

THE JORDAN TIMES



CLIMATE 2

Madaba hosts
FAO **workshops** on
climate change
resilience



TOURISM

Cabinet approves
JD5 million support
package for **Petra**
tourism sector

3



PAPER

Economic corridors
enhance **Jordan**
in **global** trade
networks — JSF

7



CYCLING

Del Toro, Seixas show
glimpse into **Tour de**
France **future**

8



Tuesday, July 28, 2026 | Safar 1 14, 1448 Hijri



Prime Minister Jafar Hassan chairs a Cabinet session on Monday

Cabinet approves \$97 million financing agreement for National Water Carrier Project

AMMAN (JT) — The Cabinet, during a session chaired by Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Monday, approved an agreement with the French Development Agency to help finance the National Water Carrier Project, with an initial contribution of \$97 million, as the government moves to complete the mega project's financial closure and begin implementation.

The approval marks another step towards advancing the Kingdom's largest water infrastructure project, which is expected to cost approximately \$5.8 billion, according to a Prime Ministry statement.

The government signed the project's final technical and legal agreement in April, paving the way for

the completion of financing arrangements and the start of construction works.

The National Water Carrier Project is considered the first project of its scale in Jordan's history.

It will involve the desalination of 300 million cubic metres of seawater annually, the construction of pumping systems capable of transporting water to elevations of up to 1,100 metres above sea level and a pipeline network extending approximately 450 kilometres.

The project will rely heavily on renewable energy and advanced environmentally friendly technologies. Upon completion, it is expected to meet around 40 per cent of Jordan's drinking water needs, representing a major boost to the

country's water security efforts.

The Cabinet also approved the validating reasons for the 2026 amendments to the Natural Resources Law, to be referred to the Legislation and Opinion Bureau for review and the completion of legal procedures.

The proposed amendments are part of efforts to modernise investment legislation and create a more attractive environment for investors in the natural resources sector, the statement said.

They are also aligned with Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision, which identifies mining as a key driver of "high-value industries".

Continued on page 5

Crown Prince visits Civil Status, Passports Department, urges completion of digital transition of services

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Crown Prince Hussein, the Regent, visited on Monday the Civil Status and Passports Department, and emphasised the importance of completing digital automation of services.

The Crown Prince called for expanding public awareness campaigns to ensure all citizens are informed about the services provided through the Sanad application, particularly those offered by the Civil Status and Passports Department, and to educate citizens on how to use the services and access them online, according to a Royal Court statement.

His Royal Highness was briefed by Director General of the Civil Status and Passports Department Ghaith Al Tayeb on the department's services and projects in the areas of digital transformation and e-connectivity, as well as efforts being made to expand the provision of e-services, thereby helping to streamline procedures for citizens and improve their experience.

Al Tayeb explained that the department offers 25 online services, accounting for 81 per cent of its transactions, noting that the proportion of transactions completed online rose from 3.8 per cent in 2024 to 24.6 per cent in



HRH Crown Prince Hussein, the Regent, visits on Monday the Civil Status and Passports Department and emphasises the importance of completing full digital automation of services to facilitate procedures for citizens

2026, the statement said. During his tour of the Civil Status and Passports Department, the Crown Prince also emphasised

the need to expedite the processing of applications submitted in person, as well as to ensure inclusive access to support the di-

verse needs of citizens.

His Royal Highness was accompanied by Interior Minister Mazen Farraya, Minister of Digital Econ-

omy and Entrepreneurship Sami Smeirat, and Director of the Office of the Crown Prince Zaid Baqain.

Photo courtesy of Royal Court

DIPLOMACY

Foreign minister, UN chief discuss efforts to restore regional security, stability

AMMAN (JT) — Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi held talks on Monday with United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres that focused on regional developments and ways to strengthen cooperation between Jordan and the UN and its agencies.

During a meeting in Amman, Safadi and Guterres reaffirmed the strong partnership between Jordan and the UN and stressed the importance of continued coordination to promote regional security and stability, according to a Foreign Ministry statement.

Safadi and Guterres discussed regional developments and efforts to restore calm and stability.

They also stressed the importance of maintaining the ceasefire between the United States and Iran, and resuming negotiations to address the root causes of tension and ensure freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz in line with international law, the statement said.

The talks also ad-



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi (right) speaks during a meeting in Amman on Monday with United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres

ressed the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Safadi emphasised the need for the full implementation of US President Donald Trump's Gaza plan and the lifting of Israeli restrictions on humanitarian aid entering the Strip, which, he said, continues to face a humanitarian catastrophe.

The two sides also reviewed the deteriorating situation in the occupied West Bank.

Safadi stressed the need for concerted international efforts to stop Israeli measures that entrench the occupation, fuel tensions and violence, and undermine the prospects for a just and comprehensive peace, according to the statement.

He also warned that illegal Israeli measures, including settler violence, settlement expansion, land confiscation and attempts to alter the historic and legal status

quo in Jerusalem and its Muslim and Christian holy sites, are pushing the West Bank towards further escalation in violation of international law and relevant UN resolutions.

Safadi called for concerted regional and international efforts to compel Israel, as the occupying power, to end its violations of international law and humanitarian law.

Continued on page 5

Housing Bank Achieves JOD 82.2 Million in Net Profits During the First Half of 2026

Amman, 28 July 2026

The Housing Bank for Trade and Finance Group announced its financial results for the first six months of 2026, reporting net profits of JOD 82.2 million after tax, an increase of 2.6% compared to the same period last year.

Commenting on the results, Chairman of the Board Abdel Elah Al-Khatib said they reflect the bank's strong financial position, solid performance and ability to deliver sustainable growth despite regional and global challenges. He added that the results demonstrate the bank's prudent liquidity management and strategic allocation of resources to enhance profitability, support key business sectors and contribute to the national economy.

CEO Ammar Al-Safadi said the bank's strong performance reflects its success in delivering innovative financial solutions and high-quality initiatives, further strengthening its position as one of the country's leading banking institutions.

Highlighting a major milestone in sustainable finance, Al-Safadi noted that the bank issued the first blue bond in the Kingdom, valued at USD 100 million, as part of a USD 200 million program, in partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the bond's proceeds will finance sustainable projects, with a primary focus on water resources and the National Water Carrier Project. The bond provides a new financing and investment instrument to support projects related to water resource protection and management, ecosystems and sustainable infrastructure. It also

contributes to the Kingdom's National Water Security Program while reinforcing Jordan's position as a regional leader in sustainable finance.

Al-Safadi added that the bank remains committed to balancing growth and profitability through prudent policies that support effective risk management and improve operational efficiency. He emphasized that this approach is a core part of the bank's long-term strategy for achieving sustainable growth and strong financial performance.

Reviewing the bank's key financial indicators, Al-Safadi highlighted a 12% increase in net direct credit facilities to reach JOD 5.0 billion, while total income grew by 3.0% to reach JOD 233.4 million. He said these results reflect the strong performance and efficiency of the group's various business operations.

Al-Safadi also highlighted the bank's strong capital base, with totalequity reaching JOD 1.5 billion and a capital adequacy ratio of 18.8%, well above the minimum regulatory requirements set by the Central Bank of Jordan and the Basel Committee.

He further reaffirmed the bank's commitment to continuously providing innovative banking solutions and distinguished services within a flexible and evolving operating environment, enabling it to deliver comprehensive financial solutions and an exceptional banking experience for its clients.

Air Force downs two drones, no injuries or damage — JAF



AMMAN (JT) — The Royal Jordanian Air Force intercepted and shot down two drones targeting the Kingdom on Monday morning, the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) said.

In a statement, the JAF said that the interception resulted in no casualties or material damage.

Teams from the Royal Engineering Corps were deployed to the sites

where the drone debris fell and secured the areas in accordance with established technical and security procedures, the statement said.

The Armed Forces are continuing to monitor Jordan's airspace and remain at the highest level of operational readiness to counter any threat to the Kingdom's security and the safety of its citizens, the statement added.



HRH Princess Basma on Monday, during a ceremony marking 50 years of partnership between Jordan and the United Nations Population Fund, stresses the importance of the partnership between Jordan and the fund in improving the quality of life

Princess Basma stresses Jordan-UNFPA partnership to improve quality of life

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Princess Basma, Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), on Monday stressed the importance of the partnership between Jordan and the fund in improving the quality of life, ensuring target groups' access to essential services and enhancing their resilience against challenges.

Speaking at a ceremony marking 50 years of partnership between Jordan and UNFPA, organised in cooperation with the Higher Population Council (HPC), Princess Basma said that the milestone should serve as an impetus to realign priorities, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

She also called for placing reproductive health and the safety of women and girls at the forefront of national and international development plans as a fundamental human right enshrined in constitutions and international charters.

The ceremony coincided

with World Population Day 2026, held under the theme "Fulfilling Youth Hopes and Aspirations Today and for the Future."

Princess Basma highlighted the severe impact of conflicts on reproductive health services globally, including in the Gaza Strip, where the collapse of the healthcare system has turned childbirth into a source of fear rather than a symbol of life, compounding physical burdens, psychological distress and uncertainty for women, girls, children and the elderly.

Princess Basma noted that, according to international organisations, nearly 117 million people worldwide, half of whom are women and girls, have been forcibly displaced by conflicts.

The princess added that around 60 million displaced women and girls face heightened risks of gender-based violence amid protection systems unable to meet the scale of need.

She stressed the neces-

sity of supporting the UNFPA Humanitarian Appeal for 2026 to enable its vital network of clinics and services worldwide to deliver reproductive health and protection services to thousands of women, adolescent girls and refugees under extremely complex conditions.

UNFPA Representative in Jordan Himyar Abdulmoghni said that the 50-year partnership has evolved in line with the Kingdom's changing priorities, contributing to the use of demographic data in policymaking, advancing sexual and reproductive health rights, promoting gender equality, and expanding youth opportunities.

Abdulmoghni reaffirmed the fund's commitment to working alongside the government and national institutions, supporting national priorities and the ICPD Programme of Action to strengthen institutions' capacity to adapt to demographic shifts and empower future generations.

UNFPA Regional Director for Arab States Laila Baker presented key findings from the "Life, Choices and Future" survey, which gathered insights from over 108,000 young men and women aged 18–39 across 73 countries, including eight Arab states.

Baker said that Arab youth retain strong aspirations for marriage and family building, noting that nearly two-thirds of Arab respondents expressed optimism about available opportunities, while two-thirds also highlighted significant inequality, reflecting optimism alongside concern over equal opportunity.

In Jordan, the survey revealed that 47.6 per cent of youth surveyed expressed concern over risks linked to regional conflict, economic instability, widening inequality, and global health and environmental hazards.

Baker emphasised that anxiety reflects pressing pressures rather than a lack of ambition, stressing that demographic

strategies must look beyond growth or fertility rates to focus on everyday realities, including employment, affordable housing, healthcare, social protection and gender equality.

Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Omar Fanek said that the success of the Jordan-UNFPA partnership stems from a shared vision to serve future generations and provide dignified care.

Fanek added that Jordan addresses demographic challenges through structured institutional programmes in cooperation with international partners.

HPC Secretary General Issa Masarweh, outlined Jordan's demographic realities and youth challenges related to marriage, fertility, unemployment, low income relative to living costs, competition from non-local labour and educational gaps relative to market needs.

Education Ministry, British Council extend Teaching for Success partnership until 2029

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Education and the British Council have announced the extension and expansion of their Teaching for Success partnership until 2029, reaffirming their shared commitment to English language education and the continuous professional development of teachers in Jordan.

The renewed partnership was formalised through an agreement signed by Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Azmi Mahafzah and Alex Lambert, country director Jordan and Levant lead, British Council, marking the next phase of a long-standing collaboration to support high-quality English language teaching and learning, according to a council statement.

The renewed agreement marks a "significant milestone" in a partnership that has grown from a successful pilot initiative into a nationally co-funded programme supporting the ministry's priorities for improving the quality of English language teaching.

Since its launch in 2022, Teaching for Success has supported over 7,000 English language teachers across Jordan.

Under the renewed partnership, the programme will reach some

4,000 teachers annually, backed by a joint annual investment by both sides.

Mahafzah welcomed the collaboration, highlighting the value of bringing together Jordanian and British expertise to strengthen the skills of in-service teachers.

'We are proud to continue working alongside the Ministry of Education to support teachers across Jordan...'

He said that the ministry will work closely with the British Council to implement the initiative and expressed his confidence that the partnership will contribute to improving learning outcomes.

The extension reflects the Ministry of Education and the British Council's long-standing collaboration in developing a sustainable model of teacher professional development that combines national priorities with evidence-informed international practice.

By investing in teachers, the partnership aims to improve classroom practice and strengthen learning outcomes for students across Jordan.

UK Ambassador Philip Hall OBE said: "Jordanians' language skills are impressive. The Teaching for Success partnership should help every teacher of English in Jordan teach the language even better. It's a fantastic programme and I wish success to every teacher participating and to every child benefiting."

Lambert said: "Teaching for Success demonstrates what can be achieved through long-term partnerships built on trust, shared expertise and a common commitment to improving education."

"We are proud to continue working alongside the Ministry of Education to support teachers across Jordan and strengthen English language education through a sustainable, nationally owned model of professional development," Lambert added.

The renewed partnership reflects the shared ambition of the Ministry of Education and the British Council to continue investing in teachers as a catalyst for improving educational outcomes and ensuring sustainable, system-wide impact, the statement read.

AGRICULTURE

Madaba hosts FAO workshops on climate change resilience

AMMAN (JT) — The first training workshops dedicated to civil society organisations were launched on Monday in Madaba under the Building Resilience to Cope with Climate Change in Jordan through Improving Water Use Efficiency in the Agriculture Sector (BRCCJ) project, implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

The workshops aim to boost the capacities of civil society organisations and enable them to play a greater role in raising environmental awareness and supporting climate change adaptation efforts at the local level, according to a FAO statement.

The workshops are based on the findings of consultation sessions conducted with civil society organisations of Madaba, Karak, Tafleeh and Maan.

These consultations identified local communities' needs and priorities related to climate change adaptation, water resources management and improving water use efficiency in the agriculture sector.

Policy and Education Expert at FAO Samia



The workshops aim to enhance the capacities of civil society organisations and enable them to play a greater role in raising environmental awareness and supporting climate change adaptation efforts at the local level

Akroush delivered an overview of the BRCCJ project, highlighting its objectives, key components and its role in improving water use efficiency in agriculture, promoting climate-smart agricultural practices, and strengthening the capacities of local communities and civil society organisations to enhance resilience to climate change and support sustainable agricultural development.

The workshop, organised in coordination with the National Women's Committees Gathering in Madaba, brings together representatives of civil society organisations from across the governorate.

Participants are receiving theoretical training delivered by Sustainable Scientific Vision for Engineering and Environment, covering climate change and its impacts on Jordan, adaptation meas-

ures in the agriculture sector, sustainable water resources management, rainwater harvesting, climate-smart agriculture, as well as awareness-raising and community engagement skills to support local initiatives and strengthen community participation in climate adaptation efforts.

The training workshops will continue in the coming period in the governorates of Karak, Tafleeh and Maan, foster-

ing knowledge exchange, expanding community participation, and supporting the implementation of local initiatives that contribute to sustainable agricultural development.

BRCCJ project is implemented by FAO and funded by the Green Climate Fund, in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, the Ministry of Environment, and the United Nations Development Programme.

The project aims to strengthen the resilience of Jordan's communities and agricultural sector to the impacts of climate change by improving water use efficiency, promoting sustainable natural resource management and scaling up the adoption of climate-smart agriculture practices.

These workshops are expected to reinforce the role of civil society organisations as key partners in promoting environmental awareness and supporting local communities in adopting more sustainable water management and agricultural practices, thereby enhancing resilience to climate change and ensuring more efficient use of water resources.

HCD, CARC sign agreement to ensure accessible, inclusive air travel

AMMAN (JT) — The Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (HCD) and the Civil Aviation Regulatory Commission (CARC) on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to bolster cooperation in guaranteeing the right of persons with disabilities to travel freely, independently and with dignity.

The agreement aims to develop the air transport system by ensuring the accessibility of its facilities, services and information, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

It also aims at providing reasonable accommodation on an equal basis with others, in line with the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities No. 20 of 2017, the Civil Aviation Law, relevant international standards, and CARC's commitments made at the Global Disability Summit 2025.

The MoU was signed by HH Prince Mired, Chief Chamberlain and HCD President, and Chairman of the Board of Commissioners and CEO of CARC Dhaifallah Farajat, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

ic growth and ensures equitable access to opportunities offered by the tourism sector.

Failing to invest in making tourist destinations and services accessible not only deprives persons with disabilities of their right to travel, but also leads to lost economic and investment opportunities that could otherwise boost the sector's growth and competitiveness nationwide, the prince stressed.

Prince Mired added that promoting inclusive tourism requires ensuring accessibility across all stages of travel, from air transport services and airport facilities to reaching and enjoying tourist destinations independently and safely.

He noted that the MoU marks a "significant" step towards developing policies and regulations governing civil aviation accessibility, while elevating the readiness of airports and service providers, guaranteeing equal travel opportunities for persons with disabilities and consolidating Jordan's standing as an inclusive destination aligned with international standards.

For his part, Farajat said that the agreement seeks to reinforce institutional cooperation in refining policies and regulations protecting the rights of air passengers with disabilities and reduced mobility.

Farajat added that the MoU aims to enhance sector compliance with accessibility requirements and reasonable accommodation, delivering higher quality, efficient and inclusive air transport services in line with national legislation and international best practices.

Areas of cooperation include reviewing and updating relevant legislation, harmonising national regulations with international standards, and improving access to facilities, services and related information.

The MoU also covers capacity-building programmes for sector personnel on rights-based approaches and communication etiquette, raising awareness regarding passenger rights, developing a complaints mechanism and adopting technical specifications for accessible airport infrastructure and civil aviation facilities.

The signing underscores the commitment of both sides to fostering an inclusive air transport sector in the Kingdom, placing the rights of persons with disabilities at the core of policies, procedures and services.



The Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Civil Aviation Regulatory Commission on Monday sign a memorandum of understanding to bolster cooperation in guaranteeing the right of persons with disabilities to travel freely, independently and with dignity

Cabinet approves new rules on unpaid leave, private school ratings, social protection

- Government employees will be able to access unpaid leave after three years of service instead of five
- Private schools will be classified into six categories based on education quality, management, performance indicators
- New social protection and welfare fund framework to be established to strengthen support programmes, promote economic empowerment

AMMAN (JT) — The Cabinet on Monday approved amendments to the Human Resources Management bylaw in the Public Sector for 2026, aimed at making unpaid leave provisions more flexible for government employees while ensuring the continuity of public services.

During a session, chaired by Prime Minister Jafar Hassan, the Cabinet approved the validating reasons for the proposed amendments and referred them to the Legislative and Opinion Bureau for legal procedures.

The draft bylaw was also granted an urgent status, according to a Prime Ministry statement.

The amendments seek to reorganise regulations governing unpaid leave after a review of the current system by relevant authorities, with the goal of improving workforce management and addressing the needs of employees and government institutions.

Under the proposed changes, the minimum service requirement for obtaining unpaid leave would be reduced from



Prime Minister Jafar Hassan chairs a Cabinet session on Monday, during which a set of regulations related to unpaid leave, private school ratings, social protection were approved

five years of actual service to three years.

The draft regulation would also remove the current limit on the duration of unpaid leave, allowing employees to remain on leave for an open-ended period rather than a fixed number of years.

It also eliminates the requirement for employees to return to work during the final five years of service in order to qualify for a retirement pension.

The statement said that the amendments would provide greater flexibility for employees working

abroad, allowing them to continue their overseas employment or return to their government positions.

The draft bylaw also expands unpaid leave for study purposes, setting the duration at five years for both study inside and

outside Jordan, compared with the current system, which allows two years for study inside the Kingdom and five years abroad.

Employees will also have the option to continue contributing to the Social Security system during their unpaid leave period.

The new provisions will apply to employees currently on unpaid leave under the existing regulation, as well as those who apply for leave after the amendments come into effect.

To ensure workforce planning and avoid disruptions to government services, public institutions will be able to fill vacancies created by employees on unpaid leave, the statement said.

The statement also said that the revised regulations would help public sector entities improve workforce planning, manage vacancies more effectively and ensure the continued delivery of government services without affecting the quality of services provided to citizens.

The Cabinet also approved the draft bylaw for classifying private educational institutions, including private schools, as part of efforts to improve education quality, increase transparency and encourage competition among schools.

The new amendments introduce a framework for

evaluating and ranking private schools based on their performance levels and the quality of services they provide, the statement said.

Under the proposed system, private educational institutions will be classified into six categories based on their scores against a set of approved standards and indicators designed to measure educational performance and learning outcomes.

The evaluation framework will assess several areas, including the quality of education, school environment, human resources, innovation and creativity, leadership and management, and community engagement.

The statement said that the classification system is intended to encourage schools to pursue continuous improvement, with evaluations to be conducted every three years to track progress and allow institutions to improve their rankings.

The new system is also aimed at enhancing transparency by enabling students and parents to ac-

cess information about schools' performance levels and classifications.

Classification results will be published publicly, and schools will be required to display their classification certificates prominently and include them on official documents.

In a separate decision, the Cabinet approved the Social Protection and Welfare Fund bylaw for 2026.

The statement described the new amendments as a significant step towards strengthening the social protection framework.

The bylaw establishes a unified financial mechanism through a national institutional funding arm designed to support social protection and welfare programmes provided by the Ministry of Social Development.

The new framework seeks to move beneficiaries towards greater empowerment and economic participation, shifting the focus from assistance alone to sustainable support that promotes productivity and self-reliance, the statement said.



Ayman Safadi



Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani



Chris Fearn

Safadi, Qatari, Maltese counterparts discuss relations, regional de-escalation efforts

AMMAN (JT) — Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi on Monday discussed bilateral relations and regional developments with Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Bin Jassim Al Thani during a phone call.

During the phone call, the two top diplomats discussed ways to strengthen the ties between Jordan and Qatar and expand co-operation across various sectors, according to a Foreign Ministry statement.

The discussion also covered regional developments, particularly diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions and enhancing regional security and stability.

Safadi and Sheikh Mohammed stressed the

importance of all parties remaining committed to dialogue and diplomacy and implementing the agreements reached under the Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Iran, including ensuring freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, in order to safeguard regional security, preserve recent gains and reinforce regional stability.

The two ministers also reiterated Jordan's and Qatar's full support for all efforts aimed at defusing tensions and reaching a comprehensive agreement that addresses the root causes of regional tensions and delivers lasting security and stability.

Also on Monday, Safadi held a telephone conversation with the new Minister for Foreign and European

Affairs of Malta Chris Fearn.

During the call, the two ministers discussed ways to bolster friendly relations between the two countries and enhance co-operation bilaterally, and within the framework of the European Union, according to a Foreign Ministry statement.

Safadi and Fearn also reviewed regional developments and ongoing efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions in the region.

Safadi congratulated his Maltese counterpart on assuming his new role as foreign minister.

The two ministers agreed to maintain continuous communication and coordination regarding the advancement of bilateral relations and regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Prince Ali attends launch of Amman International Film Festival

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Prince Ali, chairman of the board of commissioners of the Royal Film Commission, on Sunday evening attended the opening ceremony of the seventh Amman International Film Festival - Awal Film.

HRH Princess Rym Ali, president of the festival, launched the seventh edition of the festival, titled "Beyond the Frame", held at the Hussein Cultural Centre in Amman, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Princess Rym delivered an opening speech in the presence of HRH Prince Abdullah and HRH Princess Jalilah.

She said that this edition invites audiences to look beyond the frame, where culture, memory, and shared experiences lend films their authenticity and distinct voice.

The princess added that Arab film makers must reclaim their narrative, as others have long dictated which stories are told and which are left out.

Former prime minister Omar Razzaz, Greater Amman Municipal-



Deputising for His Majesty King Abdullah, HRH Prince Ali on Sunday evening attends the opening ceremony of the seventh Amman International Film Festival - Awal Film

ity Mayor Yousef Shawarbeh, officials, diplomats and international cinema stars attended the ceremony.

The event featured a tribute to the late Palestinian artist Mohammad Bakri, which included a short film on his art career.

His children Saleh, Adam and Yafa read a

commemorative message alongside their mother Leila.

The seventh edition celebrates Tunisian cinema by highlighting six notable works by Tunisian film makers.

Presenters Muhamad Jazirah and Zain Awad introduced singer Yazan Rousan, who performed a song titled "Good Morn-

ing Tunisia" blending Jordanian and Tunisian dialects.

Tunisian actor and director Dhafer L'Abidine expressed his gratitude to Jordan and the festival organisers.

He said that he was happy that his feature film "Sofia" was selected as the opening film. Festival organisers

screened "Sofia" to open the event, which runs through August 3, with L'Abidine presenting his work in person.

The festival showcases Arab and international films premiering for the first time in Jordan, alongside panel discussions, seminars and workshops with industry professionals.

PSD launches security, awareness campaigns to combat Crystal meth

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — Police on Sunday launched a "strict" security campaign along with an awareness campaign to combat the use of Crystal meth in the Jordanian society.

The Anti-Narcotic Department, in collaboration with the Media and Community Policing Directorate, launched the campaigns to warn the public about the use of this deadly substance, Police Spokesperson Brig. Gen. Amer Sartawi said.

Crystal meth is the common name for crystal methamphetamine, a strong and highly addictive drug that affects the

central nervous system, according to WebMD.

"We consider anyone who deals or sells this deadly substance as a criminal and a murderer," Sartawi told The Jordan Times.

Sartawi said that the aim is also to alert society about the dangers of Crystal meth.

"Our aim is to protect our society and impose the strictest procedures against dealers and users," Sartawi explained.

The police official added that Crystal meth "is one of the most dangerous chemical substances that affects people's mental and physical health".

"This dangerous sub-

stance causes rapid addiction, severe disturbances in perception and behaviour, and affects bodily functions, especially causing damage to the brain and lungs, in addition to aggression, loss of control and perception, and causing many heinous crimes," Sartawi added.

The campaign includes two aspects, he added.

The first is an operational security part that focuses on drug traffickers and people who promote, smuggle and use the deadly drugs, according to Sartawi.

The second part of the campaign will focus on raising the public's awareness through broadcast

messages and media material that explains the nature of this substance, the indicators of its use and its dangerous repercussions, he added.

"We aim to enhance awareness and consolidate the role of the family and community institutions in prevention and early intervention," Sartawi added.

Citizens are urged to report any person who deals with Crystal meth by contacting 911, according to a statement by the Public Security Directorate (PSD).

All information will be treated with utmost discretion, seriousness, firmness, verification and confidentiality, the PSD statement added.

Cabinet approves JD5 million support package for Petra tourism sector

AMMAN (JT) — The Cabinet on Monday approved a JD5 million support package for tourism establishments in the Petra Development and Tourism Region, aimed at protecting jobs, easing financial burdens and strengthening the sector's long-term competitiveness.

The package, approved during a Cabinet session chaired by Prime Minister Jafar Hassan, includes 11 measures benefiting around 1,600 workers and tourism businesses in Petra, according to a Prime Ministry statement.

The decisions were issued following directives by the prime minister after a meeting last week between the minister of tourism and antiquities, and representatives of the

tourism sector in Petra.

The measures include wage support programmes, loan repayment deferrals, the rescheduling of social security, tax, electricity and water payments, support for the tourism risk management fund, new tourism initiatives and regulations governing future hotel expansion, the statement said.

Under the wage support programmes, the government will cover 50 per cent of social security-covered wages and related contributions for around 900 tourism workers in Petra until the end of 2026.

It will also cover 35 per cent of social security-covered wages and related contributions for more

than 500 employees working at international hotel chains in Petra during the same period.

A separate programme will provide six months of support for 280 unemployed tourism workers, allowing them to return to the workforce while restoring their social security coverage.

The Cabinet also approved a one-year deferral of loan instalments for tourism establishments in Petra, with the government covering the resulting interest costs, estimated at JD2.27 million, the statement said.

Additional measures include expanding the concessional loan programme for tourist guides nationwide, allowing the Jordan Tourism

Board to defer, reschedule or waive fees owed by affected tourism offices in Petra, and rescheduling outstanding income and sales tax payments with exemptions from interest and penalties.

Tourism establishments in Petra will also be allowed to reschedule outstanding electricity and water bills, with a full exemption from interest and penalties.

The Cabinet also approved allocating 10 per cent of revenues collected from cooperatives operating in Petra and companies managing the archaeological site to strengthen the risk management account of the Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority.

Trump says ‘good chance’ Iran talks will yield results

ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE, TEHRAN (AFP) — US President Donald Trump on Monday voiced optimism over the prospects for a peace deal in talks with Iran, as the two sides held their fire for a third consecutive day.

Asked on Air Force One how much patience he had for negotiations with the Islamic republic, Trump said: “I have a lot of patience... We’ll see what happens. I think there is a good chance that something could happen.”

Meanwhile, Iran’s foreign ministry on Monday said it was not currently involved in negotiations with the United States, despite a halt in recent fighting between the two sides.

“Mediators may convey messages from the American side to us regarding current developments in the region. But at present, we are not engaged in any negotiations with the United States,” ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said at a weekly press briefing.

“Claims that Iran has requested negotiations are fabrications that the other side circulates from time to time,” he added.

Hostilities resumed between Iran and the United States earlier this month after diplomatic efforts collapsed amid an impasse regarding the Strait of Hormuz.

Fighting has nonetheless paused since early



This screen grab made on Sunday from undated handout video footage released by the US Central Command (CENTCOM) on Saturday, shows what CENTCOM says are operations enforcing its naval blockade against Iran

added.

Hostilities resumed between Iran and the United States earlier this month after diplomatic efforts collapsed amid an impasse regarding the Strait of Hormuz.

Fighting has nonetheless paused since early

Saturday, following 13 days of exchanges of fire between the two sides.

Baqaei criticised the United States, saying its conduct in recent years has “resembled that of a mafia gang that adheres to no rules or laws”.

“So long as such behavior

continues, we cannot be hopeful about the emergence of a reasonable process,” he added.

Iran insists on retaining control over the management of the Strait of Hormuz, including the collection of

service fees, while keeping Oman involved as a coastal state.

Iran’s Revolutionary Guard have turned back multiple vessels in recent days, including six earlier on Monday that attempted to transit the strait outside the route

designated by the Islamic republic.

On Monday, Baqaei reiterated that Washington had nothing to do with recent talks with Oman over the administration of the Strait of Hormuz.

“These talks have no connection with the United States. They are a bilateral matter between Iran and Oman, and they are continuing,” Baqaei said, adding that the waterway “remains closed”.

Iran and the United States held their fire Sunday, handing Gulf shipping and the oil industry a respite from missile strikes as Donald Trump’s UN envoy said the president was “giving talks some space”.

Iran said it had halted retaliatory attacks against Washington’s allies in the Middle East, and US Ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz told “Fox News Sunday” that, while forces remained “locked and loaded”, Trump would give negotiations “a little bit of room”.

Prior to Friday, the US military had carried out strikes on Iran for 13 consecutive nights, in the largest rekindling of the almost five-month-old war since an April cease-

fire, Friday and Saturday nights passed without bombing.

“These attacks continued until two nights ago, but over the past two nights the Americans have stopped their attacks,” said Iran’s army spokesman Mohammad Akraminia.

“Since... our strategy has essentially been retaliatory, we have also halted our retaliatory operations.”

Fighting over the strategic Strait of Hormuz derailed diplomatic efforts between Washington and Tehran, but the conflict then expanded beyond the vital energy corridor to include attacks on US bases, regional shipping and Gulf allies.

Unconfirmed Iranian media reports on Sunday said an oil tanker had been damaged by a sea mine.

The lull has revived hopes of a return to negotiations, although American media reported the pause could also reflect pressure on US stockpiles of Patriot interceptors and other defensive weapons.

Waltz dismissed this idea, in a second interview with NBC News’ “Meet the Press”.

“I want to be crystal

UN lists South Sudan antelope route as heritage in danger

PARIS, France (AFP) — The United Nations has fast-tracked a vast antelope migration path in South Sudan onto its list of World Heritage in Danger, in the young nation’s first such listing.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) added the so-called Boma-Badingilo migratory landscape to its list on Sunday.

The grassland and woodland savannahs that cover some 37,500 square kilometres — an area larger than Belgium — are viewed as under threat from both war and climate change.

One million animals — including antelopes and gazelles — migrate through the vast wilderness located between the White Nile and the Ethiopian border every year, leaving scars on the grasslands that are visible from the sky.

South Sudan has been the scene of a series of deadly



An aerial view of the Pibor River flowing across the landscape between Boma and Badingilo national parks on February 4, 2020

conflicts since gaining its independence in 2011.

“The Boma-Badingilo migratory landscape is home to one of the greatest wildlife migrations on Earth and stands as a powerful symbol of our country’s resilience, beauty and potential,” Tourism Minister Denay Jock Chagor told AFP.

Its listing “as South Sudan’s first UNESCO World Heritage Site is a proud and historic moment for our nation”, he added.

Paulino Warnyang, a representative of communities living in the area, said it honoured “not only the animals and the land, but also the people whose lives, traditions and cultures have always been connected to them”.

Making the UNESCO heritage list often sparks a lucrative tourism drive and can unlock funding for the preservation of sites that can face threats including pollution, war and negligence.

Germany’s Merz completes chaotic Cabinet reshuffle

BERLIN (AFP) — Chancellor Friedrich Merz on Monday named a new transport minister, completing a chaotic Cabinet reshuffle sparked by a senior party member resigning over a surrogacy scandal.

Steffen Bilger, 47, of Merz’s conservative CDU Party, will be formally appointed on Wednesday to replace Transport Minister Patrick Schnieder, Merz told a press conference after a meeting of the party leadership.

Merz’s intention to sack Schnieder leaked last week but according to German media no formal announcement was made because Merz’s original pick for his replacement pulled out at the last minute.

Having been left in post for several days regardless, Schnieder then asked to be released



From left to right: German Chancellor and CDU Chairman Friedrich Merz, designated CDU Secretary-General Franziska Hoppermann and designated German Health Minister Carsten Linnemann in Berlin on Tuesday

from the job on Sunday.

Merz told reporters on Monday he was “sorry for the situation that resulted” from Schnieder’s botched dismissal and said that he has “no problem” with him.

Schnieder had faced months of criticism over his lack of effectiveness in improving Germany’s ailing rail infrastructure, despite the country loosening its its traditional aversion to debt

to make way for a defence and infrastructure spending boost worth hundreds of billions of euros.

Merz on Monday said he expected Bilger to “demonstrate that this

enormous borrowing is justified by swift implementation — in transport projects, rail, roads, the entire infrastructure”.

The Cabinet reshuffle was set in motion last week when Jens Spahn, the chairman of the CDU parliamentary group, resigned amid controversy over contracting a surrogate mother to have a child.

Spahn and his husband had the child via a surrogate in the United States, despite surrogacy being illegal in Germany and vehemently opposed by the CDU.

Spahn will be replaced by Merz’s Chief of Staff Thorsten Frei, who in turn will be replaced by current Health Minister Nina Warken.

CDU General-Secretary Carsten Linnemann will be the new health minister.

Nigeria, South Africa hold tense meeting over xenophobic protests

ABUJA (AFP) — Nigerian and South African diplomats sat down on Monday as “brothers” to address a series of xenophobic attacks against foreigners, though tensions were evident despite the pleasantries exchanged in Abuja.

For months, South Africa has been the scene of protests — some of them violent — against African immigrants that demonstrators have blamed for crime, unemployment and a strain on public services.

As high-ranking officials from Abuja and Pretoria met at the Nigerian ministry of foreign affairs, both sides addressed each other as brothers and cited Nigeria’s support for the fight against apartheid.

But the delegations also staked out positions that seemed unlikely to be resolved, with the Nigerian side denouncing Pretoria’s “complicity” in the protests.

“We have records of Nigerians who have legitimate papers to re-



Members of the March and March movement destroy stalls, for allegedly belonging to a foreigner, during a weekly demonstration in Diepsloot, Johannesburg, on July 23

main in South Africa, yet, they have been attacked,” Nigeria’s junior minister for foreign affairs, Sola Enikanolaiye, said before the meeting went into a closed-door session.

“And we could see some mob actions in which we saw the police watching, as if they are helpless to address this situation”.

South African police say at least four foreign nationals have been killed in attacks linked to the anti-migrant protests, though some African governments repatriating citizens have reported a higher toll.

More than 160,000 people have fled the country, according to an AFP tally based on figures from African gov-

ernments repatriating their citizens, including about 1,500 Nigerians.

Nigeria, as well as Ghana, have been particularly outspoken over the South African government’s handling of the protests.

In some cases, anti-immigrant groups have burst into people’s homes and dragged them into police vans.

South Africa’s delegation, meanwhile, said the country was facing “criminality” from immigrants, including drug peddling and wire fraud.

“President [Cyril] Ramaphosa and the government he leads have been outspoken against any intolerance,” said Ronald Lamola, South Africa’s minister for international relations.

He added that the country has the right to “deal decisively with irregular migration, undocumented immigrants — including acts of criminality”.

South Africa, one of the continent’s most industrialised economies, has long been a magnet for both undocumented and documented immigrants.

But the nation is also saddled with high unemployment, weak social services and high crime, with immigrants being scapegoated for the country’s broader social ills and government failures, analysts say.

UN-backed probe slams Venezuela withdrawal from ICC

GENEVA (AFP) — Venezuela’s decision to withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC) is gravely concerning and will only serve to reinforce impunity for human rights violations, a UN-backed probe said on Monday.

Venezuela will pull out of the ICC’s over “geographical bias”, the nation’s foreign minister said Friday amid an ongoing ICC investigation into alleged crimes against humanity committed under ousted Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro’s government.

The UN’s Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela said the move raised profound concerns about the government’s commitment to accountability.

“It comes at a critical juncture for the country, when what is urgently needed is the realisation of the rights of Venezuelans to justice, truth and a proper reckoning with the past,” the probe said in a statement.

The UN Human Rights Council set up the fact-finding mission in 2019, and tasked it with assess-



The Hague-based International Criminal Court tries individuals for the world’s worst crimes

ing alleged human rights violations committed since 2014.

Nicolas Maduro ruled Venezuela with an iron fist from March 2013. Following his capture by US forces in January, the country is now run by interim leader Delcy Rodríguez, who had been Maduro’s vice president from 2018 onwards.

The fact-finding mission said the current administration had so far taken no meaningful action to progress investigations into the widely-documented gross violations and international crimes committed over more than a decade.

The current authorities

are now seeking to evade international processes intended to spearhead that national-level accountability, it added.

The ICC tries individuals for the world’s worst crimes, including war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The ICC is currently probing alleged crimes against humanity committed during crackdowns on protesters in Venezuela since 2014.

In December 2025, Venezuela’s parliament took steps to repeal the Rome Statute, the court’s founding text, after the tribunal closed its Caracas office citing fruitless government talks.



This photo shows a general view of a destroyed building after the Rapid Support Forces targeted several civilian facilities in Al Rahad Abu Dakna located on the national highway linking Kosti and El Obeid, on Saturday

Drone strikes rock Sudan's El-Obeid after army secures highway

EL OBEID, Sudan (AFP) — Drone strikes blamed on paramilitary forces shook the Sudanese flashpoint of El Obeid on Monday, hours after the army regained control of the city's highway to the capital Khartoum.

The army's rival, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), have for months amassed troops around El Obeid, attempting to encircle it ahead of an apparent large-scale assault.

Following a days-long

advance across North Kordofan state, the Sudanese army on Sunday managed to push the RSF west, off the 400-kilometre highway that connects Khartoum with El Obeid, two army sources told AFP Monday on condition of anonymity.

The army released footage on Monday showing army chief Abdel Fattah Al Burhan visiting Jabrat Al Sheikh, one of the last RSF hold-out positions along the highway.

He appeared flanked by the leaders of the two most important militias in his current coalition whose fighters helped secure the advance: Darfur governor and Joint Forces commander Minni Minawi and Sudan Shield Forces commander Abu Aqla Kaykal.

Since April 2023, the army's war with their former allies the RSF has torn the country apart and killed more than 200,000 people, aid workers estimate.

Jordan condemns attempted drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities

Saudi says Iran-backed groups in Iraq targeted territory with drones

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan on Monday condemned attempted drone attacks on oil facilities in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province and the capital Riyadh that were launched from Iraqi territory.

In a statement on Monday, the Foreign Ministry described the attacks as a "flagrant violation of the Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and a threat to its security and stability."

The ministry also said that the attacks constituted a blatant breach of international law and the United Nations Charter.

It reaffirmed Jordan's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and expressed its unwavering support for all measures it takes to safeguard its sovereignty, security, national resources, and the safety of its citizens and residents.

The Saudi defence ministry said on Monday that its forces had intercepted and destroyed several drones launched by Iran-backed groups in Iraq targeting petroleum



facilities.

The Saudi ministry said the "terrorist attempts were launched from Iraqi territory and carried out by Iranian-backed terrorist militias", according to

an official statement posted on social media.

The defence ministry said the drones were targeting areas in the country's east and the capital Riyadh.

Saudi Arabia demanded that Iraq prevent its territory from being used to launch attacks.

The kingdom "affirms the necessity for the Iraqi government to take all

necessary measures to ensure the prevention of the use of its territory as a launching point for aggression", read a statement posted by an official Saudi broadcaster.

France and Spain race to contain fires before new heatwave

NAVALUENGA, Spain (AFP) — French and Spanish firefighters on Monday battled to contain raging wildfires that have reduced land and property to ashes and forced hundreds of thousands of residents and tourists to flee for their lives.

But with searing temperatures forecast to rise again, fears grew that days more of punishing heat could further fan the flames, destroying more homes and livelihoods at the peak of the summer holiday season.

Spanish Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska said the coming hours would be "absolutely decisive" to bring the fires west of the capital, Madrid, under control.

Some 60,000 people have been forced to flee in Spain and 220,000 in France, often with just minutes' notice, some leaving pets and medicine behind.

At a sports hall just outside Madrid, displaced people sprawled on camp beds, held their heads in their hands and comforted pets as they awaited news.

Maria Angeles Canete



This handout photo released on Sunday and taken on Friday by Spain's Military Emergencies Unit (UME) shows UME personnel fighting a wildfire near Navas del Rey, 55 kilometres southwest of Madrid

fought back tears as she looked around the desolation that used to be her campsite near Navaluenga, west of the capital.

"We lost everything," she said. "We had this campsite, we had another one, and we've lost it all. We have nothing."

In Brussels, the European Union announced more water-bombing planes were being sent to France, in addition to those already deployed to

Spain.

But EU commissioner Hadja Lahbib told AFP that its fleet was increasingly stretched due to fears they may soon be needed elsewhere.

"Extreme conditions are looming for Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, in addition to France, the Iberian Peninsula... where the situation is expected to worsen, including in Portugal starting today," Lahbib said.

Devastation

The scale of the devastation from the fires is vast in the worst-affected areas.

Pine trees smouldered with blackened trunks and smoke rose from charred forests, with the burnt-out husks of cars and houses reduced to shells, AFP reporters said.

"You run to save what you can and then you turn to defend," said Karim Benali, 39, a volunteer firefighter

Jordan expresses solidarity with Spain, France, Italy over wildfires

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan has expressed solidarity with Spain, France and Italy as wildfires continued to affect several regions in the three countries.

The Ministry of Foreign said in a statement on Sunday that Jordan stands with the governments and peoples of three friendly nations during the ongoing emergency.

Ministry spokesperson Fouad Majali urged Jordanian nationals in Spain, France and Italy to exercise extreme caution, avoid areas affected by the fires, and follow instructions issued by local authorities.

He also called on Jordanians in the three countries to contact the Jordanian embassies in Madrid, Paris and Rome through their emergency hotlines for assistance or inquiries, which are available around the clock.

Near Bordeaux, tractors fitted with blades to clear land, pickups towing water tanks and logging trucks sped to join a convoy of fire engines.

"We want to help," said farmer and wood transporter Christopher Bonfond, 25, in the village of Marcheprime, southwest of the city in the Gironde region.

"I'm a hunter and I want nature to stay like it is."

on a road near Navaluenga.

"There were some 48 homes here, they burned," he said, surrounded by charred earth and trees blanketed with a persistent smell of smoke.

In France, fire has ravaged 42,000 hectares of forest — an area larger than the US city of Detroit — west of Bordeaux since last Wednesday.

In Spain, 77,000 hectares — nearly the size of New York City — has been destroyed.

David Sanchez, a 48-year-old painter and decorator, had just returned home to

Cebreros after evacuating at the weekend to find that his small olive and pistachio grove had been consumed by the inferno.

"Now it's time to clean up and plant again and that's it. It's crap, to be honest. And the fire has flared up again down there," he said, surrounded by choking air that stung the eyes and throat.

Some 150,000 hectares of land have burned in Spain and 115,000 hectares in France since the start of this year.

Earlier this month, 13 people were killed in a wildfire in southwestern Spain while flames ripped through the UNESCO-listed Fontainebleau forest south of Paris.

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"I'm a hunter and I want nature to stay like it is."

Climate change

Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has called the fires "the most painful expression of a climate emergency", with the flames ripping through land and vegetation left tinder-dry by lack of rainfall and a succession of heatwaves.

France's main fire has caused a "pyrocumulonimbus" — a giant fire cloud that can create its own winds and packs lightning and sometimes tornadoes that can cause more blazes.

Spain's weather agency AEMET announced a new heatwave starting Wednesday until the end of the week, with temperatures forecast to hit 42°C in the northeast and 39°C in the centre.

"The wildfire danger level will continue to increase, reaching extreme levels and making firefighting efforts more difficult due to high temperatures, locally gusty southerly winds and widespread low humidity," AEMET said in a statement.

MeteoFrance also forecast more hot weather of up to 40°C from Tuesday with dry wind.

Cabinet approves \$97 million financing agreement for National Water Carrier Project

Continued from page 1

The statement said that the draft legislation was developed following consultations with public and private sector partners and aims to bring Jordan's regulatory framework in line with the best international practices.

The amendments are

designed to encourage investment in petroleum, natural gas, oil shale, critical minerals and other natural resources by allowing investors to enter into production-sharing agreements or mining agreements once the economic feasibility of projects has been established, according to the statement.

The proposed changes would also expand investment incentives, including exemptions aimed at encouraging exploration activities, while simplifying procedures for allocating land for natural resource projects, it said.

Under the draft law, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources

would continue to oversee policy development for the natural resources sector and establish mechanisms for the exploitation of petroleum, natural gas, oil shale, and critical minerals.

The legislation also proposes the establishment of an exploration and community development support fund,

which would support mineral exploration projects across Jordan, help update geological and petroleum data maintained by the ministry and contribute to local communities hosting mining, petroleum, and oil shale projects through infrastructure development and job creation, the statement said.

Foreign minister, UN chief discuss efforts to restore regional security, stability

Continued from page 1

The two officials reaffirmed the importance of supporting the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) to ensure it continues providing vital services to Palestinian refugees in line with its UN mandate.

Safadi commended the humanitarian role of UN agencies, particularly in delivering aid to Gaza and supporting refugees.

The discussions also covered developments in Syria. Both sides reaffirmed their support for Syria's unity, sovereignty, security and stability, as well as reconstruction efforts, and stressed the need to end Israeli attacks and interference in the country.

Safadi and Guterres also reviewed regional and international issues related to efforts to promote regional and global security and stability.

Safadi commended Guterres for his consistent

support for international law and international humanitarian law, as well as the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the two-state solution.

Guterres praised Jordan's role and His Majesty King Abdullah's efforts to promote regional security and stability and achieve a just

and lasting peace in accordance with international law and relevant UN resolutions.

He also commended Jordan's humanitarian role in delivering aid to Gaza, its cooperation with UN agencies, and its continued efforts to provide refugees with dignified living conditions.



Border Gurads foil three infiltration attempts at northern, southern borders — JAF

AMMAN (JT) — Border Guard forces in the northern and southern military regions on Monday foiled three infiltration attempts, involving three individuals attempting to illegally cross into the Kingdom.

In the Northern Military Region, Border Guards foiled an infiltration attempt along one of its border fronts, where a suspect was detected.

The Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF)

said in a statement that rules of engagement were applied, and the individual was arrested and referred to the relevant authorities for legal procedures.

In the Southern Military Region, it said that Border Guards intercepted two individuals attempting to cross the borders in two separate incidents, adding that both suspects were arrested and referred to the competent authorities.

JAF reaffirmed its commitment to protecting the Kingdom's borders and dealing firmly with all infiltration and smuggling attempts, stressing that border security is a "red line".

JAF emphasised that Border Guard personnel remain at the highest state of readiness and vigilance to immediately counter any suspicious movements, safeguarding the nation's security and stability.

THE JORDAN TIMES

An independent Arab political daily, established in 1975	Published by the Jordan Press Foundation
Chairman of the Board	Queen Rania Al Abdullah Street P.O. Box 6710 Amman 11118
Samih Maaitah	
Director General	E mail: editor@jordantimes.com jotimes@jordantimes.com Website: jordantimes.com
Hasan Jazzazi	Follow us on X Platform: @jordantimes Like our facebook page: thejordantimes Youtube: thejordantimes
Editor-in-Chief	National Library registration number: D/1998/2062
Raed Omari	Telephone: 5600800 ext. 2392 Facsimile: 5696183 Advertising facsimile: 5696183 Circulation Department: 5600800 ext. 2383
Editorial and advertising offices Jordan Press Foundation	
The Jordan Times is published daily except Saturdays	

Will heatwaves push European holidaymakers to ‘coolcations’?

Agence France-Presse

PARIS, France — European holidaymakers worn down by recurrent heatwaves are currently snubbing Mediterranean destinations for northern climes in hopes of cooler temperatures, but it remains to be seen whether it is just a fad or a durable shift in the tourism market.

With temperatures in the European summer regularly climbing up towards 40°C, cool has become cool.

This year, visitors “have been telling me that they have escaped the heat in southern parts of Europe”, said Terje Viblom Pedersen, a guide who offers tours in south-eastern Sweden.

“They are just amazed” by the daytime high temperatures under 30°C and sea breezes, as well as the lack of crowds compared to tourist hotspots in southern Europe.

Two French tourists, Daniel and Florence Gastaldi, joined Pedersen for a tour of Stockholm’s Old Town.

“It’s good to have escaped the heatwave,” said the recently retired couple from the southern French city of Marseille.

“We’re happy to have found cooler temperatures,” they said.

The concept of “colocations,” vacations in a cooler clime, has been gathering pace in recent years and appears to have exploded in 2026.

On the French version of Hotels.com, searches for rooms in the Danish capital of Copenhagen have jumped by 246 per cent since the first heat-wave struck France in May.

Those for Dublin in Ireland have risen by 151 per cent.

The trend is not limited to France.

Jonna Robertson, a trip adviser at New York-based Fora Travel, said she had observed the phenomenon in the United States, which has also seen its share of sweltering weather.

“Oslo has seen booking growth of 154 per cent year-over-year, Helsinki 124 per cent... Those numbers tell me that travellers are actively looking beyond the traditional summer hotspots,” said the expert and founder of Coolcation Adventures.

In France, industry experts say they have seen growing popularity of mountain resorts during the summer.

“That’s because at higher altitudes there is a clear drop in temperatures in the evening and during the night, which makes the stays much more liveable,” said Jean-Pascal Chopard, head of the tourism body for the mountainous Jura region.

The South remains popular

But will this current enthusiasm actually change the geography of international tourism?

Travellers’ choices depend on a whole range of different factors, not least pricing, experts point out.

And southern Europe, which is traditionally cheaper than the north, remains at the top of the most popular destinations.

“All European countries have recorded an increase in tourist arrivals, and there is no discernible trend linked to the heat,” said Swedish professor Stefan Gossling, a tourism specialist.

“Temperature is one aspect people take into account when they go on vacation,” he told AFP.

“But there are many other elements. Italy is not Denmark in terms of culture, environment, prices. All of that means people don’t easily change destinations when they have a favourite,” he said.

Norway’s tourism promotion agency agreed.

“Our recent visitor surveys show that around one in five foreign tourists considers cooler summer temperatures to be one of the reasons for choosing Norway” it said.

Nevertheless, “climate is only one of many factors that influence travel decisions”, it argued.

Security, nature, accessibility, air connections, and exchange rates also play a role.

Furthermore, Mediterranean countries have very extensive tourism infrastructures.

Indeed, visitor numbers continue to demonstrate the importance of warm countries.

Greece, for example, had its best year ever in terms of visitor numbers last year, as did Spain.

In Spain, spending by domestic and foreign tourists has already risen by more than eight percent in the second quarter of 2026, according to data published recently by Exceltur, an organisation that brings together the main Spanish tourism companies.

Fora’s Jonna Robertson, for her part, is counting on a seasonal redistribution, with trips to hotter countries taking place in spring or autumn, in order to avoid both overtourism and exhausting temperatures.

Rethinking security in an age of wildfires

By Ayoub Abu Dayyeh

Every summer, southern Europe braces for another wildfire season. This year, large fires have swept across parts of Spain, Sicily and south-western France, destroying forests, threatening villages, forcing evacuations and leaving behind landscapes that may take generations to recover.

Firefighters have displayed extraordinary courage, often risking their lives against flames intensified by drought, heat waves, mulch and strong winds. Yet, the repeated return of these disasters raises a question that extends beyond climate change and forest management. It is a political and moral question about priorities.

Spain and France are among Europe’s strongest economies and are both leading members of NATO. Together with their allies, they possess some of the most advanced military capabilities ever assembled. NATO can mobilise fleets of aircraft, satellites, drones, logistics networks and highly trained personnel with remarkable speed when military operations are required. History has shown that the alliance has been able to sustain prolonged military campaigns in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Libya, while individual member states have also participated in operations in Syria and against Iran-backed military targets in recent years. The financial and technological resources devoted to warfare are immense.

Against this backdrop, the struggle against wildfires appears strangely underpowered. Each

summer, firefighters often speak of aircraft shortages, exhausted crews and limited resources. Local authorities compete for specialised firefighting planes because demand exceeds supply. Countries request assistance from their neighbours through European co-operation mechanisms, yet devastating fires frequently continue burning for days before sufficient aerial support arrives. Even Jordan has participated in firefighting in Cyprus on many occasions.

This contrast invites reflection. If nations possess the industrial capacity to manufacture sophisticated fighter jets, cruise missiles, precision-guided weapons, and advanced drones and surveillance systems, why does the world still struggle to produce enough specialised firefighting aircraft? If military alliances can coordinate thousands of personnel across continents within hours, why is a similarly ambitious international system for combating natural disasters still so limited?

The question is not whether military forces should disappear. Every nation has legitimate security concerns and responsibilities to defend its citizens. Rather, the question concerns balance, justice and equity. Security today is no longer defined solely by armies confronting one another. Climate change, prolonged droughts, extreme heat, floods and wildfires increasingly threaten lives, infrastructure, food security, biodiversity and economic stability. A forest fire that destroys thousands of hectares, devastates tourism and fills cities with smoke is not merely an environmental problem. It is

a national security challenge.

Imagine if even a small fraction of global military expenditure were redirected towards environmental emergency preparedness. Hundreds of additional firefighting aircraft could be built and strategically stationed around the Mediterranean basin. Satellite systems already monitoring military movements could continuously detect new fires within minutes. Military logistics could rapidly deploy firefighters, engineers, medical teams and equipment wherever flames emerge. Joint exercises could prepare nations not only for armed conflict but also for climate-related disasters.

Such an initiative would not require abandoning defence. It would simply recognise that the threats of the twenty-first century demand broader definitions of security. Protecting forests, preserving water resources, and safeguarding communities against climate-driven disasters deserve the same seriousness that governments devote to conventional military planning.

Some may argue that military aircraft cannot simply replace firefighting planes. They are correct. Different missions require different equipment, training and tactics. Nevertheless, the comparison remains valid at the level of priorities. The capacity to invest, innovate, manufacture and coordinate certainly exists. The real question is whether sufficient political will exists to treat environmental emergencies with equal urgency.

The forests burning across Spain, Sicily, Greece and France

remind us that nature does not recognise national borders. Smoke drifts across countries and so pollution. Wildlife disappears without passports. Carbon released from burning forests contributes further to global warming, increasing the likelihood of future fires. Every delayed response makes the next disaster more probable.

History often celebrates technological achievements developed for war. Perhaps the coming decades should instead celebrate technologies developed for protecting life. Imagine an international alliance whose greatest strength lies not in the destructive power of its weapons but in its ability to extinguish fires, prevent famine, restore ecosystems and save human lives before disaster spreads.

The smoke rising above the forests of Spain and France should therefore provoke more than sympathy. It should provoke a reassessment of our collective priorities. Humanity has demonstrated extraordinary ingenuity in designing machines capable of striking targets thousands of kilometres away with astonishing precision. Surely the same ingenuity can be directed towards extinguishing fires that threaten our shared natural heritage.

In the end, the measure of civilisation is not only how effectively it wages war, but also how effectively it protects life. When future generations look back at our time, they may ask a simple question: Why was it easier to finance destruction than to prevent forests from burning? The answer will reveal far more about our values than about our technology.

US tariff exemptions: Is Jordan facing major economic opportunity

By Raad Mahmoud Al-Tal

The US decision to exempt Jordanian apparel and textile exports from customs duties, while reducing tariffs on most other Jordanian products to 10 per cent, is one of the most important developments in economic relations between Jordan and the United States since the Free Trade Agreement came into force in 2001. This decision is especially important because Jordan’s exports of apparel and textiles to the United States exceeded JD431 million during the first four months of this year, making this sector the largest Jordanian exporter to the US market.

From an economic point of view, tariffs are more than just taxes on imported goods. They are an important factor that affects a country’s competitiveness in international markets. Lower tariffs reduce the cost of entering a market, making products more competitive in terms of price and helping companies increase their market share. Therefore, giving Jordanian products duty-free access to the US market provides a clear competitive advantage over many competing countries and creates new opportunities for Jordanian exporters.

The importance of this agreement goes beyond increasing exports. It can also encourage foreign direct investment. International companies do not only

look for low production costs; they also look for countries that provide easy access to major global markets. Since products made in Jordan can now enter the US market without customs duties, Jordan becomes a more attractive location for export-oriented industries. This is especially important as many multinational companies are changing their global supply chains and searching for new production locations.

At the macroeconomic level, higher exports bring benefits to the whole economy. Stronger foreign demand increases industrial production, supports economic growth, and creates more business for transportation, logistics, storage and insurance services. It also increases foreign currency earnings, which strengthens the balance of payments and supports the country’s foreign exchange reserves. In addition, expanding industrial production creates new job opportunities, both directly in factories and indirectly in related sectors. This makes the agreement an important opportunity to help reduce unemployment, one of Jordan’s biggest economic challenges.

There is no doubt that gaining duty-free access to the world’s largest consumer market is a major economic opportunity for Jordan. However, the real question is not what Jordan has gained from the agreement, but how the country can make the best use of it. International experience shows that

trade agreements do not automatically lead to economic growth. For example, Mexico successfully used its free trade agreement with the United States to attract large industrial investments and become an important part of global value chains in the automotive and electronics industries. On the other hand, many countries signed similar agreements but achieved limited results because of weak business environments, high production costs and the absence of effective industrial policies. This shows that trade agreements create opportunities, but government policies determine how much countries benefit from them.

For Jordan to fully benefit from this agreement, increasing exports alone will not be enough. The country also needs to improve the investment environment, simplify business procedures, reduce production, energy, and transportation costs, improve logistics services, develop workforce skills, and strengthen links between local industries and supply chains. These steps will increase the domestic value added of Jordanian exports and make the economic benefits more sustainable.

At the same time, attention should not focus only on the apparel sector. The US decision also covers a wide range of leather and textile products, including bags, home furnishings, towels, curtains, fabrics, yarns and industrial inputs. This creates an opportuni-

ty to diversify Jordan’s exports. In addition, Jordan has comparative advantages in more than 120 products, including mining, fertilisers, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and other industries that can generate higher value added if supported by a clear industrial strategy.

Despite the positive expectations, the success of this agreement should be measured by its actual economic results, not only by its terms. Success is not simply about duty-free access or higher export values. It should be measured by Jordan’s ability to attract new investment, increase domestic production, create high-quality jobs, raise value added and improve long-term economic growth and productivity.

There is no doubt that this agreement is a strategic opportunity for Jordan’s economy. However, it is not an end in itself. It is a tool to promote investment, production and employment. Its success will depend on Jordan’s ability to turn its tariff advantage into a production advantage by attracting new industries, increasing the value added of its exports, and creating better jobs for Jordanians. Duty-free access opens the door to the US market, but only a more competitive economy can turn this opportunity into long-term economic development. The next step is not only to sign trade agreements, but also to maximise their economic benefits through effective industrial and economic policies.

Architects of trust: The CBJ redesign Regional Cybersecurity

By Hamza Alalakli

At first glance, a cyber threat intelligence sharing platform may seem like a highly specialised technical project of interest only to cybersecurity experts. However, the reality runs much deeper. The financial sector serves as the backbone of the digital economy; any widespread disruption in payment networks, banking systems, or financial infrastructure can instantly reverberate across markets, impacting investors, businesses and public trust in digital services.

Consequently, advanced central banks view cybersecurity as a fundamental pillar of financial stability, rather than merely an isolated technical function within an IT department. The Arab FI-ISAC initiative perfectly aligns with this global paradigm by institutionalising structured cooperation among Arab monetary authorities to exchange and analyse cyber threat intelligence, a framework modeled after successful ISACs across vital global sectors.

Herein lies the strategic significance of the Central Bank of Jordan’s (CBJ) leadership. True

leadership is not measured solely by managing risks within state borders, but by an institution’s capacity to architect regional frameworks that elevate collective readiness. In the cyber realm, a window of just a few hours can mean the difference between containing a massive attack and witnessing the cascading disruption of dozens of institutions.

The benefits extend far beyond immediate alerts. Over time, this mechanism cultivates a specialised Arab knowledge base dedicated to financial sector threats, capturing attack vectors, emerging trends, lessons learned from actual incidents, and best practices for response and recovery. This cumulative intelligence empowers central banks and regulatory bodies to refine regulatory frameworks, upgrade compliance mandates, optimise emergency response plans, and enhance the efficacy of routine cyber drills. Cybersecurity thus matures into a process of continuous learning rather than a series of isolated, reactive responses.

From an economic perspective, fostering a financial sector endowed with high cyber resilience

structurally reinforces the confidence of financial institutions, investors, and consumers in the digital ecosystem. By developing such frameworks, Jordan strengthens an institutional environment that fosters long-term stability and market confidence, without overstating immediate direct economic correlations.

What distinguishes the Jordanian experience is its embodiment of sustainable institutional leadership. It is anchored in a strategic vision that invests in human capital, grants specialised teams the creative space to innovate, and anchors knowledge within the institution so it expands over time. In this context, the CB Jstands out as a prime example of an entity that successfully transitioned from an operational role to spearheading an initiative with a profound regional footprint, a shift reflecting institutional maturity and commendable leadership.

The true value of the CBJ’s achievement does not solely reside in the Arab FI-ISAC project securing global recognition among the top five projects in its category at the WSIS Prizes 2026. Rather, it lies in the strategic message it tel-

egraphs investing in institutional capacity, empowering talent and building joint frameworks is the most direct path to international preeminence.

Through this initiative, the CBJ has demonstrated that cybersecurity is no longer the exclusive domain of technical departments; it is a core element of sound governance, risk management, and financial stability. Today’s most successful organisations are not those with the largest technology budgets, but those capable of translating information into decisions, expertise into policy, and cooperation into a collective capacity to predict and mitigate risks before they escalate into crises.

Ultimately, the story of the Arab FI-ISAC is not about a technical platform, but about institutional leadership that believed shared knowledge is more powerful than isolation and that regional synergy beats unilateral effort. When a national institution drives a globally recognised project, it charts the features of a uniquely Jordanian model of governance and innovation worthy of emulation across the region.

Tuesday, July 28, 2026



Photo Courtesy of Orange Jordan

As first telecom operator globally, KACE grants Orange Jordan 6-Star Recognised for Excellence certificate from EFQM

AMMAN (JT) — Orange Jordan has received the Recognised for Excellence certificate with a 6-star rating from the King Abdullah II Centre for Excellence (KACE), the national representative of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) in Jordan.

With this achievement, the company becomes the first telecommunications operator worldwide to achieve this advanced evaluation under the EFQM Excellence Model, Orange Jordan said in a statement to The Jordan Times.

This recognition was commemorated at an official ceremony, during which the KACE Executive Director Wedad Quteishat, presented the certificate to the CEO of Orange Jordan Philippe Mansour, in the presence of the Executive Committee members, representatives from both parties, and a number of senior government officials and media representatives.

"The event solidified the company's elevated position in driving institutional excellence at the regional and international levels," the statement said.

"The 6-star recognition reflects a prestigious global recognition of the company's institutional excellence. It further highlights its core corporate strengths, represented by leadership built on vision and purpose, customer-centric approach, a culture of innovation and continuous development, em-

powering individuals, creating sustainable value and achieving results that have a positive impact on society," the statement said.

During the ceremony, Mansour emphasised that "receiving the 6-Star Recognised for Excellence certification, as the first telecom operator globally to do so, marks a pivotal milestone in the company's journey toward institutional excellence".

'Beyond business performance, this recognition reaffirms the company's commitment to Jordan and to the communities it serves...'

He noted that this achievement reflects the strength of the company's strategic direction and operating model, as well as its ability to continue delivering sustainable value to its customers and stakeholders.

"Beyond business performance, this recognition reaffirms the company's commitment to Jordan and to the communities it serves, as it continues investing in the Kingdom's

digital future," he said.

For her part, Quteishat said that Orange Jordan's journey with the EFQM serves as an inspiring example for Jordanian organisations, highlighting that institutional excellence is not a one-time achievement, but rather an ongoing journey of development, improvement and innovation.

"The Recognised for Excellence programme represents a comprehensive organisational growth journey that enables institutions to evaluate their performance, invest in improvement opportunities and foster a culture of innovation and sustainability."

She affirmed that receiving the Recognised for Excellence certification, with a 6-star evaluation, reflects Orange Jordan's unwavering commitment to adopting global best practices while underscoring its ability to achieve sustainable organisational performance in line with the highest international standards, making it the first telecom company worldwide to reach this level of recognition and a Jordanian success story worthy of celebration.

The year 2024 witnessed a Royal recognition for Orange Jordan by His Majesty King Abdullah for receiving the Recognised for Excellence with a 5-star rating during the King Abdullah II Award for Excellence ceremony, which took place in the presence of HRH Crown Prince Hussein and HRH Prince Feisal.

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) organised a field visit on Monday for ambassadors from ASEAN member states to introduce them to the investment advantages and services of the Zarqa Industrial Estate (ZIE).

The envoys of Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines and Thailand noted the strong relations between Jordan and their countries, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

They stressed the importance of arranging visits by economic delegations from their countries to examine Jordan's investment environment, particularly at ZIE, noting its infrastructure and investor incentives.

JIEC Chairman Obaid Yassin said the company is seeking to place Zarqa Industrial Estate on local, Arab and international investment promotion platforms.

He said the visit builds on JIEC's promotional efforts following His Majesty the King's recent visit to the estate and his directives to promote it and provide incentives to attract investment.

The initiative also builds on Royal efforts to promote Jordan's investment environment during visits to several of the participating



countries and meetings with business leaders and investors, Yassin added.

JIEC Director General Oday Obeidat said the company has attracted eight industrial investments to ZIE across several sectors and is preparing to launch a promotional campaign targeting local and foreign markets.

Obeidat said ZIE is Jordan's first green industrial estate, incorporating advanced renewable energy solutions and Internet of Things systems.

He said the estate seeks to reduce energy and water costs through rainwater-harvesting



Photo Courtesy of Zarqa Industrial Estate

Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation organises a field visit Monday for ambassadors from ASEAN member states

projects and the provision of natural gas.

The estate's first phase has been com-

pleted and incorporates sustainable solutions, including solar power, electric vehicle charg-

ing stations, green spaces, recycling systems and energy-efficient infrastructure.

Palestinian-Jordanian business forum, Lebanese ambassador talk trade, investment

AMMAN (JT) — The Palestinian-Jordanian Business Forum (PJF) and Lebanese Ambassador to Jordan Brigitte Tawk discussed on Monday boosting economic cooperation and commercial trade.

The meeting, attended by Lebanese-Jordanian Business Forum President Nassim Dada, focused on expanding bilateral trade, exploring investment opportunities and tackling current economic challenges.

Tawk pledged her embassy will facilitate



Photo Courtesy of the Palestinian-Jordanian Business Forum

The Palestinian-Jordanian Business Forum and Lebanese Ambassador to Jordan Brigitte Tawk discuss on Monday boosting economic cooperation

direct communication and support business

leaders to tap into unexploited economic po-

tential, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

PJF President Nazmi Atmeh cited the forum's 15 years of driving investment and supporting Jordan's economy.

Lebanese-Jordanian Business Forum President echoed those sentiments, stressing the role of the business community in deepening ties between Jordan and Lebanon.

To spur economic growth, participants agreed to formalise collaboration between the forums and the embassy through joint initiatives and regular meetings.

Economic corridors enhance Jordan in global trade networks — JSF

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan Strategy Forum (JSF) issued on Monday a policy paper titled "Jordan and Economic Corridors: Strategic Opportunities in a Changing Global Economy".

The policy paper addressed the rapid transformations in international trade and transport networks, and opportunities that emerging economic corridors offer Jordan to enhance its standing in the regional and global trade and connectivity system.

The Forum explained that geopolitical tensions, frequent disruptions to supply chains and escalating concerns related to trade and energy security have prompted many countries to diversify their transport routes and reduce reliance on a limited number of maritime routes and strategic bottlenecks.

As a result, economic corridors are no longer limited to the construction of roads and railways, but now encompass maritime

and land transport, energy networks, digital infrastructure, logistics services, and industrial and investment cooperation.

The paper reviewed "key" corridors and initiatives that have recently reshaped trade between Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

The corridors are China's Belt and Road Initiative, the Trans-Caspian Middle East Corridor (Middle Corridor), the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), the Iraq-Turkey Development Corridor (Development Road), the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) and the Jordanian-Syrian-Turkish Transport Initiative.

The JSF emphasised the need to view these initiatives, not as competing alternatives, but a network of integrated routes Jordan can leverage within a multicorridor national strategy.

It explained that relying on a single route could increase Jordan's vulner-

ability to geopolitical risks and trade disruptions, while diversifying routes offers greater flexibility, expands trade connectivity options and strengthens the economy's resilience.

The IMEC is among the "most influential" routes for Jordan's future options in trade, transport and energy, along with the Jordanian-Syrian-Turkish Transport Initiative, which offers a "valuable" opportunity to revitalise its traditional land routes through the Levant through utilising and developing the Hejaz Railway, the forum noted.

The IMEC comprises an eastern route connecting Indian ports to ports in the Arabian Gulf via maritime transport and a northern route linking the Gulf states to the Mediterranean and Europe through a network of railways and roads.

It also includes projects for electrical interconnection, hydrogen pipelines, fiber optic cables and advanced digital infrastructure, JSF said.

According to estimates in the paper, the corridor requires around 2,800 kilometres of new railway infrastructure, with total investments estimated at around \$20 billion based on available preliminary data.

Various studies also indicate the potential to reduce transit time via the corridor by 40 per cent to 51 per cent, cut transport costs by about 30 per cent and achieve annual logistical savings exceeding \$5 billion.

These savings are particularly important for high-value industries, such as pharmaceuticals, electronics, automotive components and advanced manufacturing, whose competitiveness is directly affected by shipping costs, speed of market access and the reliability of supply chains, the paper said.

It also indicated that the Jordanian-Syrian-Turkish transport initiative could provide an integrated route linking the Gulf states, via Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria and

Turkey, to European markets, noting that this route relies more heavily on rehabilitating existing infra-

structure compared with projects requiring entirely new transport networks.

This could allow for its

reactivation in a "shorter" timeframe and at relatively lower costs, provided that regional stability and

coordination are ensured, and damaged infrastructure is rehabilitated, the paper added.

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Monday amounted to JD22.1 million spread over 17.9 million shares that traded through 4,617 transactions.

The ASE share price index shed 0.39 per cent, closing at 3954.73 points.

Out of 107 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 43 companies rose while the share price of another 27 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were Northern Cement Company by 7.05 per cent, Al Zarqa Educational and Investment by 6.41 per cent, Amad Investment and Real Estate Development by 5.59 per cent, Jordan Insurance by 5.33 per cent and Amwaj Properties by 5.26 per cent.

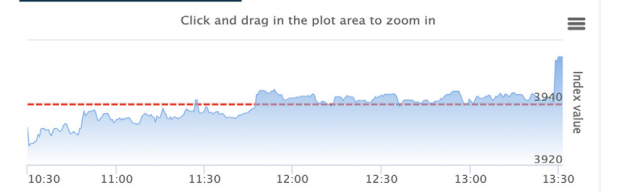
The companies whose shares dropped the most were National Insurance by 7.14 per cent, Euro Arab Insurance Group by 4.72 per cent, Deera Investment and Real Estate Development Company by 4 per cent, Arab Investors Union Company for Real Estates Developing by 3.64 per cent, and First Jordan Investment Company Plc. by 3.45 per cent.



THE MARKET TODAY

ASE Index: ↑ 3954.73 0.39% July 27, 2026

Live Data Historical Data



DAILY SUMMARY

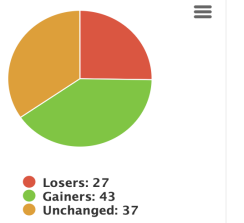
Regular Market OTC Market Bonds

Trading Value (JDs) 22,074,739

Trading volume 17,947,266

No. of Transactions 4,617

No. of Securities 107



FOOTBALL

Japan’s ‘King Kazu’, 59, scores his first goal for four years

TOKYO (AFP) — The 59-year-old former Japan striker Kazuyoshi Miura scored his first competitive goal in almost four years when his Fukushima United side strolled to a 7-0 win at the weekend. In his 41st professional season, the grey-haired veteran nicknamed “King Kazu” netted Japan third division side Fukushima’s fifth in an Emperor’s Cup qualifier against Iwaki Furukawa FC, his first goal since November 2022. Miura latched on to a 52nd-minute cross by Takatora Einaga inside the box to slot home, rolling back the years to beat two defenders to the ball. “It was a bit of a scramble, but what matters is that we were in the right spots, so I think we positioned ourselves well,” Miura said. “I wanted to live up to the expectations of everyone, including the coach who gave me the opportunity to play until that point. Above all, I was so happy that, even when we were already way ahead, the players, staff, and fans were all able to celebrate that one goal together with such joy.” Miura made his professional debut in 1986 for Brazilian team Santos and has also played for teams in Italy, Croatia, Australia and Portugal. He helped put football in Japan on the map when the professional J-League was launched in 1993.

De Zerbi wants ‘soul and passion’ from new-look Tottenham

SYDNEY (AFP) — Tottenham manager Roberto De Zerbi urged his team on Monday to play with “soul and passion” as the London club rebuild after narrowly avoiding relegation from the Premier League. Spurs have embarked on an aggressive summer of spending to boost their fortunes after avoiding the drop by coming 17th, but it was a nail-biting outcome that went down to the wire. Big-money signings include midfielders Mateus Fernandes from West Ham and Sandro Tonali from Newcastle. De Zerbi also raided his old club Brighton for centre-back Jan Paul van Hecke. Full-back Andy Robertson, centre-back Marcos Senesi and goalkeeper Martin Dubravka have all arrived on free transfers as the squad takes on a new look. De Zerbi, in Sydney on a pre-season tour, said he expected more when the new campaign begins on August 22 and outlined that he wanted to “build a new team with the qualities, with big players, but with soul, with passion, with all the values we have”.

Del Toro, Seixas show glimpse into Tour de France future

By Barnaby Chesterman
Agence France-Presse

PARIS, France — Tadej Pogacar romped to another dominant Tour de France victory but cycling fans were treated to a glimpse into the future with the battle for the best young rider’s white jersey.

After a close contest which begun right from the Grand Depart in Barcelona, Mexican Isaac Del Toro, 22, edged 19-year-old French prodigy Paul Seixas both to third place and the white jersey.

Pogacar may go on dominating the sport for many more years, but at the very least he is likely to face some stiffer opposition as younger rivals mature and progress.

Del Toro — a close friend and team-mate of Pogacar’s — eventually finished just over two minutes ahead of Seixas but that gap belied how close their arm-wrestle had been, with just 24 seconds separating them at the start of Saturday’s Queen stage in the Alps.

“I wanted to go as deep as possible, but there was a moment where I was on my limit, and I cracked,” Seixas said of his final effort.

Seixas may feel some disappointment in missing out on the podium, but the magnitude of his achievement cannot be understated.

He was the youngest rider to start a Tour since Adrien Cento in 1937.

Del Toro, by contrast, was riding in his third



The pack of riders (peloton) cycles up Rue Lepic on the ascent of the Butte de Montmartre during the 21st stage of the 113th edition of the Tour de France cycling race, 88,7 km starting and finishing in Paris, on Sunday

Grand Tour and last year had come within a whisker of winning the Giro d’Italia.

So to push the Mexican all the way and finish fourth in what is cycling’s toughest race — and on top of that, one made materially harder by 10 days of heatwave — is a quite astonishing result.

“In a few days, with a bit of air, there will be some pride,” said Seixas.

He comfortably beat the likes of Juan Ayuso

and Tom Pidcock, who have both finished on the Vuelta a Espana podium in recent years, or even former Grand Tour winners Richard Carapaz and Sepp Kuss.

He may have lacked the panache and impudent brilliance he had shown in the spring in winning the Tour of the Basque Country and Fleche Wallonne, but this race was three times longer than anything he had ever competed in before.

He never came close to winning a stage or even putting in a fortune-changing attack, but he showed admirable durability and determination as other more experienced riders crumbled.

It would be a tall ask to expect him to win a Tour with Pogacar still active, but he certainly appears capable of breaking the home nation’s 41-years-and-counting winning drought in the Grande Boucle.

Del Toro dilemma

Del Toro finds himself in a unique situation. He was 36th in his debut Grand Tour at the Vuelta two years ago before finishing second at last year’s Giro and now third at the Tour.

He is clearly ready to win a Grand Tour right now, but his prospects also depend on his UAE Emirates-XRG team’s plans around Pogacar. If he is required to

support Pogacar’s ambitions, as he was in France, that would limit is own aspirations.

It’s hard to imagine him wanting to limit himself to such a super domestique role next year.

And beyond those two, what of the rest.

Frenchman Lenny Martinez really came into his own at the Tour, finishing fifth at the age of 23.

He is a talented climber who looks capable of fighting for a Grand Tour, although perhaps not the Tour de France.

Seventh-placed Ayuso, also 23, was a teenage sensation before Seixas, finishing third at the Vuelta in 2022.

After some recent struggles, he seems to be battling back to his best.

Briton Oscar Onley, 23, has had a season disrupted by injury and illness but a year ago he finished fourth at the Tour.

Italians Davide Piganzoli, 24, and Giulio Pellizzari, 22, both finished in the Giro’s top 10 this year.

But perhaps Italy’s most talented youngster is 19-year-old Lorenzo Finni.

He is not quite as advanced in his development as Seixas, but he has been making waves on the junior circuit this year, winning the Giro Next Gen.

Cycling has a bright future ahead of potentially thrilling Grand Tour battles — but they may all have to wait until Pogacar retires to dream of winning the sport’s greatest prize.

LIFE

THE JORDAN TIMES

‘The Odyssey’ sparks IMAX stampede — and a backlash

By Adam Plowright
Agence France-Presse

PARIS, France — Box office phenomenon “The Odyssey” by Christopher Nolan has been a powerful promotional tool for IMAX cinema technology, but it has also provoked a backlash online about its perceived elitism.

Nolan became the first director ever to use the highest resolution 70mm IMAX film with a specially designed camera to shoot the whole of his epic movie about ancient Greek hero Odysseus.

With demand high for the best possible viewing experience, some IMAX cinemas have been booked out weeks in advance, with screen owners putting on extra showings in late or even midnight slots.

The catch? Only 41 cinemas worldwide can actually project Nolan’s special 70mm film print — while tickets for the standard digital IMAX screens are premium-priced at usually double the cost of a regular cinema place.

Over half of all 70mm IMAX theatres are in the



Nolan became the first director ever to use the highest resolution 70mm IMAX film

United States, while a country as large as India, with its population of around 1.5 billion, doesn’t have a single one.

“Creating a film in a format that most people can never experience as intended is not how an auteur of world cinema should work,” journalist Harsh Tiwari argued in The Print, an Indian online news and opinion site.

Also, because Nolan

optimised his film for the larger, immersive IMAX screens, the vast majority of viewers watching at their local cinemas are seeing an adapted, more tightly cropped version of what he intended.

IMAX confirmed that its screens revealed “substantially more image than standard theatrical presentations” in a statement e-mailed to AFP.

“This isn’t fair. Only a

few people will get to experience Nolan’s true vision,” social media user @CinemaRythmes complained on X.

On TikTok and Instagram, jokers have been posting videos poking fun at Nolan’s supposed format snobbery by showing themselves watching the movie on a small screen or while distracted — noting sarcastically how that was “as Nolan intended”.

‘Difficult film’

IMAX, a Canada-headquartered company, produces high-resolution cameras, large-format screens and top-end sound systems that are designed to give theatre-goers the best possible experience.

Nolan, the British-American director of “Oppenheimer”, “Interstellar” and “The Dark Knight”, has been using IMAX cameras for some scenes in his films for nearly 20 years.

For “The Odyssey”, IMAX developed a new camera called the Keighley Film Camera, a 200-kilogramme (440-pound) behemoth with soundproofing to make it as quiet as possible.

“It was a difficult film. It should be difficult: it’s the Odyssey, it should be hard, and that’s fine,” Nolan told a select group of media including AFP earlier this month.

The New York-listed company told AFP that audience response to the film had been “extraordinary, and with it we’ve seen tremendous interest in IMAX technology across the entire film-

making process”.

The group added 11 new 70mm theatres worldwide in anticipation of demand, each capable of projecting the film reel, which is 18 kilometres long when unspooled and weighs 270 kilogrammes.

Ticket revenues at IMAX theatres broke a record at \$52 million on the first weekend.

The move into the premium IMAX format is part of a broader industry trend in which cinema owners are seeking to make a night out at the movies as comfortable and luxurious as possible.

Improving the user experience is seen as necessary in order to tempt people off their sofas and away from their home cinema systems and streaming sites.

“The Odyssey” has already grossed an estimated \$320 million worldwide since its release on July 15 — more than its blockbuster budget of \$250 million.

The two biggest movies of 2026 so far, “The Super Mario Galaxy Movie” and Michael Jackson biopic “Michael”, have each grossed just over a billion dollars.

‘Star Trek’ celebrates 60th anniversary at Comic-Con

SAN DIEGO (AFP) — “Star Trek” legend George Takei on Sunday headlined a 60th anniversary celebration of the groundbreaking sci-fi series at Comic-Con, which featured stars from across the Starship Enterprise’s expanded universe of films and shows.

The 89-year-old Takei — who played the helmsman Hikaru Sulu on the original series and in multiple movies — earned a standing ovation from fans in a packed Hall H at the four-day pop culture extravaganza in San Diego, California.

The actor joked about how young he felt marking such a milestone in television history, before turning more serious in talking about what he called an “extraordinary phenomenon” — from its initial low ratings to its near-mythical status.

He said that the franchise’s longevity was due to “all the people like you and your parents and your grandparents, because of their intelligence and their sensitivity and their vision” in supporting Gene Roddenberry’s concept.

“We have lived long and endured for 60 years and going,” he said, evoking the famous motto of Leonard Nimoy’s Mr Spock.

The first episode of

“Star Trek” aired in September 1966. It depicted the voyages of the Enterprise captained by James T. Kirk (William Shatner) and his multiracial crew, taking on major moral and social issues against the backdrop of outer space.

Shatner and Nichelle Nichols, a Black actress who played Lieutenant Uhura, made history in 1968 with one of the first interracial kisses ever seen on US television.

Since then, the original series and its more than a dozen spin-offs have generated nearly 1,000 episodes.

It has a major presence at Comic-Con, both with panels devoted to the series and the many fans who roam the halls dressed as their favorite characters.

The panel also featured Michael Dorn (“Star Trek: The Next Generation”), Jerry O’Connell (the animated “Star Trek: Lower Decks”), Robert Picardo (“Star Trek: Voyager”) and Karim Diane, who plays the franchise’s first openly gay Klingon in “Star Trek: Starfleet Academy”.

The tribute began with comments from Roddenberry’s son Rod, who heads the production and distribution company Roddenberry Entertainment.

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