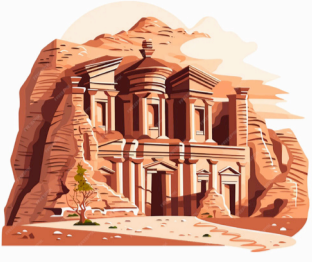




TOURISM 2
PDTRA unveils concessions to support **struggling commercial** sector amid **tourism** crisis



MODERNISATION 3
Gov't launches **second** phase of institutional **culture** system in public **sector**



DEVELOPMENT 7
Gov't launches **35m** euro programme to boost **industrial** competitiveness, support **SMEs**



FAMILY FLAVOURS 8
Knowledge for better care



Monday, June 29, 2026 | Muharram 14, 1448 Hijri



His Majesty King Abdullah meets on Sunday in Dallas, Texas, with eight-year-old Jordanian Shahm Al Manna, who is currently receiving medical treatment at children's hospital in Philadelphia

King meets young Jordanian receiving treatment in US, invites him to Nashama match

AMMAN (JT) — His Majesty King Abdullah met on Sunday in Dallas, Texas, with eight-year-old Jordanian Shahm Al Manna, who is currently receiving medical treatment at a children's hos-

pital in Philadelphia, according to a Royal Court statement.

During the meeting, the King invited Shahm and his family to attend the Jordan national football team's (Al Na-

shama) match against Argentina, fulfilling the young boy's wish to watch the national team play live.

Shahm suffers from multiple neurological and muscular disorders

that prevent him from walking without the use of an electric wheelchair. He had previously expressed his hope of attending the Al Nashama-Argentina match in person.

Photo courtesy of Royal Court

King condoles Saudi monarch, crown prince over Aramco helicopter crash victims

AMMAN (JT) — His Majesty King Abdullah II sent a cable to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, expressing condolences over the deaths of the 14 Saudi passengers on board the Aramco helicopter that crashed in Ras Tanura on Sunday.

His Majesty sent a similar cable to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the prime minister of Saudi Arabia.



Jordan condemns Iranian missile, drone attacks on Bahrain, Kuwait

AMMAN (JT) — The Foreign Ministry on Sunday condemned the "brutal" Iranian missile and drone attacks targeting Bahrain and Kuwait.

The ministry said the attacks constituted a "blatant" violation of the sovereignty of both countries and posed a threat to their security, stability and territorial integrity.

It also said that the strikes were a dangerous

escalation and a "flagrant" breach of international law and the UN Charter, according to a Foreign Ministry statement.

The ministry reiterated Jordan's unwavering solidarity with Bahrain and Kuwait, stressing the Kingdom's full support for all measures taken by the two countries to safeguard their sovereignty, security and the safety of their citizens and residents.



Jordanian rescue team launches operations in earthquake-stricken Venezuela

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan International Search and Rescue Team, operating under the Public Security Directorate's (PSD) Civil Defence, on Sunday began operations to locate and rescue individuals missing or trapped following the twin earthquakes that struck Venezuela.

The team launched its field operations immediately upon arriving in the Venezuelan capital, Caracas, aboard a Royal Jordanian aircraft, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The 100-member deployment includes highly specialised personnel, among them



The Jordan International Search and Rescue Team launches its field operations immediately upon arriving in the Venezuelan capital

three doctors from the Royal Medical Services, specialised search

and rescue, medical and technical support teams.

The team is equipped with advanced tools and technologies re-

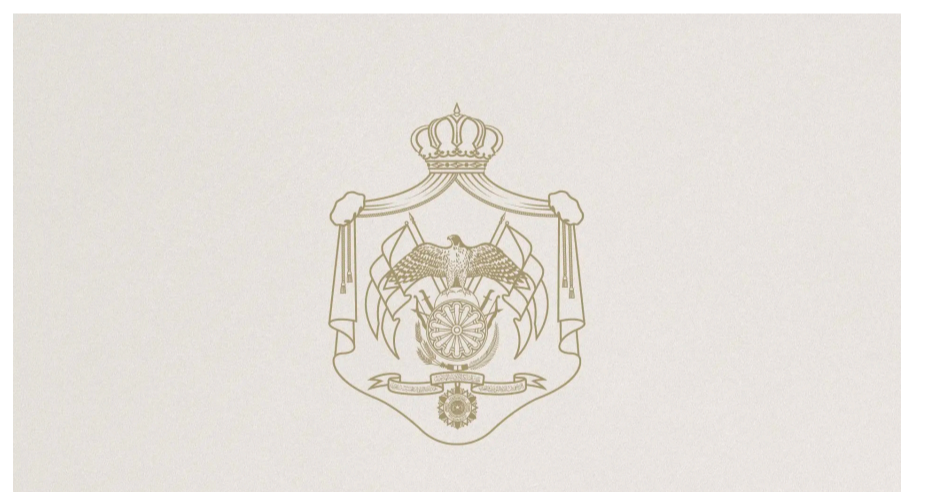
Petra photo

quired for natural disaster response, in line with the highest international standards.

The PSD said that the team is currently conducting operations across three sites in Caracas, in close coordination with relevant Venezuelan authorities.

Drawing on its extensive expertise and capabilities, the team is working to save lives and provide assistance, reflecting the humanitarian role of the PSD and Jordan's broader commitment to supporting affected countries, in line with Royal directives.

Continued on page 5



Royal decree summons Parliament to convene for extraordinary session starting 12 July

AMMAN (JT) — A Royal decree has been issued, summoning Parliament to convene for an extraordinary session, starting July 12, a Royal Court statement said.

As per the Royal decree, the Parliament will debate the 2026 amendments to the Local Administration Law, the Jordanian Universities Law, Real Estate Ownership Law,

draft law to repeal the Civil Consumer Corporation Law, and amendments to the Professional Work Regulation Law and Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission Law.

ANALYSIS



Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli air strike that targeted the southern Lebanese village of Choukine on May 17

US-backed Lebanon-Israel accord marks start of negotiations, not final outcome — analysts

AMMAN — Lebanon and Israel signed a US-sponsored framework agreement on Friday aimed at ending

months of hostilities and launching a process to restore stability along the border, although officials and analysts cautioned that its implementation

will depend on security commitments, the role of the Lebanese army and the future of Hizbollah's weapons.

Continued on page 5

Jordan's historic World Cup journey ends with loss to Argentina

By Osama Alkafri

AMMAN — Jordan concluded their historic maiden FIFA World Cup campaign with a 3-1 loss to Argentina in their final Group J match at Dallas Stadium in Arlington, Texas, on Sunday.

His Majesty King Abdullah and HRH Crown Prince Hussein attended the match.

Argentina made a confident start and took the lead in the 19th minute when Giovanni Lo Celso curled a superb left-footed free kick into the top-left corner, leaving Jordan goalkeeper Yazeed Abulaila with no chance.

The South American champions doubled their advantage in the 31st minute after a VAR review resulted in a penalty. Lautaro Martinez calmly converted from the spot, sending a right-footed effort



Jordan's forward Mousa Tamari celebrates with teammate forward Mahmoud Mardi scoring his team's first goal during the 2026 World Cup Group J football match between Jordan and Argentina at the Dallas Stadium in Arlington on Sunday

into the bottom-left corner to make it 2-0.

Jordan showed greater attacking intent after the break and were rewarded in the second

half when Mousa Tamari reduced the deficit.

The forward finished from the centre of the penalty area after meeting a pinpoint cross

from Ehsan Haddad, scoring Jordan's first-ever goal against Argentina and becoming the first player to find the net against the de-

fending world champions during the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Al Nashama continued to push forward in search of another goal, but Argentina's quality proved decisive.

Eight-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi, who began the match on the bench, was introduced in the second half and put the result beyond doubt in the 80th minute with a trademark free kick that found the back of the net to seal a 3-1 victory for Argentina.

Following the match, His Majesty praised the national team in a post on X, saying: "To Al Nashama of our national team, you have represented Jordan with honour and laid the foundations for even greater achievements that we look forward to."

Continued on page 5



The Ministry of Water and Irrigation and the Water Authority of Jordan detect major violations on the Disi water conveyance pipeline in the Jafr and Manja areas

Water Ministry detects major violations on Disi conveyance pipeline

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation and the Water Authority of Jordan detected major violations on the Disi water conveyance pipeline in the Jafr and Manja areas, where the violators illegally drained water from the pipeline to fill and sell unauthorised water tankers.

Following reports of tankers withdrawing water during the night, the ministry coordinated a security campaign on Thursday with the Royal Badia Police, as they removed the illegal equipment, bringing the total number of major violations detected within a month to 10, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The attacks involved damaging pipeline manholes and air valves to install three-inch lines for filling tankers.

Officials filed reports, while investigations continue to apprehend the perpetrators.

In the Manja area, south of Amman, authorities detected alleged perpetrators on a farm selling water to neighbouring farms via an illegal well.

The suspects installed large-diameter pipelines and water metres to sell the stolen water.

In cooperation with the Public Security Directorate, personnel dismantled the attacks and documented the

incident.

The ministry, through an ongoing campaign, exerts efforts to protect water resources in the Kingdom and urges citizens to verify the source of purchased water tankers for compliance with Jordanian drinking water standards.

Citizens should request a validated receipt as proof of water source and safety, while intensive campaigns are planned for suspected areas.

The new Water Authority Penal Law imposes stiffer penalties on anyone who assaults water lines or sells water illegally, as it will apply to all violators, sellers and buyers.

PDTRA unveils concessions to support struggling commercial sector amid tourism crisis

AMMAN (JT) — Chief Commissioner of the Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority (PDTRA) Adnan Sawair said the authority is prepared to reschedule the debts of shop owners in the new commercial market and provide further concessions.

Sawair made the remarks in response to protests staged by a number of shop owners in the new commercial market, who closed their businesses while calling for reductions in rents, fees and service charges, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

He also stressed that dialogue with traders will continue despite the economic challenges facing the city.

Sawair said that Petra is experiencing an economic crisis as a result of the decline in tourism and the suspension of charter flights, noting that PDTRA recognises the scale of the challenges facing the city, which have persisted since 2019.

He said that the authority has provided exemptions and concessions to the commercial sector over recent years, including waiving nine months' rent for tenants in 2020 and granting a 50 per cent rent exemption in 2021, in addition to other measures.

The chief commis-



Chief Commissioner of the Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority Adnan Sawair says that the authority is prepared to reschedule the debts of shop owners in the new commercial market and provide further concessions

sioner noted that the total outstanding financial claims on the commercial sector now stand at around JD570,000, down from nearly JD2.5 million.

Sawair added that most tenants have not met their financial obligations since 2020, while the authority itself also faces financial commitments as the largest employer in the local community, with around 1,080 employees.

He said that PDTRA is willing to allow debts to be repaid in instalments over extended periods and will also grant a 50 per cent reduction in this year's rent to those who settle all their outstanding obligations.

Sawair stressed that the PDTRA board of commissioners had approved the decision and that the door remains open to dialogue and reaching solutions with traders.

On the tourism sector, Sawair said that the authority is working with the government to implement initiatives to support tourism establishments and preserve jobs, noting that Petra relies almost entirely on international tourism, making it one of the most affected sites by the decline in visitor numbers.

He added that restoring charter flights is a priority for reviving the tourism sector, along-

side diversifying target markets and attracting visitors from new countries, including China and Southeast Asian nations.

Sawair also said that the authority seeks to diversify economic activity in Petra through light industry projects and infrastructure improvements, with the aim of creating sustainable employment opportunities alongside the tourism sector.

Transport minister highlights Jordan's role as regional logistics hub at Arab union meeting

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan's transport and logistics sector remains a "key" pillar of the national economy, Minister of Transport Nidal Qatamin said on Sunday.

Speaking at the opening of the 39th General Assembly of the Arab Union for Land Transport in Amman, Qatamin highlighted ongoing efforts to develop infrastructure, border crossings and logistics services to enhance the Kingdom's position as a regional hub for transport and trade connectivity.



Speaking at the opening of the 39th General Assembly of the Arab Union for Land Transport in Amman, Qatamin highlights ongoing efforts to develop infrastructure, border crossings and logistics services

In the presence of transport experts from member states of the union and the Arab League, the minister said that the transport sector is a major driver of economic growth due to its role in supporting trade, investment and the sustainability of supply chains among Arab countries.

He said that continued investment in the sector is essential to keeping pace with regional and international developments and improving its contribution to economic

development.

The minister described the Arab Union for Land Transport as a key platform for advancing institutional cooperation in the sector, stressing the importance of boosting coordination among member states to promote Arab economic integration.

He also called for further development of logistics corridors, the harmonisation of transport procedures and the modernisation

of border and customs systems to facilitate the movement of goods, reduce operating costs and shorten transit times across the Arab region.

The assembly featured an official opening session followed by specialised discussions and coincided with the 50th anniversary of the union's establishment.

The event drew representatives from transport ministries, federations and land transport companies from several

Arab countries.

Minister Plenipotentiary and Chairperson of the Transport and Tourism Committee at the Arab League Bahgat Abu El-Nasr said that the union has become a "leading" reference for research and studies related to the transport sector in the Arab world, underscoring its growing role in supporting policy-making and logistics development.

Secretary-General of the Arab Union for Land

Transport Malek Haddad said that the union has reached an "advanced" stage of institutional development after five decades of work, enabling it to boost its capabilities and expand its role within the Arab transport sector.

President of the International Association of Land Transport and Chairperson of the Arab Union for Land Transport Khaled Haqil stressed the need to enhance public-private partnerships to improve the efficiency of logistics systems and enhance their ability to respond to global developments.

Participants discussed developing the Arab land transport system, facilitating transit and cross-border transport, modernising transport legislation and regulatory frameworks, accelerating digital transformation in logistics services, enhancing training and road safety programmes, and expanding public-private partnerships to build a more integrated, efficient and sustainable Arab transport system.



Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority Commissioner for Tourism and Youth Affairs Thabet Nabulsi and a delegation from the German Agency for International Cooperation on Sunday discuss cooperation to implement development programmes

ASEZA, GIZ discuss cooperation to support local communities

AMMAN (JT) — Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) Commissioner for Tourism and Youth Affairs Thabet Nabulsi on Sunday discussed cooperation with a delegation from the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) to implement developmental programmes aimed at supporting local communities in Aqaba and Wadi Rum.

During the meeting, which was attended by Rima Tabbaa, ASEZA director of entrepreneurship and innovation, and Saleh Naimat, director of the Wadi Rum area directorate,

both sides reviewed cooperation priorities for the upcoming phase, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The talks focused on supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, economically empowering women through productive projects, and developing the digital skills of youth and women to enhance their job market opportunities.

Nabulsi stressed the importance of directing development partnerships towards projects with long-term, sustainable impacts to ensure continued benefits

for local communities.

He also highlighted ASEZA's keenness to expand cooperation on qualitative initiatives that boost socioeconomic development and bolster the innovation ecosystem in Aqaba and Wadi Rum.

Supported by the German government and the European Union, ASEZA and GIZ have implemented several programmes over the past years in the fields of entrepreneurship, training, employment, women's empowerment and digital transformation to support sustainable development in the coastal city.

Umm Qais complex sheds light on Roman urban life — archaeologist



The so-called Peristyle Court in ancient Gadara (from the southeast)

AMMAN — The Peristyle Court in ancient Gadara (modern Umm Qais) is a monumental, 2nd-century AD architectural complex located just inside the city walls. Spanning roughly 54 by 45 metres, this grand civic and commercial complex is one of the most ambitious building projects from the Roman imperial period.

The area of the Peristyle Court lies to the south of the colonnaded main street and immediately to the east of the early imperial city wall. North of the main street, domestic architecture has been excavated; in the south of the area, the large Roman bath building "Al Qasr" is visible.

"The monumental architecture covering this area was excavated to about 85 per cent down to the Roman level by the Department of Antiquities [DoA] at the beginning of the millennium," said Professor Patric-Alexander Kreuz from Kiel University.

"The documentation of the building, finds and stratigraphy pose a challenge, as does the inconsistent and, in our opinion, inaccurate interpretation of the complex as two buildings of different functions in various international publications: A macellum or church and a peristyle complex or forum," Kreuz added.

This interpretation makes the late 2nd-century complex a precious structure: Gymnasia

were of utmost importance in the region during the Hellenistic-Roman periods and contributed significantly to urban experience, Kreuz continued, adding that gymnasia was a "highly" charged urban location for the production and dissemination of cultural knowledge (education, values, civic identity).

Yet, they were also sensitive to shifts in urban culture and a loss of the binding nature of previously dominant lifestyles, values and identities.

"Shifts that can be assumed in the regional context e.g. from Hellenistic to early Islamic times."

"Against the background of the complex historical and cultural

dynamics in the region during these centuries, its disruptions and continuities, the monumental complex in Gadara thus promises important contributions to the discussion about the transformation of the classical city in the Levant region," Kreuz said.

According to the professor, it was particularly susceptible to powerful trends in the use of urban space and changed views of what was considered appropriate urbanity — in a region where the urban model of Hellenistic-Roman city culture was only a temporarily dominant phenomenon.

"On the basis of our work to date — only possible thanks to the generosity and trust

we have received from the DoA in Amman and Umm Qais, for which we are very grateful — we hope to address the numerous unresolved issues presented by the complex and area in the coming years."

"We suggest a detailed architectural analysis of the Roman-period building and an examination of the remains of its intense subsequent use to understand, among others, how the architectural framework of the Roman building was gradually appropriated and modified over the centuries, reflecting how a prominent location of the Roman city underwent fundamental changes in post-antique times," Kreuz said.



The King Hussein Cancer Foundation (KHCF) and Save the Children Jordan on Sunday sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) aimed at enhancing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for child cancer patients from Gaza

KHCF, Save the Children Jordan sign MoU to support Gaza child cancer patients

AMMAN (JT) — The King Hussein Cancer Foundation (KHCF) and Save the Children Jordan on Sunday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) aimed at enhancing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for child cancer patients from Gaza receiving treatment at the King Hussein Cancer Centre (KHCC), as well as their companions.

The agreement was signed by KHCF Director General Nisreen Qatamish and Save the Children Jordan CEO Dana Erekat, in the presence of Ahmad Hendawi, Regional Director of Save the Children International, the Jordan News Agency, Petra reported.

Under the MoU, MHPSS services will be provided to around 420 children and young cancer patients from Gaza and their companions at KHCC.

The programme will be implemented over six months and includes the design, execution and technical supervision of specialised psychosocial support services, in addition to training selected

KHCC staff members. Qatamish said that the agreement reflects KHCF's commitment to providing holistic care for cancer patients from Gaza by integrating psychosocial support with medical treatment.

She added that this integrated approach aims to help patients and their families cope with the severe psychological impact of the war on Gaza, as well as the challenges associated with cancer treatment.

Erekat said the project is supported by Save the Children International's Humanitarian Fund, noting that mental health and psychosocial support is a core pillar of the organisation's child protection programmes.

She added that the initiative adopts an integrated approach focused on long-term recovery and resilience-building, particularly for children affected by conflict and crises such as those in Gaza.

Launched by His Majesty King Abdullah, the Jordanian Medical Corridor provides continuous medical care for

sick children from Gaza and forms part of the Kingdom's broader humanitarian response.

Medical evacuations, which began in March 2025, are conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation, as part of coordinated humanitarian efforts in line with international standards.

The children are receiving treatment at several Jordanian hospitals, reflecting the Kingdom's ongoing medical and humanitarian support for Palestinians affected by the war in Gaza.

Jordan also operates two military field hospitals in Gaza — one in the northern part of the Strip, established in 2009 following the 2008 war, and another in Khan Younis in the south, established in November 2023 during the ongoing war on Gaza since October 7, 2023.

Other humanitarian initiatives include a mobile bakery and the "Restoring Hope" programme, which provides prosthetic limbs for amputees.

Gov't launches second phase of institutional culture system in public sector

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of State for Public Sector Development Badriya Balbisi on Sunday launched the second phase of the Institutional Culture System project in the public sector.

The project is being implemented by the Civil Service and Public Administration Commission in cooperation with the Public Sector Modernisation Programme Implementation Unit at the Prime Ministry.

The second phase builds on efforts under the second executive programme of the Public Sector Modernisation Roadmap (2026-2029), the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

It aims to strengthen the ability of government institutions to adapt to change and anticipate future developments, while embedding an institutional culture based on integrity, transparency, innovation and achievement, ultimately improving public



Minister of State for Public Sector Development Badriya Balbisi on Sunday launches the second phase of the Institutional Culture System project in the public sector

derlying and less visible factors of change, including employee behaviour, attitudes, mindsets and work practices, as well as interactions with service recipients.

"We are not speaking about institutional

ance, streamlines procedures and improves service quality.

Chairman of the Civil Service and Public Administration Commission Faiez Nahar said that the project is one of the commission's strategic initiatives

bed a culture of performance and institutional excellence, while fostering a more dynamic and innovation-oriented work environment.

Nahar said the second phase will focus on applying the diag-

culture. They also reviewed mechanisms for building performance indicators and the interventions required to establish a more efficient, flexible and innovative public-sector work environment.

MOURNING

Jordan offers condolences to Saudi Arabia over victims of helicopter crash



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expresses condolences to the government and people of Saudi Arabia over the victims of a helicopter crash

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed condolences to the government and people of Saudi Arabia over the victims of a helicopter crash involving an Aramco aircraft in Ras Tanura, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry Spokesperson Ambassador Fouad Majali reiterated Jordan's full solidarity with the government and people of Saudi Arabia in

this tragic incident, extending heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims, according to a Foreign Ministry statement.

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Energy said that the helicopter crashed on Sunday at around 6:00am, resulting in the death of all 14 people on board, all of whom were Saudi nationals, according to the Saudi Press Agency.

NCSC, JEPSCO sign MoU to enhance cyber readiness

AMMAN (JT) — The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and the Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPSCO) on Sunday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance cybersecurity cooperation, strengthen cyber readiness, and protect critical digital infrastructure in the electricity sector.

NCSC Director Mohammad Smadi said the agreement is part of the centre's efforts to strengthen partnerships with key institutions and establish an integrated national cybersecurity framework to safeguard digital systems and services, while enhancing capabilities to respond to growing cyber threats.

He added that cooperation with the JEPSCO includes the exchange of expertise and knowledge, development of human capacities and collaboration in risk



The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and the Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPSCO) on Sunday sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance cybersecurity cooperation

assessment, cyber incident response and the application of national cybersecurity standards and best practices, according to a NCSC statement.

JEPSCO Director General Hassan Abdullah said that cybersecurity

is a top priority for the company, given its commitment to protecting its digital systems and critical infrastructure and ensuring the continuity and reliability of services.

He added that the

MoU reflects efforts to strengthen strategic cooperation between both sides and benefit from national expertise in developing cybersecurity systems and enhancing preparedness to address cyber threats, in

line with international best practices and standards.

The memorandum outlines cooperation in several areas, including the exchange of information on cyber threats targeting critical infrastructure, particularly the electricity sector, as well as the organisation and implementation of joint cyber exercises, the statement said.

It also covers security assessments of information technology networks, operational technology systems, and smart meter systems, in addition to the exchange of expertise, views and proposals on shared cybersecurity issues.

The agreement forms part of broader efforts by the National Cyber Security Centre to expand cooperation with public and private sector institutions and strengthen national cybersecurity in line with evolving technological developments.



Export House, AmCham discuss boosting exports to US

AMMAN (JT) — Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Export House Company Maher Matalaka and Chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in Jordan (AmCham) Samer Joudeh discussed ways to boost cooperation to support Jordanian exports and expand their presence in the US market.

During the meeting, the two sides explored mechanisms to assist Jordanian companies, enhance their export readiness and encour-

age participation in specialised trade fairs and business events, according to a company statement released on Sunday.

They also discussed exchanging expertise and market information to broaden the base of Jordanian exporting companies, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The meeting reviewed key opportunities and challenges in the US market, with both sides stressing the importance of

closer coordination to improve the competitiveness of Jordanian exports and create new opportunities for national products in international markets.

Matalaka and Joudeh reiterated their commitment to maintaining close cooperation through joint initiatives and regular coordination meetings aimed at supporting the growth of Jordanian exports and strengthening their foothold in global markets.

CRIME

Cassation Court upholds over 9-year sentence in teenage sexual abuse case

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — The Cassation Court upheld a March 2024 Criminal Court decision to increase the prison term of a man who engaged in consensual sexual activities with a minor in Amman in 2020.

The Criminal Court handed the defendant a seven-year prison term after convicting him of engaging in sexual activities with a 16-year-old in 2019.

However, the court decided to increase the sentence to nine years and six months

because the "defendant caused the victim to lose her virginity".

The court also refused to reduce the prison term because the victim was under 18, according to court transcripts.

Court documents said the defendant and

the victim developed a relationship via social media.

The victim escaped from her family's home and met with the defendant on several occasions, the court maintained.

"The two engaged in consensual sexual ac-

tivity on several occasions," the court stated.

The victim informed some of her family members about the affair and her family reported the defendant to the authorities, court papers said.

The defendant was arrested and the vic-

tim was referred to the Family Protection Department for further examination and questioning, the court maintained.

The defendant had contested the Criminal Court's ruling through his lawyer, claiming "there were irregulari-

ties in the investigation procedures".

Meanwhile, the Criminal Court's attorney general asked the higher court to uphold the ruling.

The Cassation Court ruled that the Criminal Court's judgement fell within the law,

that the proceedings were proper and that the sentence given was satisfactory.

The Cassation Court tribunal consisted of judges Mohammad Aibrahim, Yassin Abdullat, Qassem Dughmi, Hamad Ghzawi and Mohammad Khashashneh.



Men check the scene of an Israeli strike in Syria's southern Hama governorate on April 3, 2025

Israel army says killed militants in southern Syria

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Israeli military said on Sunday it killed several militants a day earlier in southern Syria.

The Israeli army said in a statement that it eliminated several "armed terrorists" in the Security Zone in southern Syria.

The Israeli army has occupied what it calls a "security zone" in southern Syria since late 2024 and said it would remain in place there "in order to remove any threat to Israeli civilians and IDF soldiers".

Israeli defence minister Israel Katz said earlier this month that it planned to keep its troops in Syria "for an unlimited period", as well as in Lebanon and Gaza.

After the December 2024 overthrow of Syria's longtime ruler

Bashar Assad, Israel sent troops into a UN-patrolled buffer zone that separated Israeli and Syrian forces on the Golan Heights.

A ceasefire in the Middle East war between Tehran and Washington has been strained as the foes exchange tit-for-tat attacks...

Israel has also carried out repeated incursions into Syrian territory since then, as well as bombings, and has said it wants a demilitarised zone in the country's south.

Israel captured most of the Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and later annexed the areas under its control, in a move not recognised by most of the international community.

Despite tensions between the neighbours, Israel and Syria's new authorities have held several rounds of direct talks and have agreed to establish an intelligence-sharing mechanism as they edge towards a security agreement.

A ceasefire in the Middle East war between Tehran and Washington has been strained as the foes exchange tit-for-tat attacks, harming negotiations meant to end the war despite a memorandum of understanding reached in mid-June under Pakistan's mediation.

Trump threatens to annihilate Iran after new exchange of attacks

WASHINGTON, United States (AFP) — US President Donald Trump said on Saturday that Iran would "no longer exist" if the United States is "forced" to resume the war, as he accused Tehran of violating a ceasefire.

The threat came after US forces said they struck "multiple" Iranian targets on Saturday in another tit-for-tat response to attacks on shipping in the vital Strait of Hormuz.

"United States aircraft just struck Iranian missile and drone storage locations, and coastal radar sites, for violating the Cease Fire Agreement, AGAIN!" Trump wrote on Truth Social.

"There may come a point when we are no longer able to be reasonable, and will be forced to militarily complete the job that we very successfully started. If that happens, the Islamic Republic of Iran will no longer exist!" Trump wrote.

The clashes brought new tension to the negotiating process meant to end a war launched by the United States and Israel at the end of February.

They also underlined the risks still facing one of the world's most important sea lanes for oil and other commodities.

US Central Command said Saturday's strikes were in response to an Iranian drone attack on the Panama-flagged



US President Donald Trump pumps his fist as he leaves the stage after delivering remarks during the Faith & Freedom Coalition's 2026 Policy Conference at the Washington Hilton on Friday in Washington, DC

oil tanker "Kiku," which was carrying some two million barrels of crude.

The US military said the latest response targeted "surveillance infrastructure, communication systems, air defense sites, drone storage facilities, and minelayer capabilities".

Iranian media reported several explosions in the Sirik and Qeshm areas of southern Iran.

On Friday, the United States also conducted strikes that it said were in response to another Iranian attack on a ship, the "Ever

Lovely".

Iran said on Saturday it had hit US targets in the Gulf in its own retaliation. Bahrain said it was targeted by several Iranian drones early on Saturday and accused Tehran of "sabotaging peace efforts".

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said "if the aggression is repeated, our response will be broader".

The flare-ups in violence highlighted ongoing wrangling over control of the Hormuz Strait.

Iran has warned vessels not to enter or leave the Gulf through

the strait without permission, but ships have continued to move, some using a route not authorised by Tehran.

H.A. Hellyer, of London think tank the Royal United Services Institute, said "Iran is likely to continue calibrated, low-level coercive activity in and around the Strait of Hormuz... to create persistent pressure on international shipping without triggering a wider conflict."

He said November's US midterm elections for Congress give Washington "incentives for a quicker agreement" while, for

Iran, "a drawn-out negotiation accompanied by controlled pressure in the strait can work to its advantage".

Despite the latest flare-up, oil prices have fallen sharply on hopes that traffic through Hormuz would recover. In peacetime, it carries about a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas exports.

The economic impact on Iran remains unclear, but on Saturday the country's statistics agency said that year-on-year inflation had hit 88.6 per cent, up from 68 per cent in February.

Venezuela quakes kill 1,400 as time running out to find survivors

LA GUAIRA, Venezuela (AFP) — Rescue crews raced on Saturday to find survivors in the rubble of Venezuela's powerful earthquakes as the death toll reached 1,430 and hopes dwindled 72 hours after the earth roared and rumbled.

Millions of people were feared to lack sanitation and other basic needs, as the first US aid flights landed in Caracas.

Tens of thousands of people were reported missing as collapsed buildings dotted cities in a country already enduring an economic crisis and political upheaval after US special forces captured authoritarian leader Nicolas Maduro in January.

Facing public outrage at the response by local officials, Venezuela's US-backed interim leader Delcy Rodriguez thanked other countries for the outpouring of aid.

The search for survivors saw desperate attempts by local residents to claw away rubble from buildings that collapsed in Wednesday's two quakes.

Experts say the first 72 hours after natural disasters are the key, narrow window for finding the living. After that the search becomes one of recovering bodies.

"It's just very chaotic, hot and unorganised," said Australian firefighter Craig Demeillon, 43, who traveled alone to La Guaira from Miami to help. "Hopefully there's more people to find."

A Salvadoran rescue worker who declined to give his name put it this way: "At this point,



Rescuers illuminate the area with the headlights of a pickup truck while searching for possible victims at a collapsed building following twin earthquakes, in Caraballeda, La Guaira State, some 40 km northeast of Caracas, on Saturday

they are probably dead bodies. Thanks to God maybe we can find people still alive."

UN aid chief Tom Fletcher on Friday told AFP the death toll could continue to soar, adding that more than 50,000 people were missing.

The United States said one runway at Simon Bolivar International Airport was partially functioning to receive C-17 US military planes, while a naval ship had arrived off the coast.

Newborn rescued

There was joy in the hardest-hit coastal area of La Guaira, north of Caracas, when locals pulled an infant alive out of the wreckage on Friday, some 32 hours after the magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 tremors.

In one social media video, a man wailed up in tears as he held the baby in his arms. The UN migration agency said it had ex-

amined available population and damage data and had determined that "up to 6.76 million people could be affected", and would "require emergency shelter, safe water, sanitation and hygiene services, healthcare, protection support and essential relief items".

National Assembly President Jorge Rodriguez reported on Saturday 1,430 dead and 3,238 people injured, while the UN estimated \$6.7 billion in physical damage, equivalent to 6 per cent of Venezuela's GDP.

'Permit to save lives'

Venezuelans, already battered by years of a failing economy and the turbulence of the US intervention to topple Maduro in January, were furious at the government.

Jessica Mendoza was forced to transport her own daughter to a morgue in Caracas after 25-year-old

ero, 53.

"Look at what time it is... how many lives have we already lost by now?"

Venezuela already in trouble

Rodriguez said she had spoken with US President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who "re-affirmed their commitment to supporting the response efforts".

The US said earlier it was sending a disaster response team of more than 250 personnel, including three special search-and-rescue units with dogs trained to locate people trapped beneath the rubble.

Twenty-one countries were sending search-and-rescue teams, parliament chief Rodriguez said.

Venezuela's worst earthquakes in more than a century have come after the oil-rich country endured more than a decade of economic collapse.

The crisis has hollowed out hospitals and public services, driving millions to leave the country.

And the country remains in a fragile political transition six months after the US ouster of Maduro.

Earthquakes of similar magnitude claimed more than 200,000 lives in Haiti in January 2010 and 73,000 lives in Kashmir in October 2005.

Those killed in Venezuela included 28 Portuguese nationals, five Spaniards, two Brazilians, seven Chinese nationals, one Chilean, one Italian-Venezuelan and one Uruguayan.

"I've been here since dawn standing in line so I can go rescue people," said Ezequiel Riv-

Iraqi forces raid Baghdad's Green Zone amid arrest reports

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi security forces deployed in Baghdad's fortified Green Zone early Sunday with the raid targeting "several politicians", a security official told AFP.

The Green Zone houses the US embassy and other diplomatic missions, as well as international institutions and government offices. High-ranking officials and politicians also live there.

Video footage shared

on local Telegram channels showed security forces in heavy vehicles such as tanks in the Green Zone, including a clip of them inside a compound and, in one instance, inside a house.

A security official told AFP, under the condition of anonymity, that a "raid targeted several politicians over financial corruption, per judicial orders", adding that the operation involved anti-terrorism forces and the military. No

official statement has been released as yet.

The source did not provide further details or names of officials reportedly arrested.

The large-scale raids were aimed at arresting senior Iraqi officials, with several names circulating in local media reports.

Iraq's new Prime Minister Ali Al Zaidi vowed to fight corruption and mismanagement that has plagued Iraq for decades.

Skydiving plane crash kills 11 in France

TOMBLAINE, France (AFP) — A skydiving plane crashed on Sunday in eastern France, killing all 11 people on board — among them a group of nurses — local authorities said, the country's deadliest ever general aviation accident.

The crash in the town of Tomblaine killed five instructors, five students and the pilot, said Yves Seguy, the prefect of the Meurthe-et-Moselle department.

The students were nurses, according to the head of Meurthe-et-Moselle's nursing council, Thierry Pechey.

"They were colleagues who had decided to go on a first skydiving jump, no doubt to unwind, as we're going through a difficult time with the heatwave," he said.

Mayor of the nearby city of Nancy, Mathieu Klein, said the victims "died in full view of their loved ones, who were preparing to film the tandem skydives".

Medical and psychological support teams were caring for relatives of the victims who were present, as well as other witnesses, according to local authorities.

The incident is "the



Rescuers and security personnel work alongside the wreckage of a Pilatus PC-6 light aircraft after it crashed at Tomblaine, on the outskirts of Nancy, eastern France, on Sunday

most serious general aviation accident in terms of loss of life", excluding military and commercial aviation, according to France's BEA aviation safety agency.

"There has not been such a serious accident in aeronautics concerning parachute jumping for about 30 years," said Transport Minister Philippe Tabarot.

Tabarot and Interior Minister Laurent Nunez both visited the site.

The aircraft, a Pilatus registered in Germany, crashed in a grassy area near the runway of the Nancy-Essey aerodrome, close to a residential area and two roads, an AFP journalist reported.

"It's tragic, but it could have been even worse," said Klein, noting the plane crashed "just a few metres from homes".

Tomblaine mayor Herve Feron said the plane fell "in a completely unexplained manner... during the ascent", describing it as crashing "straight down".

The aircraft had been "chartered for the occasion, for the skydiving weekend, as is regularly done", he added.

The cause of the incident was not immediately clear and a technical investigation has been opened, said Amaury Lacote, deputy public prosecutor in the eastern city of Nancy.

Iran warns ships not to bypass its chosen Hormuz route

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's top diplomat warned on Sunday that any attempt by shipping to bypass its preferred route through the Strait of Hormuz would "increase tensions" in the Middle East, as US and Iranian forces again traded attacks across the vital seaway.

The exchanges underscored the fragility of a Pakistan-brokered agreement aimed at ending the war launched by the United States and Israel in February, which disrupted shipping through the strait and rattled global energy markets.

Although a ceasefire took effect in April, sporadic violence has continued in the Gulf region, with ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz often the spark.

Early on Sunday, US Central Command (CENTCOM) said it had attacked 10 Iranian military targets over "continued Iranian aggression against commercial shipping".

Iran then said it had carried out retaliatory strikes against US bases in Kuwait and Bahrain in response. Both Kuwait and Bahrain denounced



A cargo ship is photographed off coast of the Khor Fakkan Container Terminal, the only natural deep-sea port in the region and one of the major container ports in Sharjah Emirate, along the Gulf of Oman on Sunday

the attacks.

Tehran has continued to insist on controlling passage through the vital strait, through which a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas travel in normal times, something it did not have before the war.

At the moment, Iran insists ships transiting the strait pass through a

corridor close to its own shores, though this week dozens of vessels have travelled along the opposite side of the waterway, hugging the Omani coast.

"Any attempt to adopt new or separate arrangements compared to what is underway by the Islamic Republic of Iran, will only lead to more

complicated situations and delays in the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, and will increase the tensions," Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said.

"I urge all parties... to adhere to the memorandum of understanding and not to allow this MoU to deviate from its course."

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said Sunday they were taking measures to control traffic in the strait and that vessels in violation of those measures would be dealt with more firmly than before.

Mohammad Mokhber, adviser to Iran's supreme leader, wrote on X that as long as Iran managed the strait, Washington's

"hegemonic dreams in the region will not be realised".

In the memorandum of understanding reached this month — aimed at putting a lasting end to the war — Iran had agreed "safe passage of commercial vessels with no charge, for 60 days only, from the Persian Gulf to the Sea of Oman, and vice versa" in the strait.

Iran would 'no longer exist'

Experts said there would likely be more Hormuz incidents.

For Iran, "a drawn-out negotiation accompanied by controlled pressure in the strait can work to its advantage", said HA Hellyer, of London think tank the Royal United Services Institute.

The agreement signed by the US and Iran said both countries, and their respective allies, were "not to initiate any war or any military operation against each other and to refrain from the threat or use of force against each other".

But both countries have since traded accusations of violating their fragile

ceasefire.

US President Donald Trump said on Saturday that Iran would "no longer exist" if the US were "forced" to resume the war.

"United States aircraft just struck Iranian missile and drone storage locations, and coastal radar sites, for violating the Cease Fire Agreement, AGAIN!" Trump wrote on Truth Social.

CENTCOM said the strikes were in response to an Iranian drone attack on the Panama-flagged oil tanker "Kiku".

Washington had carried out similar strikes on Friday.

Israel strikes Lebanon

Israel, meanwhile, launched strikes in Lebanon as Hizbollah's leader Naim Qassem rejected a deal to end that conflict, which has also threatened to derail the wider US-Iran peace effort.

Iran called them "a blatant violation" of the truce deal.

Hizbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah warned on Sunday of "internal conflict" in Lebanon over the country's agreement with Israel, signed

this week, predicting the deal would not be implemented.

The agreement, which aims to pave the way to peace between the neighbours, includes plans to disarm Iran-backed militant group Hizbollah.

Lebanon was drawn into the Middle East war in early March, when Hizbollah launched rockets at Israel in support of Iran, and Israel responded with heavy air strikes and a ground invasion.

Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei said on Sunday that Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon was "an essential condition for reaching a final and lasting agreement" that establishes security in the region.

Iran's chief negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, meanwhile, said Iran was "seriously pursuing this issue" of ending the Israeli occupation in Lebanon in a call with Lebanese speaker of parliament Nabih Berri.

On Sunday, Lebanese state media reported a new Israeli strike on the country's south, while the Israeli military said a soldier was killed in fighting in southern Lebanon.

Jordanian rescue team launches operations in earthquake-stricken Venezuela

Continued from page 1

The Jordan International Search and Rescue Team is considered one of the world's leading disaster response units. It is classified internationally as a "Heavy Urban Search and Rescue [USAR]" team, the highest level under the international classification system, reflecting its advanced readiness and

professionalism. Rescue crews are racing to find survivors in the rubble of Venezuela's powerful earthquakes as the death toll reached 1,430, and hopes dwindled 72 hours after the earth roared and rumbled, according to AFP.

Millions of people were feared to lack sanitation and other basic needs.

Tens of thousands of people were reported

missing as collapsed buildings dotted cities in a country already enduring an economic crisis and political upheaval after US special forces captured authoritarian leader Nicolas Maduro in January.

The search for survivors saw desperate attempts by local residents to claw away rubble from buildings that collapsed in Wednesday's two quakes.

Experts say the first 72 hours after natural disasters are the key, narrow window for finding the living. After that, the search becomes one of recovering bodies.

The UN migration agency said that it had examined available population and damage data and had determined that "up to 6.76 million people could be affected," and would "re-

quire emergency shelter, safe water, sanitation and hygiene services, healthcare, protection support and essential relief items".

National Assembly President Jorge Rodríguez reported on Saturday 1,430 dead and 3,238 people injured, while the UN estimated \$6.7 billion in physical damage — equivalent to six per cent of Venezuela's GDP.



Japan's Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi (right) and South Korea's Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back inspect the honour guards during a welcoming ceremony before their meeting at the Defence Ministry in Seoul on Sunday

S. Korea, Japan reaffirm pledge to denuclearise Korean Peninsula

SEOUL (AFP) — The defence ministers of South Korea and Japan reaffirmed on Sunday their countries' commitment to the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, despite Pyongyang's repeated pledges to expand its nuclear arsenal.

The meeting comes after North Korean leader Kim Jong-un vowed to strengthen his country's defence capabilities, including equipping its navy with nuclear weapons and pressing ahead with missile testing.

South Korean Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back held talks with Japanese counterpart Shinjiro Koizumi in Seoul, who is on a two-day visit, during which the two agreed to explore ways to deepen defence cooperation.

Seoul and Tokyo are both security allies of Washington, but cooperation between their militaries has been hampered by historical ten-

sions stemming from Japan's colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula in the early 20th century.

But the two "reaffirmed their commitment to the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and the establishment of lasting peace, and agreed to continue bilateral cooperation... as well as trilateral cooperation among South Korea, Japan and the United States", Seoul's defence ministry said in a statement released after the bilateral meeting.

The meeting also came weeks after the two neighbours held their first joint maritime search-and-rescue exercise in nine years, a move widely seen as another step towards closer defence cooperation.

The renewed commitment by the two defence chiefs to rid the peninsula of nuclear weapons, however, comes as Pyongyang has recently

vowed not only to retain its nuclear arsenal but also to expand it.

The North Korean leader vowed earlier this month to beef up North Korea's defence capabilities, citing military modernisation efforts by South Korea and the US that he said were pushing the region "to the brink of a nuclear war".

He also vowed that his country would equip its navy with nuclear weapons and build larger warships.

Pyongyang has repeatedly declared itself an "irreversible" nuclear state since a 2019 summit between Kim and his US counterpart Donald Trump in Hanoi collapsed over the scope of denuclearisation and sanctions relief.

North Korea remains technically at war with the South because the Korean War ended in an armistice rather than a peace treaty.

Jordan's historic World Cup journey ends with loss to Argentina

Continued from page 1

"The nation awaits your return with immense pride, for you hold a special place in the hearts of all Jordanians," the King said, while also commending the travelling supporters, adding that they had projected "the finest image of our homeland, exemplify-

ing the true meaning of national belonging".

He stressed that Jordan "is stronger through its unity, more beautiful through its people, and greater through the love that binds us all".

His Royal Highness also praised the team in a post on Instagram, saying that although

Jordan "may not have earned the points", Al Nashama had "earned the respect of the world through their character, sportsmanship, and determination".

The Crown Prince highlighted the unity shown throughout the tournament, noting that Jordan's traditional shemagh had been embraced with pride,

the supporters had earned international recognition for their passion, and Jordanians around the world had united behind the national team.

"Al Nashama have given 12 million Jordanians eleven role models, reminding us that nations are built through unity, hard work and ambition," he

said, adding: "This may have been Jordan's first FIFA World Cup, but it will not be the last. The ambition of Jordanians knows no limits."

The Jordan delegation is scheduled to return to Amman on Tuesday June 30, according to Jordan Football Association statement.

US-backed Lebanon-Israel accord marks start of negotiations, not final outcome — analysts

Continued from page 1

The agreement was signed after a fifth round of negotiations in Washington under US mediation. It establishes a framework for security arrangements, creates a mechanism to oversee implementation and outlines steps intended to facilitate Israel's eventual withdrawal from southern Lebanon once agreed conditions are met.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said that the framework establishes "a clear mechanism" to restore Lebanon's sovereignty, dismantle Hizbollah's military infrastructure and enable Israel to return to its internationally recognised border once security threats are removed.

He added that the agreement creates a US-facilitated trilateral military coordination mechanism to oversee implementation, strengthen security coordination and reduce the risk

of renewed hostilities along the border.

Israeli officials indicated that any withdrawal would remain linked to security arrangements and progress on the issue of Hizbollah's weapons, maintaining that implementation would proceed gradually rather than through immediate changes on the ground.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun described the accord as "a first step" towards restoring full Lebanese sovereignty.

"The Lebanese negotiating team has achieved what we consider a first step on the path toward restoring the state's sovereignty over all its territory," Aoun said.

The group's leader Naim Qassem on Saturday called the framework agreement a "grave blunder" that is "legitimising" Israeli occupation, urging the government to withdraw from it.

Hizbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah said

that the government will not be able to implement it "unless they go, with American support, to civil war" inside Lebanon.

The agreement marks an unprecedented stage in Lebanese-Israeli contacts, with Beirut agreeing to direct negotiations despite the absence of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The talks followed months of conflict after Iran-backed Hizbollah opened the Lebanese front during the regional war.

Officials said the framework is intended to establish a structured process for addressing security concerns and preventing renewed escalation while creating conditions for future Israeli withdrawal and a stronger security role for the Lebanese state.

Political analyst Amer Sabaleh said that the agreement should be viewed as a negotiating framework rather than a final settlement.

"For Israel, this is a framework that opens successive stages of negotiations rather than imposing immediate results on the ground," he said.

In remarks to the Jordan Times Sabaleh said that Israel is likely to maintain its military presence while gradually assessing Lebanon's ability to fulfil future commitments, particularly expanding the role of the Lebanese army and addressing the issue of Hizbollah's weapons.

"The Israeli approach will be gradual," he said. "It will test the Lebanese state's ability to implement each commitment before moving to the next stage of negotiations."

He added that Washington's objective is to establish separate security arrangements for Lebanon that ultimately reinforce state institutions while increasing pressure to address the Hizbollah file through negotiation rather than immediate confrontation.

Imad Salamey, head of the Political and International Studies Department at the Lebanese American University, told AFP that one of the agreement's shortcomings was that it made "no guarantee that Israel will fully withdraw from occupied areas or significantly restrict its military operations in southern Lebanon".

"Without firm Israeli commitments, many residents of the south may continue to face insecurity, delayed reconstruction."

The framework agreement, according to observers, represents the most significant diplomatic breakthrough between Lebanon and Israel in years. However, they agreed that its success will ultimately depend on implementation, making the coming weeks a critical test of whether the framework can evolve into a lasting security arrangement or remain another temporary understanding.

Putin vows to ensure Russia's security amid Ukraine retaliatory strikes

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday vowed to ensure security and overcome challenges as Ukraine stepped up its retaliatory strikes inside Russia amid Moscow's four-year war.

Kyiv calls the attacks fair retribution for Russia's near-daily barrages on Ukrainian civilians and energy infrastructure since its February 2022 offensive.

"Yes, we see the problems, we are aware of them and are responding to them, but we

will certainly ensure the security of both the country and our citizens, as well as the inviolability of Russia's borders," Putin said at the United Russia Party congress.

"We will undoubtedly overcome all the challenges facing us today, including terrorist attacks on our territory and infrastructure facilities," he added.

Putin's speech came hours after a Ukrainian drone strike killed one person in Russia's southern Krasnodar region and sparked a fire

in a refinery, according to regional governor Veniamin Kondratyev.

Kyiv claimed the hit, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky calling it a part of the "operations that weaken Russia's ability to wage this war".

"The Slavyansk oil refinery in the Krasnodar region was hit — about 300 kilometres from the frontline. We also reached a refinery in the Yaroslavl region, approximately 700 kilometres from our border," Zelensky said on X on Sunday.

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The national team: More than ninety minutes

By **Zaid K. Maaytah**

Among the many scenes that followed the national team's historic qualification for the FIFA World Cup, two stayed with me in particular, the first was the sight of children proudly wearing the national team's jersey in streets, schools, homes and family gatherings, the second was thousands of Jordanians living in the United States filling stadiums with flags, chants and songs, travelling long distances simply to stand behind the Nashama. These scenes mattered because they showed that the meaning of the qualification was not limited to football, it had entered the space of identity.

The jersey worn by children was not just a piece of sportswear, it became a symbol through which a young generation could feel part of a larger national story, children do not learn belonging only through lessons or speeches, they absorb it through moments they can see, repeat and share with others, when a child wears the national team's jersey with pride, he is not only imitating players on the field, he is participating in a collective emotion that links family, school, neighbourhood and country, memories like these often become the foundation upon which a lifelong sense of belonging is built.

The Jordanians abroad expressed the same idea from another direction, their presence in American stadiums showed that national attachment does not disappear with distance, in many cases, living away from home makes identity more visible, because people search for symbols that reconnect them to where they come from, for Jordanians in the diaspora, the national team became a meeting point, a way to gather, remember and pass belonging to children who may be growing up far from Jordan, but are still emotionally connected to it. For many families, these gatherings became about far more than watching a match, they were opportunities to speak Arabic, share memories of home, introduce younger generations to Jordanian traditions and remind children born abroad that identity is shaped not only by where we live, but also by the stories, symbols and experiences we choose to preserve.

This is where football's social role becomes important, it does not create national identity from nothing, but it gives people a public and emotional way to express it, the flag, the anthem, the jersey, the shared tension before a match and the collective joy after qualification all become rituals of belonging. In an age where much of our interaction takes place through individual screens and increasingly fragmented communities, opportunities for entire societies to experience the same emotions at the same time have become increasingly rare, moments like these remind us that belonging is not built through messages alone, but through experiences that people genuinely live together. Through them, people who may never meet still feel part of the same story.

The lesson is not that football should be celebrated only when the national team succeeds, the lesson is that sport can become part of the social infrastructure of a country, supporting school football local clubs, youth academies, public pitches and community leagues should not be seen only as preparation for future tournaments, it is also an investment in creating shared experiences, strengthening social cohesion, developing positive role models and giving future generations opportunities to experience the same sense of belonging that united Jordanians across continents during these unforgettable weeks.

The national team's qualification will be remembered as a sporting milestone, yet its wider value lies in what it revealed about society, it showed that a child in Amman and a Jordanian family in America can be connected by the same jersey, the same anthem and the same sense of pride, football may last ninety minutes on the field, but the belonging it awakens can remain for a lifetime.

Zaid K. Maaytah — researcher in Economics and Behavioural Policy

Crown Prince Hussein and Jordan's global vision

By **Mwaffaq Otoom**

Jordan has a double reason to celebrate as His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hussein marks his 32nd birthday. Beyond the occasion itself, it offers an opportunity to reflect on how a young leader from a small nation has positioned Jordan as a thoughtful and constructive voice in a rapidly changing world.

The Crown Prince's role carries particular significance for Jordan. Situated in a challenging geopolitical environment, the Hashemite Kingdom has long assumed responsibilities that exceed its size and resources. Throughout its history, Jordan has drawn its strength from diplomacy, moderation, education and the resilience of its people. Within this context, the Crown Prince has become an increasingly important public figure, embodying both the continuity of the Hashemite legacy and its modern evolution. His message speaks simultaneously to youth, innovation, technology, public service and international partnership, projecting a vision of Jordan that is rooted in tradition while focused on the future.

The significance of the Crown Prince's leadership extends well beyond Jordan. Most readers outside the region are inclined to understand Jordan through the pillars of stability, peace initiatives, hosting refugees and regional diplomacy — this is an important part of the way people know about Jordan. However, the Crown Prince provides a new interpretation to the image of Jordan as one that believes in investing in its future by empowering youth and preparing its institutions and citizens for a world of knowledge-based industry, technology and rapid change.

The clearest example of his growing international profile came in 2015, when he chaired a UN Security Council meeting on peace, security and youth. This was not just because of his youth but also because he used the world's largest stage to place youth at the centre of global discussions around peace and security. Instead of focusing on the problems presented by youth, the discussions in his region have often revolved around viewing youth as a problem, bur-

den or risk, Jordan instead offered a view of youth as partners in stability, builders of peace and a critical part of resisting extremism.

This statement continues to be true across countries today. Young people worldwide are experiencing unemployment, political discontentment, technological disruption, disinformation, anxiety over climate change, displacement and war. Many young people believe they are spoken about by institutions, not included in communication with them. Crown Prince Hussein's international message has consistently sought to reduce this gap in perception and include young people in the centre of both national and global development and decision-making processes.

The Crown Prince's leadership has an international perspective that links domestic reform goals of Jordan to a global trend

This represents a significant contribution from Jordan to the international dialogue. Jordan does not lay claim to be a player based on size or wealth. Rather, Jordan's influence is derived from credibility, balance and their capacity to convert challenging regional realities into constructive messages globally. The Crown Prince's focus on youth continues this tradition of being practical, moderate and oriented towards people. This premise implies that the establishment of peace must be accomplished not only by diplomats and government officials,

but also by educated, skilled and engaged young people.

His speech to the United Nations General Assembly in 2017 solidified his place as a global representative for Jordan. He spoke for his country and for all the youth in the world today who are looking for answers and guidance during an uncertain time, while also defending the importance of living by ideals, serving others, and taking responsibility. These moments are key for those who are not Arab because they represent more than the image of a country located in a chaotic environment; they demonstrate that there's a nation capable of providing able leaders with clear, safe, and sound wisdom and direction to the rest of the world.

The Crown Prince's leadership has an international perspective that links domestic reform goals of Jordan to a global trend. His focus on education, innovation, technical skills, entrepreneurship and technology is part of diplomacy; as a means of establishing international relevance in the twenty first century, countries will be assessed on their ability to develop talent, create opportunities and use technology to deliver ideas.

This is critical for Jordan because the country's most valuable resource has always been its people. By implementing initiatives focused on youth, promoting education using a practical approach and developing institutions like Al Hussein Technical University, Crown Prince Hussein has laid out an actionable vision for developing young Jordanian people with the skills and confidence to compete, innovate, and contribute. This does not represent symbolic leadership, rather, he is creating institutions to help support young Jordanians achieve successful futures.

His focus on future technology has been further enhanced in recent times. AI/digital transformation, start-ups and emerging technology are not just niche topics but are now vital for economies to be competitive and for nations to survive. By helping Jordan connect with global tech leaders and marry them with future-future partnerships, The Crown Prince is strategically positioning Jor-

dan as a nation that wants to participate in shaping global change rather than reacting to it.

Jordan's international reputation hinges on this. While a nation can have historically high regard, it ultimately will be judged for its future. The work performed in public by the Crown Prince reinforces to those watching that Jordan not only represents a voice of moderation within the Middle East, but also is a young, forward-thinking, knowledge-based society. This message resonates with investors, universities, tech partners and with youth worldwide.

Crown Prince Hussein's leadership style also sets him apart in terms of steadiness. He does not rely on loud slogans or flashy gestures, instead it is grounded in service, discipline, engaging with institutions and creating opportunities over time. In this time of loud public demonstrations being rewarded more often than actual merit, the Crown Prince provides an alternative model of leadership that includes preparing, listening, taking responsibility and building bridges.

He acts as a bridge between diverse generations by linking the Hashemite tradition with contemporary youth culture. He acts as a bridge between Jordan and the global community by representing Jordanian values at international forums but also bringing international dialogue back home to enhance the development of Jordan. He acts as a bridge between tradition and modernity by respecting tradition while facilitating progress.

Crown Prince Hussein is a symbol of continuity but also represents a fresh new direction for all of Jordan's citizens. To the world, he sends a very strong message, that if small states invest in their citizens, promote moderation and engage positively with the global community, they can also lead. To young people throughout the region and around the world, his example illustrates that leadership can be demonstrated at any age and through quality services and taking your responsibilities seriously as well as preparing the country for tomorrow.

Mwaffaq Otoom is former vice president at Yarmouk University (Jordan)

The future of Gulf security after the war

By **Mohammad Abu Rumman**

It is difficult to interpret the recent US-Gulf ministerial meeting as merely a routine diplomatic gathering intended to reassure Gulf capitals following the signing of the US-Iran Memorandum of Understanding, or simply as another reaffirmation of Washington's commitment to Gulf security. Such meetings have been held for decades and would not have required this level of political and media attention had their sole purpose been to restate existing commitments.

What has changed is that the region has emerged from a major war, while the US-Iran Memorandum has opened the door to a new transitional phase whose contours remain incomplete. Yet this transition extends far beyond Iran's nuclear file or the ceasefire itself. The Middle East is now undergoing a process of redefining itself — redistributing roles among regional and international actors and, ultimately, rewriting the rules of regional security.

This explains why the ministerial statement resembled a political blueprint for the emerging regional order far more than a conventional declaration of the US-Gulf partnership. While it reaffirmed America's security umbrella and outlined shared strategic interests, it also sought to define the network of relationships that Washington envisions governing the region in the years ahead: Who are the allies? Who are the partners? How should competition be managed? Where does Israel fit? What role is assigned to Iran? What are the limits of Turkey's regional influence? And within what framework should the region's remaining powers operate?

In other words, the statement was not merely about the Gulf — it was about the future architecture of the Middle East itself.

This is precisely what explains Tehran's sensitivity toward the document and the reactions that followed. Iran responded on two parallel tracks. Diplomatically, the

Foreign Ministry issued a statement rejecting key elements of the US-Gulf declaration. Militarily, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps sent carefully calibrated signals in the Strait of Hormuz. These actions were not intended to trigger another confrontation as much as they were political messages: Iran refuses to be excluded from the region's future security arrangements and any attempt to construct a regional security order that marginalises or bypasses Tehran will remain inherently unstable.

At its core, each side continues to claim victory in the recent war. Washington argues that it successfully altered Iran's strategic behaviour and imposed new rules for future negotiations. Tehran, meanwhile, insists that it withstood the assault, prevented the realisation of the war's maximal objectives and preserved its most important strategic deterrent capabilities. Between these two competing narratives of victory lies the real struggle: Defining the next regional order.

Against this backdrop, Secretary of State Marco Rubio's regional tour appears far more consequential than a simple reassurance mission. For the first time, the United States is confronting quiet yet profound Gulf reassessments regarding the viability of the security model that has governed the region for decades. Gulf states have spent hundreds of billions of dollars on American weapons systems and have hosted the largest US military presence outside the United States. Yet their critical infrastructure has remained vulnerable, the Strait of Hormuz has continued to serve as an Iranian pressure point and Washington has consistently managed regional crises according to its own national priorities — which have not always aligned with those of its Gulf partners.

These questions do not suggest that the Gulf is preparing to decouple from the United States. Rather, they indicate that the relationship itself has entered a peri-

od of strategic reassessment. The traditional equation of purchasing security no longer commands the certainty it once did, particularly amid the rise of other global powers, shifting US strategic priorities and the expanding strategic autonomy of Gulf states.

Ultimately, the future of the region will be determined not solely by the balance of military power, but by the ability of regional actors to construct a new security framework...

Perhaps more significant is that these reassessments are no longer confined to Gulf policy circles. They have begun to resonate within Western strategic thinking as well. In his Foreign Affairs article, "A New Order for the Gulf", David Roberts argues that Gulf security cannot remain indefinitely dependent on the American security umbrella. Instead, he contends that the region must develop its own defensive capabilities and establish a new regional security architecture based on internal balances and diversified partnerships rather than exclusive reliance on external protection. More importantly, Roberts argues that any durable security order must integrate Iran into a new regional framework rather than exclude it, emphasising that security cannot simply be purchased from abroad — it must ultimately be built from within.

One may disagree with Roberts' conclusions, particularly his proposal for a gradual American military withdrawal from the Gulf. Nevertheless, his argument illustrates how fundamentally the debate over Gulf security has evolved — even within Western policy circles.

This brings us to the more consequential question: How do the Gulf states themselves envision the next regional security order? Will reliance on the American security umbrella remain its central pillar? Or will the coming years witness the emergence of a more autonomous Gulf security doctrine? Can Gulf states reach a shared understanding of the region's principal threats and agree on a common framework for managing relations with Iran, Turkey and Israel? Will the Gulf security system remain largely self-contained, or will it evolve toward broader security partnerships incorporating countries such as Jordan, Egypt and perhaps Pakistan, each assuming distinct strategic roles?

These questions are no longer theoretical. They have become integral to the broader process of reshaping the Middle East after the war. In this sense, the US-Gulf ministerial statement was not the conclusion of a debate but rather its opening chapter — not a battle over missiles this time, but a contest over who will write the rules of the emerging regional order, who will participate in shaping them and who will ultimately be compelled to adapt to them.

The Middle East today is living not only in the aftermath of war but also in the aftermath of certainty — the certainty that defined regional alliances since the end of the Cold War. Ultimately, the future of the region will be determined not solely by the balance of military power, but by the ability of regional actors to construct a new security framework capable of responding to the transformations produced by war while preventing the region from sliding into yet another cycle of open-ended conflict.

BUSINESS

Monday, June 29, 2026



Orange Jordan, through its 'Big by Orange' entrepreneurship programme, has participated in VivaTech 2026, one of the world's leading technology and start-up events in Paris

Orange Jordan showcases start-up at VivaTech 2026 in Paris

AMMAN (JT) — Orange Jordan, through its "Big by Orange" entrepreneurship programme, has participated in VivaTech 2026, one of the world's leading technology and start-up events, held in Paris.

According to a company statement issued on Sunday, the company was represented at the event alongside Jordanian start-up LOGATTA, which is supported by Orange Jordan.

LOGATTA presented its innovative product, Accord, a digital platform designed to automate contract management while enabling businesses to access and analyse contract data in real time, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The participation formed part of Orange

Group's wider engagement at VivaTech, which included a start-up demo day hosted at its Paris headquarters.

According to a company statement issued on Sunday, the company was represented at the event alongside Jordanian start-up LOGATTA...

The event brought together start-ups supported by the group across

more than 24 countries, providing them with an opportunity to engage directly with potential partners, investors and experts from Orange's global innovation ecosystem.

Orange Jordan said its participation reflects its ongoing commitment to supporting Jordanian entrepreneurs by nurturing local talent and enabling start-ups to access leading international technology platforms.

The company added that such initiatives allow Jordanian entrepreneurs to showcase their innovations to global investors, explore new market opportunities, and enhance their capabilities through exposure to emerging technology trends and international best practices, Petra reported.

Gov't launches 35m euro programme to boost industrial competitiveness, support SMEs

By Ilham Darwazah

AMMAN — The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply on Sunday launched the "Leadership in Industry" programme, a 35 million euro initiative funded by the German government and implemented through the Industrial Development and Support Fund (IDSF) to strengthen the competitiveness of Jordan's industrial sector.

The programme aims to support 370 micro, small and medium-sized industrial enterprises (SMEs), enhance exports, improve productivity and create new employment opportunities.

It will provide non-refundable grants of up to JD25,000 for micro-enterprises, JD50,000 for small enterprises and JD100,000 for medium-sized enterprises.

A total of 10 million euro has been earmarked to support women-owned and women-led businesses through financial, technical and logistical assistance, with the aim of increasing women's participation in the industrial sector.

The fund will cover up to 70 per cent of eligible project costs, rising to 80 per cent for businesses owned or managed by women or projects that create employment opportunities for women.

Ministry Secretary-General Dana Zoubi said the initiative supports the Economic Modernisation Vi-



The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply on Sunday launches the 'Leadership in Industry' programme, with 35 million euro funded by the German government

sion and the Industrial Policy 2024-2028, both of which seek to strengthen the competitiveness of Jordanian industry and increase its contribution to economic growth.

She noted that the industrial sector accounts for around one-quarter of the national economy and contributed nearly 45 per cent of Jordan's economic growth last year.

Zoubi said the Industrial Development and Support Fund has received more than 2,500 applications since its establishment, supporting 635 companies. Beneficiary firms

recorded sales growth of more than 30 per cent and an increase in exports of around 40 per cent, while creating over 4,100 jobs.

She also revealed that Jordan has reached preliminary understandings with the World Bank to secure around JD60 million in additional funding for the 2027-2029 period to expand industrial support programmes.

Jordan Chamber of Industry Vice President Mohammad Jitan said more than 90 per cent of the Kingdom's industrial establishments are SMEs that

require continued financial support to expand their operations and improve competitiveness.

He said the Fund's programmes have helped manufacturers overcome financing constraints and rising operating costs, enabling them to increase productivity and expand exports.

World Bank representative Mohammad Abdel-Qader said the programme is the result of nearly three years of cooperation between Jordan, Germany and the World Bank, with a focus on supporting SMEs,

promoting economic development in the governorates and increasing women's participation in the industrial workforce.

KfW Development Bank Country Director Matthias Schmidt-Rosen said support for Jordan's industrial sector remains a cornerstone of German-Jordanian development cooperation. He said KfW would continue working with the government to develop financing programmes that strengthen industrial competitiveness, stimulate economic growth and create jobs.

Asia's vendors grapple with rising costs of ever-present plastics

By Joy Chiang with AFP bureaus in Asia

TAIPEI (AFP) — Food vendors across Asia reliant on plastics for everything from bags to cups and containers are grappling with their rising costs, as a result of the energy crisis sparked by the Middle East war.

While the United States and Iran have reached a deal to halt the conflict, it will take time for markets to recover and supply flows to return to normal, with persistent concerns over traffic through the economically vital Strait of Hormuz.

At Taipei's Songjiang market, chicken vendor Li Yu-ping, 52, said in early June that the price of plastic bags had jumped nearly 60 per cent, while the cost of plastic trays had risen by a third.

"We use them everywhere," she said of the bags. "Our food containers are also plastic, all disposable."

Wary of hiking prices, "all of this has become a cost for the vendors", she said.

A key raw material for many of these plastic goods is ethylene, which is derived from naphtha, an oil by-product. Around 60 per cent of the naphtha imported to Asia comes from the Gulf.



A vendor packs goods into a plastic bag at a traditional market in Keelung on June 9

plastic goods such as plastic bags surging.

In Bangkok, Nikorn Sai-inthara, a 60-year-old selling vegetables from a street cart, estimated his operating costs had risen by 30 per cent.

"I rely on plastic bags for my work because I sell vegetables on the go to busy people and office workers," said Nikorn, who wraps individual portions in plastic and secures them with a rubber band.

"Ever since the fighting started in the Middle East, my profits have fallen, but I don't dare raise prices for my customers," he told AFP.

Several vendors across the region told AFP they do not have a practical alternative to the plastic products they use on a daily basis.

"We have no choice. If you don't give customers plastic bags, they complain," said Chang Chiu-hsiang, a 78-year-old grocer in Taipei. "I think you can't really avoid using them," added Li, the chicken vendor, noting however that some customers

have started to use reusable bags.

Somsak Jaidee, 62, who sells rice porridge in bags secured with rubber bands at a Bangkok market, said that while "everything is more expensive... I have to endure it".

"I can't think of anything else that offers the same convenience for my customers as plastic bags."

The cautious reopening of the Strait of Hormuz since the US-Iran deal was signed last week has yet to fully impact naphtha prices, which have dipped only slightly.

And manufacturers continue to process naphtha purchased when prices were higher.

In early June, Taiwanese manufacturer Formosa Petrochemical reported cutting the utilisation rate of its ethylene steam cracker to 35 per cent, down from 53 per cent in March at the very start of the war.

tremely expensive, and some of our customers simply can't bear the higher prices," Formosa's president, Lin Keh-yen, told AFP.

In South Korea, supply tensions remained acute in early June.

"Normally, if we order 10,000 plastic bags, they arrive within about a week. Now suppliers are telling us that we may have to wait more than a month" with prices 30 per cent higher, said a shop employee in Seoul.

A nearby dry cleaner said the price of plastic garment covers had more than doubled, while a cafe owner noted a 50-per cent increase in the cost of plastic cups.

South Korea's plastics industry association said the Middle East war had forced manufacturers to hike prices, although "alternative" supply routes have helped stabilise the situation.

Fajar Budiyo, secretary-general of the Association of Olefin, Aromatic, Plastic and Chemical Industries in Indonesia, said a shift to suppliers in places like China and Africa has helped keep prices at bay.

In the Philippines, meanwhile, manufacturers said they had absorbed some of the additional costs.

"Our profits got squeezed. We could not simply raise prices as we would be swamped by imports," said Steve Tavera, a member of the Philippine Plastics Industry Association.

As a result, price hikes have so far been "conservative", he said.

Zarqa Industrial Estate targets 530 firms, 21,000 jobs under expansion drive

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan Industrial Estates Company (JIEC) has outlined plans to attract up to 530 industrial companies and generate around 21,000 jobs at the Zarqa Industrial Estate (ZIE), as part of efforts to position it as a leading green industrial hub in the Kingdom.

The announcement came on Sunday during a promotional tour organised by JIEC for a delegation from the East Amman Industrial Investors Association, aimed at showcasing investment opportunities, incentives and the estate's integrated business environment, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

According to a company statement issued on Sunday, Chairman of JIEC Obaid Yassin said the Zarqa Industrial Estate represents a strategic project aligned with Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision, which seeks to strengthen the national industrial sector and enhance the Kingdom's position as a regional investment hub despite ongoing geopolitical challenges.

Yassin said the estate has been developed in line with advanced engineering standards for industrial zones, adding that completion of its first phase reflects JIEC's commitment to implementation time-

lines and its strategy to attract further industrial investments in the coming period.

He added that the board is currently reviewing several proposals aimed at increasing the estate's attractiveness to investors.

JIEC Director General Oday Obaidat said the estate has already attracted seven industrial investments across various sectors and is preparing to launch a promotional campaign targeting both local and international investors to highlight available opportunities.

He described ZIE as Jordan's first green industrial estate, noting that it incorporates

renewable energy systems, Internet of Things technologies, water harvesting infrastructure and natural gas supply systems designed to reduce energy and water costs for investors.

Obaidat said the first phase covers 1,386 dunums of a total 2,475 dunums, with total investment costs reaching JD35 million. This phase includes serviced industrial plots as well as ready-built facilities covering 21,000 square metres.

He added that preliminary studies suggest the first phase alone could attract around 217 industrial investments, generating around 8,500 jobs.

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Sunday amounted to JD11.1 million spread over 3.6 million shares that traded through 3,926 transactions.

The ASE share price index shed 1.06 per cent, closing at 3824.87 points.

Out of 93 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 23 companies rose while the share price of another 42 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were Jordan Insurance by 7.48 per cent, Jordan Masaken for Land and Industrial Development Projects by 4.84 per cent, Premier Business and Projects Company Ltd. by 4.8 per cent, Arab Phoenix Holdings by 4.41 per cent, and Al Faris National Company for Investment and Export by 4.17 per cent.

The companies whose shares dropped the most were Amad Investment and Real Estate Development by 5.26 per cent, International Arabian Development And Investment Trading Company by 5.26 per cent, Jordan Poultry Processing and Marketing by 5 per cent, Jordanian Company for Developing and Financial Investment by 4.76 per cent, and First Jordan Investment Company Plc. by 3.45 per cent.

THE MARKET TODAY

ASE Index: ↓ 3824.87 1.06% June 28, 2026

Live Data Historical Data

Click and drag in the plot area to zoom in

DAILY SUMMARY

Regular Market		OTC Market	
Trading Value (JDs)	11,077,369		
Trading volume	3,609,378		
No. of Transactions	3,926		
No. of Securities	93		

Jordan resumes FIBA World Cup qualifiers

By Aline Bannayan

AMMAN — It's Jordan vs Iraq and Syria vs Iran as Amman hosts postponed Window 2 and Window 3 matches of Asian Group C qualifiers for the 2027 FIBA World Cup.

Window 2 was discontinued in Beirut with heightened security concerns amid Israel's bombing of several areas in the Lebanese capital in March.

Jordan tops the group after they beat Syria twice 100-48 and 74-59 in Window 1, Group C opening qualifiers. As Window 2 tipped off, Jordan beat Iran 73-60 to keep their lead atop the table as Syria beat Iraq 78-70. In other matches, Iran beat Iraq 86-71 and 94-68.

The national squad was idle since then as the Jordan basketball Federation faced a series of resignations and admin issues, and the team regrouped very late to start their preparations. Former Coach Wisam Sous has been recalled to oversee the team in the upcoming three matches as Jordan plays Window 3 matches against Iran on July 2 and Iraq on July 5.

The Jordanian squad again has Jalen Harris combining with top scorers Ahmad Duweiri and Freddie Ibrahim with younger players recalled to join aiming to qualify to the World Cup for the third consecutive and fourth overall time after first qualifying in 2010. The team, now 41st in FIBA rankings and 8th in Asia, still lacks a solid bench and continues



JBF photo

Jalen Harris leads Jordan's lineup at the qualifiers

to be carried by veteran Duweiri combining with new naturalised player Harris who led the team with an impressive record 42 points in FIBA records of the World Cup qualifiers.

A total of 80 national squads from the four FIBA regions are playing FIBA World Cup qualifiers in six windows from November 2025 to March 2027 following which 5 teams from Africa, 7 from the Americas, 7 from Asia, and 12 from Europe will advance to the 2027 World Cup in Doha, Qatar which is a direct qualifier for 7 national teams to the 2028 Olympic Games.

The top three teams from each group contesting the qualifiers will advance to the next round where the 12 teams will be divided into two groups of six from which the group leaders will advance to the World Cup alongside the fourth best team.

Group A: Australia, New Zealand, Philippines have advanced with Guam out;

Group B: Japan, South Korea and China have advanced with Chinese Taipei out;

Group D: Lebanon, Qatar which is a direct qualifier for 7 national teams to the 2028 Olympic Games.

At the 31st FIBA Asia

Cup 2025, Jordan's squad failed to keep up the nation's impressive record at the competition with key absences becoming an obstacle in their quest to reach the quarterfinals. Jordan ended up 11th among 16

competing nations after previously, reaching the medals podium twice finishing runner-up in 2011, 3rd in 2009, 4th in 2022.

In 2023, Jordan was Asian Games silver medalist, the best Asian

result for a team sport after qualifying to the FIBA World Cup in 2010, 2019 and 2023. So far, the squad has played at the FIBA Asia Cup 17th times, with their best position runner-up in 2011.

Group C

Team	P	W	L	SF	SA	PTS
Jordan	3	3	0	247	167	6
Iran	3	2	1	240	212	5
Syria	3	1	2	185	244	4
Iraq	3	0	3	209	258	3

TENNIS

Serena blasts drug test rules ahead of Wimbledon return

LONDON (AFP) — Serena Williams has slammed the drug test rules that force tennis stars to declare their location to doping officials, claiming the "unprofessional" system stopped her coming out of retirement sooner. Williams will play her first singles match since 2022 when the American legend faces Australia's Maya Joint in the Wimbledon first round on Tuesday. The 44-year-old has made a sensational comeback after four years in retirement, far playing doubles at Queen's Club and Berlin before deciding to step up her return at Wimbledon, where she will also compete with sister Venus in the doubles. Williams' stunning decision to pick up a racquet again has brought unwanted stress off the court however. The 23-time Grand Slam champion had to enter the anti-doping testing pool several months before being allowed to officially return to the women's tour. Tennis "whereabouts rules" require players to give a location and time slot when they can be tested for each day of the year.

RUGBY

Rennie adopts basic All Blacks game plan for France Test

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AFP) — Coach Dave Rennie said on Sunday he only has time to implement a "simple structure" for his first assignment in charge of the All Blacks, a heavy-weight showdown with France. Rennie's short 10-day preparation time means he'll establish a basic game plan for their opening Nations Championship Test in Christchurch on Saturday. The former Wallabies coach was named to replace the sacked Scott Robertson as New Zealand's head coach in March but has had little involvement since because of a club contract in Japan that finished this month. Rennie said he had only coached a handful of the 34-strong playing group previously. "I'm enjoying it, it's been good getting to know them better," he told journalists after the team arrived in Christchurch. "A lot of it now is around a simple structure from an attack point of view, getting really good connection defensively, and we just want the guys to get out there and be really clear and play."

FAMILY FLAVOURS MAGAZINE

THE JORDAN TIMES



Knowledge for better care

By Dr Kamal 'Aki,

Consultant aediatrician and paediatric nephrologist expert contributor/Family Flavours Magazine

It is essential to educate parents and caregivers of children living with chronic illnesses, particularly those affecting the kidneys, heart, brain or lungs. Increased awareness and understanding can help ensure proper care, improve health outcomes and support the child's overall well-being and quality of life.

A joint effort

It is always recommended that doctors, parents and caregivers work together to achieve the best possible outcomes. Parents are advised to understand the details of their child's disease; its potential complications and the medications prescribed for its treatment.

Here are some tips when visiting your doctor:

1. Bring all medications, or keep a clear record of them, including their names and dosages
2. Sometimes, a pharmacist may give an alternative drug if the prescribed one is not available. Always inform your doctor about these changes as the alterna-



tive drug may differ from the initial prescription

3. Always ask your doctor about drug-drug and drug-food interactions.

For instance, iron should be taken one hour before meals or two hours after meals. Also, iron should not be consumed with calcium or tea because

they lead to decreased absorption

4. Always mention to your doctor if your child is taking herbal products, even if you do not consider them medicines. Herbs contain active compounds that may act like medicines, interfere with prescribed treatments or affect laboratory test results. In other words, herbs are not always harmless.

Confidence in treatment

Believing that treatment will help your child is an

important part of care. Confidence in the treatment plan can encourage regular follow-up visits and help families stay consistent with medications. In many cases, follow-up appointments are just as important as the first visit.

If your child misses a dose, ask your doctor or pharmacist about the best course of action. Some medications can be taken later, while others may need to be skipped. Taking an extra dose without medical advice may cause harm.



In emergencies

In times of war, lockdown or natural disasters, try to keep an adequate supply of essential medications. If supplies become limited, speak with your healthcare provider before making any changes. Some medications, especially those used for blood pressure, can cause serious problems if stopped suddenly.

Emotional support and understanding

If you move to another city, change your medical insurance or transfer from paediatric to adult care, request a detailed medical report. This report should include the diagnosis, treatment history and current medica-

tions. Children living with chronic illnesses need empathy, emotional support and understanding. A chronic condition can affect the entire family and may create stress for parents, siblings and caregivers.

Managing stress can help families provide better care and make daily challenges easier to handle. Lifestyle changes are often easier when the whole family takes part. For example, if a child is following a low-salt diet because of high blood pressure or swelling, the entire family may benefit from making similar dietary changes.

Managing a chronic medical condition requires teamwork. Parents and healthcare

providers each play an important role in supporting the child's well-being. Understanding the condition, its possible complications and the medications used for treatment helps families make informed decisions.

Most importantly, have confidence in your healthcare team and remain actively involved in your child's care. Your role as a parent or guardian is just as important as the medical care your child receives. When families and healthcare providers work together, children are more likely to achieve the best possible outcomes.

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