



His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, His Highness the Prime Minister and senior state officials at the launching of the space science center.

Amiri Diwan photo

Kuwait Amir patronizes, attends space science center launching ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA): Under the patronage and in the presence of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, a ceremony was held at Bayan Palace on Wednesday to launch a national space science center.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and senior state officials attended the event.

His Highness the Amir arrived at the venue and was warmly welcomed by Director-General of Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) Dr. Ameenah Rajab Farhan and board members.

His Highness the Amir was apprised of Kuwaiti satellite images and listened to a detailed explanation from Director of the National Satellite Project Dr. Hala Al-Jassar.

Addressing the event, His Highness the Amir commended the efforts of Kuwaiti creative and distinguished researchers in serving their country.

He underlined that supporting scientific research is the key to advancement, in which the State of Kuwait is interested, amid an evolving era of artificial intelligence, renewable energy and space science.

He regarded backing scientific research, along with promoting the national identity as the basis of the country's vision, reminiscing the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's insight for establishing a prosperous scientific, technological and innovative culture for the sake of a sustainable Kuwait.

He added that while seeking to create a scientific environment that is based on state-of-the-art scientific research and contributes to developing Kuwaiti people's capabilities in all scientific fields, especially space science, it is necessary to laud the KFAS' unwavering efforts.

The eagerness of KFAS administration and staff to boost the efficiency of distinguished and creative people amid mounting requirements and future ambitions must also be admired, he affirmed.

In this context, His Highness the Amir instructed this august foundation's staff to keep drawing in distinguished Kuwaitis specializing in various domains and to exert ardent efforts to place Kuwait among pioneering countries in scientific and technological areas, particularly space science.

Continued on Page 5

MoE principals, senior officials eye retirement

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Amid rumors of potential staff reductions and changes to end-of-service bonuses, which the Ministry of Education has officially denied, there has been a noticeable increase in retirement requests among various educational supervisory positions.

According to educational sources, the ministry has been insisting that these rumors are completely unfounded. Despite this, the ministry received a wave of early retirement applications yesterday from a number of employees who occupy educational supervisory roles, effective September 30.

In response to this widely circulated rumor, many school principals and educational supervisors have opted to submit their retirement requests with the hope of securing their full end-of-service bonuses before any potential changes that could affect their financial rights.

This wave of resignations has led to a state of confusion within the educational sector, particularly with the start of the new school year.

It has become evident that many important supervisory positions, such as school principals and educational supervisors, will soon be vacant at a critical time when the sector requires administrative and organizational stability to deal with the challenges of returning to school.

Continued on Page 5

NewsWatch

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

KUWAIT CITY: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) clarified on Wednesday that no discussions or decisions have been made regarding the cancellation or amendment of the end-of-service bonus for state employees.

In a statement posted on its official account on the social networking platform X, the CSC emphasized its commitment to maintaining open communication with the public, addressing all inquiries through social media and the government's Sahel application. (KUNA)

CAIRO: Egypt and the United States are responsible for maintaining peace and stability in the "turbulent" region, said Egyptian Foreign Minister Bader Abdelati on Wednesday.

This came in the opening speech of the strategic dialogue session between the two countries, chaired by Abdelati and US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken in Cairo. (KUNA)

Continued on Page 5

Cabinet nods Afia suspension

Anger erupts as private clinics offer discounts post-Afia

Citizenship of six Kuwaitis revoked

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Supreme Committee for the Investigation of Kuwaiti Nationality has issued a decision to revoke the citizenship of six individuals, in accordance with Article 11 of Amiri Decree No. 15 of 1959, pertaining to the Kuwaiti Nationality Law, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The individuals affected by this decision are: Dalia Hussein Haji Taqi, Aida Abdel Hadi Mohammed Al-Ajmi, Omar Abdul Hadi Mohammed Al-Ajmi, Mohammed Nasser Hassan Al-Ajmi, Safiyya Jabara Qurai Al-Mari and Mohammed Dhuwaihi Aayed Al-Hajri.

This decision reflects the committee's ongoing efforts to review and enforce nationality regulations in Kuwait.

Death toll mounts

Walkie-talkies explode in new Lebanon blasts

BEIRUT, Sept 18, (AP): Explosions went off in Beirut and multiple parts of Lebanon in an apparent second wave of detonations of electronic devices, Hezbollah officials and state media said Wednesday, reporting walkie-talkies and even solar equipment detonating a day after hundreds of pagers blew up. At least 9 people were killed and more than 300 people wounded, the Health Ministry said.



Abiad

at the scene. An AP photographer in the southern coastal city of Sidon saw a car and a mobile phone shop damaged after devices exploded inside of them.

A Hezbollah official told the AP that walkie-talkies used by the group exploded. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media. Lebanon's official news agency reports that solar energy systems exploded in homes in several areas of Beirut and in southern Lebanon, wounding at least one girl.

The new blasts hit a country still thrown into confusion and anger after Tuesday's pager bombings, which appeared to be a complex Israeli attack targeting Hezbollah members that caused civilian casualties, too. At least 12 people were

Continued on Page 5

More hospitalized in hot & dusty weather

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: A recent study by the Dasman Diabetes Institute, which was established by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), has revealed that high temperatures and dust storms in the country are linked with the frequency of hospitalization among diabetics.

A research team at the institute, in cooperation with Harvard University and Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), conducted the study that was published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) issued by the British Medical Association in collaboration with the American Diabetes Association (ADA).

The study showed the health challenges the country is facing in terms of the spread of diabetes and obesity under harsh environmental conditions like dust storms and extreme heat.

Entitled, "The Combined Effect of Dust Storms and Extreme Heat on Diabetics in Kuwait," the study was based on the daily collection of dust samples from 2017 to 2019. These samples were analyzed to determine dust pollution levels, in addition to the collection of temperature data from weather stations.

Continued on Page 5



PM Diwan photo

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the Cabinet meeting.

UN Assembly backs Palestinian resolution for Israeli withdrawal

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 18, (AP): The U.N. General Assembly strongly supported a non-binding Palestinian resolution Wednesday demanding that Israel end its "unlawful presence" in Gaza and the occupied West Bank within a year.

The vote in the 193-member world body was 124-14, with 43 abstentions. Israel's U.N. Ambassador, Danny Danon, called it "a shameful decision that backs the Palestinian Authority's diplomatic terrorism."

"Instead of marking the anniversary of the Oct. 7 massacre by condemning Hamas and calling for the release of all 101 of the remaining hostages, the General Assembly continues to dance to the music of the Palestinian Authority, which backs the Hamas murderers," Danon said.

The resolution comes as Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza approaches its first anniversary and as violence in the West Bank reaches new highs. The war was triggered by Hamas attacks in southern Israel on Oct. 7.

The resolution, which also demands the withdrawal of all Israeli forces and the evacuation of settlers from the occupied Palestinian territories "without delay," is not legally binding, but the extent of its support reflects world opinion. There are no vetoes in the General Assembly, unlike in the 15-member Security Council.

Continued on Page 5

KD 25 fine, jail in car horn misuse

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: To address the disturbances caused by vehicle horns on the roads, Assistant Director of Traffic Awareness at the General Traffic Department Lieutenant Colonel Abdullah Bu Hassan says using a car horn for purposes other than intended constitutes a traffic violation.

He revealed that this offense incurs one point on the traffic points system, a fine of KD 25, and could lead to jail time if the case is taken to court and a conviction is secured.

In an interview with Kuwait TV, Lieutenant Colonel Bu Hassan clarified that car horns are intended only to warn other drivers of imminent danger or an accident, rather than to attract attention to themselves or to annoy others.

He urged all drivers to adhere to traffic laws, especially considering the presence of elderly and vulnerable drivers on the roads.

Kuwait touts IAEA role in boosting nuclear safety for member states

VIENNA, Sept 18, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait on Wednesday affirmed the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in know-how transfer, benefiting from nuclear applications, bolstering the nuclear security safety in the member states as well as its role in enforcing safeguards in line with the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The stand was expressed by the State of Kuwait Ambassador to Austria and its Permanent Representative at the international agency Tala Al-Fassam during the 68th session of the agency's general convention, currently held here.

Ambassador Al-Fassam, in his address, has affirmed the State of Kuwait's continuous keenness on cooperating with the IAEA's various departments for building capacities of the relevant national institutions to execute key projects for economic and social development, cement the coordination and work with the member countries for executing the concept, "the nuclear energy for peace and development."

Touching on Kuwait's relationship with the IAEA, Al-Fassam noted that this year marks the 60th anniversary of Kuwait's joining of the

agency, in 1964.

The State of Kuwait, throughout these 60 years, keenly supported the IAEA, contributing in he three stages of the overhaul programs of the agency's laboratories, in the fund for nuclear energy peaceful usage initiative, setting up the nuclear fuel bank, in addition to Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research's participation in the UN framework conference on climate change (28COP) and presenting the Kuwaiti explorer's ship during the convention.

Kuwait's participation in the event emanates from its belief in the necessity of joint action and international cooperation to address pending global issues such as the climate change and oceans pollution, Ambassador Al-Fassam stated, expressing aspiration to enhance the cooperation at these levels to make further achievements at the national and international levels.

As to the technical cooperation program, the Kuwaiti Ambassador HAS affirmed that the State of Kuwait dedicates special concern for the program for it constitutes a basis for building the national potentials.

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo

The first day for kindergarten students is a new experience for their parents as well.

Kindergarteners back

Kindergarten students started their first day of the academic year 2024-'25 on Wednesday, with enthusiasm and keenness.

The pupils began their educational journey with eagerness as their parents accompanied them to their classes, meeting their classmates and teachers. (KUNA)

MoCI bans cash on all car sales

New rule starts October 1

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA): Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel has issued a decision to ban cash transactions in all car sales and to limit payment transactions to banking channels starting from October 1.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry stated in a press release on Wednesday that this decision is part of its efforts to reduce suspicions of money laundering and financial crimes in the country. The ministry indicated that banning cash transactions will effectively contribute to reducing financial crimes and closing loopholes related to money laundering in particular.

The ministry explained that restricting cash sales will allow the concerned authorities to track the movement of funds, ensure their sources, and verify that they are free from any unlawful activities.

It affirmed its full commitment to combating financial crimes, including money laundering, which pose a challenge to economic growth and sustainable development. The ministry noted that these practices harm society and damage the country's international reputation, necessitating concerted efforts to combat them.



Al-Ajeel



Minister of Social Affairs poses for a group photo during the inauguration.



Minister of Social Affairs inaugurates new hall for visitors.



KUNA photos Part of the opening of the new hall.

5th PADA visitors hall inaugurated

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah has inaugurated the Visitors Hall at the Public Authority for Disabled Affairs (PADA) branch in West Abdullah Mubarak.

In a press statement, Al-Huwailah affirmed that PADA is keen on providing integrated services in a prompt manner; such that the transactions of people with disabilities are completed easily and smoothly in line with the vision of Kuwait to fully support this important segment of the population.

She said the ministry is keen on addressing all issues concerning those with special needs and working with other concerned authorities to find plausible solutions. She emphasized the importance of listening to the suggestions of those with disabilities and their families in

order to keep on improving the services offered to them as per the applicable laws.

She disclosed this is the fifth hall that the authority has opened so far; indicating the other halls are located in its headquarters in Hawalli, Jahra (Kuwait Mall), Sabah Al-Ahmad (Kuwait Mall) and Granada (Deaf Club). She added the new hall has five counters manned by competent employees.

On the other hand, Director of PADA Wafaa Al-Muhanna confirmed that the opening of more branches in various governorates will facilitate the completion of transactions for people with disabilities and their families.

Al-Muhanna revealed the services provided include opening files for the first time, renewing a disability certificate, issuing a disabled identification card, applying for a traffic plate and updating data; in addition to the electronic services on the website of PADA and Sahel application.

Crown Prince, PM send best wishes

Kuwait HH Amir congratulates Chilean President on Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable on Wednesday to Chilean President Gabriel Boric Font, congratulating him on Chile's National Day. His Highness wished the President good health and extended his best wishes for continued progress and prosperity to Chile and its people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a congratulatory cable to President Boric, wishing him good health and well-being on the occasion of Chile's National Day.

Similarly, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable congratulating President Boric on Chile's National Day.

Move aims to develop student skills

MoE's Al-Enezi launches scouting initiative for school year 2024/25

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Development and Activities at the Ministry of Education Maryam Al-Enezi issued a general bulletin to all public and private schools, including religious and foreign schools, regarding the activation of scouting teams for the 2024/2025 academic year.

The bulletin stated that the scouting movement aims to prepare students to be responsible citizens who contribute to and develop society. It also provided detailed instructions on the role and objectives of scouting teams, along with the necessary steps to enhance student participation in scouting activities.

Al-Enezi affirmed that scouting activities play a crucial role in instilling educational, national, and social values by enhancing the spirit of cooperation and teamwork, add-

ing that these activities help build self-confidence and develop leadership skills among students.

She highlighted the importance of integrating scouting activities with curricula, revealing that field activities, which apply academic concepts in practical and interactive ways, can significantly enhance the educational process.

Al-Enezi stressed the need to develop the leadership skills of scout team members by encouraging them to take on various responsibilities and work collaboratively.

She said it is important to prepare high school students to become leaders within scout teams, as this will help them lead student groups effectively and develop their management and communication skills.

Al-Enezi highlighted the importance of schools adhering to the activation of scout teams in line with educational goals.

She urged all school administrations to collaborate to ensure the success of this initiative.

Al-Enezi affirmed that scout teams are a vital component of the modern educational curriculum, aimed at preparing a generation of young people to face future challenges with a sense of responsibility and effective patriotism.



Al-Enezi

MPW conducts engineer hiring with online exams

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Ministry of Public Works conducted online tests for engineers applying to head road maintenance projects, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting MPW sources.

This initiative, coordinated with various departments and sectors, aims to ensure that the right individuals are selected based on their experience and skills in managing road maintenance, including tasks such as asphalt paving, excavation, and replacing services and infrastructure.

A committee comprising members from sectors such as the Maintenance Engineering Sector and the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport was formed to conduct interviews with applicants.

After these interviews, online tests were administered to assess the capabilities of engineers in project management and their ability to expedite completion.

This new process marks a shift from previous years when engineers were assigned without such tests, addressing past project and maintenance issues to prevent future recurrences.



September

Room Promotion





Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 57.173 net	BHD 128.000 net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 65.000 net	BHD 145.000 net

Promo period from 1st September to 20th September 2024 Terms & conditions apply*



KUNA photo Part of the audience during the 'New Standards for Healthy Cities' training course.

Over 10K individuals trained in first aid

EMS teams commended in new healthy cities standards training

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Director of the Emergency Medical Department and former National Coordinator of Healthy Cities Dr. Ahmad Al-Shatti praised the emergency medical teams for their exceptional participation in the "New Standards for Healthy Cities" training course under the Healthy Cities Initiative.

In a press release issued yesterday, he highlighted their contributions through their experiences in emergency clinics, awareness campaigns, mock exercises, and participation in evaluation committees.

Dr. Al-Shatti revealed that the emergency medical team's involvement in the initiative included reviewing various relevant experiences and areas of expertise such as First Aid clinics in medical office buildings and a manual detailing basic technical requirements concerning location, content, monitoring, and ongoing development.

He highlighted the "A Paramedic in Every Home" campaign, which has trained over 10,000 individuals, and has been instrumental in raising First Aid awareness among residents of health cities seeking to join the Healthy Cities Network.

Dr. Al-Shatti affirmed the Emergency

Medical Department's efforts to enhance public awareness of emergency management techniques. This included planning simulated evacuation drills to assess people's readiness and their ability to handle such situations, as well as ensuring ongoing evaluation and training at assembly and evacuation sites.

He underscored the department's involvement in health assessment committees for applicants seeking to join the network of cities, universities, governorates, malls, and commercial complexes.

Dr. Al-Shatti indicated that over 150 specialists from various related bodies and entities participated, including representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Environment Public Authority, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Health, media, and Medical Emergency Department, as well as from the WHO, the Social Development Office, Kuwait University, and the registered healthy cities in Kuwait.

It is noteworthy that the Healthy Cities Office at the Ministry of Health organized the course to review the new indicators proposed by the WHO. The aim was to standardize efforts, stimulate participation, and encourage contributions from various sectors in promoting health.

KRCS hands out aid to Eastern Sudan

KHARTOUM, Sept 18, (KUNA): Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) announced Tuesday, the delivery of humanitarian aid to 137 families in the city of Tokar, eastern Sudan, which was exposed to the worst floods in its history.

The head of KRCS delegation to Sudan, Abdulrahman Al-Saleh, told KUNA after a field visit to the city, that KRCS began the aid distribution program in the affected (Tokar) with the support and cooperation of the Ambassador of Kuwait to Sudan, Dr. Fahd Al-Dhafiri, and members of the mission.

He added that the Kuwaiti aid, which covers about 50,000 residents of the city, included essential needs, in addition to 10 boats, 4 large water pumps, and pesticide machines, expressing his hope that this aid would



KUNA photo The Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society provides assistance to families affected by floods in eastern Sudan.

contribute to alleviating the severity of the disaster.

Al-Saleh stressed that KRCS will continue to provide support and aid within the Sudanese market, in implementation of the directives of the Kuwaiti leadership to support the

Sudanese people in facing the war and flood crises.

He thanked the Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS) and everyone who contributed to making the visit and enabling the Kuwaiti delegation to reach those affected in their areas.

World News Roundup

Europe

Boy stabs 6 kids

Ukraine 'destroys' Russia army depot

KYIV, Ukraine, Sept 18, (AP): Ukrainian drones struck a large military depot in a town deep inside Russia overnight, causing a huge blaze and prompting the evacuation of some local residents, a Ukrainian official and Russian news reports said Wednesday.

Meanwhile, a senior US diplomat said that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's recently announced - but still confidential - plan for winning the war "can work" and help end the conflict that is now in its third year.

Ukraine claimed the strike destroyed Russian military warehouses in Toropets, a town in Russia's Tver region about 380 kilometers (240 miles) northwest of Moscow and about 500 kilometers (300 miles) from the border with Ukraine.



Zelenskyy

The attack was carried out by Ukraine's Security Service, along with Ukraine's Intelligence and Special Operations Forces, a Kyiv security official told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the operation.

According to the official, the depot housed Iskander and Tochka-U missiles, as well as glide bombs and artillery shells. He said the facility caught fire in the strike and was burning across an area 6 kilometers (4 miles) wide.

Repel

Russian state news agency RIA Novosti quoted regional authorities as saying air defense systems were working to repel a "massive drone attack" on Toropets, which has a population of around 11,000. The agency also reported a fire and the evacuation of some local residents.

There was no immediate information about whether the strikes had caused any casualties.

Successful Ukrainian strikes on targets deep inside Russia have become more common as the war has progressed and Kyiv developed its drone technology.

Portugal declares a state of calamity: More than 100 wildfires stretched thousands of firefighters to the limit in northern Portugal on Wednesday, with seven deaths since the worst spate of fires in recent years spread out of control over the weekend.

Portuguese Prime Minister Luis Montenegro declared a state of calamity for the hardest-hit areas late on Tuesday, invoking powers to mobilize more firefighters and civil servants. He also called on police investigators to redouble their efforts to find those who started the fires and pledged help for those who have lost their homes or have been evacuated.

"We are well aware that these difficult hours are not over yet," Montenegro told the nation in a televised address. "We have to continue to give everything we have and ask for help from our partners and friends so that we can reinforce the protection of our people and property."

The European Copernicus satellite service said that over 15,000 hectares (37,000 acres) had been scorched and a combined 13 kilometers (8 miles) of fire fronts had been detected as on Tuesday night. It added that an area home to 210,000 people was exposed to the fire risk.

The hot, dry conditions behind the outbreaks in Portugal coincided this week with flooding in central Europe.

Boy stabs, injures 6 kids in Portugal: Portugal was shaken Tuesday when a 12-year-old boy stabbed and injured six other children in a rare episode of violence inside a school.

Portuguese national police said that the victims were from 11 to 14 years old in the attack at the school in Azambuja near Lisbon.

One boy was seriously injured with a chest wound but his life is not in danger, Azambuja Mayor Silvino Lúcio said. The boy had been taken to a hospital in Lisbon.

The mayor said five girls suffered light wounds to their arms.

The attacker was in custody, the police said. No motive was immediately given for the attack.

Portuguese Prime Minister Luis Montenegro condemned the attack and wished for the quick recovery of the injured children in a message posted on social media platform X. He called it an "isolated attack" that was extremely rare in his country.

"It was an isolated act and a strange occurrence in Portuguese society, but one that should make everyone who works in public space reflect with a sense of responsibility," Montenegro wrote in Portuguese.

'Floods, wildfires show climate breakdown': Devastating floods through much of Central Europe and deadly wildfires in Portugal are joint proof of a "climate breakdown" that will become the norm unless drastic action is taken, the European Union's head office said Wednesday.

"Make no mistake. This tragedy is not an anomaly. This is fast becoming the norm for our shared future," said EU Crisis Management Commissioner Janez Lenarcic.

The worst flooding in years moved Tuesday across a broad swath of Central Europe, taking lives and destroying homes. At the other end of the 27-nation EU, raging fires through northern Portugal have killed at least six people.

"Europe is the fastest warming continent globally and is particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events like the one we are discussing today. We could not return to a safer past," Lenarcic told EU lawmakers in Strasbourg, France.

He warned that beyond the human cost, nations are also struggling to cope with mounting bills for repairing the damage from emergencies and the lengthy recovery from disaster.

Cyprus court sacks govt accountant: Cyprus' top court ordered Wednesday that the country's comptroller general be removed from his post for alleged misconduct and interferences in the works of judiciary.

The ruling is believed to be the first of its kind in the Mediterranean island nation's 64-year history.

The eight-judge panel of the Supreme Constitutional Court said in a 209-page decision that Odysseas Michaelides had "violated boundaries" and exhibited "behavior unbecoming" for his post.

The ruling is the latest chapter in a long-running feud between Michaelides, the government's chief accountant, and Attorney General George Savvides and his deputy Savvas Angelides, who had brought the case before the top court.



Dutch Princess Alexia, Princess Amalia, King Willem-Alexander, Queen Maxima, Princess Laurentien and Prince Constantijn (from left to right) wave to people on the balcony of Noordeinde Palace on Prinsjesdag, in The Hague, the Netherlands, on Sept 17. The third Tuesday in September is Prince's Day in the Netherlands. It marks the opening of the Dutch parliamentary year, and on this day the reigning monarch outlines the government's plans for the year ahead. (Xinhua)

Dutch govt asks for formal opt-out from EU migration rules

The new Dutch government dominated by the far-right party of Geert Wilders officially asked the European Union for an exemption from its migration obligations on Wednesday, seeking to fulfill a campaign promise to drastically reduce the number of immigrants in the nation.

Dutch Migration Minister Marjolein Faber of Wilders' party wrote to the European Commission that the Netherlands wants out of regulations for accepting refugees.

"I have just informed the EU Commission that I want a migration opt-out within Europe for the Netherlands," Faber wrote in a letter to Ylva Johansson, the European Commissioner for Home Affairs, posted on social media.

On Tuesday, the government, which came to power in July, announced its policy blueprint for the coming year, including stricter policies to hold back or kick out migrants who don't qualify for asylum.

The announcement came just a day after party leaders were publicly bickering over their plans, underscoring divisions within the four-party governing coalition.

Even before the plan was made public, the European Commission warned the Dutch government that its approach wouldn't work. "We have adopted legislation. It's adopted. You don't opt out of adopted legislation in the EU," spokesman Eric Mamer said last Friday.

Dutch King Willem-Alexander, a mostly ceremonial monarch, summarized the wide-ranging policy blueprint for the coming year and beyond a day after members of the hard right-led coalition publicly bickered over its plans to slash migration, underscoring divisions even within the four-party coalition over how to push through the reforms. (AP)

Politics

Thune strives to be next GOP Senate leader

Trump to meet Modi during visit to US

FLINT, Mich., Sept 18, (AP): Former US president Donald Trump said Tuesday that he's meeting next week with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi when Modi visits the U.S.

Modi is scheduled to be in the United States this weekend, along with the leaders of Australia and Japan, for a summit of the so-called Quad hosted by President Joe Biden in his Wilmington, Delaware, hometown. The group is formally called the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, and it began as a partnership after the devastating 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

The popular and polarizing Indian prime minister has advanced Hindu nationalism in his decade-long tenure.

The meeting between Modi with Trump had not been previously reported. The Republican presidential nominee referenced it for the first time while speaking at an unrelated event in Flint, Michigan. The Indian embassy in Washington did not respond to a request for comment Tuesday night.

Foreign leaders have argued that meetings with Trump are part of standard encounters they have with opposition figures.

Trump on Tuesday made his first public appearance since Sunday's second apparent assassination attempt against him, speaking to a crowd chanting "God bless Trump!" and "Fight, Fight, Fight!" as U.S. Secret Service agents surrounded the stage to protect him.

There's more work to do after Liberals suffer loss: Trudeau

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, Sept 18, (AP): Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Tuesday he's focused on the work ahead after the ruling Liberals lost in another by-election, raising more questions about his ability to lead the party into the next federal election.

For the second time in recent months the Liberals lost in a former stronghold when the Bloc Quebecois won the vote in the electoral district of LaSalle-Emard-Verdun Monday in Montreal in a tight three-way race with the New Democratic Party.

"Obviously it would have been

nicer to be able to win . . . but there's more work to do," Trudeau said in Ottawa.

"The big thing is to make sure that Canadians understand the choice they get to make in the next election," Trudeau said. "That's the work we're going to continue to do."

Election Canada results show the Bloc candidate Louis-Philippe Sauve finished with 28% of the vote. Liberals' candidate Laura Palestini collected 27.2% and finished just 248 votes behind the winner. The NDP collected 26.1% and was about 600 votes behind the winner.

tory, Thune, 63, had approached the contest with the same quiet intensity - fueled by an aversion to losing - he learned on the basketball court and track of Murdo's high school.

The outcome of the secret leadership ballot, expected after the November election, is deeply uncertain. It's a weighty choice for Senate Republicans as they leave the McConnell era, creating a test of whether someone like Thune, who defines himself by the party's traditional values and has at times defied Trump's wishes, can still rise to power.

Also:

MITCHELL, SD: The gold-leafed ceilings and crystal chandeliers of Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort are a long way from the small town of Murdo, South Dakota, where Sen John Thune grew up. But that's where the senator found himself this spring as he launched a bid to become the next Senate Republican leader.

Even before Sen Mitch McConnell, R-Ky, announced he would end the longest leadership tenure in Senate his-

shocked many with its intensity.

The storm that left homes flooded, cars submerged and schools closed Tuesday in parts of North Carolina wasn't really a surprise to scientists who have long said that such rainfalls are one marker of climate change.

"Data shows one of the strongest relationships between climate change and precipitation is that as the atmosphere warms, the capacity to hold water increases. Therefore we see more intense rainfall in a shorter period of time," said Andrew Kruczkiewicz, senior researcher at the Columbia Climate School at Columbia University. (AP)

3 shot to death in Vermont: A Vermont town official, his wife and her son were found shot to death in their home over the weekend, state police said.

Police identified them Tuesday as Brian Crossman, 46, a selectboard member in Pawlet; Erica Crossman, 41; and Colin Taft, 13. The town of about 1,400 people is near the New York state line.

They were found dead Sunday, Vermont State Police said in a news release Tuesday. All three deaths were ruled homicides.

Police said their investigation was active and no one was in custody.

Members of the Pawlet selectboard, who are elected by residents to oversee town expenditures and enact ordinances, held their regularly scheduled meeting Tuesday night. Crossman's seat was vacant and there were flowers at his place at the table. (AP)



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau responds to questions during Question Period, in Ottawa, Ontario on Sept 16. (AP)



Ryder



Kruczkiewicz

America

Hawaii's Kilauea erupts again: One of the world's most active volcanoes is erupting again in a remote part of a Hawaii national park.

Kilauea erupted briefly Sunday night in an area of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park that's closed to the public. The volcano's middle East Rift Zone eruption then resumed Monday night, U.S. Geological Survey's Hawaiian Volcano Observatory said.

Eruptive activity increased early Tuesday but there is no immediate threat to homes or infrastructure, the observatory said. Volcanic gas known as "vog" may reach downwind subdivisions near the park, the observatory warned.

The park encompasses the summits of two of the world's most active volcanoes: Kilauea and Mauna Loa. But the eruption's location in a remote wilderness area more than 6 miles (10 kilometers) from the nearest road doesn't make public viewing possible, according to park officials. (AP)

US moves soldiers to Alaska: The US military has moved about 130 soldiers along with mobile rocket launchers to a desolate island in the Aleutian chain of western Alaska amid a recent increase in Russian military planes and vessels approaching American territory.

Eight Russian military planes and four navy vessels, including two submarines, have come close to Alaska in the past week as Russia and China conducted joint military drills. None of the planes breached US airspace and a Pentagon spokesperson said Tuesday there was no cause for alarm.

"It's not the first time that we've seen the Russians and the Chinese flying, you know, in the vicinity, and that's something that we obviously closely monitor, and it's also something that we're prepared to respond

to," Pentagon spokesperson Maj Gen Pat Ryder said at a news conference. (AP)

'Firehose' storm hits NC: The Carolinas

braced for a storm that forecasters warned could bring heavy rain - as much as 6 to 8 inches in some spots. But one narrow band got a "firehose" that dumped as much as 20 inches in a so-called 1,000-year flood that



Soldiers pack sandbags to reinforce the dam due to the flooding of the Danube River at Pilismarot, Hungary on Sept. 16. Devastating floods through much of Central Europe and deadly wildfires in Portugal are joint proof of a 'climate breakdown' that will become the norm unless drastic action is taken, the European Union's head office said on Sept 17. (AP)

oil surges

The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 84 cents to USD 74.54 per barrel on Tuesday as opposed to USD 73.70 pb on Monday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Wednesday.

The price of the Brent crude and West Texas Intermediate went up respectively by 95 cents and USD 1.10 to settle at USD 73.70 per barrel and USD 71.41 pb. (KUNA)

Kuwait's trade surplus with Japan widened 15.0 percent from a year earlier to JPY 76.9 billion (USD 521 million) in August, up for the first time in two months buoyed by strong exports, government data showed on Wednesday.

Kuwait stayed in black ink with Japan for 16 years and seven months, the Finance Ministry said in a preliminary report.

Overall Kuwaiti exports to Japan grew 11.8 percent year-on-year to JPY 98.4 billion (USD 673 million) for the first increase in two months. Imports from Japan rose 1.9 percent to JPY 21.5 billion (USD 142 million),

Kuwait's August trade surplus with Japan up 15%

up for the fourth month in a row.

Middle East's trade surplus with Japan narrowed 4.8 percent to JPY 852.2 billion (USD 6.0 billion) last month, with Japan-bound exports from the region sliding 1.0 percent from a year earlier.

Crude oil, refined products, liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other natural resources, which accounted for 94.7 percent of the region's total exports to Japan, fell 2.3 percent.

The region's overall imports from Japan expanded 12.8 percent on demand for automobiles and machinery. The world's third-biggest economy logged a global

trade deficit of JPY 695.3 billion yen (USD 4.9 billion) in August for the second straight month, as a weaker yen continued to push up the value of its imports. Exports rose 5.6 percent from the year before, thanks to shipment for semiconductor-making equipment and related parts.

Imports grew 2.3 percent as pharmaceutical and oil products inflated costs amid the yen's depreciation against the dollar pharmaceutical and oil products.

China remained Japan's biggest trade partner, followed by the US. The trade data are measured on a customs-cleared basis before adjustment for seasonal factors. (KUNA)

Market Movements

18-09-2024

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
SAUDI - TASI	+35.28	11,920.94	DUBAI - DFMGI	-5.00	4,390.20
JAPAN - Nikkei 225	+176.95	36,380.17	PHILIPPINES - PSEi	-19.46	7,155.90
EGYPT - EGX 30	+183.31	30,342.46			
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+1,029.60	80,587.44			

Business

Educating younger generation on the power of digital marketing as part of its 'weyak' initiative

stc hosts digital marketing workshop in collaboration with Ordable

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, hosted a digital marketing workshop in collaboration with Ordable, an innovative platform that offers a wide range of custom-tailored solutions to businesses that include online ordering, scan or tap, point of sale, and B2B. The workshop, led by Ordable's Co-Founder, Salem Marafi, witnessed the participation of over 30 entrepreneurs representing various local businesses and restaurants.

The digital marketing workshop, organized under the 'weyak' initiative, is part of stc's broader efforts to support and empower local entrepreneurs and SMEs by providing them with the knowledge and tools needed to excel in today's fast-evolving digital landscape. As digital marketing becomes a vital component of business growth, particularly for small businesses, stc aims to leverage its network and expertise to position itself as the preferred digital enabler, offering tailored solutions and knowledge to enhance the success of SMEs in Kuwait.

Throughout the workshop, Marafi provided participants with valuable insights related to the power of successful digital marketing and its impact on businesses. He covered a range of topics within digital marketing, as well as the modern tools available today, the impact of ef-



Salem Marafi stands among the participants in the digital marketing workshop.

ficiently utilizing social media platforms, as well as engagement techniques tailored to different segments and sectors in the market. Marafi also held a Q&A session for participants, allowing them to speak about

their current situations and ask questions related to their businesses.

In a statement, stc highlighted its commitment to enabling digital transformation and innovation across Kuwait's business ecosys-

tem. The Company frequently organizes workshops and educational programs with the main focus being to educate and empower the community. These programs allow participants to understand and learn

more about the different products and services available in the market that could help them achieve their goals or streamline segments of their operations. stc aims to support local businesses by leveraging

market knowledge and marketing techniques mentioned by experts to expand their online presence, engage with customers more effectively, and drive business growth.

stc emphasized its ongoing commitment to organizing workshops that actively engage the community and offer valuable insights across a range of topics. By fostering educational and interactive platforms, stc is dedicated to cultivating a supportive and dynamic environment. Additionally, the Company continues to strengthen its partnerships with both public and private sector entities to amplify its impact and broaden its reach.

About stc

Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is a Kuwaiti shareholding company incorporated pursuant to Amiri Decree No. 187 on 22 July, 2008, to operate and manage the third GSM mobile network in Kuwait as per Law No. 2 of 2008. Accordingly, stc launched its operations in December 2008 and was listed on Bursa Kuwait in December 2014.

stc Kuwait is a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and solutions to customers, both for individuals and enterprises, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, and is a subsidiary of stc Group. stc Kuwait has expanded its portfolio by acquiring companies such as Qualitynet General Trading and Contracting Company (solutions by stc) in Kuwait, and e-portal Holding Company and its subsidiaries.

Boursa Kuwait index declines 0.3% amid cautious investor sentiment

Main market index drops by 1.3%

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Boursa Kuwait has maintained its downward trajectory since the start of the week.

The general index fell by 27.9 points, or 0.3 percent, closing at 7,128 points. Trading activity saw 303.6 million shares exchanged through 17,041 transactions, amounting to 60.9 million dinars (approximately \$185.7 million).

Consequently, the market value dropped by 165 million dinars, reaching 42.309 billion dinars compared to 42.144 billion dinars in the previous session. Investor sentiment is currently cautious as they await the outcome of today's US Federal Reserve meeting, which is anticipated to address potential interest rate cuts.

This uncertainty has contributed to global market anxiety and heightened investor apprehension about unforeseen developments.

Leading stocks experienced significant selling

pressure, causing the main market index to fall by 82.3 points, or 1.3 percent, to 6,107 points. This decline occurred with 200.2 million shares traded through 9,510 transactions, worth KWD 31.5 million (around \$96 million).

Similarly, the Premier Market index decreased by 14.8 points, or 0.19 percent, to 7,743 points, with 103.3 million shares traded through 7,531 transactions, valued at KWD 29.4 million (approximately \$89.6 million).

The (Main 50) index also dropped, falling 92.3 points, or 1.5 percent, to 5,924 points. This decline involved trading 110.5 million shares through 5,159 transactions, totaling 19.3 million dinars (about \$58.8 million).

The session saw declines in 8 sectors, with financial services leading the way with a 2.14 percent drop. Conversely, 3 sectors rose, led by communications with a 0.88 percent increase, while 2 sectors remained unchanged.

The session was marked by a decline in 85 shares, with "Invest" experiencing a notable drop of 26.92 percent. In contrast, 31 shares rose, with "Madar" leading with a 6.12 percent increase. The price of 14 shares remained stable. "Invest" was the most active in terms

of volume, trading 53.75 million shares, while "EFA" led in liquidity with about 11.54 million dinars.

Among the top gainers were Madar, Hayat Com, Maaden, and Warjia, whereas the biggest decliners included Inovest, Eva, M Business, and MK Holding.

The analysts anticipate continued fluctuations in the Boursa Kuwait due to ongoing selling pressures on leading stocks and a general wait for new market incentives. This weakness is attributed in part to declining oil prices, which heighten concerns about reduced oil revenue and increased budgetary pressures in Gulf countries.

Analysts highlighted that attention is focused on the latest US inflation data, which showed a reading of 2.5 percent for August -- the lowest since February 2021.

However, the monthly consumer price index, excluding food and energy, was higher than anticipated. This has heightened expectations that the Federal Reserve might cut interest rates by about 25 basis points today.

They emphasized that market fluctuations are likely to persist in the near term, with investors awaiting a clearer outlook on oil prices and the Federal Reserve's decision next week.

Program to boost professional competence

MoCI & IBS introduce 'certified real estate appraiser' program

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Institute of Banking Studies have signed a memorandum of understanding to launch the 'Certified Real Estate Appraiser' program to enhance the qualifications of professionals in the real estate appraisal field in Kuwait, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Ziad Al-Najem, Undersecretary of the Ministry, stated that the program aligns with the real estate appraisal standards set by the ministry.

Its goal is to improve the professional competence of real estate appraisers and strengthen the strategic role of the appraisal profession in accordance with these standards. The program was developed in collaboration with local real estate appraisal experts and incorporates the latest scientific and practical methodologies.

Al-Najem emphasized the im-

portance of real estate valuation not only within the real estate sector but also for the banking sector.

Accurate property valuation supports informed investment decisions, whether for buying or selling properties, and aids individuals seeking home ownership. Additionally, it ensures transparency and accuracy in financial data disclosure by providing a clear picture of real estate value in company budgets.

Rana Al-Nibari, Director General of the Institute, noted that the Certified Real Estate Appraiser Program (Level C) offers foundational knowledge of real estate and appraisal concepts.

This program provides an excellent opportunity for individuals to learn the basic principles and structures of real estate valuation, thereby enhancing career prospects in the field.

Kuwait's growth to rebound to 2.5% in 2025 after oil cut impact

GCC growth set to surge to 4.4 percent in 2025 as oil cuts reversed, reports ICAEW

DUBAI, Sept 18: The latest ICAEW Economic Insight report for the Middle East, prepared by Oxford Economics, paints a cautiously optimistic outlook for the region. While economic growth in the Middle East is projected at 2.1% in 2024, a significant acceleration to 3.7% is expected in 2025, largely driven by the reversal of oil production cuts by OPEC+.

GCC growth to surge in 2025

The GCC region is poised for a significant rebound, with growth projected to more than double to 4.4% in 2025 as oil production cuts are gradually phased out. The report highlights the resilience of the GCC's non-energy sectors, which are expected to expand by 4.4% in 2025. Strong domestic momentum, coupled with anticipated interest rate reductions, is expected to fuel consumption and private investment, boosting the region's overall economic outlook.

2024 growth impacted by oil production cuts

The extension of oil production cuts by OPEC+ has led to a slight downward revision of the GCC's 2024 growth forecast to 2.1% from 2.2% three months ago. While this reflects the temporary impact on the region's energy sector, the outlook for 2025 remains optimistic as oil production increases, providing a strong boost to the region's economies.

Non-energy sectors show resilience

The report underscores the resilience of GCC non-energy sectors, which are projected to grow by 4.2% this year and 4.4% in 2025. Recent PMI readings suggest strong domestic activity, and anticipated interest rate reductions are expected to further bolster consumption and private investment. These sectors, including tourism, trade, and finance, are becoming crucial growth drivers in the region's economic diversification efforts.

Kuwait faces challenges amid oil cuts

Kuwait's economy is forecast to grow by only 0.5% due to ongoing oil production cuts, but is expected to rebound to 2.5% in 2025-26. The recent discovery of the Al-Nokhatha oil field, with estimated reserves of 3.2 billion



Hanadi Khalife, ICAEW Head of Middle East.



Scott Livermore, ICAEW Economic Advisor and Chief Economist and Managing Director at Oxford Economics.

barrels, promises higher future oil gains and supports Kuwait's agenda to expand production output to 4 million barrels per day by 2035.

Oman's public finances remain resilient

Oman's economy is projected to achieve a growth rate of 1.5% in 2024, supported by a resilient non-energy sector. Growth is expected to gain further traction, reaching 2.3% in 2025, as oil production restrictions are eased. Oman's public finances remain robust, with a budget surplus expected de-

spite lower energy revenues. The country's commitment to fiscal reforms and diversification efforts has been recognised by Moody's, which recently upgraded Oman's Ba1 credit rating to positive.

Geopolitical risks remain

The report highlights ongoing geopolitical risks, particularly regional conflicts, which could impact sectors linked to tourism and trade, and adds a layer of uncertainty to the forecast. However, a potential breakthrough in nuclear talks with Iran offers some upside potential for oil production and exports in the medium term.

Inflation outlook

The GCC inflation forecast for 2024 has been lowered to 1.7%, but is expected to rise to 2.1% next year. Inflation remains below 2% in all GCC countries except Kuwait and the UAE, where slightly higher rates persist due to housing price pressures.

Hanadi Khalife, Head of Middle East, ICAEW, said: "The report underscores the importance of resilience in navigating global economic and regional geopolitical headwinds. We are confident that the Middle East's business community, supported by the expertise of the accountancy profession, will continue to demonstrate its ability to innovate and thrive amid these challenges."

Scott Livermore, ICAEW Economic Advisor, and Chief Economist and Managing Director, Oxford Economics Middle East, said: "The GCC's proactive and strategic investment in non-oil sectors, alongside the gradual recovery of oil production, is paving the way for robust growth in 2025, projected to more than double to 4.4%. In a global environment of slowing economic growth, the resilience of the GCC stands out. The region's strong performance across both energy and non-energy sectors – particularly in tourism, trade, and finance – positions it for sustained success in the coming year."

Despite ongoing challenges, the latest ICAEW Economic Insight report paints a positive picture for the region's economic prospects in 2025, driven by the reversal of oil production cuts and continued strength in non-energy sectors.

Combs pleads not guilty to sex trafficking charges

NEW YORK, Sept. 18, (AP) — Sean “Diddy” Combs pleaded not guilty Tuesday to federal sex trafficking and racketeering charges. An indictment says the music mogul “engaged in a persistent and pervasive pattern of abuse toward women and other individuals.”

Later Tuesday, U.S. Magistrate Judge Robyn Tarnofsky refused to grant Combs bail and ordered him to be jailed pending trial.

Combs was arrested late Monday in Manhattan, roughly six months after federal authorities conducting a sex trafficking investigation raided his luxurious homes in Los Angeles and Miami.

Over the past year, Combs has been sued by people who say he subjected them to physical or sexual abuse. He has denied many of those allegations.

Here is the Latest: The defense attorney for Sean “Diddy” Combs says he will appeal the decision to deny his client bail.

Combs has been indicted on sex trafficking and racketeering charges. A federal judge on Tuesday ordered the music mogul to be held without bail pending his trial.

As he left the courtroom, Combs’ lawyer, Marc Agnifilo, said he is not surprised by the outcome and that he is looking forward to a bail hearing soon, saying: “Tomorrow we fight again.”

A judge has refused to grant bail to Sean “Diddy” Combs and has ordered him to be sent to jail while awaiting trial on sex trafficking and racketeering charges.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Robyn Tarnofsky announced the decision Tuesday after hearing lengthy arguments from prosecutors and Combs’ lawyers.

Prosecutors asked that the music mogul be held without bail. Combs’ attorneys proposed that he be released on a \$50 million bond to home detention with electronic monitoring.

Combs’ defense attorney, who is asking that he be released on bail, has said in court that by coming to New York in anticipation of the charges, the music producer “did the exact opposite of what we see defendants do when they’re presented with problems in the court.”

Treatment

Marc Agnifilo said Tuesday that Combs came to New York to “wait it out.”

Agnifilo also says Combs is receiving “treatment and therapy for things that he needs treatment and therapy for.” He says his client is “not a perfect person,” that he has used drugs and has been in toxic relationships.

Prosecutors seeking to have Combs’ jailed without bail have pointed to a 2016 video of the music producer assaulting a woman as she attempted to leave a California hotel.

In court Tuesday afternoon, Assistant U.S. Attorney Emily Johnson said the assault happened after one of Combs’ “Freak Offs,” which is defined in the indictment as “elaborate and produced sex performances.”

Johnson did not identify the woman who was attacked, but a video from that time first published by CNN this year shows Combs attacking R&B singer Cassie.

Johnson says Combs tried to bribe a hotel security officer “with a handful of cash in exchange for his silence,” but was unsuccessful.

She says the video showing the attack disappeared from the hotel’s servers within days and that this was no coincidence.

Johnson says Combs only acknowledged this attack relatively recently, after being confronted with the video, and that this proves he can’t be taken at his word.

Federal prosecutors have asked that Combs be jailed without bail, while his attorneys have proposed he be released on a \$50 million bond.

In court Tuesday afternoon, Assistant U.S. Attorney Emily Johnson said the government is seeking Combs’ detention on “multiple bases,” including the severity of the charges against him and the potential punishment of life in prison. She argued that he is a flight risk and there is a risk of witness intimidation.

“Mr. Combs physically and sexually abused victims for decades,” Johnson said. “He used the vast resources of his company to facilitate his abuse and cover up his crimes. Simply put, he is a serial abuser and a serial obstructor.”

Continued on Page 12

People

Variety



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows character Orion Pax/Optimus Prime, voiced by Chris Hemsworth, in a scene from ‘Transformers One.’ (AP)

Film

Film brings new depth to classic heroes and villains

Epic origin story in ‘Transformers One’

By Mark Kennedy

Movie origin stories finally reach their nadir this week with “Transformers One,” the super-violent, toy-selling vehicle that tells the tale of how Optimus Prime and Megatron went from besties to foes. Did anyone ask for this? Did Wile E. Coyote and the Road Runner ask for too much money?

The computer-animated “Transformers One” is out of time, a throwback to a few years ago when Hollywood mined popular IP for forgotten heroes, built overly complex worlds and then ramped up the action so that the audience just got numbed to a blur of battles. But “Transformers One” isn’t good enough to watch on a plane, even a trans-Pacific flight. The inflight map is better.

A map isn’t a bad idea, actually: You may need some sort of guide for this one — those uninitiated to the folklore of Cybertron are flung helplessly into references to Energon, Alpha Trion, Quintessons and something called the Matrix of Leadership. You come in halfway into a conversation.

The story by Andrew Barrer and Gabriel Ferrari is basically the Bible’s Cain and Abel with a detour into the Roman Empire and the Hasbro figurines’ accumulated mythology, which seems to be a series of never-ending epic battles between good and evil. Some stuff just seems downright weird, like why these robots need a gym or why after running they become breathless.

The main heroes here are buddies Orion Pax and D-16 — who will become mortal enemies Optimus Prime and Megatron by the end — and we meet them when they are lowly miners, basically non-transforming bots digging for reserves of the energy cleverly called Energon. This is a society in which the upper class is made up of Transformers who stomp around preening while the lower classes do dirty jobs like comb through garbage.

They all serve Sentinel Prime, the leader of the subterranean Iacon City, who is not what he seems.

He is apparently the last of the Primes and lives in a marble palace, giving the people below spectacles as a diversion, like an epic road race. It gives off ancient Roman Coliseum vibes.

Orion Pax (voiced with puppy-dog sweetness by Chris Hemsworth) is not satisfied by this life. “There’s got to be something more I can do,” he says. “Aren’t you tired of being treated like you’re nothing?” Brian Tyree Henry voices D-16 with skepticism and resignation.

The two friends join with mining manager Elita-1 (Scarlett Johansson, bland) and Keegan-Michael Key’s B-127 (who will later become fan favorite Bumblebee) to journey to the surface of the planet, find the Matrix of Leadership (a sort of necklace that might have been sold in the Sharper Image catalog) and get a hero’s welcome. But they learn some unsavory things about the ruler from the Transformer elder statesman Alpha Trion (the instantly recognizable Laurence Fishburne).

Compliment

Director Josh Cooley, who co-wrote the screenplay for “Inside Out” and helmed “Toy Story 4,” never lets the action stop — and that’s not a compliment. The camera is constantly swiveling and the violence — assault-weapon lasers, booming cannons, light torture, martial arts crunching moves, beating a rival with their own amputated limb and ceaseless pounding — is nauseating. (“Please stop punching me in the face” is a joke line here.) If Transformers ever bled, this would be an R-rated movie.

The hyper-violence papers over some pretty robotic — sorry! — dialogue. Why do all these movies show the Transformers with cool upgrades like laser knives but they remain speaking in stilted, operatic prose? “I want him to suffer and die in darkness.” “They are to be your undoing” and “Cybertron’s future is in your hands.”

There are some good moments, of course. When our band of misfit bots get an upgrade to Transformer

status, they cutely don’t know how to do it seamlessly at first, with limbs awkwardly getting mixed with vehicle parts. Anyone who has played with the toys knows the feeling. And Key never fails to generate a chuckle, proving a masterful comedic voice actor.

The other actors — Jon Hamm and Steve Buscemi, included — hardly register and the movie’s main song — “If I Fall” by Quavo, Ty Dolla Sign and Brian Tyler’s Are We Dreaming — feels like AI wrote both the uninteresting rap-rock beat and soupy lyrics (“I’m the alpha, omega, got lights on me, Vegas.” Vegas?)

The saddest thing about “Transformers One” is the wastefulness of another dull outing in a universe geared toward kids just learning to transform themselves. The lessons here, unfortunately, are that friends can become enemies overnight and you only win if you beat someone hard enough. “We’re better than this,” Orion Pax screams at his sudden rival at one point. No, they’re not.

“Transformers One,” a Paramount release that lands in theaters Friday, is rated PG for “sci-fi violence and animated action throughout, and language.” Running time: 103 minutes. Half a star out of four.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Alex Garland’s “Civil War” is finally making its debut on MAX on Friday. The film stars Kirsten Dunst as a veteran photojournalist covering a violent war that’s divided America; She reluctantly allows an aspiring photographer, played by Cailee Spaeny, to tag along as she, an editor (Stephen McKinley Henderson) and a reporter (Wagner Moura) make the dangerous journey to Washington, D.C., to interview the president (Nick Offerman), a blustery, rising despot who has given himself a third term, taken to attacking his citizens and shut himself off from the press. In my review, I called it a bellowing and haunting experience; Smart and thought-provoking with great performances. It’s well worth a watch. (AP)

Features

ARABIC TIMES

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

MEXICO CITY: The Mexican pop-rock band Maná has removed its 2016 song with Nicky Jam after the Puerto Rican reggaeton singer expressed his support for Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump.

“Maná does not work with racists,” the group said in an Instagram post explaining the decision to remove “De pies a cabeza” from online platforms. The song is a remix of the 1992 original included on Maná’s classic album “¿Dónde jugarán los niños?”

“For the last 30 years Maná has supported and defended the rights of Latinos in the world. There is no business or promotion that is worth more than the dignity of our people,” the band wrote on Instagram.

Jam, known for songs such as “Travesuras,” “Voy a Beber” and the J Balvin collaboration “X” expressed his support for Trump last Friday at a rally in Las Vegas. When introducing the singer, Trump seemed to mistake him for a woman: “Latin Music superstar Nicky Jam! Do you know Nicky, she’s hot. Where’s Nicky?” he said.

Despite the confusion, Jam expressed pleasure at meeting Trump, who since his first presidential campaign has promised to close the border and espoused harsh anti-immigrant rhetoric.

Maná has supported the cause of migrants in the United States for more than two decades. In 2018, upon receiving the Latin Recording Academy’s Person of the Year award, their vocalist Fher O’Lvera promised: “We will continue to fight for the rights of migrants who have made this country great; in the last century, they were the difference for this country to be as great as it is.” (AP)

LONDON: News publisher Guardian Media Group said Tuesday it is in talks to sell The Observer newspaper to Tortoise Media, a “slow news” outlet founded by a former BBC executive and a US diplomat.

Founded in 1791, the Observer is the world’s oldest Sunday newspaper. It was bought by Guardian Media Group, which also publishes the Guardian, in 1993.

Tortoise was co-founded in 2019 by James Harding, a former

BBC news executive and editor of The Times newspaper, and Matthew Barzun, who was a US ambassador to Britain between 2013 and 2017.

Tortoise has produced multimedia investigations including the popular podcast “Sweet Bobby,” which is set to be made into a Netflix documentary.



Trump



Balvin

The companies did not disclose the price or terms of the potential deal.

Guardian editor-in-chief Katharine Viner said a deal with Tortoise “has the potential to be a very positive thing.”

“My number one priority is a future in which both titles continue to thrive and deliver high quality

journalism to our readers,” she said. (AP)

BEIJING: China’s box office revenue for the Mid-Autumn Festival holiday, which lasted three days until Tuesday, reached 389 million yuan (54.89 million U.S. dollars), according to data released

by the China Film Administration on Wednesday.

The figure marks a slight increase from the 367 million yuan recorded in 2023 and the 371 million yuan in 2022, according to box office tracker Maoyan.

In comparison, the Mid-Autumn box office hit a record high of over 800 million yuan in 2019. (Xinhua)

People & Places

People

'Bail denied'

Prosecutors highlight flight risk, tampering

Continued from Page 11

Sean "Diddy" Combs has pleaded not guilty to federal sex trafficking and racketeering charges.

Combs stood up to enter his plea in a New York courtroom Tuesday.

An indictment unsealed Tuesday alleges Combs presided over a sordid empire of sexual crimes, coercing and abusing women for years while using blackmail and shocking acts of violence to keep his victims in line.

A motion for bail from Combs' attorneys proposes he be released on a \$50 million bond secured by his home in Miami.

The motion filed Tuesday also proposes his detention at home with GPS monitoring, with his travel restricted to federal districts in south Florida and southern New York.

The motion says Combs will turn over his passport and that he is attempting to sell his private jet. It says he has remained in the country even though there were no restrictions on his travel, and that his attorneys have kept attorneys updated on his location.

It adds that "conditions at Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn are not fit for pre-trial detention." Prosecutors say Combs repeatedly engaged in violence towards his employees and others.

Witnesses

In a court filing Tuesday, prosecutors say Combs and an unidentified co-conspirator kidnaped someone at gunpoint a few days before Christmas in 2011 in order to facilitate a break-in at another person's home. They say multiple witnesses, police reports and other records corroborate the incident.

The detention memo also says that two weeks later, Combs' allies set fire to a vehicle by slicing open its convertible top and dropping a Molotov cocktail inside.

Prosecutors say police and fire department reports document the arson and that multiple witnesses heard Combs brag about his involvement.

Prosecutors say Combs should be denied bail because he is a serious flight risk.

In a detention memo filed in court, prosecutors say Combs has "seemingly limitless resources" to flee, pointing out that his net worth is close to \$1 billion, including over \$1 million in personal cash on hand as of last December.

They said he has had a personal plane for international travel since 2019, along with multiple vehicles in multiple locations.

The letter says Combs "has the money, manpower, and tools" to flee without detection.

Prosecutors say the violence Combs exacted on his victims was so extreme that he should be denied bail.

In a detention letter written for the federal judge overseeing the music mogul's case, prosecutors described how Combs would assault women, employees and others "by throwing objects at them, choking them, pushing them, kicking them, and slamming them against walls and on to the ground."

The letter says the violence was sometimes spontaneous and sometimes premeditated, including "resorting to kidnapping and arson when the defendant's power and control were threatened."

Prosecutors say Combs "disposition to violence cannot be reasonably prevented through bail conditions."

The letter also says Combs should be denied bail because he has already reached out to potential witnesses in the case and that further attempts at witness tampering are likely.

US Attorney Damian Williams says Combs did not act alone.

During a news conference Tuesday, Williams said Combs' security and household staff, as well as operators high up in the music industry were complicit. Williams says they cleaned up damaged hotel rooms and "delivered large quantities of cash to Combs to pay for the commercial sex workers."

Williams says the investigation is ongoing, and is urging "anyone with information about this case to come forward and to do it quickly."

US Attorney Damian Williams, whose office is bringing the case against Sean "Diddy" Combs, says the music mogul led a criminal organization that carried out kidnapping, forced labor and sex trafficking, among other crimes.

Ammunition

Speaking at a news conference Tuesday, Williams said authorities will seek to have Combs detained while he awaits trial.

He spoke before a display board showing images of some of the items recovered in searches of Combs' homes in Los Angeles and Miami in March, including AR-15s and a drum magazine containing dozens of rounds of ammunition. He says agents also seized electronic devices that contain images and videos of sexual encounters.

Williams says: "Combs led and participated in a racketeering conspiracy that used the business empire he controlled to carry out criminal activity, including sex trafficking, forced labor, kidnapping, arson, bribery, and the obstruction of justice."

Combs' lawyer, Marc Agnifilo, has said he will fight to keep his client free. He says Combs is innocent and will plead not guilty.

Combs' former longtime girlfriend, whom he was seen attacking in a March 2016 security video, has declined to comment on the federal case against him.

Douglas Wigdor, an attorney for the singer Cassie Ventura, said in a statement released before Combs was due to appear in court Tuesday that neither he nor his client have anything to say on the matter.

Wigdor says: "We appreciate your understanding and if that changes, we will certainly let you know."

Ventura reached a settlement with Combs last November, one day after filing a lawsuit containing allegations of beatings and abuse by the music producer.

Outside the Manhattan courthouse early Tuesday, Combs' lawyer, noted that his client came to New York City voluntarily because they knew the charges were coming.

Marc Agnifilo said: "Not a lot of defendants do that. He came to New York to, to basically engage the court system and start the case."

Though the indictment was not unsealed at the time of his comments, Agnifilo said they know what the charges will be and that Combs is "innocent of these charges." He vowed to "fight like hell" to get Combs released from federal custody.



Models wear creations as part of the Alberta Ferretti Spring Summer 2025 collection, that was presented in Milan, Italy, Tuesday, Sept. 17, 2024. (AP)



Actor Chris Hemsworth attends the premiere of 'Transformers One' at AMC Lincoln Square on Tuesday, Sept. 17, 2024, in New York. (AP) — Details Page 11

Fashion

Dreamy summery dresses

Ethereal yet grounded looks rule Milan Week

MILAN, Sept. 18, (Agencies): Just as the northern hemisphere starts the wardrobe transition from summer to fall, runway shows in the world's fashion capitals seek to stir the imagination, and desire, for the next warm weather season.

Milan designers have been ambiguous about seasons in recent fashion weeks, with summer collections not corresponding to the soaring temperatures. That was not the case during the first day of Milan Fashion Week previews on Tuesday, featuring diaphanous, dreamy summery dresses, alongside crisp cotton.

Here are highlights from the first day of Milan Fashion Week of runway previews of mostly womenswear for Spring-Summer 2025:

Fendi honored its upcoming centenary with a Spring-Summer 2025 collection that paid elegant homage to the founding era, from art deco detailing to a flapper silhouette, light on the fringe.

In snippets of conversation that punctuated the show's soundtrack, Silvia Venturini Fendi emphasized the matriarchal lineage that has made her the third generation to play a key Fendi role. "My mother was the energy of the house," Venturini Fendi recalled.

The collection by Fendi womenswear artistic director Kim Jones sought to spotlight "100 years of very chic Roman women," combining ready-to-wear with artisanal detailing

of couture. Diaphanous dresses with art-deco embroidery were grounded with boots. Slip dresses were turned upside down as skirts, worn with a sheer top embellished with crystals. Knitwear defined the silhouette, under sheers or hugging the body over diaphanous trousers.

Bags by Venturini Fendi, artistic director of accessories, were soft and huggable, often carried in triplicate.

Alberta Ferretti showed her summery creations in the courtyard of a former cloister, now a science museum, with an elegant dome rising in the background, the juxtaposition emphasizing the artisanal heritage in her collection.

Instead of embellishments, Ferretti focused on technique. Laser cut cotton created an almost lace effect. Individual cotton leaves were stitched together as dresses or accents on bodices. Pleating elevated dresses, while boxer shorts gave a casual flair.

The day looks were in earthy tones of sand, ecru and black. For evening, chiffon dresses flowed in bright shades.

"They are real summer clothes, because the world in the summer is very warm. I know a show is supposed to be a show but reality is important," Ferretti said backstage.

Marni maintained its zany heritage under creative director Francesco Risso, with a wardrobe of whimsically tailored everyday looks for him and for her.

until Weinstein is arraigned. Prosecutors have said that the grand jury heard evidence of up to three alleged assaults: in the mid-2000s at the Tribeca Grand Hotel, now known as the Roxy Hotel, and a Lower Manhattan residential building, and, in



Sorokin



Weinstein

The indictment will remain under seal

Music

Latin Grammys

Epic concert film of Houston soon

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 18, (AP): Whitney Houston's epic concert in South Africa staged after President Nelson Mandela's landmark election will be hitting theater screens this fall.

Houston's performance in 1994 has been turned into a fully-remastered theatrical release called "The Concert for a New South Africa (Durban)," according to a statement Tuesday from several collaborators, including Houston's estate, Sony Music Entertainment and Trafalgar Releasing.

The limited theatrical screening will debut Oct. 23 and feature the late singer's never-before-released show from Durban, South Africa. The project will come ahead of a new live album, "The Concert for a New South Africa (Durban)," which will be released Nov. 8.

"She loved South Africa; she loved the people, and she loved Nelson Mandela," said Pat Houston, the singer's sister-in-law and Houston estate executor who is an executive producer on the concert film. "This concert is one of the most consequential concerts of her career. On this momentous 30th anniversary, we are thrilled that we can release this film not only to her fans, but to the people of South Africa and its new generation."

In 1994, Houston took the stage for three concerts in South Africa including in Durban at Kings Park Stadium, Johannesburg and Cape Town. Her performances came in a newly unified post-apartheid nation following Mandela's historic election victory.

Charities

The concerts drew more than 200,000 attendees in a show filled with celebration of freedom, hope and unity. The proceeds from her concerts benefited numerous local South African children's charities through her foundation.

For the film, Houston's performance was remastered into 4K video along with enhanced audio. The concert film will be shown in nearly 900 cinemas in more than 25 countries.

"It was my first time in South Africa, and I don't think that I was truly prepared for how this trip would change me forever," said Rickey Minor, a three-time Emmy winner who was Houston's musical director for 25 years. "The energy was electric, and the audience was incredible, as we celebrated the end of apartheid. Whitney shared her love and shined her light."

Earlier that year, Houston won three Grammys, including album of the year for "The Bodyguard" soundtrack. She won record of the year and best female pop vocal performance for massive hit "I Will Always Love You."

Houston was one of the world's bestselling artists with her effortless, powerful vocals rooted in the Black church but made palatable to the masses with her pop persona. She sold over 200 million records worldwide during her 25-year career and won six Grammys, 16 Billboard Music Awards and two Emmys before her death in 2012.

Houston's live album will include some of her greatest hits from "I Wanna Dance With Somebody (Who Loves Me)," "How Will I Know," "I Have Nothing" and "Greatest Love of All." It will also include the unreleased track "Love Is."

"The message of hope and unity from the Durban, South Africa performance is still as relevant today as it was 30 years ago," said Marc Allenby, the CEO of Trafalgar Releasing. "Fans are going to be blown away by how powerful this is on the big screen."

Also:

NEW YORK: Édgar Barrera - the producer and songwriter known for his work with such artists as Madonna, Karol G, Peso Pluma, Shakira, Grupo Frontera and beyond - leads the Latin Grammy nominations for a second year in a row. This year, he's up for nine awards; last year he received 13 nominations and won three.

The Latin Recording Academy announced this year's nominees in a livestream Tuesday.

Barrera is nominated for producer, songwriter, record and album of the year. He's also nominated twice in the best Regional Mexican song category, and three times in the song of the year category, for his work on Shakira and Grupo Frontera's "Entre Paréntesis," Karol G's "Mi Ex Tenía Razón," and Maluma and Carin León's "Según Quién."

Just behind Barrera are some of his collaborators, like Karol G and Bad Bunny.



Houston

Pressure mounts on the app to protect children

Instagram makes teen accounts private in safety push

Mental health risks rise

How parents can keep their kids 'safe' on social media

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP): At what age should kids be on social media? Should they be on it at all? If they aren't, will they be social pariahs? Should parents monitor their conversations? Do parental controls work?

Navigating social media as a parent - not to mention a child - is not easy. Using social media platforms is still the default for most American teenagers, with the Pew Research Center reporting that 58% of teens are daily users of TikTok, including 17% who describe their TikTok use as almost constant. About half of teens use Snapchat and Instagram daily, with near-constant use at 14% and 8% for each, respectively.

But parents - and even some teens themselves - are growing increasingly concerned about the effects of social media use on young people. Lawmakers have taken notice and have held multiple congressional hearings on child online safety. But even with apparent bipartisan unity, making laws and regulating companies takes time. So far, no regulation has passed.

What are parents - and teens - supposed to do in the meantime? Here are some tips on staying safe, communicating and setting limits on social media - for kids as well as their parents.

There's already, technically, a rule that prohibits kids under 13 from using platforms that advertise to them without parental consent: The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act that went into effect in 2000, before today's teenagers were even born.

The goal was to protect kids' online privacy by requiring websites and online services to disclose clear privacy policies and get parents' consent before gathering personal information on their kids, among other things. To comply, social media companies have generally banned kids under 13 from signing up for their services.

Disorders

But times have changed, and online privacy is no longer the only concern when it comes to kids being online. There's bullying, harassment, the risk of developing eating disorders, suicidal thoughts or worse.

For years, there has been a push among parents, educators and tech experts to wait to give children phones - and access to social media - until they are older, such as the "Wait Until 8th" pledge that has parents sign a pledge not to give their kids a smartphone until the 8th grade, or about age 13 or 14. Some wait even later, like 16 or 17.

But neither social media companies nor the government have done anything concrete to increase the age limit.

"There is not necessarily a magical age," said Christine Elgersma, a social media expert at the nonprofit Common Sense Media. But, she added, "13 is probably not the best age for kids to get on social media."

The laws currently being proposed include blanket bans on the under-13 set when it comes to social media. The problem? There's no easy way to verify a person's age when they sign up for apps and online services. And the apps popular with teens today were created for adults first. Companies have added some safeguards over the years, Elgersma noted, but these are piecemeal changes, not fundamental rethinks of the services.

"Developers need to start building apps with kids in mind," she said.

Some tech executives, celebrities such as Jennifer Garner and parents from all walks of life have resorted to banning their kids from social media

altogether. While the decision is a personal one that depends on each child and parent, some experts say this could lead to isolating kids, who could be left out of activities and discussions with friends that take place on social media or chat services.

Another hurdle - kids who have never been on social media may find themselves ill-equipped to navigate the platforms when they are suddenly allowed free rein the day they turn 18.

A more realistic and effective approach to social media, experts say, is a slow, deliberate onboarding that gives children the tools and information they need to navigate a world in which places like TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat are almost impossible to escape.

Instruction

"You cannot just expect that the kids will jump into the world of social media, learn how to swim on their own," said Natalie Bazarova, a professor of communications and director of the Cornell Social Media Lab. "They need to have instruction."

Start early, earlier than you think. Elgersma suggests that parents go through their own social media feeds with their children before they are old enough to be online and have open discussions on what they see. How would your child handle a situation where a friend of a friend asks them to send a photo? Or if they see an article that makes them so angry they just want to share it right away?

For older kids, Elgersma says to approach them with curiosity and interest, "asking about what their friends are doing or just not asking direct questions like, 'What are you doing on Instagram?' but rather, 'Hey, I heard this influencer is really popular.'" And even if your kid rolled their eyes it could be a window.

Don't say things like "Turn that thing off!" when your kid has been scrolling for a long time, says Jean Rogers, the director of the nonprofit Fairplay's Screen Time Action Network.

"That's not respectful," Rogers said. "It doesn't respect that they have a whole life and a whole world in that device."

Instead, Rogers suggests asking them questions about what they do on their phone, and see what your child is willing to share.



Parents whose children died or were grievously harmed by social media prepare to deliver a 100,000-signature petition from parents to Congress demanding online safety legislation on Thursday, September 12. (AP)

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP): Instagram is making teen accounts private by default as it tries to make the platform safer for children amid a growing backlash against how social media affects young people's lives.

Beginning Tuesday in the US, UK, Canada and Australia, anyone under 18 who signs up for Instagram will be placed into restrictive teen accounts and those with existing accounts will be migrated over the next 60 days. Teens in the European Union will see their accounts adjusted later this year.

Parent company Meta acknowledges that teenagers may lie about their age and says it will require them to verify their ages in more instances, like if they try to create a new account with an adult birthday. The Menlo Park, California company also said it is building technology that proactively finds teen accounts that pretend to be grownups and automatically places them into the restricted teen accounts.

The teen accounts will be private by default. Private messages are restricted so teens can only receive them from people they follow or are already connected to. "Sensitive content," such as videos of people fighting or those promoting cosmetic procedures, will be limited, Meta said. Teens will also get notifications if they are on Instagram for more than 60 minutes and a "sleep mode" will be enabled that turns off notifications and sends auto-replies to direct messages from 10 p.m. until 7 a.m.

While these settings will be turned on



Students use their cellphones as they leave for the day at the Ramon C. Cortines School of Visual and Performing Arts High School in downtown Los Angeles, Aug. 13, 2024. (AP)

for all teens, 16 and 17-year-olds will be able to turn them off. Kids under 16 will need their parents' permission to do so.

"The three concerns we're hearing from parents are that their teens are seeing content that they don't want to see or that they're getting contacted by people they don't want to be contacted by or that they're spending too much time on the app," said Naomi Gleit, head of product at Meta. "So teen accounts is really focused on addressing those three concerns."

The announcement comes as the company faces lawsuits from dozens

of U.S. states that accuse it of harming young people and contributing to the youth mental health crisis by knowingly and deliberately designing features on Instagram and Facebook that addict children to its platforms.

While Meta didn't give specifics on how the changes might affect its business, the company said the changes may mean that teens will use Instagram less in the short term. Emarketer analyst Jasmine Enberg said the revenue impact of the changes "will likely be minimal."

"Even as Meta continues to priori-

tize teen safety, it's unlikely that it's going to make sweeping changes that would cause a major financial hit," she said, adding that the teen accounts are unlikely to significantly affect how engaged teens are with Instagram "not in the least because there are still plenty of ways to circumvent the rules, and could even make them more motivated to work around the age limits."

New York Attorney General Letitia James said Meta's announcement was "an important first step, but much more needs to be done to ensure our kids are protected from the harms of social media." James' office is working with other New York officials on how to implement a new state law intended to curb children's access to what critics call addictive social media feeds.

Others were more critical. Nicole Gil, the co-founder and executive director of the nonprofit Accountable Tech, called Instagram's announcement the "latest attempt to avoid actual independent oversight and regulation and instead continue to self-regulate, jeopardizing the health, safety, and privacy of young people."

"Today's PR exercise falls short of the safety by design and accountability that young people and their parents deserve and only meaningful policy action can guarantee," she said. "Meta's business model is built on addicting its users and mining their data for profit; no amount of parental and teen controls Meta is proposing will change that."

3.4m kids in Sudan at risk

Doctors Without Borders closes Russia operations

GENEVA, Sept 18, (Agencies): Doctors Without Borders said Tuesday it has closed its operations in Russia after 32 years, citing a Justice Ministry letter that said the medical aid group had been removed from a register of foreign nongovernmental organizations.

The aid group, also known by its French name Médecins Sans Frontières and acronym MSF, said it will retain its branch office in Moscow, but operations - run by its Dutch affiliate - have stopped. It was MSF Netherlands whose registration was withdrawn, a group spokesperson said in an email.

MSF has been in Russia since 1992 and has operated programs that provided aid for homeless people and migrants, tuberculosis treatment, and general health care including for infectious diseases such as AIDS.

Russia has banned a wide array of international organizations, groups and movements on the grounds that they threaten the state.

Epidemic: An estimated 3.4 million children under five are at high risk of deadly epidemic diseases in Sudan, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said Tuesday in a statement.

With heavy rains and flooding in the country, diseases such as cholera, malaria, dengue fever, measles and rubella "can spread more rapidly and severely worsen the outlook for the children in the affected states and beyond," UNICEF Representative to Sudan Sheldon Yett was quoted as saying in the statement.

The crises stem from significant declines in vaccination rates and the destruction of health, water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure due to the ongoing internal conflict, he said, adding that the deteriorating nutritional status of many children in Sudan puts

them at even greater risk.

UNICEF delivered 404,000 doses of oral cholera vaccine to Sudan on Sept. 9, said the statement.

According to UNICEF, the vaccination coverage in Sudan has plummeted to some 50 percent from 85 percent before the internal conflict.

More than 70 percent of hospitals in conflict-affected areas are non-operational, and frontline healthcare workers have not been paid in months, it said.

Food poisoning: Over 100 individuals in Chaungchar village in Tatkon township of Nay Pyi Taw, capital of Myanmar were hospitalized due to food poisoning, according to a release issued by the country's State Administration Council's Information Team on Wednesday.

The villagers in Chaungchar village, a flood-affected region, experienced symptoms such as vomiting and diarrhea after consuming biryani, chicken and potatoes, and tomato egg curry donated by the well-wishers on the morning of Sept. 17, the information team said.

As of Wednesday, all affected individuals are in stable condition, it added.

Dengue: Over 38,000 dengue cases have been reported in Sri Lanka from January to Sept. 17, the latest data from the National Dengue Control Unit shows.

Seventeen deaths from dengue have occurred during the same period, the data shows. This is a case fatality rate of 0.04 percent.

The highest number of dengue cases have been reported in the Western Province, the most populous province in Sri Lanka. 16,021 cases have been reported in the province, accounting for 41.9 percent of the total cases.

The Northern Province reported 4,744 cases or 12.4 percent of total.



Dr. Aron Blaesi, inventor of expandable, gastroretentive fibrous dosage forms presenting dosage forms before and after expansion due to water absorption. (Business Wire)

Novel dosage form cuts side effects, enhances efficacy of cancer therapy

ZURICH & CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Sept 18, (AP): At present, the prevalent oral solid dosage forms, the capsules and tablets, are loose or lightly compacted mixtures of drug and excipient particles. Upon ingestion, they rapidly disintegrate into their constituents in the stomach. The small drug particles then are swept out of the stomach and pass through the intestine.

Many kinds of cancer drug, however, are absorbed only in the acidic upper part of the gastrointestinal tract. Because the gastric residence time of the drug particles (~2-3 hours) is much shorter than the convenient dosing interval (~12-24 hours), upon repeated dosing of such drugs the drug concentration in blood fluctuates greatly.

This is therapeutically not optimal: The maximum drug concentration is high, promoting such acute side effects as heart problems, high blood pressure, liver damage, headache, and so on, and the minimum is low, compromising the efficacy of the therapy.

To mitigate these limitations, En-

zian Pharmaceuticals has invented, and developed, a new dosage form comprising a cross-ply structure of cellulose fibers. Upon ingestion, the fibrous dosage form expands due to water absorption, and forms an expanded viscoelastic gel that resides in the stomach for prolonged time, thereby releasing drug at a constant rate.

It was shown that the Enzian dosage form resides in the stomach of dogs for about a day, and dissolves for safe excretion thereafter. In a follow-up four-part study, also published by IJP, it was shown that the dosage form delivers cancer drugs into the blood of dogs at a constant rate, ensuring a steady drug concentration in blood over time.

Thus, the Enzian dosage forms enable maintaining the optimal drug concentration in blood, thereby enhancing efficacy and mitigating unacceptable side effects of cancer therapies. According to Dr. Aron Blaesi, Enzian's founder, CEO, and Lead Scientist, work is currently underway to validate the dosage forms in humans.

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Hosts reach 302-7 at stumps

Mendis gives Sri Lanka the edge in 1st test against New Zealand

GALLE, Sri Lanka, Sept 18, (AP): Raised up the order to score even more runs, prolific middle-order batter Kamindu Mendis struck a fine hundred on Wednesday to rescue Sri Lanka from a precarious position as the hosts reached 302-7 at stumps on Day 1 of the first test against New Zealand.

Kiwi quick William O'Rourke claimed three wickets in Galle but Mendis (114) was untroubled, posting his fourth century in test match cricket in only his seventh test.

The left-handed batsman has scored more than 800 runs in just 11 innings and he is on course to become the fastest Sri Lankan to 1,000 test runs, with Roy Dias (23 innings) currently holding that record. Apart from four hundreds,

Mendis also has scored four half-centuries.

Mendis had been batting at No. 7 until this test match, when he was promoted to No. 5. Often he had batted with the tail while occupying the lower position and had run out of partners.

New Zealand had the advantage after reducing Sri Lanka to 178-5

CRICKET

and with the last recognized pair out in the middle. Mendis, with Kusal Mendis (50), was involved in a 103-run partnership for the sixth wicket to help Sri Lanka fight back.

Kamindu Mendis reached his century by putting away a full toss



Sri Lanka's Kusal Mendis plays a shot on the first day of the first cricket test match between New Zealand and Sri Lanka in Galle, Sri Lanka. (AP)

from part-time spinner Rachin Ravindra to the boundary.

Kusal Mendis, made to keep wicket and pushed to No. 7 in this game, was fighting for his place but should be fine for the rest of the series.

The partnership was broken when Kusal Mendis was dismissed in unusual fashion. The batter pulled Glenn Phillips' delivery and the ball stuck short leg fielder Tom Latham and popped up to Tim Southee at short mid-wicket for an easy catch.

New Zealand took the second new ball soon after it was available and it was spinner Ajaz Patel who made the breakthrough by dismissing Kamindu Mendis with just five minutes to go for stumps.

Sri Lanka lost both its openers

Pathum Nissanka (27) and Dimuth Karunaratne (2) early in the day after electing to bat first as O'Rourke removed both batters.

O'Rourke also struck Angelo Mathews on his right index finger forcing the batter to retire. He did come out to bat after lunch and made 36.

Phillips was the pick of the spinners, bowling captain Dhananjaya de Silva through the gate.

New Zealand had a warm-up test match last week against Afghanistan in India washed out after five days without a ball being bowled. Sri Lanka is coming off a three-match test series in England which the hosts won 2-1.

The teams will play a second test beginning Sept. 26, also at Galle.

Al-Fuheis prevails over Kuwait's Al-Fatat

FUHEIS, Jordan, Sept 18: The Kuwaiti team, Al-Fatat, suffered a narrow 76-85 defeat against Jordan's Al-Fuheis Youth Club in the third round of the Arab Clubs Championship for Women's Basketball at the Fuheis Club Hall

BASKETBALL

Al-Fatat started the game with strong performance, leading by one point (45-44) at halftime, thanks to key contributions from Jay Burch and Al-Habil. However, Al-Fuheis made a comeback in the later periods, driven by

outstanding performances from American players Brookie Williams and Angela Tompkins. Williams scored 36 points, and Tompkins delivered a "double-double" with 22 points and 14 rebounds.

Despite persistent efforts from Al-Fatat to hold its lead in the final periods, Fuheis Club pulled ahead in the fourth quarter, securing the top spot in the championship standings with 6 points. Al-Fatat currently sits in second place with 5 points.

Al-Fatat will play a crucial match today against the Iraqi Gas Al-Shamal team at 3:00 pm, aiming to rebound from its loss and strengthen its position in the competition.



Al-Fatih player goes for a basket as opponents look on.

'Concussion is a public health issue of concern at all levels of soccer'

FIFA teams up with WHO for campaign to 'educate' world soccer about concussion

GENEVA, Sept 18, (AP): FIFA teamed up with the World Health Organization on Wednesday for a campaign to educate the soccer industry about the risks of concussion injuries.

"Concussion is a public health issue of concern at all levels of soccer, and many other sports, requiring greater levels of awareness and action," WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a statement.

Ten years after the alarming case in the 2014 World Cup final of Germany player Christoph Kramer, world soccer governing body FIFA is sending a toolkit to each of its 211 national federations to help teach at all levels of soccer that symptoms of a head injury can take up to 72 hours to appear.

Kramer continued to play in the final against Argentina for 14 minutes after being injured despite being in clear distress. Match referee Nicola Rizzoli later said he alerted Germany players after Kramer asked if he was playing in the final.

At the 2022 World Cup, Iran goalkeeper Ali Beiranvand was treated for several minutes on the field after clashing heads with a teammate, then continued to play on against England before finally being replaced.

SOCCER

FIFA favors letting teams make an extra substitution to remove immediately a player with a suspected head injury. That lets team medical staff evaluate injuries at length without the pressure of trying to send players back into the game.

At soccer's rules-making panel, known as IFAB, FIFA has consistently blocked proposals to allow temporary substitutions that would let injured players with a suspected concussion be assessed just for several minutes before potentially returning to the game. FIFA medical advice is that symptoms can take up to 72 hours to develop.

"The symptoms of a concussion can change or evolve within the minutes, hours, days and even weeks after the traumatic event," FIFA said of the new "Suspect and Protect" campaign. "No match is worth the risk."

Best of the Rest

Munroe wins air racing title:

Australian wingsuiter Tahi Munroe won the air racing title in 24,703 seconds at the tenth World Wingsuit League (WWL) Wingsuit World Championship at Tianmen Mountain in Zhangjiajie, central China's Hunan Province on Wednesday.

The final eight competitors jumped in turns from the nearly 1,400-meter-high mountain. The vertical distance between the takeoff and landing points is 990 meters, and the straight-line distance through the air is about 1.3 kilometers. Munroe, who entered the final with the best result in the preliminaries, took first place with an outstanding performance after two rounds of fierce competition.

As a first-time participant,

Munroe demonstrated his professional athletic ability with flawless flight. He expressed his happiness at achieving excellent results at Tianmen Mountain, which has been his dream for many years.

South African athlete Jean Jacques Wallis and Norwegian athlete Joakim Lerhaugen won second and third place, respectively. (Xinhua)

Yedder stays free: French soccer star Wissam Ben Yedder will stay free ahead of his trial on charges of assault while intoxicated, one of his lawyers told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

Marie Roumiantseva said Ben Yedder will remain under strict judi-

Cancelo steals the show, Al-Hilal sinks Al-Rayyan

DOHA, Qatar, Sept 18, (AP): Joao Cancelo scored his first goal for Al-Hilal as the Saudi Arabian club beat Qatari club Al-Rayyan 3-1 in the Asian Champions League Elite tournament.

The Portuguese international, signed from Manchester City, scored just before halftime. Earlier, Serbia international Sergej Milinkovic-Savic opened the scoring for the four-time Asian cham-

SOCCER

pion. Cancelo then assisted Marcos Leonardo for the third before the break.

Early in the second half Roger Guedes scored for Al-Rayyan but it was the Saudi Arabians who came closest to scoring again as Aleksandar Mitrovic missed a penalty.

Al-Hilal's Riyadh rival Al-Nassr drew 1-1 with Al-Shorta of Iraq on Monday when Cristiano Ronaldo stayed in Saudi Arabia after being diagnosed with a viral infection.

In this revamped tournament, the



Al-Hilal's Bono heads the ball as Al Rayyan player looks on during the Asian Champions League match.

24 teams have been divided into two groups of 12, divided into east and west geographic zones, and each plays eight games. The top eight from each group progresses to the round of 16.

There were goals galore in the east. South Korean debutant Gwangju FC won 7-3 against Yokohama F.Marinos, the Japanese team that

lost in May's final.

Chinese teams enjoyed a good start. Shandong Taishan defeated Central Coast Mariners of Australia 3-1 while Shanghai Port won 4-1 against Pohang Steelers, three-time winners, of South Korea.

Elsewhere, Japan's Vissel Kobe and Buriram United of Thailand drew 0-0.

KBA launches support initiative for Al-Jahra

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: In a supportive move to assist the Al-Jahra Club basketball teams, which have been struggling with an administrative crisis and a three-way management conflict for nearly nine months, the Kuwait Basketball Association Board of Directors has decided to reinstate the Al-Jahra basket-

BASKETBALL

ball teams across all age groups. This includes the Under-15, Under-17, Under-19, and the senior team for the 2024-2025 sports season. This decision was made during the Board's meeting No. 16/2024, held the day before yesterday.

Additionally, the Basketball Association has introduced an initiative to support all basketball teams at Al-Jahra Club. This initiative encompasses the provision of necessary player and technical equipment, including sportswear for training and matches, basketballs, and other essential items for daily training. The goal is to ensure effective participation in the approved age groups and to support any future clubs that might face similar challenges.

A specialized committee from the Association will begin working with Al-Jahra Club to ensure



Dhari Burjas

that all requirements are met before the start of the 2024-2025 season.

The decision to re-establish the Al-Jahra Club teams was based on Article (69) of the Kuwait Basketball Association's bylaws, which addresses "Unexpected Events and Force Majeure."

Dhari Burjas, Chairman of the Basketball Federation, emphasized that this decision and initiative were made out of a sense of duty and sporting responsibility. He stated, "Our aim is to enable players to continue enjoying their sport and to support Al-Jahra Club's return to full participation. We hope for a swift resolution to their issues and a successful season for all teams in the Federation's competitions."

Kihira to miss Grand Prix season

TOKYO, Sept 18, (AP): Four-time Grand Prix series medalist Rika Kihira will miss the upcoming figure skating season because of a stress fracture in her right ankle that has not fully healed, the Japanese star announced Wednesday.

Kihira said recent MRI results showed the ankle is healing but it had not reached the point where she could skate "at full strength and confidence." So with just over a year left before the 2026 Milan-Cortina Olympics, Kihira decided in consultation with longtime coach Brian Orser to focus on recovery and training rather than trying to compete.

"I will continue practicing, training, and receiving treatment without putting too much strain on my injury. I will continue to work hard every day

to improve my skills and make a full recovery," Kihira said.

The figure skating season began in earnest last weekend with the Lombardia Trophy in Italy.

World champion Ilia Malinin of the U.S. continued his push toward the Olympics by winning the men's event ahead of Japanese rivals Yuma Kagiyama and Shun Sato. Amber Glenn and Sarah Everhardt went a somewhat surprising 1-2 for the U.S. in the women's event, while American ice dancers Anabelle Morozov and Jeffrey Chen finished second.

The Nebelhorn Trophy is this week-end in Germany, but the first major international competition is Skate America beginning Oct. 18 in Allen, Texas.



Dinamo's goalkeeper Ivan Nevistic, left, attempts to punch the ball clear as teammate Dinamo's Bruno Petkovic leaps to head the ball under pressure from Bayern's Michael Olise during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Bayern Munich and GNK Dinamo at the Allianz Arena in Munich, Germany. (AP)



Kuwait continues its training in preparation for the qualifiers in China.

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Kuwait youth team finalizes preparations for Asian Cup qualifiers

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Kuwait youth team has intensified its preparations for the 2025 Asian Cup qualifiers in China, set to begin this Saturday in Group Three. The group also features teams from the UAE, Lebanon, South Korea, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

Kuwait's first match will be against the Northern Mariana Islands on Saturday, followed by a clash with South Korea next Monday in the second round. It will face Lebanon in the third round next Wednesday and conclude its group stage against the UAE on September 29.

The top team from each of the two groups, along with the best five

second-placed teams, will advance to the finals.

In preparation for the tournament, the team has conducted an

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internal training camp. Led by Croatian coach Dario Pasic and assistant coach Mohammed Al-Fulai-

jawi, the technical staff is focused on getting the players in optimal form to achieve their goal of qualification.

The technical staff has selected a 24-player squad, including Muqdad Safar, Talal Al-Matrouf, Jassim Shamouh, Hussein Kankouni, Hussein Al-Aryan, Abdullah Fares, Abdullah Al-Ayoub, Khaled Al-Kharqawi, Abdullah Al-Sarraf,

Khaled Al-Othman, Mohammed Arhama, Mohammed Al-Suraie, Ahmed Boudi, Jassim Al-Matar, Fadel Al-Sarraf, Turki Al-Yousef, Mohammed Al-Omran, Abdullah Al-Basri, Ahmed Al-Rashidi, Montaser Suleiman, Omar Al-Azmi, Eid Talal, Jassim Al-Enezi, and Bandar Nawaf.

Meanwhile, the delegations of the participating teams have begun ar-

iving, with all five teams expected to land by the end of today.

The organizing committee, headed by the acting Secretary-General of the Football Association, Dr. Saleh Al-Majroub, is in full swing with its preparations to host the qualifiers. The committee holds daily meetings to ensure the group stage runs smoothly, aiming to deliver an ideal and successful tournament.

Familiar faces dominate as CL debuts new format

Bayern rout Zagreb highlights opening night, Mbappe scores for Real again

ROME, Sept 18, (AP): Same old winners.

The revamped Champions League debuted with some familiar clubs claiming victories on opening night.

After joining Real from Paris Saint-Germain, Kylian Mbappé scored for 15-time champion, which needed late goals from Antonio Rudiger and Endrick to beat Stuttgart 3-1.

Six-time champion Liverpool returned from a goal down for a 3-1 win at seven-time champion AC Milan in a rematch of the 2005 and 2007 finals.

Harry Kane scored four in Bayern Munich's 9-2 rout of Dinamo Zagreb as the German club opened its bid for a seventh title - which could be achieved in its home stadium in May.

Two-time champion Juventus dispatched PSV Eindhoven 3-1.

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During the new league phase, all 36 teams are ranked from top to bottom in a single standings that finishes in January.

Also, Aston Villa returned to the competition for the first time in 41 years and won 3-0 at Young Boys; and Sporting Lisbon beat 10-man Lille 2-0.

The first round of league matches continues with six more matches on both Wednesday and Thursday.

After a scoreless first half, Mbappé put Madrid ahead seconds after the break when he redirected a cross from Rodrygo.

After Deniz Undav equalized for Stuttgart midway through the second half with a header, Rudiger restored Madrid's advantage with a header and Endrick sealed it with a solo counterattack in stoppage time.

"This was a typical Madrid match in the Champions League," Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois said. "We always have difficult games. We sometimes complicate things ourselves, but credit to Stuttgart. They pressed high, they were really offensive and they created chances." At 18 years and 58 days, Endrick became Madrid's youngest scorer in the Champions League. Raul Gonzalez was 18 years and 113 days old when he scored a hat trick in a 6-1 win against Ferencvarosi in 1995 for the previous record.

Christian Pulisic scored early for Milan before Liverpool struck back with headers from both of its center-backs: Ibrahim Konate and Virgil van Dijk. Dominik Szoboszlai added another for Liverpool.

"I'm very proud to be standing here after 50 appearances, a goal, and a win at the San Siro after a difficult start. The way we played after that start was outstanding," Liverpool captain Van Dijk said.

Kane converted three penalties and broke Wayne Rooney's record for the most Champions League goals by an English player by boosting his tally to 33 - three ahead of Rooney.

Bayern's best goal might have been its second from Raphael Guerreiro, who crushed in a powerful drive after a chest pass from Jamal Musiala.

Bayern coach Vincent Kompany was not the first choice when he was hired in May but so far his team has won all five of its matches. His team now tops the Champions League standings on goal difference.

Kenan Yildiz's goal for Juventus after 21 minutes was the first of the



Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior, right, fights for the ball with Stuttgart's Enzo Millot during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Real Madrid and VfB Stuttgart at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium, in Madrid. (AP)

Tomoooh Club heads to Cairo for Heliopolis Champ'ship

revamped competition. And what a goal it was.

The Turkey winger dribbled into the left side of the box and curled in a long shot off the far, top corner of the goal frame.

At 19 years and 136 days, Yildiz broke the Juventus record for the youngest scorer in the competition that Alessandro Del Piero established when he scored at 20 years and 308 days against Borussia Dortmund in September 1995.

With a goal reminiscent of the way Del Piero used to score, it seemed fitting that Yildiz was wearing the same No. 10 that Del Piero wore for Juventus.

"He was my idol as a child," Yildiz said. "An incredible evening, goosebumps." Under experienced coach Unai Emery, Villa has won three of its four Premier League matches and was in control virtually throughout at Young Boys in its return to the competition after 41 years.

Youri Tielemans put Villa ahead with a bouncing shot midway through the first half and Jacob Ramsey doubled the lead 11 minutes later by taking advantage of a loose ball. Amadou Onana sealed it four minutes from time.

Emery has won the Europa League four times with two clubs - three with Sevilla and once with Villarreal. He also coached Villarreal to the Champions League semifinals in 2022 and led Villa to the Conference League semifinals last season.

Villa was mourning the death a day earlier of 1982 European Cup winner Gary Shaw.

Viktor Gyokeres, who had been an Arsenal transfer target, opened the scoring for Sporting with a neat turn and shot into the bottom left corner.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Tomoooh Club delegation for Intellectual Disabilities departed for Cairo to participate in the 5th Heliopolis International Championship, taking place from September 19 to 21. The event features swimming, equestrian, table tennis, and athletics for all age groups, with participation from Gulf and Arab nations.

Fahad Al-Sahli, the club's assistant secretary and head of the delegation, announced that the club will compete in athletics and table tennis with three athletes over the age of 21: Mohsen Al-Mashmoum and Hassan Al-Mutawa will participate in both table tennis and athletics (100m and 200m races), while Mohammed Al-Otaibi will compete in athletics (100m and 200m races).

Al-Sahli emphasized the club's commitment to partici-

pating in international events to provide athletes with opportunities to engage in competition, sharpen their skills, and enhance their social roles in the community.

He also highlighted that this delegation includes players making their international debuts, aiming to boost their confidence and prepare them for future competitions, with a goal of building a strong foundation of champions in sports for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Club coach Bilal Al-Hamami confirmed the team's readiness following the completion of an intensive training program that began in mid-August. He noted the players' excitement and dedication, expressing optimism about achieving success in the tournament.



Al-Tomoooh Club delegation.

It was Gyokeres' ninth goal in six matches this season.

Lille midfielder Angel Gomes was sent off before the break and Zeno Debast added a long-range strike

midway through the second half.

Bayern fans didn't appear enthusiastic about the new format, holding aloft a gigantic banner that ran the length of one end of the stands

reading "Too much of a good thing - back to the roots - undo new CL-format." The protest banner was displayed during the playing of the Champions League anthem.

Flick likely to rotate squad

Atletico and Barcelona ready to start European campaigns

MADRID, Sept 18, (Xinhua): FC Barcelona and Atletico Madrid make their Champions League debuts on Thursday night with Barcelona traveling to Monaco, while Atletico Madrid are at home to RB Leipzig.

Barca travel to the south of France after starting the season with five

wins from five games in La Liga and with 17-year-old Lamine Yamal in outstanding form, along with central defender Inigo Martinez, while midfielder, Pedri also looks to be getting close to his best after a long run of physical problems.

Hansi Flick's job will be to ensure that the trio remain free of injuries under the intense fixture schedule, with Martinez and Pedri both struggling with muscle problems for the past couple of seasons.

Flick is certainly working hard at his task, with stories that he arrives at Barcelona's training ground at 6 a.m. to prepare his training sessions.

New signing Dani Olmo is out with a hamstring issue, and Fermin Lopez suffered a relapse of his muscle problem training on Tuesday, but the good news for Flick is that Frenkie de Jong and Gavi are training with the squad again as they look to get back to action.

Flick may look to rotate his squad after Sunday's win in Girona and a tough visit to Villarreal this week-

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end, with Ferran Torres and Eric Garcia both in with a good chance of starting.

Atletico welcome Leipzig after an impressive 3-0 win at home to Valencia on Sunday in a game that saw new signings, Conor Gallagher and Julian Alvarez score their debut goals for the club.

Gallagher has quickly won over the Atletico fans after his move from Chelsea, thanks to his high workrate and ability to score important goals, while Alvarez adds guile to an attack containing Alexander Sorloth (another summer arrival), Antoine Griezmann and Angel Correa.

Last season Atletico were able to turn their Metropolitan Stadium into a veritable fortress, winning all five of their European matches in front of their supporters and it will be a 60,000 full house as they start this season's campaign.

Usyk released after detention in Poland

KRAKOW, Poland, Sept 18, (AP): Heavyweight boxing champion Oleksandr Usyk has been released after being briefly detained at Krakow airport in Poland, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Wednesday.

"I was disappointed by this attitude towards our citizen and champion," said Zelenskyy after he had a phone conversation with Usyk. "Our champion has been released, and he is no longer being detained."

He posted a photo of Usyk with Ukraine's Consul General in Krakow after the athlete was released.

It was not immediately clear why the 37-year-old Usyk was detained. He is one of Ukraine's most prominent athletes known abroad, and he has organized and participated in different projects aiding his country's efforts to resist Russia's invasion.

"A misunderstanding took place. It was quickly resolved," said Usyk, expressing gratitude for the "efficient support" of Ukrainian diplomats. "And respect to Polish Police for conducting their obligations with no regards to height, weight, reach and regalia," he said on Instagram.

Recently appointed Ukraine's Foreign Minister, Andrii Sybiha, said on X that he was briefed on the details of Usyk's detention. "Such actions toward our champion are disproportionate and unacceptable," he said.