



Cabinet reshuffle to be limited, PM's Office says

AMMAN (JT) — The Cabinet reshuffle will be limited in scope and is being carried out to meet a constitutional requirement following the merger of the ministries of Education and Higher Education and Scientific Research under the name “Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development”, the Prime Minister's Office said on Monday.

The reshuffle in Prime Minister Jafar Hassan's Cabinet will include the appointment of two deputy prime ministers to strengthen and support the Economic Modernisation and Services committees, the office said in a statement.

The two deputy prime

ministers will be given greater authority to follow up on key government portfolios and projects, with the aim of speeding up implementation and improving the pace of government work.

The government's priority at this stage is to press ahead with major national projects that are considered essential to Jordan's economic and development needs and cannot be delayed, the Prime Minister's Office said.

It added that the relevant ministers would continue overseeing these projects to ensure their completion. The government will also focus on legislation and draft laws supporting Jordan's po-

litical, economic and administrative modernisation efforts.

The office said Hassan is seeking to establish a different approach to managing his Cabinet, based on accumulated experience and greater cohesion among ministers.

Hassan has not appointed any new ministers since the first Cabinet reshuffle, which took place during the first year of the government, the office said, adding that approach reflects a preference for maintaining stability within the Cabinet, giving ministers sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities and allowing them to remain accountable for the portfolios they oversee.

Hassan chairs first meeting of committee preparing for 2030 Baptism anniversary

AMMAN (JT) — Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Monday chaired the first meeting of the national committee overseeing preparations for Jordan's 2030 commemoration of the second millennium of the Baptism of Jesus Christ.

The committee brings together government officials, religious and community leaders and representatives of relevant institutions to oversee preparations for the landmark religious and historical occasion, according to a Prime Ministry statement.

The committee will develop policies and guidelines, coordinate international outreach and national procedures, and plan events to mark the anniversary.

Hassan stressed the need to begin preparations immediately in line with the directives of His Majesty King Abdullah and in support of an initiative proposed by the Council of Church Leaders in Jordan.

He called for a comprehensive plan and clear timetable, saying the commemoration reflects Jordan's historical and religious standing,



Members of the Security Council gather for a meeting on the maintenance of international peace and security in the Red Sea

and its role as a global destination for Christian pilgrimage.

The prime minister also highlighted the occasion's significance in promoting Jordan's message of coexistence, respect for others, peace, love and human fraternity.

Hassan said that the government would mobilise all available re-

sources to support preparations, describing the anniversary as an opportunity to strengthen Jordan's position as a destination for religious heritage and Christian pilgrimage.

During the meeting, participants reviewed plans by the Foundation for the Development of Lands Adjacent to the

Baptism Site for several projects, including an integrated village for Christian pilgrims and visitors, a museum dedicated to the Baptism of Jesus Christ, a green corridor and infrastructure upgrades at the site.

The meeting also called for the formation of specialised subcommittees to oversee implementa-

tion and ensure the objectives of the preparations are met, with the support of experts and specialists.

The national committee is chaired by the prime minister and includes the ministers of government communication, interior, digital economy and entrepreneurship, and tourism and antiquities.

Tawjihi 2026 records highest-ever pass rate at 65.3% — official

AMMAN (JT) — The overall pass rate for the 2026 General Secondary Education Certificate Examination (Tawjihi) reached 65.3 per cent, Director of the Examinations Department at the Ministry of Education Mohammad Shehada said on Monday.

Speaking at a press conference, Shehada said that the pass rate for the 2026 national exam is the highest ever recorded in the history of Tawjihi.

According to Shehada, the pass rate in the academic stream stood at 68.1 per cent, with 116,366 12th-grade students passing the exams.

He said that the pass rate in science-oriented fields, which include health, engineering and technology, reached 70 per cent, while humanities-oriented fields encompassing languages, law and business record-



Director of the Tests and Examinations Department Mohammad Shehadeh speaks during a press conference on Monday to announce the 2026 General Secondary Education Certificate Examination (Tawjihi) results

ed 65.4 per cent.

In the vocational and technical stream, pass rates by discipline were recorded as follows: Information Technology registered 79.2 per cent, engineering 56.1 per cent, hairdressing and beauty 53.5 per cent, business 52.8 per cent, hospitality 52.4 per cent and agriculture 49.7 per

cent.

Shehada said that this year's results mark a “major” milestone with the graduation of the first cohort of students from the vocational and technical stream, who enrolled when the programme was first introduced in the 2023/2024 academic year across six specialisations.

He explained that the stream aims to equip students with skills required by the labour market and supply it with a qualified workforce.

Shehada also said that enrollment in these disciplines has grown significantly, noting that the number of offered specialisations will expand to 14 in the upcoming

academic year to provide broader options for students and align educational outcomes with market needs.

Regarding private-study candidates, 55,065 students registered, of whom 44,170 sat for the exams. A total of 26,040 students passed, yielding a pass rate of 59 per cent.

Shehada added that this year's results reflected a notable rise in overall average scores, a trend not witnessed over the past five years.

Shehada congratulated the successful students and their families, wishing them continued success.

To those who did not fully pass this session, he said, “The result is not the end of the road and that opportunities remain open for them to succeed in future rounds.”



The Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army on Monday evacuates the 30th group of sick children from the Gaza Strip, comprising 50 children accompanied by 78 family members

JAF evacuates 50 sick children from Gaza in 30th medical evacuation

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) on Monday evacuated the 30th group of sick children from the Gaza Strip, comprising 50 children accompanied by 78 family members, as part of the “Jordanian Medical Corridor” initiative launched under Royal directives.

The children will receive treatment at several Jordanian hospitals,

reflecting the Kingdom's ongoing medical and humanitarian commitment to supporting Palestinians in the war-hit Gaza Strip, according to a JAF statement.

The medical evacuations, which began in March 2025, are conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO), as part of coordinated

humanitarian efforts in line with international standards.

The Jordanian Medical Corridor forms part of Jordan's broader humanitarian response, providing medical care for sick children from Gaza and supporting Palestinians amid the difficult humanitarian conditions in the Strip.

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Who moves first? Israel-Hamas dispute threatens Gaza's US-backed roadmap

For analysts, dispute is not on ‘disarmament first, then withdrawal’ but on who controls Gaza after war



This aerial view shows displaced Palestinians returning to the war-devastated Jabalia refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip on 19 January 2025, shortly before a ceasefire deal was implemented

By Mai Anati

AMMAN — A US-backed plan for Gaza has hit a major obstacle after Israel rejected the proposed sequence linking Hamas disarmament to an Israeli withdrawal from the war-ravaged territory.

The 15-point plan was endorsed by Hamas in late July and calls for the group to hand over its weapons to a new Palestinian governing body, while envisaging an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza as the process moves forward.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected the plan on Sun-

day, saying Israel would not withdraw until Hamas was “genuinely disarmed”, making the issue of the sequence of implementation the central dispute between the two sides.

The rejection came despite Hamas calling on Washington to pressure Israel to accept the roadmap, with Hamas political bureau member Bassem Naim saying the group expects the US to ensure that the process is not obstructed.

“We expect the mediators and the American guarantor to pressure Netanyahu and his government to adhere to the roadmap,” Naim told

AFP.

Nickolay Mladenov, the Board of Peace's high representative for Gaza, said that the proposal remains the “only way forward” to prevent a repeat of the October 7, 2023 attack, while stressing that further discussions were under way.

Mladenov also said that Israel would withdraw only after complete and verified disarmament, reinforcing the position that Hamas must first give up its weapons before the next stages of the plan can proceed, according to AFP.

“If there is genuine de-militarisation, Israel will withdraw from the

Strip,” he said.

But Mladenov maintained that Israel would eventually pull out if there were verified disarmament.

“If there is genuine de-militarisation, Israel will withdraw from the Strip,” he said.

He said that the disarmament would involve all Hamas weapons, down to Kalashnikov rifles.

Israel has demanded the destruction of all weapons, not just handing them over, AFP said.

The dispute therefore centres on what comes first. Hamas must disarm and Israel must withdraw, but Israel is

insisting that disarmament must be completed before any withdrawal takes place.

US President Donald Trump has continued to back the framework.

In a post on his Truth Social platform, Trump described the plan as the best option for Gaza's future.

The proposal also includes plans for reconstruction, improved transport systems, modern utilities and commercial ports, with wealthy Gulf states envisaged as playing a role in supporting security and long-term development.

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QAIA achieves Airport Council International World Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation Level 1

AMMAN (JT) — Airport International Group (AIG), the Jordanian company operating Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA), on Monday announced that the airport has achieved Level 1 of Airports Council International (ACI) World’s Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation (AEA) Programme, marking its first participation in the global accreditation programme.

The achievement reflects QAIA’s commitment to creating a more accessible and inclusive airport experience while aligning its facilities, services and operational practices with internationally recognised standards, according to AIG statement.

The ACI World Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation recognises airports that demonstrate a structured approach to improving accessibility and embedding inclusion across their operations.

By attaining Level 1, QAIA joins a growing network of airports worldwide committed to ensuring that all passengers can travel with greater ease, confidence and independence.

Accessibility is an “integral” part of AIG’s broader vision for enhancing the passenger experience.

Over the years, QAIA

has introduced a range of measures designed to better support passengers with disabilities and reduced mobility, including accessible parking and terminal infrastructure, tactile guidance, adapted passenger facilities, priority seating, sign language interpretation services, AI-powered service call points and continuous improvements to its digital platforms, according to the statement.

‘At Airport International Group, we see inclusion as an ongoing journey rather than a destination...’

These initiatives reflect AIG’s ongoing efforts to foster a welcoming environment where every traveller can enjoy a “seamless” journey.

Commenting on the achievement, AIG CEO Nicolas Deviller said, “Achieving Level 1 of the ACI World Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation reflects our belief

that accessibility is fundamental to delivering a world-class airport experience.”

“At Airport International Group, we see inclusion as an ongoing journey rather than a destination, and this milestone reinforces our commitment to continuously evolving Queen Alia International Airport in line with the best international practices,” Deviller added.

“We thank ACI World for this recognition and look forward to building on it as we continue creating an airport experience that is welcoming, seamless and accessible for all — bringing our brand promise, ‘QAIA Feels Like Home,’ to life for every passenger,” the CEO said.

The accreditation adds to a strong year of international recognition for AIG and QAIA.

In 2026, the airport also upgraded its ACI World Airport Customer Experience Accreditation from Level 3 to Level 4, retained its SKYTRAX 4-Star Airport Rating, and entered the SKYTRAX list of the World’s Top 100 Airports.

Together, these achievements demonstrate AIG’s commitment to its long-term vision of delivering a world-class airport experience, according to the statement.

Average annual temperature in Jordan up by 1.6°C over 100 years — JMD

AMMAN (JT) — The Kingdom’s average annual temperature has increased by roughly 1.6°C over the past 100 years, according to Amman Civil Airport station data spanning 1923 to 2025, records from the Jordan Meteorological Department (JMD) showed on Monday.

JMD data also showed a clear shift in heatwaves regarding frequency, intensity, and duration, according to Jordan News Agency, Petra.

JMD Director-General Raed Khattab said that average temperatures over the last decade rose by about 0.9°C compared to the reference period (1991–2020), indicating a trend towards more severe heat.

Khattab noted that heatwaves in Jordan stem from hot air masses originating in the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa combined with summer high-pressure systems, with climate change intensifying these events.

Records between 1995 and 2025 show a rise in heatwave frequency, with 2020 recording five heatwaves.

Khattab cited the August 8-15, 2025 heat-



File photo

Jordan Meteorological Department Director-General Raed Khattab on Monday says that average temperatures over the last decade rose by 0.9°C compared to the reference period (1991–2020)

wave as one of the most severe in Jordan’s 100-year climate record, as maximum temperatures at Amman Civil Airport remained at or above 40°C for seven consecutive days.

During that wave, the King Hussein International Airport recorded

a record maximum temperature of 49.6°C on August 13, 2025. Four stations broke maximum temperature records, while 11 broke minimum temperature records.

For current forecasts through September, Khattab said that sea-

sonal outlooks do not indicate a full heatwave, despite scattered hot days.

Upcoming temperature rises do not meet the JMD operational definition of a heatwave, which requires maximum temperatures to exceed average levels

by 5°C or more for at least three consecutive days.

Khattab stressed that heatwaves impact public health, water, agriculture, energy, and tourism, underscoring the importance of early warning systems and sectoral readiness.

282 students graduate under ‘MASAR’ programme in H1 2026 — report

AMMAN (JT) — A total of 282 students graduated under the “MASAR” programme of the cybersecurity sector during the first half of 2026, according to a report on the Executive Programme of the Economic Modernisation Vision (2026–2029).

According to the report, 77 government institutions received training through the “Wai” platform, while three cyber bootcamps were con-

ducted, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The report showed that national initiatives were implemented to raise cybersecurity awareness, and 44 awareness workshops were held for 5,664 employees.

The report noted that 282 students graduated from the fifth cohort of the “MASAR” programme, which equips enrolled cybersecurity students for the labour

market through specialised field training.

Graduations were also held for participants in the ninth and tenth “Nashama” bootcamps, which train fresh cybersecurity graduates through intensive four-month programmes focused on practical skills.

The report added that local strategic partnerships were fostered to enhance Jordan’s regional and international role

through several memoranda of understanding with various entities.

Institutions were supported in implementing the Jordanian National Cybersecurity Framework through business modelling courses, quantum risk calculation and risk management training, and capacity-building workshops for senior management and technical units across nine government entities.

Arab Thought Forum hosts lecture on ‘Master and Slave Within the Self’

AMMAN (JT) — The Arab Thought Forum (ATF) on Sunday hosted a lecture titled “Master and Slave Within the Self”, delivered by Dean of the House of Philosophy in Fujairah Ahmad Barqawi, and moderated by ATF Acting Secretary General Amani Jarrar.

The lecture brought together a number of academics, intellectuals and those interested in philosophical and intellectual affairs, according to an ATF statement.

Jarrar said that philosophy remains an essential tool for liberating the mind and raising awareness, noting that the crisis facing the Arab individual is not confined to knowledge, but is also closely linked to one’s relationship with the self and the ability to exercise inner freedom.

She highlighted Barqawi’s intellectual contribution, describing him as “one of the prominent contemporary Arab philosophers” whose work has focused on questions of the self, freedom and existence, and on restoring philosophy as a practice that helps individuals overcome inherited patterns of thought and forms of intellectual, psychological and social domination.

Jarrar said that the human being carries an ongoing internal tension between the desire for freedom, independence and creativity and the constraints imposed by fear, dependence, surren-



ATF photo

The Arab Thought Forum on Sunday hosts a lecture titled ‘Master and Slave Within the Self’, delivered by Dean of the House of Philosophy in Fujairah Ahmad Barqawi

der and habit.

She noted that individuals may appear free and independent in their external lives while remaining constrained by internal patterns that limit their will and prevent them from achieving genuine freedom.

“Awareness of the self and the sources of its submission is a crucial step towards regaining inner freedom,” she said, stressing that inner liberation is a prerequisite for any genuine project of reform and development.

She added that a free and dynamic society cannot be built without individuals who possess awareness and agency are able to question their convictions and practise critical thinking, noting that meaningful change begins not only with transforming external structures and circumstances, but also with overcoming internal intellectual and psychological

constraints.

For his part, Barqawi noted that the self should not be viewed merely as an “I” conscious of its existence, but as the “I” that moves from awareness to action and becomes manifest through its choices, relationships and interaction with the surrounding world.

He said that the self develops through awareness of its existence and its ability to act upon and influence the conditions surrounding it, noting that mastery and servitude represent two states of the self and, consequently, two forms of self-awareness.

Barqawi traced the concept of the “master-slave dialectic” to German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, who presented it as a conflict between two selves seeking recognition, noting that the confrontation results in one becoming dominant and the other

subordinate, while the subordinate’s awareness of servitude eventually develops into an awareness of freedom.

He noted that Hegel’s dialectic has provided an important framework for understanding class conflict and human self-consciousness, but said his own approach shifts the concept from a relationship between two individuals to a conflict taking place within the human self itself.

According to Barqawi, the self caught in this dialectic may become internally divided, with conflicting aspects of the self rejecting, threatening or seeking revenge against one another. This division can also shape an individual’s relationship with others and with the surrounding social environment.

He argued that such a divided self may emerge in societies where the human self has not fully

asserted its freedom and where its existence, rights and dignity have not been sufficiently recognised.

Barqawi said that examining this internal conflict raises questions about the conditions that produce a divided self, the ways in which it appears in human relationships and social practices and the negative consequences it may generate.

He also addressed the possibility of overcoming this internal division and restoring the individual’s sense of unity and freedom, stressing that the master-slave dialectic can be understood not only as a relationship between two opposing parties, but also as an experience taking place within the human self.

An extensive discussion followed the lecture, during which Barqawi and the audience addressed a range of issues concerning the self, freedom, consciousness and the relationship with the other.

The discussion also went over the impact of submission, dependence and domination on individuals’ personalities, behaviour and relationships, as well as manifestations of internal division in contemporary society.

Participants discussed how individuals may, in certain circumstances, contribute to reproducing the constraints to which they are subjected through their attitudes, practices and relationships with others.



Ministry of Water photo

The Ministry of Water says that its inspection teams uncover major violations involving water lines and illegal wells in Irbid, Aqaba, Southern Shouneh and Madaba

Water Ministry campaign removes illegal connections, wells

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation/Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) said that its inspection teams have uncovered major violations involving water lines and illegal wells in Irbid, Aqaba, Southern Shouneh and Madaba.

The violations were detected during campaigns carried out in cooperation with stakeholders, and in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and the Public Security Directorate and the Royal Department for Environment Protection, according to a ministry statement.

The violations involved supplying farms, water tankers

and homes, as well as the illegal sale of water.

The teams removed the violations and prepared official reports to take legal action against alleged perpetrators.

In Irbid, the teams seized an unauthorised drilling rig while it was being used to drill an illegal well, which was subsequently filled in, the drilling rig was confiscated.

In Aqaba, specialised teams uncovered new illegal connections to main water lines supplying a factory and a chalet.

In Madaba, nine illegal connections to main water lines were uncovered. The connections were being

used to supply homes and farms and to fill water tankers for illegal sale.

In the Maghtas (Baptism Site) area of Southern Shouneh, seven illegal wells used to supply farms and fill unauthorised water tankers were uncovered. The wells were sealed.

All illegal connections in the cases were removed and official reports were prepared pending further investigation.

The ministry said that it continues it intensive efforts to tighten control over water resources across the Kingdom and deter violations, calling on the public to report such illegal activities.

Detailed designs completed for Potash Railway’s third phase — report

Progress made on road networks, Aqaba Port facilities, airports, border crossings

AMMAN (JT) — Detailed designs for the third phase of the Potash Railway Line have been completed, marking progress on a project to establish a railway linking Aqaba’s industrial port with the Kingdom’s mining areas, according to a first-half 2026 progress report on the implementation of the Economic Modernisation Vision’s Executive Programme for 2026-2029.

The report said the project is part of efforts to develop Jordan’s transport and logistics infrastructure and strengthen links between the country’s industrial and mining sectors and Aqaba Port.

It also highlighted progress on a number of major transport and logistics projects during the first half of the year, including roads, ports, airports, border crossings and public transport, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

In Aqaba, the port management and truck control system was launched and actual operations began, contributing to the development of logistics and port services in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone.

The system is also expected to improve operational efficiency and facilitate the movement of trucks and supply chains through advanced digital solutions.

Progress was also recorded on the Irbid Ring Road, with bridge col-



JT file

The first-half 2026 progress report on the Economic Modernisation Vision’s Executive Programme for 2026-2029 says detailed designs for the third phase of the Potash Railway Line have been completed

umns completed and preparations under way for culvert works. Work also began on a number of roads under a project to maintain and rehabilitate the Kingdom’s arterial and main road network.

The report also said all studies and designs for the King Hussein Bridge Station project had been completed, while implementation had begun on a project to develop regular transport services between Amman and governorate and district centres.

Companies responsible for organising queues for routes covered by the project were established, and operating contracts and agreements with partner companies were

signed. In the aviation sector, work began to upgrade meteorological monitoring systems on the runways at Amman Civil Airport and King Hussein International Airport in Aqaba to improve the accuracy of meteorological data used for air navigation.

The work is part of a project to enhance the efficiency of Jordanian airspace, ensure flexible, efficient and sustainable operations and facilitate air traffic in the Aqaba area.

The report also said a framework agreement had been finalised and signed with the investor designated as developer and operator of King Hussein International

Airport in Aqaba, while preliminary studies and designs had begun.

A tender was floated for the second phase of the development of Aqaba’s Oil Port, aimed at increasing the port’s capacity to handle petroleum products and enhancing public safety measures.

Under the Land Freight Transport Sector Development Plan, a study is being prepared on freight transport patterns in the Kingdom, while a proposal to establish a national Jordanian land transport company is also being examined.

Two contracts were signed to license new transport companies operating through smart applications under a project to regulate passen-

ger transport using smart applications.

The report said the internal network covering all sites of the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, including directorates, maintenance workshops and weighbridges, had been completed and linked to a central control and monitoring room.

Information had also been collected and site assessments completed

as part of updated studies for the Irbid Ring Road and Salt Ring Road.

At the Dura Border Crossing, finishing works on sewage, water and electricity networks had been completed, along with waterproofing works on station roofs. A tender was also floated for works in the passen-

JREEEF programmes benefit 2.28m people, save JD152.9m in energy bills

Fund’s projects cut carbon emissions by 883,270 tonnes, reduce energy consumption by 817.6GWh over 2015-2025

By Ahmad Khatatneh

AMMAN — Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Saleh Kharabsheh on Monday attended the launch of a report documenting the achievements of the Jordan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund (JREEEF) over the past decade.

The “A Decade of Achievement” report, covering the Fund’s work between 2015 and 2025, showed that JREEEF programmes benefitted more than 2.28 million people and generated cumulative energy-bill savings of around JD152.9 million.

It also said that programmes reached around 19.2 per cent of Jordan’s population and helped reduce carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 883,270 tonnes.

The report also showed that the Fund’s projects reduced energy consumption by around 817.6 gigawatt-hours, while the cumulative production capacity of photovoltaic systems reached around 681.6 gigawatt-hours, contributing to energy security and supporting Jordan’s transition towards a



Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Saleh Kharabsheh on Monday attends the launch of a report documenting the achievements of the Jordan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund (JREEEF) over the past decade

green economy.

Kharabsheh, who also chairs the fund’s board of directors, said the figures reflected the scale of the Fund’s impact, noting that its projects had contributed around 7.8 per cent of Jordan’s target for reducing emissions by 2030.

He said that the fund had become a national platform bringing together the government, national and international donors and other partners to support renewable energy and energy-efficiency

programmes.

The fund also contributes to developing the energy services market, empowering the private sector, and developing technical standards and specifications to strengthen the sector’s competitiveness and sustainability, Kharabsheh said.

According to the report, the fund installed 13,748 renewable energy systems and 45,298 household solar water heaters across the Kingdom.

Its programmes also

supported energy-efficiency solutions at 162 facilities, while 1,098 facilities implemented renewable energy solutions. The total capacity of photovoltaic systems implemented through the programmes reached 69.3 megawatts.

The fund’s programmes covered households and a wide range of productive and service sectors, including schools, hospitals and health centres, farms, industrial facilities, hotels, municipalities, places

of worship and residential care facilities.

The projects helped beneficiaries reduce energy costs, improve efficiency and strengthen the competitiveness of productive sectors, while contributing to lower emissions and improved services.

JREEEF Executive Director Rasmi Hamza said that the fund had made a tangible impact on citizens and institutions across the Kingdom during its 11-year journey.

He said the fund’s legislative foundation was established in 2012, while its programmes began being implemented on the ground in 2015 to support the adoption of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency across different sectors.

Hamza said that the Fund’s impact extended beyond the number of projects implemented, highlighting its contribution to reducing energy costs for households,

supporting farmers and improving working environments in educational and health institutions, as well as strengthening the competitiveness of industrial and tourism

establishments.

The report said the Fund had developed an integrated financing system offering full and partial grants ranging between 10 and 50 per cent, in addition to revolving loans, helping accelerate the adoption of renewable energy and energy-efficiency solutions.

It also expanded partnerships with national and international institutions, including the European Union, Italy’s Ministry of Environment and Energy Security, the US Agency for International Development and the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

The launch ceremony, held in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme in Jordan, also featured the presentation of the fund’s achievements and testimonies from beneficiaries representing different sectors and governorates.

The event concluded with a discussion session titled “Reflections on the Fund’s Journey”, focusing on its impact on Jordan’s energy sector over the past 11 years and priorities for the next phase.

Cabinet approves JD5m funding for 'Better Work' programme

AMMAN (JT) — The Cabinet, during a session chaired by Prime Minister Jafar Hassan, on Sunday approved extending the Better Work programme for an additional three years, with government funding increased to JD5 million from JD1.1 million. The Cabinet tasked the Ministry of Labour with completing the necessary procedures and arrangements to implement the programme, according to a Prime Ministry statement. The Better Work programme has been implemented in Jordan since 2008 through cooperation between the Ministry of Labour, the International Labour Organisation and the International Finance Corporation. The programme aims to improve working conditions, strengthen compliance with labour standards and enhance productivity and competitiveness in Jordan’s garment and textile sector. The increased funding is expected to support the sector’s development, enhance working conditions, and contribute to attracting investment and expanding employment opportunities in the industry.

Safadi, Peruvian counterpart discuss cooperation

AMMAN (JT) — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi on Monday held a phone call with Peruvian Foreign Minister Carlos Pareja to discuss bilateral relations and ways to enhance cooperation in the economic and tourism sectors, as well as coordination within international organisations. The talks focused on an agreement to hold the first round of political consultations between the foreign ministries of Jordan and Peru as soon as possible, in implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two countries in 2005. Safadi and Pareja also discussed regional developments and efforts to end the escalation, restore calm and achieve security and stability in the region. Safadi congratulated Pareja on his appointment as foreign minister, expressing his commitment to working together to strengthen relations between the two friendly countries and coordinate on issues of mutual interest.



Air Cairo to launch twice-weekly Alexandria flights from Amman Civil Airport

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Civil Airport on Monday said that Air Cairo will launch a new route to Alexandria, with two flights per week starting on Friday. The new route is part of efforts to strengthen air connectivity between Jordan and Egypt, and provide passengers with more flexible and convenient travel options. Amman Civil Airport, which has an annual capacity of up to 1 million passengers, was developed as a secondary hub to Queen Alia International Airport to help ease congestion for both passengers and aircraft. The airport is designed to accommodate medium-sized aircraft carrying up to 200 passengers and weighing approximately 80 tonnes, making it suitable for low-cost carriers. Its lower operating costs are also expected to provide airlines with a more cost-effective option for serving the Jordanian market.



Army thwarts drug smuggling attempt using drone

AMMAN (JT) — The Eastern Military Region command on Monday foiled an attempt to smuggle a large quantity of narcotics using guided balloons along one of its border fronts within its area of responsibility. Border Guard units detected the balloons, shot them down inside Jordanian territory, and seized their contents in coordination with military security agencies and the Anti-Narcotics Department, according to Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF). The seized items were transferred to the relevant authorities for further action. JAF emphasised that the operation demonstrates the high alertness and readiness of Border Guard units to deal with evolving smuggling tactics regardless of the methods used. JAF reaffirmed that it will not allow the Kingdom’s borders to become a conduit for smuggling or a threat to national security, stressing that it will handle any attempt targeting the nation’s security and territorial integrity with firm force.

JHCO concludes free medical week in Gaza with 1,845 consultations, services

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation (JHCO) and its strategic partner, the Jordanian Campaign, concluded a free medical week in the Gaza Strip in cooperation with the Yas Medical Centre, providing 1,845 medical consultations and services.

Organised between August 2 and 6, the initiative aimed to support the Gaza Strip’s health sector and improve access to essential healthcare services amid ongoing humanitarian challenges, according to a JHCO statement.

The medical week covered a wide range of spe-



JHCO photo

Organised between August 2 and 6, the initiative aimed to support the Gaza Strip’s health sector

cialities alongside supportive medical services, including general medicine, paediatrics, dentistry, dermatology, ENT, general surgery, and internal medicine and nephrology.

According to statisti-

cal data, general medicine recorded the highest number of visits with 406 consultations, followed by dentistry with 327, dermatology with 130, paediatrics with 109, ENT with 76, general surgery with

17, and internal medicine and nephrology with 12.

Supportive medical services played a major role in the initiative, with the pharmacy providing 656 services and consultations, the laboratory recording 98 visits, and nursing services handling 14 visits, ensuring an integrated care pathway from initial checkups to diagnostic testing and treatment.

The implementation of the medical week comes as Gaza’s healthcare system faces increasing pressure, making free specialised medical services a top priority to relieve burdens

on families and secure access to basic healthcare.

The project is an extension of ongoing efforts by JHCO and the Jordanian Campaign inside Gaza to respond to critical humanitarian needs across vital sectors.

Jordan runs two military field hospitals in Gaza, one in the Strip’s north and was established in 2009 following the war in 2008, and the second is in Khan Younis in the south, which was established in November 2023 at the peak of the Israeli war of aggression on the coastal enclave that erupted on October 7, 2023.

JEDCO supports 1,020 projects, helps create 3,688 jobs since 2022

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation (JEDCO) said on Monday that it has provided technical and financial support to 1,020 projects across the Kingdom between 2022 and 2026, contributing to the creation of 3,688 jobs.

The figures were presented during a dialogue session held by JEDCO with beneficiaries of its technical and financial support programmes in Amman Governorate, as part of efforts to strengthen direct com-

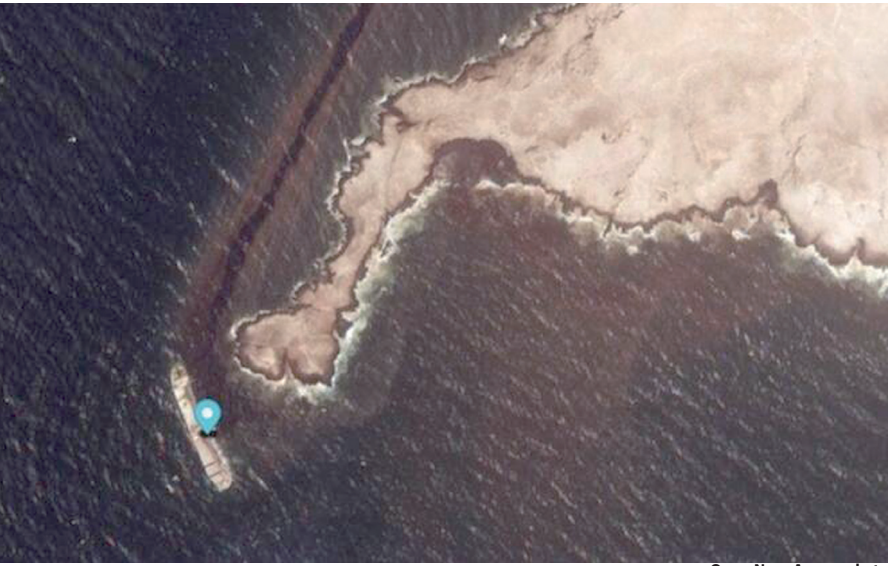
munication with beneficiaries, and improve the programmes and services provided to them.

JEDCO Executive Director Ghaleb Hijazi said that the corporation considers beneficiaries key partners in the development process, stressing that listening to their experiences and feedback is essential to improving service quality, developing programmes, and enhancing their economic and development impact.

He said that JEDCO is keen to strengthen direct

communication channels with beneficiaries to promote transparency, build relationships based on trust and partnership, and better response to the needs and aspirations of small and medium-sized enterprises.

The support provided during the period covered projects in the industrial, agricultural, handicrafts and services sectors, contributing to the growth and development of enterprises, strengthening their capabilities and enhancing their competitiveness.



Oman says on Monday it was working to contain an oil spill off its southern coast after a tanker ran aground in June inside a protected marine area

Oman moves to contain oil spill after tanker ran aground

MUSCAT, Oman (AFP) — Oman on Monday said it was working to contain an oil spill off its southern coast after a tanker ran aground in June inside a protected marine area, triggering calls for action by environmentalists.

It follows an investigation by AFP that found the ship had been stranded for weeks near Al Qibliyyah island after it was rocked by explosions.

The Oman Environment Authority on Monday said the ongoing spill had affected roughly 390 square kilometres, according to its most recent analysis.

The slick was concentrated around Oman's Hallaniyat Archipelago off the country's southern coast, where a marine reserve was established last year to protect sensitive ecosystems home to diverse marine life, including rare sea

turtles.

The country's environment authority said rapid action was needed to protect the area's biodiversity, including "coral reefs, turtle nesting areas, marine habitats and coastal areas of ecological importance".

A report in the state-backed Oman News Agency quoted an official with the transport ministry as saying authorities were conducting aerial surveillance and had deployed divers.

The official said authorities were in the early stages of developing a plan to transfer the vessel's oil cargo "to reduce the risks arising from the incident, ensure navigational safety and protect the marine environment".

Omani authorities have not yet identified the cause of the spill. But British maritime security company Vanguard told AFP last

week that the tanker was rocked by explosions in early June as it sailed off the coast of Yemen, causing water to enter several sections of the vessel.

Advocacy groups Greenpeace and PAX told AFP that the spill was on the verge of causing an "environmental disaster", saying the tanker was carrying around one million barrels of crude.

The ship is believed to be part of Russia's "shadow fleet" that Moscow uses to circumvent Western sanctions on its oil exports.

The fleet includes ageing vessels that have faced criticism over maintenance, insurance and safety standards.

Tankers have been frequently targeted in the Gulf region over recent months as the US exchanged fire with Iran and its allied proxies.

Colombian president declares emergency after quake kills 111

BOGOTÁ (AFP) — Colombia's newly inaugurated President Abelardo de la Espriella on Monday declared a state of emergency after a powerful earthquake struck the west of the country.

The 7.4 magnitude tremor killed at least 111 people and injured 87 more, De la Espriella stated from the Colombian capital Bogota.

Emergency teams rushed to help victims and search for survivors under the rubble after the quake hit the coastal Choco region at 7:34 am local time.

The tremor, with an epicenter 100 kilometres deep in the San Jose del Palmar municipality, killed at least 40 people in the Risaralda region.

"The situation is critical," Mayor Mauricio Salazar of the provincial capital Pereira told Caracol Radio.

Twenty-seven people were killed in the Valle del Cauca department, and two more died in the city of Manizales, in Colombia's coffee-growing region.

The quake caused a tower of Manizales' beloved cathedral to fall over, an AFP journalist observed.

"A great many buildings" in the city sustained damage, said administrator Jaime Zuluaga, 50. "Traffic is paralyzed and people don't want to go back to their homes for fear of an aftershock."

Airports shut

Twenty buildings crumbled in Colom-



Women look at a damaged building after an earthquake in Cali, Colombia on Monday

bia's third-largest city Cali, trapping people beneath the debris, Mayor Alejandro Eder said.

Choco's governor warned of serious damage in the provincial capital Quibdo, where videos showed more buildings reduced to rubble. The death toll in the impoverished region remains unknown.

Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela also felt the early-morning quake, which prompted building evacuations in

Bogota.

Still wearing their pajamas, crowds of people rushed out into the street upon feeling the tremor, AFP reporters saw.

"The quake was very, very strong," said content creator Valeria Polo, 29, in the capital, where only minimal damage was recorded.

Six small airports in western Colombia suspended operations, the civil aeronautics agency said, and the soccer governing body postponed upcoming

football matches.

President Abelardo de la Espriella, who was just sworn in on Friday, said he was heading to Bogota to convene an emergency meeting.

"To the Colombians who are going through difficult times today, I want to say: You are not alone," he added.

De la Espriella has pledged to build close ties with the United States and Israel, both of whom voiced support following the disaster.

Washington is "closely monitoring the large earthquake that struck Colombia and stands ready to support the people of Colombia", Secretary of State Marco Rubio wrote on X.

Israel offered its assistance, as did Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum and Ecuador's Daniel Noboa.

In June, twin earthquakes in Venezuela of magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 killed more than 6,000 people and caused widespread destruction.

شركة مناجم الفوسفات الأردنية م.ع.م.
Jordan Phosphate Mines Co. PLC

البوتاس العربية
Arab Potash

Tender # JAS 01 - 2026
INVITATION FOR BID

Jordan Advanced Company for Specialty Fertilizer Industries (JASFert) hereby invites tenders for “BASIC ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE PHOSPHORIC ACID AND SPECIALTY FERTILIZERS COMPLEX”

Jordan Advanced Company for Specialty Fertilizer Industries (JASFert), a joint venture established between the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JP/MC) and the Arab Potash Company (APC), hereby invites qualified and experienced local and international engineering consulting firms, joint ventures, and consortia to submit their offers for the provision of Basic Engineering Services for the proposed Phosphoric Acid and Specialty Fertilizers Complex in Jordan.

The Project will comprise facilities for the production of Sulfuric Acid (SA), Merchant Grade Phosphoric Acid (MGA), Purified Phosphoric Acid (PPA), Technical Grade Mono-Ammonium Phosphate (MAPt), Mono-Potassium Phosphate (MKP), Granular NPK Fertilizers, together with associated utilities, storage, logistics, infrastructure, and by-product handling facilities. The complex will be developed at the Eshidiyah and Aqaba sites in Jordan.

Interested Consultants with proven relevant experience who wish to participate in the Tender are invited to submit the required qualification and registration documents by email to tender@jasfert.com.

Upon verification of the submitted documents, eligible bidders will be provided with the bank account details for payment of the non-refundable Tender Document fee of **JOD 5,000** (Five Thousand Jordanian Dinars). A copy of the bank deposit receipt, clearly indicating the Tender reference number and description, shall then be sent to the same email address, after which the Tender Documents, including all relevant conditions and details, will be issued electronically.

The required documents for obtaining the Tender Documents include the Commercial Registration Certificate, valid Professional License, and valid Consulting Classification Certificate issued by the Jordanian Ministry of Public Works and Housing, as applicable.

Note: The above requirements apply to local Consultants. Foreign Consultants shall submit equivalent documents issued by the relevant authorities in their home countries.

The key tender dates and submission requirements are as follows:

- Deadline for purchasing the Tender Documents: **12:00 noon, Thursday, 20 August 2026.**
- Deadline for submission of inquiries and requests for clarification: **12:00 noon, Wednesday, 30 September 2026.**
- Deadline for submission of bids: **12:00 noon, Monday, 19 October 2026** (Jordan Time). Bids received after this deadline will not be accepted.

Place of Submission:

- [Arab Potash Company Headquarters]
- [Arab Potash Co, Al Jaheth St 6, Amman, Jordan]

Contact Persons:

- Dr. Mohammad Megdady, Phone: +962798673422
- Mr. Ali Abualghanam, Phone: +962795667337

For additional information or clarifications, Consultants may contact JASFert through tender@jasfert.com.

Ukraine drone strike on Russian oil-refining city kills 13

MOSCOW (AFP) — A Ukrainian drone strike on the central Russian region of Tatarstan killed at least 13 people in one of the deadliest attacks carried out by Kyiv since the war began more than four years ago.

Kyiv said it had struck an oil refinery in the industrial city of Nizhnekamsk, more than 1,000 kilometres away from the Ukrainian border.

Both sides have significantly escalated their long-range attacks this year, causing a spike in civilian deaths, according to the United Nations.

"At this moment, 13 people have been killed" in the attack on Nizhnekamsk, the regional press service said in a statement on Monday.

Another 75 people were wounded, 21 of which had been hospitalised, the authorities added.

Russia's Tatarstan region is rich in energy resources and has many major oil refineries that Kyiv has been targeting in retaliatory strikes.

Unverified footage on social media showed a large black smoke cloud billowing at the site of an oil facility.

Ukraine's General Staff said it had struck the Taneko refinery, controlled by oil giant Tatneft, as part of a campaign of "reducing the military potential of the Russian aggressor".

Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said a child was among those killed.

So too were citizens



This handout photograph taken and released by Ukrainian State Emergency Service on Saturday shows a burning building following Russian ballistic missile strikes in Kyiv region

from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, according to the regional government.

Deadly strikes

Russia also hit Ukraine with deadly strikes on Monday.

Near the front line, a Russian artillery strike killed five people in a village in the northeastern Kharkiv region, local Ukrainian officials said.

"On August 10, Russian forces carried out a massive artillery strike on the residential area of the village of Bugaivka in the Chuguiv district. Various houses were destroyed as a result of the enemy attack. Five people were killed," regional prosecutor's office said in a statement on Telegram.

It posted a picture of a house reduced to

rubble by the attack.

Russia's defence ministry said it shot down 456 Ukrainian drones fired overnight. It never states how many reached their targets.

The Tatarstan region had earlier reported a "massive" Ukrainian drone attack.

Ukraine's air force said Russia fired 126 drones in its overnight attack.

A woman was also killed in a Ukrainian attack on the Russian border region of Belgorod, and a man was killed in a Russian drone strike on a taxi in the frontline Kher-son region, officials there said.

In Ukraine's southern Odesa region, tens of thousands of households were still without power after Russian struck the power grid over the weekend.

Concerns are rising in Kyiv over the upcoming winter, with the energy network still reeling from four years of Russian strikes.

Last winter, millions were plunged into darkness and had their heating and water cut for hours as temperatures sunk to -20°C.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky warned on the weekend that his country has "virtually no intact thermal power plants" following the Russian attacks.

Kyiv has also been running short of vital missile interceptors as Russia has significantly escalated its attacks with hard-to-intercept ballistic missiles.

Dozens have been killed in Kyiv over the last two months in direct hits on apartment buildings.



US President Donald Trump deplanes from Air Force One on Sunday at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland

Trump says will demand conflict compensation from Iran

WASHINGTON, TEHRAN (AFP) — US President Donald Trump said on Monday he would seek conflict compensation from Iran as part of any future peace negotiations, citing attacks and atrocities stretching back decades allegedly backed or perpetrated by Iran.

Iran is “asking for compensation for the damage done to them during the last five month Military Conflict... I am likewise demanding compensation from Iran, for all of the people that they have killed and gravely wounded with their roadside bombs and many conflicts”, Trump posted.

Iranian supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei named Revolutionary Guards general Ali Abdollahi head of the country's armed forces on Monday...

Iranian supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei named Revolutionary Guards general Ali Abdollahi head of the country's armed forces on Monday...

Abdollahi has previously led the Khatam Al Anbiya, Iran's inter-branch central military command tasked with coordinating operations.

An statement on Khamenei's website announced that “Major General Ali Abdollahi has been appointed chief of staff of the armed forces. Brigadier General Ahmad Vahidi has also been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps with the rank of major general”.

The pair represent Khamenei's first senior military appointments since being named supreme leader early in the Middle East war after the death of his father in US-Israeli strikes.

Abdollahi has issued bellicose threats over the course of the war, warning regional neighbours earlier this month that “any country serving as a defensive shield for criminal and aggressive America will be engulfed by the flames of war”.

Hundreds of Syria Kurds head back to hometown after years of displacement

HASAKEH, Syria (AFP) — A first group of Syrian Kurds headed back to their northeastern hometown of Ras Al Ain on Monday after years of displacement, with Kurdish officials later accusing “armed groups” of attacking some returnees upon their arrival.

A January agreement with the government on merging Kurdish forces and civil institutions into the state had included provisions for the return of displaced Kurds, but residents of Ras Al Ain had still been waiting.

Tens of thousands of Kurds were displaced when Turkey and allied Syrian fighters seized an Arab-majority strip of territory along the Turkish border, including Ras Al Ain, from Kurdish control in 2019 during Syria's civil war.

Jawan Isso, from a committee representing displaced people from Ras Al Ain, told AFP that a “first batch” of around 2,500 people were headed home on Monday.

“This step is the result of efforts by all sides and ongoing coordination” between the Damascus and Kurdish authorities, he said, adding that “the second batch will be transferred in the coming days”.

But later on Monday, Isso told AFP that Kurds returning to Ras Al Ain were attacked by “armed groups” with several wounded, calling it a “deliberate and premeditated” incident.

The incident sparked a demonstration in



Onlookers stand along the road as Syrian Kurds, who were living in displacement camps in the city of Hasakeh, prepare to head back to the northeastern border town of Ras Al Ain on Monday, following years of displacement, months after an integration deal between the Kurds and Damascus

nearby Kurdish-majority Qamishli, where an AFP correspondent saw angry protesters try to break into the security forces' headquarters, with Syrian officers pushing them back.

“We condemn the assault to which the displaced Kurdish families were subjected during their return,” Mazloum Abdi, leader of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces who signed the January deal with Damascus, said on X.

“We understand the angry reactions in the Kurdish street in response to this assault, and at the same time, we call on our people to exercise self-restraint, refrain from being drawn

into any irresponsible acts, and preserve our civil and security institutions,” he added.

Abdi said he was working with the relevant authorities “to ensure the protection of the returning displaced civilians”.

‘Waiting for this moment’

Earlier in the day, an AFP correspondent saw dozens of trucks loaded with furniture and other belongings waiting to set off from near the city of Hasakeh, with men, women and children eager to depart.

“I've been waiting for this moment... It's like a dream for a person to return to their home,”

said returnee Nora Khodor, 37.

Isso said that around 100,000 people from the Ras Al Ain area had applied to return.

Human rights groups say residents' homes and belongings there were seized or looted after the offensive.

Some of the fighters subsequently settled in the area with their families, with some reportedly still living in the formerly ethnically-mixed region, known as Sari Kani in Kurdish.

Turkey launched successive cross-border offensives against Kurdish-led forces in the country's north before Syria's new Islamist authorities ousted long-time ruler Bashar Assad

in December 2024.

Since then, the authorities have been extending central government control across the country, including formerly Kurdish-held areas.

“We are very happy about returning,” said Rawda Mohammed, 39, before the violence erupted.

“I asked about my home. They told me it is totally destroyed, but we did not get pessimistic because we're happy to return, and when we get there we'll see what we can do.”

Some 5.5 million people remain internally displaced in Syria following the more than 13-year civil war, according to the United Nations.

One woman confirmed dead in western Canada wildfire

MONTREAL, Canada (AFP) — An 80-year-old woman died while fleeing her home to escape a massive wildfire in Canada's British Columbia province, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) said late Sunday.

The Summerland fire, which broke out Friday near Okanagan Lake, has spread rapidly and led to the evacuation of more than 20,000 people, with Canadian officials declaring a state of emergency.

The fire covered more than 13,600 hectares as of late Sunday and was considered out of control, according to the BC Wildfire Service.

The RCMP confirmed that “an 80-year-old woman has died as a re-



This handout photo taken on Friday, and released on Saturday by the BC Wildlife Service shows the Bald Range wildfire near Summerland in Canada's western British Columbia province

sult of the Summerland [Bald Range] wildfire.”

The Meadow Valley resident “was attempting to leave her home,

along with one member of her family, due to the wildfires when she reportedly died suddenly,” police said.

No other known fatalities have been reported, according to police.

British Columbia Premier David Eby said he

was “deeply saddened by the news.”

Emergency responders on Saturday had to airlift 50 people to safety as the Summerland wildfire forced overnight evacuations, CTV News reported.

Prime Minister Mark Carney earlier posted his gratitude to firefighters and first responders on X, thanking them for “working tirelessly to keep people safe”.

“The federal government stands ready to help and support the government of British Columbia in these efforts. I'm keeping everyone forced from their homes in my thoughts and hoping they can return safely soon,” Carney said.



Firemen work to extinguish a fire that broke out at a livestock facility near Kouvaras, south of Athens, on Monday

Greece battles new fire near Athens driven by winds

ATHENS (AFP) — A new wildfire broke out in Greece on Monday morning southeast of the capital Athens, fanned by strong winds of more than 70 kilometres per hour, firefighters said.

At least 172 firefighters and around 40 vehicles have been deployed to fight the blaze in Kouvaras, 60 km southeast of Athens, in the Attica region, the fire service announced on X.

“Two water-bombing aircraft and four helicopters” are also taking part, the service added.

Agios Stylianos, a village near Kouvaras, has

been ordered to evacuate by civil protection authorities.

Just hours later the flames appeared to have subsided, an AFP photographer said.

It marks the second fire near Athens this summer, after one that broke out 10 days ago northwest of the Greek capital and destroyed more than 11,000 hectares of pine forests and farmland.

Because of gusts reaching up to 130 km/h, it took five days to bring the fire under control.

Two helicopter crew members died in a collision with another hel-

icopter while battling the flames.

Like much of the Mediterranean, Greece has experienced increasingly frequent and intense wildfires that scientists link to climate change.

The country remains on extreme alert and several regions are still classified at a very high fire risk.

Experts have warned about the increased severity of the fires affecting Attica, where Athens is located.

From 2017 to 2026, 42 per cent of the total forest area in the region burned because of 15 major fires.

Rockfall at Egypt's largest gold mine kills worker, injures five

CAIRO (AFP)— A rockfall at Egypt's largest gold mine killed one worker and injured five others, officials said on Monday, with operations in the affected area suspended pending an investigation.

The accident occurred

“inside a tunnel at an underground working section” of the Sukari gold mine in Egypt's eastern desert region, according to a statement released by the petroleum ministry.

The injured workers were taken to a hos-

pital in the Red Sea resort town of Marsa Alam. The ministry said initial medical assessments indicated their conditions were stable.

Petroleum Minister Karim Badawy ordered the formation of a com-

mittee to investigate the incident, determine its causes, review health and safety procedures at the mine and recommend measures to prevent similar accidents, the statement said.

Located about 30 kilometres southwest of

Marsa Alam, the Sukari mine is operated by Sukari Gold Mines Company, a joint venture between the Egyptian government and Anglo-Gold Ashanti, which acquired the mine's previous operator, Centamin, in 2024.

Who moves first? Israel-Hamas dispute threatens Gaza’s US-backed roadmap

Continued from page 1

Netanyahu has nevertheless said that Israel does not accept all elements of the US proposal. He described Trump as “our greatest friend in the White House”, while saying some US ideas were acceptable and others were not.

Political analyst Amer Sabaihle said the plan clearly places Hamas

disarmament at the beginning of the process.

“The plan is clear: Hamas hands over its weapons, and the steps begin after that,” Sabaihle said. “Netanyahu is benefitting from Hamas’ handling of the issue, while the Board of Peace's position also supports starting with disarmament.”

“If Hamas continues to delay, Netanya-

hu will have stronger grounds to maintain his position,” he said, adding that “neither the US administration nor the Board of Peace will be able to blame him later”.

Strategic political analyst Areij Jaber said that the dispute goes beyond a single clause in the plan and reflects a deeper question over Gaza's future.

“The core dispute is not over a single clause in the plan, but over who will control Gaza after the war,” Jaber said. “Netanyahu does not want an Israeli withdrawal that allows normal life to return to Gaza or gives a Palestinian administration a meaningful role in the Strip.”

“Hamas has endorsed the plan. Washington is

pressing ahead. Israel is demanding complete disarmament before any withdrawal, leaving the next phase of the Gaza framework uncertain.”

The dispute comes as Israel prepares for elections on October 27, with the Gaza plan facing opposition from Netanyahu's right-wing base and far-right members of his Cabinet.

JAF evacuates 50 sick children from Gaza in 30th medical evacuation

Jordan also operates two military field hospitals in Gaza: One in the northern part of the Strip, established in 2009 following the 2008 war and another in Khan

Younis in the south, established in November 2023 during the ongoing Israeli war on the enclave that erupted on October 7, 2023.

In addition to its Gaza-based facilities, the JAF established a

Jordanian field hospital in Nablus in late November 2023. Other humanitarian initiatives include a mobile bakery and the “Restoring Hope” programme, which provides prosthetic limbs for amputees.

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Queen Rania Al Abdullah Street
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Amman 11118

E mail: editor@jordantimes.com
jotimes@jordantimes.com
Website: jordantimes.com

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Economic modernisation:
From vision to
implementation and impact

By Raad Mahmoud Al-Tal

The report on the first half of 2026 on the implementation of the second Executive Programme of the Economic Modernisation Vision represents an important step in strengthening the way economic policy is managed in Jordan. Its significance goes beyond the number of projects implemented. More importantly, it reflects a structured approach to government action based on a clear national vision, a defined implementation programme, continuous monitoring and transparent reporting.

One of the most positive aspects of the report is that it presents a clear picture of the implementation process. It distinguishes between projects that have been completed, those currently under implementation, those that have been delayed and those that have not yet started. It also provides explanations for delays where they exist. This is an important step toward greater transparency and accountability, as it allows citizens and decision makers to assess progress based on actual performance rather than expectations or announcements.

The report also highlights an important development in economic policymaking. Government economic decisions are increasingly being aligned with a broader strategic framework, namely the Economic Modernisation Vision. This means that economic decisions are becoming part of a coherent national direction rather than isolated measures or individual initiatives responding to temporary circumstances.

This approach is particularly important for economic policy. Economies need policy consistency, clear priorities and continuity in reform. Investors do not assess a single decision in isolation. They look at the overall direction of economic policy and the credibility of its implementation. Citizens also need to understand where the economy is heading and how current reforms are expected to improve their lives in the future.

The second Executive Programme includes 394 projects. Of these, 343 are currently under implementation, 16 have been completed, 5 are delayed for technical and procedural reasons, while 30 have not yet started because their scheduled starting dates have not been reached.

The significance of these figures is not simply the number of projects. What matters is the existence of a monitoring framework that openly reports progress and acknowledges delays. Genuine transparency does not mean reporting only achievements. It also means identifying challenges, explaining delays and showing how they are being addressed.

However, the next stage presents an even more important question: Will citizens feel the impact of these efforts?

The ultimate success of the Economic Modernisation Vision cannot be measured only by the number of projects completed or decisions taken. Citizens want to see better employment opportunities, higher incomes, improved public services, greater efficiency and an economy capable of creating new opportunities.

Investors want a more predictable and competitive business environment. Young people want meaningful employment opportunities that match their skills. The private sector wants reforms that allow businesses to expand, invest, innovate and compete in international markets.

Therefore, the next phase should gradually move from measuring implementation to measuring impact. The progress achieved during the first half of the year is encouraging, but its true economic value will ultimately depend on whether it translates into stronger growth, higher productivity, greater private investment, sustainable employment and better public services.

The government's approach of publishing regular progress reports, monitoring implementation and aligning economic decisions with a clear national strategy is a positive development. Maintaining this approach is equally important, while gradually strengthening the measurement of outcomes and economic impact.

A successful economic vision is not simply one that implements a large number of projects. It is one that creates a stronger economy and allows citizens to feel the benefits of reform in their daily lives.

This, ultimately, is the real test of the Economic Modernisation Vision: To move from a written vision, to effective implementation, to measurable economic outcomes, and finally to a tangible improvement in people's lives.

Stablecoins: Opportunities
and risks in emerging economies



Hossam Haddad

Rapid structural shifts in the global financial system are forcing policymakers to confront a transformative wave of asset tokenisation that extends far beyond technical innovation. At the centre of this movement are stablecoins, the most mature class of tokenised assets, which attract outsised regulatory focus despite their modest market footprint. This intense scrutiny stems from their dual nature: stablecoins hold the promise of driving financial inclusion, lowering cross-border remittance costs and fostering payments competition, yet they also introduce profound structural risks to exchange rate stability and monetary independence, particularly within emerging and developing economies.

While total stablecoin market capitalisation hovers around \$300 billion, with nearly 99 per cent pegged to the US dollar, transaction volumes have reached record highs, driven heavily by automated arbitrage within the crypto ecosystem. However, their true disruptive power lies in retail payments and cross-border remittances, where they bypass expensive legacy banking rails and drastically compress user fees. Furthermore, as programmable assets, stablecoins possess an inherent first-mover advantage in an emerging era of agentic artificial intelligence, enabling automated smart-contract transactions that legacy financial infrastructure is simply ill-equipped to handle.

For emerging markets, the primary macro-financial risk is the potential for accelerated, frictionless currency substitution. Attempts by emerging market monetary authorities to mitigate this by fostering local-currency stablecoins can inadvertently trigger a paradox: Once a domestic stablecoin is minted on the same public blockchain rails as USD stablecoins, Foreign Exchange (FX) conversion transforms into a friction-free, on-chain swap via decentralised exchanges and liquidity pools. By shifting the FX exchange perimeter away from regulated banks and toward unhosted, programmatic liquidity, local-currency stablecoins may inadvertently act as a catalyst for digital dollarisation rather than a shield against it.

This shift presents a direct challenge to traditional commercial banking and monetary transmission mechanisms. As retail depositors move liquidity out of commercial bank accounts and into dollar-backed stablecoins, domestic banking systems face deposit disintermediation. This migration shrinks the credit supply available for local business lending and elevates funding costs for domestic financial institutions. Consequently, central banks find their primary policy rate interventions less effective, as a growing share of domestic economic activity relies on offshore, dollar-denominated liquidity pools that operate entirely beyond the reach of local reserve requirements and monetary policy adjustments.

The severity of these stablecoin risks is not uniform across jurisdictions and depends heavily on each country's underlying macroeconomic backdrop. In economies with high existing financial dollarisation, stablecoins largely serve as a digital substitute for physical foreign cash, shifting bank deposits into offshore T-bill backed reserves without drastically altering net foreign currency demand. Conversely, in un-dollarised economies, or regions across the Middle East and North Africa with managed exchange rate regimes, fixed pegs and selective capital controls, stablecoins unlock latent demand for foreign currency. By enabling rapid capital flight, circumventing traditional Capital Flow Management measures, and eroding central bank reserves during periods of regional or economic stress, they complicate the preservation of exchange rate pegs.

In response, many monetary authorities are assessing whether to deploy Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs) as a public counterweight to private stablecoins. While a retail CBDC preserves monetary sovereignty and offers a risk-free digital payment instrument, its design entails delicate trade-offs. If structured carelessly, a sovereign CBDC could accelerate commercial bank disintermediation during times of

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Jordan's new partnership economy



ECONOMIC
REVIEW

Yusuf Mansur

International experience has shown that public-private partnerships (PPPs) are no longer merely an alternative financing mechanism for infrastructure projects. They have evolved into a comprehensive model for delivering public infrastructure, improving service quality and accelerating economic development. Jordan appears to be moving decisively in this direction, guided by its Economic Modernisation Vision, which places PPPs at the heart of the country's long-term development strategy.

The Ministry of Investment's latest implementation report highlights this strategic shift through progress on three major projects: The Amman Bridge, the Non-Revenue Water Reduction Project, and the National Pharmaceutical Track-and-Trace System.

The significance of these initiatives extends well beyond their investment value. They reflect a fundamental transformation in the way public projects are conceived and delivered. Rather than acting solely as financier and operator, the government is increasingly leveraging the private sector's technical expertise, innovation, and financial capacity while maintaining its essential regulatory and oversight role. The objective is to strike a balance between market efficiency and the public interest.

The proposed Amman Bridge is perhaps the most ambitious of the three. Designed as an elevated expressway connecting western and southern Amman, with a dedicated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor, the project aims to alleviate chronic traffic congestion, reduce travel times and improve the efficiency of the capital's transportation network.

Its benefits, however, extend far beyond mobility. Reduced congestion translates into lower fuel consumption, higher labour productivity, fewer greenhouse gas emissions and potentially a lower import bill for fuel, thereby contributing indirectly to an improved trade balance. Delivering the project through a PPP framework also reduces the fiscal burden on the government by sharing financing and operational responsibilities with private investors.

Equally significant is the Non-Revenue Water Reduction Project, particularly for one of the world's most water-scarce countries. Rather than focusing solely on rehabilitating water networks, the project adopts a performance-based contracting model, linking the private operator's remuneration to measurable reductions in water losses and improvements in distribution efficiency. If successfully implemented, the project could save millions of cubic metres of water annually, effectively creating a new water resource without constructing additional dams or desalination plants. It would also lower operating costs while improving the reliability and quality of water services for citizens.

For Jordan, therefore,
the opportunity
extends well beyond
implementing three
strategic projects

management, healthcare and digital public services. This reflects a broader evolution in the country's approach to infrastructure investment and public service delivery.

Yet international experience also reminds us that signing a PPP contract is only the beginning. Success should ultimately be measured by the sustainable economic and social value these projects generate rather than by the size of the investment itself. Global experience offers valuable lessons. The United Kingdom pioneered large-scale PPP implementation through the Private Finance Initiative, which facilitated the construction of hundreds of schools, hospitals and transportation projects. Although some contracts later attracted criticism for their long-term fiscal costs, the British experience established important principles for risk allocation and contract management.

Canada, particularly Ontario and British Columbia, has emerged as one of the world's leading PPP success stories. Independent institutions evaluate project feasibility, oversee procurement and monitor performance throughout the life of each contract. As a result, many infrastructure projects have been delivered on schedule, within budget and to high-quality standards.

Australia has adopted a rigorous "Value for Money" approach, under which PPPs are pursued only when they demonstrably outperform conventional public procurement. This discipline has contributed to successful investments in highways, metro systems, ports, and other major infrastructure while maintaining an appropriate balance between investor returns and public value.

Meanwhile, Singapore has effectively employed PPPs in logistics, public utilities and digital infrastructure, while the United Arab Emirates has become a regional benchmark in renewable energy, desalination and transportation projects through strong legal frameworks, transparent procurement processes and an investment-friendly environment.

These international experiences converge on four essential ingredients for successful PPPs: Selecting the right projects, conducting rigorous feasibility studies, allocating risks to the parties best equipped to manage them, and ensuring continuous oversight through strong and independent institutions. And all must be applied and coordinated with the utmost transparency and non-contestability.

For Jordan, therefore, the opportunity extends well beyond implementing three strategic projects. It is about establishing a mature national PPP framework capable of attracting investment, accelerating infrastructure delivery, improving public services and supporting fiscal sustainability without placing excessive pressure on government finances.

Ultimately, these projects should not be judged solely by the amount invested, but by the outcomes they deliver. Have they reduced congestion? Have they conserved water? Have they strengthened pharmaceutical safety? Have they improved productivity and attracted new investment?

If the answer is yes, Jordan will have achieved far more than the successful delivery of three infrastructure projects. It will have laid the foundations for a new development model — one built on genuine collaboration between the public and private sectors, where infrastructure investment becomes a catalyst for sustainable economic growth, enhanced competitiveness and long-term national prosperity.

stress. Conversely, wholesale CBDCs integrated with cross-border payment corridors offer a safer avenue, enabling central banks to deliver fast, low-cost international settlements without relinquishing capital flow visibility or yielding the payment architecture to unhosted private networks.

Navigating this changing landscape requires emerging market policymakers to modernise their regulatory toolkits without stifling financial innovation. Priorities must focus on maintaining robust macroeconomic fundamentals, closing persistent data gaps on cross-border crypto flows through mandatory exchange reporting, and expanding Capital Flow Management protocols to cover on- and off-ramps as well as de-centralised exchange mechanisms. Crucially, international regulatory cooperation remains indispensable to prevent activity from migrating to unhosted wallets or light-touch jurisdictions, ensuring that competitive forces yield lower payment costs while preserving global financial stability.

From an analytical standpoint, the rise of stablecoins serves as a mirror reflecting the underlying strength and credibility of domestic policy frameworks. Rather than treating tokenisation solely as a threat to be restricted, central banks must leverage these technological developments to modernise domestic payment infrastructure, enhance efficiency and reduce friction in official financial channels. By pairing robust macroeconomic governance with agile, risk-sensitive oversight, monetary authorities can effectively harness the competitive benefits of digital innovation while safeguarding financial integrity and national monetary sovereignty in an increasingly interconnected global economy.

The writer is a former Jordanian minister of state for economic affairs.



File photo

Jordan's real estate trading rises 15% in July to JD673.8 million

AMMAN (JT) — Real estate trading volume in the Kingdom rose 15 per cent month-on-month in July to JD673.8 million, although it was down 10 per cent from the same month last year, according to the Department of Lands and Survey's monthly report.

For the first seven months of 2026, total real estate trading stood at JD3.716 billion, down 4 per cent from the same period in 2025.

Real estate revenues reached JD154.7 million during the January-July period, up 4 per cent year-on-year. In July, revenues fell 2 per cent compared with the same month last year but rose 7 per cent from June to JD25.8 million.

The report showed that real estate sales activity declined 10 per cent during the first seven months of the year, with apartment sales falling 7 per cent and

land sales dropping 11 per cent compared with the same period in 2025.

In July, overall property sales fell 16 per cent year-on-year but increased 17 per cent from the previous month.

Apartment sales declined 12 per cent compared with July 2025 but rose 18% from June. Land sales fell 17 per cent year-on-year but increased 17 per cent month-on-month.

The total number of properties sold to companies in Jordan during the first seven months of 2026 reached 5,674.

Non-Jordanian ownership

The number of property ownership transactions by non-Jordanians fell 5 per cent during the first seven months of 2026 compared with the same period last year.

Apartment ownership transactions by non-Jordanians increased 2 per cent, while land

transactions declined 16 per cent.

In July, the number of property ownership transactions by non-Jordanians fell 1 per cent year-on-year but rose 17 per cent from June.

Apartment transactions decreased 7 per cent compared with July 2025 but increased 15 per cent from the previous month. Land transactions rose 11 per cent year-on-year and 19 per cent month-on-month.

Despite the decline in the number of transactions, the estimated value of property acquisitions by non-Jordanians rose 15 per cent during the first seven months of 2026 to JD123.4 million.

In July alone, the estimated value of property acquisitions by non-Jordanians jumped 45 per cent compared with the same month last year, but fell 2 per cent from June to JD23.7 million.

Manufacturing sector GDP reaches JD1.6b in Q1 2026

AMMAN (JT) — The manufacturing sector's gross domestic product reached JD1.6 billion during the first quarter of 2026, according to a report on the Executive Programme of the Economic Modernisation Vision (2026–2029).

Key achievements included publishing Jordan Ecolabel Regulations No. 1 of 2026, adopting its official logo, and conducting awareness sessions on certification requirements and privileges, according to Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Under the local entrepreneurship employment initiative, the "Entrepreneurship in Industry" programme was launched with 35 million euros from the Industry Support and Development Fund to assist 370 micro, small and medium-sized industrial enterprises, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

To boost exports, the final draft of the National Export Strategy (2026–2029) was completed alongside a potential export market study.

In the chemical sector, a JD250,000 agreement was signed between the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply and the Industrial Research and Development Fund to support at least 8 researchers or institutions.

For business environment improvements, the Industrial Designs Law



JT file

The manufacturing sector's GDP reaches JD1.6 billion during the first quarter of 2026, according to a report on the Executive Programme of the Economic Modernisation Vision 2026–2029

was reviewed under the "Facilitated Manufacturing" initiative.

Requirements were also gathered for European Union approval to export composite food products.

To support the garment sector, 5 promotional webinars were held for investors across

Europe, Turkey, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan and Asia.

In engineering, 15 Fourth Industrial Revolution training courses benefited 285 engineers, while 21 engineers across 16 companies were trained in mold and product design.

A promotional webinar

was also held to attract semiconductor manufacturing to Jordan.

In the pharmaceutical sector, drug registration was accelerated and automated.

Jordan became the second Arab nation admitted to the Pharmaceutical Inspection Cooperation Scheme.

A mobile app for reporting side effects was launched, alongside a platform for drug leaflets.

New pricing rules for vascular stents and heart valves were approved by the High Committee for Drugs and Pharmacy to lower treatment costs, Petra reported.

Europe wary as gas stocks languish at lows while winter looms

By Nathalie Alonso
Agence France-Presse

PARIS, France — Four years after Russia's invasion of Ukraine set off an energy crisis, European countries face new questions about natural gas security as the war in the Middle East drags on.

Surging prices due to Iran's closure of the Straits of Hormuz are keeping liquefied natural gas (LNG) stocks unusually low, with winter just months away.

That raises the spectre of both supply difficulties and prices remaining well above pre-crisis levels, just as colder Continental weather drives up demand.

Stockpiles slump

Besides its use in heating and producing electricity, gas also powers many



AFP file photo

Tanker approaching a French LNG terminal in Fos-sur-Mer

factories across Europe. Summer is traditionally when energy firms take advantage of lower prices to fill LNG storage tanks, preparing for higher winter demand.

In a typical year, storage sites would be filled to "around 75 to 80 per cent", said Anne-Sophie Corbeau, a researcher at the Columbia Univer-

sity's Center on Global Energy Policy.

Currently the level is just 58 per cent — the lowest since 2021 — according to Gas Infrastructure Europe, an industry association cited by the resources consulting firm Kpler.

Why? "The European Union ended last winter with

underground gas storage at only 28 per cent, significantly lower than in previous years," said Ronald Pinto, an analyst at Kpler First.

European imports were curtailed by the US and Israeli strikes against Iran, which led Tehran to effectively close the Strait of Hormuz to Gulf tanker traffic.

That halted gas shipments from Qatar, a key European supplier, driving up prices of contracts for future delivery, the main way of buying LNG on global markets.

"Italy, Poland and Belgium, contracted buyers of Qatari LNG, have borne the direct losses, as they have been unable to import any Qatari LNG volumes since April 2 — the date on which Italy received its last vessel loaded with Qatari LNG," Pinto said.

Pricing pain

European buyers had hoped prices would ease by summer, allowing them to fill storage tanks later for less.

The Dutch TTF contract — the benchmark for European gas — for September delivery is currently trading

around 55-58 euros per megawatt-hour.

The cost was just 30 euros before the Middle East war, and as low as 15-20 euros before the war in Ukraine.

An EU Commission spokesperson expressed confidence that filling storage tanks to 80 per cent of capacity "is sufficient to secure winter supply and it is technically achievable".

Europe has significantly ramped up its import capacity since the war in Ukraine, which prompted it to slash its Russian gas supplies.

Russia still supplies around 12 per cent of the bloc's gas imports, according to the European Council, but by the end of 2027 it will ban them completely.

"It is also worth noting that EU gas demand has decreased by 17

per cent compared to pre-crisis levels" before 2022, the spokesperson added.

Analysts are not so sanguine.

"Supply risks to Europe remain elevated amid reduced LNG availability from the Middle East," Rystad Energy analyst Antonia Syn said in a recent market update.

Gas infrastructure routinely experiences breakdowns or technical disruptions that halt flows.

And severe cold in the United States — now Europe's biggest single supplier — could divert its supplies to domestic buyers.

Asian countries that usually buy from Gulf suppliers could also turn to US or other sources, driving up prices to painful levels for

European buyers.

So the longer Europe waits to fill up storage sites, the bigger the risks.

"We believe this wait-and-see approach has kept TTF prices from reflecting a scenario of extreme gas scarcity during the winter period," said Pinto at Kpler First. He expects average monthly prices to remain at 55 to 62 euros per MW/h through the rest of the year.

"For now we're seeing LNG go more to Asia than to us, because prices are even higher there," Corbeau said.

"If stocks are down, if the winter is rough and some other problem happens, we'll have to start thinking about conservation measures," she warned, as was the case across Europe in 2022.

FINANCE

UK fintech Revolut gets French banking licence

LONDON (AFP) — British digital financial services group Revolut said on Monday that it had obtained a full French banking licence, a long-awaited step that cements its standing among established retail lenders in Europe.

"The French banking licence strengthens the group's position as one of Europe's largest retail banks," Revolut said in a statement.

The French bank will operate alongside Revolut's Lithuanian subsidiary as dual hubs within the European Union, under the supervision of local

regulators and the European Central Bank.

Founded in 2015, the company has around 30 million customers in western Europe and has been a leader in rolling out financial services via smartphones, initially focusing on allowing clients to easily exchange currencies and make transfers.

"France has become a leading financial hub, supported by a dynamic financial ecosystem and a robust regulatory framework," Nik Storonsky, the firm's co-founder and CEO, said on Monday.

"It is the ideal plat-

form to accelerate Revolut's next phase of growth — bringing us one step closer to our ambition of becoming one of Europe's largest and most trusted banks," he said.

The company has said it plans to invest \$1.2 billion in France and is set to open its western Europe headquarters in Paris next year.

The British company, whose growth has exploded in recent years, secured a long-awaited banking licence in its home market in March.

Its value jumped to \$115 billion in July following a secondary

share sale to private investors, a source close to the deal said.

Storonsky said in April that an initial public offering of its shares was at least two years away.

The fintech is targeting 100 million customers in 100 countries, and is also seeking to secure a US banking licence.

Revolut's rapid growth has also drawn criticism in recent years regarding its ability to comply with financial regulations, particularly those aimed at combating fraud and money laundering.

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Monday amounted to JD18.2million spread over 12.8 million shares that traded through 3,183 transactions.

The ASE share price index shed 0.59 per cent, closing at 3987.03 points.

Out of 110 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 40 companies rose while the share price of another 32 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were National Insurance by 7.45 per cent, Arab International for Education and Investment by 7.16 per cent, Amwaj Properties by 5.26 per cent, Jordan Dairy by 5 per cent, and Jordan Decapolis Properties by 4.88 per cent.

The companies whose shares dropped the most were Jordan Vegetable Oil Industries by 4.84 per cent, Al Entkaeya for Investment and Real Estate Development Company Plc. by 3.03 per cent, Noor Capital Markets for Diversified Investments by 2.78 per cent, National Steel Industry by 2.63 per cent and Al Sanabel International for Islamic Investments Holding Plc. Company by 2.17 per cent.



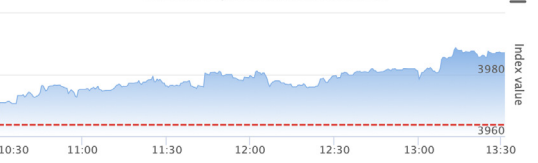
THE MARKET TODAY

ASE Index: ↑ 3987.03 0.59% August 10, 2026

Live Data

Historical Data

Click and drag in the plot area to zoom in



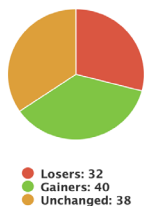
DAILY SUMMARY

Regular Market

OTC Market

Bonds

Trading Value (JDs)	18,165,594
Trading volume	12,821,584
No. of Transactions	3,183
No. of Securities	110



Losers: 32
Gainers: 40
Unchanged: 38

TENNIS

Shelton sweeps Fonseca to reach another Montreal quarter-final

MONTREAL, Canada (AFP) — Defending champion Ben Shelton kept a clean slate at the ATP Montreal Masters on Monday, holding off a challenge from Joao Fonseca to power 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) into the quarter-finals. World No.10 Shelton has not dropped a set in reaching the last eight. The 23-year-old American left-hander will face the winner of a later match between Botić Van De Zandschulp and 13th seed Jakub Menšík. Brazilian teenager Fonseca, billed as one of the faces for the future of the sport, might have compromised his own chances when he landed badly on his ankle after missing a smash while leading 3-1, 40-30 in the second set. The youngster was plagued by 32 unforced errors as his opponent mastered an annoying evening wind to earn the victory. "It was tough today, not easy conditions," Shelton said. "With the wind I struggled to find footing on a lot of balls. It all came down to grit. The tennis was not clean. Beating a high-quality player like that is huge for me."

World Cup co-hosts US and Canada oppose Infantino

LOS ANGELES, United States (AFP) — The football federations of the United States and Canada — two of the 2026 World Cup host nations — on Monday backed a statement from three confederations criticising FIFA president Gianni Infantino. US Soccer, Canada Soccer, the CFU (Caribbean Football Union) and UNCAF (Central American Football Union) said they "stand together, along with our colleagues around the world, in calling for meaningful change that strengthens FIFA's governance, transparency and accountability". That puts the US and Canada at odds with the third co-host of this year's World Cup, Mexico, which has given Infantino its backing. Infantino has come under intense pressure since first proposing and then shelving a plan to raise private investment for a new commercial subsidiary, called the FIFA Forward Enterprise, who he proposed would run the commercial side of World Cups. FIFA had hit back on Saturday at "a concerted and ongoing effort by some to undermine" football's governing body and Infantino. But the FIFA chief came under renewed fire on Monday as a joint letter from three confederations — Europe's UEFA, CONCACAF for North and Central America and the Caribbean and Asian body AFC — declared football "belongs to no individual".

By Aline Bannayan

AMMAN — The football season gets into full swing in August. Hussein will be the first Jordanian team in action, with fans hoping to see many of the national team stars back in action after the World Cup, when the Jordanian league champs play an away match in the ACL Elite preliminary round against Uzbekistan's Pakhtakor. If Hussein fail to advance to the ACL Elite group stages they will play in the second tier competition — Asian Champions League Two — in which Faisali, as league runner-up, will also represent Jordan in Round 1 as of September 15. Hussein did not play any friendlies ahead of the decisive match but the team is on a high note after they combined a first-time triple titles last season: the Pro League for the third season, the Jordan Cup and the Super Cup. Faisali won the JFA Shield. Last season, Hussein and Wihdat represented Jordan in the Asian Champions League Two for the second year running after both teams were eliminated from the Round of 16 in 2024/25. Wihdat, failed to advance past Round 1 while Hussein reached the quarterfinals losing 3-1 to Qatar's Ahli. Saudi Arabi's Nassr beat Ahli 5-1 in the semis



Hussein FC photo

Coach Ahmad Hayel (in white) heads Hussein's preparations for the Asian match

and moved to play the final against eventual champs Japan's Gamba Osaka. Hussein became the first Jordanian club to reach the quarters of the ACL Two in 2025/26 which was previously called the AFC Cup. With Hussein's achievement,

and Jordan's runner-up spot in the Asian Cup as well as the FIFA Arab Cup, Jordanian clubs are hopeful the Asian Football Confederation will grant the Jordan league champion club of 2026/27, a berth in the top tier Asian Champions League (ACL) Elite

as of the 2027/28 season. In the Asian Champions League, Wihdat played the group stages of the competition in 2021 and 2022, before it was renamed the Asian Champions League (ACL) Elite. None of the other Jordanian clubs had ever made it past the

ACL preliminary round where Faisali played in 2020 and 2018, Wihdat in 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019 and Shabab Urdun in 2014. In the Asian Champions League Two, last season was Hussein's 2nd and Wihdat's 14th time in the competition

which was won by Faisali twice in back-to-back seasons in 2005-2006 and Shabab Urdun once in 2007 when it was called the Asian Champions League Cup. Wihdat reached the semis in 2006, 2007 and 2011. No Jordanian clubs played in 2022.

Parts of Germany's Rhine could become unnavigable, group warns

FRANKFURT, Germany (AFP) — Parts of the Rhine River in Germany could soon become unnavigable as water levels drop further due to soaring summer temperatures and low rainfall, an industry group warned on Monday. Levels have been at record lows since the end of July as Germany, like elsewhere in Europe, struggles through a series of heatwaves. Cargo ships have managed to continue transporting goods along the waterway, which flows through the industrial heartland of Europe's top economy, albeit with reduced loads and at higher costs. But the BDB association of inland shipping warned the water level at the town of Kaub — used as a reference point for vessels plying the waterway — is expected to fall even further this week. "With water levels this low, commercial shipping will no longer be able to transport goods in the region," the group's managing director Jens Schwanen told the Rheinische Post newspaper. "In principle, this



AFP photo

An aerial view shows vessels passing by at the partially dried-up river bed of the Rhine in Godorf near Cologne, western Germany, on Friday, following exceptionally hot weather

means the Rhine is no longer continuously navigable and thus divided in two." There would still be shipping on the river in The Netherlands and in Germany up to around Cologne, and further south on several tributaries, he said.

But water levels along much of the Rhine in Germany would be too low for vessels to pass. A spokeswoman for the WSV agency responsible for managing German waterways told AFP that "water levels are expected to continue to fall slightly over

the coming days". There are no bans on shipping, however, she added, and it was up to the individual captains to decide how to adjust their cargoes to adapt to the lower waters. Asked about the BDB's warning, a transport ministry spokesman

said that the government was "monitoring very closely whether the situation will turn out as described in that scenario".

The Rhine originates in the Swiss Alps, flows through and along the borders of several countries, and empties into the North Sea in the Netherlands. Problems on the Rhine have already prompted some German companies, including steelmaker Thyssenkrupp and chemical giant BASF, to use shallow-draft ships to continue transporting raw materials and finished products. A halt to shipping on parts of the key economic artery would deal yet another blow to Germany's economy, already battling problems ranging from the Iran war energy surge and US tariffs. Chancellor Friedrich Merz's government is weighing help for companies who transport goods via the river, including the chemical and oil sectors, and has agreed with some states to temporarily lift a ban on trucks driving on Sundays and public holidays.



AFP photo

This handout photo shows Feliks, a rare eastern imperial eagle, being released into the wild near Subotica

Free as a bird: Rescue mission returns rare Serbian eagle

BELGRADE (AFP) — Feliks, a rare eastern imperial eagle, is again soaring through the skies of his Serbian homeland after being rescued from the clutches of bird smugglers during his inaugural migration. Serbia's Bird Protection and Study Society, which helped return the bird from its months-long international ordeal, said he had been released back into the wild this week. After the young raptor first flew the nest in July 2025, experts tracking the protected species' flight path became alarmed when he took an unusual route towards the Middle East. "At that point, we

started to worry because we could see that he was heading towards an extremely unsafe region," Uros Stojiljkovic of the Bird Protection and Study Society of Serbia told AFP. In late October, Feliks's signal disappeared, with his last location recorded in Syria. Stojiljkovic said he had originally hoped it was just a faulty tracker, but soon it became clear that he had been kidnapped. Contacted via a partner organisation in Lebanon, the Serbian conservationist said the bird's unnamed captors had demanded a ransom. "We categorically refused. By doing so, you are effectively supporting that smuggling chain,"

Stojiljkovic said. After lengthy negotiations, the bird was handed to a wildlife centre in Beirut, where he remained for six months as plans were made for a safe return. In June, Serbian troops returning from a peace-keeping mission in Lebanon eventually flew Feliks home on a military plane and brought him to Palic Zoo to recover. After careful rehabilitation, he was released back to the wild this week. "We hope he will manage to fly at least as far as the first time, when he reached the shores of Asia and Africa," zoo director Sonja Mandić said in a statement.

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