



# INTERIOR, PUBLIC WORKS TEAM UP TO EXPEDITE ROAD MAINTENANCE

## Kuwait launches 24/7 road overhaul

### Cooperation urged as closures, diversions planned

By Mohammed Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16:** As part of the ongoing cooperation between the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Interior, a coordination meeting was held in which the Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of

Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, the Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Mohammed Al-Mashaan, several assistant under-secretaries, department directors from both ministries, and those involved in road projects, operations, maintenance, and water projects participated.

During the meeting, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef affirmed the Ministry of Interior's keenness to support the Ministry of Public Works and the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART).

He stressed the importance of implementing the road maintenance plan based on the schedule, avoiding delays, and eliminating obstacles to ensure that projects can proceed effectively.

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**2** Bahrain ambassador receives dignitaries at morning diwaniya

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**12** World's second Sphere will be built in the UAE capital

### NewsWatch

#### Disease prevention

#### KFAED contributes \$8m to Global Fund

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA):** Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development on Wednesday inked a grant accord with the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Malaria and Tuberculosis (Global Fund) at a value of USD eight million to contribute to fund financial resources for the period 2023-2025.

The Kuwaiti fund said in a press release that the grant would be invested to set up sustainable and flexible health systems in a number of countries, adding that the Global Fund in coordination with the World Health Organization and the UN Development Program was seeking to secure some USD 18 billion to back global efforts to stem spread of the aids, tuberculosis and malaria.

The global fund is also seeking to aid states in their efforts to save lives of 20 million people, cut rates of fatalities resulting from the three diseases by 60 percent, in addition to protecting 450 million people from infection.

This is the seventh tranche by KFAED, intended to combat diseases and epidemics at the international level and the third contribution of its kind for treating these illnesses.

**KUWAIT CITY:** International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) stated Wednesday that it has spent more than USD 11 million to more than two million Palestinian beneficiary since October of last year, as part of Kuwait's steady and unwavering stance by the Palestinian people.

IICO Chief Dr. Abdullah Al-Matouq in press statement said that this encompasses 86 relief projects covering multiple avenues, in cooperation with various Kuwaiti, Palestinian, Jordanian, Turkish and Egyptian organizations.

The Islamic Organization mobilized all assets, whether in air bridges, ships, or truckloads, to provide the people of Gaza with much needed supplies, Al-Matouq added. (KUNA)

**CAIRO:** The 89th meeting of the Executive Office of the Council of Arab Ministers of Housing and Reconstruction, chaired by Saudi Arabia, kicked off on Wednesday at the HQ of the General Secretariat of the Arab League.

Saudi Arabia's Undersecretary of the Ministry of Municipalities and Housing, chair of the meeting, Abdulrahman Al-Tawil said in his opening speech that the meeting is receiving great attention from Arab leaders and governments, which contributes to meeting the needs of Arab citizens for adequate housing. (KUNA)

**ABUJA:** More than 140 people, including children, were killed and dozens were injured in Nigeria after an overturned gasoline tanker truck exploded in flames while they were trying to scoop up fuel pouring from the vehicle, emergency services said Wednesday.

The accident occurred at midnight in Jigawa state's Majiya town when the tanker driver lost control of the vehicle while traveling on a highway, police spokesperson Lawan Adam said. Residents rushed to the scene and were scooping up fuel "sparking a massive inferno," he said. (AP)

### Ministry cites documentation delays

## MoE reports KD 46.3 million in outstanding debts to companies

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16:** The Ministry of Education has issued a memorandum stating that the total amount of its debts has reached KD 46,349,593,838, explaining these debts are owed to companies that have yet to complete the documents needed for disbursing payments to them.

The Education Ministry confirmed that these debts will be paid upon completion of the required procedures and submission of the necessary documents, indicating the aforementioned amount will be kept in a bank account within a certain period based on the financial system approved by its finance counterpart.

The ministry explained that debts owed to the government and registered under it are owed by employees who are still in service, those who resigned, companies, institutions and private schools. It affirmed that it is working hard to collect these debts as per the established collection methods.

It disclosed that for employees who are still in service, the debt is deducted from their monthly salary as per the legal percentage; while for employees whose service ended, files are opened for them with the value of their debts in order to collect payment either through the entities where they are currently employed, through the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS), or through a legal claim.

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Ministry of Interior photo  
Coordination meeting between the Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior and the Minister of Public Works to implement the maintenance of the country's roads.

### Cabinet commends KDIPA for fostering investment opportunities

## Evening work in government institutions moves forward

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16:** During a meeting, chaired by the Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, the Cabinet tasked the Civil Service Commission with proceeding with the implementation of the proposal for evening work in government institutions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Cabinet reviewed a presentation by the Head of the Civil Service Commission, Dr. Issam Al-Rubai'an, regarding the Commission's proposal -- which was recently approved -- concerning the implementation of an evening work system in government agencies. This initiative aims to improve the work environment in the public sector, simplify procedures, and enhance productivity in government entities providing services.

According to a statement issued by the Cabinet following the meeting, Al-Rubai'an explained that "the evening work system in government departments has many advantages, most notably reducing traffic congestion and providing options for citizens and residents to choose the most convenient

time to visit government agencies for their transactions."

In another matter, Minister of Information and Culture, Minister of State

for Youth Affairs, and Chairman of the Higher Organizing Committee for the Arabian Gulf Cup Football Championship (Gulf 26), Abdulrahman Al-

Mutairi, along with several leaders from the Public Authority for Sports, presented efforts and preparations for organizing the championship, which

will take place in Kuwait from Dec 21, 2024 to Jan 3, 2025.

Al-Mutairi emphasized the collaboration of all government entities and relevant civil society institutions to ensure that the championship is organized in a manner befitting Kuwait's esteemed reputation and status, highlighting its significance in the sports arena.

He revealed that a contract has been signed with an international company specializing in electronic gate systems, ticketing, and crowd control, due to its extensive experience in this field, particularly its involvement in organizing the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar, which received widespread acclaim.

On another front, Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan confirmed that the Ministry and the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport have completed all procedures and steps, securing all necessary approvals from relevant government and oversight authorities in preparation for signing contracts for 18 projects in the coming days.

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PM Diwan photo  
The Cabinet holds its regular weekly session at the Bayan Palace under the chairmanship of Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

### Cooperation at meeting's forefront

## PM leads Kuwait at historic GCC-EU summit

**BRUSSELS, Oct 16, (KUNA):** The first-of-its-kind summit between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union (EU) will begin in Brussels on Wednesday, with closer cooperation being high on the agenda.

Representing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah will attend the gathering.

President of the European Council (EC) Charles Michel, and Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani will co-chair the event.

The GCC-EU Summit is an opportunity for both major blocs to further

promote and bolster their partnership amid the tough geopolitical circumstances.

The conferees will mainly look into ways of cementing bilateral cooperation between both sides on how to address key global challenges, along with economic cooperation, chiefly in trade, investment, energy, sustainability, climate and communications.

The EU said in a press release that EU-GCC relations are based on the 1989 cooperation agreement, which outlines regular dialogue about bilateral cooperation regarding economic ties, climate change, energy, environment and research.

In February of 2022, the foreign

ministers of the GCC and the EU agreed on the joint cooperation program of 2022-27 recently updated back in October 2023.

The program set GCC-EU mutual activities within the domains of trade, investment, climate cooperation, green and sustainable energy transition as well as counterterrorism efforts.

The European Commission and the European High Representative of Foreign Affairs issued in May of 2022 a joint statement titled "Strategic Partnership with the GCC", which defined the roadmap for the EU to boost cooperation with the Gulf countries.

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### Sheikha Jawaher highlights cooperation

## Kuwait affirms human rights stance

**DOHA, Oct 16, (KUNA):** Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Ambassador Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duajj Al-Sabah reaffirmed, Wednesday, Kuwait's firm commitment to human rights.

This came in a statement to KUNA after her participation at the 17th meeting of Heads of Government Agencies Concerned with Human Rights in the GCC countries that was held in the Qatari Capital, Doha.

Sheikha Jawaher stressed on Kuwait's firm commitment to promoting and protecting human rights, including close and effective cooperation with the international community in that matter.

She extended her sincere appreciation to the brotherly State of Qatar for the invitation, their hospitality, and distinguished coordination to hold this important meeting, which discussed a number of topics related to the promoting human rights in the GCC countries.

She noted that the meeting discussed frameworks of cooperation and joint coordination between the brotherly GCC countries in implementation of the human rights strategy for the GCC countries for the years (2023-2026).

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## MoE promotes oil sector tours

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16:** The Ministry of Education has asked all secondary schools in Kuwait to facilitate visits to the oil sector in coordination with the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC).

This initiative aims to educate students about the significance of rare specializations and skills essential for the labor market, particularly in the oil and energy sectors.

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### Day by Day

**EFFICIENT** leaders understand that true success is the ultimate form of victory. Any claims of victory that aren't reflected in tangible outcomes are meaningless and deceptive.

Genuine victory is something you can see and experience. Anything else is merely an illusion, like the so-called victories claimed by leaders in Gaza and extremist groups.

Victory, at its core, is synonymous with success. There is no such thing as a "victory in failure." Success is the foundation of building strong nations, and victory is simply the other side of the same coin as real success.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.  
**Zahed Matar**



KUNA photo  
Ministerial dinner with the participation of GCC ministers and EU's High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell.



## Prayer Timings

Fajr .....	04:30	Asr .....	14:50
Sunrise ..	05:49	Maghrib ..	17:17
Zohr .....	11:34	Isha .....	18:34

# Local

## Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Hot and humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear with a chance for light fog forming at night.

**By Night:** Rather hot to mild

## Weather

and humid especially over coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to southerly wind, with speeds of 12-35 km/h with a chance for light fog forming over some areas.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	39	24

Kuwait Airport	40	21
Abdaly	40	21
Bubyan	34	19
Jahra	41	25
Failaka Island	34	21
Salmiyah	31	29
Ahmadi	32	20
Jal Aliyah	40	22
Nuwaisib	39	-



Editor-in-Chief of the Al-Seyassah and the Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah is received by the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Kuwait Salah Al-Maliki.



CEO of the Al-Seyassah and the Arab Times newspapers Mishal Al-Jarallah is received by the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Kuwait Salah Al-Maliki.

Photos by Rizk Taufiq

## Bahraini ambassador receives dignitaries at morning diwaniya

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Kuwait Salah Al-Maliki received visitors yesterday morning for the monthly meeting at the embassy diwaniya, which brought together several sheikhs, dignitaries, diplomats, media professionals, and well-wishers, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Ambassador Al-Maliki expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to host visitors at the embassy diwaniya on a monthly basis. He said, "I am pleased to receive this distinguished group of sheikhs, Kuwaiti dignitaries, members of the diplomatic corps, and international organizations, along with our friends from the media and journalists who have gathered at the embassy diwaniya this morning."

"Holding the diwaniya in the morn-

ing has become popular due to the high volume of evening commitments. This gathering offers a unique opportunity for increased communication among community members, and strengthens the social ties that characterize the Kuwaiti people." He reflected on how this gathering recalls the old traditions of morning diwanias, as many used to gather to facilitate acquaintance and the exchange of ideas.

The ambassador said, "Returning to this beautiful custom reflects the strong social spirit we cherish and provides us with the chance to connect and unite". Ambassador Al-Maliki concluded his speech by expressing his anticipation for more gatherings that would boost communication and camaraderie.

## 'Less dependent on gov't jobs'

### Young Kuwaiti entrepreneurs turn ideas into lucrative trade

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA): Many Kuwaiti youths have become less dependent on government jobs and turned their passions and dreams from a mere idea to a success story, launching from Kuwait then expanding regionally and internationally.

Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) interviewed ambitious young entrepreneurs in Kuwait who built local businesses, then expanded globally, establishing their brand in the Arab and Gulf regions, and occasionally in European countries.

Co-founder and CEO of Floward Abdulaziz Al-Loughani told KUNA that his company operates in 40 cities across the Gulf and the Middle East, pointing out that his company consists of 1,000 employees.

Founded in 2017, the biggest hurdle the company faces is possessing the right technical skills in line with the company's growth, as well as gaining customer trust with the idea of ordering flowers online, he added.

The company did not only emulate global business models of viewing products online, rather it innovated a special way of providing customers with available goods coinciding with local demand.

To enhance user experience, the business has innovated with artificial intelligence, using it to add high-quality descriptions to products, as well as provide the user with curated arrangements that suit the customer's taste, he stated.

Floward has made numerous achievements since it was founded, like joining the Saudi Unicorns program, acquiring the company Mubkhar, and acquiring an official flower business licence from FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 to become the first business in the championship's history to get this advantage.

Future plans for the business include expanding investment in existing branches and opening new ones, finding new acquisition opportunities in different fields similar to the gifting business.

In a similar statement, Co-founder of COFE app Ali Al-Ebrahimi said that his business's story began in 2018, profiting off an increase in global coffee production, and then expanding into the beverage industry completely.

The business idea entailed mixing coffee production with advanced technology, rooted in Middle Eastern history, by launching

the COFE app, offering coffee enthusiasts a great way to enjoy coffee, added Al-Ebrahimi.

The app aims at simplifying ways of acquiring coffee and ultimately beverages, which is valued at USD 1.5 trillion, adding that the app was downloaded more than 4.1 million times in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt and Qatar, he pointed out.

The company's biggest hurdles since its inception were finding strategic partnerships, and finding the appropriate workforce to build a team dedicated to the company's success, requesting local universities offer appropriate workshops for this endeavor.

Expanding outward posed new hurdles, one of which was aligning the company's work with the regulations of each country, assuring his hope for similar regulations to be unified across the region.

The latest investments in the company have totaled USD 15 million, raising the company's value to USD 100 million.

The company consists of more than 50 employees, covering marketing, technology, and sales, while owning offices across the Gulf and Middle East.

Future goals of the company include reinforcing its position in the technology and beverages sectors and improving the supply chain between businesses, like hospitality and airlines.

For his part, Co-founder and CEO of Justclean app, Athbi Al-Enezi, said that with the spread of online food ordering services, came the idea of cleaning to ease cleaning chores and laundry.

Launched in 2017, the app offers its services across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) with local teams working in each country. He pointed out that the company raised USD 30 million in funding in the latest funding round.

The company's biggest hurdles came during the Coronavirus pandemic, disrupting supply chains and services, he added.

The app records thousands of orders each day in every country it is located in, reflecting the significant trust placed upon it by its customers, he exclaimed.

Justclean is valued at USD 70 million, and employs more than 80 staff working in local teams in each country, assuring the company's willingness to grow and enter different markets.

# New amendments to enhance discipline in schools get okay

'Stick to attendance schedule'; no to repeated sick leaves

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education Affairs Mansour Al-Dhafiri has approved a set of new amendments to the powers

granted to educational zones in integrated systems and schools, due to the granting of many powers to some educational zones over integrated systems, with the necessity to adhere to limiting these powers to the specified systems. It is essential for employ-

ees to adhere to the approved functional rules and procedures to ensure a smooth workflow.

The new amendments include directives regarding attendance and departure reports, aimed at strengthening the monitoring of employees' compliance with official working hours through daily reports and reports on exceptional cases.

The procedures also highlight the importance of personal attendance, and discouraging repeated reliance on sick leave without official permission supported by medical reports.

These amendments are part of a broader plan to organize the job evaluation process, which will be divided into two components: employee evaluation and the evaluation of members.

Stricter standards will be applied to ensure fairness and accuracy in assessing employee performance, with measures in place to address any violations or misconduct.

The amendments also introduce a new follow-up system designed to expedite the evaluation processes and prevent any administrative infractions.

The amendments related to the delegation of powers include the integrated systems that were adopted, and are outlined as follows, emphasizing the importance and urgency of the subject:

First: Powers of the Assistant Director and the Secretariat Department Attendance and Departure System

1. Employee Shifts, which include:
  - Employee attendance and departure data
  - Absence memos and responses
  - Fingerprint memos and responses

2. Permissions, which include:
  - Special permissions
  - Medical review permissions

3. Attendance and Departure Reports, which include:
  - Employees for whom an absence memo was printed
  - Detailed employee movement reports
  - Brief employee movement reports

4. Leave System:
  - Approval of sick leave requests
  - Employee sick leaves
  - Employee sick leave reports
  - Employee leave reports
  - Employee leave approvals

5. Certificate System:
  - Career progression certificates
  - To whom it may concern (basic data)
  - To whom it may concern: Basic data for those appointed on contracts
  - Salary detail certificates
  - Salary transfer continuity certificates
  - Travel permits outside Kuwait
  - Salary certificates for non-Kuwaitis

Second: Powers of School Principals

All the powers mentioned above, in addition to:

1. Performance Evaluation, which includes:
  - Employee evaluations
  - Evaluation approvals
  - Final employee ratings
  - Delays by entities that do not apply fingerprint systems
2. Reports, including:
  - All reports except the initial semi-annual evaluation, which should be attached.



The Regional Network for Social Responsibility Sheikhha Fadia Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah holds the title of International Ambassador for Social Responsibility.

KUNA photo

## Commitment to society recognized

### Sheikha Fadia gets Int'l Amb Social Responsibility title

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA): The Regional Network for Social Responsibility announced on Wednesday that Sheikhha Fadia Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, Chairwoman of the Kuwaiti Federation of Women's Associations, has been awarded the title of International Ambassador for Social Responsibility.

This award recognizes Sheikhha Fadia Al-Sabah's significant efforts and positive commitment to her community and her work.

In a press release, the network highlighted that Sheikhha Fadia's appointment to the International Ambassadors for Social Responsibility Program reflects her extensive contributions to humanitarian, developmental, social, and educational

causes.

The network added that the appointment is aimed at supporting various issues addressed by the Regional Network for Social Responsibility across different sectors and helping raise awareness and support for these causes.

The statement emphasized the importance of promoting a culture of social responsibility in the Arab region, especially in the Middle East, and also stressed the need to encourage and empower the private sector to adopt and implement social responsibility initiatives to assist companies and institutions in meeting sustainability standards.

The award ceremony was held at the Al-Shaab Palace and was attended by several distinguished

figures, including Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Ambassador Sheikhha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duajj Al-Sabah; Head of the Political Science Department at Kuwait University, Dr. Haila Al-Mukaimi; Dr. Ibtisam Al-Rifai; and Huda Al-Qenaei, members of the Board of Directors of the Kuwaiti Federation of Women's Associations.

The delegation from the Regional Network included Dr. Salah Abdulrahman, President of the International Congress for Social Responsibility; Dr. Shehab Al-Othman, Head of the Advisory Committee for Kuwait's Social Responsibility Program and official representative of the network in Kuwait.

## Transparency must in funds for charity

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Director of the Charitable Societies and Awqaf Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs, Abdulaziz Al-Ajmi, affirmed that the requirement for prior approvals on internal disbursements for registered charitable organizations is designed to uphold transparency and governance without hindering their operations, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This statement was made during a meeting with representatives from 70 registered charitable associations and organizations.

Al-Ajmi noted that immediate approvals are granted to charitable organizations wishing to make disbursements through the automated systems that link the Ministry with the associations.

He added that these prior approvals apply to any amount of money, regardless of its value or disbursement method, whether through checks or other means.

He further explained that charitable organizations can submit a single statement listing all their requests using the Excel Sheet system, which is then automatically sent to the Ministry for approval.

Al-Ajmi emphasized the full commitment of the Ministry of Social Affairs to support charitable civil society organizations by simplifying administrative procedures and providing the necessary resources to ensure they can carry out their projects and programs efficiently, in line with regulatory frameworks and laws.



Kuwait's Diplomatic Attache Raheeq Al-Abad delivering her speech.

KUNA photo

## Kuwait committed to protecting kids' rights

NEW YORK, Oct 16, (KUNA): Kuwait reaffirmed its commitment to promoting and protecting children's rights while offering full support to the international community's initiatives in this field.

This statement came during a speech by the Kuwaiti Permanent Delegation to the United Nations that was delivered by Diplomatic Attache Raheeq Al-Abad, late Tuesday before the Third Committee on Social Humanitarian and Culture Affairs, Article 67 concerning the promotion and protection of children's rights.

Al-Abad highlighted that the world is facing challenges in providing decent and safe life for the children, such as poverty, lack of education, and the basic healthcare needs, as well as unsafe child-labor.

Al-Abad reiterated Kuwait's commitment to protecting children's rights and their wellbeing, citing Law No.21 of 2015 on child's rights in Kuwait which guarantees children's basic rights.

She mentioned the 2023 Gallup International survey, which Kuwait ranked second internationally in respecting children's rights, noting that in 1991 Kuwait approved the Convention on the Rights of Child.

She stated that Kuwait made remarkable achievements toward realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by cooperating with several organizations and bodies.



Al-Loughani



Al-Enezi



Al-Ibrahim



British Ambassador to Kuwait Belinda Lewis during her visit to the Staff College.

KUNA photo

## 'Time has come to give Kuwait City new face'

By Inaas Awadh  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: A member of the Municipal Council and head of the Technical Committee Munira Al-Amir insists that the implementation of her proposal to develop the Capital area will transform Kuwait City's appearance. This follows the Municipal Council's approval of two proposals she recently submitted regarding the architectural identity of government buildings and the establishment of various mechanisms by Kuwait Municipality to enhance the capital's aesthetics as the nation's façade.

In a press statement issued yesterday, Al-Amir explained that her proposals represent an important first step towards improving the image of the Kuwaiti capital and raising it to the ranks of advanced countries. The capitals usually receive special attention from the government, as they symbolize and reflect the identity of the state. The time has come to initiate the development of the capital and establish a clear identity for government buildings throughout the country. Many of the capital's government and heritage buildings need modern upgrades that align with the government's vision for sustainability and innovation.

## 'UK, Kuwait ties strong, historic'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA): Major General Pilot Fahad Al-Khurainej, Commander of the Mubarak Al-Abdullah Command and Staff College, received British Ambassador to Kuwait Belinda Lewis on Wednesday.

During her visit, Ambassador Lewis delivered a lecture to the students of Joint Command and Staff Course No. (29), titled "UK Regional Studies in the Middle East."

The British envoy commended the strong, distinguished and historic relationship between Kuwait and the United Kingdom, emphasizing the importance of continued collaboration and understanding between the two nations. This lecture is part of an initiative to host speakers from various civil and military academic backgrounds, aiming to address military, political, and strategic topics relevant to the region.





KUNA photo

Sheikh Faisal Nawaf during his reception of senior commanders and officers to discuss preparations for 2024-2025 training season.

## National Guard preps for 2024-2025 training season

### Teamwork key to military success: Sheikh Faisal Nawaf

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA): Deputy Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah emphasized that teamwork is crucial for the success of military and security institutions in achieving strategic objectives. This statement was made during a press conference on Wednesday, following a meeting with senior commanders and officers to discuss preparations for the 2024-2025 training season at his office at the National Guard's

General Presidency.

Sheikh Faisal highlighted the importance of coordination and collaboration with colleagues in the armed forces, including the ministries of Defense and Interior, the Kuwait Fire Force, and other agencies that have cooperation agreements with the National Guard.

He instructed leaders to assess the needs of their units and ensure strict adherence to control, coordination, and the execution of established

plans during the training season. He stated that these efforts will enable the National Guard to effectively fulfill its role within the defense and security framework, providing support to state agencies alongside the army and police under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, may God protect them.

## 'Dr Al-Faraj's timely caution on the Iranian nuclear risks'

"MAY God have mercy on Dr. Sami Al-Faraj. I had the privilege of knowing him during his later years. Despite his illness, he remained deeply engaged in his field of strategic and security planning, along with a keen interest in history. I recall several discussions with him in the office of our esteemed professor, Khaled Al-Mubailish," columnist **Abdulahman Walid bin Salama** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Dr. Al-Faraj had given a comprehensive lecture over 20 years ago on the dangers posed by Iranian nuclear reactors, having personally visited these sites with a UN inspection team. He and his colleagues concluded that these reactors were designed for military purposes rather than peaceful ones.



Bin Salama

"Given the proximity of the Bush-eir reactor to Kuwait, Dr. Al-Faraj was acutely aware of the potential hazards and analyzed the repercussions that a radioactive leak could have on the Gulf waters.

"In his lecture to the Ministry of Interior's leaders, he warned about the risks of radiation contamination affecting Kuwait's water generation stations and the possibility of groundwater contamination.

"He stressed the need for the National Security Agency and the Supreme Council for Civil Defense to grasp this imminent threat and to devise strategies to mitigate potential damage.

"Although the audience was engaged, one senior official famously dismissed Dr. Al-Faraj's concerns, stating, 'Why is the matter exaggerated?' I now ask, what can we do in light of such dismissive attitudes as we confront the very real possibility of this danger materializing, especially with the evident intentions of the Zionist entity to target Iranian nuclear sites?"

"The government today bears an immense responsibility to safeguard the homeland and its citizens. It must proactively formulate plans and solutions for any foreseeable scenarios, including leaks or regional conflicts.

"I urge the government to re-evaluate Dr. Sami Al-Faraj's extensive studies at the Center for Strategic Studies, as they may hold critical insights for our current security and military challenges.

"Dr. Al-Faraj emphasized that addressing such sensitive issues falls within the core responsibilities of the Supreme Council for Civil Defense, although it seems to be preoccupied with matters like heavy rains.

"May God protect Kuwait and its people from all harm."

**Also:**

"Yes, rebellion against the country's laws and government instructions has become ingrained in the culture of a segment of the population that has grown accustomed to this defiance over the decades," columnist **Talal Abul Karim Al-Arab** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"This trend has been fostered by previous governments that overlooked and even evaded accountability for those who challenged their authority. Individuals saw that their pressures

and violations often went unpunished, while the governments strangely complied with their demands and mediated for those who breached the law. As a result, it has become a source of shame for some to abide by the laws, as the notion of rebellion is glorified.

"Many now perceive breaking the laws as a sign of strength and courage, believing it to be a mark of chivalry when those in power are intimidated by their actions, disregarding the nation's prestige and interests.

"It is important to recognize that we are not speaking out of mere frustration -- numerous individuals have evaded the punishment they rightly deserve, contributing to the proliferation of this detrimental phenomenon.

"The responsibility for this culture of rebellion lies primarily with past governments and elected councils. While we do not wish to reopen old wounds, it is a necessary truth.

"Over the years, certain individuals have gained undue influence over previous administrations, bullying them when they exhibited hesitation or even capitulated to threats.

"This unwarranted submission signals underlying reasons prompting governmental indecisiveness, where the exchange of interests between the parties involved has taken precedence over the greater good of the country.

"These entities have played a pivotal role in fostering a culture of rebellion by opposing laws aimed at increasing penalties for reckless behavior in public spaces. They have resisted governmental efforts to prevent and punish dishonest practices and have fought against initiatives to limit scholarships to underperforming universities.

"They have also opposed the decision to treat female workers in Quran memorization centers equally to other state employees.

"This list of rebellions against laws is long and reflects the systematic sabotage of all reform efforts, led by individuals elected to serve the country's best interests who ultimately became tools for encouraging defiance.

"Their actions have led to unmistakable failures on the part of the government to uphold the law. They have instilled this culture in the minds of many citizens, making it a recognized trait in society.

"As a result, it has become easier for some to liberate those who disregard the law, with individuals racing to protect those they consider their own from legal repercussions. This behavior exacerbates an uncivilized culture where those who evade punishment continue to act irresponsibly.

"Consider the following examples: Is it not a rebellion against the law for able-bodied individuals to park in spaces reserved for the disabled? Is it not defiance for young people to occupy parking designated for the elderly? Is it not a violation of the law, contrary to civilized behavior, for individuals to discard trash from their vehicles? Is refusing to provide biometric fingerprint data a rebellion against purely security measures?"

"Many may wonder why this stubbornness and defiance against laws and regulations are particularly prevalent in Kuwait. Why do the behaviors of these rebels change when they are abroad? Doesn't this suggest that the enforcement of laws in our country is inconsistent and lacks the necessary authority?"

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes

# Court of Appeals sentences visa trading gang to 'imprisonment'

Two reports filed against ex-minister Ma'arafi dismissed

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Court of Appeals, presided over by Judge Naser Salem Al-Haid, sentenced a gang involved in visa trading to imprisonment. This group includes a female inspector from the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), a businessperson, a number of employees of a company, and expatriates who purchased residency.**

The court, during its consideration of the case, used a gavel for the first time in its history to maintain order in the proceedings.

In the first session, the court denied requests to suspend the imprisonment sentence and release the accused.

The Public Prosecution had charged the first defendant, an inspector from the Need Assessment Department of PAM, with accepting a bribe of KD 2,000 from the second, third, and fourth defendants in exchange for facilitating inspection transactions that benefited a company owned by the third defendant.

The second defendant was charged with assisting, agreeing, and mediating the bribe, and the third defendant was accused of directly giving the bribe to the first defendant. The fourth defendant was implicated in mediating the bribe and forging documents of PAM by registering additional workers.

**Acquisition**

The second, third, and fourth defendants were accused of facilitating the acquisition of residency for expatriates in exchange for money. The fifth and sixth defendants were charged with mediating for expatriates. The seventh to ninth defendants were accused of obtaining residency in return for money.

According to the case file, a contracting company was fined for closing a facility. In response, the first defendant - the inspector - re-evaluated the need for workers, increasing the estimate from two to ten.

She confirmed the facility's readiness for multiple transactions in exchange for a bribe of KD 2,000, aimed at amending violations and allowing for the sale of residencies.

Evidence showed that part of the bribe was transferred to her via bank transfers, while the cost of residency trading ranged from KD 1,000 to 1,500 for each residency, with an upfront payment of KD 500.

Earlier, the Criminal Court had sentenced the first, second, third, and fourth defendants to five-year imprisonment and imposed a fine of KD 4,000. The fifth, eighth, and ninth defendants were acquitted, and the sixth defendant was fined KD 500.

The Court of Appeals upheld the prison sentences for the first to fourth defendants and sentenced the seventh to ninth defendants to one-year imprisonment for purchasing forged residencies.

□ □ □

**One acquitted of theft charge:** The Criminal Court acquitted an individual who was accused of breaking into a caravan at night in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and stealing its contents to sell them in Amghara.

According to the case file, the victim testified that he was surprised to notice that the cameras in his caravan had stopped working. Upon investigation, he discovered that the caravan door had been broken and that several items had been stolen, including three air conditioners, electrical wiring, a coffee pot, a teapot, a car battery, three solar energy converters, and a surveillance camera.

He promptly reported the theft to the police and began searching for the stolen items.

He learned about an area in Amghara known as the "Street of Thieves," where stolen goods might be found. Upon visiting this location, he identified the three air conditioners, the electrical wiring, the coffee pot, and the teapot in the possession of a person who claimed to have purchased these items from the accused. The victim then informed the police about his findings.

The defense counsel representing the defendant Lawyer Fahad Al-Hadiyya, claimed that there was no connection between his client and the incident. He submitted a memorandum in the defense of his client, ultimately requesting an acquittal.

□ □ □

**Reports filed against ex-min dismissed:** The Court of Ministers has upheld the decisions of the Permanent Investigation Committee to dismiss two reports filed against former Minister Dawood Ma'arafi, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The court's ruling on the appeal confirmed that no crime involving the misappropriation of public funds took place concerning the reinstatement of dissolved clubs and the referral of port decisions to retirement.

This decision clears Ma'arafi of any allegations tied to these incidents, affirming that the actions in question did not constitute any financial wrongdoing.



The overturned bus and the car involved in the accident.

KFF photo

## Asian driver dead, 7 injured in 2 accidents

A total of seven individuals sustained injuries when a bus collided with a car and overturned on Fahaaheel Road.

According to a press statement issued by the Kuwait Fire Force, firefighters rushed to the location after receiving a report about the accident. Paramedics took the injured individuals to the nearest hospital for treatment. An investigation into the accident has been launched.

Also, a bus and a truck collided on the Seventh Ring Road, resulting in the death of a Nepalese expatriate.

His body has been sent to the Forensic Medicine Department.

According to security sources, when the Operations Room of the Ministry of Interior received information about the accident, security personnel, paramedics, and firefighters quickly rushed to the location, and extricated the victim from the wreckage, only to realize he had succumbed to serious injuries.

A case has been registered to investigate the circumstances surrounding the accident.

## Over 80 officials from 50 agencies attend

### Nazaha launches training program on integrity & anti-corruption efforts

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) organized a training program entitled, "The Role of Nazaha in Promoting Integrity and Combating Corruption for the Supervisory Category," with more than 80 participants from 50 government agencies, reports Al-Anba daily.



Al-Badr

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Director of the Administrative Development and Training Department Nadine Al-Badr at Nazaha confirmed that the authority is focusing on strengthening cooperation with various State agencies to introduce the law on its establishment

and intensify the fight against corruption. Al-Badr explained that the three-day training program touched on the authority's competencies and scope of work, Kuwait's strategy in enhancing integrity through the Right to Access Information Law and the Conflict of Interest Law, financial disclosure system, submission of statements of assets and liabilities, and how to scrutinize these statements.

She stated that the program also addressed several points; including the agreements with the United Nations to combat corruption, and the role of the authority in combating corruption and enhancing integrity at the international and local levels by receiving reports and protecting whistle-blowers.

She added government agencies were invited to the training program for executives that will be held on Oct 28.

## Traffic safety lectures held for 12th graders

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Ministry of Education, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Interior, has started holding a series of awareness lectures focused on traffic safety for 12th-grade high school students during the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.

These lectures aim to educate students about the importance of adhering to traffic rules and understanding the dangers associated with reckless driving, all within the framework of promoting a culture of traffic safety among youth.

The lectures will include a set of topics related to preventing traffic accidents and the impact of speeding on the safety of

individuals and society.

These lectures will be organized by the School Activities Department with the cooperation of the Traffic and Operations Sector of the Ministry of Interior in various high schools.

The ministry explained that these activities are part of an integrated plan to raise awareness among students and prepare a conscious, responsible generation capable of navigating traffic challenges and adhering to traffic regulations.

This initiative aims to enhance collaboration among government institutions in the field of awareness and guidance, with the aim of reducing traffic accidents and mitigating risks that threaten the lives of individuals, particularly among secondary school students.

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# Kuwait marks 'World White Cane Safety Day'



Hawalli Governor with scout students during the the governorate's Greening Week occasion.



Hawalli Governor Ali Al-Asfar during his participation in planting of seedlings.



A number of scout students planting seedlings.

## 'Green Hawally' initiative launched

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Hawally Governor Ali Al-Asfar affirmed the need to increase green spaces in the governorate to preserve the area's beauty, protect the environment, and improve air quality, reports Al-Seyassah daily. He said this during his participation in an event with the Director General of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Eng. Nasser Taqi, alongside a number of scout students from the National School in the governorate's General Diwan. The initiative, titled "Green Hawally Governorate," coincided with

the Greening Week occasion. Governor Al-Asfar said the Greening Week event helps raise awareness among students about the importance of agriculture and environmental preservation in order to develop a sense of national pride and volunteerism in caring for Kuwait's natural beauty. He praised the efforts of PAAAFR in promoting sustainable development and enhancing environmental awareness within the community, as well as in encouraging both citizens and residents to engage in greening initiatives.

## PADA reaffirms support for disability inclusion

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The National Library of Kuwait organized an event to mark World White Cane Safety Day, observed annually on October 15, under the patronage of Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The event saw the participation of 24 entities and institutions focused on supporting individuals with various disabilities.

Speaking on behalf of the Minister, Dr. Khalifa Al-Hila'a, Acting Deputy Director General of the Medical, Psychological, and Social Services Sector at the Public Authority for the Disabled Affairs (PADA), reaffirmed the Authority's commitment to providing full support to people with disabilities and facilitating their integration into society.

Dr. Al-Hila'a emphasized the Authority's dedication to reducing waiting times for medical committees, expediting the delivery of prosthetic devices, and improving overall services. Abdulrahman Al-Adwani, the event's general coordinator from the Disability Section at the National Library, highlighted the participation of 24 institutions, including the Disability Authority, Kuwait Ophthalmology Association, and rehabilitation centers.

He noted the event's significance in promoting the vital role of people with disabilities and shared plans to enhance the library's Disability Section by incorporating artificial intelligence to improve access to scientific and cultural resources.

Dr. Faisal Al-Jassar, representing the Kuwait Ophthalmology Association, underscored the association's ongoing commitment to offering medical guidance and the latest treatments for the visually impaired.

Latifa Al-Azmi, first-place winner in Kuwait's Arab Reading Challenge, credited her success to her family's support and access to Braille books. She expressed her aspiration to continue serving Kuwait through her future endeavors.



KUNA photo  
Ambassadors of insight from Al Noor Mixed Girls School.

## 'Today in Kuwait's History' second volume published

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA): Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) released a second volume of its book titled "Today in Kuwait's History", documenting key events in the country between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2023.

The second volume, which provides an overview of Kuwait's daily events and includes photographs, comes after the first volume was published in 2011, which chronicled Kuwait's history up to December 2010.

The latest edition serves as a national archive, capturing significant political, economic, social, and cultural transformations in Kuwait during these twelve years.

## PAAET offers scholarships to top graduates

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Department of Scholarships and Cultural Relations at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) announced on Monday the launch of registration for the Student Mission Plan of the 2024/2025 academic year. This plan is available to outstanding graduates of PAAET, as well as diploma holders from

PAAET's colleges and institutes for the 2023/2024 academic year.

In a press statement, the department explained that the scholarship plan covers a wide range of colleges and specializations, including:  
 ■ College of Technological Studies - all specializations  
 ■ College of Business Administration - law specialization and Information Technology specialization  
 ■ College of Health Sciences - all specializations

- College of Nursing - nursing diploma
- Higher Institute of Energy - all specializations
- Higher Institute of Communications and Navigation - all specializations
- Higher Institute of Construction - land surveyor, building supervisor, and engineering draftsman

The registration process, which began yesterday, will continue until Sunday, November 10, and can be completed via the authority's website.

# October

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## Resolution No. 535 implementation tackled

### Kuwait partakes in Arab League's Media Education strategy meeting

CAIRO, Oct 16, (KUNA): The first meeting of the Arab League's team concerned with working on a strategy for Media Education, kicked off on Tuesday at its headquarters here with the participation of Kuwait.

In his opening speech in the meeting, Assistant Secretary General and Head of the Media and Communication Sector at the League Ambassador Ahmad Khatabi said that media education is considered one of the most prominent issues recently included on the agenda of the Council of Arab Information Ministers.

This comes from the standpoint of a confident approach towards developing the Arab media system through enhancing capabilities of understanding, analysis and qualification in dealing with conventional and digitalized media.

He noted that the Technical Secretariat addressed member states on implementing Resolution No. 535 of June 2023 regarding providing them with national experiences and initiatives related to media education in the context of preparing an Arab strategy for media education.

He pointed out that several scientific events were organized, including the symposium held last February at ISESCO's headquarters in Rabat, and the conference organized under the patronages of the Secretary-General of the Arab League between UNESCO and the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, in partnership with international university institutions last April on the culture of peace and the dangers of media misinformation.

He highlighted that holding this meeting prior to the launch of the World Media and Information Literacy Week on October 24 in Jordan gives a clear indication of the Arab will to confront the challenges associated with educational media in light of digital transformations in today's world, in which "we" seek to engage effectively, with credibility and ambition.



Al-Seyassah photo  
Farwaniya Governor with Director of the Roads and Networks Maintenance Department.

## Farwaniya Governor meets MPW Director Al-Shammari

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser met with Fawaz Al-Shammari, Director of the Roads and Networks Maintenance Department in Farwaniya Governorate (Ministry of Public Works), at the Governorate Tuesday morning, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the meeting, they discussed various matters of concern to the citizens, particularly maintenance contracts related to roads and networks within the governorate.

Governor Al-Nasser emphasized his commitment to fostering communication and cooperation with all service agencies to address the needs and demands of Farwaniya's residents.

He highlighted the importance of improving services in the governorate's infrastructure and facilities, stressing that maintenance plays a crucial role in the ongoing enhancement of the quality of services provided to the community.

## Kuwait Scouts gear up to join JOTA-JOTI

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Department of Educational Development and Activities at the Ministry of Education affirmed the importance of participating in the World Scout Camp for Online and Wireless Conversation (JOTA-JOTI).

The department has issued instructions to all educational zones to encourage scout teams to actively participate in the camp, with ten students from the intermediate and secondary stages.

It expressed its appreciation to the Kuwait Scout Association for organizing such activities, which contribute to the development of scout education and strengthen cooperative relations between scouts in Kuwait and their counterparts worldwide.

The Kuwait Scout Association announced its participation in the World Scout Camp for Online and Wireless Conversation (JOTA-JOTI), scheduled to be held on October 18-20. This participation is in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, represented by the Department of Educational Development and Activities, which has pledged its full support for the event.

The camp aims to enhance communication and technology skills among scouts from various countries through wireless conversations and the Internet.

## MILSET preps for 18th Kuwaiti-French exhibit

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The office of the International Movement for Leisure Activities in Science and Technology (MILSET) in Asia organized a workshop in preparation for the 18th Kuwaiti-French Scientific Exhibition that will be held on Dec 2-3, 2024 under the patronage of Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Development and Activities in the Ministry of Education Maryam Al-Anzi and Ambassador of France to Kuwait Olivier Gauvin, reports Al-Anba daily.

First Technical Supervisor for Science in the Capital Educational District Suhaim Al-Qabandi inaugurated the workshop, which started with a brief presentation about MILSET, its programs and activities, as well as the activities of the 17th Kuwaiti-French Scientific Exhibition.

Israa Reda, from the Renewable Energy Department at the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy conducted a lecture entitled, "Basics of Renewable Energy". She covered renewable energy types, their environmental importance, electricity generation methods with solar panels, types of solar panels, advantages of photovoltaic systems, and other renewable energy sources.



## Ali Behbehani, Fajr Al-Sahli secure silver awards in chemistry and mathematics

# Kuwaiti students win 8 medals at Gulf Science Olympiad in Saudi



The winning mathematics team.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Students from Kuwait's Ministry of Education secured 8 medals in the Gulf Science Olympiad, which featured competitions in physics, chemistry, and mathematics, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The event, organized by the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States, took place in Madinah, Saudi Arabia.

Ali Salem Behbehani from the Creativity and Talent Academy Secondary School earned a silver medal in chemistry. In the physics category, Jassim Mohammed Jassim (Al Shujaa Bin Al Ayam Secondary School), Ali Jassim Al Basri (Creativity and Talent Academy), and Najat Mu'ayyad Al Rifai (Creativity and Talent Academy) won bronze medals.

In mathematics, Fajr Hamad Al-Sahli from Maria Coptic School took home a silver medal, while Hussein



Student Ali Behbehani celebrating the silver medal in chemistry.



The winning physics team.

KUNA photos

Hashem Al-Wazzan (Talent Academy), Marwa Amsaeed Al-Azmi (Al-Rawdatain Secondary School), and

Sarah Abdullah Al-Humaidi (Cordoba Secondary School) each earned bronze medals.

## Kuwait launches

Continued from Page 1

Insisting on the continuation of efforts to develop services, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef highlighted the importance of meeting the citizens' ambitions, and addressing issues such as loose gravel and other challenges on the roads and streets once and for all.

He called for the establishment of a joint operations room that operates around the clock, involving all parties concerned with road development in the country.

In this context, the Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan announced that the Ministry of Public Works and PART will soon sign contracts for 18 tenders in the coming days.

She revealed that these contracts will focus on comprehensive maintenance of all main expressways and internal streets in Kuwait's six governorates, involving international, Gulf, and local companies.

The minister expressed appreciation for the efforts exerted by the Ministry of Interior in facilitating the work of existing authorities and developing plans to manage road conditions during the maintenance process, which includes closing certain roads and opening alternative routes to ensure smooth traffic flow.

Dr. Al-Mashaan urged citizens and residents to cooperate with the ministry to expedite the completion of projects.

She also asked for their understanding of the maintenance procedures, including road closures and lane changes, in order to achieve a new vision for Kuwait that aligns with future needs.

The minister indicated that the meeting was productive, as it thoroughly addressed all projects related to the road engineering sector, as well as the challenges and obstacles hindering the timely completion of certain initiatives.

At the end of the meeting, it was agreed to launch a joint awareness campaign among all relevant state agencies.

The campaign aims to educate the public about traffic warnings, instructions, and temporary road closures to promote safe driving during maintenance and road improvement periods. Citizens will receive updates on road work through notifications via Sahel app to ensure the safety of road users.

## MoE reports

Continued from Page 1

The same applies to companies or institutions, as files are opened for them and their debts are collected through deduction or discount from any dues they have with the ministry or through official or legal claims.

It clarified that if an employee's service ends and the debts are not paid, a special file will be opened for him to complete the collection pro-

cess even if he is no longer working at the ministry.

Regarding the dues registered under the employees of the ministry or through other entities such as PIFSS or companies, the collection will be in accordance with the legal framework. This is done in coordination with its finance counterpart to ensure the implementation of all collection procedures.

The memorandum also revealed the steps taken to update the ministry's financial systems. The Financial Department in the Financial Affairs Sector has been working hard to prevent the increase of debts owed to the government, by coordinating with the educational districts to implement salary suspension decisions as soon as they are issued by the Leave and Attendance Department in the educational district, which helps in shortening the documentary cycle.

It added that the Financial Department employees are being trained to receive decisions electronically.

On the estimates of revenues and expenditures, the ministry affirmed its commitment to the circulars of its finance counterpart in this regard.

The ministry added it is keen on enhancing the efficiency of collection operations to protect public funds, urging the concerned parties and individuals to cooperate in order to ensure the completion of these procedures in the interest of the public.

## MoE promotes

Continued from Page 1

In a circular sent to secondary schools, the ministry has invited students to participate in awareness programs organized by the KPC.

These programs are designed to provide students with accurate information regarding in-demand specializations and the importance of acquiring skills aligned with both local and international market requirements.

Moreover, the students will have the opportunity to engage with specialists from various sectors, enabling them to gain a deeper understanding of the oil labor market and its specific requirements.

This initiative aims to prepare future generations to effectively contribute to development by directing them toward specializations that are currently experiencing a shortage of national talent.

The education sources noted that this vital step will enhance the professional prospects of the students and help meet the needs of Kuwait's national economy.

The ministry emphasizes the importance of guiding students toward academic pathways that equip them to make significant contributions to the oil sector, which remains the backbone of the Kuwaiti economy.

## Evening work

Continued from Page 1

These contracts will focus on comprehensive maintenance of all main highways in the six governorates and internal roads across various regions, with global, Gulf, and local companies.

Al-Mashaan considered the completion of these procedures for the 18 projects to be a first of its kind for the Ministry of Public Works and the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport, regarding both the number of contracts and their coverage across the entire state of Kuwait.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet praised the dedicated efforts of Sheikh Dr. Mishal Jaber Al-Ahmad, the Director of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), and the staff at the Authority, noting the noticeable progress in its operations and its endeavor to encourage and attract foreign investments in the country by providing an attractive investment environment.

The Cabinet acknowledged the recommendations of the Economic Affairs Committee regarding the Authority's annual report on its activities and projects.

## Kuwait affirms

Continued from Page 1

She congratulated Qatar on its election to membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) during the United Nations General Assembly in its 76th session.

She noted that Qatar's obtaining of the membership for an additional three years to its current membership (2025-2027) expresses the confidence of the international community in the effective role and the positive approach taken by Qatar in the field of protecting and promoting human rights at the local, regional and international levels.

## PM leads

Continued from Page 1

The EU is the GCC's second largest commercial partner with trade exchange hitting around EUR 170 billion (USD 185 billion).

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya led the Kuwaiti delegation participating in the joint ministerial meeting between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union (EU) foreign ministers held in Brussels, Belgium.

According to a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the meeting reviewed the relations between the countries, cooperation and coordination between the GCC and EU, exploring ways to further enhance and develop these ties.

# Real estate market sees a strong activity in October

Transactions surge to KD 131.97 mln

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: A total of 184 real estate transactions, valued at approximately KD 131.97 million, were recorded in the country during the first ten days of October.**

Statistics from the Real Estate Brokers Union revealed that the private real estate sector led in the number of deals, accounting for 75.5 percent with 139 transactions totaling KD 65.22 million, representing 49.4 percent of the total value of trades during this period.

The investment real estate sector came in second place with 38 deals worth KD 33.22 million. The commercial sec-

tor ranked third with four deals totaling KD 26.2 million, followed by the crafts sector with two deals valued at KD 2.53 million, and finally the exhibitions sector with one deal worth KD 4.8 million.

Ahmadi Governorate recorded the highest number of deals with 60 transactions (42 in the private sector and 18 in the investment sector), followed by the Capital with 35 deals (32 in the private sector, two in the investment sector, and one in the commercial sector). Farwaniya came next with 28 deals (20 in the private sector, five in the investment sector, two in the commercial sector, and one in the craft sector). Hawally had 26 deals (14 in the private sector, 11 in the investment sector, and one in the commercial sector), while Mubarak Al-Kabeer had 18 deals (15 in the private sector and one in each of the investment, craft, and exhibition sectors). Finally, Jahra had 17 deals (16 in private housing and one in the investment sector).

## Kuwait joins first 'Green Mideast' initiative

JEDDAH, Oct 16, (KUNA): the first session of the ministerial council of the "Green Middle East" initiative kicked started in Jeddah on Wednesday, under chairmanship of Saudi Arabia with participation of Kuwait, namely the Acting Director General of the Environment Public Authority Samira Al-Kandari.

In her statement at the session, Al-Kandari affirmed the

State of Kuwait's support for the initiative, aimed at boosting cooperation to stem land degradation, boost and sustainably manage vegetations.

The initiative, she said, constitutes a pioneering step for a future sustainable environment, with cutting of contamination emissions and expanding green spots.



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## Teachers worry about long-term impact

## Many US schools still closed weeks after deadly Hurricane Helene

WASHINGTON, Oct 16, (AP): Tens of thousands of students in the Southeast are dealing with school disruptions after Hurricane Helene wreaked havoc so severe - on homes, campuses and municipal power and water systems - that some districts have no idea when they will reopen.

While virtual learning helped during the COVID-19 school closures, that has not been an option for this crisis because internet and cellphone service has remained spotty since the storm struck in late September. In hard-hit western North Carolina, some districts warn students will miss up to a month of school, and others say they can't yet determine a timeline for returning to classrooms.

"I feel like a month is a lot, but it's not something that can't be overcome," said Marissa Coleman, who has sent her four children to stay with grandparents in Texas because their home in North Carolina's Buncombe County has no running water. "But if we get further into Thanksgiving and Christmas, it's like, how are they actually going to make this up?"

In mountainous Buncombe County, Helene swept away homes, cut power and destroyed crucial parts of the water system for Asheville, a city of about 94,000 people. The storm decimated remote towns and killed at least 246 people throughout the Appalachians, where massive cleanup efforts have been complicated by washed-out bridges and roads. It was the deadliest hurricane to hit the U.S. mainland since Katrina in 2005.

The Buncombe County School system, which serves over 22,000 students, told families Tuesday on the district's Facebook page no decision has been made "with regards to start date or length of day" because of a need to repair buildings, restore phone and security systems and redraw bus routes.

Even when schools reopen, educators worry the disruption could have profound effects on students' learning and emotional well-being.

Children who experience natural disasters are more prone to acute illness and symptoms of depression and anxiety, research shows. The physical and mental health impacts put them at



A view of damage in Asheville, NC, is seen during an aerial tour with President Joe Biden who looked at areas impacted by Hurricane Helene near Asheville, on Oct 2. (AP)

greater risk of learning loss: Absences can undermine achievement, as can the effects of trauma on brain function.

The challenges come amid growing concerns about the impacts of climate change on students. Wildfires have

swept through communities, displacing families. Many school systems with inadequate heating or air conditioning have closed during extreme weather or forced students and educators to endure sweltering or frigid temperatures. Ac-

ording to the World Bank, 400 million children lost school days because of "climate-related closures" in 2022.

Days after Helene made landfall, Hurricane Milton roared ashore last week farther south along the same Florida coast as a Category 3 storm. While about half the state's districts were closed, all of them they were planning to reopen by the end of this week.

Schools affected by Helene are trying to provide stability. The Buncombe district has suggested parents trade books with neighbors and friends for their kids. "Have them write, maybe about something they're looking forward to when school starts again," the district told parents on social media. "Turn everyday experiences into math problems."

Cécile Wight, a mother of two in Asheville, said she has been grateful for concern shown by schools including surveys checking on families' well-being and an elementary school bus driver who took his own car to visit each child on his route.

"That has been huge, just having the emotional support from the school sys-

tem and from the people we know at the school," she said.

But uncertainty remains. Wight said her family is able to stay at their home because they have well water, but many other families have yet to return since evacuating. Most of Buncombe's 45 schools still lacked running water as of Tuesday, meaning they're unable to meet basic safety and hygiene standards.

Schools have begun exploring whether it would be possible to open without running water, relying on portable bathroom trailers. In a letter to families, Asheville Superintendent Maggie Furman said the district is considering drilling wells at each school so they don't have to rely on city water.

Coleman said her kids are eager for some kind of normalcy.

"I understand the schools are going to have to take some time to find a way to open safely, and I support that 100%. But I definitely am not in the camp of 'We need to wait until we get water back, until everything's normal again to open.' I just think that's going to be too long," Coleman said.



US First Lady Jill Biden greets supporters after speaking during a campaign stop on Oct 14 in Madison, Wis. (AP)

## US first lady out campaigning again

## Harris will cut her own path as president, says Biden

PHILADELPHIA, Oct 16, (AP): US President Joe Biden on Tuesday said Kamala Harris would "cut her own path" once she wins the 2024 election, allowing for more daylight between him and his vice president as she works to win over skeptical voters three weeks before Election Day.

"Kamala will take the country in her own direction, and that's one of the most important differences in this election," he said. "Kamala's perspective on our problems will be fresh and new. Donald Trump's perspective old and failed and quite frankly, thoroughly dishonest."

Biden's comments may give Harris more license to stake out her own political and policy stances in the critical closing phase of the presidential race, and appear to go further to distance the vice president's aides have privately

expressed some frustration that the 81-year-old president has been too focused on his own legacy - and not the race to succeed him. But Harris has of late faced increasing pressure to articulate how she'd govern differently from Biden, a question trickier than it seems on the surface.

While Biden's favorability ratings remain underwater, some of the biggest pieces of his legislative agenda, from infrastructure to lowering the costs of some prescription drugs, are popular, and signaling any daylight with the president on foreign policy at a time of global crises could be seen as reckless.

Harris herself has been loath to do anything that could be perceived as disloyal to Biden, who elevated her from a first-term senator to the vice presidency, and then handed the reins of his political operation over to her, endorsing Harris when he dropped out

of the race in July.

She's brushed off questions about how she would be different than the Democratic president by saying "I'm not Joe Biden," but has offered few specifics. At the same time, she's tried to seize the mantle of being the candidate who would bring positive change to the country, largely relying on being of a different generation than both Biden and Trump.

Harris said last week in an interview on ABC's "The View" that she couldn't think of a move made by Biden that she would have decided differently - a line that was featured prominently by Trump at rallies and online. She later offered that she would, unlike Biden, select a Republican for her Cabinet if elected.

"When I decided it was time to pass the torch to the next generation, I knew. I knew who I wanted to replace me," Biden said.

He also took multiple swipes at Trump, calling him a loser, laying into the Republican nominee for his refusal to accept the results of the 2020 election he lost, his continued stoking of misinformation around the election and his embrace of the violent mob that sought to overturn the results of the election on Jan. 6, 2021.

"Every generation faces a moment where democracy has to be defended," Biden said. "This is our moment."

Meanwhile, Jill Biden wasted no time after she stepped up to the microphone at a suburban Detroit restaurant.

"Now some have come to (the) Detroit area recently and thrown around some insults, but from what I've seen this is a vibrant, thriving city," she said. It was a swipe at Republican Donald Trump, who aimed a recent dart at the most populous city in a critical Midwestern battleground state.



The Italian navy ship Libra arrives at the port of Shengjin, northwestern Albania, Oct 16 carrying the first group of migrants who were intercepted in international waters and redirected to Albania in terms of an agreement between the two counties. (AP)

## Italian ship with 16 migrants docks at Albania port

An Italian navy ship on Wednesday docked at the Albanian port of Shengjin to bring the first group of 16 migrants intercepted in international waters to be processed there. The naval ship Libra left the port of Lampedusa on Monday with 16 men - 10 from Bangladesh and six from Egypt - who were rescued at sea after departing from Libya, a ministry spokesperson said.

Last week, Italy formally opened two centers in Albania where it plans to process thousands of asylum-seekers outside its borders. The centers will only house adult men, while vulnerable people such as women, children, the elderly and those who are ill or victims of torture will be accommodated in Italy. Families will not be separated. Italian Ambassador to Albania Fabrizio Bucci said Friday the two centers were ready to process migrants after the opening was delayed for months to consolidate the crumbling soil at one center, in Gjader where they will be accommodated.

A small group of activists gathered at the entrance of

the port to protest the arrival of the migrants, holding a banner saying, "The European dream ends here."

"This deal is against human rights, more concretely the migrants' rights," said Edison Lika, a protester.

Though the center in Gjader has capacity for 3,000 migrants, it will start with 400 and increase to 880 in a few weeks. The number of people reaching Italy along the central Mediterranean migration route from North Africa has fallen by 61% in 2024 from 2023. According to the Italian Interior Ministry, as of Oct. 15, 54,129 migrants have arrived in Italy by sea this year, compared to 138,947 by the same date last year.

Under a five-year deal signed last November by Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni and her Albanian counterpart, Edi Rama, up to 3,000 migrants picked up by the Italian coast guard in international waters each month will be sheltered in Albania. They will be screened initially on board the ships that rescue them before being sent to Albania for further screening. (AP)



Survivors sit on a vessel after a boat carrying migrants ran into trouble off the coast of the eastern Aegean Sea island of Samos, Greece, on Sept 23. (AP)

## 4 dead in migrant boat accident off Greek island

Four people, including two children, died Tuesday off the Greek island of Kos in an accident involving a migrant smuggling boat crossing from nearby Turkey, Greek authorities said. A coast guard statement said 27 people were rescued and nobody was listed as missing. It said that according to survivors, the accident occurred when the person steering the small boat made a clumsy maneuver just off Kos.

Ten passengers fell into the water and two women and two children died, the coast guard said. The survivors were picked up by coast guard vessels.

Greek authorities are bracing for a possible surge in migrant arrivals due to the ongoing fighting in Lebanon and Gaza. Earlier Tuesday, an official warned that wars in the Middle East and Africa, combined with the effects of climate change, will put Europe under continuous long-term pressure from immigration.

Sofia Voultepsi, a deputy minister for migration, also said a landmark European Union migration pact earlier

this year remained lacking in practical terms.

"We got the (agreement), but the basic piece is still missing: Returns," Voultepsi said. "We must have a common system for asylum, a common system for returns and a common system for integration."

The EU migration pact is due to take effect in mid-2026 following a new round of negotiations with the bloc's 27 member states expected to last about a year.

Voultepsi also expressed alarm at the growing number of refugees in Lebanon because of ongoing Israeli airstrikes targeting the militant group Hezbollah.

Greece is a major entry point for migrants into the EU, with most crossing from Turkey and Libya in unsafe boats. Earlier Tuesday, the coast guard said 81 migrants were rescued from a stranded vessel traveling from Turkey to Italy. The rescue was carried out Sunday with the assistance of two merchant vessels. The rescued migrants told Greek authorities they had paid \$8,500 each for the trip. (AP)

## America

## Georgia judge blocks new rule:

A judge has blocked a new rule that requires Georgia Election Day ballots to be counted by hand after the close of voting. The ruling came a day after the same judge ruled that county election officials must certify election results by the deadline set in law.

The rulings are victories for Democrats, liberal voting rights groups and some legal experts who have raised concerns that Donald Trump's allies could refuse to certify the results if the former president loses to Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris in next month's presidential election. They have also argued that new rules enacted by the Trump-endorsed majority on the State Election Board could be used to stop or delay certification and to undermine public confidence in the results.

The State Election Board last month passed the rule requiring that three poll workers each count the paper ballots - not votes - by hand after the polls close. The county election board in Cobb County, in Atlanta's suburbs, had filed a lawsuit seeking to have a judge declare that rule and five others recently passed by the state board invalid, saying they exceed the state board's authority, weren't adopted in compliance with the law and are unreasonable. (AP)

## Cruz, Colin Allred meet in debate:

Republican Sen Ted Cruz and Democratic Rep Colin Allred met for their only debate Tuesday night, trading attacks over abortion and immigration in a closely watched race that could help determine which party wins control of the US Senate.

Nationally, Democrats view Texas as one of their few potential pickup chances in the Senate this year, while Cruz has urged Republicans to take Texas seriously amid signs that the former 2016 presidential contender is in another competitive race to keep his seat.

From start to finish in the hourlong debate, Cruz sought to link Allred to Vice President Kamala Harris at nearly every opportunity and painted the three-term Dallas congressman as out of step in a state where voters have not elected a Democrat to a statewide office in 30 years. (AP)



Cruz

## 'Save father from execution':

Richard Moore never meant to kill anyone the night he robbed a South Carolina convenience store and the Black man was convicted by a jury with no African Americans, his son and lawyers say as they fight to save the inmate from execution next month.

Moore was unarmed into a Spartanburg County store to rob it in 1999, took a gun from a clerk when it was pointed at him and fatally shot the clerk in the chest as the two struggled. The inmate's son, Lyndall Moore, said his father is now the only prisoner left on the state's death row convicted by a jury without any Black people.

"He's a human being who made mistakes," Moore added. "And this particular mistake led to the death of another human being. But his sentence is completely disproportionate to the actual crime." South Carolina ended a 13-year pause on executions last month with the lethal injection of Freddie Owens. Moore is set to be executed Nov. 1.

Moore's lawyers have urged the U.S. Supreme Court to stop the execution, saying a lower court should review whether it was fair that no African Americans were on the jury that considered Moore's fate in Spartanburg County, which was 20% Black in the 2000 U.S. Census. (AP)

## Zelenskyy 'victory plan' includes big hurdle for West: NATO membership for Ukraine

KYIV, Ukraine, Oct 16, (AP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Wednesday his plan to win his country's fight against Russia's invasion could bring peace next year, but it contains a step that some crucial Western allies have so far refused to countenance: inviting Ukraine to join NATO before the war ends.

"If we start moving according to this victory plan now, it may be possible to end the war no later than next year," Zelenskyy told his country's parliament.

He has recently been trying to win approval for the plan from Western partners, who so far have stopped short of publicly voicing their support for it.

The first point in Zelenskyy's five-point plan that was presented in a speech to the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine's parliament, is perhaps the most ambitious and the most likely to make Western allies balk: letting Ukraine into NATO while the fighting continues.

Zelenskyy said granting Ukraine membership in the alliance would be a "testament of (allies') determination" to support Ukraine.



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg wrap up a joint press conference on July 11. (AP)

It may, however, be too ambitious a step. NATO's collective security guarantee - Article 5 of the military alliance's treaty - is the pillar on which its credibility is based. It is a political commitment by all member countries

to come to the aid of any member whose sovereignty or territory might be under attack.

NATO makes its decisions by consensus, and many allies -- including the United States and Germany -- refuse to allow Ukraine in while fighting continues because they fear being dragged into a wider war with Russia.

At their summit in Washington in July, NATO's 32 members declared Ukraine on an "irreversible" path to membership in the Western military alliance. Any decision on offering to start membership talks is probably not likely before the next summit in the Netherlands in June.

Ukraine's troops are having trouble holding back Russia's military might, especially in the eastern Donetsk region where they are gradually being pushed backward. Though Russia's gains have been incremental, its steady forward movement is slowly adding up and Ukraine keenly feels the need for more large-scale Western help.

But there are signs that Western support may be waning, diminished by a focus on the Middle East wars and domestic political concerns.



## INTERNATIONAL



Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) party leader Omar Abdullah, standing in car shakes hands with supporters as he celebrates his victory in the election for a local government in Indian controlled Kashmir, Budgam on Oct. 8. (AP)

## Abdullah will be region chief minister

## Kashmir gets largely powerless government

SRINAGAR, India, Oct. 16, (AP) Leaders of Kashmir's biggest political party were sworn into office Wednesday to run a largely powerless government after the first local election since India stripped the disputed region of its special status five years ago.

National Conference leader Omar Abdullah will be the region's chief minister after his party won the most seats in the three-phased election. It has support from India's main opposition Congress party, although Congress decided not to be a part of the new government for now.

The vote was Kashmir's first in a decade and the first since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government scrapped the Muslim-majority region's long-held semi-autonomy in 2019. The National Conference staunchly opposed the move, and its victory is seen as a referendum against the Modi government's changes.

Lt. Gov. Manoj Sinha, New Delhi's top administrator in Kashmir, administered the oaths of office to Abdullah and the five members of his council of ministers in a ceremony under tight security

at a lakeside venue in the region's main city of Srinagar. Some of India's top opposition leaders, including Rahul Gandhi of the Congress party, attended.

However, there will be a limited transfer of power from New Delhi to the local government as Kashmir will remain a "union territory" - directly controlled by the federal government - with India's Parliament as its main legislator. Kashmir's statehood would have to be restored for the new government to have powers similar to other states of India.

India and Pakistan each administer a part of Kashmir, but both claim the territory in its entirety. The nuclear-armed rivals have fought two of their three wars over the territory since they gained independence from British colonial rule in 1947.

Kashmir's last assembly election in 2014 brought to power Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party, or BJP, the first time ruled in a coalition with the local Peoples Democratic Party. The government collapsed in 2018, after the BJP withdrew from the coalition and New Delhi took

the region under its direct control.

A year later, the federal government downgraded and divided the former state into two centrally governed union territories, Ladakh and Jammu-Kashmir. The move - which largely resonated in India and among Modi supporters - was mostly opposed in Kashmir as an assault on its identity and autonomy amid fears that it would pave the way for demographic changes in the region.

The region has since been on edge with civil liberties curbed and media freedoms restricted.

Like on election days, authorities on Wednesday limited access of foreign media to the oath ceremony and denied press credentials to most journalists working with international media, including The Associated Press, without citing any reason.

In the recently concluded election, the National Conference won 42 seats, mainly from the Kashmir Valley, the heartland of the anti-India rebellion, while the BJP secured 29 seats, all from the Hindu-dominated areas of Jammu. The Congress succeeded in six constituencies.

'Objective of SCO is to strengthen mutual trust, friendship'

## China, Russia announce further cooperation during meet in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 16, (AP) Leaders and top officials from an international group founded to counter Western alliances met in Pakistan's capital Wednesday, with Moscow and Beijing announcing they will boost cooperation.

The 23rd meeting of the China and Russia-founded Shanghai Cooperation Organization was held amid tight security in Islamabad, virtually on lockdown, and attended by leaders including Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyan Jaishankar and the prime ministers of Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Mongolia.

According to Russian state news agency Tass, Mishustin said during a meeting with Li on the sidelines of the gathering that "despite unprecedented external pressure," both countries are "increasing the volume of mutual trade and launching joint investment projects." He also said they are "creating new international transport corridor ... and strengthening food security in Russia and China."

The Chinese premier said Beijing was willing to work with Moscow to strengthen strategic coordination, expand cooperation and contribute to the development and revitalization of the two countries, reported the official Xinhua News Agency.

The member state leaders attending the SCO meetings called for enhanced cooperation in the fields of security, trade, and health, minimizing the impacts of climate change and boosting people-to-people contact.

Jaishankar, India's foreign minister said the objective of the SCO is to "strengthen mutual trust, friendship and good neighborliness," adding that "if trust is lacking or cooperation inadequate, if friendship has fallen short and good neighborliness is missing somewhere, there are surely reasons to introspect and causes to address."

The two countries have had a history of bitter relations since the end of British colonial rule on the Indian subcontinent in 1947, which led to the India-Pakistan Partition.

Meanwhile, Attaullah Tarar, Pakistan's information minister, boasted on state-run Pakistan Television of organizing "the international event" within years of joining SCO, "in a safe and secure and conducive environment."

Over a week ago, two Chinese engineers were killed in a suicide bombing claimed by an outlawed separatist group that opposes Chinese-funded projects in Pakistan.

Thousands of Chinese nationals work in the South Asian country on projects related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, part of China's Belt and Road Initiative which aims to reconstitute the Silk Road trade route and has seen Beijing building power plants, roads, railroads and ports around the world. It is a major part of President Xi Jinping's push for China to play a larger role in global affairs.

In his opening remarks, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif called for expanding the initiative and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, focusing on roads, railways, and digital infrastructure.



In this photo released by the Press Information Department, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, (center), delivers his speech at the opening session of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meeting, in Islamabad, Pakistan on Oct. 16. (AP)

## UN asks Asia-Pacific countries to invest more in preventing damage from disasters

MANILA, Philippines, Oct. 16, (AP) Disasters, including those wrought by fiercer storms, are threatening more people and could derail economic progress in the Asia Pacific region if governments don't invest more in disaster mitigation and prevention, a UN official said Tuesday.

UN Assistant Secretary-General Kamal Kishore, who heads the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, issued the warning in a speech at the start of a regional conference on disaster mitigation hosted by the Philippines, one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

"Disasters are now affecting record numbers of people and threatening their lives and livelihoods," Kishore told hundreds of delegates to the three-day conference in Manila led by ministers in charge of disaster mitigation and response across the Asia Pacific.

"Left unchecked, these disaster risks threaten to derail the development aspirations of the Asia Pacific region and push back progress that has taken decades to achieve," he said.

Kishore said Asia Pacific countries should regularly dedicate funds in their national budgets for the reduction of disaster risk, and should allocate a larger proportion of foreign development aid to disaster prevention and "not simply response."

Such investments have brought down death tolls, he said. "They do die, but the mortality is coming down compared to before," Kishore separately told reporters in an interview on the sidelines of the Manila conference.

Discussions focused on better disaster-warning systems, sharing of technology and building more resilient infrastructure, houses and workplaces.

The Philippines, which is co-hosting the Manila conference, has been in the crosshairs of disasters given its location as an archipelago sandwiched between the Pacific Ocean and the South China Sea, where about 20 typhoons and storms blow across each year. It's also in the so-called Pacific "Ring of Fire," where volcanic eruptions and

earthquakes have long been a constant threat.

"These are compounded by the increasing frequencies of hazards brought about by climate change, which makes the Philippines at risk and our landscape even more," President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. told the conference in a keynote speech.

With better access to financing, technology and data, the most vulnerable states could build better resilience, Marcos said.

European Union Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič attended the U.N. disaster-mitigation conference in Manila because he said closer international cooperation was the only way for nations from Asia to Europe to confront "a new reality" of "unprecedented frequency and intensity of weather-related disasters."

"None of us will be able to face these new challenges alone," Lenarčič told The Associated Press in an interview. "These disasters know no boundaries."



In this screen grab from video released by the Taiwan Coast Guard, a view of a China Coast Guard boat from a Taiwan Coast Guard boat as it passes near the coast of Matsu islands, Taiwan on Oct. 14. (AP)

## Xi makes rare visit to province facing Taiwan

China's President Xi Jinping made a rare visit to a province facing Taiwan following military exercises that mobilized China's navy, air force, missile force and land troops to simulate a blockade of the self-governing island democracy that Beijing claims as its own territory and threatens to annex by force.

Xi did not comment on the military exercises during his visit to Fujian province, according to the official Xinhua News Agency, but his visit came on the heels of China's dispatch of a record 125 aircraft, as well as its Liaoning aircraft carrier and ships, in large-scale military exercises surrounding Taiwan and its outlying islands Monday. (AP)

## Mexico admits 'army killings'

MEXICO CITY, Oct. 16, (AP) Mexico's new president acknowledged that three civilians including a child died in two shootouts involving the military last week in a violent border city.

President Claudia Sheinbaum said a soldier was killed in one of the shootouts, as well as two adults and an 8-year-old girl. She said the events on Friday and Saturday are under investigation.

But Sheinbaum gave no sign of backing away from the outsized role that she and her predecessor have given to the armed forces.

The events in Nuevo Laredo, across the border from Laredo, Texas, started Friday when a nurse, her husband and son found themselves on a road where soldiers were pursuing suspects' vehicles. The husband, Víctor Carrillo Martínez, told local media there was a confrontation and his wife died in the crossfire.

Sheinbaum said the soldier was apparently killed in an exchange of gunfire.

"It had to do with criminals who opened fire on an army vehicle," she said. "It is very important to say that Nuevo Laredo is where criminal groups have carried out the most attacks on the army and the National Guard."



Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum gives a media briefing from the National Palace in Mexico City on Oct. 2, the morning after her inauguration. (AP)

## Pyongyang sends soldiers to fight for Moscow

## US official warns of N.Korea nuclear threats

SEOUL, South Korea, Oct. 16, (AP) US Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell said Wednesday that Washington and its allies are "alarmed" by North Korea's nuclear and missile threats as well as its increasing military support for Russia's war in Ukraine, but said he couldn't confirm Ukrainian claims that Pyongyang was also sending soldiers to fight for Moscow.

Campbell spoke with reporters following discussions with South Korean and Japanese counterparts on reinvigorating an international pressure campaign against North Korea, which faltered in recent years amid a deepening divide at the UN Security Council.

Earlier on Wednesday, Washington, Seoul and Tokyo announced plans with eight Western governments to launch a new multinational team to monitor the enforcement of sanctions against North Korea.

Russia in March vetoed a UN resolution in a move that effectively abolished monitoring by UN experts of Security Council sanctions against North Korea, which prompted Western accusations that Moscow was acting to shield its arms purchases from Pyongyang to fuel its war in Ukraine.



South Korea's First Vice Foreign Minister Kim Hong-kyun, center, poses for photos with United States Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell, (right), and Japan's Vice Foreign Minister Masataka Okano during their trilateral meeting at the Foreign Ministry in Seoul on Oct. 16. (AP)

yang to fuel its war in Ukraine.

Campbell said there are signs that North Korea was increasing its support of materials, including artillery and missiles, to support Russia's war on Ukraine, which he said was "creating further instability in Europe." He said

the U.S. was still evaluating reports that North Korea was also sending personnel.

"We are concerned by them and ... we agreed that we will continue to monitor the situation closely," Campbell said about the claims.



	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts		
SAUDI	- TASI	+37.04	12,038.67	JAPAN	- Nikkei 225	-730.25	39,180.30
DUBAI	- DFMGI	+15.73	4,485.30	PHILIPPINES	- PSEI	-19.31	7,437.00
PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	+414.12	86,247.63	EGYPT	- EGX 30	-39.13	30,545.11

# Business

A year-on-year growth of 6.0%

## NBK reports net profit of KD 457.0 million for 9M2024

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has announced its financial results for the nine-month period ended 30 September 2024. The Bank reported a net profit of KD 457.0 million (USD 1.5 billion), compared to KD 431.1 million (USD 1.4 billion) for the corresponding period in 2023, improving by 6.0% year-on-year.

In the three-month period ended September 30, 2024, NBK achieved a net profit of KD 164.6 million (USD 540.1 million), demonstrating an annual growth rate of 5.7%.

Total assets as of the end of September 2024 grew by 6.3% year-on-year to reach KD 39.2 billion (USD 128.5 billion), whereas total loans and advances increased by 6.2% year-on-year to KD 23.2 billion (USD 76.0 billion). Likewise, customer deposits stood at KD 22.4 billion (USD 73.5 billion) as of the end of September 2024, reflecting a 7.1% increase compared to the same period in 2023, while shareholders' equity grew by 6.2% year-on-year, totaling approximately KD 4.0 billion (USD 13.1 billion).

The Bank's asset quality also showed significant improvement, with NPL/gross loan ratio declining to 1.39% while the NPL coverage ratio increased to 263%.

### Strategic Diversification

Commenting on the Bank's 9M2024 financial results, Hamad Al-Bahar, NBK Group Chairman, said: "Throughout the first nine-months of 2024, the Group continued to capitalize on the benefits of its strategic diversification approach across its products, services, and geographic presence. This approach has strengthened our operating performance and driven net profit growth, despite the surge of regional and global geopolitical tensions and their broader economic implications."

Al-Bahar elaborated that NBK achieved solid growth, driven by a diversified and resilient business model that effectively navigates shifting operating conditions. He emphasized that this level of growth was underpinned by prudent risk management practices, a strong capital base, high asset quality, and robust liquidity.

### Sustainable Development

NBK continued to strengthen its leadership in sustainability throughout the first nine-months of 2024, building on its sound record in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices. The Bank remains dedicated to fostering sustainable development within the communities it operates, while actively supporting the reach of sustainable financing initiatives to its clients across all locations.

Al-Bahar underscored the robustness of NBK's financial position, high credit quality and its competitive edge within the Kuwaiti banking sector; given the Group's expansive geographical footprint and its unique capability to provide both conventional and Islamic banking services through its subsidiary, Boubyan Bank. Furthermore, Al-Bahar emphasized upon the Bank's steadfast commitment to fostering sustainable development within Kuwait's economy while reinforcing its position as the leading corporate in ESG practices.

### Prudence and Resilience

Meanwhile, Mr. Isam J. Al-Sager, NBK Group Vice Chairman and CEO, said: "The financial results for the first nine-months of 2024 showcase NBK's consistent ability to deliver profit growth through various economic cycles, steered by its resilient business model and prudent approach to risk management."

Al-Sager highlighted that the Group endorsed further its leading banking brand and position, as its core business segments continue to witness strong growth rates. He noted that the Group's net operating income rose by 7.8% in the first nine-months of 2024, reaching KD 931.0 million (USD 3.1 billion).

### Innovative Products

Al-Sager emphasized that NBK remains focused on strengthening its position across key market sectors while broadening its customer base through the introduction of innovative digital products and services, alongside delivering exceptional customer service. He noted that the Bank's ongoing efforts and investments in technology and innovation aim to reaffirm its stewardship in providing digital banking services that promote sustainable future growth. Additionally, these efforts are designed to maximize value not only for customers and shareholders but also for the communities in which the Bank operates and to all its stakeholders.

He further pointed that NBK Group has significantly strengthened the contributions of its Islamic division, Boubyan Bank, along with its international operations, to both operating income and bottom-line during the first nine months of 2024. This achievement underscores the strength of NBK's vision and the effectiveness of its diversification strategy. He reiterated that the Group will continue strengthening its international operations, particularly in key growth markets.



Hamad Al-Bahar – NBK Group Chairman



Isam J. Al-Sager – NBK Group Vice Chairman and CEO



NBK Headquarters

of the most significant players in the region.

### Credit and Project Award

In discussing local credit performance, Al-Sager emphasized the substantial recent surge in project awards in Kuwait year-to-date. He expressed confidence that this positive trend in project awards will bode well for business credit going forward.

Al-Sager also noted that several factors including the influx of a significant number of citizens into the labor market, are expected to enhance consumer spending and demand for credit both, the business and retail side. He emphasized NBK's commitment to aligning its strategic objectives with Kuwait's National Development Plan and to playing a pivotal role in financing future mega projects; confirming NBK's position as the government's key partner in financing strategic national projects.

### Prestigious Awards

In the third quarter of this year, NBK reaffirmed its strong banking brand and solid financial position by securing the top spot on The Banker's list of the "Top 100 Arab Banks" for 2024. Additionally, the Bank maintained its ninth position among regional banks. The Banker's ranking was based on a set of criteria, including Tier 1 capital, total assets, profitability, asset quality, return on capital, and return on assets.

In a further testament to its excellence, NBK has garnered nine prestigious awards from Global Finance, a renowned international publication specializing in finance and business. These accolades recognize the Bank's outstanding achievements in innovation and digital transformation, as well as its commitment to delivering top-tier banking solutions that meet customer needs and align with the rapid technological advancements in the banking sector.

For the second consecutive year, Global Finance has recognized NBK as the "Best in Innovation, Global Winner for 2024", outranking both conventional and Islamic banks. The Bank also secured two prestigious awards in the Middle East: Best in Innovation-Middle East, and Best Online Product Offerings – Middle East. Furthermore, NBK distinguished itself at the local level by winning six out of the ten accolades granted to banks in Kuwait, reinforcing its leadership in innovation and digital transformation.

### Key financial indicators for 9M2024

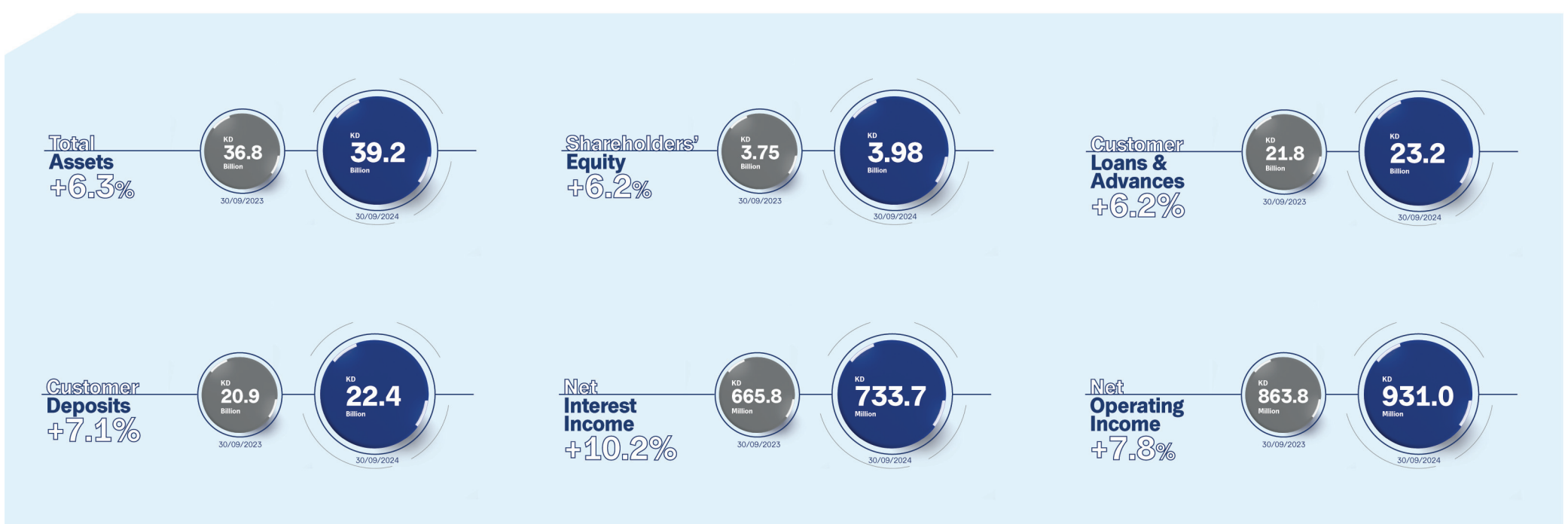
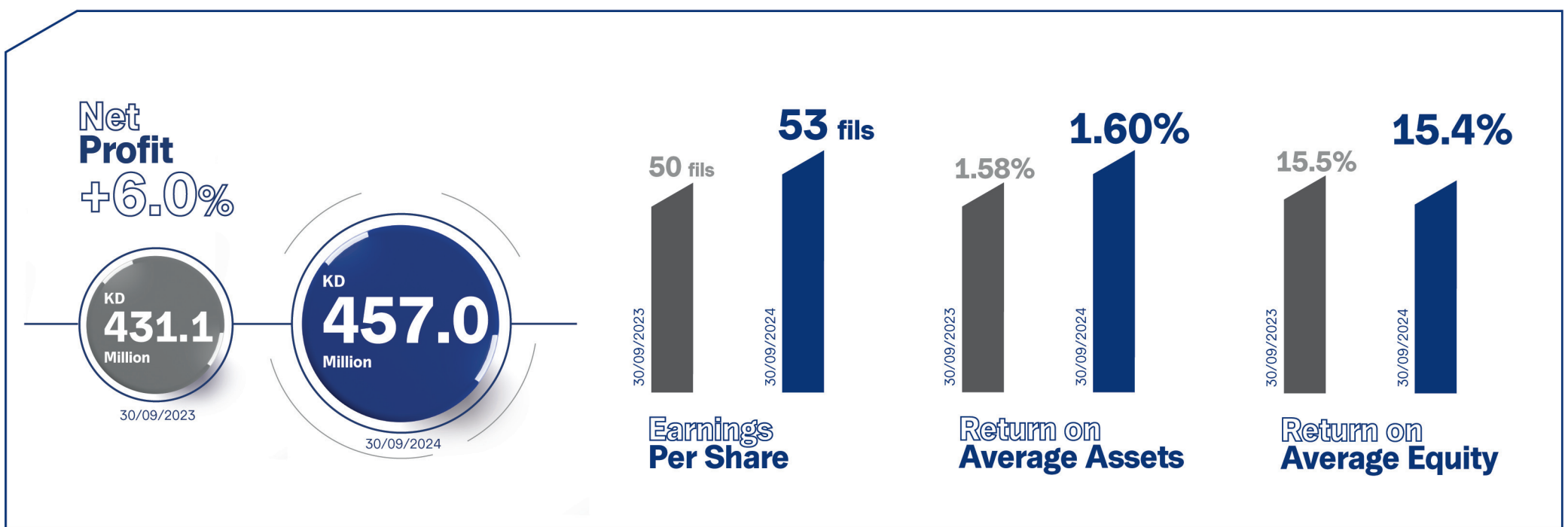
- Net operating income stood at KD 931.0 million (USD 3.1 billion), up 7.8% year-on-year
- Total assets grew by 6.3% year-on-year, at KD 39.2 billion (USD 128.5 billion)
- Total loans and advances increased by 6.2% year-on-year to KD 23.2 billion (USD 76.0 billion)
- Customer deposits grew by 7.1% year-on-year to KD 22.4 billion (USD 73.5 billion)
- Shareholders' equity amounted to KD 4.0 billion (USD 13.1 billion), registering an annual growth of 6.2%
- Strong asset quality metrics, with NPL/gross loans ratio at 1.39% and an NPL coverage ratio of 263%
- Robust Capital Adequacy Ratio of 16.5%, comfortably exceeding regulatory requirements

### Relentless Pursuit of Excellence

Al-Sager emphasized NBK's steadfast commitment to fostering a sustainable future through the prioritization of best-in-class ESG practices. He highlighted the bank's strategic focus on integrating sustainability initiatives into its business operations, viewing them as integral to its corporate culture. This approach is designed to support the transition to a sustainable, low-carbon economy and to fulfill the Bank's ambitious objective of achieving carbon neutrality by 2060.

Following the recent launch of NBK Wealth, Al-Sager highlighted that NBK Group is experiencing substantial growth in this segment. The new structure aims to establish the bank as the largest wealth management entity in Kuwait and one

## Financial Highlights 9 Months 2024





## BUSINESS

# Boursa Kuwait general index rises slightly by 0.03 percent

Main market index gains 0.11%

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed on Wednesday with the general index up by 1.95 points, or 0.03%, reaching 7,103.85 points. A total of 505.2 million shares were traded in 22,154 transactions, valued at KD 85.3 million (USD 260.16 million).**

The main market index increased by 6.81 points, or 0.11%, closing at 6,445.77 points, with 360.8 million

shares traded across 13,424 transactions, worth KD 43.3 million (USD 132 million).

The premier market index also edged up by 0.75 points, or 0.01%, closing at 7,621.27 points, with 144.3 million shares traded in 8,730 transactions, valued at KD 42 million (USD 128 million).

In contrast, the Main 50 index dropped by 12.86 points, or 0.20%, to close at 6,397.23 points, with 304.2 million shares traded through 9,669 transactions, amounting to KD 35.9 million (USD 109.4 million).

## Brent and WTI crude prices fall by over \$3

### Kuwait oil prices down to \$74.46 pb

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA):** The price of Kuwaiti crude oil dropped by USD 3.34, reaching USD 74.46 per barrel on Tuesday, compared to USD 77.80 pb in Monday's trading, according to Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Wednesday.

In global markets, Brent crude oil futures went down USD 3.21 to reach USD 74.25 pb, while West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures fell by USD 3.25, reaching USD 70.58 pb.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) reported in its monthly update that demand for oil from OPEC+ members was revised downward by 200,000 barrels per day compared to

the previous month's estimate, bringing it to 43.2 million bpd, which was 500,000 barrels more than 2024 projections.

OPEC also noted that the 2024 demand for OPEC+ crude has been revised downward by 100,000 bpd compared to last month's estimate, now reaching 42.8 million bpd, an increase of 600,000 bpd over the 2023 estimate.

In China, the official data released on Monday indicated that the country's crude oil imports for the first nine months of this year fell by around three percent compared to last year, averaging 10.99 million bpd.

Al-Ghaith praises team's efforts in Forex market

## Warba Bank wins 'Best Foreign Exchange Bank in Kuwait' for 2024 by Euro Money

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16:** Warba Bank has been awarded the "Best Foreign Exchange Bank in Kuwait" for the year 2024 by the prestigious Euro Money Institution.

On this occasion, Anwar Bader Al-Ghaith, Deputy CEO Support Services and Treasury at Warba Bank, expressed his happiness of the Bank receiving this prestigious award, saying: "We are proud of this awarding from Euro Money, which reflects the confidence that global analysts and specialists place in the efforts of the Treasury Group at Warba Bank, explaining that the Bank has succeeded in building a professional team that provides distinguished services in the foreign exchange market, which reflects our excellence in this field."

Al-Ghaith stressed that this achievement reflects Warba Bank's desire to provide the best services and products to its clients, as well as leading in digital transformation and enhance the level of financial services in the local market, stressing that this achievement reflects the Bank's commitment to providing integrated and value-added financial services to its clients, and enhances its position as a leading institution in the financial sector.

He pointed out that this award is considered an international recognition of the pioneering role played by the Bank in the foreign exchange market, and confirms the excellence of the Treasury Group in achieving high levels of professionalism and innovation in developing innovative financial solutions.

Al-Ghaith added: "This award is not just an achievement; it is an incentive for us to continue developing our services and providing more innovative financial solutions that keep pace with our clients' aspirations. We will continue to enhance our efforts to meet clients' needs and support them in achieving their financial goals through our specialized team that works in an integrated manner to achieve these goals."

Al-Ghaith explained that the Bank is keen to build a team of national talents and qualify them, as all members of the treasury group are qualified national staff who have high experience and skills, which contributed to achieving this success in an effective and sustainable manner, noting that the Bank always seeks to provide added value to its clients by adopting the best practices and the latest technologies.

For his part, Abdullah Mahmoud Al-Lanqawi, Chief Treasury Officer at Warba Bank, stated: "This achieve-



Anwar Bader Al-Ghaith



Abdullah Al-Lanqawi

ment highlights Warba Bank's leading role in providing innovative financial solutions that meet the diverse needs of clients, explaining that this has brought about a qualitative shift through the launch of the electronic trading platform, which allows its clients to obtain competitive prices instantly and easily, with the ability to execute their operations quickly and accurately, providing them with a smooth experience in managing their foreign exchange needs.

He added that the Treasury Group provides daily reports on the currency market, enabling clients to make their decisions based on the latest available financial analyses, thus enhancing their ability to benefit from market movements and avoid risks proactively. Noting that these solutions have contributed to the growth of the customer base and the acquisition of a larger market share in the field of foreign exchange trading, which has been positively reflected in significantly increasing the Bank's profitability. Warba Bank has also been accredited as a market maker for foreign currencies through the global FX ALL platform, which enhances its position as



'Best Foreign Exchange Bank in Kuwait' for 2024 by Euro Money

one of the leading banks in this field.

Al-Lanqawi stressed the Treasury Group's keenness to meet the growing needs of clients and support the Bank's growth in local and regional markets, by offering a wide range of foreign exchange products, hedging services against market fluctuations, in addition to a diverse package of integrated financial solutions. These products are carefully designed to meet clients' needs with high efficiency, and provide innovative solutions that enhance their ability to manage market risks and achieve their financial goals in a sustainable manner, giving them high flexibility in financial planning and making decisions based on accurate analysis.

The "Best Foreign Exchange Bank" award is granted by Euro Money based on precise criteria including service quality, innovation, and market impact, reflecting Warba Bank's position as one of the leading financial institutions in Kuwait.

Euro Money magazine relies on independent evaluations, surveys, and opinion polls of financial services leaders in each market in a number of key categories, in addition to a wide range of qualitative and quantitative criteria such as business volume, innovation, asset quality, profits, efficiency rates, key performance indicators, leadership, and credit ratings. Euro Money awards and ratings are being held for over 26 years.

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

## 'Public-private harmony essential for successful investment projects'

### Transparency boosts investor confidence in Kuwait's investment sector, says Al-Terkait

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA):** Boosting transparency and governance of investment companies will boost confidence amongst investors because it contributes to more stable and lucrative investment environment, Union of Investment Companies (UIC) Chairman said Wednesday.

Abdullah Al-Terkait called for addressing bureaucracy to make Kuwait more attractive to foreign investors.

UIC, he said in an interview with KUNA, was keen on improving legislative infrastructure of investment sector to enable it play more active role in national economy.

He said development of the infrastructure - like state-of-art facilities, advanced transport network and digitization - was key to honor investors' needs, coupled with tax exemptions and credit facilities.

Al-Terkait said the private sector, which has expertise and flexibility to come up with innovative solutions, should be given a bigger role in deci-



Union of Investment Companies (UIC) Chairman Abdullah Al-Terkait.

sion-making through partnership with the government sector. He called for creating an environment that encouraged innovation that enabled entrepreneurs the space to grow and prosper.

Al-Terkait said harmony between private and public sectors was key to

successful investment projects in the State of Kuwait. "Although there is a constructive cooperation in some domains, there is a need to further boost this partnership to achieve national development goals," he added.

"The private sector plays a major role in triggering economic growth, lures investment and provides expertise and innovation that contribute to development," he said.

Al-Terkait called for facilitating contributions of private sector in huge projects to ultimately achieve sustainable development.

Supporting small and medium-size companies - the backbone of the national economy - through financing or legislations will help boosting economy and diversify income, he said.

Commenting on national workforce, Al-Terkait said citizens were facing challenges resembling in lack in jobs that meet their expectations in the private sector "so they hesitate in joining" the sector.

## Firms struggle to find revenue channels

### Kuwait's investment sector endures major 'screening' of 25 listed firms

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16:** Recent developments in Kuwait's investment sector have led to a significant "screening" process for approximately 25 listed companies, resulting in a thorough reassessment of the performance of their executive management and boards of directors, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This initiative comes as many firms aim to refresh their competitive strategies following major shifts in the investment landscape due to changing market conditions.

Informed sources told the daily that executive management performance has notably declined, with many companies failing to propose innovative strategies or effectively capitalize on available opportunities, particularly in asset management.

As a result, some companies have opted to dismiss their executive management, citing negligence in enhancing company assets and failing to comply with regulatory standards set forth by the Capital Markets Authority.

Specifically, certain investment firms have encountered violations related to key positions, including risk managers, investment and asset managers, and investment advisors.

These shortcomings have severely impacted their business operations, financial performance, and overall results. Furthermore, noncompliance with Law No. 7 of 2010 and its executive regulations has necessitated substantial restructuring within these companies.

Despite previous efforts by the Capital Markets Authority to enforce governance and transparency, several listed investment companies continue to struggle with adhering to these essential standards. Recent evaluations have highlighted numerous violations by executive management, which have adversely affected corporate performance and financial results.

The restructuring efforts have led to changes in executives and presidents across around 25 listed companies. Reports indicate that many executive teams have failed to effectively implement company strategies or fulfill their responsibilities to activate primary business functions, often neglecting to adhere to board-approved policies.

For example, some investment decisions were made without proper review by the company's risk management departments, violating established risk management procedures.

The sources further noted a lack of progress among several companies in identifying alternative revenue channels, particularly in an investment environment characterized by scarcity and limited tools.

Consequently, some firms have resorted to capital reductions, reflecting the absence of a clear vision or plans for expansion.

Additionally, a trend has emerged wherein companies are narrowing their activities and licenses from the Capital Markets Authority to focus on specific roles, such as subscription managers and investment portfolio managers.

This deterioration in company conditions and the absence of effective revenue-generating strategies have compelled several firms to reevaluate their executive management structures. The lack of forward-thinking goals has driven companies toward comprehensive changes, aiming to rebuild and reposition themselves in the market.

Notably, some of the changes within the boards of directors and executive teams were influenced by exit strategies and restructuring efforts aimed at enhancing organizational effectiveness.

## SAMENA recognizes stc's innovation in 5G & FWA technology

### stc wins 'FWA Overall Experience Award' at SAMENA Council's LEAD Awards 2024

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16:** Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced that it has won the 'FWA Overall Experience Award' at the SAMENA Council's Leadership & Excellence (LEAD) Awards 2024 in Dubai, UAE. The recognition highlights stc's exceptional developments in Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) solutions, further strengthening its position as a pioneer in providing ICT solutions and exceptional customer experience.

stc received the award after submitting all the supporting documents requested by SAMENA Council's LEAD Awards during the nomination period. Following a rigorous review of the various initiatives launched by stc under the FWA experience, the Company emerged as a winner of the award. Engineer Fahad Al Ali, Chief Technology Officer of stc attended the ceremony in Dubai and accepted the award on behalf of stc.

The 'FWA Overall Experience Award' recognizes stc's pioneering role in delivering fixed wireless and high-speed network solutions that provide customers with reliable connectivity across most areas in Kuwait. The Company focused on areas that had limited connectivity options and provided them with FWA solutions and services that could address the gap in such services. Targeting specific segments enabled stc to address a gap in the market, and therefore offer FWA services to underserved areas throughout Kuwait. Additionally, with the aim of enhancing the user experience, stc improved the installation process for FWA solutions, making it more user friendly, faster and more efficient.

As part of the award, stc was recognized for the quality of service that it provides its customers. The Company achieved a high customer satisfaction rate due to various attributes related to its innovative business model and new-to-market concepts. Having invested in developing a strong network



Engineer Fahad Al Ali accepts FWA Award for stc at SAMENA Council ceremony.

infrastructure, stc received a strong reputation for providing high-speed reliable and consistent connectivity. By focusing on delivering services to new developed areas, stc increased its customer acquisition rate through offering innovative services such as Outdoor Unit (ODU) based 5G internet devices, which have become popular for customers seeking superior connectivity.

Commenting on the award, Al Ali, said, "As a pioneer in the telecom and ICT sector, stc has been diligent in strategically positioning itself to deliver exceptional products and services to its diverse customer base. Our investment in 5G technology and advanced connectivity solutions aligns with our strategic approach to enabling digital transformation in Kuwait. In this regard, we are proud to be recognized with the 'FWA Overall Experience Award' by the SAMENA Council at the 2024 LEAD awards. The award reflects stc's ongoing commitment to providing the best connectivity experience for its valued customers."

Al Ali added, "By continuously innovating and enhancing our network capabilities, we have been able to meet

the needs of our customers throughout Kuwait while maintaining our leading position in the market. Our dedication to offering cutting-edge 5G and FWA solutions reflects our customer-centric approach, where ensuring an exceptional customer experience is our top priority."

Al Ali concluded by thanking SAMENA Council and the judging panel for their recognition of stc the LEAD Awards. He also thanked the management team at stc for their unwavering support, as well as the stc employees that contributed to this great achievement for the Company.

It is worth noting that SAMENA Council's Leadership & Excellence Awards recognize the efforts of regional technology providers, corporates, telecom operators, regulators, and digital space players, focusing on acknowledging efforts on four main fronts: Business Excellence, Leadership in Regulatory Enablement, Leadership in User Experience, and Innovation Excellence. The awards this year recognized the application of advanced mobile connectivity in the region, with a primary focus on 5G development.

Over 30,000 attendees expected at career fair

## stc a platinum sponsor for 3rd Watheefti fair

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16:** Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced its platinum sponsorship and participation in the 3rd Watheefti career fair. The 3-day event will be held from October 17th till the 19th at the Arena 360 Kuwait, in which stc will be participating following its ongoing commitment to empower the younger generation and attract Kuwaiti talent to its workforce. The career fair will be inaugurated under the patronage and presence of His Excellency Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research and acting Minister of Education, Dr. Nader Abdullah Mohammed Al-Jallal.

As a telecom pioneer with a comprehensive corporate social responsibility framework, stc's sponsorship of the career fair aligns with the Company's approach towards supporting and empowering the local education system in Kuwait. stc considers education to be one of the key pillars defined under its CSR program, in which the Company launched educational initiatives with the objective of supporting local educational initiatives. As part of its sponsorship, stc will have its booth set up at the career fair exhibition with members of its recruitment team present. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn more about the working environment at stc, the process of applying to vacant positions, and gain insights on the job market within the industry.

The Watheefti career fair is expected to welcome over 30,000 attendees, with over 120 companies participating from 14 different industries. Additionally, there will be 40 workshops conducted on different topics that aim to help candidates in building their careers for the future. Aside from the workshops, there will be 20 different conferences led by local and international industry leaders. Representatives from stc's different sectors will be conducting some of the workshops as part of the Company's active sponsorship in the career fair. They will also be participating in panel discussions with other experts, covering matters that may impact the career choices of the attendees.

As part of its CSR and sustainability programs for 2024, stc focused on sponsoring, launching, and organizing various educational initiatives that aimed to spread a positive impact in the community. These initiatives align with the



stc to attract Kuwaiti talent at Watheefti career fair from Oct 17-19.

Company's ongoing commitment to empower the education sector, providing students and graduates with different platforms to further build their knowledge and strengthen their educational background. The Watheefti career fair serves as a unique platform, given its size and agenda, for recruiters to meet with students and provide them with valuable information related to job opportunities in the market, as well as the recruitment process itself.

In a statement, stc highlighted that it is excited to participate in the Watheefti career fair and looks forward to welcoming attendees at its booth. The Company expressed its ongoing commitment to supporting young Kuwaiti talents and offering them opportunities to join a dynamic and innovative work environment. stc further emphasized that its participation in this event aligns with its mission to foster a culture of continuous learning and professional growth, contributing to the development of a skilled and capable workforce that will strengthen its role in the telecom and ICT sectors.



# KFH launches Real Estate Appraisal Program

Confirming its leadership and extensive experience in the real estate industry

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the launch of its Real Estate Appraisal Program, in collaboration with the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST). This is the first program of its kind in Kuwait and is designed for individuals interested in the real estate sector. It also aligns with KFH's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy, leveraging its leadership and extensive experience in the real estate field.

The launch of the program was announced during a conference in the presence of KFH Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, KFH Group Chief Operations Officer, Abdulla Abu Alhous, Deputy General Manager Public Relations and Media, Yousef Al-Ruwaieh, GUST president, Professor Bassam Alameddine, as well as Head of GUST Executive Education, Professor Abdullah AlFalah.

During the conference, AlOmar said that the training program for real estate appraisers was developed by a team of specialists, researchers, and experts in the field. This comprehensive program covers both theoretical and practical aspects of the profession of real estate appraiser, highlighting the importance of preserving real estate wealth and using reliable sources to assess property value and make informed investment choices.

AlOmar also stated that offering this training program to real estate offices and individuals interested in the field, and working towards its recognition



Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, Abdulla Abu Alhous, Yousef Al-Ruwaieh, Professor Bassam Alameddine and Professor Abdullah AlFalah.

as a professional certification both locally and globally, aligns with KFH's extensive expertise in the real estate industry. It is also part of KFH's ongoing commitment to developing and governing the real estate appraisal sector in accordance with the latest technical and professional standards.

AlOmar highlighted that the program covers various topics such as real estate appraisal requirements and improving trainee skills, advancements in the real estate market and associated activities, competencies of regulatory bodies, and the variety of laws and regulations. It also includes valuable information related to working in the real estate appraisal field, including worker skills and abilities, as well as the professional and practical basis for determining the fair market value of different types of properties.

AlOmar commended the expertise of the real estate appraisal professionals at KFH and the professors and researchers at GUST who assisted in creating this program. He expressed optimism that their efforts will lead to success and the training program will meet its objectives. AlOmar also hoped for continued collaboration between KFH and GUST on different

initiatives to support the national economy, following professional standards and practices at the local, regional, and global levels.

**KFH Group Chief Operations Officer - Abdulla Abu Alhous**

KFH Group Chief Operations Officer, Abdulla Abu Alhous, thanked GUST for their efforts in preparing the Real Estate Appraiser program, noting that the program showcases KFH's leadership in the real estate market, ultimately contributing to improved business governance and performance, according to the business standards and professional practices, as outlined and adopted by regulatory bodies.

He highlighted the significance of these programs in meeting the huge market needs, especially amid the increasing demand for real estate appraiser services from government entities, banks, companies and individuals.

Abu Alhous noted that this program enhances the work of real estate appraisers. He further emphasized that professionally conducted real estate appraisals can streamline real estate financing operations, accurately estimate property market value for both banking and investment purposes, and contribute to wealth growth, economic



diversification, and organized real estate transactions.

He added: "Undoubtedly, KFH's keenness to promote the real estate appraisal mechanism stems from its crucial role for protecting the rights and assets of institutions, companies, banks and interested clients, thus mitigating risks associated with real estate financing," he remarked, "By ensuring governance in real estate activity with unified and transparent methods and standards, conflicts of interest can be avoided. This ultimately fosters growth and stability for real estate holdings, which are vital for the overall economy."

**Abu Alhous explained that the program is divided into three levels as follows:**

**Level one - The Certified Appraiser:** This level focuses on laws and regulations governing the residential sector in Kuwait. It also covers the Real Estate Appraisal standards (nos. 101, 102 and 103) along with the Real Estate Profession code of conduct and charter.

**Level two - Senior Certified Appraiser:** At this level, trainees are introduced to the valuation of investment real estate, residential complexes, international valuation standards, and

various appraisal methods.

**Level three - Advanced Certified Appraiser:** This advanced level teaches trainees the means for evaluating commercial and industrial real estate, as well as B.O.T projects.

He extended his sincere gratitude to all the people involved in the preparation and presentation of this important training program. He expressed his hope that it would effectively contribute to graduating a cohort of real estate appraisers that are capable of accurately assessing properties and establishing professional standards in assets valuation.

**President of GUST- Professor Bassam Alameddine**

Meanwhile, GUST president, Professor Bassam Alameddine, said: "The partnership between GUST Executive Education and KFH highlights their collaboration in the academic and real estate sectors. This collaboration has the potential to enhance the skills of KFH employees, real estate professionals, and all participants in these programs and workshops."

He stressed the importance of this type of programs as part of GUST's strategic partnership to take part in the development of the real estate sector

and the Kuwaiti economy.

Alameddine concluded: "We at Gulf University for Science and Technology are eager to organize advanced training courses in collaboration with KFH. We reaffirm our commitment to this partnership and our openness to future training initiatives. We appreciate KFH's continued confidence in GUST."

**Head of GUST Executive Education Center - Prof. Abdullah AlFalah**

Meanwhile, Head of GUST Executive Education, Professor Abdullah AlFalah, said: "The Real Estate Appraiser program has taken over one year of completion in order to provide a different type of training than the traditional programs available in Kuwait. It is designed according to international standards and complies with the local requirements and regulations."

He lauded the collaboration between GUST Executive Education and KFH, one of the leading providers of real estate appraisal. "This exchange of expertise with KFH, combined with GUST's pioneering knowledge in preparing academic curricula will lead to creating exceptional training programs that enrich the real estate market in Kuwait."

AlFalah emphasized the significance of this program in meeting the real estate market circumstances, ultimately driving the Kuwaiti market forward. He pointed out that the program resulted in preparing three books that are compliant with the appraisers' assessments in Kuwait. "The program will qualify the trainees for the British fellowship program in addition to an international accreditation in the real estate appraisal field."

He stressed that the strategic partnership between GUST and KFH was not limited to the real estate appraisal program but also extended to include other various programs targeting the vital sectors in the Kuwaiti market.

## SAMENA Council recognized its leadership in delivering exceptional 5G experiences

# Zain wins 'Outstanding Mobile Broadband Network Quality' award

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16:** Zain won the Outstanding Mobile Broadband Network Quality award under the Leadership in User Experience category during this second edition of the Leadership and Excellence Awards (LEAD), recently organized by SAMENA Telecommunications Council in Dubai. This prestigious award acknowledges Zain's leadership in delivering an exceptional 5G user experience, excelling in speed, reliability, and quality for its customers in Kuwait.

The event was attended by top executives and leaders from major telecom operators, ICT providers, and industry regulatory bodies in the Middle East and North Africa. SAMENA Telecommunications Council CEO Bocar A. BA presented the award on stage to Daaj Al Oud, Chief Technology Officer of Zain Kuwait.

This recognition affirms Zain's leadership in continuously enhancing its 5G network technologies to keep pace with the significant developments in the telecom and ICT sectors. The award underscores the company's strategic vision of securing a competitive edge in the digital era by delivering world-class services,



Chief Technology Officer Daaj Al Oud receives the award in Dubai.

pioneering innovations, and exceptional customer experiences.

Zain continues to innovate 5G-powered experiences for its customers, ensuring the highest levels of quality to deliver a superior digital experience. As the era of 5G Advanced technologies approaches, the company aims to maintain its leadership position in the

region by building a robust and advanced network.

Zain's recent accomplishments demonstrate its ambition to lead the telecom and ICT sectors, strengthening its position as a leading digital service provider in the Kuwaiti market and across the region.

This year, Zain continues to lead



Zain logo

the expansion of the 5G market and enhance its network infrastructure. The company achieved an exceptional speed rate of over 450 Mbps, efficiently managing a massive volume of 5G data, which accounts for more than 55% of its mobile broadband traffic.

Zain remains committed to investing in its 5G network infrastructure, consistently leveraging the latest innovative technologies to deliver the highest speeds and best experiences. The company is preparing for the 5G Advanced era by making early investments in upgrading and enhancing its technology infrastructure.

Earlier this year, Zain achieved a significant milestone by reaching speeds of 10 Gbps following a successful trial of 5G Advanced technology, becoming the first operator in the Kuwaiti telecom market to successfully test this technology. Additionally, the company

### AlOmar:

■ Working towards its recognition as a professional certification both locally and globally

### AlFalah:

■ Collaborating to develop different economic and finance programs

### Abu Alhous:

■ The program contributes to improved business governance and performance in accordance with professional practices

### Alameddine:

■ Organizing advanced training courses through partnership with KFH

successfully tested Ultra-Reliable Low Latency Communication (URLLC) on its standalone 5G network, a key feature of 5G Advanced technology.

Zain is expected to commercially launch 5G Advanced services in 2025 to meet the evolving needs of customers, businesses, and government entities. As a pioneer of the 5G revolution in Kuwait and the region, Zain aims to create new service experiences that exceed the speed, reliability, and quality its customers expect. The company will continue to build the next generation of networks, foster innovation, and support Kuwait's digital transformation initiatives.

The LEAD Excellence Awards are

one of the most prestigious regional platforms celebrating achievements in the telecom and information technology sectors in the region. They are organized by the SAMENA Council, a coalition of telecommunications companies covering three broad geographic regions: South Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa.

These awards highlight the accelerating efforts of technology players, digital service providers, telecom operators, regulatory bodies, and others. This year's awards focused on five fronts: Innovation, Business Leadership, User Experience Delivery, Fixed Wireless Access, and Regulatory Enablement.

## US pharmacies struggle

# Walgreens to close 1,200 stores



A United Airlines 777 performs during the San Francisco Fleet Week Air Show on Friday, Oct. 11, 2024 in San Francisco, Calif. (AP)

## Revenue trends looking up

# United Airlines says its Q3 profit dipped 15 pct

**CHICAGO, Oct 16, (AP):** United Airlines on Tuesday reported that its third-quarter profit fell 15% from a year ago but revenue trends improved thanks to low-fare carriers scaling back their growth plans for the rest of the year.

The Chicago-based airline's directors, meanwhile, approved up to \$1.5 billion to buy back shares. It's United's first share-repurchase program since 2020, when airlines were barred from buying back their own stock as a condition of getting pandemic-relief aid from the federal government.

United said that by September, it was seeing more strength in corporate, premium and no-frills basic economy travel. Airline executives have complained about budget airlines cutting prices on economy-class seats because of a glut of flights. Their pricing power is improving, however, as Spirit, Southwest and

others trim their schedules and reduce the supply of seats for sale.

United said a closely watched figure, revenue per seat, turned positive compared with last year on flights within the United States in August and September after lagging 2023 levels in earlier months.

United posted a third-quarter profit of \$965 million, down from \$1.14 billion a year earlier. Excluding special items, the airline said its adjusted earnings were \$3.33 per share, beating the average forecast by analysts of \$3.17 per share, according to FactSet.

Revenue rose 2.5% to \$14.84 billion, topping the analysts' average forecast of \$14.77 billion.

United forecast fourth-quarter earnings of \$2.50 to \$3 per share, in line with analysts' average prediction of \$2.76 per share.

**NEW YORK, Oct 16, (AP):** Walgreens is planning to close around 1,200 locations, as the drugstore chain and its rivals struggle to define their role for U.S. shoppers who no longer look to them first for convenience.

Drugstores that once snapped up prime retail space in towns and cities across the country are in retreat. They've been battered by shrinking prescription reimbursement, persistent theft, rising costs and consumers who have strayed to online retailers or competitors with better prices. The boost they received from taking the lead on vaccinations during the COVID-19 pandemic has long since faded.

Walgreens' announcement Tuesday morning comes as rival CVS Health wraps up a three-year plan to close 900 stores and Rite Aid emerges from bankruptcy, whittled down to about 1,300 locations.

As the companies retract, they raise concerns in many communities about access to health care and prescriptions. Drugstore leaders and analysts who follow the industry say smaller versions of these chains have a future in U.S. retail, but they're still trying to understand how that will play out.

"They've really got to rethink how they do business and, most importantly, what they mean and what value they bring to the customer," said Neil Saunders, managing director of consulting and data analysis firm GlobalData.

Walgreens Boots Alliance Inc., which runs about 8,500 stores in the U.S., said in late June that it was finalizing a turnaround plan in the U.S. that might lead to hundreds of store closings. The company said Tuesday that it will start by closing about 500 stores in its current fiscal year, which started last month.

Walgreens didn't say where the store closings would take place. It will prioritize poor-performing stores where the property is owned by the company, or where leases are expiring.



A shopper passes by a Christmas tree on display in a Costco warehouse on Sept. 12, 2024, in Thornton, Colo. (AP)

## Concerns over persistent inflation and prices cited

# Retail trade group expects to see slower holiday sales in US

**NEW YORK, Oct 16, (AP):** The largest retail trade group in the United States said Tuesday that it expects consumers to spend more during the upcoming holiday shopping season but the growth in sales to be slower than last year due to concerns over persistent inflation and prices.

The National Retail Federation said

its 2024 forecast indicates that shoppers will make \$979.5 billion to \$989 billion worth of purchases in November and December, which would represent a 2.5%-3.5% increase over the same two-month period a year ago.

However, the \$955.6 billion spent during the 2023 holiday shopping season was 3.9% more than in 2022.

The group makes its calculations based on government figures. The numbers exclude sales at automobile dealers, gasoline stations and restaurants. The forecast considers economic indicators such as employment, wages, consumer confidence, disposable income, consumer credit, previous retail sales and weather.





KIB and KU signing ceremony.

Bank's innovation program aims to develop future banking leaders

## KIB signs innovation MoU with the College of Business Administration at Kuwait University

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) has announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the College of Business Administration at Kuwait University to establish a partnership focused on fostering and accelerating innovation. KIB will lead the organization and management of the innovation program in collaboration with a specialized global consulting firm, which will serve as the program's advisor and provider.

This partnership aims to advance the concept of innovation and provide practical training opportunities at the Bank for university students. It also reflects KIB's commitment to its comprehensive social responsibility strategy, supporting educational institutions, and enhancing the role of the education sector in achieving sustainable community and economic development.

Commenting on the occasion, Mohamed Atef El-Shareef, General Manager of the Digital Innovation and Data Intelligence Department at KIB, said: "We are pleased to announce the signing of an MoU with the College of Business Administration at Kuwait University, aimed at opening new horizons for innovation. Through this partnership, KIB strengthens its position as a leader in supporting innovation in Kuwait. With the Human Intelligence Innovation Program 'H.I.', KIB seeks to bridge the gap between the banking sector and academic institutions, preparing future leaders with the skills and knowledge necessary for success. Additionally, such initiatives offer valuable professional development opportunities for students and allow the Bank to benefit from the latest ideas and innovations."

El-Shareef added: "Through this new partnership, KIB will offer practical training opportunities for university students within the Bank's facilities, providing them with valuable, real-world experience in the banking sector. Additionally, KIB will consider offer-

ing future employment opportunities to outstanding students and graduates based on their performance during the practical training provided through the collaboration with the College of Business Administration."

Expressing his delight with the agreement, Dr. Awad Al-Dhafiri, Acting Dean of the College of Business Administration at Kuwait University, said: "This cooperation will strengthen the relationship between the College of Business Administration and KIB, a distinguished bank with real estate expertise, which has specifically chosen the students at the College to introduce them to real estate investment methods."

In this context, Dr. Al-Dhafiri emphasized the significance of KIB's role as a key contributor to the real estate investment sector, a major economic driver in Kuwait. "The Bank is one of the oldest institutions in real estate appraisal and has extensive expertise in the field. It is also continuously enhancing the performance of its employees, especially in response to the economic and legislative changes taking place in the country."

Dr. Al-Dhafiri stated that this type of collaboration is highly valuable for educational institutions, as it serves as a bridge between practical fieldwork and college training. It also immerses students in decision-making scenarios by engaging them with case studies and real-world experiences.

On his part, Dr. Abdullah Nader Al-Awadi, Supervisor of the Student and Graduate Training Office, said: "This partnership with KIB is an important step toward fostering a culture of innovation among students at the College of Business Administration. It also offers a valuable opportunity for students to gain experience in a leading banking environment, helping them develop practical knowledge and refine their skills, thereby enhancing their readiness for the job market."

It is worth noting that KIB remains committed to supporting academic institutions by establishing long-term strategic partnerships. This commitment reflects the Bank's leadership in the local banking sector and its ongoing focus on developing talent and contributing to sustainable development, particularly in education and innovation. These partnerships provide Kuwaiti students with valuable opportunities to gain practical experience in banking innovation through intensive training programs designed to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed for a successful professional future.

### About KIB

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

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

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

### Program supports technological leadership

## Markaz focuses on data analytics and AI training

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" continues to advance its digital transformation in 2024 through its Technology Champion Initiative, a program that has significantly contributed to the company's innovation and technological advancement. Launched in 2023, the initiative plays a pivotal role in empowering employees to lead the integration of innovative technologies across various departments and enhancement of Markaz's digital ecosystem, nurturing a culture of continuous learning and cross-functional collaboration.

Since its launch, the initiative has contributed significantly to cross-departmental coordination and continuous upskilling through a series of specialized training sessions. One core focus has been strengthening data analytics capabilities, with participants receiving training in data visualization tools to improve data-centric decision-making across the company.

"We recognize that successful digital transformation is driven by the passion and expertise of our employees," said Salman Olayan, Senior Vice President of Strategic Planning at Markaz. "Our Technology Champions are well-versed in our business operations and have the foresight to navigate the rapidly evolving tech landscape. They have been instrumental in promoting teamwork, ongoing development, and the integration of AI and data-driven technologies," he added.

Additionally, with AI's growing importance, Markaz organized an AI Training Workshop focused on advanced prompting techniques to optimize productivity through AI-driven language models (LLMs). The workshop helped the Technology Champions incorporate AI tools effectively into their daily operations, further enhancing operational efficiency.



Markaz logo

The program, rooted in the belief that people—not just systems—are essential to achieving digital growth, selects 'Technology Champions' from various departments. These individuals are chosen based on their deep understanding of Markaz's operations and emerging technological trends. By focusing on employee empowerment, the program nurtures a culture of continuous learning and technological leadership that supports the company's strategic goals. This initiative also highlights Markaz's forward-looking approach to technology integration. It ensures that the company and its workforce remain at the forefront of industry advancements while empowering its workforce to lead the digital charge.

About Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz"

Established in 1974, Kuwait Financial Centre K.P.S.C "Markaz" is one of the leading asset management and investment banking institutions in the MENA region with total assets under management of over KD 1.38 billion (USD 4.50 billion) as of 30 June 2024. Markaz was listed on the Boursa Kuwait in 1997. Over the years, Markaz has pioneered innovation through the creation of new investment channels. These channels enjoy unique characteristics and help Markaz widen investors' horizons. Examples include Mumtaz (the first domestic mutual fund), MREF (the first real estate investment fund in Kuwait), and Forsa Financial Fund (the first options market maker in the GCC since 2005), all conceptualized, established, and managed by Markaz.

### The Conversation

## Teachers feel most productive when they use AI for teaching 'strategies'

By Samantha Keppler  
University of Michigan

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



Teachers can use generative AI in a variety of ways. They may use it to develop lesson plans and quizzes. Or teachers may rely on a generative AI tool, such as ChatGPT, for insight on how to teach a concept more effectively.

In our new research, only the teachers doing both of those things reported feeling that they were getting more done. They also told us that their teaching was more effective with AI.

Over the course of the 2023-2024 school year, we followed 24 teachers at K-12 schools throughout the United States as they wrestled with whether and how to use generative AI for their work. We gave them a standard training session on generative AI in the fall of 2023. We then conducted multiple observations, interviews and surveys throughout the year.

We found that teachers felt more productive and effective with generative AI when they turned to it for advice. The standard methods to teach to state standards that work for one student, or in one school year, might not work as well in another. Teachers may get stuck and need to try a different approach. Generative AI, it turns out, can be a source of ideas for those alternative approaches.

While many focus on the productivity benefits of how generative AI can help teachers make quizzes or activities faster, our study points to something different. Teachers feel more productive and effective when their students are learning, and generative AI seems to help some teachers get new ideas about how to advance student learning.

K-12 teaching requires creativity, particularly when it comes to tasks such as lesson plans or how to integrate technology into the classroom. Teachers are under

pressure to work quickly, however, because they have so many things to do, such as prepare teaching materials, meet with parents and grade students' schoolwork. Teachers do not have enough time each day to do all of the work that they need to.

We know that such pressure often makes creativity difficult. This can make teachers feel stuck. Some people, in particular AI experts, view generative AI as a solution to this problem; generative AI is always on call, it works quickly, and it never tires.

However, this view assumes that teachers will know how to use generative AI effectively to get the solutions they are seeking. Our research reveals that for many teachers, the time it takes to get a satisfactory output from the technology - and revise it to fit their needs - is no shorter than the time it would take to create the materials from scratch on their own. This is why using generative AI to create materials is not enough to get more done.

By understanding how teachers can effectively use generative AI for advice, schools can make more informed decisions about how to invest in AI for their teachers and how to support teachers in using these new tools. Further, this feeds back to the scientists creating AI tools, who can make better decisions about how to design these systems.

Many teachers face roadblocks that prevent them from seeing the benefits of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT. These benefits include being able to create better materials faster. The teachers we talked to, however, were all new users of the technology. Teachers who are more familiar with ways to prompt generative AI - we call them "power users" - might have other ways of interacting with the technology that we did not see. We also do not yet know exactly why some teachers move from being new users to proficient users but others do not.

The Research Brief is a short take on interesting academic work. (AP)

### Luxury Spa discounts for women at Waldorf Astoria Spa

## Gulf Bank supports Breast Cancer Awareness Month by offering exclusive discounts to female customers

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: In commemoration of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Gulf Bank launched a campaign to raise awareness of the importance of early breast cancer detection, reinforcing its commitment to empowering women within the community.

Throughout October, Gulf Bank provides exclusive discounts to its female customers, with additional benefits for Rose Gold Credit Cardholders.

Gulf Bank proudly announces a range of exclusive discounts for its female customers throughout the month of October, in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. These offers include significant discounts of up to 50% at the International Hospital, covering essential medical services such as mammography, MRI, CT scans, and ultrasound imaging, aimed at encouraging early detection and proactive health screenings.

In addition, Gulf Bank provides a variety of wellness and health-focused offers, including discounts up to 25% at the Baraka Health Center. These discounts apply to services such as health and wellness consultations, nutrition advice, yoga and fitness sessions, gym memberships, skincare treatments, and both traditional and modern massage therapies, offering women a comprehensive approach to maintaining their well-being.

Furthermore, customers enjoy up to 15% off on luxurious spa treatments at the Waldorf Astoria Spa, allowing them to indulge in a relaxing and rejuvenating experience. Similarly, up to 15% discounts are



Najla Aleisa



Gulf Bank's Breast Cancer Awareness Month

available at Miss Platinum, giving customers access to additional beauty and wellness treatments.

These exclusive offers form part of Gulf Bank's ongoing commitment to promoting health and wellness within the community, empowering women to take proactive steps toward maintaining their health while rewarding them with special discounts across various services. Through these initiatives, Gulf Bank continues to highlight the importance of both physical and mental well-being for its female customers.

On this occasion, Mrs. Najla Aleisa, Chief Marketing Officer at Gulf Bank, states, "As part of Gulf Bank's commitment to fostering community well-being, we consistently launch a series of initiatives and awareness programs to promote health. This October, we aim to raise awareness of the importance of regular breast cancer screenings while offering exclusive discounts to encourage participation."

She adds, "In collaboration with hospitals and wellness centers, we have designed a comprehensive health and wellness pro-

gram for our female clients. This initiative also serves as part of our ongoing efforts to reward Gulf Bank's customers, particularly holders of the Rose Gold Credit Card by MasterCard."

Mrs. Aleisa further highlights that the Rose Gold credit card offers exclusive discounts at more than 1,000 retail outlets, catering to the needs of the modern woman and rewarding her with every purchase. Cardholders also benefit from Gulf Bank's Gulf Points Program, Kuwait's fastest rewards program, allowing them to earn points redeemable for airline tickets, hotel stays, and exclusive seasonal travel packages.

Additionally, Rose Gold cardholders earn five Gulf Points for every Kuwaiti Dinar spent on international websites, and two Gulf Points for every Kuwaiti Dinar spent locally or internationally. These points can be redeemed for flights with any airline and stays at over 300,000 hotels worldwide, with no date or booking restrictions.

Cardholders also benefit from Gulf Bank's Easy Pay service, which allows them to shop at participating

stores and spread their payments over 12 months with no interest or additional fees when using a Gulf Bank credit card.

The Rose Gold credit card provides additional travel benefits, including discounts on hotel bookings, flights, and car rentals. Cardholders also enjoy complimentary access to airport lounges in five Middle Eastern countries.

To simplify travel arrangements, the card offers travel insurance, including coverage for Schengen visa applications, for cardholders and their families.

With these exclusive offers, Gulf Bank reaffirms its dedication to supporting women's health and well-being, not only during Breast Cancer Awareness Month but throughout the year. By offering valuable benefits and rewards, the Bank continues to enhance the banking experience for its female customers, encouraging proactive health measures while providing exceptional financial services tailored to their needs. Gulf Bank remains committed to empowering women and contributing to a healthier, more informed community.

## Companies consider four-day workweek to combat burnout and retain talent

NEW YORK, Oct 16, (AP): Companies considering a four-day workweek aim to combat job burnout and retain talent seeking a better work-life balance, according to Dale Whelahan, CEO of 4 Day Week Global, which assists organizations in implementing this change. The trend is gaining momentum in Australia and Europe, with Japan recently launching a campaign encouraging employers to adopt shorter workweeks.

While American companies have been slower to adopt the four-day model, there is potential for change. A Gallup poll in 2022 revealed that 8% of full-time employees worked four days a week, up from 5% in 2020. The Associated Press interviewed Whelahan about the reasons companies should consider this shift. His remarks have been condensed for clarity.

Question: Why should companies consider a four-day workweek?

Answer: The real question is, why not? Evidence suggests we need to rethink our work structure. Burnout is rampant, and many industries face recruitment and retention crises, along with rising stress levels that lead to health issues and work-life conflicts. Long commutes are contributing to the climate crisis, and unequal workloads exacerbate social inequities. Moreover, stress is linked to serious health conditions like cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes. It's crucial to address stress in our work environment, as it continues to rise.

Historically, work structures have evolved. My grandfather, a farmer, worked seven days a week with long hours but enjoyed autonomy. My father, as a technician, transitioned into a salary-based role

focused on mass production. This shift gave rise to management as a discipline, which examined the link between fatigue and performance, ultimately leading to the establishment of the five-day workweek. Today, our workforce is primarily cognitive and emotional, unlike the physically demanding jobs of the past. Our brains cannot endure the same hours as our muscles.

Q: What are the benefits of reducing work hours?

A: Reducing work hours can enhance productivity, as employees return more engaged and rested. We implement a "100-80-100" principle: employees receive 100% pay for 80% of their time while maintaining 100% output. This approach encourages organizations to rethink productivity—not in terms of hours worked, but by focusing on outcomes that drive business success.

Q: How does this affect gender dynamics in the workplace?

A: Part-time work is disproportionately held by women, often leading to pay reductions despite their output being comparable to full-time employees. In four-day trials, both men and women share household and parenting responsibilities more equitably. Without this shift, women tend to work part-time, resulting in pay cuts, while men are pressured into longer hours in high-stress jobs, perpetuating a cycle of inequality.

Q: What about the role of meetings in productivity?

A: Meetings have become a major issue, exacerbated by the pandemic. This trend stems from a culture of indecisiveness, where decision-making is delayed, and many people are involved to dilute responsibility. This hampers productivity rather than enhancing it.





Visitors walk past ancient Egyptian colossal statues along the Grand Staircase at the Grand Egyptian Museum in Giza, Egypt, Oct. 15. (AP)

## A grand museum displaying Egypt's ancient treasures opening for a trial run

CAIRO, Oct. 16, (AP) — The Grand Egyptian Museum will open 12 halls with exhibits about ancient Egypt in its main galleries starting this week in a trial run ahead of the still-unannounced official opening, officials said Tuesday.

The museum, a mega-project near the famed Giza Pyramids which has cost well over \$1 billion so far, will open the halls for 4,000 visitors per day starting Wednesday, said Al-Tayeb Abbas, assistant to the minister of antiquities.

The museum has been under construction for more than a decade, and an overall opening date has not yet been set, having been repeatedly delayed for various reasons, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Some sections have been open since 2022 for limited tours.

More than 100,000 artifacts of Egypt's ancient treasures will be displayed in the world's largest archaeological museum, according to the Egyptian state information website.

Abbas told the AP that the trial run starting Wednesday would help prepare for the full opening by identifying operational issues, including which parts of the museum might become overcrowded.

The displays across the 12 halls tap into issues related to society, religion, and doctrine in ancient Egypt, he added. The open-style halls have been classi-

fied by dynasty and historical order, and will showcase thousands of artifacts.

Eras that will be exhibited in the main galleries include the Third Intermediate Period (about 1070-664 B.C.), Late Period (664-332 B.C.), Graeco-Roman Period (332 B.C.-395 A.D.), New Kingdom (1550-1070 B.C.), Middle Kingdom (2030-1650 B.C.), and Old Kingdom (2649-2130 B.C.). One of the halls displays statues of "Elite of the King," members of the royal family and high-ranking officials who worked in the army, priesthood, and the government.

Limited tours have been allowed in parts of the site since late 2022 to test visitors' experience and the museum's operational preparedness.

Aude Porcedde, a Canadian tourist who visited several sections, told the AP she was amazed by the museum, adding that Egyptian civilization is important for her and for the world to know more about.

"There is a lot of history and a lot of things we are not aware of, especially coming from the other side of the world, and seeing everything here and learning from the locals has been great," said Costa Rican tourist Jorge Licano.

The grand staircase, six stories high and with a view of the pyramids, and

the commercial area are open to the public, showcasing monuments and artifacts that include sarcophagi and statues. Other parts of the museum, including the King

Tutankhamun treasure collection, are set to open at later dates.

All halls are equipped with advanced technology and feature multimedia presentations to explain the lives of the ancient Egyptians, including its kings, according to Eissa Zidan, director-general of preliminary restoration and antiquities transfer at the museum.

One of the halls will use virtual reality to explain the history of burial and its development throughout ancient Egypt.

"The museum is not only a place to display antiquities, but it also aims to attract children to learn about ancient Egyptian history ... The museum is a gift to all the world," Zidan told the AP.

## New entertainment hub

### World's second Sphere will be built in the UAE capital

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Oct. 16, (AP) — The world's second Sphere is planned to be built in the capital of the United Arab Emirates after the opening of the first giant dome entertainment complex in Las Vegas.

Abu Dhabi's Department of Culture and Tourism and Sphere Entertainment Co. announced the plan late Tuesday to bring a Sphere to the Middle East.

Under the deal, Abu Dhabi will pay a franchise fee to Sphere Entertainment to build the second location using its designs. Abu Dhabi's government will pay to build the structure, as well as annual fees to Sphere Entertainment "for creative and artistic content."

The announcement offered no financing information, nor did it say where the Sphere would be built in the Emirati capital. Abu Dhabi's government did not immediately respond to questions about the project Wednesday. Sphere declined to comment beyond the initial announcement.

The massive \$2.3 billion Las Vegas Sphere opened in 2023 as the gambling capital's most expensive entertainment venue. A high-resolution LED screen wraps halfway around the 17,500-seat audience. It has hosted concerts and sporting events inside the world's largest spherical structure standing at 366 feet (111 meters) tall and 516 feet (157 meters) wide.

However, efforts to build a second Sphere abroad have been choppy. London Mayor Sadiq Khan rejected a plan to build one in the city's east over multiple concerns last year, including light pollution.

Abu Dhabi has been trying to differentiate itself as a travel destination from neighboring Dubai in the UAE, an energy-rich federation of seven sheikhdoms on the Arabian Peninsula.

The UAE is also preparing to open the first casino in the country. While the only one currently under construction is in the



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen, of the Netherlands, drives past the Sphere during the Formula One Las Vegas Grand Prix auto race, on Nov. 18, 2023, in Las Vegas. (AP)

emirate of Ras al-Khaimah, other sheikhdoms in the country are believed to be actively considering having their own.

Sphere is the brainchild of James Dolan, the executive chair of Madison Square Garden and the owner of the New York Knicks and Rangers.

Stock in Sphere closed more than 6% higher Tuesday on the New York Stock Exchange to \$48.91 a share. That's a major boost after Benchmark last month downgraded Sphere Entertainment to "sell" over "concerns over the Sphere's scalability, high production costs and a potentially underwhelming profitability outlook."

Meanwhile, some projects in the UAE have failed to be built or been delayed for years after being announced in economic downturns. Trademark filings show Sphere Entertainment Co. trademark filings made as well in Japan, Oman and Qatar, though there's no announced plans for similar venues. Companies often protectively trademark their names in other markets without necessarily having business there.

the almost all-male slate of hosts. (Vogue editor Anna Wintour, who oversees the gala each year, rounds out the list of co-chairs.) (AP)

**BEIJING:** A museum to commemorate the "two bombs, one satellite," referring to China's first atomic bomb, intercontinental ballistic missile and satellite, has been renovated and reopened to public on Wednesday, coinciding with the 60th anniversary of China's first atomic bomb explosion.

The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) transformed the site of a former rocket test base, located on the Huairou campus of the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences in the suburbs of Beijing, into the memorial museum. Originally opened in 2015, the museum has welcomed over 430,000 visitors prior to its upgrade this year.

More than 17,000 researchers from over 40 institutions affiliated to CAS participated in the development of the "two bombs, one satellite" in the 1960s and 1970s.

Among the 23 national honorees recognized for their contributions to the development of the "two bombs, one satellite," 21 are academicians of the CAS, with 17 having previously worked at the academy. (Xinhua)

## Variety

**NEW YORK:** The theme of the next Met Gala and its celebrity chairs have been announced: **Pharrell Williams**, Lewis Hamilton, Colman Domingo, ASAP Rocky and LeBron James will help the museum launch an exhibit examining Black style in menswear over the centuries.



Williams

Williams and Hamilton were on hand Wednesday morning to help officials at the Metropolitan Museum of Art announce "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style," the spring exhibit that will be launched by the Met Gala on May 5. A precise dress code for the star-studded gala - tailored specifically to the exhibit's theme - will be announced early next year.

And this one's for the guys: It's the first fashion exhibit at the Met in over 20 years to focus exclusively on menswear, which explains

## Tourism



A fly fisherman paddles on a pond as fall foliage begins to show color in Campton, N.H., Sunday, Oct. 6, 2024. (AP)



Trees cover an area near Rock Creek Road in Mammoth Lakes, Calif. (AP)



Trees line Rock Creek Road in Mammoth Lakes, Calif. (AP)

## Ideal time for leaf-peeping trips

### New England's fall colors draw visitors

MEREDITH, N.H., Oct. 16, (AP) — New England leaf-watching season is in full swing, as people from as far as Florida and Berlin flock to the region for scenic drives, train rides and bus tours to soak in the splendid hues of red, orange and bronze. With quaint towns and covered bridges scattered through swaths of changing forest, the rural Northeast provides an ideal setting to view nature's annual show.

"Leaf-peeping is one of the most accessible tourism things that you can do," said Teddy Willey, the general manager of the Frog Rock Tavern in Meredith, New Hampshire. "You don't have to have the athleticism to be a hiker, you don't have to have the money to own a boat."

You just need to be able to jump in a car and head north, he said.

"Once you're there, you just take it in," Willey said. He spoke just after his tavern was flooded with tourists from Indiana who had stepped off a sight-seeing bus.

Among them was Vicky Boesch, of Fort Wayne, who had made the trip with her sisters.

"We came out to the Northeast to see the beautiful foliage and the colorful leaves," she said, adding she was impressed with Vermont.

"The leaves were very pretty on the mountains because the sun was out yesterday, and so that makes them pop more," she said.

It wasn't only the fall colors that provided a contrast with Indiana, she said, but also the region's distinctive architecture, lakes and towns.

Gordon Cochran, of Lake View, Iowa, said he was in New Hampshire to visit his daughter and

had a "beautiful ride" on the slow-moving Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad.

Weather conditions associated with climate change have disrupted some recent leaf-peeping seasons. One problem is that global warming has brought drought that causes leaves to turn brown and wither before they can reach their colorful peak.

Willey acknowledges that he's not a leaf guy. "Personally, no. I grew up here, so I think it loses its luster a little bit," he said with a chuckle, adding that the season still has its moments.

"I'll be driving somewhere around the Lakes Region, and all of a sudden, you're like, 'You know what, there's a reason why people come here and there's a reason I live here. It really is quite beautiful,'" he said, referring to a scenic part of eastern New Hampshire.



## Early detection of disease helps improve quality of life

## Several lesser-known signs may indicate onset of dementia

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Dementia is commonly associated with memory loss, but there are several lesser-known signs that may indicate its onset, particularly noticeable in the morning. This condition encompasses a range of diseases that impair various brain functions, including memory, cognition, language and behavior, according to the International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry.

While there is currently no cure for dementia, early detection plays a crucial role in improving quality of life. Understanding the various symptoms of dementia is essential, especially those that may manifest upon waking.

The study published in the journal explores the connection between dementia and morning irritability. Researchers analyzed data from three nursing homes, focusing on the behaviors of 110 patients aged 60 and older, all of

whom had been diagnosed with dementia or exhibited agitation. The patients were categorized into three groups based on their peak periods of agitation: morning, evening, or no agitation.

The findings revealed that morning agitation was particularly common among dementia patients, indicating a potential link between this behavior and cognitive decline. Morning irritability might signify that dementia is disrupting an individual's circadian rhythm. The Mayo Clinic notes that irregularities in the sleep-wake cycle can be indicative of dementia.

Many individuals with dementia report excessive daytime sleepiness and difficulties achieving restful sleep, often waking up earlier than desired. Furthermore, research by Alzheimer's UK suggests that those who tend to wake

up early may have a slightly increased genetic risk of brain deterioration.

However, it is important to note that most people do not have a genetic predisposition to developing dementia, and various proactive measures can be taken to mitigate overall risk.

Identifying early signs of dementia, such as morning irritability and disrupted sleep patterns, is crucial. Recognizing and addressing these symptoms promptly can slow the progression of dementia and facilitate better management of the condition.

While certain risk factors, such as genetics, are beyond our control, adopting a healthy lifestyle can significantly lower the likelihood of developing dementia.

One of the most effective strategies for protecting brain

health is to maintain a balanced diet. Research indicates that adhering to a Mediterranean diet may help preserve brain function and slow the advancement of Alzheimer's disease. Previous studies have shown that individuals following a Mediterranean diet exhibited thicker cortical areas of the brain -- an important finding, as these regions often shrink in Alzheimer's patients.

Regular physical activity also plays a vital role in reducing dementia risk, potentially lowering it by up to 20 percent.

Additionally, keeping the mind engaged through activities like reading, learning new languages, or playing musical instruments is equally important for cognitive health.

Understanding these early warning signs and adopting preventive measures can lead to a healthier brain and improved overall well-being.

## Bill to include protections for vulnerable groups

## New UK bill seeks to legalize assisted dying for people who are terminally ill

LONDON, Oct 16, (AP): A new bill aiming to legalize assisted dying in Britain is to be introduced in Parliament on Wednesday, marking the first time in nearly a decade that the House of Commons will debate allowing doctors to help end people's lives after previous court challenges to change a legal blanket ban failed.

Labour politician Kim Leadbeater will introduce a bill granting terminally ill people in England and Wales a way to allow physicians to help them die, although the details won't be released until later in the month ahead of a Parliamentary vote.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer has promised that lawmakers will have a "free vote," meaning they will not be obliged to vote along party lines. Starmer supported a 2015 assisted dying bill and has said "there are grounds for changing the law."

Disabled (cross head)  
"There is absolutely no question of disabled people or those with mental illness who are not terminally ill being pressured to end their lives," Leadbeater said in a statement. She said it is "important that we get the legislation right, with the necessary protections and safeguards in place."

Leadbeater's bill is likely to be simi-

lar to an assisted dying bill introduced in the House of Lords earlier this year that has only made slow progress.

The unselected House of Lords studies and amends legislation passed by the elected House of Commons. While bills can originate in the Lords, they rarely become law.

The bill introduced in the House of Lords restricts assisted dying to adults with six or fewer months to live and requires permission from the High Court after having a declaration signed by two doctors, among other criteria.

Esther Rantzen, the founder of a British children's charity who has advanced lung cancer, encouraged people to write to their local member of Parliament, saying "all we are asking for is the right to choose." Rantzen said in the absence of a legal way to end her life in Britain, she plans to travel to Switzerland, where assisted suicide is legal for foreigners.

Opponents of assisted dying, however, say there is no way to change the law without endangering vulnerable people, according to actress Liz Carr, a disability rights campaigner.

Assisted suicide - where patients take a lethal drink prescribed by a doctor - is legal in Australia, Belgium,

Canada, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and parts of the US, with regulations on qualifying criteria varying by jurisdiction.

Naomi Richards, an anthropologist who specializes in death and dying at the University of Glasgow, said the number of people who might make use of assisted dying, if legalized in Britain, would be fairly limited, unless the public pushed for wider access.

"These are questions that in a democracy will only be answered further down the road," she said.

Trudo Lemmens, a professor of health law and policy at the University of Toronto, said Britain's first priority should be to address inequities in health care across the U.K.

"What we've seen is that people ask for medical assistance in dying because they feel they're a burden to others," Lemmens said, referring to Canada after it legalized assisted dying in 2016.

"Pressure inevitably increases to expand it beyond what is legislated," Lemmens said. "Countries should be extremely careful on this and deeply study what has happened in other jurisdictions before they allow end-of-life termination by physicians."

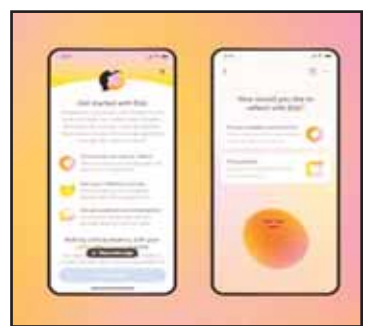
## Personalized mental health guidance

## New empathetic AI companion to help people navigate life's ups and downs

SANTA MONICA, Calif., Oct 16, (AP): Headspace, the world's leading comprehensive mental health platform, has introduced Ebb, an empathetic AI companion integrated into its app to help people navigate life's ups and downs. Ebb provides instant, personalized support designed to guide Headspace members through self-reflection and emotional processing.

Built by a team of clinical psychologists and data scientists, Ebb is a conversational AI tool trained in motivational interviewing, an evidence-based methodology that can help people make positive behavioral changes. With the guidance of Ebb, Headspace members can engage in deeper self-reflection, process thoughts and emotions, and receive personalized content recommendations from the vast Headspace library of thousands of meditations, mindfulness exercises, and mental health content. By serving up personalized content for the member's current emotional state, Ebb allows members to seamlessly transition from reflection into a supportive, relevant exercise.

"It can feel daunting to process emo-



Ebb, an empathetic AI companion, provides instant, personalized support designed to guide Headspace members through self-reflection and emotional processing. (Graphic: Business Wire)

tions with friends and family for fear of being judged or misunderstood. We designed Ebb to be an empathetic, non-judgmental listening ear for people through a variety of life circumstances," said Jenna Glover, Ph.D., Chief Clinical Officer at Headspace. "Long term, we envision Ebb becoming a nimble,

knowledgeable mental health companion that learns from member behavior, adapts to changing needs, and complements the care provided by our clinicians and mental health coaches - as well as helps to triage and escort a member to these providers."

Over the past decade, Headspace has used AI in its platform to reduce the administrative load on its care providers, identify safety risk in member chat conversations, and serve up relevant mental health and mindfulness content to its members. Its new app feature, Ebb, was trained using a combination of large language models, as well as proprietary in-house datasets, which include curated interactions that reflect a broad range of emotions and life experiences.

Designed with safety and privacy in mind, Ebb does not give mental health advice, guidance, or diagnoses, but rather prompts people to pause from their day to reflect on their thoughts and feelings. Research has found various benefits for processing emotions and self-reflection, including improvements on well-being, working memory, stress, and resilience.



A Long March-4C carrier rocket carrying the Gaofen-12 05 satellite blasts off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China, Oct. 16. The satellite entered the planned orbit successfully. (Xinhua)

## China outlines space science goals for 2024-2050

## China's methane-tracking satellite to join fight against global warming

BEIJING, Oct 16, (Xinhua): China's 2024 schedule of intense spacecraft launches will include the launch of a methane tracker -- a commercial satellite designed to monitor methane emissions worldwide.

Coded XIGUANG-004, the 75-kg satellite will carry multiple payloads, including a methane concentration detector and an imaging camera. These payloads are capable of identifying sources of methane emissions in coal mines, landfills, and oil and gas fields.

Scientists say it is important to monitor methane emissions as the colorless, odorless gas is the second-largest contributor to climate warming, after carbon dioxide.

"The duration of methane in the atmosphere is shorter than that of carbon dioxide, making it more urgent to reduce its emissions," said Liu Yi, director of the Carbon Neutrality Research Center under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

According to Liu, scientific and technological methods can help reduce methane emissions in the short term, facilitating the utilization of otherwise wasted methane produced during coal and oil mining. Increasing the number of methane-monitoring satellites is also crucial for emissions cuts.

"One of the major challenges we are facing is that current satellites cannot provide sufficient global coverage, resulting in a lack of data," Liu said in a media interview.

The development of international standards for methane emissions is underway. With a sufficient number of satellites, it will become possible to effectively monitor the methane emissions of enterprises.

"If an enterprise exceeds the set emissions standards, it will be required to

provide economic compensation for failing to do so," Liu said, explaining the role such satellites play in reducing methane emissions.

China has set the goals of peaking its carbon emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality before 2060. This has been reinforced by its comprehensive approach to green and low-carbon development, and the new satellite is part of the efforts.

The satellite was developed by Xiopm Space, a commercial satellite maker in Xi'an, capital city of northwestern Shaanxi Province. The firm launched a satellite into space in August 2023, and it aims to develop a constellation of 108 hyperspectral satellites by 2030.

## Application

Qin Xiaobao, deputy director in charge of the company's data application, said that existing technology cannot efficiently and accurately monitor small-scale human-made emissions sources, also known as point sources. In China, the main point sources of methane gas emissions are coal mining, landfill sites, rice farming areas and livestock raising areas.

Meanwhile, China unveiled a national mid and long-term development program for space science on Tuesday, which will guide the country's planning of space science missions and space research from 2024 to 2050.

The program, the first of its kind at the national level, was jointly released by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), the China National Space Administration and the China Manned Space Agency at a press conference held by the State Council Information Office.

The program outlines the development goals of China's space science, including 17 priority areas under five

key scientific themes, as well as a three-phase roadmap.

The five key scientific themes include the extreme universe, space-time ripples, panoramic view of Sun-Earth, habitable planets, and biological and physical sciences in space, Ding Chibiao, vice president of the CAS, said at the press conference.

The theme of extreme universe focuses on exploring the origin and evolution of the universe, revealing the physical laws under extreme cosmic conditions. The priority areas range from dark matter and extreme universe to the universe's origin and evolution, as well as the detection of cosmic baryonic matter, according to the program.

The theme of space-time ripples centers on detecting medium to low-frequency gravitational waves and primordial gravitational waves, with the goal of uncovering the nature of gravity and space-time. The priority area within this theme is space-based gravitational wave detection, Ding said.

The Sun-Earth panoramic view theme involves the exploration of the sun, the Earth, and the heliosphere to unravel the physical processes and laws governing the complex interactions within the Sun-Earth system. Priority areas include Earth's cycle systems, comprehensive observations of the Earth-Moon, space weather observation, three-dimensional solar exploration, and heliosphere exploration, according to the program.

Scientists will also explore the habitability of celestial bodies in the solar system and exoplanets, as well as search for extraterrestrial life. Key areas in the subject cover sustainable development, the origin and evolution of the solar system, characterization of planetary atmospheres, the search for extraterrestrial life, and exoplanet detection.

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## Jiménez and Huerta score in 2-0 victory

## Mexico stops 7-game winless streak against US

GUADALAJARA, Mexico, Oct 16, (AP) Raúl Jiménez scored on a 22nd-minute free kick and set up César Huerta's goal in the 49th as Mexico stopped a seven-game winless streak against the United States with a 2-0 victory on Tuesday night in Mauricio Pochettino's second game as the American coach.

Mexico had five losses and two draws against the U.S. dating to a 3-0 win in September 2019 at East Rutherford, New Jersey.

With nearly a dozen regular players missing that included Christian Pulisic, the U.S. failed to have any first-half shots for the first time since an April 2023 exhibition against El Tri that ended 1-1.

American players not at the game included defenders Sergiño Dest,

Chris Richards and Cameron Carter-Vickers; midfielders Tyler Adams, Weston McKennie and Luca de la Torre; and attackers Tim Weah, Folarin Balogun, Gio Reyna and Ricardo Pepi.

Defender Mark McKenzie was in the original starting lineup but because of soreness in his left groin was replaced by Miles Robinson just before kickoff.

"Overall Mexico was a little bit better and fully deserve the victory," Pochettino said. "For us it is a process. It was a great opportunity for our players to visit a very difficult place to play. We can only improve and learn from this experience." Jiménez curled a 25-yard-plus shot past Matt Turner for his 34th international international goal. Jiménez created the second goal

after he ran onto a through pass, had Tim Ream knock the ball away, they regained possession from the defender and centered to Huerta.

Huerta slid around Robinson and beat Turner from near the penalty spot for his third international goal. Pochettino, hired last month to replace Gregg Berhalter, led the Americans to a 2-0 win over Panama in his debut Saturday.

His first competitive matches will be next month in a two-leg CONCACAF Nations League quarterfinal, likely against Jamaica. After that, Pochettino has just six international windows before players report ahead of the 2026 World Cup.

"We need to play more games like this in order to compete," Pochettino said.

Javier Aguirre won his second game since replacing Jaime Lozano as Mexico coach in August. El Tri was coming of a 2-2 draw against the Spanish club Valencia last weekend.

"I think that the team was aware of the bad performance in Puebla, they wanted to prove themselves that they were capable of playing better," Aguirre said.

Fans at Akron Stadium yelled the homophobic chant that led to fines imposed by FIFA, but Costa Rican referee Keylor Herrera did not stop the game.

Andrés Guardado started in his 182nd international match and led to a loud ovation in the 19th minute of what he said was his national team finale at age 38. He was greeted by every member of the team.



The United States' Brandon Vazquez, top, jumps for a header during an international friendly soccer match against Mexico at Akron Stadium in Guadalajara, Mexico. (AP)

## 'A huge privilege'

## Tuchel hired as head coach of England ahead of World Cup

LONDON, Oct 16, (AP) Thomas Tuchel was hired as England coach on Wednesday and tasked with the challenge of ending the national team's decades-long wait for a trophy.

The German, who previously managed Paris Saint-Germain, Chelsea and Bayern Munich, has signed an 18-month contract that begins in January and runs through to the 2026 World Cup in the United States.

"This is a really exciting day for the English game. We've appointed one of the very best coaches in the world," said English Football Association chief Mark Bullingham at Tuchel's Wembley Stadium unveiling. "Our aim is always to win a major tournament and we believe Thomas gives us the best possible chance to do that at the next men's World Cup."

By then it will be 60 years since England won its only major trophy - the World Cup in 1966.

Fourteen different managers have failed to break that run, with Gareth Southgate coming closest by leading the nation to back-to-back European Championship finals before stepping down in July.

Champions League-winner Tuchel has delivered silverware across Europe and laid out his intention to emulate that success with England.

"I understood very quickly that it's a big job," he said - adding that he wanted to push England "over the line and try to put a second star on the shirt."

The 51-year-old Tuchel becomes the national team's third foreign coach after the late Sven-Goran Eriksson and Fabio Capello. That has led to criticism in some of the British media, with the Daily Mail publishing a back page headline declaring it a "dark day for England."

While he received well-wishes from U.K. prime minister Keir Starmer, the leader of the right wing Reform Party Nigel Farage asked on X: "Why can't we have an English manager?"

Tuchel, laughed when asked if he had a message to England fans disappointed to have a foreign coach.

"I'm sorry, I have a German passport," he said. "Hopefully I can convince them and show them and prove to them that I'm proud to be the England manager and I will do everything to show respect to this role and to this country."

Bullingham said the FA had interviewed several candidates before deciding on Tuchel, but did not disclose any names.

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola and former Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp were both reported candidates.

"Clearly some were more up for the role than others," Bullingham said. "We were absolutely delighted to end up with Thomas and we believe he gives us the best chance of winning the World Cup."

Tuchel succeeds one of England's most successful coaches in Southgate, who led the country to a World Cup semifinals as well as those two Euros finals.

Southgate stepped down after eight years following defeat to Spain in the final of Euro 2024.

Tuchel fits the FA's remit of hiring a coach who has delivered at the highest level and also knows the English game.

As manager of Chelsea, he beat Guardiola's Manchester City to win the Champions League within months of taking the job. He also won the UEFA Super Cup and Club World Cup with the Premier League club.

He has won league titles with PSG in France and Bayern in Germany. He takes on the England job after leaving Bayern at the end of last season.

Tuchel will be joined by his former Chelsea assistant Anthony Barry, who most recently worked with Portugal at the Euros.

By the time they take up their roles the draw for World Cup qualifying will have taken place in December.

Under 21s coach Lee Carsley will remain in charge of England as interim coach for the Nations League games against Greece and Ireland next month.



The newly appointed England men's soccer team manager Thomas Tuchel speaks during a press conference held at Wembley Stadium in London. (AP)

## England stumbles to 239-6



England's Joe Root plays a shot during the second day of the second test cricket match between Pakistan and England, in Multan, Pakistan. (AP)

## Duckett hits robust ton in 2nd test vs Pakistan

MULTAN, Pakistan, Oct 16, (AP) England's top-order crumbled against spin-heavy Pakistan on a reused pitch after Ben Duckett hit a robust century in the second test on Wednesday.

The tourists slipped to 239-6 at stumps on Day 2 and still trail by 127 runs after Pakistan tailenders had resisted before being bowled out for 366 shortly after lunch.

Duckett's 114 off 129 balls looked to have kept England in the driver's seat before it lost four late wickets in a sensational collapse against spinners Sajid Khan (4-86) and Noman Ali (2-75).

Khan struck three times in 10 deliveries and got the big wickets of Joe Root (34), Duckett and Harry Brook (9). Ben Stokes, returning to test cricket from a torn hamstring, got caught close to the wicket of Ali's left-arm spin after scoring just 1 off five balls.

Jamie Smith was unbeaten on 12 as Pakistan spinners exposed England's long tail with Brydon Carse not out on 2 from 19 balls.

Duckett had dominated the spinners with his authoritative sweep shots and added 86 runs with Root before Khan struck late on a dry wicket, tailor-made to suit the home team's all-out spin attack.

Root, who scored a memorable 262 in England's massive innings and



Pakistan's Sajid Khan bowls during the second day of the second test cricket match between Pakistan and England, in Multan, Pakistan. (AP)

47-run win in the first test, dragged Khan back onto his stumps and then Duckett edged the off-spinner to slip after the ball had spun enough from the rough.

Brook, the triple-century maker at the same venue last week, then paid the price of exposing his stumps to Khan's length ball and got clean bowled as Pakistan sliced the strong England batting lineup with its spinners, who haven't played first-class cricket for the last nine months.

Opening batter Zak Crawley made a shaky 27 and couldn't capitalize on

wickets in between them before Pakistan was dismissed shortly after lunch.

The tailenders batted around all-rounder Aamer Jamal's 37 to frustrate England with Ali also playing a little cameo of 32 off 61 balls as Pakistan added 107 to its overnight 259-5.

Pakistan lost the overnight pair of Mohammad Rizwan (41) and Salman Ali Agha (31) before Jamal, who received treatment on his hip while batting, chipped away by adding 49 runs with Ali.

Rizwan's scrappy knock ended in the third over of the day when Jamie Smith made a spectacular diving catch as Carse squared up the batter with his pace.

Jamal and Noman defied England in the latter half of the first session as Pakistan added 99 runs to its overnight 259-5 before Leach and Carse ended the frustration by dismissing the home team after lunch.

Debutant Kamran Ghulam made headlines on Day 1 with a resolute century as Pakistan looks for its first home win in 12 matches by packing its playing XI with three specialist spinners and only one fast bowler in Jamal.

Ghulam had been scoring well in Pakistan's domestic seasons for the last four years, but got his chance after Pakistan rested its premier batter Babar Azam for the remaining two test matches of the series against England.

chances as Khan made a mess of a run-out chance when he broke the stumps before grabbing the ball at the non-striker's end. Duckett later convinced Crawley to go for a successful lbw television referral before he finally got caught behind of Ali after contributing 73 runs for the first wicket stand.

Duckett had bossed the spinners for 16 boundaries with his strong sweep shots before Pakistan's spinners hit back late.

Earlier, Jack Leach grabbed 4-114 and fast bowlers Carse (3-50) and Matthew Potts (2-66) shared five

## No structural damage after hyperextending knee

## 76ers' George diagnosed with bone bruise

PHILADELPHIA, Oct 16, (AP) Philadelphia 76ers forward Paul George has a bone bruise but did not suffer any structural damage when he hyperextended his left knee during a pre-season game, the team said Tuesday.

"Everything checks out OK," coach Nick Nurse told reporters at the team's New Jersey complex after George had an initial exam. The team announced later in the day that an MRI showed the bone bruise but no structural damage.

The Sixers said he would be reevaluated again in about a week.

Even before the injury, George was not scheduled to play in Wednesday's pre-season game against Brooklyn.

A nine-time All-Star, George was injured when his knee buckled on a defensive play in the second quarter of Monday's game against Atlanta. He scored eight points in 12 minutes in a 104-89 victory.

"I felt that it hyperextended, and immediately it was, all right, I need to get taken out and (looked at), but if you ask me, I'm not too concerned about it," George told The Philadelphia Inquirer.

The Sixers have been

cautious with their star players and shut down center Joel Embiid on

Sunday for the rest of the preseason for what they called left knee manage-



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) drives against Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James (23) and Los Angeles Lakers guard D'Angelo Russell during the second half of a NBA preseason basketball game, in Las Vegas. (AP)

ment.

The Sixers - who signed George to a four-year, \$212 million contract as a free agent this summer - are his fourth team, after seven years with Indiana, two with Oklahoma City and the last five as a member of the Los Angeles Clippers. He's a six-time All-NBA selection and has averaged 20.8 points over 14 NBA seasons.

With George joining the 2023 NBA MVP in Embiid and All-Star guard Tyrese Maxey, the 76ers were expected to boast one of the most formidable trios in the league as they try to put together a nucleus that can

compete with NBA champion Boston.

George played 76 games last season, the first time he played more than 56 since 2018-19.

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Thank you for achieving the maximum points of 55: Toyota

## TOYOTA GAZOO Racing clinches victory with 1-2 finish at Rally Chile

SANTIAGO, Oct 16: TOYOTA GAZOO Racing (TGR) World Rally Team (WRT) has claimed an outstanding one-two victory at the 2024 FIA World Rally Championship's Rally Chile. Kalle Rovanperä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen secured top podium position in their No. 69 GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicle, with teammates Elfyn Evans and co-driver Scott Martin in the No. 33 GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicle following less than a minute behind to solidify the day's victory with a second-place win.

Akio Toyoda, TGR-WRT Chairman, commented: "Kalle, Jonne, congratulations on your victory! Elfyn, Scott, thank you for the one-two finish! To the whole team, thank you for achieving the maximum points of 55 in one event! You all are great! I'm very happy to see the hard work of everyone who continued to improve without giving up pay off! Let's enjoy the final stages of the season from the position of chasing! I'm really looking forward to Rally Japan!"

Rally Chile, based in Concepción around 500 kilometres south of the capital city Santiago, returned to the WRC calendar in 2023 following a four-year hiatus. The event took place on gravel roads in the Biobío region, known for their mix of technical and fast sections with varying surfaces. The rally kicked off with stages to the south-east, while the remainder of the competition spanned the Biobío River and ended across new, undriven sections that posed significant challenges to drivers.

After concluding the longest and one of the most demanding phases of the rally, Rovanperä and Halttunen led, with team-mates Evans and Martin following closely behind in a one-two finish as they prepared for the final stretch. The No. 69 and No. 33 crews tackled 139.2 competitive kilometres across two loops of three stages, facing rough, technical roads along with increased fog and rain compared to earlier stages.

These conditions did not let up going into the closing stage of Rally Chile, with Rovanperä extending his lead during the morning under heavy fog and securing his fourth win of the season alongside Halttunen in an exciting Power Stage finish.

Rovanperä's 15th victory for TGR-WRT ties him with two-time champion Carlos Sainz for the most WRC wins with Toyota, while Evans, alongside Martin, returned to the podium for the fifth time this season.



Left-right: TOYOTA GAZOO Racing World Rally Team in action.



Over the years, Toyota has been participating in many different forms of motorsports, including Formula One, the World Endurance Championship (WEC), and the Nürburgring 24 Hours endurance race. Toyota's participation in these events was overseen by separate entities within the company until April 2015, when Toyota established TGR, to consolidate all of its motorsports activities under one in-house brand. Representing Toyota's belief that 'the roads build the people, and the people build the cars,' TGR highlights the role of motorsports as a fundamental pillar of Toyota's commitment to making 'ever-better' cars. Harnessing years of experience gained under the extreme conditions of various motorsports events, TGR aims to forge new technologies and solutions that bring the freedom, adventure, and joy of driving to everyone.

The next round of the 2024 FIA WRC is the Central European Rally (17-20

October), marking a return to asphalt for the final two events of the season. First held in 2023, this cross-border rally features challenging stages across Germany, the Czech Republic, and Austria.

### Race Notes:

■ No. 69 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicle (Kalle Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen)

■ Position: 1st

■ Time: 2 hours, 58 minutes, and 59.8 seconds

■ No. 33 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicle (Elfyn Evans and Scott Martin)

■ Position: 2nd

■ Time: 2 hours, 59 minutes, and 23.2 seconds

## Ronaldo held scoreless, Portugal perfect NL record ends after draw with Scotland

Spain secures spot in last eight

MADRID, Oct 16, (AP): Cristiano Ronaldo was held scoreless and Portugal lost its perfect record in the Nations League after a 0-0 draw at Scotland.

Portugal had won its first three matches in the competition but couldn't find a breakthrough against the Scots at Hampden Park in Glasgow.

Ronaldo, sitting on 133 international goals, had a few good chances to break the deadlock. He seemed upset with the referee after the game ended, leaving the field with a sarcastic applause, waving his arms and with thumbs down.

Portugal had beaten Croatia, Scotland and Poland in Group A1, which it still leads with 10 points, three more than Croatia and six more than Poland. Last-place Scotland stayed on one

point. It came into the match on a nine-match winless streak and had lost four games in a row.

"There was a lot missing for Portugal tonight," midfielder Bernardo Silva said. "We lacked intensity, didn't attack at the right moments. We leave here frustrated."

The top two nations in each group will advance to the knockout stage.

Alvaro Morata scored about 10 minutes after missing a penalty kick as Spain comfortably defeated Serbia 3-0 to secure a spot in the quarterfinals after its third consecutive victory in the Nations League.

Morata sent his penalty over the crossbar in the 54th, then found the net for Spain's second goal in the 65th at the Nuevo Arcangel stadium in Cordoba.

"I missed a penalty but ended up scoring," Morata said. "We are in the knockout stages again. It seems easy but it's not, we need to give value to our achievements."

Aymeric Laporte had opened the scoring five minutes into the match for Spain, the defending champion which opened with a 0-0 draw at Serbia and then beat Switzerland and Denmark in Group A4.

Spain leads the group with 10 points, three more than Denmark, which drew 2-2 at last-place Switzerland.

Serbia was third with four points from the draw against Spain and a win over Switzerland, which remains winless.

Serbia played a man down from the 76th after Strahinja Pavlovic was sent off for a sliding tackle on an opponent. Alex Baena scored Spain's third goal from the ensuing free kick.

Croatia scored three times in the first 26 minutes of a first half against Poland that featured a total of five goals.

The Croatians led 3-2 going into the break in a game that ended in a 3-3 draw in Poland in Group A1.

Piotr Zielinski opened the scoring for Poland five minutes into the match

before the visitors took command with goals from Borna Sosa in the 19th, Petar Šucic in the 24th and Martin Baturina in the 26th. Nicola Zalewski brought Poland closer in the 45th and Szymanski leveled the match in the 68th.

Croatia saw goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic sent off in the 76th for an ugly foul on Poland striker Robert Lewandowski outside the penalty area. Livakovic kicked the ball clear but kept his foot high during the follow-through and hit Lewandowski just below the knee on his standing leg.

Croatia was in second place in the group with seven points, three less than Portugal.

Poland was third with four points, three more than Scotland.

Kosovo beat visiting Cyprus 3-0 in League C, while Romania won 2-1 at Lithuania and Belarus drew 1-1 with Luxembourg at home.

Northern Ireland routed Bulgaria 5-0 at home with a hat trick by Isaac Price.



Roberto Mancini and his technical staff look dejected in the dugout.

## Mancini's job hangs in the balance as Saudi Arabia draws with Bahrain

MANAMA, Oct 16: Saudi Arabia's Italian coach, Roberto Mancini, faced widespread criticism following the goalless draw against Bahrain in the fourth round of Group 3 in the final qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup.

Mancini's future with the Saudi national team is now uncertain, as reports suggest that his contract may soon be terminated.

The team has dropped seven points in the first four rounds, earning just five points and currently sitting in third place.

In the post-match press conference, Mancini acknowledged the team's struggles, stating: "We have improved in some areas, but the main issue is our inability to finish chances and the overall weakness in our offensive play."

He highlighted the need for better performances from key attackers, saying, "Our front line, including Salem Al-Dawsari, Firas Al-Brikan, Abdullah Radif, and Saleh Al-Shehri, must do better. We missed several easy chances that could have changed our standing."

Mancini emphasized that, despite creating numerous opportunities and

even missing a penalty, the team deserved to win. "It's always easy to blame the coach, and I've become used to that throughout my career," he said, adding that players must also take responsibility for their performances.

When addressing his frustration with fans, Mancini said: "It's normal. I was angry after the match, but this is part of football."

Sources revealed that Yasser Al-Misehal, president of the Saudi Football Federation, held a meeting with Mancini after the match to discuss the situation. In a statement to the media, Al-Misehal said: "The right decision will be made after meeting with the coach and the technical committee."

Media outlets have reported that the federation has already decided to dismiss Mancini, with potential interim replacements being Saleh Al-Mohammadi and Saad Al-Shehri.

Al-Misehal expressed dissatisfaction with the team's performance in the qualifiers, but he refrained from making any hasty decisions, stating, "It is unacceptable to go winless in three home games, but appropriate decisions will be made soon."

## Al-Qadsiya tops Al-Arabi in friendly

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The first volleyball team of Al-Qadsiya Club achieved a commanding 3-0 victory against Al-Arabi in a friendly match. This match was part of the teams' preparations for the upcoming 2024-2025 season, which kicks off in November with the Federation Championship. The "Yellow" squad also played a second friendly match against Burgan.

Dr. Hussein Al-Qabandi, a member of the Board of Directors and head of the volleyball department at Al-Qadsiya Club, expressed confidence in the team's readiness

for the new season under the guidance of Bahraini coach Redha Ali. He emphasized their commitment to competing seriously in all tournaments.

Al-Qabandi noted that four players – Ahmed Al-Munais, Ibrahim Mandeel, Rashid Anbar, and Fahd Al-Saad – were absent from daily training as they joined the first team preparing for the Arab Championship in Bahrain at the end of this month.

He also mentioned that the club's foreign professionals, Dutch player Ter Horst and Iranian Mohammad Reza Beyk, have been consistently participating in daily training sessions.



Portugal's Francisco Conceicao, right, challenges for the ball with Scotland's Kenny McLean during the UEFA Nations League soccer match between Scotland and Portugal at Hampden Park in Glasgow, Scotland. (AP)

## Egypt qualifies for 2025 African Cup of Nations

NOUAKCHOTT, Oct 16: The Egyptian national team secured its spot in the 2025 African Cup of Nations with a 1-0 victory over hosts Mauritania in the fourth round of Group 3 qualifiers.

Egyptian striker Ibrahim Adel scored the decisive goal in the 85th minute, boosting the "Pharaohs" to 12 points, solidifying their position at the top of the group. Mauritania, meanwhile, remains stuck at three points.

In another Group 3 match, Botswana defeated visiting Cape Verde by a single goal.

Meanwhile, Sadio Mané, star of Saudi club Al-Nassr, led the Senegalese national team to a crucial 1-0 win over Malawi in Group 12, securing Senegal's qualification for the African Cup. Senegal now sits in second place with 10 points,

behind Burkina Faso on goal difference, while Malawi remains

without points at the bottom of the group.



Egyptian players celebrate after qualifying for the 2025 African Cup of Nations.

Elsewhere, Sudan defeated Ghana 2-0, furthering Ghana's struggles.

In other results, Gabon beat Lesotho 2-0, Zambia edged Chad 1-0, Uganda overcame South Sudan 2-1, the Republic of Congo defeated Tanzania 2-0, Rwanda beat Benin 2-1, Sierra Leone secured a 1-0 win over Ivory Coast, Morocco crushed the Central African Republic 4-0, Guinea thrashed Ethiopia 3-0, while Congo and South Africa tied 1-1. Guinea-Bissau and Mali finished 0-0, and Comoros held Tunisia to a 1-1 draw.

Eight teams have now secured their place in the finals: Morocco (the host), Egypt, Algeria, Cameroon, Senegal, Angola, Burkina Faso, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



Al-Qadsiya player returns the ball to Al-Arabi during the friendly game.





Brazil's Rodrygo, left, is challenged by Peru's Luis Advincula during a qualifying soccer match for the FIFA World Cup 2026 at Mane Garrincha Stadium in Brasilia, Brazil. (AP)

# Sports

Pizzi acknowledges the tough challenges ahead

## Kuwait drops vital points in Palestine draw

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DOHA, Oct 16: Kuwait international campaign, which began at the end of last September, has concluded after the team played two crucial matches – against Oman and Palestine – in the third and fourth rounds of Group Two in the third stage of the 2026 World Cup Asian qualifiers.

Kuwait suffered a 0-4 defeat to Oman but managed to secure a 2-2 draw with Palestine.

Currently, Kuwait sits in fifth place in the group with 3 points, level with Oman but trailing on goal difference. South Korea leads the group with 10

points, 3 points ahead of Jordan and Iraq, while Palestine occupies sixth and last place with 2 points.

Next up, Kuwait will host the South Korean and Jordan in the fifth and sixth rounds on November 14 and 19, with plans to hold a domestic training camp starting in early November.

Argentine coach Juan Pizzi commended the players' high spirits during the Palestine match, saying, "The Blues regained confidence after the previous loss."

At the post-match press conference, Pizzi expressed his disappointment at losing two valuable points, emphasizing that the team aimed for all three points but "lacked focus in the final minutes."

He noted that his players gave their best effort and were determined to win, but "things didn't go as we had hoped."

Pizzi also acknowledged the tough challenges ahead in November's matches and stressed his intent to "evaluate and rehabilitate all players to prepare them properly."

Several players, including Fahad Al-Hajri and Salman Al-Awadhi, sustained injuries during the match.

Team captain Yousef Nasser highlighted the improved performance, saying, "The team played a great match and showed a better image compared to the previous game," though he admitted the result was unsatisfactory. He added, "The journey to World

Cup qualification is still long."

Nasser also mentioned the team had addressed some mistakes from the previous match and created several scoring opportunities against Palestine, managing to find the net twice.

Palestine's coach, Makram Daboub, said his team put in a strong performance despite the match's challenges, stating, "We deserved a better result than the draw."

Looking ahead, Daboub emphasized the importance of its upcoming match against Oman in November's fifth round, adding, "We are still in the race for fourth place, with five matches remaining to correct mistakes and regain full fitness."



Pizzi and Yousef address the media after the Palestine match.

# Argentina, Brazil restore old order

Messi winds back clock; Colombia cruises past Chile in World Cup qualifiers

RIO DE JANEIRO, Oct 16, (Xinhua): Soccer heavyweights Argentina and Brazil returned to winning ways on the 10th matchday of South American World Cup qualifiers on Tuesday with emphatic victories over Bolivia and Peru, respectively.

Lionel Messi evoked memories of his prime Barcelona years as he scored three goals and set up two others in Argentina's 6-0 home win over Bolivia.

Messi opened the scoring in the 19th minute when his low finish beat Guillermo Viscarra at the near post after Lautaro Martinez intercepted an errant Marcelo Suarez pass.

Messi returned the favor when he unselfishly passed to Martinez, who slotted home from close range on the counterattack.

Eight-time Ballon d'Or winner Messi was again the provider when he chipped a delightful free-kick into the path of Julian Alvarez on the stroke of halftime. The Atletico Madrid striker showed deft control before drilling his shot past Viscarra.

Argentina, who lost to Colombia and drew with Venezuela in its previous two matches, was relentless and substitute Thiago Almada made it 4-0 with a first-time effort from 15 yards after Nahuel Molina's cross.

Messi doubled his personal tally by combining with Exequiel Palacios before slicing a shot into the far corner with his weaker right foot.

The 37-year-old Inter Miami forward grabbed his 10th international hat-trick two minutes later with an 18-yard drive after a slick one-two with debutant Nico Paz.

The result at Estadio Monumental in Buenos Aires leaves the reigning world champion three points clear at the top of the 10-team South American zone standings. Bolivia are seventh, 10 points further back.

In Brasilia, Barcelona winger Raphinha scored twice as Brazil continued its resurgent form with a 4-0 home victory over Peru.

The host went ahead at Mane Garrincha stadium through Raphinha, who converted a 38th-minute spot-kick following Carlos Zambrano's hand ball. Zambrano was also at fault when he hacked down Savinho in the area, prompting referee Esteban Ostojich to award Brazil another penalty, which Raphinha again dispatched with aplomb.

Substitute Andreas Pereira struck with an acrobatic volley to make it 3-0 before Luiz Henrique completed the rout with a low finish 16 minutes from time.

After a run of four losses in five games, Brazil have strung together two consecutive victories for the first time since September last year.

The five-time world champions are now fourth in the South American group with 16 points from 10 qualifiers, 10 points ahead of ninth-placed Peru.

Earlier, Bournemouth winger Luis Sinisterra scored one goal and set up another as Colombia cruised to a 4-0 home victory over Chile.

Davinson Sanchez gave the host the lead in the 34th minute at Estadio Metropolitano by heading home after James Rodriguez's corner was flicked on by Jhon Lucumi.

Luis Diaz doubled the advantage shortly after halftime as he capitalized on chaotic defending by the visitors. Benjamin Kusevic's rushed pass out of defense was intercepted by Rodriguez and the Rayo Vallecano playmaker then squared the ball to Diaz, who swept home from 12 yards.

Aston Villa striker Jhon Duran made it 3-0 when he combined with Sinisterra on the counterattack before angling a left-footed shot into the far corner.



Al-Nasr Sports Club junior weightlifting team poses with officials after the honoring ceremony.

## Al-Nasr Sports Club honors team for 3rd-place finish

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Board of Directors of Al-Nasr Sports Club honored the junior weightlifting team for its third-place finish in the inaugural Federation Championship, where it secured three gold medals, one silver, and one bronze.

The players were recognized by the club's Chairman, Khaled Al-Shuraidah, in a ceremony attended by Secretary-General Ali Al-Dasm, Assistant Secretary-General Sultan Al-Mutairi, Assistant Treasurer Dhari Al-Hamli, and Game Director Ahmed Al-Adwani.

Sultan Al-Mutairi expressed his gratitude to the club's management for their support and recognition of the sport. He also extended thanks to Game Director Ahmed Al-Adwani, the technical and administrative staff, and the players for their dedication in achieving second place in the Federation Championship for Cubs.

Ahmed Al-Adwani emphasized that the coaching staff is working to prepare the team, which includes many talented players, for upcoming championships with the goal of securing titles and medals. He also highlighted that the club's continued support will have a significant impact on future successes.



Argentina's Lionel Messi, left, is challenged by Bolivia's Gabriel Villamil during a World Cup 2026 qualifying soccer match at Monumental stadium in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (AP)

## Kuwaiti ice skating team aims for Dubai Championship glory

DUBAI, Oct 16: The Kuwait Winter Games Club announced that the Kuwaiti ice skating team will compete today in the Dubai International Freestyle Skiing Championship for men and women, featuring three athletes: Salman Al-Kandari, Safaa Al-Abdullah, and Salil Al-Abdullah.

Sheikh Jaber Bandar Al-Sabah, the club's honorary president, emphasized that this competition serves as a key preparation stage for the athletes ahead of the Asian Winter Games (Harbin, China 2025), scheduled to begin in February next year.

He noted that the club has provided thorough preparations for the players in this championship, which is organized under the supervision of the International Ski Federation (FIS) and spans three days. The two Al-Abdullah athletes completed a week-long training camp in Dubai alongside the UAE national team players.

Meanwhile, Al-Kandari has prepared by participating in sports gatherings at specialized ice rinks. These experiences, according to Al-Sabah, are vital for the athletes as they gear up for the major event



Sheikh Jaber Al-Sabah

in China, as well as earning crucial ranking points with the International Ski Federation.

He further stressed the club's commitment to ensuring optimal preparation for Kuwait's participation in the Asian Winter Games, the second-largest sporting event on the Asian continent.

## INEOS Britannia trails New Zealand 2-4

BARCELONA, Spain, Oct 16, (AP): INEOS Britannia scored its first two victories over Emirates Team New Zealand in the America's Cup finals on Wednesday and now trails the first-to-seven wins 4-2.

After being dominated on first three days of racing, the British were gifted a big lead in Race 5 and then held off a

hard-charging New Zealand in Race 6 by seven seconds.

New Zealand had sailed flawlessly to sweep the first four races held in view of the Barcelona beachfront. But the Kiwis made their first mistake of the series when their yacht fell off its foils in the pre-start buildup for the day's first regatta.