoy expressed a strong belief in the importance of people-to-people and the cultural exchanges and the limitless possibilities they offer.

In the realm of tourism, he said, more than 2,000 Kuwaitis visited Korea in the first half of this year, representing a significant increase compared to the average annual visit of 3,500 Kuwaitis before the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the education and culture, he said, the King Sejong Institute, a Korean language learning center, was established in collaboration with the Kuwait University in October 2023. This center has facilitated Korean language and cultural education for around 200 individuals.

Moreover, over 10 Korean students come to Kuwait each year under government scholarship programs, where they not only learn Arabic but also engage with students at the Kuwait University, fostering mutual cooperation for the future.

Following the speech, one of the main events, the "Hanbok Fashion Show," showcased the cultural cooperation between Kuwait and Korea. Among the 20 models participating, half are members of the "Korean Kuwaiti Cultural Diwan-ya," a group of supporters of Korean culture.

The ambassador expressed confidence that these young individuals will serve as strong bridges connecting the future and strengthening ties based on deep-rooted bonds.

The Korean envoy, H.E. Park wished peace and prosperity for Kuwait and its people, who have consistently provided humanitarian support to nations in crisis and suffering worldwide.

He concluded by calling for lasting peace in the Middle East, affirming that Korea, as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and a leading proponent of the rules-based international order, will make every effort to promote regional peace and stability.

Ali Yusuf and Ali Al Momen fly as Captains for a day

## NBK, Jazeera Airways collaborate to fulfill dreams of young heroes

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues its "I Dream to Be" initiative, a first-of-a-kind initiative which aims to fulfill the dreams of children with cancer, giving them the opportunity to experience their aspirations, giving them the chance to live their dreams.

Two young patients, Ali Yusuf and Ali Al Momen, who are receiving treatment at NBK Hospital, have always dreamt of becoming pilots. Through a collaboration with Jazeera Airways, NBK helped make their dream come true by providing them with the chance to learn the basics of piloting.

NBK arranged a special visit for Yusuf and Al Momen to Jazeera Airways, where they met with officials and participated in a training session, followed by a real flight experience, with a round-trip journey from Kuwait to Riyadh and back.

On board the flight, the Jazeera Airways captain, together with the NBK team, welcomed the two young heroes, acknowledging their bravery as they undergo chemotherapy at NBK Children's Hospital. The captain announced, "We are honored to welcome our two heroes, Captain Ali Yusuf and Captain Ali Al Momen, who had a dream to become pilots. Today, that dream is coming true. Let's give them a round of applause for their strength - we are proud of them!"

Barathan Pasupathi, Chief Executive Officer, Jazeera Airways, said: "At Ja-

### Pasupathi:

- It was an honor to collaborate with NBK to fulfill the hopes of two remarkable boys

### Al Abdul Jaleel:

- NBK prioritizes supporting children as part of its commitment to the community

zera Airways, we are dedicated to uplifting the communities we serve. It was an honor to collaborate with NBK to fulfill the hopes of two remarkable boys, Ali Yusuf and Ali Al Momen. Currently under chemotherapy treatment at the NBK Children's Hospital, both aspire to be pilots and it was a pleasure to host them on their journey as Captains for the day."

"As an airline, we are committed to making travel more accessible to all and through this initiative we hope to inspire the dreams and empower the spirits of both these brave young heroes. We eagerly anticipate the day we see them soar as pilots with Jazeera Airways," he added.

Joanne Al Abdul Jaleel, NBK's Public Relations Manager, expressed her pride in the initiative: "Granting Yusuf and Al Momen's wish to become pilots is yet another success of our 'I Dream to Be' initiative. We are proud work with Jazeera Airways and both play a role in bringing joy to these two children and support

their dreams in every way we could."

Al Abdul Jaleel added, "The I Dream to Be initiative offers children, including those with life-threatening conditions and special needs, a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It's our way of spreading happiness and showing that even in difficult situations, there is always hope. We ask the children what they want to be and do our best to make that a reality."

The initiative is part of NBK's commitment to its social responsibility program and expanding its reach to cover more sustainable programs.

NBK gives top priority to children through its commitment to corporate social responsibility. NBK works closely with children's associations in Kuwait to maximize its reach to all the children in Kuwait.

NBK has been at the forefront of supporting Kuwait's community through a range of initiatives towards education, health, environment and social responsibilities.



Photos during the initiative.

## Gurvinder Singh Lamba delivers farewell speech as outgoing chairman

# Indian Business and Professional Council Kuwait holds Annual General Meeting & Elections

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3: The Indian Business and Professional Council (IBPC) Kuwait held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Election on Sunday, September 29, 2024, at Marina Hotel, Salmiya. The meeting witnessed the election of new office bearers and a review of the Council's activities over the past two years.

Outgoing Hon. Chairman Mr. Gurvinder Singh Lamba delivered a heartfelt farewell speech, reflecting on his tenure and thanking the IBPC members for their support. He praised the collective efforts that have strengthened the Council's mission to foster business and professional ties between India and Kuwait.

The AGM proceedings were conducted by Hon. Secretary Mr. Soly Mathew, who provided a comprehensive report of the Council's activities and achievements during the past two years. The Treasurer, Mr. Sunit Arora, presented the audited financials, which were prepared by CA Deepak Bindal.



Photo during the meeting.

The members unanimously accepted the financial report.

As per IBPC protocol, the cur-

rent Hon. Vice Chairman, Mr. Kaizar Shakir, and Hon. Joint Secretary, Mr. Suresh KP, were automatically elevat-

ed to the positions of Hon. Chairman and Hon. Secretary, respectively, for the upcoming term.

Following the tabling of financials, the Election Officers were invited to announce the nominations for the positions of Vice Chairman, Joint Secretary, and Treasurer. The following members were nominated and elected unopposed, Mr. Gaurav Oberoi as Hon. Vice Chairman, Mr. Sunit Arora as Hon. Joint Secretary, Mr. Krishen Suryakant as Hon. Treasurer.

In his address, the newly elected Hon. Chairman, Mr. Kaizar Shakir, introduced the Executive Committee for the 2024-2026 term. He highlighted the Committee's future plans, focusing on initiatives to expand IBPC's influence and reach. Mr. Shakir reaffirmed IBPC's commitment to continuing its strong relationship with the Indian Embassy in Kuwait and other organizations, with the goal of further strengthening trade and cultural ties between India and Kuwait.

Mr. Suresh K P, Hon. Secretary of IBPC, extended heartfelt gratitude to the Embassy of India and His Excel-

lency Dr. Adarsh Swaika, Ambassador of India to Kuwait, for their unwavering support and guidance in all IBPC initiatives.

The AGM concluded with a Vote of Thanks by the incoming Treasurer, Mr. Krishen Suryakant, expressing gratitude to all members for their support and participation.

IBPC Kuwait is a non-profit organization and apex body under the Embassy of India providing a platform for Indian businesses and professionals to enhance Indo-Kuwait trade and professional relations. IBPC creates enrichment opportunities by organizing networking opportunities, events (both business and cultural), trade shows, exhibitions etc. Over the years, IBPC has successfully established institutional linkage between the leading Chambers of Commerce and organizations from India such as ASSOCHAM, FICCI, CII, TPCI and FIEO and Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industries.



## art



The old Kuwaiti wedding paintings are the creations of visual artist Ibrahim Shukrallah.

KUNA photos

### 14-meter artwork brings Kuwait's timeless wedding traditions to life

Through 14-meter painting on canvas, Kuwaiti Artist Ibrahim Shukrallah captured the essence of traditional Kuwaiti weddings in a vibrant and artistic portrayal, the artwork explained the various stages of the Kuwaiti wedding.

The artwork started with the engagement, followed

by the Dazza (a gift to the bride) then the marriage contract -- known as "Melcha" -- witnessed by family and friends, then the Yelwa (performative celebration for the bride) and the groom's parade "Zafah" to their new home after the wedding.

This piece is one of the largest works that explores

the details of Kuwaiti weddings, offering a unique and innovative approach.

Shukrallah incorporates elements of Kuwait's environment through colors, lighting techniques and architectural features, which is a remarkable work that stands as a historical documentation. (KUNA)

## Heritage

Dr. Collins praises Kuwait's unique artefacts

# Arab museums as places of change

By Chaitali B. Roy

Special to the Arab Times

As part of the celebration of 125 years of bilateral relations between Britain and Kuwait, Dr. Paul Collins, museum scholar and academic extraordinaire, former Jaleh Hearn Curator of Ancient Near East at the Ashmolean, the University of Oxford's Museum of Art and Archaeology and present Keeper of the Middle East at the British Museum was in Kuwait for a visit organised by the National Council For Culture, Arts, and Letters and the British Embassy in end September.

During his stay, Dr. Collins visited museums and met curators and owners of private art collections in Kuwait. The hope is for effective collaboration and knowledge exchange between Kuwait's museum sector and the British Museum in the future.

In an interview with Arab Times, Dr. Collins expressed his admiration for the extraordinary nature of Kuwait's artefacts and archaeological remains, emphasised the need for storytelling with objects and the importance of making the past relevant.

He highlighted the potential of museums in fostering a sense of pride and belonging, discussed their roles in civic society, and the value of local voices in narrating history. "There are extraordinary works of art, including Kuwait's vibrant archaeological heritage," he said to Arab Times. "One reason I wanted to visit Kuwait was to talk to friends and colleagues here about storytelling. There is enormous potential here for telling the story of the past in exciting ways."

Dr Collins's fascination for the past began with dinosaurs. "Then I moved into ancient Egypt," he smiles, recalling his youth. "I was fascinated with the mysteries of the past, the different cultures, and the alien nature of past societies." During his time at University, Paul Collins discovered the Ancient Near East. "I found this exciting part of the world further east and got hooked, both through the ancient writing and the extraordinary objects I saw in museums."

Those visits to museums started Dr Collins on a lifelong journey of discovery. He received his PhD from the Institute of Archaeology, University College London. His research interests centred on ancient Iraq and Iran's archaeology and material culture. His area of expertise is in visual representation in Mesopotamia, its relationship to the written record, and the transmission and adoption of artistic forms across the Near East. His other areas of interest include the role of museum displays in shaping disciplinary knowledge and the history of collecting.

Talking about his lifelong interest in the Ancient Near East and the need to understand its story and impact on perspectives, he says, "Education is fundamental to changing perspectives. Thinking about the past is part of



Dr. Paul Collins giving a lecture at the British Residence in Kuwait.

that. Thinking about how writing came about, how we organised ourselves in cities, and how thousands of people started living together are fundamental questions we are still grappling with. Learning about how ancient people or people in more recent history grappled with those questions might help us understand how to deal with it."

Speaking about the role of museums in a volatile yet culturally rich region

like the Middle East, Dr Collins highlighted the importance of museums in telling stories through objects and using modern technologies like video and sound. "If you are looking for a place where stories can be told through the material objects, video, sound and all the technologies of telling stories, then the museum is where it is done." Museums are essential in civic society today, he says, because they are no longer about individual collectors but the general population. "Museums tell the stories of communities in many ways, and they need to be better at telling those stories more effectively so that the wider populations of the city it's in, then the region, and then, the wider world has a place where they can hear the voices of all the communities."

Despite being the birthplace of human civilisation, the Middle East has been late in joining most of the world in recognising museums as essential spaces for knowledge exchange and inspiration. But the Gulf has been fast catching up in recent years. Dr Collins acknowledges that people are more interested in the present. "But the past," he says, "can be as important in terms of memory and identity. Family connections might not take you back too far, but the deeper past can become important when a community comes together and starts thinking about that broader identity."

Reclaiming heritage is an essential part of Dr Collins's work. He talks about the importance of allowing local voices to be heard when telling their stories. "Often, stories about groups and society are told very often by people from outside those societies."

His work in Iraq includes the Nahrein project. "This project offers opportunities for our colleagues on the ground to tell local stories, and that's how identity is maintained and preserved, rather than external people coming in and telling you about your past."

As the former Chair of the British Institute for the Study of Iraq, Dr Collins was involved with founding the Basra Museum in the former palace of Saddam Hussein. "Basra's public museum was no longer fit for a modern museum," he shares when asked about his work with the Basra Museum.

He connects this initiative to his view on locals owning their storytelling in museums. "It is about thinking of local communities and allowing them a space to present their own stories. Eventually, our work was very much about the physical structure of the building, getting cases into the museum, etc. The Iraqis selected and displayed the objects brought down from Baghdad."

When asked about similar collaborations in Kuwait, Dr Collins remarked, "I have had many conversations during my trip, and I hope we can build on these conversations because there's huge expertise and experience here, which would be very welcome, for example, in the British Museum. Similarly, we may have ways of doing things that might be useful here."



## Film

## Actress on her bold performance in 'The Outrun'

## Saoirse Ronan felt happy and settled

LOS ANGELES, Oct 3, (AP): The thing about birthing a lamb on camera is you only get one take.

Saoirse Ronan had been getting up at dawn to observe local farmers in Orkney in action, soaking in as much as she could. But soon it was her turn. Not only would she have a life in her hands: She had to look like she'd been doing it her whole life. She was terrified.

It wouldn't be the last time Ronan, 30, would have to step out of her comfort zone to make the "The Outrun" (in theaters Friday), a harrowing and transcendent portrait of addiction and recovery which she produced alongside her husband, actor Jack Lowden. She'd yell and scream and say the meanest things she could think of to her fellow actors. She'd go from euphoric to inconsolable on a dime in a chaotic, drunken haze. And she'd plough the despairing depths of a very sick person about to relapse.

But after 20 years of acting, these were challenge she was ready for. There's a reason her performance, defining and distinctive on a resume full of memorable characters, from Briony Tallis to Lady Bird, has garnered comparisons to Gena Rowlands in "A Woman Under the Influence."

## Responsibility

It was Lowden who put Amy Liptrot's bestselling memoir in her hands during the pandemic, thinking it might be an interesting role for her.

"We tend to be drawn towards the same kind of material," Ronan said in a recent interview with The Associated Press. "I trust his taste and opinion. I kind of hold it higher than anyone else's."

They were both at a point where they felt like they had more to give to the movies than just performing. They wanted more responsibility, more agency to help shape the material that they loved so much. And so, Ronan and Lowden set off on a journey to make "The Outrun" together. Producing, she said, made her fall in love with filmmaking even more.

"It only made the experience as an actor even richer," Ronan said. "I had history with every single decision that had been made. I was a part of it and there was a piece of me in those decisions."

One of the first decisions that Liptrot, Ronan and German filmmaker Nora Fingscheidt made was to come up with a new name for Amy to create some healthy distance from their real life subject. They decided on Rona, after an uninhabited island visible from the Liptrot's real farm.

The production would involve an extensive pre-shoot on the Orkney Islands, on a remote corner of Scotland, to get the full scope of its natural splendor across a year, including lambs being born and birds nesting. The film skips around between her childhood, her downfall in London and her return to Orkney, with sublime asides about the history of the place, the folklore and what's going on in Rona's head. She finishes the odyssey in isolation on the even smaller island of Papay.

"We wanted to create a poetic film where the images and atmosphere stay with you for a long time after watching," wrote director Fingscheidt. "A film that takes you on a journey, not just to Orkney or London, but a spiritual journey into the inner world of a young woman, raised under extreme circumstances, searching for her place in life without alcohol."

In the chaotic London portions, in which Rona's relationship with her boyfriend Daynin (Paapa Essiedu) crumbles under the weight of her addiction, Ronan found herself apologizing often to her screen mates. To capture the full extent of Rona's cruelty, Fingscheidt asked Ronan to get mean and personal.

"I've never explored that before with a character to get that cruel and just genuinely mean," Ronan said. "But you really have to kind of go, OK, I'm doing this for the sake of authenticity and honoring Amy's life. In a way, it felt more respectful to the people who were affected by Amy's illness. Because the cruelty and the meanness and the ugliness that comes out...I've experienced myself. It's incredibly painful. If we were going to do this story and their experience justice, we needed to show all of that."

## Community

Behind the scenes Lowden, who is Scottish and is particularly passionate about telling Scottish stories, was a helpful presence who understood the culture and the people. They worked with many locals in the small community of Orkney and Papay - which has no hotels. Ronan loved when he was able to be on set. They married in private earlier this year.

"He's one of those enigmas where, yes, he's a brilliant, brilliant actor and is so incredible on screen, but most of the time would much prefer to watch someone else shine," she said. "He loves being behind the scenes, making sure everyone has what they need and making sure that the set is operating well. He's more naturally a producer."

After the shoot, Ronan was ready to let Rona go. She had a six-week break and took herself on a train holiday around Europe to shake her off. Then she was due on another set: Steve McQueen's highly anticipated World War II film "Blitz," an AppleTV+ film opening in theaters Nov. 1. She plays a mother searching for her 9-year-old son who was supposed to be safely in the English countryside but has set on a dangerous journey to get back to her.

"I'm buzzing that these two films are coming out at once because they couldn't be more different," Ronan said. "It's very exciting for me to stand by the two of them. They feel very personal for different reasons."

They're also already getting her awards buzz. Ronan has been nominated for four acting Oscars, going back to "Atonement," but has yet to win. This year it's possible she could get both a lead and supporting nomination for the two projects. But she's more focused on getting them out to the world. And in "The Outrun," which she's seen from development to release, she is proud of a performance that she's not sure she would have been capable of a few years ago.

"I don't think it's necessarily something that I would have had the strength of character to take on years before," Ronan said. "But because I felt so happy and settled in my own life, and professionally speaking, I felt ready to play someone that was as messy and disconnected as she was. I was more than ready to give in to not knowing what this character was going to be, what it was going to turn into."

Plus, she now knows how to birth a lamb.

"You just got to get in there and do it," she laughed.



Saoirse Ronan poses for a portrait on Sept. 27, 2024, in New York. (AP)



This image released by Sony Pictures Classics shows Saoirse Ronan in a scene from 'The Outrun.' (AP)

## Variety

LOS ANGELES: A San Diego doctor became the third person to plead guilty in the case of Matthew Perry's fatal drug overdose, as prosecutors collect cooperators in an attempt to convict two bigger targets they say are responsible for the death of the "Friends" star.

Dr. Mark Chavez, 54, entered the plea Wednesday to a felony count of conspiring to distribute the surgical anesthetic ketamine in federal court in Los Angeles, after reaching a plea agreement with prosecutors in July.

Chavez agreed to cooperate as the US Attorneys Office pursues more serious charges against Dr. Salvador Plasencia, who prosecutors say gave ketamine directly to Perry. The other major target in the investigation is Jasmine Sangha, an alleged dealer who prosecutors say was known as the "ketamine queen" of Los Angeles and supplied the doses that killed Perry last year.

Chavez stood in court with his lawyer and answered dozens of questions from Judge Sherilyn Peace Garnett. He agreed to give up his right to trial and other rights. (AP)

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NEW YORK: Javier Bardem was no longer comfortable being silent on

## Gaza.

The Spanish actor spoke out about the Israeli-Hamas conflict upon accepting an award at the San Sebastian Film Festival last week. In his nuanced remarks, Bardem condemned the Hamas attacks as well as the "massive punishment that the Palestinian population is enduring."

He called for immediate cease-fire, and for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Hamas leaders - some of whom are now dead - who ordered the Oct. 7 attacks to be judged by the International Criminal Court.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Bardem explained why he chose to speak out.

"I believe that we can and must help bring peace. If we take a different approach, then we will get different results," Bardem told the AP, speaking prior to Iran's attack on Israel Tuesday. "The security and prosperity of Israel and the health and future of a free Palestine will only be possible through a culture of peace, coexistence and respect."

Israel's offensive has already killed over 40,000 Palestinians, according to

Gaza health officials, displaced the vast majority of Gaza's 2.3 million residents and destroyed much of the impoverished territory. (AP)

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NEW YORK: The Jonathan Majors-starring bodybuilder drama "Magazine Dreams" has been acquired for theatrical release after it was dropped following Majors' conviction for assaulting his ex-girlfriend.

Briarcliff Entertainment has picked up distribution rights to the film, its chief executive, Tom Ortenberg confirmed Wednesday. Ortenberg said in an email that Briarcliff is planning a "robust" theatrical release in the first quarter of 2025. Deadline first reported the acquisition.

Before Majors' conviction, "Magazine Dreams" had been a critical hit at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2023. Searchlight Pictures had set a release for later in the year, with widespread expectations that it could land Majors his first Oscar nomination. (AP)

□ □ □

ATLANTA: Rapper Rich Homie Quan died from an accidental drug overdose, the medical examiner's office in Georgia confirmed.

The cause of death for the hip-hop performer, born Dequantas Devontay Lamar, was from a slew of drugs such

as fentanyl, alprazolam, codeine and promethazine, a spokesperson for the Fulton County medical examiner's office said on Wednesday.

Quan showed no signs of trauma when his body was found. His brother told police that he thought Quan was asleep on the floor by the kitchen before he picked up the rapper and put him on the couch, saying it was "very unusual" to see food still in his mouth.

Later that morning, police were called by a woman who noticed that Quan's body was cold and he was not breathing. (AP)

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BEIJING: The Russian-language touring version of the musical "Anna Karenina" premiered at the Beijing Performing Arts Centre on Wednesday.

Based on renowned Russian author Leo Tolstoy's masterpiece, this musical production has been well received since its stage debut in 2016.

The award-winning musical, featuring its original cast, will run through Friday.

The Beijing Performing Arts Centre, a facility under the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA), will present the original version of the legendary musical "Cats" later in November and its first original musical production, "War and Peace," in December. (Xinhua)

## Music

## Refugee audiences reconnect with their homeland

## Sudanese turn to folk music for healing and unity

CAIRO, Oct 3, (AP): As the performers took the stage and the traditional drum beat gained momentum, Sudanese refugees sitting in the audience were moved to tears. Hadia Moussa said the melody reminded her of the country's Nuba Mountains, her family's ancestral home.

"Performances like this help people mentally affected by the war. It reminds us of the Sudanese folklore and our culture," she said.

Sudan has been engulfed by violence since April 2023, when war between the Sudanese military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces broke out across the country. The conflict has turned the capital, Khartoum, into an urban battlefield and displaced 4.6 million people, according to the UN migration agency, including more than 419,000 people who fled to Egypt.

A band with 12 Sudanese members now lives with thousands of refugees in Egypt. The troupe, called "Camirata," includes researchers, singers and poets who are determined to preserve the knowledge of traditional Sudanese folk music and dance to keep it from being lost in the ruinous war.

Founded in 1997, the band rose to popularity in Khartoum before it began traveling to different states, enlisting diverse musicians, dancers and styles. They sing in 25 different Sudanese languages. Founder Daffallah el-Hag said the band's members started relocating to Egypt in recently, as Sudan struggled through a difficult economic and political transition after a 2019 popular uprising unseated longtime ruler Omar al-Bashir. Others followed after the violence



Sudanese Camirata troupe perform at the Italian culture center in Cairo, Egypt, July 24, 2024. (AP)

began. El-Hag arrived late last year.

The band uses a variety of local musical instruments on stage. El-Hag says audiences are often surprised to see instruments such as the tanbour, a stringed instrument, being played with the nuggara drums, combined with tunes of the banimbo, a wooden xylophone.

"This combination of musical instruments helped promote some sort of forgiveness and togetherness among the Sudanese people," el-Hag said, adding that he is eager to revive a museum in Khartoum that

housed historic instruments and was reportedly looted and damaged.

Fatma Farid, 21, a singer and dancer from Kordofan, moved to Egypt in 2021. Her aunt was killed in 2023 when an explosive fell on their house in al-Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan.

"The way I see art has changed a lot since the war began," she said. "You think of what you present as an artist. You can deliver a message," she said. Kawthar Osman, a native of Madani city who has been singing with the band since 1997, feels nostalgic

when she sings about the Nile River, which forms in Sudan from two upper branches, the Blue and White Nile.

"It reminds me of what makes Sudan the way it is," she said, adding that the war only "pushed the band to sing more for peace."

Over 2 million Sudanese fled the country, mostly to neighboring Egypt and Chad, where the Global Hunger Index has reported a "serious" level of hunger in Chad. Over half a million forcibly displaced Sudanese have sought refuge in Chad, mostly women and children.

Living conditions for those who stayed in Sudan have worsened as the war spread beyond Khartoum. Many made hard decisions early in the war either to flee across frontlines or risk being caught in the middle of fighting. In Darfur, the war turned particularly brutal and created famine conditions, with militias attacking entire villages and burning them to the ground.

Armed robberies, lootings and the seizure of homes for bases were some of the challenges faced by Sudanese who stayed in the country's urban areas. Others struggled to secure food and water, find sources for electricity and obtain medical treatment since hospitals have been raided by fighters or hit by airstrikes. Communications networks are often barely functional.

The performers say they struggle to speak with family and friends still in the country, much less think about returning.

"We don't know if we'll return to Sudan again or will see Sudan again or walk in the same streets," Farid said.



## HEALTH/SCIENCE



A customer looks at refrigerated items at a Grocery Outlet store in Pleasanton, Calif., Thursday, Sept. 15, 2022. (AP)

## Is the food in the fridge still good?

## New law bans confusing food labels to cut waste

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Oct. 3, (AP) - California wants to help end the everyday household debate over whether the food in the fridge is still good to eat. Food labels that say "sell by" or "best before" are misleading because they have no universal meaning under current laws. Now California wants to crack down on such practices, bidding to help consumers stop playing guessing games with produce and other items in their fridges.

The state is the first to ban food labels such as "sell by" or "best before" under a law signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom. The legislation signed by Newsom over the weekend aims at reducing both food waste

and the state's climate-warming emissions.

There are more than 50 different date labels on packaged food sold in stores, but the information is largely unregulated and does not relate to food safety. "Sell by" dates, for example, often act as a guide for stores to pull products from the shelf and not as an indicator of whether the product is still safe to consume.

With no federal regulations dictating what information these labels should include, the stamps have led to consumer confusion - and nearly 20% of the nation's food waste, according to the Food and Drug Administration. In California, that's about 6 million tons of

unexpired food that's tossed in the trash each year.

"Having to wonder whether our food is still good is an issue that we all have struggled with," said Democratic Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, author of the bill.

The new law "is a monumental step to keep money in the pockets of consumers while helping the environment and the planet," she added in her statement.

The law is set to take effect in July 2026, establishing a new standard for food labeling in California. It will require the use of "Best if Used By" label to signal peak quality and "Use By" label for product safety, an approach recommended by federal agencies.

Some farmers taking to natural farming

## In India, warming climate pressures scientists to develop tougher seeds

BENGALURU, India, Oct. 3, (AP) - Unpredictable rains and increasing heat aren't just making life more difficult for the people of Rayanpet, a village in India's arid south. They're also taking a toll on the thousands of acres of rice grown here.

"We used to know when it would rain and for how long and we sowed our seeds accordingly," said P. Ravinder Reddy, a former soldier who turned to farming on his family's land 16 years ago. "Now it's so unpredictable and many times the seeds don't sprout either because there's too much rain or it's completely dry."

Fortunately for Reddy, agricultural research organizations in India have been working for years to engineer rice seeds that can better withstand the vagaries of climate. He's been experimenting with the new varieties for the past five years, and said they're giving better yields with less water and are more disease-resistant.

"I have planted them across a quarter of my 25-acre field because there's still demand for older varieties but I think in a few years, we will use only these tougher seeds," Reddy said.

India is one of the world's largest producers and consumers of wheat and rice. Research organizations here, like their counterparts around the world, have long worked to produce seeds that increase yields, withstand drought or resist plant diseases. It's a growing need as a changing climate leads to more extreme and unpredictable weather.

According to a United Nations report released earlier this year, more than 700 million people went hungry last year and over a third of the global population is unable to afford a healthy diet, thus increasing the urgency for re-



P. Ravinder Reddy, a farmer, applies fungicide to peanut seeds before sowing in Rayanpet village of Telangana state, India, Wednesday, Sept. 25, 2024. (AP)

silient seeds that can produce food reliably. Apart from India, other programs including a United States government program and privately funded projects are helping develop climate-resilient crops in Africa, Central America and other Asian countries.

As India is among the countries most vulnerable to climate impacts, these new seeds are essential in ensuring it produces enough food for its people as well as for export.

As climate change intensifies, India's nearly 120 million farmers - most with less than 5 acres of land - are seeing their livelihoods threatened by erratic rainfall patterns, rising temperatures and increased pest infestations.

Some are taking to what is called natural farming - techniques like using natural fertilizers and planting crops alongside trees and other plants that can protect crops from wind, erosion and some extreme weather - to deal with climate change. But that can mean reduced yields, and India's fed-

eral government is also promoting the use of climate-resilient seeds that don't compromise yields.

Increasing salinity in groundwater, heavy rainfall over short periods, prolonged droughts and even increasing nighttime temperatures can affect rice seeds, experts say.

"We really need these seeds to deal with these multiple issues created by global warming," said Ashok Kumar Singh, former director of New Delhi-based Indian Agriculture Research Institute and a scientist who specializes in plant genetics and breeding. Singh has overseen the creation of multiple successful rice varieties to withstand pests and various plant diseases. And his organization, with funding from the federal agriculture ministry, has released more than 2,000 climate-resilient seed varieties in the last decade.

Earlier this year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi released 109 climate-resilient seeds across crops that included cereals, pulses and oilseeds like peanuts. India's federal government has announced plans to ensure at least 25% of land tilled for paddy in the country will be sowed with climate-resilient seeds in the coming "kharif" or winter crop season.

"We are breeding for multiple stressors, including heat and disease resistance," said Janila Pasupuleti of International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, based in Hyderabad. Pasupuleti said that this approach not only stabilizes yields but also enhances the nutritional quality of crops, benefiting both farmers and consumers.

Even as scientists are creating climate-resilient seeds regularly, making sure the seeds reach the maximum number of farmers is critical.



Runners compete in the parkrun event in Bushy Park, southwest London, Saturday, Sept. 28, 2024. (AP)

## Feel-good runs transforming lives

## Parkruns draw millions for fitness, fun

LONDON, Oct. 3, (AP) - On a weekend morning in the fall of 2004, 13 runners lined up in a London park for an informal race - unaware they were taking the first steps in what would become a global movement.

Paul Sinton-Hewitt had simple ambitions: to provide a free, weekly 5-kilometer (3.1 mile) run open to anyone. "I didn't know who was going to join me on that day," Sinton-Hewitt said. "I didn't care how many people came. I would be on the start line every single week for the rest of my life and I would help people to run."

Parkrun - as it became known - has far exceeded any vision he had, marking its 20th anniversary on Saturday with runs now held in more than 2,500 locations, including 25 prisons, in nearly two dozen countries. More than 10 million people have participated in at least one parkrun and the organization has recorded more than 100 million finishes.

"We're the smallest that we will ever be," Sinton-Hewitt said. "In 20 years time when we come back and

have this chat again those numbers are going to be minuscule. So it's a bizarre thing."

The feel-good fun run is credited with changing countless lives, getting people up and moving, motivating them to come back week after week and nurturing lifelong friendships. Testimonials have come from couch potatoes to people who reversed diabetes and stopped drinking to inmates who found an escape while serving time.

The World Health Organization has endorsed parkrun for offering an accessible way to be physically active and more than 2,000 doctor's offices have partnerships with the organization to promote its health benefits.

More than 45,000 people who registered for parkrun this year in the UK said they had been completely inactive before signing up, according to a study published Tuesday in PLOS Global Public Health.

Of nearly 550 newly registered runners studied over six months, Sheffield Hallam University and the University

of Sheffield found their life satisfaction increased after as few as two parkruns.

"All of us say it's changed our lives," said Caroline Noon, who started running around age 50 and has completed more than 320 parkruns.

It's a refrain Sinton-Hewitt hears constantly as the organization's executive director.

Had it not been for a springer spaniel named Tim, none of this may have happened.

Sinton-Hewitt, a lifelong runner, was training for a marathon when he tripped over his dog and was seriously hurt.

He continued to reinjure himself and he realized that his sub-2:30 marathon dream - once within reach - was dead and his competitive running career was probably over at age 44.

It couldn't have happened at a worse time. He had lost his job, had relationship problems and was struggling with his mental health. Running had been his outlet since he was a ward of the state as a child growing up in South Africa and now he was sidelined.

## Kenya's mpox cases rise to 9

## NSW issues warning over mpox spike

SYDNEY, Oct. 3, (Xinhua) - Health authorities in Australia's most populous state have urged people at risk of contracting mpox to get vaccinated amid a spike in cases.

New South Wales (NSW) Health on Thursday reported that there have been 433 confirmed cases of mpox in the state since June 1, the largest outbreak in NSW since its first case of the infectious disease was confirmed in May 2022.

Of those cases, 37 percent were fully inoculated - having received two doses of a vaccine - 14 percent had received one dose and 46 percent were not vaccinated.

"The rapidly rising numbers of mpox cases detected across the state are very concerning, with 26 people requiring hospitalization due to the severity of their symptoms," Kerry

Chant, NSW's chief health officer, said in a statement.

"The majority of cases of hospitalization have been among people who are unvaccinated or have received only one dose of vaccine. While cases of mpox are occurring in vaccinated people, the cases tend to be milder and for a shorter period."

Meanwhile, Kenya's Ministry of Health on Wednesday confirmed one more mpox case, raising the total count in the country to nine as the government strengthened public health response to the disease.

Deborah Barasa, cabinet secretary in the Ministry of Health, said in a statement released in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi that the case had been confirmed in Nakuru, some 160 km northwest of the capital.

"The new case is a male aged 37,

who traveled to Rwanda and Uganda," Barasa said, noting that "no deaths have been reported among the confirmed cases."

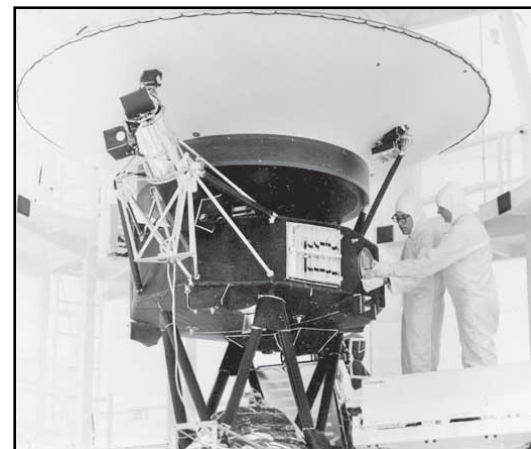
She added that the ministry's surveillance efforts remain robust and had tracked 68 contacts, among whom 61 had been monitored for the recommended 21 days.

Barasa revealed that the ministry had cumulatively screened nearly 1.13 million travelers at 26 points of entry.

She called for vigilance, noting it is key to protecting communities from the spread of the disease.

According to Barasa, the ministry has intensified surveillance, risk communication and community engagement to combat stigma and curb infections.

Barasa noted on Tuesday that the ministry is working to secure mpox vaccines for high-risk populations.



This photo provided by NASA shows the 'Sounds of Earth' record being mounted on the Voyager 2 spacecraft in the Safe-1 Building at the Kennedy Space Center, Fla. Aug. 4, 1977. (AP)

## NASA turns off Voyager 2 instrument to save power

NEW YORK, Oct. 3, (AP) - To save power, NASA has switched off another scientific instrument on its long-running Voyager 2 spacecraft.

The space agency said Tuesday that Voyager 2's plasma science instrument - designed to measure the flow of charged atoms - was powered down in late September so the spacecraft can keep exploring for as long as possible, expected into the 2030s.

NASA turned off a suite of instruments on Voyager 2 and its twin Voyager 1 after they explored the gas giant planets in the 1980s. Both are currently in interstellar space, or the space between stars. The plasma instrument on Voyager 1 stopped working long ago and was finally shut down in 2007.

Four remaining instruments on Voyager 2 will continue collecting information about magnetic fields and particles. Its goal is to study the swaths of space beyond the sun's protective bubble.

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### Horley takes 3-13 in two overs

## Bangladesh beats Scotland to begin Women's T20 World Cup in UAE

SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates, Oct 3, (AP): Tournament host Bangladesh beat Scotland by 16 runs to launch the Women's T20 World Cup on Thursday far from home.

Bangladesh put up 119-7 as off-spinner Saskia Horley took 3-13 in two overs, but restricted debutant Scotland to 103-7 as medium-pacer Ritu Moni took 2-15 in four overs.

Hosting rights were stripped from Bangladesh in August because of uncertainty after nationwide protests toppled the government. The United Arab Emirates agreed on short notice to stage the ninth edition for the first time.

The Bangladesh team didn't appear fazed to be

3,500 kilometers from home. It won the toss and made slow progress batting on a sluggish surface.

Opener Shathi Rani scored 29 off 32 balls, hitting three fours, and put on 26 with Murshida Khatun (12).

Scotland's bowlers toiled hard initially - Rani and Sobhana Mostary added 42 off 44 balls for the second wicket, the game's highest partnership. Mostary top-scored with 36 off 38 balls, hitting two fours.

Then wickets came at regular intervals once Rani was out caught off Katherine Fraser.

Scotland spinners picked up four wickets, setting the tone for what is expected to be a spin-dominated tournament.

Bangladesh collapsed from 68-1 to 97-5 across 27

deliveries, yet Nigar Sultana's run-a-ball 18 pushed them past 100 and to a defendable target. Fahima Khatun scored a vital 10 not out off five balls.

Chasing 120 for a maiden win, Scotland was led by Sarah Bryce's unbeaten 49 off 52 balls in her World Cup debut. The opener only hit one boundary but tried to hold the chase together.

Bangladesh spinners made it difficult to score. Surprisingly, Moni was the pick of its bowlers, and three of the four spinners claimed one wicket.

Bryce didn't have much support. Her older sister and captain Katherine Bryce scored 11. Only three Scots made it to double figures.



New Zealand captain Sophie Devine, right, watches Australia captain Alyssa Healy speak during a special panel session featuring captains of the 10 countries participating in the Women's T20 World Cup. (AP)



Paula Badosa of Spain returns a shot during the China Open tennis tournament women's singles match against Zhang Shuai of China at the National Tennis Center in Beijing. (AP)

## Gauff rallies against qualifier to reach semis at China Open

### Badosa ends Zhang's resurgence

BEIJING, Oct 3, (AP): **Sixth-ranked Coco Gauff again made a slow start and had to rally to beat Ukrainian qualifier Yulia Starodubtseva 2-6, 6-2, 6-2 to make the China Open semifinals on Thursday.**

Gauff will next play Paula Badosa of Spain, who earlier ended local wild card Zhang Shuai's unexpected run at the title.

The No. 115-ranked Yulia Starodubtseva had not lost a set in her three matches this week and quickly took the lead, making 10 winners and holding Gauff to zero in an error-strewn first set for the American.

Gauff also lost the first set against Naomi Osaka in the previous round before Osaka retired because of a lower back injury. The American helped to carry Osaka's bags off the court.

Former U.S. Open champion Gauff needed to find a response against Starodubtseva and saved two break points in her opening service game of the second set. A service break propelled Gauff ahead 3-1.



Coco Gauff of the United States celebrates after defeating Yulia Starodubtseva of Ukraine in the women's singles quarterfinals match of the China Open tennis tournament, at the National Tennis Center in Beijing. (AP)

After another narrow escape on her next service game, Gauff lost only three more games for the rest of the match.

Zhang Shuai's drought-busting week came to a shuddering halt as Badosa continued her own resurgence in a 6-1, 7-6 (4) victory in their quarterfinal.

The Spaniard has won 28 of her last 35 matches dating to May and made the semifinals of three of her

past five tournaments. There was also a run to the U.S. Open quarterfinals last month.

But the story of the week has been the 35-year-old Zhang, who entered the China Open on a 24-match losing streak - the second longest in the Open era - and ranked No. 595. She didn't drop a set in four matches this week.

The Chinese wild card had no answer, though, to Badosa's fast

start as the Spaniard made three service breaks to comfortably claim the opening set.

It was much closer in the second set as Badosa found herself down 3-1. She rallied and edged Zhang in the tiebreak.

Italy's Matteo Berrettini bounced back from the disappointment of an injury ending his Japan Open last week by squeezing past Christopher O'Connell 7-6, (9) 7-6 (6) in the Shanghai first round.

The Italian, who retired with an abdominal injury in the second round in Tokyo last Friday, had his fitness given a stern examination by the Australian in a lung-busting match lasting two hours, 13 minutes.

Next up for the former Wimbledon finalist is No. 14-ranked Holger Rune.

Other first-round winners included Marcos Giron, David Goffin, Jaume Munar, Zhou Yi, Jakub Mensik and Miomir Kecmanovic.

The 32 seeded players received a first-round bye, including top-ranked Jannik Sinner and second-ranked Carlos Alcaraz, who won the China Open against the Italian on Wednesday. Sinner starts against Taro Daniel of Japan, and Alcaraz faces Shang Juncheng of China.

## Como soccer team is attracting more than just celebrities to Italy's famous lake

ROME, Oct 3, (AP): George Clooney's villa is a 20-minute drive up the lake shore road from Como's stadium. Kate Beckinsale was a spectator in the stands last weekend.

Celebrity spottings and weddings have long been a pastime on Italy's famous lake, which is known for its majestic views of the Alps.

Now there's another reason to visit: The local soccer team is making rapid progress in its first season back in the top division in more than two decades.

Since Indonesian tobacco billionaire brothers Roberto Budi Hartono and Michael Bambang Hartono purchased the club five years ago in Serie D, the club has also been attracting soccer celebrities.

Como coach Cesc Fabregas and former France striker Thierry Henry - both World Cup winners and former teammates at Arsenal - are minority owners.

"We chose to invest in Como because investing exclusively in soccer comes with unpredictable risks,"

said Mirwan Suwarso, who manages Como for the Hartonos. "Here we're relying on a brand: We want to make this the top soccer tourism destination in the world."

The heavy foreign investment has attracted a mix of well-known vet-

eran players and rising prospects.

Veterans such as former Liverpool and Napoli goalkeeper Pepe Reina and former Barcelona captain Sergi Roberto. Plus former France and Real Madrid center back Raphael Varane, who then decided to retire but plans

to remain with the club in another role. Alberto Moreno, a 32-year-old left back, has played every minute of the opening six Serie A matches after signing as a free agent in July after leaving Villarreal - having previously played for Liverpool.

Then there's Nico Paz, a 20-year-old attacking midfielder signed from Real Madrid; and Alieu Fadera, 22-year-old Gambian winger signed from Genk.

Add in Como-born striker Patrick Cutrone (formerly of AC Milan), who is tied atop the league scoring chart with four goals in six games, and it's clear that there's a mix of players not usually seen at a promoted club. "Como is the revelation of the season," Napoli coach Antonio Conte said before the Serie A leader hosts Como on Friday.

In Como's last three matches, it held Champions League side Bologna to 2-2, won at Champions League side Atalanta 3-2 and beat Hellas Verona 3-2 to move into the top half of the table in 10th.



Juventus players celebrate after the UEFA Champions League opening phase soccer match between Leipzig and Juventus in Leipzig, Germany. (AP)

## Donnarumma high-ball blunders may cost PSG

PARIS, Oct 3, (AP): Paris Saint-Germain goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma's weakness under the high ball is increasingly obvious.

Although PSG coach Luis Enrique has not made an issue of it, Donnarumma's errors may prove costly to them if the French league title race is closer this season. PSG tops the table on goal difference from Monaco ahead of Sunday's trip to face Nice, which scored eight goals in its previous home game.

Donnarumma's blunders were exposed in Tuesday's 2-0 loss at Arsenal in the Champions League. Although Enrique did not blame him for the goals, the mistakes were evident and worryingly similar to ones last season in Europe's elite competition.

Arsenal's first goal saw a hesitant Donnarumma beaten as Kai Havertz - hardly the most renowned at headers in world soccer - anticipated a cross from Leandro Trossard and nodded the ball in.

Italy's No. 1 goalie was beaten again when Bukayo Saka's low free kick from the right went straight under him. He was not entirely at fault, since his view of the ball may have been obscured, but there seemed to be no talking between Donnarumma and his defenders.

It all looked very familiar. Last season in the Champions League quarterfinal first leg against Barcelona, Donnarumma failed to come for a corner and central defender Andreas Christensen headed in the winner. Despite his imposing stature - Donnarumma is 1.96 meters tall - he stood rooted to his line and seemed unsure how to judge the ball's flight.

Earlier in that match, Donnarumma struggled with Lamine Yamal's cross and Raphinha put Barcelona ahead.

Donnarumma's hesitancy repeated itself

in the semifinal return leg against Borussia Dortmund when central defender Mats Hummels rose unchallenged to head in Julian Brandt's corner from the left - a carbon copy of Christensen's goal.

Donnarumma also made blunders trying to pass the ball out from defense in some Ligue 1 games last season.

On Tuesday night, a few minutes after Arsenal's second goal, television cameras showed him muttering to himself and throwing up a hand in exasperation.

For all of his shot stopping and excellent reflexes on the goal line, the 25-year-old Donnarumma does not appear as strong overall as his PSG predecessor Keylor Navas, who was a more commanding presence in the penalty area.

Despite having just had an outstanding season for PSG, Navas was unceremoniously moved aside when Donnarumma arrived from AC Milan following the 2021 European Championship which Italy won thanks in parts to Donnarumma's penalty-saving exploits.

PSG fans could not understand why the highly regarded Navas was suddenly the designated No. 2 without competition for places.

Donnarumma was brought into the club by PSG's then-sporting director Leonardo. The Brazilian's strong ties with each club as a former player for PSG and Milan helped to facilitate the arrivals of Zlatan Ibrahimovic, star defender Thiago Silva, and Italian coach Carlo Ancelotti, his friend.

Donnarumma's arrival was seen as somewhat of a coup, given his young age and reputation. He had long been tipped for stardom after making his debut for Milan at age 16 in 2015.

But Donnarumma's trajectory is not going the way many observers expected it to.



PSG's goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma saves a shot from Arsenal's Gabriel Martinelli, left, during a Champions League opening phase soccer match between Arsenal FC and Paris Saint-Germain at Arsenal stadium in London, England. (AP)

### NY completes three-team trade with Hornets

## Knicks add Towns to roster from T-wolves

NEW YORK, Oct 3, (AP): Karl-Anthony Towns joined the Knicks on Wednesday after the Minnesota Timberwolves sent their four-time All-Star to New York in a three-team trade that also included the Charlotte Hornets.

The deal was agreed to Friday but took a few days to complete under the NBA's complicated new trade rules, meaning Towns has not been able to practice with the Knicks in their first two days of training camp in Charleston, South Carolina.

After practice in Minnesota, Timberwolves coach Chris Finch fondly reflected on his time with Towns and praised him for how welcoming he was upon being hired midway through the 2020-21 season to replace Ryan Saunders, with whom Towns had a close relationship.

The Knicks can't wait to plug him into their center spot, believing his outside shooting can be the key for a team that thinks it can contend for a title this season.

"He possesses a blend of playmaking, shooting, rebounding and defending that in combination with his size allows him to compete at a level that is rare in this league," Knicks President Leon Rose said in a statement. The Timberwolves received three-time All-Star Julius Randle and guard Donte DiVincenzo from the Knicks, while reacquiring Keita Bates-Diop and also receiving a first-round pick.

The Knicks sent Charlie Brown, DaQuan Jeffries and Duane Washington Jr. to the Hornets, along with two second-round picks, and acquired the draft rights to center James Nnaji.

Towns arrived in Minnesota as the No. 1 pick in the 2015 draft and leaves what appears to be a team on the rise. The Timberwolves reached the Western Conference finals last season, even though Towns was limited by injuries to 62 games.

Now the 7-footer, who has averaged 22.9 points and 10.8 rebounds while shooting 39.8% from 3-point range, leaves behind an All-Star pairing with Anthony Edwards for one with Jalen Brunson.

"Nine years ago, I arrived in Minnesota as a young man with a dream. Little did I

know that this place would become my home, and its people would become my family. Your love, support, and unwavering loyalty have fueled my journey and inspired me to be the best player I could be," Towns wrote on X in what he called a post to the Timberwolves family.

"Thank you to my teammates, coaches, and the entire Timberwolves organization for the countless opportunities and experiences. I'll cherish the friendships I've made and the battles we've fought together."

He rejoins Tom Thibodeau, one of his former coaches in Minnesota, after the Knicks gave up two key pieces to get him.

Randle was the NBA's Most Improved Player in 2021, when he led the Knicks to their first playoff berth since 2013, and the Knicks went to the postseason in three of his five seasons in New York after being one of the league's worst teams before he arrived. The Knicks reached the Eastern Conference semifinals the last two years, though Randle missed the postseason last season after surgery for a dislocated shoulder.

DiVincenzo averaged a career-high 15.5 points last season, his only one with the Knicks, and his career-best 283 3-pointers made were third in the NBA and set a single-season franchise record.

For the Timberwolves, DiVincenzo was the vital part of the deal for added depth on the wing. Finch said the club was not financially motivated to move Towns' contract, even if they were on track to pass the second apron of the luxury tax.

"Our ownership was and is committed to paying large amounts of tax for this team to be highly competitive. That hasn't changed," Finch said. "This deal in totality checks a lot of boxes. We think it's a great basketball trade. We think it makes us deeper in a lot of ways and in ways that we needed. It does give us flexibility and mechanisms to keep remaking the team going forward."

"That, more than anything, that whole package there was the reasons for the deal. But it doesn't change either our expectations coming into the season. We still have a very, very talented roster, the same core as last year and we've got two great weapons to add to that."



Significant participation

## Public Authority for Sports hosts Sports Analysis and Media course

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3: The "Sports Analysis and Media News" course concluded successfully at the Abdullah Al-Salem Center for Leadership Preparation, part of the Competitive Sports Sector at the Public Authority for Sports. The week-long course saw significant participation from sports analysts and enthusiasts. Notable attendees included Dr. Mosaed Al-Khayat and Dr. Salem Al-Waqian. Certificates were awarded to participants by Nawaf Al-Kandari, the Director of the Leadership Preparation Center, alongside Dr. Mosaed Al-Khayat.

Nawaf Al-Kandari emphasized the commitment of the Public Authority for Sports and the Leadership Preparation Center to organize courses that enhance sports analysis and media reporting. He noted that attracting a diverse range of participants is vital for the growth of Kuwaiti sports, especially for analysts and media professionals.

He stated, "We need to convey sports news accurately. The partici-

pants have established foundations and rules that enable them to effectively communicate sports culture to the public."

Dr. Mosaed Al-Khayat added that both the Public Authority for Sports and the Leadership Development Center are dedicated to raising the standard of sports in Kuwait across all areas, including technical, administrative, and media aspects.

He elaborated, "Sports media is an integral part of the sports ecosystem. As sports media evolves, so does the individual in society. It establishes standards and guidelines that guide officials towards improvement through constructive proposals and opinions. Furthermore, it enhances player efficiency, motivates them, and encourages society to engage in sports while combating negative behaviors and addressing high obesity rates in Kuwait."

Dr. Al-Khayat also highlighted the broader scope of sports media, stating that it should encompass not just news transmission but also address psychological, social, mental, economic, and philosophical dimensions.



Group photo of the course participants.

### Nasaf goes top

## Jovovic urges Kuwait Club to learn from Irbid loss

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

AMMAN, Oct 3: Kuwait Club's Montenegrin coach, Nebojsa Jovovic, attributed his team's 1-2 loss to Al-Hussein Irbid to costly mistakes made by some players, marking the team's first defeat in the Asian Championship. The match took place at Amman International Stadium as part of the second round of Group 4 in the AFC Champions League 2.

With this loss, Kuwait Club's tally remains at one point, while Al-Hussein Irbid earned its third point.

After the match, Jovovic noted that while his team initially took the lead and had several opportunities to extend its advantage, luck was not on their side, ultimately costing it in the



Nebojsa Jovovic

second half. He acknowledged that "the players from Al-Hussein were more effective and aggressive," adding that his players made commendable efforts to equalize but were unsuccessful.

Jovovic emphasized the need for his team to learn from its mistakes ahead of future matches, stating, "There is still a chance to recover, and we must work hard to achieve this goal."

The match also saw a change in Kuwait Club's lineup compared to its previous Zain Premier League matches, with Tunisian Yassin Al-Khenisi replacing Youssef Nasser and Ahmed Al-Dhafiri coming on for Mohammed Daham.

In an attempt to rectify the situation in the second half, Jovovic intro-

duced Daham, Nasser, Ali Hussein, Faisal Zayed, and Ahmed Al-Zanki. However, the team's solutions were limited as Al-Hussein Irbid maintained control and pressured Kuwait Club. If not for the outstanding performance of goalkeeper Saud Al-Hoshan, the scoreline could have been more lopsided.

In another match within the same group, Uzbekistan's Nasaf Qarshi defeated Shabab Al-Ahli from the Emirates 2-1. This victory allowed Nasaf to top the group with four points, while Al-Ahli fell to second place with three points, trailing on goal difference behind Al-Hussein Irbid, who now sits third. Meanwhile, Kuwait Club remains at the bottom of the standings with one point.



Sultan Al-Enezi with Dhofar officials.

## FIFA validates Al-Enezi contract

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3: FIFA has confirmed the legitimacy of Sultan Al-Enezi's contract and registration with Dhofar of Oman, following the termination of his contract with his previous club, Al-Arabi.

Sultan announced last September that he had unilaterally terminated his contract with Al-Arabi due to the club's delays in providing his outstanding financial dues. He subsequently signed with Dhofar Club, prompting Al-Arabi to issue a warning to the Omani club regarding the potential consequences of this contract.

Upon receiving FIFA's confirmation of Sultan's contract with Dhofar, he arrived in Muscat and received a temporary card, allowing him to play for the Omani team for the remainder of the current season.

In a statement released, Al-Arabi reiterated its warning regarding the signing of Sultan. The club clarified that the issuance of a temporary card by FIFA does not constitute a final decision but rather a standard procedure until the matter is resolved between the two parties.

The statement further noted, "Al-Arabi reserves the right to appeal and will seek clarification regarding the decision to issue a temporary card. We will continue to pursue legal actions to protect the club's interests."

### Borussia takes on Union Berlin

## Dortmund looking to Adeyemi for more after 3-goal haul in Champions League

BERLIN, Oct 3, (AP): Borussia Dortmund coach Nuri Sahin is hoping Karim Adeyemi's starring performance against Celtic in the Champions League is just a harbinger of what's to come from the player.

The 22-year-old Adeyemi scored a hat trick and might have scored more in Dortmund's 7-1 win on Tuesday. Sahin wants to see it on a consistent basis.

"What Karim has, the whole package, is so good, but together we have to see that we get that on the field every three days, in every training session," Sahin said.

Adeyemi has struggled for consistency since arriving in Dortmund from Salzburg in 2022. Last season he scored three goals in 21 Bundesliga appearances and two as Dortmund reached the Champions League final. This season he already looks like a transformed player.

Adeyemi has scored two and set up three more in Dortmund's five Bundesliga games, while he already eclipsed last season's mark in the Champions League on Tuesday. Adeyemi was also fouled for a penalty converted by Serhou Guirassy.

Adeyemi also earned praise from Dortmund captain Emre Can.

"He played brilliantly, not just today, but also the last weeks," Can said. "He's playing with more maturity, with more determination. That's the requirement."

Adeyemi's next chance to impress comes at Union Berlin in the Bundesliga on Saturday - if he overcomes a right thigh injury that forced him from the field early in the second half on Tuesday. He has been set back by thigh injuries before.

Adeyemi was not included on Thursday in the Germany squad for Nations League games against Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Netherlands, though he scored five for the under-21 team in September.

"I haven't always had the best first halves of the season," Adeyemi told reporters after the Celtic game. "Now things are different and, I'm trying to not just help the team in the second half of the season, but also in the first half. That's why I don't want to rest on my laurels."

After Union on Saturday and the international break, the Bundesliga resumes for Dortmund on Oct. 18 against St. Pauli followed by a visit to defending champion Real Madrid in the Champions League.

# Miami wins Supporters Shield

## Charlotte clinches playoff spot

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Oct 3, (AP): Lionel Messi and Inter Miami have another trophy, along with home-field advantage throughout the Major League Soccer playoffs.

Messi scored twice in the final minutes of the first half, goalie Drake Callender stopped a penalty kick in the 84th minute and Inter Miami beat the defending MLS Cup champion Columbus Crew 3-2 on Wednesday night, wrapping up the Supporters Shield - given annually to the team with the best regular-season record.

It was Messi's 46th major trophy won for club or country, extending his record for the most by any men's soccer player in history. And it becomes the second he has won with Inter Miami, this Supporters Shield being added to the Leagues Cup trophy the Herons claimed shortly after Messi joined the club in 2023.

Luis Suarez also scored for Inter Miami, which will open the playoffs at home in the final weekend of October to start a best-of-three first round

series. If the team wins that series, it would have the right to host every match it plays the rest of the season - an Eastern Conference semifinal (scheduled for Nov. 23 or 24), the East final (Nov. 30 or Dec. 1) and the MLS Cup final on Dec. 7.

Karol Swiderski had two goals and an assist, and Charlotte clinched a playoff spot with a 4-3 victory over the Chicago Fire.

Charlotte (12-11-9) has beaten Chicago (7-17-9) in five straight matches.

Teenager Mitja Ilenic scored his first career goal and Santiago Rodriguez scored on a penalty kick and added an assist, leading New York City to a 3-2 victory over FC Cincinnati.

Ilenic, a 19-year-old defender, scored his first career goal to give NYCFC (13-11-8) a 1-0 lead in the 16th minute. Ilenic was making his 29th start and 44th appearance dating to last season - his first. Maxi Moralez notched his fifth assist this season.

John Tolkin, Lewis Morgan and Elias Manoel each scored a goal in the second half and the New York Red Bulls beat Toronto FC 4-1.

New York (11-7-14) has not lost to Toronto (11-18-4) since a 3-1 decision at BMO Field in July 2019. The Red Bulls are unbeaten in their last 11 meetings with Toronto, a run that in-



Colorado Rapids defender Andreas Maxso, right, heads the ball while Los Angeles Galaxy forward Gabriel Pec defends in the first half of an MLS soccer match in Commerce City, Colo. (AP)

cludes eight victories.

Josef Martinez scored two goals Wednesday night against his former team and moved into seventh in MLS history with 115 career regular season goals and CF Montreal beat Atlanta

United 2-1.

Ezequiel Ponce scored in the 50th minute, Erik Sviatchenko added his first career MLS goal, and the Houston Dynamo beat the New England Revolution 2-1.

Houston (14-9-9), which qualified for the postseason in consecutive years for the first time since 2013 on Saturday, matched its points total of 51 from last season - with two regular-season matches remaining.

Facundo Torres and Duncan McGuire each scored a goal to help Orlando City beat the Philadelphia Union 2-1.

Gabriel Pirani used both feet to score a pair of unassisted goals during second-half stoppage time after Christian Benteke netted his league-leading 22nd goal and D.C. United rallied from two down to stun Nashville SC 4-3.

The come-from-behind victory leaves DC United (9-13-10) in a three-way tie with Toronto FC and the Philadelphia Union for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference with two matches left in the regular season.

Rookie Gabriel Pec scored early in the second half and had assists on two Riqui Puig goals from there as the Los Angeles Galaxy rallied for a 3-1 victory over the Colorado Rapids.



Inter Miami's Lionel Messi, right, and Columbus Crew's Alexandru Matan fight for the ball during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Columbus, Ohio. (AP)

### Best of the Rest

#### Greek police arrest 8 fans:

Greek authorities arrested eight Romanian football fans under fan violence laws on Thursday, after a knife and a retractable baton were found in the van they were travelling in ahead of a Europa League match.

The fans were in a convoy of two vans and a car heading to Thessaloniki for the match between Steaua Bucharest and Greek club PAOK when their vehicles were searched at the Promachonas border crossing between Bulgaria and Greece, police said.

They were arrested under stricter regulations introduced as part of a crackdown on fan violence that has plagued Greek soccer in particular,

and sports events in the country in general, for decades. (AP)

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#### Boca eyes Gago:

Former Real Madrid and Argentina international midfielder Fernando Gago is the leading candidate for the vacant managerial position at Boca Juniors, according to widespread media reports.

Gago, who is currently in charge of Mexico's Guadalajara, has held informal talks with Boca officials this week, Argentine news outlet Ole reported on Wednesday.

It added that Guadalajara was reluctant to release the 38-year-old before the end of the current Liga MX season in December. (Xinhua)





Real Madrid's Federico Valverde, left, passes the ball challenged by Lille's Mitchel Bakker during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Lille and Real Madrid at the Stade Pierre Mauroy in Villeneuve-d'Ascq, outside Lille, France. (AP)

# Sports

## Real, Bayern suffer stunning defeats

Liverpool cruises as Benfica crushes Atletico in Champions League



Bayern's Harry Kane, center, duels for the ball with Aston Villa's Ross Barkley, right, and Aston Villa's Diego Carlos during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Aston Villa and Bayern Munich, at Villa Park in Birmingham, England. (AP)

**PARIS, Oct 3, (AP):** Kylian Mbappé came off the bench but couldn't prevent defending champion Real Madrid from losing 1-0 at unheralded Lille in the revamped Champions League.

With Mbappé a substitute after a minor hamstring injury, the opening goal came from Canada striker Jonathan David's penalty deep into first-half stoppage time. A video review ruled that midfielder Eduardo Camavinga handled the ball.

David scored a hat trick last weekend and shot confidently past goalkeeper Andriy Lunin, who was replacing the injured Thibaut Courtois. Mbappé came on in the 57th.

It was Madrid's first loss in the competition since a 4-0 hammering by Manchester City in the 2023 semifinal return leg.

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti did not excuse his players.

Madrid hadn't lost in 36 official matches, since a 4-2 defeat in extra time to Atletico Madrid in the Copa del Rey in January.

A brighter note saw Brazil teenager Endrick becoming the youngest Champions League starter for Madrid at 18 years, 73 days old. He surpassed the mark set by former Madrid great Raúl González, who was 18 years, 78 days old when he faced Ajax in 1995.

Liverpool coach Arne Slot got his first taste of a European night at Anfield and saw his team beat Bologna 2-0, thanks to goals from midfielder Alexis Mac Allister and prolific forward Mohamed Salah, who set up the first goal.

Salah teased the defense with an 11th-minute cross for Mac Allister to score from close range and curled in a rising shot in the 75th as Liverpool carried over the confidence from easing past AC Milan 3-1 at San Siro two weeks ago.

Bologna, playing in the competition for the first time in 60 years, is still looking for a goal after drawing 0-0 with Shakhtar Donetsk in the first round.

Substitute Jhon Duran scored a late winner to give Aston Villa another 1-0 win over Bayern Munich.

Coach Unai Emery sent the 20-year-old Duran on in the 70th and the Colombia forward - who has made a habit of scoring goals from the bench - did it again with a brilliant left-footed effort from around 25 meters to beat Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer.

Juventus had goalkeeper Michele Di Gregorio sent off in the 59th for a handball yet still won 3-2 at Leipzig.

Slovenia forward Benjamin Sesko scored both goals for Leipzig but Serbia's Dusan Vlahovic did the same for 10-man Juve before Francisco Conceição netted in the 82nd.

Kerem Akturkoglu, veteran Angel Di Maria, Alexander Bah and Orkun Kokcu scored for Benfica in a 4-0 rout of Atletico Madrid.

Benfica's victory equaled the biggest winning margin by a Portuguese team against a Spanish one in Europe's elite club competition. They also claimed the other victory, defeating Real Madrid 5-1 back in February 1965.

Earlier, Atalanta and Feyenoord got their first wins in the competition's second round of matches.

Italian team Atalanta coasted to a 3-0 win over Ukraine's Shakhtar while Dutch club Feyenoord secured a gritty 3-2 win at tournament newcomer Girona.

Albanian Berat Djimsiti, Nigerian Ademola Lookman, and Italian Raoul Bellanova scored for Atalanta in the German city of Gelsenkirchen. It was officially a home game for Shakhtar, which is playing at German club Schalke's stadium because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Girona led through center-back David López's close-range finish, but the visitors equalized with an own goal from Yangel Herrera and took the lead on Antoni Milambo's 31st-minute strike.

Monaco netted a last-minute equalizer in a 2-2 draw at Dinamo Zagreb thanks to Denis Zakaria's penalty.

Also, Sturm Graz lost 1-0 at home to Club Brugge, which won thanks to a curling strike from Christos Tzolis.

Pizzi adjusts team's training schedule

## Kuwait and Oman gear up for crucial qualifier

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DUBAI, Oct 3: Kuwait soccer team under the guidance of Argentine coach Juan Pizzi, has adjusted its training schedule, reducing sessions to one period in the evening. This change comes after previously conducting two training sessions daily since the start of their external camp in Dubai last Monday. The team will now train exclusively in the evening at the Police Officers Club Stadium until next Tuesday, when it will travel to Muscat in preparation for its upcoming match against the Omani on

Thursday in the decisive qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup finals in the United States, Mexico, and Canada.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Club players participated in a recovery program after joining the team yesterday, following their recent match against Al-Hussein Irbid of Jordan in the second round of the AFC Champions League 2 qualifiers, which ended in a 2-1 defeat for Kuwait Club.

Yousef Nasser, Meshari Ghanam, Saud Al-Hoshan, Fahad Al-Hajri, Mohammed Daham, Sami Al-Sanea, Faisal Zayed, and Reda Hani are undergoing treatment.

Meanwhile, the AFC Referees

Committee has appointed an Australian officiating team for the upcoming match between Kuwait and Oman. Leading the match will be Iranian-born referee Alireza Faghani, along with assistants Anton Shchetinin and Ashley Beecham, and fourth official Adam Kersey. The Video Assistant Referee (VAR) duties will be handled by Catherine Jaswicz and Kearney Robinson.

Oman team coach Rashid Jaber stated that preparations for the upcoming matches against Kuwait and Jordan are progressing well, with a positive atmosphere among the players during their internal camp. He

emphasized the importance of mental readiness and self-confidence as the team seeks to recover from two previous losses.

The team continues its training at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, focusing on tactical drills, technical skills, and player positioning.

Team manager Khalid Al-Rawas described their preparations as "very good," highlighting the significance of the forthcoming matches against Kuwait and Jordan. He reiterated their goal to secure victories and earn all six points, expressing confidence in the players' abilities to deliver their best performance.



A file photo of players in action.

Merger League kicks off with 14 teams

## Kuwait Club and Al-Salmiya set for third showdown in Cup semis

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 3: The Competitions Committee of the Handball Federation has released the schedule for the "Merger" League for the 2024-2025 sports season, which kicks off on the 9th of this month and concludes on March 28, 2025.

This season, 14 clubs are participating, with the absence of Al-Jahra and Al-Shabab. The league will begin with a preliminary round where all teams play against each other once in a single-division format. At the end of this "merger" phase, the top six teams will qualify for the Premier League and continue competing for the title. They will retain their points from the merger round as they enter the Premier League, which will be held in a "three-stage" format. The team with the highest points at the end of the competition will be crowned Premier League champion.

Teams ranked seventh to fourteenth after the merger will compete in the First Division League, which follows a "home and away" format. Like the Premier League, they will keep the points earned during the merger phase and play to determine

their final rankings from seventh to fourteenth.

According to the league rules, each club is allowed two professional players, and up to five youth players may participate with the senior teams.

The opening match of the merger league will be played between Fahheel and Al-Sahel on the 9th of this month. Khaitan faces Al-Tadamon, and Al-Sulaibikhat takes on Al-Salmiya.

In other news, the Kuwait Club and Al-Salmiya have qualified for the semi-finals of the 56th edition of the Federation Cup, which was postponed from last season. Al-Salmiya defeated Al-Sulaibikhat 28-26, while Kuwait Club overcame Burgan 35-28 in the quarter-finals. This sets up a third meeting in 18 days between "Al-Ameed" and "Al-Raheeb."

The two teams previously clashed on September 18 in the first group of the 39th Arab Clubs Championship in Kuwait, where Kuwait Club won 31-29. They met again on September 26 in the Arab Championship final, with Kuwait Club securing the title after a 32-23 victory. Now, Al-Salmiya will face the "Sons of Kaifan" once more in the Federation Cup semi-finals.



Kuwaiti players preparing for the World Cup qualifier against Oman.

## United revamped by Ratcliffe but it's the same old story for Ten Hag

MANCHESTER, England, Oct 3, (AP): It feels like Groundhog Day for Manchester United and Erik ten Hag.

Another season has hit crisis point after only a few games.

Perhaps that's why the United manager was so dismissive of the renewed pressure on him after last week's humbling 3-0 loss to Tottenham.

"Nothing is easy, but this is nothing for me to panic about because I experienced it so often with my teams during seasons that you are facing those problems," he said this week.

He is right.

United's record of three losses after six English Premier League games is in keeping with his two previous campaigns at Old Trafford.

In 2022, he lost his opening two and three of the first seven.

In 2023 it was even worse, as United lost three of five at the start.

Both of those seasons ended with a trophy, but the feel-good factor provided by the most recent silverware - May's FA Cup triumph against Manchester City - has long evaporated in the face of the likelihood that United's 11-year wait for the league title is set to go on.

There is little sign of progress in

the league despite spending around \$750 million on transfers.

On Sunday, United travels to Aston Villa, which has been transformed by manager Unai Emery, who has worked on a fraction of that budget. The Spaniard has spent around \$270 million to turn Villa from a team that was battling relegation when he took over in October 2022 to one that beat Bayern Munich in the Champions League on Wednesday.

Another defeat for United would intensify questions about Ten Hag's position ahead of the October international break, which has tradition-

ally been a time when clubs look to make managerial changes.

Emery's success at Villa is evidence of what can be achieved in a short period of time. Villa was three points above the relegation zone when he was hired. In his first full season, he led the Midlands club to fourth, eight points ahead of United and qualified for the Champions League.

He is yet to deliver silverware, but the trajectory is clearly upward.

United is 13th heading into the weekend, having finished last season in eighth and the previous year third.

Ten Hag kept his job only after an

extensive review by United's new hierarchy put in place by minority owner Jim Ratcliffe. But even if he was given a vote of confidence and a one-year extension to his contract, he remains a legacy of a failing operation that Ratcliffe is trying to overhaul since buying a 27.7% stake in the club in February.

What's more, the decision to keep Ten Hag was made before new CEO Omar Berrada and sporting director Dan Ashworth officially took up their positions in the offseason.

Both insisted in September the Dutchman had their full backing, but managers are ultimately judged by

results on the field and the sight of United fans leaving early and some booing at the end of the Tottenham game highlighted growing dissatisfaction again around the club.

Ten Hag has a new coaching staff, including former United striker Ruud van Nistelrooy, but familiar problems abound.

United has previously sacked managers David Moyes, Jose Mourinho and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer in mid-season, but never one before November in the modern era.

That might provide Ten Hag with some comfort as he tries, once again, to turn United's season around.