

THE JORDAN TIMES



EDUCATION

ILO, JRF conclude project to enhance recognition of prior learning

2



OCCUPATION

Awqaf minister condemns Israeli incursions, restrictions at Al Aqsa Mosque

3



GATHERING

100 freight, logistics companies from 18 Arab countries convene in Amman

7



WEEKENDER

Jordan's Silver Economy: Ageing Brings Challenges and Opportunities

8



Thursday, October 1, 2026 | Rabi II 20, 1448 Hijri



King receives call from Netherlands monarch

AMMAN (JT) — His Majesty King Abdullah received a phone call from King Willem-Alexander of The Netherlands on Wednesday, during which they discussed recent regional developments.

His Majesty emphasised the importance of de-escalating tensions in the region, and respecting the

security and sovereignty of Arab states, according to a Royal Court statement.

The King warned of the dangerous developments in the West Bank and Jerusalem and their impact on the escalation of the conflict, and stressed the need to support Lebanon and Syria's efforts to maintain their security and

stability.

The two leaders also discussed the friendly relations between the two kingdoms and readiness to continue strengthening cooperation, with His Majesty highlighting the importance of continued coordination and consultation in service of mutual interests.

King receives UK national security adviser

AMMAN (JT) — His Majesty King Abdullah received the United Kingdom's National Security Adviser Jonathan Powell at Al Hussein Palace on Wednesday.

His Majesty emphasised the need to step up international efforts to achieve comprehensive regional de-escalation that guarantees the security of Arab states and restores stability to the region, according to a Royal Court statement.

The King underscored the importance of putting a stop to Israel's dangerous violations in the West Bank and Jerusalem, stressing the need to support the efforts of Lebanon and Syria in maintaining their security, stability, and sovereignty.

The meeting also touched on the deep-rooted ties between Jordan and the UK, as well as ways to enhance cooperation between the two countries.



Photo courtesy of Royal Court

His Majesty King Abdullah receives United Kingdom National Security Adviser Jonathan Powell at Al Hussein Palace, and underscores the need to step up international efforts to achieve comprehensive regional de-escalation that guarantees the security of Arab states and restores stability to the region

Fuel prices partially adjusted for October amid global surge

Committee says local fuel prices remain below global costs under gradual approach

AMMAN (JT) — The Fuel Pricing Committee on Wednesday held its monthly meeting to announce local fuel prices for October.

Reviewing fuel derivative prices during September compared with August, the committee noted a "marked" increase in crude oil and refined product prices, driven by ongoing geopolitical tensions in the region and their impact on global markets, according to a Ministry of Energy statement.

Despite this international surge, and out of the government's keenness to mitigate the impact on citizens and economic sectors, the committee decided to partially adjust fuel prices for October.



JoPetrol photo

Following a Fuel Pricing Committee decision, 90-octane gasoline in October will be sold at JD1.05 per litre, 95-octane gasoline at JD1.360 per litre, diesel at JD0.9 per litre and kerosene at JD0.550 per litre

Under the decision, prices of 90-octane gasoline, 95-octane

gasoline and diesel were each raised by JD0.05 per litre, while

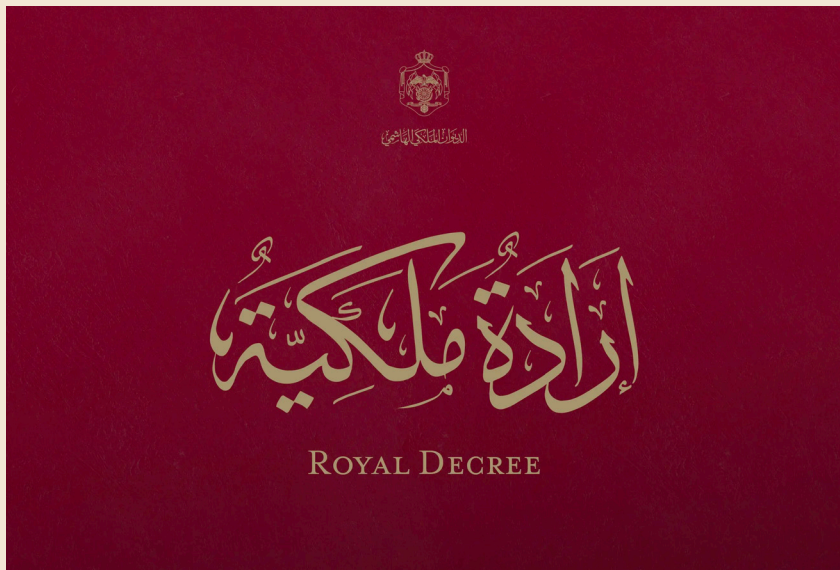
the price of kerosene remained the same. Following the deci-

sion, 90-octane gasoline in October will be sold at JD1.05 per litre, 95-octane gasoline at JD1.360 per litre, diesel at JD0.9 per litre and kerosene at JD0.550 per litre.

The price of a 12.5-kilogramme household liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinder remains fixed at JD7, while the government continues to subsidise industrial LPG with support amounting to JD1.8 million for October.

The committee stressed that local fuel pricing relies on the monthly average of international prices during the 30 days preceding the pricing date.

Continued on page 5



Royal Decree summons Parliament to convene for ordinary session on 2 November

AMMAN (JT) — A Royal Decree has been issued, postponing the start of Parliament's ordinary ses-

sion to 2 November 2026.

A second Royal Decree was issued, summoning Parliament to

convene for the ordinary session on Monday, 2 November 2026, according to a Royal Court statement.

US-led coalition ends mission in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A US-led coalition deployed in Iraq more than a decade ago to fight militants concluded its mission on Wednesday, a move celebrated by the country's leaders, but which some fear will embolden pro-

Iran armed factions.

Coalition troops deployed to Iraq and Syria in 2014 to fight the Daesh group, which had seized large swathes of territory, committing massacres and forcing thousands of women and children into

slavery.

The group was defeated in Iraq in 2017 and in Syria in 2019, but coalition forces stayed on to battle the group's remnants.

Continued on page 5



AFP photo

American soldiers taking position around the embassy in the capital Baghdad

Jordan holds 60 days of petroleum product stocks — Energy Ministry

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan has sufficient stocks of key petroleum products to cover around 60 days of consumption, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources said.

The reserves include 90- and 95-octane gasoline, diesel, kerosene and aviation fuel, the ministry said in a statement to Al Mamlaka.

The ministry also said that the Kingdom has liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) storage capacity equivalent to approximately 38 days of consumption.

Jordan's energy sector operates under carefully developed plans aimed at ensuring uninterrupted supplies, the ministry said, reaffirming its commitment to maintaining energy security and continuity of



Photo courtesy of Aqaba Development Corporation

The Oil Terminal in the southern port city of Aqaba

supply.

The government has expanded storage ca-

capacity to maintain strategic reserves of petroleum products, helping

strengthen the country's energy security and ensure supplies

can be maintained during emergencies.

In August, Jordan began reassessing its crude oil and petroleum-product storage capabilities through a government tender aimed at developing a new strategy to expand storage facilities and strengthen the Kingdom's ability to respond to potential supply disruptions.

The initiative also seeks to identify investment and regional trade opportunities linked to the sector.

The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources has invited bids for specialised technical services to assess and improve Jordan's oil and petroleum-product storage capabilities.

Continued on page 5



UNDP photo
The United Nations Development Programme and the government of Japan on Wednesday mark the conclusion of the 'Mitigating Juvenile Crime Incidents in Aqaba and Wadi Rum — Advancing the Roles, Participation and Protection of Women, Youth and Vulnerable Groups' Project

UNDP, Japan project advances youth participation, community security in Aqaba, Wadi Rum

AMMAN (JT) — The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the government of Japan on Wednesday marked the conclusion of the “Mitigating Juvenile Crime Incidents in Aqaba and Wadi Rum — Advancing the Roles, Participation and Protection of Women, Youth and Vulnerable Groups” Project.

The project supported five civil society organisations through the Community Security Grants Mechanism to create opportunities for young people through creative and cultural industries, according to a UNDP statement.

Working across Aqaba and Wadi Rum, the mechanism supported more than 1,600 young women and men through 27 community-led initiatives and 90 additional activities, including training and capacity building, the creation of safe spaces, dialogue and awareness-raising sessions, and awareness messaging.

The activities focused on three areas: community and cultural empowerment; tourism, environment and green economy; and digital resilience and creative innovation.

The activities used culture, creativity and local knowledge to help young people develop skills, explore economic opportunities and play a more

active role in their communities, while strengthening dialogue and stakeholder capacities to help prevent juvenile crime.

The programme was informed by research conducted with 587 young people in Aqaba and Wadi Rum on their priorities, experiences and perceptions of community security. The findings helped shape the programme's capacity-building activities and grant themes, allowing participating organisations to translate locally identified priorities into practical initiatives.

The results and lessons were presented at the Second Creative Pathways Forum in Aqaba, which brought together young people, community organisations, government institutions and other local partners.

The project also supported the refurbishment of a temporary centre for the Community Peace Centre (CPC) in Aqaba, strengthening its capacity to engage with young people and local communities.

CPC also supported the project's awareness campaign through workshops, community partnerships, and media and podcast training focused on crime prevention and social issues affecting young people, resulting in three podcast episodes.

“We hope that this

project, which complements national efforts, including Economic Modernization Vision, Aqaba Social Master Plan as well as Aqaba Vision 2040, has contributed to strengthening inclusive, community-based resilience and social stability in Aqaba and beyond,” said Keiko Matsuzaki, Head of Economic and Development Cooperation at the embassy of Japan.

“Creative and cultural industries can open practical pathways for young people to build skills, pursue economic opportunities and participate in shaping the future of their communities,” said Baker Hiyari, Head of Governance and Peacebuilding at UNDP Jordan.

“By investing in local organisations and ideas rooted in Aqaba and Wadi Rum, we are creating opportunities for young women and men while showing how community-led solutions can contribute to more inclusive and sustainable local development,” he added.

Funded by the government of Japan and implemented by UNDP in cooperation with local and national partners, the programme brought together community action, research and institutional collaboration to respond to priorities identified by young people.

ILO, JRF conclude project to enhance recognition of prior learning

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan River Foundation (JRF), in partnership with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), has concluded the project “Strengthening National Institutional Capacities to Implement the Recognition of Prior Learning [RPL] Programme in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training [TVET] Sector”.

The two-year project, executed under the supervision of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission, was implemented within the framework of the Horizons Partnership and with the support of the government of the Netherlands, according to a JRF statement.

The project aims to strengthen the system for recognising skills and experience that individuals acquire through work and non-formal and informal learning, and convert them into qualifications recognised under the National Qualifications Framework.

The project worked across two integrated phases. The first focused on strengthening the commission's capacity to implement a system that enables individuals to demonstrate and have their skills and experience acquired through work and non-formal and informal learning recognised in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework.

It also focused on developing the system's tools, procedures, assessment and certification mechanisms, alongside preparing guidance materials, implementing a national awareness campaign, and building the capacity of 50 assessors and 20 administrative staff from the commis-



Photo courtesy of JRF
The Jordan River Foundation and the International Labour Organisation conclude a project that aims to strengthen the system for recognising skills and experience that individuals acquire through work and non-formal and informal learning

sion and relevant entities to implement RPL procedures.

In its second phase, the project moved to the actual implementation of the system and testing its effectiveness and suitability across six sectors: agriculture, hospitality and tourism, logistics services, construction, beauty and automotive maintenance, in five governorates of Amman, Balqa, Mafrqa, Aqaba and Irbid.

As part of the development of the system's services, the RPL Self-Assessment Portal was launched in coordination with the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship and the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission.

The portal enables individuals to submit and track their appli-

cations electronically. The project also contributed to developing the mechanisms for implementing the Recognition of Prior Learning system, as well as draft instructions and related legal foundations, supporting the system's sustainability and future expansion.

To date, more than 850 beneficiaries have obtained professional practice certificates after undergoing theoretical and practical assessments, enhancing their ability to demonstrate their competencies and access the labour market.

Assistant to the President of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission Yousef Abdallat affirmed that the project represents an “important” step towards es-

tablishing a national system for recognising skills and experience acquired through different pathways of learning and work.

He noted that the commission plays a key role in developing the system, ensuring its quality, and aligning skills with labour market needs.

He added that the RPL system supports lifelong learning and more flexible pathways for recognising and developing skills and competencies, including Micro-Credentials.

The next phase will focus on building the capacities, tools, and mechanisms to advance implementation, expansion, and sustainability through continued cooperation between national entities and international partners.

JRF's Programmes Division Director Mahmoud Karaki reiterated that the foundation remains committed to supporting the Kingdom's priorities in economic development and community empowerment.

“We recognise the importance of Recognition of Prior Learning as an effective tool for leveraging the skills and accumulated experience of individuals, in line with national priorities and the Economic Modernization Vision,” Karaki added.

He noted that JRF continues to bring together efforts with various relevant stakeholders to strengthen individuals' access to sustainable economic opportunities, as part of the foundation's Community Empowerment Programme.

Environment minister, Iraqi counterpart discuss cooperation, climate challenges

AMMAN(JT) — Minister of Environment Ayman Suleiman on Wednesday met with Iraqi Environment Minister Sarva Qadir over ways to enhance environmental cooperation and shared environmental and climate challenges.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environmental Affairs meeting at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

During the meeting, both sides discussed the main environmental challenges facing Jordan and Iraq, particularly the impacts of climate change and dust storms and their



Petra photo
Minister of Environment Ayman Suleiman and Iraqi Environment Minister Sarva Qadir on Wednesday in Cairo discuss ways to enhance environmental cooperation and shared environmental and climate challenges

environmental, health and economic effects.

Suleiman and Qadir stressed the importance of strengthening coordination and exchange-

ing expertise to mitigate the effects of these phenomena.

They also discussed mobilising international support to help the two

countries address the growing impacts of climate change and dust storms, enhance their capacity to adapt and respond, and benefit from

available climate finance mechanisms.

The two sides agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding between the Jordanian and Iraqi environment ministries on the sidelines of the 31st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP31), scheduled to be held in Antalya, Turkey.

The MoU would enhance cooperation and the exchange of expertise and knowledge in environmental and climate fields of mutual interest.

It would also boost cooperation and the exchange of expertise and knowledge in environmental and climate fields of mutual interest.

House speaker, Australian ambassador discuss parliamentary, bilateral cooperation

AMMAN (JT) — Lower House Speaker Mazen Qadi on Wednesday met with Australian Ambassador to Jordan Paula Ganly to discuss cooperation across various fields, particularly in parliamentary affairs.

During the meeting, attended by First Deputy Speaker Khamees Attieh and MPs Ayman Badaweh and Abdul Raouf Rabiehat, Qadi commended the strong relations between Jordan and Australia, praising the level of partnership that serves the interests of both nations, according to Al Mamlaka TV.

He noted that His Majesty King Abdullah's address to the United Nations General Assembly presented a “comprehensive” vision for addressing



Lower House photo
Lower House Speaker Mazen Qadi and Australian Ambassador to Jordan Paula Ganly on Wednesday discuss cooperation across various fields, particularly in parliamentary affairs

regional crises, foremost of which is the Palestinian issue, stressing that the speech constitutes a clear roadmap towards achieving a just peace based on the two-state solution.

For her part, Ganly highlighted the depth of bilateral ties, praising Jordan's role under King

Abdullah's leadership in promoting regional peace and stability.

She reaffirmed Australia's commitment to expanding cooperation with the Kingdom across various fields to serve mutual interests, reiterating her country's firm support for the two-state solution.

Social security subscribers reach 1.671m, including 458,000 women — official

AMMAN (JT) — The number of active insured persons registered with the Social Security Corporation (SSC) reached 1.671 million, including 458,811 active women, accounting for around 28 per cent of the total, according to SSC Acting Director General Shaman Majali.

During a consultative dialogue meeting on maternity, Majali said that the number of insured women who have benefitted from maternity insurance since its implementation began reached 91,587, Al

Mamlaka reported.

The number of beneficiaries stood at 11,969 last year and 9,390 during the current year.

At the opening of the meeting, Majali stressed the importance of continuing to develop the social protection system related to maternity insurance and the various insurance schemes provided under the Social Security Law, in a way that responds to the needs of insured women and families, supports working women and enhances their eco-

nomic participation.

The number of beneficiaries stood at 11,969 last year...

Regarding the Riaya (care) programme, Majali said that the cumulative number of insured women ben-

efiting from childcare services through home-based care and nurseries reached 38,401. The number of beneficiaries stood at 4,835 last year and 4,976 during the current year.

For her part, International Labour Organisation (ILO) Decent Work for Women Programme Director Reem Aslan praised the role played by maternity insurance in protecting women and enhancing their economic participation, stressing that international labour standards view maternity from an integrated

perspective that combines the protection of women's health with social protection.

She noted that the meeting provides an opportunity to move towards new stages in developing maternity insurance by strengthening the scheme, reviewing eligibility conditions and the value of maternity compensation, and enhancing the link between maternity insurance and care services. She noted that the dialogue is based on the findings of studies conducted for this purpose.



File photo

Awqaf minister condemns Israeli incursions, restrictions at Al Aqsa Mosque

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Mohammad Khalayleh on Wednesday warned that Al Aqsa Mosque is being subjected to “unprecedented and extremely serious” violations coinciding with Jewish holidays.

Speaking to Al Mamlaka, Khalayleh said the situation at Al Aqsa Mosque and in Jerusalem represents a systematic attempt to impose a new and dangerous reality inside the mosque's courtyards.

He said that the violations have reached serious levels, led by senior Israeli officials and rabbis who are conducting successive mass incursions into the mosque's courtyards.

Khalayleh said that the incursions are being carried out under religious and political cover in an attempt to Judaize Al Aqsa Mosque, alongside imposing a tight siege on the site, restricting worshippers and those maintaining a presence there, preventing them from entering the



Al Aqsa Mosque Compound and its Dome of the Rock in the Old City in occupied East Jerusalem, October 22, 2024

mosque and facilitating settler incursions.

He stressed that Al Aqsa Mosque is an exclusively Islamic right, as affirmed by His Majesty King Abdullah, and that its courtyards, domes and prayer platforms are the exclusive right of Muslims and cannot be subject to temporal or spatial division. He added that the mosque is under Hashemite custodianship.

Khalayleh warned

that the violations and any infringement on the Hashemite custodianship could have “catastrophic” consequences for the entire region.

He said that the Ministry of Awqaf oversees Al Aqsa Mosque as part of the Hashemite custodianship over the mosque and the Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem.

Khalayleh also said Al Aqsa Mosque covers 144 dunums and that everything within its walls is the exclusive right of Muslims.

Regarding attempts to bring sacrificial offerings into the mosque, Khalayleh said far-right groups in Israel had “crossed all boundaries” in practising Talmudic rituals and ceremonies inside Al Aqsa Mosque compound.

He said such practices are unprecedented and take place under direct

protection from Israeli forces, describing them as “blatant aggression” and a new assault on Jerusalem and Islamic holy sites.

Khalayleh also stressed that Jordan has repeatedly warned against any infringement on Al Aqsa Mosque and Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem.

He called on Muslims around the world to stand together in defence of Al Aqsa Mosque and take action to deter further attacks against it.

Khalayleh said that defending Al Aqsa Mosque is a matter of Muslim faith and that Jordan, under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah, stands at the forefront of efforts to defend the mosque and Jerusalem at international forums.

He referred to the King's address to the United Nations General Assembly and his remarks on Jerusalem and the Palestinian cause, calling on the Islamic world to support Jordan's efforts to preserve Jerusalem and confront Israeli attacks.

Regarding the situation of Jerusalem Awqaf employees, Khalayleh said Israeli violations have also included attacks on Ministry of Awqaf staff.

He said that some employees have been arrested, some mosque guards prevented from reaching their workplaces and others removed, while Al Aqsa employees have faced harassment and restrictions preventing them from carrying out their duties.

Some of these measures are aimed at facilitating the entry of extremist Jews and other groups making incursions into Al Aqsa Mosque, he said, adding that they take place under the official protection of the occupying forces in Jerusalem.

Khalayleh also stressed the importance of the role of Muslim scholars in raising awareness about developments in Jerusalem, saying the Arab and Islamic world's preoccupation with internal issues should not lead to the neglect of the Al Aqsa Mosque issue.

Prime minister mourns former minister Shaher Bak Askar

AMMAN(JT) — Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Wednesday mourned the passing of former minister of State for Foreign Affairs Shaher Bak Askar and expressed condolences to the family of the deceased. Askar served as Minister of State for Foreign Affairs from 2002 to 2003 and as secretary-general of the Foreign Ministry, according to a Prime Ministry statement. He also served as commissioner-general for human rights in the Kingdom and as Jordan's ambassador to Spain and South Africa. Throughout his career, he held several positions at the Royal Hashemite Court and in the diplomatic corps. Born in Amman in 1939, Askar was the recipient of several Jordanian, Arab and international decorations.



Four illegal water connections detected on southern Amman pipeline — ministry

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation on Wednesday detected four illegal connections on a main water pipeline in southern Amman. The operation was carried out by the Water Authority of Jordan's Internal Control Unit and the Jordan Water Company (Miyahuna), in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and the Public Security Directorate (PSD) through the Muwaqqar Badia Police Station. The campaign in Al Muwaqqar and Shoumariyah uncovered four illegal connections on a 300mm main carrier line, including three 1-inch lines and one 2-inch line, used to divert water to unlicensed tankers. Technical teams disconnected the illegal connections, restored the pipeline and issued official violation notices. The ministry reiterated its commitment to protecting the Kingdom's water resources in accordance with the law and commended public cooperation, as well as the support of the Ministry of Interior, the PSD and the Judicial Council.



JREEEF, Mercy Corps sign agreement to support clean energy in Azraq

AMMAN (JT) — Energy and Mineral Resources Minister and Chairman of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund (JREEEF) Saleh Kharabsheh on Wednesday signed an agreement with Mercy Corps under the “Tabiaa” project to support the sustainability and climate resilience of local communities and

promote clean energy solutions in Azraq District.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Kharabsheh said climate change has become a “reality” requiring communities to strengthen their ability to withstand and adapt to its effects.

He expressed hope that the agreement

would pave the way for “wider” cooperation, according to an Energy Ministry statement.

Mercy Corps Programmes Director Candice Branchoux said that the programme will provide solar water heating systems for 40 low-income households in Azraq and offer training and community awareness sessions

on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

She added that the programme will train young people in renewable energy and energy efficiency to improve their job prospects.

JREEEF CEO Rasmi Hamzeh said the project targets households in Azraq District in cooperation with the Ministry of Social

Development.

He said that the project includes the design, installation, operation and maintenance of solar water heating systems, as well as awareness sessions on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Hamzeh added that the project will provide training for young men and women from

the area in renewable energy and energy efficiency skills.

He called for building on the partnership to develop future programmes covering wider areas, which would help improve living conditions for beneficiary households and strengthen the resilience and sustainability of local communities.



Al Mamlaka TV photo

The agreements covered 80 projects under the ‘Create Your Business’ programme, worth JD2 million, and 35 projects under the ‘Development’ programme, worth JD1 million

JEDCO allocates JD3m to support 115 projects across Kingdom

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation (JEDCO) on Wednesday signed 115 support agreements under its “Create Your Business” and “Development” programmes, with a total value of JD3 million.

The agreements covered 80 projects under the “Create Your Business” programme, worth JD2 million, and 35 projects under the “Development” programme, worth JD1 million, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

During the ceremony, Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Yarub Qudah said the ministry is committed to ensuring that support reaches deserving projects through a scientific, professional and ethical approach, with a focus on selecting projects capable of sustainable growth.

Qudah said that JEDCO received around 2,700 applications for the two programmes, with 115 projects selected following several stages of assessment.

The selection process included initial and final evaluations, an additional assessment by an independent specialised company and personal interviews to assess applicants' commitment to their ideas and ability to implement them, he said.

Qudah said that reaching the final stage indi-

cates that the selected projects are viable and realistic and have potential for growth and expansion.

He added that the ministry also sought to ensure geographical diversity among beneficiary projects and avoid concentrating support in a limited number of governorates.

The programmes focus on helping small projects develop and expand into businesses capable of creating jobs and generating sustainable employment opportunities, Qudah said.

He stressed the importance of maintaining partnerships with beneficiary projects from the provision of support through advanced stages of growth and expansion, in a way that benefits project owners, employees and local communities.

JEDCO Executive Director Ghaleb Hijazi said signing the agreements marks a new stage for the beneficiary projects, aimed at boosting productivity, expansion, competitiveness and job creation.

He said that the two programmes are complementary, with “Create Your Business” helping entrepreneurs establish their projects, while “Development” supports existing businesses in improving their operations and strengthening their ability to grow and

compete, in line with the Economic Modernisation Vision.

Hijazi said strong demand for the programmes reflects the need for support initiatives that respond to the requirements of entrepreneurs and businesses.

He said that JEDCO received 2,222 applications under “Create Your Business” and 561 under “Development”, with 115 projects qualifying for support.

“The selected projects represent a diversity of governorates and sectors, alongside growing participation by women in economic activity and entrepreneurship,” Hijazi said.

He stressed that JEDCO's role does not end with providing support, but extends to following up on projects, measuring results and directing support towards opportunities with the greatest potential to achieve sustainable economic impact.

Hijazi added that the achievement reflects JEDCO's growing role as a national tool for translating economic priorities into practical support programmes, strengthening the ability of projects and enterprises to produce, grow, expand and compete, while creating jobs and broadening the economic base across the Kingdom.

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — The Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment (IMCWE) and the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs on Wednesday launched the Jordanian Women in Politics Forum (JWPF).

The JWPF's aim is to be a space for dialogue, communication and exchange of information and experiences among female political parties' members.

The initiative came from around 30 women from various political parties in the Kingdom who joined forces to establish the JWPF, said Nuha Muhreiz, one of the JWPF founding members.

“Hopefully make a real difference in the journey of Jordanian women towards effective political participation,” Muhreiz said.

She added that she hopes the forum will work as an inclusive national framework for dialogue, networking, and joint action — and as a new step reflecting the maturity of Jordanian women's experience in political parties.

“We believe that women's presence in political life should not be measured solely by the number of seats held by female



Petra photo

The Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment (IMCWE) and the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs on Wednesday launches the Jordanian Women in Politics Forum

members, but rather by their ability to influence decision-making, contribute to policy formulation, and lead change,” Muhreiz added.

She added, “Today, we stand at the threshold of a new phase: A transition from mere presence to making an impact, from representation to leadership, and from individual initiatives to organised institutional action.”

Minister of Social Development Wafa Bani Mustafa said that the forum is one of the outcomes of the Political Modernisation Vision that was initiated by His Majesty King Abdullah, which focused on increasing the participa-

tion of women and youth in political life.

The Political Modernisation Vision emphasises the need to engage young citizens and women in political public life, Bani Mustafa told the gathering.

“We strongly believe that the forum will strengthen women's presence in political life,” said Bani Mustafa, who is also the Chairperson of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment.

Bani Mustafa added, “We are hopeful that the forum will be a space where all women political party members will gather to work for the

benefit of the nation and its citizens”.

Minister of Political and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Moneim Odat also addressed the gathering during the two-hour event, saying the forum will hopefully allow female political parties members to exchange ideas, experiences and work towards increasing their presence in politics in the future”.

Odat added that he is hopeful that “the dialogue among these women will be done in a manner that will encourage respecting each other's opinions and ideologies”.

Country Representative of UN Women Jordan Nicolas Burniat said in his opening speech that the JWPF stems from “many years of training and support provided by the Women Political School to women interested in a political career”.

The JWPF is meant as a space that brings together women from different political parties, different political currents and different parts of the political spectrum, the UN official said.

“That is important because women in politics do not, and should not, all think alike,” Burniat stressed.

The objective is to “make sure that women have a strong voice in politics, in all its diversity”, Burniat added.

Paolo Zingale, head of Cooperation at the European Union Delegation to Jordan, said the launch of the forum was a “timely and constructive initiative in Jordan's political modernisation process”.

“Let me say clearly: Supporting women's political participation is not an external agenda. It is a Jordanian national priority, and the European Union is proud to support Jordan's own vision in this regard,” Zingale told the gathering.

The EU's support is neutral, and it is grounded in engagement with all parties, “regardless of ideology, in the shared interest of a more inclusive political life in Jordan”, Zingale added.

The EU official went further to stress that “women's empowerment in politics must go far beyond just having a woman in the room”.

“Women must have a voice, and they must be able to engage fully on all issues, not only those narrowly defined as women's issues, family issues, or children's issues,” Zingale said.

470 Aqaba youth sign employment contracts with 23 companies

AMMAN (JT) — A total of 470 young men and women from Aqaba signed employment contracts with 23 private sector companies on Wednesday, concluding the three-month “From Opportunity to Employment” initiative.

Organised by the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), the initiative linked local job seekers with private sector companies through a programme combining skills training

ing with recruitment and direct employment, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

ASEZA Chief Commissioner Shadi Majali presided over the signing ceremony, attended by Aqaba Governor Ayman Awayseh, ASEZA commissioners and representatives of the public and private sectors.

Majali said that aligning employment programmes with actual market needs helps create direct and measur-



Petra photo

The initiative linked local job seekers with private sector companies through a programme combining skills training with recruitment and direct employment

able job opportunities, noting that the initia-

tive moved from identifying companies' hiring

needs to skills training and direct employment.

He commended the 23 participating companies for hiring Jordanian talent and reaffirmed ASEZA's commitment to expanding cooperation with the private sector in workforce development.

The ceremony concluded with the signing of employment agreements and the recognition of participating companies and beneficiaries.



Security services vehicles patrol outside Prince Sultan Bin Abdulazir Airport in Tabuk on Wednesday

Israel-bound plane rerouted, pilots wounded in reported fight

TABUK, Saudi Arabia (AFP) — Two pilots were wounded after they reportedly fought on board the plane they were flying from Dubai to Tel Aviv, and which was forced to make an emergency landing in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday.

The flydubai plane landed in Tabuk “at 9:45 am (6:45 GMT) and its captain and copilot were found to have injuries and were transported to hospital”, a statement from the company operating the airport said.

The low-cost carrier had earlier said flight FZ 1073 “experienced an incident while en route. The aircraft has landed safely in Tabuk Airport (TUU) and all passengers are safe and accounted for”.

Several Israeli media reported that a fight had broken out between the plane’s pilots, reportedly causing a distress signal to be activated.

Israeli media also reported that two other pilots were flying on

the plane as passengers, and that they had taken over the controls to carry out the emergency landing in Saudi Arabia.

At Ben Gurion airport, families gathered to await the return of their loved ones.

Yasmin Abukasis, mother of passenger Miryam Shira Ohayon, told AFP her daughter called her from Saudi Arabia: “She said one pilot tried to kill the other pilot with a knife. They heard shouting.”

Another passenger went to the cockpit “and saw a lot of blood. She started screaming ‘come help’ and some people went in and caught the guy”, she added.

‘Going down very fast’

“All the while, the plane started going down very fast. People thought they were going to die.”

She added that two other pilots in the back later took over the controls.

Israel’s Kan public

broadcaster and Channel 12 reported that the Israeli military had scrambled fighter jets after fears of a possible hijacking — with the hypothesis later dismissed.

The office of Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the premier had held consultations on the matter and was “monitoring developments”.

“The incident is under control, and all measures are currently being deployed in order to return the Israeli passengers safely to Israel,” a statement said.

According to data from the Flightradar website, the aircraft suddenly lost altitude during the flight, dropping from nearly 34,000 feet at 5:21 GMT to less than 17,000 feet at 5:22 GMT.

An AFP correspondent in Tabuk, where the plane landed, saw heavy security near the airport, with several police vehicles and an ambulance parked at the terminal.

Gaza health officials say Israeli strike kills 5 in Gaza City

GAZA CITY, Palestinian Territories (AFP) — Gaza’s civil defence agency and a hospital said an Israeli air strike targeting a minibus killed five people on Wednesday in a neighbourhood southwest of the city.

Mahmoud Bassal, the spokesperson for the civil defence which operates as a rescue force under Hamas authority, told AFP there were “five martyrs and 20 wounded, including a number of children and women... as a result of an Israeli air strike that targeted a passenger bus in Tel Al Hawa”.

Bassal said the bus was carrying civilians between Gaza City and the central and southern parts of the Palestinian territory.

He said it was hit “by two missiles fired by Israeli drones, which led to the destruction of its front and completely burned it”.

AFP has contacted the Israeli military for a response.



Palestinian mourners gather for a mass funeral at the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip on Tuesday following the recovery of 41 bodies from the rubble of a residential building hit in an Israeli strike at the start of the war in October 2023

Gaza City’s Al Shifa hospital confirmed that five bodies and several wounded people had arrived at the medical facility “following an Israeli air strike that targeted a vehicle near the

destroyed Cabinet headquarters in the Tel Al Hawa neighbourhood”.

The massive Israeli offensive has left most of Gaza in ruins and killed more than 74,000 people, according to

Gaza’s health ministry, whose figures are considered reliable by the United Nations.

Israeli forces have killed more than 1,400 people since a ceasefire was announced last

October, according to Gaza’s health ministry.

The Israeli military has identified five deaths in its ranks over the same period, as well as the death of one civilian contractor.

Three tankers hit Tuesday in Hormuz — maritime agency



In this photo obtained from Iran's ISNA news agency on June 1, vessels sail at Suru Beach in Bandar Abbas along the Strait of Hormuz

DUBAI (AFP) — A British maritime agency said on Wednesday that unknown projectiles struck three ships in the Strait of Hormuz the previous day.

A crude oil tanker, LNG tanker and a third vessel had each “been struck by an unknown projectile”, the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Centre (UKMTO) said, without elaborating.

The Strait of Hormuz is currently at the centre of the Middle East war between Iran and the United States.

Around a fifth of the world’s oil and liquefied natural gas passed through the strategic shipping lane before the war.

But since the conflict broke out, Tehran has been blocking the passage of commercial ships, firing on vessels it accuses of unauthorised crossings.

Washington has responded with a counter-blockade of Iranian ports in an effort to prevent Tehran from exporting its oil.

UK PM Burnham reopens divisive debate on rejoining EU

LONDON (AFP) — Andy Burnham put the idea of Britain rejoining the EU on the table on Wednesday, breaking a taboo for a UK prime minister and reopening the divisive Brexit debate.

Burnham said his centre-left Labour government could go “all the way” and propose membership of the bloc after weighing the “pros and cons” of different possible relationships with Europe.

Right-wing rivals immediately criticised the comments, as the UK appeared to be gearing up for a re-run of the bitter “Brexit wars” that dominated politics following the contentious 2016 vote to leave the European Union.

Burnham, premier since July after Labour MPs turfed out Keir Starmer, told his party’s annual conference on Tuesday that Britain’s departure in 2020 had done “more harm than good”.

He said Brexit had triggered “a decade of low growth” and Britain must “decide on a long-term relationship” with its largest trading partner.

Burnham promised to set out “different options” for future ties with Europe closer to a planned summit with the 27-member bloc later this year.

Possibilities that could be looked at included joining the European single market and customs union, “or we could go all the



Britain's Prime Minister Andy Burnham (centre) and his wife Marie-France (left) greet delegates in the audience after delivering his keynote speech on the third day of the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool, north-west England, on Tuesday

way”, Burnham told BBC Radio’s Today Programme on Wednesday.

“So there are clearly options that need to be considered, and we have to look at what is doable, and what would be the pros and cons of each.”

“What I am saying is it’s not good enough to leave that question just hanging,” he added.

Brexit polls

Britain’s right-wing Conservative party took Britain out of the EU after Britons voted to leave by 52 per cent to 48 per cent.

A poll by Survation in June found that 55 per cent of voters would

opt to rejoin if a referendum was held again.

“I think Burnham is recognising the widespread view in the country that Brexit has failed, and in the Labour Party that closer ties are needed,” David Henig, an expert on UK-EU relations, told AFP.

“As yet I don’t think he is committed to rejoining, not least given fears this would be politically divisive and reopen previous turmoil, but I suspect he is starting to realise that there may be no other realistic option.”

Burnham is currently bound by Starmer’s 2024 election-winning manifesto which ruled out

joining a customs union, going back into the single market or allowing the return of freedom of movement with the EU.

Burnham’s comments indicate that he plans to remove some of those red lines going into the campaign for the next general election, expected in 2029.

Realistic option?

Sandro Gozi, a European lawmaker who chairs a parliamentary initiative on EU-UK relations, told AFP that Burnham’s willingness to openly explore options offered a “historic opportunity” for the European Union.

Labour MP Stella Creasy said in a com-

ment sent to AFP: “Today is the day our colleagues around Europe can see that finally the red lines have been removed.”

The UK-EU summit had been due to be held in July in Brussels, but was postponed when Starmer was ousted

But Anand Menon, director of the UK in a Changing Europe think tank, cautioned against any suggestion that Burnham’s comments mark the start of a return journey.

“All he seems to have said is: ‘We’ll have a conversation about it now’. There are quite a few people in his cabinet who would not want to see him spending a lot of time and effort dealing with Europe,” he told AFP.

Reform criticism

Burnham campaigned to stay in the EU and

has previously said he hoped Britain would return within his lifetime.

But during his successful campaign to return to parliament in June and replace Starmer in Downing Street, Burnham insisted he did not want to “rerun” the Brexit debate.

Richard Tice, deputy leader of the anti-EU Reform UK party, said Burnham was “trying to sneak us back into Brussels via the back door”, while Tory deputy leader Alex Burghart accused the prime minister of looking “backwards”.

The UK-EU summit had been due to be held in July in Brussels, but was postponed when Starmer was ousted.

An EU official told AFP the bloc was looking to hold the meeting in November, but the date was not confirmed.

“Clearly, the mood is positive and commitment to have a good summit is definitely there,” the EU official said. “And there is a lot of work ongoing to prepare it.”

The two sides had been hoping to present several deals at the summit, namely on food and animal safety standards, a youth mobility scheme and the linking of their emissions-trading systems.

Negotiations are believed to have stalled over British concerns about the EU’s “Made in Europe” plans to protect certain industries.

MILITARY PRESENCE

US envoy rules out massive troop cuts in Europe

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AFP) — The United States is not planning to withdraw up to 40,000 troops in Europe, Washington’s envoy to NATO said on Wednesday, denying recent reports.

US broadcaster NBC reported in mid-September that Washington was weighing cuts of 25,000 or more of its forces from Europe, citing anonymous US officials.

“Those reports are wrong,” US Ambassador to NATO Matthew Whitaker said during a defence conference organised by broadcaster Euronews.

“The plan hasn’t even been finalised by the folks at the Secretary of War’s policy shop,” he added.

The US administration launched a formal review of its military presence in Europe this summer, raising fears among allies that it could cut back its forces in European nations.

Whitaker said the United States would “stay engaged in Europe”.

The review is also looking at how US forces use military bases.

Washington has previously criticised European countries for not allowing the United States to use NATO bases on their territory during the war against Iran.

“We’re just doing a very kind of mathematical, mechanical analysis of how we’re laid down globally because we have to address global challenges”

“We’re just doing a very kind of mathematical, mechanical analysis of how we’re laid down globally because we have to address global challenges”

Washington has already taken steps to change its presence in Europe where it has around 80,000 troops. The United States announced it would withdraw 5,000 troops from Germany in May.



Ministry of Planning photo

Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Zeina Toukan meets on Wednesday with a delegation of British parliamentarians and representatives of the Conservative Middle East Council

Minister of planning meets delegation of british parliamentarians

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Zeina Toukan met on Wednesday with a delegation of British parliamentarians and representatives of the Conservative Middle East Council (CMEC). Discussions focused on cooperation and partnership between Jordan and the United Kingdom, as well as prospects for strengthening economic and development cooperation between the two countries, according to a ministry statement.

Toukan reaffirmed the importance of the strategic partnership between Jordan and the United Kingdom, expressing appreciation for the UK's support for Jordan and its development priorities.

She also highlighted the government's priorities under the Economic Modernisation Vision and the key development and investment projects currently being implemented, the statement said.

The minister stressed the importance of strengthening private-sector partnerships and promoting investment opportunities across Jordan's priority sectors.

Court halts Tennessee's first execution of woman in 200 years

WASHINGTON, United States (AFP) — A US court on Wednesday halted the lethal injection of a 50-year-old female killer that would have been Tennessee's first execution of a woman in more than 200 years.

Barely an hour before Christa Pike was due to die by lethal injection, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a ruling to stay the execution, three decades after she murdered a classmate.

Pike was 18 when she and her boyfriend beat and killed Colleen Slemmer, 19, at a job training camp for young people.

The killing gained national attention after Slemmer's body was found with a pentagram, often seen as a satanic symbol, carved in her chest.

In the United States, only 18 women have been executed since 1976, according to the Death Penalty Information Centre.

"The interests of justice and the finality of Pike's impending execution compel the entry of a short stay of execution in order to properly analyse the parties' fully briefed arguments," the court order said.

The court is set to review whether allegations that Pike was sexually abused as a child were fully considered.

The case has sparked debate over capital punishment for young criminals.



This handout photo dated January 12, 2023 provided by the Tennessee Department of Correction shows convicted US murderer Christa Pike

Pike's lawyers argue she should be granted clemency due to her young age and mental health issues at the time of the killing.

"She was 18 when she committed her crime, and she was deeply mentally ill," they wrote in a clemency petition to Tennessee Governor Bill Lee, who said he would not intervene.

The US Supreme Court rejected on Tuesday an application for a stay of execution, which had argued that Pike's history as a victim of sexual assault, post-traumatic stress disorder and a blood condition meant a lethal injection would cause "needless suffering".

Pike, the only woman on Tennessee's death row, had been set to die by lethal injection at 10:00 am (15:00 GMT) on Wednesday at the Riverbend Maximum Security Institution in Nashville.

Independent UN rights experts have urged the US government and Tennessee authorities to "immediately halt" the execution and commute her death sentence.

"Pike's execution would mark the culmination of a trajectory of severe physical and psychological suffering marked by childhood abuse and nearly three decades of solitary confinement on death row," they said.

Fuel prices partially adjusted for October amid global surge

Continued from page 1

However, under the gradual approach adopted since the beginning of the crisis, local prices still do not reflect actual global costs, even after adding taxes.

Without the government subsidy, actual costs of fuel derivatives in the October pricing breakdown would stand at JD1.077 per litre for diesel, JD1.044 per litre for kerosene, JD1.112 per litre for 90-octane gasoline, and JD1.360 per litre for 95-octane gasoline.

The committee pointed out that total

subsidies and price differentials borne by the government since the start of the crisis through the end of September reached some JD255 million, resulting from higher global costs and the decision not to fully reflect actual prices in the monthly tariff to ease burdens on consumers and the national economy.

It added that the gradual adjustment decision for October reflects official efforts to limit local price volatility and ensure greater stability for citizens and economic sectors amid continued uncertainty in global

markets caused by prevailing geopolitical conditions.

The committee also stressed that it will continue to assess global energy market variables and their impact on local costs on a monthly basis to ensure timely decisions that balance consumer protection with overall economic and financial stability.

Also on Wednesday, the Energy and Minerals Regulatory Commission decided to maintain the "differences in fuel prices" category on monthly electricity bills for July at zero fils per kilowatt-hour.

The voices of Spain's housing camp protesters

MADRID (AFP) — Under the threat of eviction or with soaring rents gobbling up a large chunk of their salaries, protesting campers in Madrid and Barcelona are sharing their struggles and calling for action to tackle Spain's housing crisis.

The camps sprang up following the eviction last week of Maricarmen Abascal, 87, from the Madrid flat where she had lived for seven decades.

Hundreds of activists have since been camping out in Madrid's central Puerta del Sol square, while protesters in Barcelona have pitched tents in Placa de Catalunya.



Protesters talk as they gather at a camp set to protest against evictions and the housing crisis at the Puerta del Sol square in central Madrid on Wednesday

The carer

Rufina Parra, a 56-year-old Ecuadorean woman who works as a carer, had been renting a home in Madrid with her family for a decade when their landlord evicted them in 2023 because he wanted to sell the flat.

"We were left, me as a woman over 50 and my husband, who is over 60, facing the whirlwind" of the property market, said Parra, a volunteer at the Puerta del Sol camp who organises food for demonstrators.

With precarious employment contracts, she faced "nothing but obstacles" when looking for another home, a search which "had a huge impact on my health".

She, her husband, their son, dog and cat ended up living in "sub-standard housing": a 30-square-metre basement flat with no natural light, for 800 euros (\$900) a month.

The waiter

Whalfryd Cruz, a 30-year-old waiter, earns 1,000 euros a month but spends half of it for a room. He has spent two nights camping out in Madrid to demand "solutions now".

Cruz considers himself

lucky. He knows people who pay the same for a bed in "a converted living room, an attic or a room without a window — things that are inhuman".

"It can't be that when my parents brought me to this country as a child" from the Dominican Republic, "We could live on two salaries and practically want for nothing."

Now, he said, "young people can't afford to move out".

The psychologist

Ana Grau, a 50-year-old psychologist, said she spent "a long time" unable to leave her partner because she could not afford a home for herself

and her two children.

When she finally left, she could only afford a 20-square-metre flat, where she had to "go alone". As she was renting without a contract, her landlord easily evicted her.

After a long search, she found a flat for 1,000 euros a month, but "quite far away" from her children.

"Sometimes I have to rent out the living room to people so they can sleep there, so I can pay for the flat, because I can't make ends meet," said Grau, who came to Sol to support her new partner, who is sleeping in the square.

The young couple

Irene Aguilar, 19, and

Juan Romero, 23, are a young couple camping in Barcelona who hope to start a life together but still rely on their families and may have to share a flat with several others.

"We're looking for a flat, even if it means sharing it with three other people. And even then, it's expensive," said Aguilar, who studies and works.

"Looking at rents in Barcelona, it's a difficult situation. I can't save or try to build a future," added Romero, who is finishing his studies and looking for work.

The hospitality worker

Lois Reinoso, a 31-year-old who works in the hospitality sector, joined Barcelona's protest camp after his shift ended at 1:00 am on Tuesday, pitching his tent in Placa de Catalunya.

He spends much of his salary on rent and says prices have reached "surreal" levels.

"It's impossible to afford a place on your own and live independently as an adult," said Reinoso, who considers himself "privileged" to live with just his partner.

"At our age, for the sake of dignity, we shouldn't still have to share a home with three, four or five people."

US-led coalition ends mission in Iraq

Continued from page 1

The United States and Iraq agreed in 2024 to wind down the coalition's mission, and its troops withdrew gradually from bases across the country, restricting their presence to the autonomous northern Kurdistan region.

On Wednesday, the US announced the mission's formal conclusion.

"Today, the United States and our Coalition partners formally concluded Operation Inherent Resolve in

Iraq, consistent with the September 2024 US-Iraq joint statement and US national interests," the Pentagon said in a statement.

The US Department of Defence however added that it would "continue to provide targeted training and intelligence support to our Iraqi partners".

'Sovereignty'

The US-led coalition did not defeat Daesh alone. Kurdish Peshmerga fighters played an important role in crushing

Daesh, as did powerful Iraqi factions, including pro-Iran groups that have yet to disarm.

The Iraqi government, which celebrated the withdrawal, believes it will deprive Iran-backed factions of the excuse they have used to retain their arsenal.

But many Iraqis fear the pullout might embolden the pro-Iran factions further and draw the country deeper into the Middle East war.

Iraqi Prime Minister Ali Al Zaidi hailed the end of the mission as the

start of a new chapter.

"A new phase has begun, defined by Iraq's sovereignty, the strength of its institutions, the readiness of its forces, unity of decision-making, and balanced partnerships with its friends," Zaidi said at a ceremony on Wednesday.

He had also declared that October 1 would be celebrated as Sovereignty Day.

It is "a national occasion that affirms the completion of Iraq's path toward sovereignty and consolidates the pres-

ence of the state and its institutions", the heads of Iraq's executive, legislative and judicial branches said on Monday.

They added that "the presence of weapons outside state authority must be addressed... in line with timelines set by the government, in a manner that strengthens state sovereignty".

Intensified attacks

Zaidi, who came to power this year with the US's blessing, has vowed

to reinforce the state's monopoly on arms and ensure that armed factions hand over their weapons to the state.

His government initially set September 30 as the deadline for factions to disarm, but later withdrew the time limit as talks continued to "regulate" weapons — an issue that has fuelled division and is expected to take much longer to resolve.

With several powerful groups refusing to disarm, senior politicians have intervened and are

now hoping to work out a compromise deal.

Factions have put forward conditions that include not only the withdrawal of foreign troops, but also an end to American political and economic interference.

The powerful Kataeb Hizbollah group said the withdrawal of "the occupation forces... is a start towards achieving full sovereignty".

But the group also threatened Zaidi's government.

"A government that doesn't work for the

good of its people will be brought down by all possible means," it said.

Pro-Iran groups have long demanded the withdrawal of US troops and began targeting them with drones and missiles, triggering US retaliatory strikes that killed several faction commanders over the years.

During the Middle East war that began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran, Tehran and allied factions intensified their attacks in Iraq, targeting US-led troops in the Kurdistan region.

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West Bank’s violent settlers part of a new generation fuelled by ideology

Agence France-Presse

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — A mass attack by Israeli settlers on a Palestinian village in the occupied West Bank has placed new focus on the emergence of a generation of radicals in the territory.

A loosely connected movement of hardline Israeli settlers, most of them young and including school dropouts from outside the West Bank, known as the "Hilltop Youth", is behind the surging violence against Palestinians.

Inspired by religious-nationalist ideology, the movement seeks to expand the Jewish presence in the Palestinian territory by setting up unauthorised outposts — usually makeshift tents or mobile homes — on hilltops outside established Israeli settlements.

While groups of Israelis living off-grid in the West Bank have existed since the 1990s, the new generation has a clear agenda to take over Palestinian lands through violent means, said Dvir Warshavsky of Children of Abraham, a group of observant Jewish activists supporting Palestinian rights.

Early on Tuesday, more than 100 Israeli settlers attacked the village of Jalud, wounding three members of Israeli security forces, as the army accompanied a Palestinian family seeking to return to their home after being displaced by settler attacks.

The ramp-up in violence, including attacks on mosques and churches, had already prompted countries including Britain and The Netherlands to impose sanctions on settlement products, infuriating Israel.

A post published in a WhatsApp channel affiliated with the movement and seen by AFP recently claimed that over the past 12 months, the Hilltop Youth had carried out 635 attacks in 158 different Palestinian villages, and that 409 Palestinians were wounded and 436 cars were burned during the attacks. The figures could not be independently verified.

The perpetrators of such violence are rarely prosecuted by Israeli authorities.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, addressing the UN General Assembly last week, dismissed settler attacks as the work of a "handful of juvenile delinquents, about 150 in number" and accused the rest of the world of ignoring violence by Palestinians.

Israel has occupied the West Bank since 1967. More than 500,000 settlers live in the territory which is home to some three million Palestinians.

About 140 settlements are recognised by the Israeli government while being illegal under international law, but farms and outposts that are also illegal under Israeli law now number around 400, according to the Peace Now watchdog.

'Minimum people on maximum land'

Israeli rights experts who have tracked the Hilltop Youth for years said the movement gathered pace after Israel dismantled 21 settlements in the Gaza Strip and four in the West Bank as part of its unilateral "disengagement" in 2005.

The failure of the settler movement's old guard to prevent thousands of Israelis from losing their homes in the forced evacuations, combined with resentment towards the central government, ushered in a new phase.

More ideological settlers emerged, challenging "the traditional strategy of the settler movement, whose logic was to build more and more settlements with more and more people", Warshavsky said.

The "new generation" focused on building small illegal outposts and agricultural projects without permits from Israeli authorities — a strategy known as "minimum people on maximum land".

Grazing flocks of sheep and goats has allowed the hilltop youth to significantly expand control over rural areas which are under Israeli military authority.

With the rise of politicians representing the ideological settlers, such as finance minister Bezalel Smotrich, the communities have received growing legitimisation and financial support — some of it channelled toward illegal farms and outposts, according to experts.

While the government cannot make direct transfers because of their illegal status, "they fund all the rest", said Hagit Ofran of the Peace Now watchdog, meaning roads, ranger cars, security cameras, solar panels and drones — along with protection from the Israeli army.

Some funding also comes from private donations and crowdfunding, she added.

Protected by the army

Some settler leaders have sought to distance themselves from the movement. At the end of last year, the leaders of three Israeli local councils in the West Bank issued a joint statement urging law enforcement to adopt a "zero tolerance" policy towards the Hilltop Youth, saying they "do not represent" the broader settler movement.

Since Hamas' October 7, 2023 attack on Israel and the outbreak of war in Gaza and on other fronts, regular soldiers have been diverted away from the West Bank, with troops patrolling around the settlements now often reservists who are themselves settlers.

Such troops are much less likely than regular soldiers to dismantle illegal outposts, experts say.

"The army is not really fighting against them. They don't want to deal with them," Ofran said.

Is Israel drawing a water belt from Mount Hermon to the Yarmouk around Suwayda

By Motasem Saidan

His Makesty King Abdullah's warning at the UN General Assembly in September 2026 deserves to be read as more than a statement on border security. By linking Israeli movements in southern Syria to "vital water resources" and declaring that threats to Jordan's northern border or water security constitute threats to national security, the King appeared to identify a geopolitical map still in the making: One stretching from Mount Hermon through Quneitra and western Daraa towards the Yarmouk Basin.

That map is no longer hypothetical. The European Union Agency for Asylum has documented an expanding Israeli military presence in Quneitra and western Daraa, while France's Le Monde has reported that several new positions overlap with strategically important water zones between Mount Hermon and the Yarmouk Valley. Israel argues that its deployment is necessary to prevent hostile forces from exploiting the security vacuum in southern Syria. Yet the establishment of military infrastructure inevitably raises a larger question: When does a temporary security deployment begin to shape a lasting

political and resource geography?

Water makes this question particularly sensitive. The Golan and Quneitra sit across critical hydrological divides. Some catchments drain towards Lake Tiberias; others feed the Raqqad and wider Yarmouk system. The Carnegie Endowment has documented Israel's long-established network of reservoirs and ground-water infrastructure in the occupied Golan, including reservoirs capturing runoff associated with the Yarmouk Basin. This does not prove that current operations aim to divert Syrian water. It does establish, however, that water has long been part of the strategic value of the territory.

Suwayda adds another layer. Foreign policy has examined the expanding debate over Druze autonomy, while The Jerusalem Post has published arguments for sustained Israeli involvement in southern Syria to protect Druze communities. The Washington Institute has also explored scenarios of enhanced Druze autonomy, while noting the formidable obstacles to outright separation. Any viable autonomous entity would require secure trade routes, energy and, crucially, reliable water. Yet, Quneitra's reservoirs and the Raqqad sys-

tem lie west of Suwayda. Supplying the province from these sources would require major pipelines, pumping infrastructure and secure corridors through Daraa.

Suwayda adds another layer. Foreign Policy has examined the expanding debate over Druze autonomy...

For that reason, the proposition that Israel is positioning itself around Quneitra's water resources specifically to sustain a future Druze entity

remains a geopolitical hypothesis, not an established fact. A stronger interpretation is that the corridor from Mount Hermon through Quneitra and western Daraa offers several strategic advantages simultaneously: military depth, control of high ground, proximity to water resources, leverage over Damascus, and greater influence over any future political arrangement in Suwayda.

For Jordan, the issue is therefore larger than the volume reaching Al Wehda Dam. The real question is who controls, measures and manages the upstream geography. The 1987 Jordanian-Syrian Yarmouk Agreement assumed two sovereign states managing their dams, wells and tributaries. A sustained third-party military presence introduces a reality that agreement was never designed to address.

This may explain why Jordan's warning came before the map was completed. In a basin as politically fragile as the Yarmouk, water security begins far upstream — where rainfall becomes runoff, where reservoirs regulate flows, and where control over territory can eventually become influence over water itself.

Motasem Saidan is a former minister of Water and Irrigation

Amman Stock Exchange: Has the economic transformation begun?

By Raad Mahmoud Al-Tal

In economics, some numbers describe the present, while others reveal how people perceive the future. The performance of the Amman Stock Exchange in 2025 may have provided one of the clearest signals yet that expectations surrounding an important part of the Jordanian economy are changing.

The ASE General Index rose by 45.1 per cent in a single year, increasing from 2,488.8 points at the end of 2024 to 3,611.6 points at the end of 2025. This was the highest annual closing level since 2007. According to Amman Stock Exchange data, and based on Bloomberg figures, the Jordanian market ranked first in the Arab region and thirteenth globally in terms of index growth during 2025.

Yet, the significance of this performance goes well beyond the 45.1 per cent increase in the index. Other market indicators moved in the same direction. The market capitalisation of listed companies rose to approximately JOD 26.5 billion, an increase of 50.1 per cent in one year. Trading value increased from around JOD 1.2 billion in 2024 to approximately JOD 2.2 billion in 2025, representing an increase of 80.6 per cent. Around 1.1 billion shares were traded during the year.

These figures suggest that the market's performance was not simply driven by a limited number of stocks. Share prices increased for 106 listed companies, including 90 companies whose share prices rose by at least 10 per cent. Several major sectors also recorded significant gains. Banks rose by 45.7 per cent, extractive and mining industries by 77.3 per cent, transport by 51.8 per cent and electrical industries by 119 per cent.

The key economic question, however, is whether this strong market performance reflects a genuine improvement in corporate and economic fundamentals or whether it represents mainly a repricing of financial assets.

The available evidence provides part of the answer. Listed companies on the Amman Stock Exchange generated after-tax profits of approximately JOD 2.348 billion in 2025, compared with JOD 2.081 billion in 2024, an increase of 12.9 per cent. This represents the second-highest historical level of profits recorded by listed companies. Pre-tax profits also increased by 9.6 per cent, reaching JOD 3.269 billion.

This combination is economically significant. We are not

looking at rising stock prices in isolation. We are seeing higher share prices, a substantial increase in market capitalisation, stronger trading activity and higher corporate profitability occurring at the same time.

Financial markets are fundamentally forward-looking. Stock prices reflect expectations about future earnings and cash flows, adjusted for interest rates and perceived risk. A rise in share prices can therefore reflect stronger expectations about future corporate earnings, lower perceived risks, greater liquidity seeking investment opportunities, lower financing costs, or a combination of these factors.

Greater liquidity matters because it improves investors' ability to enter and exit the market, supports more efficient price discovery....

reflects the market value of listed companies and investors' expectations about their future performance.

The banking sector is particularly important in this context because of its significant weight in the Amman Stock Exchange. The sector operated within an environment characterised by monetary and financial stability. The Central Bank of Jordan also reported growth in customer deposits and credit facilities, while banking resilience and liquidity indicators remained strong during 2025.

Liquidity provides another important part of the explanation. Trading value increased by 80.6 per cent, substantially faster than the 45.1 per cent increase in the market index. This indicates that market activity expanded at a faster pace than prices.

Greater liquidity matters because it improves investors' ability to enter and exit the market, supports more efficient price discovery, and helps address the limited trading activity that can characterise smaller capital markets. But liquidity by itself is not enough.

The more important question is whether this liquidity can move beyond the trading of existing shares and contribute to financing new investment. This is where the stock market can move from being a mirror of the economy to becoming an instrument for financing the economy.

If higher market valuations strengthen companies' ability to raise new equity, finance expansion, and undertake investment projects, the capital market can become a genuine source of economic growth. If activity remains largely concentrated in the trading of existing shares and rising asset prices, however, the direct impact on the real economy will remain limited.

This is perhaps the most important challenge facing the Amman Stock Exchange in the next stage. The objective should not simply be to maintain a rising index, but to strengthen the economic role of the market by increasing the number of listed companies, broadening the investor base, deepening market liquidity, improving disclosure and corporate governance and developing new financial instruments.

There is also an opportunity to encourage large private and family-owned businesses to consider public listing when economically appropriate. A deeper equity market can provide companies with alternative sources of long-term financing while giving investors

greater access to productive investment opportunities.

For this reason, the indicator to watch in 2026 should not be the stock market index alone. A more meaningful assessment requires looking at corporate earnings growth, dividend distributions, trading activity, market capitalisation, private investment, credit to the private sector and GDP growth together.

This is why the performance of the Amman Stock Exchange should be considered within the broader context of the Jordanian economy

These indicators provide a more complete picture of whether the improvement in financial markets is becoming connected to the real economy. The fundamental transformation we need is for confidence to translate into new investment, for liquidity to translate into financing, for corporate profits to translate into expansion and higher productivity, and for a deeper capital market to translate into greater capacity to finance the economy.

At the macroeconomic level, the ultimate objective is not simply higher stock prices. It is for the Amman Stock Exchange to help transform rising financial asset values into higher investment, production, productivity and employment.

If this transition takes place, the remarkable performance of the Amman Stock Exchange in 2025 will represent more than an exceptional year for the stock market. It could mark the beginning of a new phase in which Jordan's capital market plays a more significant role in financing and supporting sustainable economic growth.



Jordan Securities Commission on Wednesday launches a financial legislation examination session at the commission's headquarters, with 39 candidates taking part

JSC launches financial legislation examination session

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan Securities Commission (JSC) Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, Emad Abu Haltam, on Wednesday launched a financial legislation examination session at the commission's headquarters, with 39 candidates taking part.

The candidates included financial sector professionals and applicants seeking licences to provide financial services in local and foreign markets.

The examination is part of the JSC's efforts to strengthen professional competency and compliance with the regulatory framework governing Jordan's capital market, according to a JSC statement.

Abu Haltam said the commission is continuously reviewing the examination's governance framework, including question-drafting methods, ap-

proval criteria and evaluation tools, to enhance transparency and integrity throughout the testing process.

Candidates who successfully pass both the JSC legislation and CISI examinations can apply for accreditation as compliance officers...

The examination assesses candidates' knowledge of capital market legislation and the professional requirements needed

to operate within the legal and regulatory framework.

He said the updated accreditation system represents a step towards international best practices and complements qualifications offered by the Chartered Institute for Securities and Investment (CISI), covering areas including securities and investment, risk in financial services and financial services fundamentals.

Candidates who successfully pass both the JSC legislation and CISI examinations can apply for accreditation as compliance officers, investment managers, issuance managers, custodians, financial advisers or investment trustees through licensed financial service providers.

The pass rate for Wednesday's session was 59 per cent, according to official results.

100 freight, logistics companies from 18 Arab countries convene in Amman

AMMAN (JT) — The first Arab Worldwide Freight Alliance (AWFA) conference opened in Amman on Wednesday, bringing together 100 freight and logistics companies from 18 Arab countries to strengthen regional partnerships, improve supply-chain connectivity and explore new markets.

The conference also saw the launch of a Jordanian-Arab platform linking companies and institutions involved in freight forwarding, customs clearance and logistics services across Jordan and the Arab region.

Discussions focused on Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision, the Kingdom's logistics position, challenges and opportunities facing Arab supply chains, and the role of women in logistics. Bilateral business meetings are also being held to develop partnerships among participating companies.

Jordan Maritime Commission Director-General Ahmad Asasleh, who opened the conference on behalf of the ministers of transport and labour, said stronger integra-



The first Arab Worldwide Freight Alliance conference open in Amman on Wednesday, bringing together 100 freight and logistics companies from 18 Arab countries to strengthen regional partnerships

tion across the transport and logistics sector is essential to building efficient and resilient supply chains.

He highlighted efforts to strengthen Aqaba Port's competitiveness as Jordan's maritime gateway and key trade link, while advancing digital transformation, improving procedures and services, and enhancing maritime safety and security.

Senate Labour and Social Development Com-

mittee Chairman Issa Murad said disruptions to global shipping and supply chains have underscored the need for stronger regional cooperation and integrated transport networks.

He said logistics and trade are priority sectors under the Economic Modernisation Vision, adding that stronger alliances could reduce freight costs, improve efficiency and delivery times, and enhance the competitiveness of

trade.

AWFA founder and President Odeh Ramahi said the alliance aims to connect Arab freight and logistics companies and turn their networks and expertise into business opportunities.

He said the alliance would help companies, particularly smaller firms, access new markets and establish reliable partnerships amid changing shipping routes and supply-chain disruptions.

AWFA Vice President Tamer Abu Saadat said the alliance aims to create a practical platform enabling Arab companies to reach new markets, identify trusted partners and develop business and investment opportunities.

The wider goal, he added, is to build an interconnected Arab logistics network capable of expanding internationally and strengthening links between regional companies and global markets.

ASE conducts quarterly review of index constituents

AMMAN (JT) — The Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) has conducted its quarterly review of the constituents of its indices to ensure they reflect market performance and the trading activity of listed companies.

As part of the rebalancing process, the ASE reviewed the trading activity of listed companies during the last quarter and screened all listed companies based on the criteria used for the in-

indices, including full market capitalisation and the number of trading days during the quarter, according to an ASE statement.

Following the review, six companies were added to the ASE General Index (ASEGI), while two companies were excluded.

The companies added to the index were Future Arab Investment Company, Zara Investment Holding, Nutri Dar, Al Nisr Al Arabi Insurance, Middle

East Insurance and Arab International Hotels.

The companies excluded were Gulf Insurance Group in Jordan and United Financial Investments.

As part of the review, the ASE calculated the free-float market capitalisation of all listed companies based on data received from the Securities Depository Centre.

The ASE applies a 10 per cent cap on the weight of individual companies

in the indices to prevent any single company from dominating the index. Accordingly, adjustments were made to the weights of companies included in the ASEGI, ASE20 and ASETR indices.

Regarding the ASEGI, the full market capitalisation of its constituents represents 96.1 per cent of the total market capitalisation of companies listed on the ASE, while their free-float market capitalisation represents 89.7 per cent of the total free-float market capitalisation of companies listed on the ASE

cent of the total free-float market capitalisation of listed companies.

For the ASE20 and ASETR indices, the full market capitalisation of their constituents represents 89 per cent of the total market capitalisation of companies listed on the ASE, while their free-float market capitalisation represents 89.7 per cent of the total free-float market capitalisation of companies listed on the ASE

Energy costs spark inflation surge across Europe

FRANKFURT, Germany (AFP) — Inflation accelerated more than expected in Germany, France and Italy in September as energy costs soared because of the Middle East war, official data showed Wednesday, boosting expectations for further eurozone interest rate hikes.

The annual rate hit 3.3 per cent in Germany, Europe's biggest economy, the fastest pace since December 2023, according to preliminary data from the statistics agency Destatis.

In France consumer prices rose three per cent in the month compared to a year earlier, the highest since February 2024 and a sharp increase from 2.4 per cent in August, statistics office Insee said.

In Italy inflation jumped to 4.2 per cent, nearly a full per centage point above the 3.3 per cent recorded in August, the Istat agency reported.

The price hikes are well above the European Central Bank's (ECB) inflation target of two per cent, raising the likelihood it will raise interest rates further.

Diesel prices in particular have hit record highs in Germany, France, Italy and several other eurozone countries in recent weeks, a result of the Middle East war that has slowed shipments of both crude oil and refined fuels from the Gulf.

That has raised expectations among analysts that the ECB will tighten monetary policy further in the coming months to rein in inflation, potentially dampening the euro-



A man walks past a giant Euro logo at the visitor centre of the European Central Bank headquarters, Frankfurt, Germany, July 18, 2024

zone's economic growth.

The central bank raised its benchmark rate to 2.5 per cent earlier this month.

Inflation data for the full eurozone will be released on Friday.

Inflation 'feeding through'

Jack Allen-Reynolds, an economist at Capital Economics, said the inflation readings "suggest that the indirect effects of higher energy costs are beginning to feed through" to the wider economy.

But he added that "this is unlikely to tip the balance for the ECB" and he expects policymakers to keep rates steady at their next meeting in October, before hiking again in December.

His view was shared by other analysts who

said the central bank would wait until December, when it also releases updated economic forecasts.

Some analysts also noted that core inflation in Germany, which excludes volatile food and energy costs, was steady at 2.4 per cent in September.

"This should ease the immediate pressure on the ECB to implement further monetary tightening at its next meeting," said Dirk Schumacher, chief economist at the German public lender KfW.

Still, Rory Fennessy of Oxford Economics said the latest inflation readings could shift the debate at the ECB.

"The fact that inflation has surprised to the upside in September will only strengthen the case among the hawks in the

[ECB governing council] for a more aggressive pace of tightening," he said.

Analysts at ING meanwhile said the French figures "suggest that inflation is likely to remain above three per cent for the rest of 2026 before gradually declining in 2027".

That will weigh on household purchasing power "at a time when consumption is weakening and rising interest rates are exacerbating France's fiscal difficulties," they said.

Consumer spending fell 0.5 per cent in France in August, Insee also reported Wednesday, and the country's public debt stood at 119 per cent of GDP in the second quarter — nearly double the eurozone limit of 60 per cent.

Germany orders winter gas reserves boost as Mideast war worries mount

FRANKFURT, Germany (AFP) — The German government on Wednesday ordered a state-owned company to boost gas reserves as worries mount about low storage levels ahead of winter, citing "geopolitical risks" amid the Iran war.

Gas reserves are currently around 58 per cent full in Germany, compared to an EU average of some 70 per cent, and way below legally mandated levels that Europe's top economy requires for the winter.

Economy Minister Katherine Reiche "has decided to instruct fed-

erally owned company SEFE... to increase natural gas storage", an economy ministry spokeswoman told AFP.

"The central reason for this step lies in ongoing geopolitical risks."

European gas prices surged to a three-year high earlier this month, with the Middle East conflict and near-total closure of the Strait of Hormuz disrupting global energy markets.

The continent, which relies heavily on energy imports, has greatly diversified its supplies since Russian gas deliveries collapsed following

Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

But disruptions to supplies from the Gulf, and the resulting higher prices on world markets, represent a fresh headache for European governments and businesses.

SEFE (Securing Energy For Europe) was formerly the German branch of Russian energy giant Gazprom but, following the outbreak of the Ukraine war, it was taken into state ownership by Berlin.

The company operates around a quarter of Germany's gas storage

capacity.

The economy ministry said SEFE will decide how much to increase storage by at what stage — and other companies would also be expected to boost their reserves.

"The measures to be initiated by SEFE are also intended as a clear signal to other companies," the spokeswoman added.

Germany has a target for its main storage facilities to be 80-per cent full going into winter but a number of factors have meant that levels have been unusually low this year.

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Wednesday amounted to JD11.9 million spread over 6.4 million shares that traded through 5,026 transactions.

The ASE share price index closed at 4190.73 points, with an increase of 0.28 per cent.

Out of 106 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 49 companies rose while the share price of another 36 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were Al Zarqa Educational and Investment by 7.33 per cent, Masafat for Specialised Transport by 5.71 per cent, Babelon Investments Company Plc. by 4.94 per cent, Jordan Poultry Processing and Marketing by 4.35 per cent, and Century Investment Group by 4.26 per cent.

The companies whose shares dropped the most were Northern Cement Company by 7.43 per cent, Jordan Dairy by 4.62 per cent, Shira Real Estate Development and Investments by 4.23 per cent, International Arabian Development and Investment Trading Company by 4 per cent, and Amwaj Properties by 3.85 per cent.



Jordan’s Silver Economy: Ageing Brings Challenges and Opportunities

By Hadeel El Bis

Jordan is still classed as a young society, but demographic indicators point to rapid shifts that will reshape it in the coming decades, with the number of older people rising markedly.

These changes strain social protection and healthcare systems. Experts say they also open the door to promising economic and investment opportunities in the “silver economy”: Developing goods, services and investments that meet older people’s needs and turning them into an engine of growth.

Jordan’s population is around 12 million, and people aged 60 and over make up about 5.5 per cent. That share is projected to reach 16.6 per cent by 2050, according to a recent report by the Phoenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies, which says public policy must be rethought to prepare for an ageing population.

The report highlights the difficulties older people face. Only 52 per cent are covered by pension or social security schemes, 21 per cent receive help from the National Aid Fund or the Ministry of Social Development, and 27 per cent fall outside both, with no regular income.

Average pension income is about 400 dinars a month, while older people put their basic needs at 500 to 800 dinars. The report attributes this widening gap to years of informal work and weak social security coverage, meaning poverty in old age is an extension of unstable working conditions, not merely a result of ageing.

It also notes a rise in economic abuse of older people, including pressure to give up property or hand over control of their money, particularly where they depend on relatives. This underlines the need for stronger legal and economic protection.

What is the silver economy?

Ahmad Awad, director of the Phoenix Centre, says the silver economy is a modern concept gaining global traction. The term first emerged in Japan and covers economic activity, investment, goods and services aimed at older people.

Awad says Jordan is at an early stage of ageing, but the indicators demand preparation now. He argues that the silver economy is not a burden but a promising investment sector that could create growth and jobs.

This accords with OECD estimates that older people are among the world’s fastest-growing consumer groups, with rising demand for healthcare, assistive technology, suitable housing, financial services and medical tourism.

Jordan already has services for older people in health, care, financial services and transport, he says, but no sta-

tistical tools to measure the sector’s size or its contribution to GDP, investment and employment.

He calls for specialised national accounts for the silver economy to track spending, investment and consumption linked to older people, and says improvements in the national statistical system make this feasible. Accurate data would help policymakers design more efficient policies and give the private sector a clearer view of future opportunities.

Sectors expected to grow include healthcare and geriatrics, pharmaceuticals, physiotherapy, home and long-term care, suitable transport, assistive technology, financial services and insurance tourism and age-friendly housing.

World Bank studies indicate that investing in long-term and home care improves older people’s quality of life, cre-

ates jobs and eases future pressure on health systems as life expectancy continues to rise.

From care to rights

Dr Ola Badr, author of policy papers on elderly care, says older people should be treated as full citizens with rights rather than as objects of charity. She says the current system has clear gaps, especially in mental health.

Sadness, isolation and lethargy are often dismissed as normal ageing, she explains, delaying the diagnosis of depression and anxiety. Primary care centres also lack routine psychological screening protocols.

The World Health Organisation says around 14 per cent of people aged 60 and over live with a mental disorder.

Depression and anxiety are the most common, and many cases go undiagnosed and untreated because of the mistaken belief that they are part of growing old.

Badr also points to a shortage of specialists in geriatrics and older people’s mental health, and to lingering stigma around seeking psychological treatment.

Economically, she says minimum pensions and social assistance no longer keep pace with living and medical costs. Much of older people’s income goes on medicines and healthcare, and many struggle to obtain health insurance or medicines for chronic illnesses, dementia and Alzheimer’s.

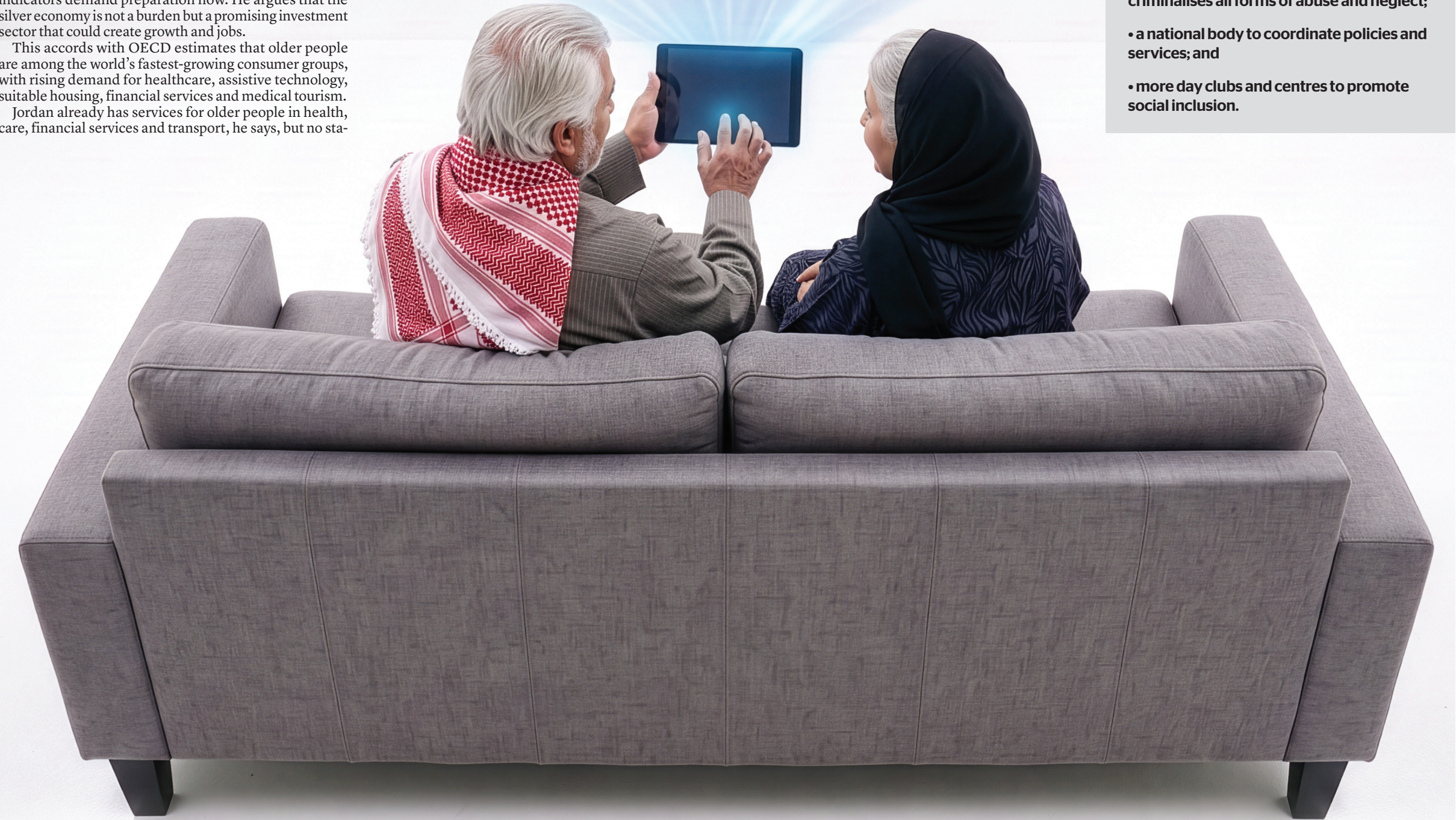
The UN says the world is undergoing one of the fastest demographic shifts in history, with the number of older people expected to double in the coming decades.

Under the Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030), the UN recommends that states legislate to protect older people from violence, neglect and discrimination, and integrate them into economic and social policy as partners in development rather than mere recipients of care.

Although the silver economy is still a new concept in the Arab region, it has become policy in several countries with ageing populations. In Japan, one of the world’s oldest societies, it has fostered specialised industries including assistive robotics, healthcare and smart home services. The European Union has adopted a silver economy strategy to support innovation and investment, while South Korea and Singapore have expanded investment in long-term care, smart housing and health technology.

BADR CALLS FOR:

- a national campaign on older people’s mental health;
- psychological support integrated into primary care;
- a free counselling helpline;
- a national law on older people’s rights that criminalises all forms of abuse and neglect;
- a national body to coordinate policies and services; and
- more day clubs and centres to promote social inclusion.



JORDAN’S SILVER ECONOMY: FACTS & FIGURES

