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Crown Prince meets with Monaco prince

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Crown Prince Hussein met on Wednesday with Prince Albert II of Monaco, on the sidelines of the MED9 Summit of the Southern European Union Countries being held in Croatia.

The meeting covered the deep-rooted ties between Jordan and Monaco, as well as ways to enhance cooperation across various sectors, according to a Royal Court statement.

Speaking about regional developments, the Crown Prince emphasised the importance of continuing to step up international efforts to restore calm in the region in a way that ensures the security of Arab states.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi, and Director of the Office of the Crown Prince Zaid Bagain attended the meeting.

Deputising for King, Crown Prince attends MED9 Summit in Croatia

- Crown Prince thanks Croatia for inviting Jordan as special guest for 3rd consecutive year
- His Royal Highness underlines immense potential to build upon ties between Jordan, MED9 countries through cooperation, joint projects
- Crown Prince says Jordan's geographic position serves as strategic gateway linking Middle East with Europe

AMMAN (JT) — Deputising for His Majesty King Abdullah, HRH Crown Prince Hussein on Wednesday attended the MED9 Summit of the Southern European Union Countries being held in Croatia under the theme "For a More Secure, Resilient and Sustainable Mediterranean".

During the summit, the Crown Prince expressed appreciation to Croatia for inviting Jordan to participate as a special guest in the summit for the third consecutive year, which affirms the strength of relations between Jordan, Croatia, and other countries of the MED9 group, according to a Royal Court statement.

His Royal Highness emphasised, during his remarks at the summit, the importance of stepping up international efforts to ease tensions in the region and ensure



Deputising for His Majesty King Abdullah, HRH Crown Prince Hussein participates in the MED9 Summit of the Southern European Union Countries, being held in Croatia

freedom of navigation in international waterways, as well as the need for the international community to address the root causes of the escalation in the region.

The Crown Prince highlighted the repercussions of the Iran war on the region and the world, noting that some countries have come under attack, whilst many others are facing economic challenges such as rising prices, energy shortages and supply chain disruptions.

His Royal Highness said Jordan has experienced the impact of the war on both of these fronts.

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Jordan condemns Houthi attacks on Saudi airports

Three people killed, dozens injured in attacks on Riyadh, Abha airports — Saudi media

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan on Wednesday condemned two Houthi attacks targeting Abha International Airport and King Khalid International Airport in Saudi Arabia, which killed several residents of Moroccan, Algerian, and Sudanese nationalities and injured others.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs slammed the Houthi attacks as a violation of Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and a threat to its security and stability and a breach of international law and the UN Charter.

Ministry Spokesperson Fouad Majali reaffirmed Jordan's "absolute solidarity" with Saudi Arabia and sup-



port for all measures it takes to protect its security, stability, resources, and the safety of its citizens and residents.

Majali also expressed Jordan's con-

jured in attacks on two airports in Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom's General Authority of Civil Aviation said on Wednesday.

A Moroccan woman and an Algerian woman were killed in an attack on Tuesday on Abha International Airport in Asir province, which borders Yemen, according to Riyadh-based Arab News.

The strike injured 28 people, some severely, including a Bangladeshi and Filipino, the authority said.

The attack on Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport on Wednesday killed a Sudanese man and injured eight people, including two Egyptians and one Pakistani, ac-

cording to Arab News.

All of the injured were immediately transferred to hospital, the authority said, adding that the two attacks also caused damage to the airports.

On Wednesday morning, a spokesman for the coalition to support Yemen's sovereignty said Saudi air defenses shot down a Houthi ballistic missile north of Riyadh.

Maj. Gen. Turki Al Maliki confirmed later in the evening that the launch platform used for the attack was destroyed in the Yemeni capital Sanaa, while the militants were preparing for an imminent attack against the Kingdom.



Foreign reserves at CBJ rise to \$28.5 billion

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan's foreign currency reserves rose by about \$3 billion, or 11.7 per cent, at the end of September compared with their level at the end of 2025, reaching \$28.5 billion, the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) said on Wednesday.

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Palestinians walk along a street lined with destroyed buildings at the Jabalia refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip on Monday

Israel strikes Gaza on October 7 anniversary, three dead — officials

GAZA CITY, NABLUS, Palestinian Territories (AFP) — Israel carried out new strikes in Gaza on Wednesday as it marked the third anniversary of the October 7 surprise attacks by Hamas, with Palestinian officials reporting three people dead.

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Registered companies rise 7.24% in first nine months of 2026

AMMAN (JT) — The number of companies registered in Jordan rose 7.24 per cent during the first nine months of 2026 compared with the same period last year, according to a report issued by the Companies Control Department.

A total of 6,046 companies were registered from January through September, compared with 5,638 during the corresponding period of 2025, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The total registered capital exceeded JD201 million, with limited liability companies accounting for the largest share of new registrations at 4,682 or 77 per cent of the total. Their combined registered capital exceeded JD76 million.

Private sharehold-



ing companies recorded the highest registered capital among company categories during the period, exceeding JD77 million, according to the report.

The number of companies deregistered or cancelled fell 15 per cent year-on-year to 764, compared with 899 during the same period in 2025.

Companies deregistered in the same year they were registered

fell 50 per cent to 10 during the first nine months of 2026, compared with 20 during the corresponding period last year.

Capital increases reached nearly JD1 billion in 2026 for the second consecutive year, an increase of approximately JD48 million compared with 2025.

A total of 990 companies increased their capital during the period, compared with 1,300 in 2025, while 146 companies reduced their capital, compared with 203 during the same period last year.

The report also said that 92,193 companies had activated electronic accounts since the launch of the department's digital services at the end of 2020, including 5,973 companies during 2026.



The King Hussein Cancer Foundation and the Kuwait Society for Relief sign a cooperation agreement aimed at supporting cancer patients arriving from the Gaza Strip in Jordan

KHCF, Kuwaiti charity sign agreement to support Gaza patients in Jordan

AMMAN (JT) — The King Hussein Cancer Foundation (KHCF) and the Kuwait Society for Relief have signed a cooperation agreement aimed at supporting cancer patients arriving from the Gaza Strip by covering the costs of medical care at the King Hussein Cancer Centre (KHCC) and their accommodation in Jordan during treatment.

The agreement was signed by KHCF Director General Nisreen Qatamish and Chairman of the Kuwait Society for Relief Ibrahim Al Saleh during a visit by a society delegation to the centre, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The visit included a

meeting with several patients from Gaza who are benefitting from the support, as well as an opportunity to see the tangible impact of the humanitarian assistance on the ground.

Qatamish said that the support provided by the society represents an extension of the strategic partnerships between KHCF and supporters from Kuwait.

She praised the society for its continued support for cancer patients arriving from Gaza, which gives them the opportunity to receive comprehensive treatment in accordance with the highest standards and helps ease the living challenges they face.

For his part, Kuwait Society for Relief Deputy Director General Omar Al Thuwaini said that supporting cancer patients arriving from the Gaza Strip stems from the society's humanitarian mission and its commitment to standing by the most vulnerable groups, particularly amid the exceptional circumstances faced by the people of the Strip.

"We believe that providing treatment and dignified care for patients is a humanitarian duty before it is relief work," he said, adding that the society is proud of its partnership with KHCF, which he described as a leading model in providing specialised medical care.

Olive presses nationwide to begin operations on October 15 — Agriculture Ministry

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Agriculture on Wednesday decided to allow olive presses across the Kingdom to open and commence operations for the current season as of October 15.

The ministry called on agricultural directors in all governorates to monitor presses to ensure compliance with the set date, stressing that no pressing will be permitted prior to October 15 under penalty of legal liability, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

With the season approaching, 153 licensed presses nationwide are prepared to receive the crop, with production expected to reach around 30,000 tonnes, according to Head of the Olive Presses Owners Syndicate Tayseer Najdawi.

Najdawi said that most presses would begin operations within 15 days, following the completion of preparations and health and safety inspections by relevant authorities, including the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health and the Jordan Food and Drug Administration.

Describing indicators for the current season as "very good", Najdawi said that this year's expected crop is significantly better than last year's season, when national production fell to less than 20 per cent of the Kingdom's usual average of 25,000 to 35,000



Head of the Olive Presses Owners Syndicate Tayseer Najdawi expects olive oil prices to range between JD90 and JD110 for the 16-kilogramme tin, depending on quality and grade

tonnes.

This season's production is expected to reach around 30,000 tonnes, compared to a domestic consumption of 25,000 to 28,000 tonnes, which is likely to leave a surplus.

Regarding operational costs, Najdawi indicated that pressing fees are likely to rise by 5 to 10 per cent this season, describing the increase as "modest" given rising running and maintenance expenditures.

Current pressing charges stand at JD0.65 per kilogramme of oil, a rate maintained for nearly 12 years despite continuous increases in

operational costs.

Najdawi attributed the anticipated adjustment to "significant" rises in maintenance and operating costs over the past two years, alongside the high cost of importing machinery and spare parts unavailable in local markets.

Olive oil prices would remain subject to supply and demand, with prices expected to range between JD90 and JD110 for the 16-kilogramme tin, depending on quality and grade, according to Najdawi.

Final price determinations will depend on overall output, market supply, and oil quality

throughout the season, he noted, emphasising that priority will be given to meeting domestic demand before opening export channels in the event of local self-sufficiency.

Final price determinations will depend on overall output, market supply...

Mahmoud Ouran, director general of the General Union of Jordanian Farmers, cautioned consumers

against promotional offers selling local olive oil for JD50 to JD60 per the 16-kilogramme tin.

Ouran stressed that production costs for the 16-kilogramme tin range between JD75 and JD80 for farmers, making low-price offers economically illogical.

He urged citizens to source olive oil exclusively from trusted channels, warning against individuals impersonating farm owners or oil marketers, as well as vendors operating near press premises claiming to sell freshly pressed oil prior to the official opening.

Italian professor explores whether robots can develop self-awareness

By Saeb Rawashdeh

AMMAN — From the very beginning, artists and scientists pointed out on the negative side of robotisation of the industry and world, and what would be long-term repercussions of so-called intelligent machines.

Artificial intelligence (AI) continues to advance at a remarkable pace and the debate is growing more intense: How intelligent can machines become? Could we one day create a robot that does more than receive information, analyse it, and respond, but is actually aware of itself and the world around it?

Intelligence and social consciousness is not the same thing. An intelligent system can process vast amounts of data, learn new techniques, solve problems, generate language and make complex decisions.

Yet, none of this necessarily means it is aware that it is doing so. Consciousness involves a subjective inner experience, a sense of self and



Professor Antonio Chella (right) on Monday at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Amman talks about the dilemmas of AI

an awareness of what is happening both internally and externally.

"There's no agreement among scientists what is for human to be consciousness," said Italian Professor Antonio Chella, who spoke on Monday at a lecture titled "Engineering Consciousness: Can a Robot Become Self-Aware?" hosted by the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Amman.

Chella, who teaches robotics at the University of Palermo, is also the

director of its Robotics Laboratory.

"The challenge to control intelligent machines lies in the fact that we have no way of measuring a machine's inner experience, assuming such an experience exists at all," said the professor.

Even in humans, science has yet to fully explain how consciousness emerges from brain activity. If people still do not completely understand human consciousness, the question becomes

even more difficult when they seek it in machines, Chella underlined.

"I wanted to study consciousness in humans by studying robots," Chella said, noting that there are two main ideas about consciousness-phenomenal consciousness and access consciousness.

Neurons are interlinked with other neurons of human brain, but "When we open a robot we would see transistors, and we cannot say that neurons and transistor

are the same," the professor said.

"Though, I prefer to leave the door open," Chella said, adding that some aspects of human consciousness are based on introspection.

Opinions on this issue vary widely. Some researchers argue that what matters is not the material an entity is made of, but the way information and processes are organised within it.

"We need to know what's going on within the machine," Chella said.

From this perspective, if we can build a system capable of performing the functions associated with consciousness, artificial consciousness could, in principle, become possible.

Other scientists maintain that consciousness is inseparable from biological life, the body, the nervous system, and sensory experience. In their view, information processing alone, no matter how sophisticated, is not enough to create genuine subjective experience.



Members of a parliamentary delegation attend separate meetings with international parliamentary groups at the 153rd General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Tanzania

MPs highlight peace, development, Palestinian rights at IPU assembly

AMMAN (JT) — A parliamentary delegation, headed by First Deputy Speaker of the Lower House Khamis Attieh, has continued its meetings at the 153rd General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Tanzania.

Members of the delegation attended separate meetings with international parliamentary groups, emphasising the need to bolster cooperation and exchange perspectives on key agenda items, particularly good governance, community empowerment, inclusion and public trust, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

Addressing the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs, MP Omar Khaldi said that parliaments are no longer strictly national bodies for legislation and oversight, but essential components of the international system and collective efforts to address crises, build peace and achieve sustainable development.

He said that the interconnected nature of current global challenges requires genuine international

cooperation and institutions capable of translating global commitments into concrete policies, legislation and action.

Khaldi stressed the need to support political solutions, adhere to international law, protect civilians and strengthen international cooperation against terrorism and extremism.

He also noted that water, food, climate, energy and cyber security have become central pillars of national and human security.

Participating in a workshop hosted by the working group on the role of parliaments in enforcing international humanitarian law and international human rights law, MP Motaz Abu Rumman said that respecting international law was both a legal and moral obligation for states.

He stressed that Palestinian children hold the same fundamental right to life as any child worldwide, emphasising the Palestinian people's right to live freely, safely and with dignity on their land, secure their legitimate national rights and establish their independent

state on their national soil.

Addressing the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, MP Yanal Freihat stressed that justice is the cornerstone of development, saying genuine sustainability cannot be achieved while occupation persists.

Freihat called on participating delegations to consider how the international community can discuss sustainable development and equal opportunities while entire populations are deprived of basic human survival requirements.

He stressed that Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and Jerusalem are not seeking green development, artificial intelligence or climate change solutions, but rather their fundamental right to survival, life, freedom, security and dignity.

The delegation is scheduled to continue its programme of meetings through the conclusion of the assembly, which features broad participation from speakers and parliamentary representatives from more than 140 countries.

GAM identifies over 40 sites with illegally reserved parking spaces

AMMAN (JT) — The Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) has identified more than 40 locations where public parking spaces were being illegally reserved, while the number of people referred to the administrative governor has exceeded 15, GAM Executive Director of Districts and City Services Ghazi Hadid said on Wednesday.

Hadid told Al Mamlaka TV that the campaign against unlicensed valet parking services is ongoing throughout the year, noting that it has been intensified amid numerous complaints about the illegal reservation of parking spaces.



GAM Executive Director of Districts and City Services Ghazi Hadid on Wednesday urges citizens to verify that valet services or parking facilities are licensed before using them

He urged citizens to verify that valet services or parking facilities are licensed before using them, noting that the licence must be displayed in a way that allows us-

ers to verify the legality of the service.

In the event of a violation, complaints can be submitted through GAM's electronic services, its unified contact

number or emergency numbers. Municipality teams are also deployed in the field around the clock to monitor violations and respond to complaints.

Hadid said that the latest regulations governing valet parking licensing were issued in May 2026 and set out the conditions and instructions for obtaining a licence.

The licence requires the company to have a commercial registration, in addition to meeting the procedures and instructions related to the company and its employees, including ensuring that employees have no restrictions

against them.

The Greater Amman Municipality announced that valet permits can be issued electronically through its website for parking company owners and commercial establishments.

For establishments wishing to use their structural parking spaces for valet services, the municipality said that the required spaces must be fully designated for the business, without any reduction, and must not be subject to a fee. Service providers are also prohibited from using pavements or reserving them with barriers under any circumstances.



Prime Minister Jafar Hassan

Prime minister directs replacement of unsafe heaters ahead of winter

AMMAN (JT) — Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Tuesday directed the Ministry of Social Development to continue replacing unsafe heaters used by citizens with safer alternatives. The measure is part of government efforts to protect public safety ahead of winter and allow households to replace substandard heating appliances with certified models, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

In January, the Cabinet allocated the necessary funds, and tasked the ministry with replacing 15,000 unsafe heaters through its directorates and centres across the Kingdom's governorates.

Hassan also directed the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply and relevant regulatory authorities to intensify inspections of factories and commercial outlets to ensure compliance with safety standards.

He stressed that violations must be detected and dealt with in accordance with the law and called for strict enforcement of safety requirements.

Foreign minister, EU officials discuss ties, regional developments

AMMAN (JT) — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi on Tuesday met with Croatian Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Gordan Grli-Radman to discuss bilateral relations and regional developments.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of HRH Crown Prince Hussein's visit to Croatia, where he is representing His Majesty King Abdullah at the South European Countries Summit (MED9) in Split, according to a Foreign Ministry statement.

Safadi and Grli-Radman discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations and reviewed regional developments.

Also on Wednesday, Safadi met with Portuguese Foreign Minister Paulo Rangel on the sidelines of the MED9 Summit.

The two ministers affirmed the strong friendship and close relations between Jordan and Portugal, and stressed the importance of continuing efforts to strengthen cooperation in various fields.

They also discussed regional developments. Safadi also met with EU Commissioner for the Mediterranean Dubravka Šuica, with talks focusing on ways to deepen cooperation between Jordan and the EU.

The two officials stressed the importance of the Jordan-EU Investment Conference, which Jordan will host on November 19, and discussed regional developments and efforts to restore lasting security and stability.



Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi

Official travel restrictions generate JD3m in savings — minister

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Abdulatif Najdawi said on Wednesday that Prime Minister Jafar Hassan's decision to restrict official foreign travel achieved fiscal savings of approximately JD3 million to date.

Najdawi noted that financial savings resulting from the decision are expected to reach around JD4 million by the end of 2026, according to a provided statement.

Prime Minister Jafar Hassan issued a circular in February restricting foreign travel for ministers, heads of official bodies and government department directors exclusively to essential operational meetings.



Aerial view of the Prime Ministry

The Prime Minister specified that travel must be limited to a single official without accompanying delegations and that official stays must not exceed two nights.

In a directive issued in early June, the Prime Minister extended the decision to suspend official travel for staff, delegations and committees through the end of 2026, permitting travel only under exceptional circumstances with prior approval.

The directive also included suspending the hosting of official foreign delegations through the end of 2026.

Army chief, US Army Central commander discuss cooperation

AMMAN (JT) — Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Maj. Gen. Magdi Harasis on Wednesday received Commander of US Army Central Lt. Gen. Kevin Leahy and an accompanying delegation.

Harasis and Leahy discussed ways to enhance military cooperation and coordination between the two armed forces, and expand the existing defence partnership to support joint efforts to promote regional and international security and stability, according to a Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) statement.

Leahy expressed appreciation for Jordan and the JAF's role in promoting security and stability at the regional and international levels.

Senior JAF officers and the US defence attaché in Amman attended the meeting.



JAF photo

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Maj. Gen. Magdi Harasis on Wednesday receives Commander of US Army Central Lt. Gen. Kevin Leahy and an accompanying delegation



Army foils infiltration attempt by two individuals

AMMAN (JT) — The Southern Military Region early on Wednesday thwarted an infiltration attempt by two individuals across one of its border fronts, after Border Guard forces detected them attempting to cross the border illegally.

The forces applied the approved rules of engagement, arrested the two individuals and referred them to the relevant authorities for legal action, according to a Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) statement.

The JAF reaffirmed its commitment to protecting national borders, and countering infiltration and illegal entry attempts in accordance with applicable laws and instructions.

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Environment Ministry launches update of green growth plans for six sectors

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Environment on Wednesday launched work to update the Phase II Green Growth Plans for the energy, transport, agriculture, water, tourism and waste sectors, with technical support from the EU Delegation to Jordan.

The update builds on the National Green Growth Action Plans for 2021-2026 and is aligned with the priorities of the Economic Modernisation Vision and requirements for the next phase, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

National experts specialising in the six sectors have been selected to review the previous plans, assess progress and develop updated, implementable plans in coordination with the relevant ministries.

Minister of Environment Ayman Suleiman, who chairs the Green Growth Steering Committee, said the update is part of efforts to establish green growth as a national strategic approach to sustainable development.

Suleiman made the remarks during a meeting to launch the update process, attended by EU Delegation to Jordan Energy and Environment Programme Manager Omar Abu Eid, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Environment Omar Arabiat, who chairs the Green Growth Technical Committee, ministry officials and national experts.

Suleiman said that the updated plans would help move from general green growth policies and frameworks to practical programmes, projects and measures that address national priorities and the needs of individual sectors.

He highlighted the need for solutions that improve resource-use efficiency, protect natural capital, support green investment and innovation, create green jobs and help address the impacts of climate change, in line with the Economic Modernisation Vision and Sustainable Development Goals.

Abu Eid highlighted the strategic partnership between Jordan and the EU and the Ministry of Environment's role in advancing the green transition.

He said that EU technical support for updating the plans is in line with the bloc's priorities on the green transition, climate action and the sustainability of the Mediterranean region.

Under the Green Economy Programme in Jordan, EU support focuses on strengthening integration among the energy, water, food and environment sectors, improving resource-use efficiency, supporting nature-based solutions to climate change and turning environmental challenges into opportunities for sustainable development, Abu Eid said.

He also stressed the importance of private-sector cooperation and attracting European investment to priority development and economic projects.



Petra photo

The Ministry of Environment on Wednesday launches work to update the Phase II Green Growth Plans

CRIME

Court upholds over two-year sentence for teen in sexual assault case

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — The Court of Cassation has upheld a January 2022 Juvenile Court ruling sentencing a 17-year-old boy to over two years in prison for molesting a minor from Irbid a year earlier.

The court declared the 17-year-old defendant (at the time of trial) guilty of molesting the

minor and handed him a four-year sentence to be served at a juvenile correctional facility.

However, the court decided to reduce the sentence to two years and eight months because the victim's family dropped charges against him and to "give the defendant a second chance in life since he is young, and should get a chance at reforming himself and reintegrating into society".

Court papers said the victim was lured by the defendant and two other men, who were tried at the Criminal Court, to an apartment.

"The three took turns in sexually assaulting the minor at knife point," court papers said.

The defendants threatened the boy "not to inform anyone about the sexual assault incident and let him go", court papers added.

The victim left and notified his family, who filed a complaint against the three defendants, the court maintained.

The defendant contested his verdict, claiming that the court relied on contradictory testimonies by the

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victim.

Meanwhile, the Juvenile Court's attorney general asked the higher court to uphold the sentence.

The higher court ruled that the Juvenile Court proceedings were accurate and that the defendant received the appropriate punishment.

"The defendant confessed to the sexual assault incident when he was arrested," the higher court ruled.

Therefore, he deserved the punishment he received, the higher court added.

The Court of Cassation was headed by Judge Mohammad Ibrahim and included judges Nayef Samarat, Yassin Abdullat, Hamad Ghzawi and Mohammad Khashashneh.

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This handout photograph released and taken by the French Ministry of the Armed Forces and Veterans on Tuesday shows French President Emmanuel Macron (left) attending the first test launch of a new intercontinental missile, fired from a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine off the coast of Finistere, western France

French missile test shows Europe militarising — Kremlin

MOSCOW (AFP) — France's test-firing of a nuclear-capable missile showed Europe was militarising, the Kremlin said on Wednesday, adding that Russia was monitoring the situation closely.

The test took place on Tuesday off France's west coast, the country's defence ministry said.

The missile, a variant of the M51, was not carrying a warhead and fell "in the North Atlantic,

hundreds of kilometres from any coastline", the ministry said.

French President Emmanuel Macron described the test as a success, saying in a video that it sent a "strong and clear" message.

"Europe is obsessed with the idea of militarisation," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters when asked about Macron's comments.

"Against the backdrop

of such aggressive actions and such plans, Russia is on its guard. We are monitoring all this closely."

Tension is rising between Russia and Ukraine's European allies, among them France, over the Ukraine war.

NATO has accused Russia of carrying out an escalating campaign of hybrid warfare against Kyiv's European backers, an accusation Moscow rejects.

Israel army destroys memorials to Palestinians on October 7 anniversary

RAMALLAH, Palestinian Territories (AFP) — Israel's military destroyed on Wednesday memorials across the West Bank to Palestinians accused of killing Israelis or who died in clashes, on the third anniversary of Hamas' October 7 attack, the army and local officials said.

The military took action across the occupied West Bank "to destroy monuments to terrorists", an army spokesperson told AFP, without explicitly connecting the move to the anniversary of Gaza-based Hamas' unprecedented attack on Israel.

Troops destroyed a stone monument and tore down commemorative posters in the northern region of Jenin, governorate spokeswoman Hala Abu Baker told AFP.

"A memorial to the martyr Yasser Hamdouni was destroyed in the town of Yaabad, and photos of various martyrs were removed from several locations in the city of Jenin," Abu Baker said.

Hamdouni was accused of killing an Israeli settler in 2003, and died while serving a life sentence in 2016.

Palestinians refer to those killed by Israeli fire or in Israeli prisons as martyrs, with stone memorials or posters



Children of displaced Palestinians, play on a destroyed building in Gaza City on Wednesday

commemorating them a frequent sight in West Bank villages and towns.

Israeli troops also raided the West Bank city of Nablus, "destroyed five memorials to martyrs in various parts of the city" and arrested scores of residents, deputy mayor Iyad Bakeer told AFP.

Israeli politicians have frequently denounced monuments,

seeing them as glorifying attacks, but it is rare for the army to destroy them, especially in areas nominally under Palestinian Authority control.

Separately, in Beit Dugqu, the army destroyed the home of a Palestinian man who was accused of killing an Israeli settler last month, the town's mayor and an AFP journalist reported.

Mayor Nazmi Mansour told AFP that "the

Israeli army raided the town at 4:00 am and distributed leaflets saying it would demolish the home of detainee Qadri Samara".

An AFP journalist saw an Israeli military bulldozer clearing the rubble of a house after it was blown up amid a heavy deployment of Israeli forces in the town northwest of Jerusalem.

Israeli forces routinely demolish the homes

of Palestinians accused of carrying out attacks. Israel says it wants to deter attacks but rights groups accuse Israel of collectively punishing Palestinians' family members.

According to an AFP tally based on data from the Palestinian health ministry, Israeli forces or settlers have killed 1,113 Palestinians in the territory since the start of the Gaza war.

Famine-scarred southern Madagascar braces for El Nino

IFOTAKA, Madagascar (AFP) — With scrawny arms and bellies swollen by malnutrition, a dozen children waited for a meal at a World Food Programme centre in an arid area of southern Madagascar scarred by famine and bracing for the looming El Nino.

Flour porridge simmered on a stove at the site that opened in the small town of Ifotaka the year after a 2021-2022 famine then described by the United Nations as the first in the world caused by climate change.

A staffer member had to slip away: She had just learned of the death of a malnourished two-year-old.

Even before the full impact due in the coming months of the El Nino warming pattern, which experts have said is on course to be the strongest on record, people in Madagascar's far south are already going hungry.

The World Meteorological Organisation has warned of "increased



Patients lie on beds inside a ward at the district hospital in Amboasary Atsimo on September 24

drought risk" in southern Africa as the months-long phenomenon begins in October, with countries across the planet, from Brazil to India, also vulnerable.

In Madagascar, international aid cuts and spiking inflation caused by the Middle East war

add to the threat of severe hunger.

Ifotaka, an inland town of wooden shacks and corrugated iron huts, was the epicentre of the 2021-2022 "kere", as periods of hunger are known here.

Around 30,000 people in the surrounding region of sandy soil and bristling

cacti suffered from a life-threatening lack of food. To survive, they boiled pieces of cactus and scraps of animal hide.

Fragile climate context

"There has been a dramatic increase in climate-related events in

Madagascar," WFP country director Tania Goosens told AFP.

"In 20 years, there have been 35 cyclones, eight floods and five severe droughts," she said, triple the climate events of the previous 20 years.

"So we're really in a very, very fragile context," Goosens said.

In the nearby coastal village of Manindra, where the ocean taunts people working dry land, rainfall was normally expected from late September, said 46-year-old farmer James Tsirimalaza.

"Unfortunately, there's no rain," he said.

Anticipating a crisis, the Save the Children NGO has doubled its normal budget for Madagascar, country representative Tatiana Dasy told AFP.

By April next year, 39 percent of children under the age of five will be suffering from acute malnutrition in Madagascar's "Grand South", according to predictions by the UN-

backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC).

This amounts to nearly 270,000 children.

The conflict between the United States, Israel and Iran that is driving up the price of oil and fertiliser will only add to the risks, it warned in July.

These increases will "directly affect the costs of transport, pumping, fertilisers, fuel for fishing, agricultural inputs and food prices", it said.

Annual food inflation in the large Indian Ocean island stood at 10.4 per cent in July, compared with 6.8 per cent in January.

'Even worse'

An hour away in a 4x4 vehicle, which no local owns, the hospital in Amboasary-Atsimo has recorded six deaths this year of malnourished children with medical complications.

In 2022, when the famine continued until

harvests in early May, 15 children died there.

On a wall, the logo of USAID, the US foreign aid agency dismantled in 2025, is a reminder that international help is also drying up.

The US funds covered patient transportation and health training via humanitarian agency Medecins du Monde, but ended two months earlier, an official told AFP.

The World Food Programme (WFP) predicts around 3.7 million people in Madagascar will experience "crisis-level food insecurity", Goosens said. "We haven't seen that in the country before, so it's even worse than in 2021-2022."

The programme aimed to support 720,000 people this year but funding had barely reached half of what was required, she said.

Waiting for the sun

At the WFP office, Eva Razafindrazaka held her grandson, being treated

for malnutrition, and explained she could not water her crops because they were too far from the communal water point.

"But those who have solar pumps can," the 51-year-old said.

As cattle were returned to their enclosure for the night, a farmer struggled to transport solar panels on a wheelbarrow, its wooden wheels sinking into the sand.

"If I leave them, I won't find them again," said Manjomaro Andrianantenaina, 25. He only got the panels the day before.

Drilling a well with a solar-powered pump cost him more than two million ariary, unaffordable to most in the region where more than 90 per cent of people live below the poverty line of \$2.15 per day, according to the World Bank in 2023.

"I used to worry about the lack of rain when it was hot," he said. "Now I wait for the sun so I can pump water from underground."

Climate champion Australia digging more coal

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australia's coal mines are expanding as exports boom, awkward timing for a nation preparing to champion clean energy as lead negotiator for the UN's climate summit.

The Strait of Hormuz closure has forced Asian countries to buy more coal as an alternative to disrupted gas supplies, analysts and miners said.

Instead of falling, as predicted by the International Energy Agency in December, global coal demand will rise 1.2 percent to a record 8.94 billion tonnes in 2026, the agency's mid-year report forecast.

The second-biggest exporter of coal, Australia is best placed to fill demand caused by the Middle East conflict, it added.

Australia is president of negotiations for the UN Conference of the Parties, or COP31, to be

held in Turkey in November, where it will seek to highlight the peril of climate change to low-lying Pacific Islands, accelerate clean energy and mobilise investment.

Australia's government said it has delivered Aus\$3.9 billion (\$2.7 billion) in climate finance from 2020 to 2025.

It is also shifting the population to renewable electricity, with a 2035 target to reduce emissions to 62-70 percent below 2005 levels. A third of households already use rooftop solar.

But environmental campaigners are unhappy at the nation's export of fossil fuels. Coal is the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions.

A 19-year coal mine extension approved by New South Wales state last week will create 809 million tonnes of emissions — 98 per cent when the coal is combusted overseas, author-

ities said.

"Climate harm does not stop at the border, and neither does the responsibility for it," the state's former fire commissioner turned climate activist, Greg Mullins, said.

An industry outlook shows Australia's annual thermal coal exports rose by 8 million tonnes to 213 million tonnes in 2025-2026.

COP31 president of negotiations, Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen, said Australia is building more renewable energy at home and abroad to create energy security less exposed to global conflict.

"Short-term increases in demand for coal as a result of an international supply shock should not be seen as a reversal of this direction," he told AFP.

"The exposure to volatile fossil fuel prices and

vulnerable supply routes reinforces the need to move faster on renewable energy, storage and electrification," he said.

Energy security

The coal transition in Asia has been set back by the Middle East war "in many ways", said Emi Gui, a member of the UN-supported Council of Engineers for Energy Transition.

"Countries are prioritising energy security over decarbonisation goals," Gui, a Monash University associate professor, told AFP.

Japan and South Korea are using more coal to replace scarce and expensive oil and gas.

Increasing electrification of transport, to cut reliance on oil, will also increase coal demand, she said.

"Worsened fiscal positions delay the retirement or decarbonisation



A coal hauler truck drives along a road with a load at the Moolarben coal mine, operated by Yancoal Australia, located in the western New South Wales coalfields and north of the town of Mudgee on Saturday

of coal plants, and there is less financial support for cleaner infrastructure such as solar and wind," she said.

Climate change will 'bite everybody'

In the rural NSW town of Mudgee, resident Bev Smiles says three nearby coal mines are seeking to expand.

Koalas, microbats and honeyeater birds are among the 23 threatened species living in a nature reserve she says is under threat from Yancoal's Moolarben mine, which wants to add another 30 million tonnes of coal.

There are 37 coal mines in New South Wales (NSW), and although new mines are

banned, the state is allowing mine extensions.

NSW coal generated Aus\$23.4 billion in exports last year, with most shipped for electricity generation to South Korea, Japan, China and Taiwan.

Whether coal exports slow is "highly dependent on the implementation of other countries' energy policies", NSW

said.

Chinese-backed Yancoal has eight coal mines across Australia and told investors it set a production record digging up 19.8 million tonnes of saleable coal in the first half of 2026, a four percent lift.

Yancoal's Hunter Valley mine expansion was approved by NSW with the condition it only sells coal to nations that have signed the Paris Agreement.

The expanding mines have generated heated public debate, with opponents citing the Nepal glacier disaster and other impacts of climate change, while locals plead for jobs.

"The industry is not going to slow down. Climate change is going to come back and bite everybody," said Smiles, who has lived in the area for three decades, noticing worsening floods and bushfires.



Members of the Ethiopian National Defence Force gather in front of Mekelle Alula Aba Nega International Airport after federal forces retook control of the facility in Mekelle on Tuesday

Eritrean troops deploy in Ethiopia’s Tigray region

ADDIS ABABA (AFP) — Eritrean troops have deployed in Ethiopia’s northern Tigray region, multiple sources said on Wednesday, threatening to turn an internal conflict into a wider regional war.

Fighting broke out between the rebel Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) and Ethiopian federal forces on September 23, sparking fears of a return to the devastating 2020-2022 civil war.

Ethiopia accuses Eritrea of backing the rebels, and the two neighbours severed diplomatic ties last week.

The Ethiopian army has successfully pushed back the Tigrayan rebels with the help of local militias and entered the regional capital of Mekelle at the weekend without a fight as the TPLF abandoned the city.

Multiple sources told AFP that Eritrean troops have crossed the border and were positioned around Adigrat, some 115 kilometres north of Mekelle, and were pushing south.

Eritrea fears landlocked Ethiopia plans to invade to seize direct access to the Red Sea, and analysts say it wants to prevent the war reaching its territory.

“The Eritrean army

has entered Tigray in uniform, equipped with heavy weaponry,” said Gebreigziabher Beyene, commander of the Tigray Peace Force, a pro-government militia that has fought alongside the Ethiopian army.

“This force is being struck by drones,” he said, adding Eritrea was “deliberately deploying its forces so that the fighting takes place inside Tigray rather than spilling into Eritrea”.

In a statement on X, Eritrea’s information minister, Yemane Meskel, did not deny that troops had crossed the border, but said Ethiopia’s government was creating “a fallacious narrative of ‘self-defence’ to rationalise and camouflage its war of aggression”.

In Adigrat, two eyewitnesses told AFP they saw Eritrean soldiers on the streets, heading south in lorries with heavy weaponry.

A local official, speaking to AFP on condition of anonymity, said the troops had been there for days and “the population is very concerned”.

Conflict monitor ACLED said Eritrean troops had crossed the border at Zelambesa on Wednesday.

And it said Tigrayan rebel forces were “heav-

ily present” around Wukro, a town along the same road that leads to the regional capital.

“Eritrean forces entered the war in Tigray to halt the Ethiopian government and allied forces from reaching the border and potentially fighting within Eritrea’s territory,” ACLED said in a briefing note.

Regional tensions

Eritrea gained independence from Ethiopia in 1993 and the two sides fought a brutal border war between 1998 and 2000.

Relations improved markedly with the rise of Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in 2018 and Eritrea even fought alongside Ethiopia during the 2020-2022 civil war against the TPLF.

But the relationship soon deteriorated, particularly over Ethiopia’s persistent claims that it has a right to sea access.

Earlier this month, Ethiopia expelled 10 Eritrean diplomats and shut its embassy in Asmara, while Eritrea responded that it would “sever all diplomatic ties”.

Britain and the United States were among countries warning their citizens to avoid travelling in northern Ethiopia.

UN warns of risks facing underage migrants travelling alone

GENEVA (AFP) — The majority of migrant children who reached Europe last year were travelling alone, United Nations agencies said on Wednesday, warning about the abuse and violence they face en route.

More than 20,000 of the 31,100 children who reached Europe along migration routes last year arrived without a parent or guardian, the agencies said in a statement.

“This report shows how exposed they are to violence and exploitation when safe pathways are limited, and they have to rely on smugglers,” said Amy Pope, director general of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). “No child should have to face these risks alone.”

While the number of children arriving by sea and land in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain fell by 25 per cent compared



Photo courtesy of UNICEF

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, three children look out of the window of a train, which was boarded by refugees primarily from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, at a reception centre for refugees and migrants, in Gevgelija

with 2024, the proportion of unaccompanied children rose to 67 per cent from 51 per cent.

Of the children who arrived, 78 per cent were boys and 22 per cent

were girls.

The IOM said that of 4,600 migrants aged 15 to 24 that it interviewed, nearly half reported physical violence along their passageways to

Europe, with Libya being the most commonly cited place where abuse occurred.

“IOM urges European Union Member States to put the best interests

of the child at the centre of every decision, to guarantee timely access to services and never to detain children for immigration purposes,” the statement said.

After botched execution, US woman is awake and shackled to bed

WASHINGTON, United States (AFP) — A convicted US killer who survived a botched execution is shackled to her hospital bed, awake and able to speak a little, her lawyer said on Wednesday, as a court ordered prison authorities to preserve evidence in the case.

Christa Pike, 50, who was sentenced to death for a murder she committed when she was a teenager, received two supposedly lethal doses of the drug pentobarbital at a Tennessee prison last Wednesday.

She survived the injections, however, and was rushed to a hospital where she was initially in critical condition, unconscious and on a ventilator.

Pike “regained consciousness yesterday and is speaking limitedly”, her lawyer Luke Ihnen said at a court hearing, adding that she was shackled to the bed.

“Medical staff have asked that the shackles be removed and have been denied that request,” Ihnen said.

An anesthesiologist retained by Pike’s lawyers as an expert ahead of her execution told BBC that she was off the ventilator.

She has “no memory, I believe, of the execution attempt”, Joel Zivot said, adding that Pike knows her name and thinks it is currently September.

“Her prognosis remains unclear but, at a minimum, we expect a long recovery,” her

lawyers said on Tuesday, calling for Tennessee Governor Bill Lee to commute Pike’s sentence to life in prison.

The court ordered state correction officials to preserve all evidence related to the botched execution including medical supplies, waste, and audio and video recordings.

Pike’s fate revived debate over capital punishment in the United States.

Lee suspended executions in Tennessee pending an independent investigation and the state’s prison chief resigned. Tennessee’s correction department has maintained that it followed established protocol.

The state of Texas was

scheduled to carry out an execution later on Wednesday, the first in the US since the attempt to put Pike to death.

Jamaal Howard was set to die by lethal injection for killing a store clerk during a 2000 robbery.

His lawyers have sought to have his execution postponed, citing Pike’s case.

First to survive

Zivot has said in an article in The New York Times that Pike has small veins that would have made it more difficult to insert an IV line to administer the pentobarbital, a sedative that suppresses respiration.

According to Pike’s lawyers, her arms turned

purple during the execution and she reported a burning sensation. These are indications, Zivot said, that some of the pentobarbital had entered the tissue of her arms and not her bloodstream.

The pentobarbital used for her execution also may have been degraded, he said.

The Death Penalty Information Centre, which publishes data and analysis on capital punishment in the United States, said Pike was the first inmate to survive after being injected with lethal doses of execution drugs.

Pike was 18 when she and her boyfriend beat and killed 19-year-old Colleen Smelter at a job training camp.

Deputising for King, Crown Prince attends MED9 Summit in Croatia

Continued from page 1

The Crown Prince stressed the importance of keeping the Palestinian cause at the forefront of efforts to address the region’s crises, noting the ongoing dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, particularly given Israel’s continued restrictions on the flow of aid, including that coming from Jordan.

His Royal Highness

reiterated Jordan’s rejection of any attempts to displace Palestinians, which constitute a violation of international law.

The Crown Prince warned of the dangerous developments in the West Bank and Jerusalem, including attacks by settlers, emphasising that the two-state solution is the only way to achieve just and lasting peace, the statement said.

Speaking about the

situation in Syria and Lebanon, His Royal Highness noted that Jordan is working closely with its active partners to support the efforts of these two countries to achieve stability, development, and to safeguard their sovereignty, despite the challenges caused by Israel’s attacks.

The Crown Prince also spoke about Jordanian-European relations, highlighting the immense po-

tential to build upon the ties between Jordan and MED9 countries through cooperation and joint projects in energy, trade, and technology fields, in order to boost opportunities for employment, education and the exchange of expertise.

His Royal Highness added that Jordan’s geographic position serves as a strategic gateway linking the Middle East with Europe, with the

Kingdom offering significant opportunities across numerous fields, including electricity interconnection, renewable energy, railways, digital connectivity, infrastructure and logistics corridors.

The Crown Prince noted that many of these opportunities will be showcased during the Jordan-EU Investment Conference taking place in Jordan this November.

New York mulls stricter rules for tourist pedicabs

NEW YORK (AFP) — New York lawmakers mullied a bill on Wednesday to regulate pedicabs, which swarm touristy areas like Times Square and Central Park and have drawn criticism for overcrowding, excessive noise and extortionate pricing.

The city council is considering a series of measures designed to regulate the three-wheeled vehicles, often adorned in neon lights and blasting music as they shuttle visitors around Manhattan.

The number of pedicabs authorised in New York is capped at 840 but, according to figures shared at a council hearing, around 1,500 are currently operating — only 330 of which are licensed.

Meanwhile, price

gouging can mean unsuspecting tourists can be charged upward of \$1,000 for rides that last just 20 minutes.

City Council Member Gale Brewer, who is behind a large part of the proposed measures, said the city received 172 complaints in 2025 related to pedicabs.

“Half, 86, involved overcharging, and another 35 involved unlicensed operators, and there were probably more because of ten tourists don’t complain,” she said.

Brewer is pushing for “clearer rules” on the sector and wants to place it under the oversight of the city’s Taxi and Limousine Commission.

“Passengers need to know what they are being charged and who

is responsible for the pedicab they are riding in,” she said, adding that vehicles should be equipped with meters displaying the cost of rides.

Another proposed regulation would introduce a fixed per-minute rate.

Brewer is also calling for driver training focused on current regulations and safety.

Meanwhile, council member Harvey Epstein relayed noise complaints from theatre companies.

“It’s not working for the Broadway productions that are interrupted by loud noise blaring from pedicabs outside their theaters,” he said.

Among the new rules proposed is a ban on stopping within 15 metres of the entrances and exits of these venues.

Israel strikes Gaza on October 7 anniversary, three dead — officials

Continued from page 1

Loud bangs across the border in Gaza were audible from the site of the Nova music festival just as family members gathered at dawn to mourn the more than 300 revellers killed three years earlier.

In Gaza City, Al Shifa hospital reported two people killed in an Israeli strike overnight.

Gaza’s civil defence

identified one of the dead as Mohamed Tamous and said he was a volunteer for the agency, which serves as an emergency rescue service under Hamas.

In the southern city of Khan Yunis, Nasser Hospital said that a 60-year-old man, Hisham Ibrahim Abu Mustafa, was killed in an Israeli strike and that others were injured.

A Palestinian man

was killed and nine people were injured during an Israeli settler attack followed by army intervention in an occupied West Bank village on Wednesday, according to the mayor and the Palestinian health ministry.

The Palestinian health ministry said 44-year-old Ali Al Bazzari died and nine others were injured “as a result of an assault by occupa-

tion forces and settlers” on the village of Burqa, north of Nablus in the northern West Bank.

Al Bazzari was a member of the Palestinian National Security Forces, according to an obituary that it published on Wednesday.

AFP photos from Rafidia Hospital in Nablus showed his sons, wife and mother mourning over his body, with his sons in tears.

The incident occurred on the third anniversary of Hamas’s October 7 surprise attacks on Israel, which triggered the Gaza war.

Violence has surged in the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since 1967, in the three years since.

Wednesday’s attack took place as farmers from Burqa were picking olives on land between the cities of Nablus and

Tulkarem, according to village mayor Ammar Salah.

“Clashes broke out between young men from the village and settlers before the [Israeli] occupation forces intervened and opened live fire at the Palestinians, killing the young man Al Bazzari and injuring others,” Salah told AFP.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said in separate statements that its teams

treated three people wounded by live fire, one of them seriously, and five people injured after being assaulted and beaten in Burqa, and transported the injured to hospitals.

The organisation added that Israeli forces “assaulted and beat ambulance crews” and detained staff as they tried to reach the wounded in the area.

According to an AFP tally based on data from

the Palestinian health ministry, Israeli forces or settlers have killed 1,115 Palestinians in the territory since the start of the Gaza war.

Excluding East Jerusalem, around three million Palestinians live in the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since 1967, along with more than 500,000 Israelis living in settlements considered illegal under international law.

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EU KIDS Act reshaping minors’ access to social media

Seeking to harmonise the protection of minors online, the European Commission announced recently its proposal for a Regulation titled the EU KIDS Act.

The EU is done relying on tech companies to police themselves. Children online are very vulnerable to predatory algorithms, cyberbullying and privacy exploitation. Nearly 60 per cent of European youth are suffering emotional and psychosocial issues due to digital platforms.

The new EU regulations will shift the legal burden onto platforms to actively block, filter and modify their interfaces based on a child’s age.

The Act, officially presented on September 17, would cover social networking services, video-sharing platforms, online games, app stores, operating systems, AI companions and general conversational chatbots.

The proposal would center on four pillars — tiered age restrictions, “safety by design”, age assurance, and burden of proof and enforcement — and three objectives: Protecting minors from risky digital services and AI systems; upholding the digital single market; and maintaining a coherent regulatory and enforcement structure for the protection of minors online.

The proposed EU Kids Act plans to establish an age limit of 15, preventing younger children from opening social media accounts. Children under 3 will be banned entirely from these platforms, while those aged 3 to 12 may only access strictly vetted, child-friendly services.

Young teens aged 13 and 14 will require formal parental consent to open highly restricted “introductory accounts” that enforce strict daily screen-time limits and block communication from strangers.

Beyond age gating, the legislation bans addictive features like infinite scrolling, autoplay, and continuous push notifications, while restricting engagement-based recommendation algorithms.

Minor accounts will be private by default, disabling location tracking and open direct messaging. Tech companies that fail to comply with these rules face severe financial penalties of up to 6 per cent of their global annual revenue.

The Commission’s proposal comes almost a year after the Australian Government introduced a ban on under-16s holding accounts on age-restricted social media platforms and follows the UK Government’s announcement in June this year of an under-16s social media ban set to begin in spring 2027.

Separately, the Danish government is consulting on a draft bill that would introduce a minimum age of 15 for access to certain social media services. The consultation runs from 7 September to 5 October 2026 and, if passed, the bill would enter into force on 1 July 2027.

The Danish proposal would apply only to DSA-designated VLOP social media platforms, with those providers responsible for effective age assurance. It would not cover the EU KIDS Act’s broader framework for games, AI, app stores or operating systems.

The Danish bill would resemble Australia’s age-based approach more closely than the EU KIDS Act: It would set a minimum age of 15 for VLOP social media services without the EU proposal’s guardian tier or under-13 exception.

Whether this approach will change as the EU KIDS Act makes its way through the European Parliament is yet to be seen; however, it is expected that this bill will come into effect before the EU KIDS Act and so may operate as at least a medium-term solution, depending on how both laws evolve as they progress through their respective legislative processes.

Almost a full year before the Commission’s announcement of the EU KIDS Act, Australia introduced a ban on under-16s holding accounts on age-restricted social media platforms. Unlike the EU’s proposed tiered approach, the Australian Online Safety Act 2021 takes a more binary approach by prohibiting under-16s from holding such accounts.

Australian law places responsibility on platforms. Platforms may estimate age but may not require government identification and the Australian eSafety Commissioner monitors platforms’ compliance.

Reports on Australia’s ban vary: According to a statement from the Australian Government in January 2026, more than 4.7 million accounts were removed because they belonged to under-16s; however, the results of a survey conducted in March 2026 suggested that 70 per cent of children with pre-ban accounts found it “easy” to circumvent the ban.

In March 2026, Australia’s eSafety commissioner reported no discernible drop in reports of online harm, including cyberbullying and image-based abuse, among under-16s following implementation of the under-16 account ban.

The Australian experience, therefore, illustrates the practical difficulties (and seemingly mixed impact) of blanket age-based restrictions.

The proposed EU KIDS Act remains subject to approval by the European Parliament and the Council, with adoption unlikely to occur before 2028. If adopted, the Regulation would apply six months after entry into force. The compliance plan and independent audit requirements would apply immediately, while national measures to prepare and support minors and the expedited procedure would apply after 12 months, with the timing governed by that provision.



Najla M. Shahwan

Jordan in the eye of the storm: Safeguarding the home front

By Hasan Dajah

Jordan stands in the eye of a regional storm, where conflicts spill across borders, placing pressure on neighbouring economies, security and social stability. With developments in Palestine, Syria and Iraq intersecting with broader regional tensions, safeguarding the home front remains a defining national priority. For the Kingdom, this means more than monitoring crises as they unfold; it requires protecting livelihoods, maintaining essential services, strengthening social cohesion and preserving national security. The central challenge is to translate Jordan’s resilience into practical policies that limit the cumulative costs of regional turmoil and equip both the state and society to withstand uncertainty.

The domestic cost begins with the economy, where disruptions to trade, and transport routes can drive up shipping and insurance costs and delay the arrival of raw materials and goods. In an economy that relies on imports to meet a portion of its needs, these pressures translate into higher production and distribution costs, which are ultimately passed on to the consumer to varying degrees. Even when goods are available, their increased cost strains the budgets of households and businesses, limiting their ability to spend and expand. This makes the management of prices, inventory, and commercial alternatives crucial for safeguarding economic and social stability.

Energy represents another channel through which external crises impact the domestic sphere. Price fluctuations or potential supply disruptions affect the transport, industrial, agricultural and service sectors, and may impose additional burdens on public finances. Hence, the importance of diversifying sources and pathways, improving consumption efficiency, and strategically expanding the use of local resources and renewable energy becomes evident. These options require a balanced economic and technical assessment — one that considers grid stability as well as storage and investment costs — to ensure that energy policies ultimately serve to safeguard production and citizens’ incomes in the long run.

As for tourism, the sector is influenced by the region’s image in the minds of travellers, even when Jordanian destinations are far removed from areas of conflict. Regional anxiety may prompt some visitors to postpone their trips, leading to a decline in revenues for hotels, restaurants, transport services and related enterprises.

The impact of these repercussions is particularly acute in communities that rely heavily on tourism. Therefore, it is essential to develop flexible response plans that include market diversification, the promotion of domestic tourism, the provision of accurate information, and support for viable businesses — helping them retain staff and weather periods of temporary slowdown.

Uncertainty also affects investment, as investors weigh expected returns against associated risks. Prolonged tensions can lead to the postponement of expansion plans or drive up financing and insurance costs. However, Jordan can mitigate these risks by ensuring legislative clarity, procedural stability, efficient services and the protection of rights. Any improvement in the domestic environment enhances the economy’s ability to attract and retain

investment, while also boosting the prospects of transforming institutional stability into a tangible economic advantage that benefits both citizens and local businesses. At the same time, surrounding crises impose mounting security demands to safeguard borders and counter smuggling, organised crime, and any attempts to exploit regional instability. While these responsibilities are essential for protecting sovereignty and societal safety, they require significant resources, equipment and continuous coordination. The delicate challenge lies in meeting security needs while maintaining development spending and essential services. Long-term financial planning, enhanced institutional efficiency, and regional and international cooperation help manage these obligations without undermining the social priorities that underpin state stability and societal cohesion during crises.

Humanitarian dimensions also come to the fore, as conflicts can trigger new waves of displacement and place strain on host communities, services and infrastructure. Addressing this scenario requires balancing humanitarian commitment with the preservation of national response capacity. It also necessitates equitable international burden-sharing, sustainable funding for affected sectors, and support for host communities. Humanitarian response must not become a burden borne solely by neighbouring countries while international actors reduce their contributions toward addressing root causes and providing the resources needed to mitigate repercussions and protect those affected.

The social and psychological costs are no less significant than the financial ones. Exposure to scenes of violence, anxiety about the future and rumours regarding commodity shortages or the escalation of confrontations can all influence people’s behaviour, confidence and decision-making. In this context, accurate information becomes an essential public service and consistent

The social and psychological costs are no less significant than the financial ones

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institutional communication becomes an integral part of crisis management. What is needed is a discourse that respects the public’s awareness, clearly explains risks and measures, and allows space for responsible dialogue — all while fostering media literacy and the community’s ability to verify news and resist disinformation that exploits fear and confusion.

Jordanian diplomacy remains a vital tool for mitigating domestic costs by working to de-escalate tensions, defend Palestinian rights, reject displacement, and support political solutions that preserve state sovereignty and the security of peoples. Prolonged conflicts fuel an environment of instability whose economic and security repercussions are difficult to contain. It is in Jordan’s interest to expand Arab coordination and build international partnerships that foster stability, while emphasising that protecting civilians and addressing the root causes of conflicts provide a more sustainable foundation for regional security than merely managing the recurring fallout affecting states and societies.

Safeguarding Jordan’s domestic front requires pre-emptive preparedness through emergency plans, strategic stockpiles, diversified supply chains and responsive social safety nets. It also necessitates supporting local production, empowering youth and expanding development across the governorates, as a productive society is better equipped to withstand crises. Ultimately, Jordan’s strength remains anchored in the integration of its institutions, the confidence of its citizens and the efficacy of its policies. As the lessons learned from periods of turmoil are transformed into practical reforms, internal costs diminish, and the Kingdom’s ability to steadfastly safeguard its independent decision-making — as well as the livelihoods of its people and the future of its generations — is strengthened.

The writer is professor of strategic studies, Al Hussein Bin Talal University

The real competition in the AI era will not simply be between countries with the most advanced technologies

Instead of asking only how many people have studied computer science, Jordan could begin asking more meaningful questions: How many people can build an AI application? How many can analyse data? How many can use AI responsibly in healthcare, tourism, education, finance or government? Where are these skills located? Which skills are growing and which are becoming scarce?

This would turn the talent passport into more than a digital CV. It could become a national talent intelligence layer supporting education, employment policy, investment and workforce planning.

The benefits could extend beyond young graduates. A mid-career employee could use the passport to document newly acquired AI skills. A woman returning to the labour market

Jordan needs a national AI talent passport

By Lubna Hanna Ammari

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly changing the way economies work, how businesses hire and how individuals build their careers. For Jordan, this transformation presents a challenge, but also an opportunity: How can we ensure that the country’s greatest asset “its people” is prepared to compete in an economy where skills can matter as much as degrees?

Jordan has already recognised the importance of this question. The Jordanian Artificial Intelligence Strategy and Implementation Plan 2023–2027 explicitly identifies building Jordanian capabilities, skills and expertise in AI as one of its main objectives. The strategy includes 68 projects and seeks to position Jordan as a regional leader in AI while using technology to support economic development and priority sectors.

But having an AI strategy is only one part of the equation. The next question is much more practical: How do we identify, verify and connect the people who have the skills needed to make that strategy work?

This is where Jordan could introduce a new national initiative: A Jordan National AI Talent Passport.

The proposed passport would not be another academic certificate, nor would it replace university degrees or professional qualifications. Instead, it would be a trusted digital record of a person’s verified skills, practical projects, training, micro-credentials, professional experience and demonstrated ability to use AI and digital technologies.

Imagine a Jordanian university graduate applying for a job in Amman, Aqaba or a global company. Instead of presenting an academic degree as the main evidence of capability, the graduate could provide a digital talent passport showing what they can actually do: Data analysis, AI-assisted research, programming, digital marketing, cyber-

security, prompt engineering, AI ethics, automation or other relevant competencies. Employers could see verified evidence of skills rather than relying solely on university transcripts or conventional CVs.

This idea responds directly to a challenge that Jordan and many other countries are facing. The International Labour Organisation has identified skills mismatch and weak school-to-work transitions among the structural challenges affecting young people in Jordan. Its recent work on youth not in employment, education or training also emphasises the need to connect universities, training institutions and employers, and to design programmes around actual labour-market needs.

A National AI Talent Passport could become that missing bridge.

The concept also aligns with an international shift towards “skills-first” labour markets. The OECD’s recent work argues that labour markets are increasingly moving beyond traditional credentials towards a stronger focus on demonstrable skills. It specifically identifies skills passports, micro-credentials and recognition of prior learning as mechanisms that can help connect people’s capabilities with employment opportunities.

Jordan does not have to start from zero. Significant investments are already being made in digital skills. The Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship’s Youth, Technology and Jobs Project, for example, aims to train young Jordanians in digital skills, expand digital education and create income opportunities. More recently, the ministry and the Ministry of Youth have been using Future Stations and youth centres across the Kingdom to expand digital and AI literacy.

The opportunity now is to connect these efforts through a common national language of skills.

The passport could be built around a simple principle: Learn it, demonstrate it, verify it, and make it visible. A student could earn a credential after completing an AI course, but an even stronger credential could be earned by successfully applying that knowledge to a real-world problem. Universities, training providers, technology companies and employers could contribute to the ecosystem, while an appropriate national authority could establish standards for verification and interoperability.

Such a system could also help Jordan discover where its AI talent actually exists.

could demonstrate capabilities gained through flexible or on-line learning. A freelancer could present verified evidence of international-standard competencies. A Jordanian professional working abroad could maintain a recognised digital profile that connects their expertise with opportunities in Jordan.

Most importantly, the passport should not become another bureaucratic document. It should be portable, digital, continuously updated, and useful to both the individual and the employer. Its value would depend on trust: employers must know that a verified skill represents genuine capability, while citizens must retain control over what they share and with whom, within Jordan’s data-protection framework.

Jordan is already investing in digital transformation, AI readiness and human capital. The next step is to make the country’s talent more visible, measurable and connected to opportunity. The World Bank’s global work on AI similarly emphasises that competency and skills are among the essential foundations required for countries to adopt, adapt and innovate with AI.

The real competition in the AI era will not simply be between countries with the most advanced technologies. It will increasingly be between countries that can identify talent, develop skills, connect people to opportunity and continuously adapt their workforce.

Jordan has the strategy. It has the young talent. It has universities, training institutions, technology companies and an expanding digital ecosystem.

What it needs now is a way to bring these assets together.

A National AI Talent Passport could be that bridge and it could help Jordan move from preparing people for the jobs of today to identifying and developing the talent that will build the economy of tomorrow.

BUSINESS



Minister of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship Sami Smeirat on Wednesday discusses technology investment opportunities in Jordan with a US Chamber of Commerce business delegation representing 38 American companies

US business delegation explore technology investment opportunities

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship Sami Smeirat met on Wednesday with a business delegation from the US Chamber of Commerce in Washington to discuss investment opportunities, technology collaboration and Jordan advantages as a tech hub.

The Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship said in a statement that the delegation included representatives from 38 US companies operating across technology, software, cyber

security, telecommunications, aerospace, AI, financial services, energy, engineering, healthcare and transportation.

During the meeting, held in the presence of US Ambassador to Jordan Jim Holtsnider, Smeirat emphasised that Jordan works to enhance its technology investment environment, develop digital infrastructure, and build digital skills to support digital economic growth and create opportunities for local and international firms.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Smeirat held discussions with individual company representatives to explore partnership opportunities in digital infrastructure, telecommunications, financial services and engineering, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The meeting formed part of the US business mission to Jordan organised by the US Chamber of Commerce to strengthen bilateral economic ties and expand private sector partnerships.

Real estate market sees September rebound, trading value up 16% — official figures

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan's real estate market showed renewed activity in September, with the value of property transactions rising 16 per cent year-on-year to JD720.5 million, according to figures from the Department of Lands and Survey.

The September trading value was also 7 per cent higher than in August, although total real estate trading during the first nine months of the year fell 1 per cent from the same period in 2025 to around JD5.1 billion.

Market revenues rose 14 per cent year-on-year in September to approximately JD28.7 million, and increased 5 per cent from August, according to the department's figures, cited by Al Mamlaka.

During the first nine months of the year, real estate revenues rose 6 per cent year-on-year to around JD210.8 million.

Property sales in September increased 6 per cent compared with the same month last year, despite a 3 per cent decline from August.

The increase was driven mainly by apartment sales, which rose 17 per cent year-on-year and 7 per cent from the previous month.



File photo

Land sales increased 2 per cent year-on-year in September but fell 6 per cent from August.

For the first nine months of the year, however, overall property sales activity declined 7 per cent compared with the same period in 2025. Apartment sales fell 3 per cent, while land sales dropped 8 per cent.

A total of 8,214 properties were sold to companies in the Kingdom during the first nine

months of the year, the figures showed.

The estimated value of property purchases by non-Jordanians rose 17 per cent during the first nine months of the year compared with the same period in 2025, reaching approximately JD168.3 million.

The increase came despite a 1 per cent decline in the number of transactions involving non-Jordanians. Apartment purchases rose

7 per cent, while land purchases fell 12 per cent.

In September alone, the estimated value of property purchases by non-Jordanians reached around JD21.2 million, up 4 per cent from September 2025 but down 11 per cent from August.

The number of transactions involving non-Jordanians fell 1 per cent year-on-year in September and 14 per cent compared with the

previous month.

Apartment purchases by non-Jordanians increased 3 per cent year-on-year in September but declined 9 per cent from August.

Land purchases fell 8 per cent year-on-year and 23 per cent from the previous month.

The report also showed that women accounted for 35.18 per cent of property owners in Jordan, compared with 64.82 per cent for men.

Regional integration key to high-value industrial projects — minister

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Yarub Qudah on Wednesday stressed the importance of leveraging regional resources, capabilities and financial potential to establish high-value-added joint industrial projects.

Speaking at a session titled "Industrial Integration and Regional Value Chains" during the "Made in the Gulf 2026" Forum and Exhibition, held in Bahrain from October 6 to 8, Qudah said competition among global economic powers is increasingly centred on rare minerals, semiconductors and advanced industries.

Qudah proposed a regional project based on Jordan's silica reserves, starting with purification to produce high-purity silicon and silicon wafers, before linking these inputs to specialised manufacturing stages across regional countries according to their respective competitive advantages, according to a statement by Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply.

He said such integration could create inter-



connected industries spanning semiconductors, computers, solar cells and optical fibres, increasing added value and expanding investment and export opportunities between Jordan and regional partners, including the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Qudah said the availability of raw materials alone is insufficient to ensure economic viability, noting that establishing comprehensive production bases within individual countries would entail high costs.

Regional integration across different stages of production, he added, would help achieve greater regional self-sufficiency while enhancing the competitiveness of finished products.

Qudah cited the food industry as a practical model for integration, proposing that regional investments be directed towards Jordanian agriculture to provide inputs for food manufacturing across the region, thereby linking agriculture with processing and exports.

Qudah highlighted regional challenges as evidence of the need to develop interconnected supply-chain networks and alternative trade routes.

He noted that Aqaba Port is operating above capacity, with around 70 per cent of its activity serving the region.

He also underlined the importance of the railway project linking Aqaba Port with phosphate and potash mines, which will connect to the Maan Land Port and national railway networks extending towards regional borders.

Qudah added that Jordan's free trade agreements with Britain, the European Union, the United States, Canada and the Greater Arab Free Trade Area represent competitive advantages that can support regional industrial integration under approved rules of origin.

The session also featured by Bahraini Minister of Oil and Environment Mohamed bin Dainah, AD Ports Group Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Hameli, and Foulath Holding Chairman Meshari Judaimi.

Investment Ministry wraps up India tour to attract textile sector investments — statement

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Investment concluded on Wednesday a promotional tour to India aimed at attracting investment in Jordan's textile and apparel sector.

The tour covered the capital New Delhi, as well as the cities of Mumbai and Ahmedabad.

According to a ministry statement on Wednesday, a Jordanian delegation, headed by Ministry of Investment Secretary General Zaher Qatranah, held meetings with more than 20 Indian companies.

The delegation also visited several companies and factories and met with organisations and institutions involved in the sector to promote investment opportunities in Jordan, as well as the incentives and advantages offered to investors.

The meetings also provided an opportunity to learn about



Photo Courtesy of Ministry of Investment

The Ministry of Investment has concluded on Wednesday a promotional tour to India aimed at attracting investment in Jordan's textile and apparel sector

the technical and operational requirements that companies consider when evaluating potential investment destinations, including Jordan.

The meetings and field visits focused on export-oriented manufacturing, primary tex-

tile industries and activities linked to value chains, with the aim of identifying investment opportunities that align with companies' needs and expansion plans.

The tour is part of the ministry's efforts to strengthen direct engagement with spe-

cialised international companies and attract quality investments that can expand Jordan's industrial base and enhance the Kingdom's position as a competitive platform for manufacturing and exports to global markets.

AI 'widening economic inequality', IMF boss warns

SINGAPORE (AFP) — The global AI boom is fast becoming the key driver of economies around the world but the boom is risking wider global inequality by leaving some nations behind, IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva warned on Wednesday.

She also lamented a lack of "decisive action" in heavily indebted advanced nations and called for "very tough policy choices" to restore the health of their public finances.

Georgieva said in a

speech ahead of the International Monetary Fund's annual meetings in Singapore next week that AI investment-to-GDP will likely top the cash pumped into railroads, the electricity grid or the telecommunication network.

Growth in AI-related trade was being seen most in the United States, China and India, where companies splashed out on data centres and other infrastructure, while others were benefiting from the manufacture of

chips and robotics.

"Love it, hate it, or fear it, AI is here, rapidly becoming a key driver of countries' relative fortunes in the world economy," Georgieva said.

"Yet, as this drives forward today's AI economies, it largely bypasses most others, increasing the risk of widening economic inequality across the globe," she warned.

"Success requires everybody be taken along to harvest the transformative power

of AI, which is why it will be so important to deliver AI access around the globe.

"And that, of course, calls for cooperation. In our interconnected world, countries cooperate not out of charity but out of self-interest."

The speech comes amid growing concern about the vast sums pumped into the sector, and when investors will see returns, after the boom fuelled a market rally to record levels over the past two years.

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Wednesday amounted to JD11.4 million spread over 7.5 million shares that traded through 5,971 transactions.

The ASE share price index shed 0.12 per cent, closing at 4200.41 points.

Out of 110 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 41 companies rose while the share price of another 37 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were Al Shamekha for Real Estate and Financial Investments by 4.69 per cent, Latent Energies for Investments by 4.69 per cent, High Performance Real Estate Investments by 4.55 per cent, Jordan Dairy by 4.55 per cent, and Arab Pesticides and Veterinary Drugs Manufacturing Company by 4.36 per cent.

The companies whose shares dropped the most were Al Zarqa Educational and Investment by 6.1 per cent, Specialised Investment Compounds by 4.17 per cent, Al Sanabel International for Islamic Investments holding Plc. Company by 3.64 per cent, Jordan Poultry Processing and Marketing by 3.57 per cent, and Northern Cement Company by 3.55 per cent.





A child who learns compassion for a weak creature also learns empathy for others.

ANIMAL CRUELTY IS A CRIME

1 Prohibited Offenses

- Killing & Poisoning:** Intentionally ending an animal's life.
- Abuse & Incitement:** Beating creatures or setting animals on them.
- Severe Neglect:** Denying a domestic pet food and basic care.

2 Legal Penalties

- Up to 3 Months Prison / 50 JOD Fine:** For intentionally killing a pet.
- Up to 1 Month Prison / 20 JOD Fine:** For abusing, beating, or harming an animal.

3 Key Message

- Child Behavior:** Repeated animal abuse by a child is a psychological warning sign.
- Take Action:** Never use poison or take matters into to your own hands; report abuse immediately.

• CONCEPT, EXECUTION & DIRECTION: OMAR ALEES (AI-ASSISTED)

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS: BETWEEN IMITATION AND DELIBERATE HARM

By Hadeel El Bis

A video filmed on a mobile phone, showing a man urging his dogs to attack a helpless cat, has spread widely on social media and provoked outrage. Security services arrested him after identifying him. The incident, together with the deaths of dozens of cats in a residential complex in Amman's Rashid suburb amid suspected poisoning, has put violence against animals back in the spotlight.

Imitation or deliberate cruelty

Dr Mohannad Faroun, a psychology trainer at the Institute for Family Health Care, said that watching such an attack can be distressing, but that it does not necessarily indicate a psychological disorder. What matters, he said, is the motive: A desire for control, a

search for thrills, revenge, or a way of venting anger and stress. Cruelty to animals can be a behavioural warning sign, he said, particularly alongside weak empathy, a persistent need for control or indifference to another creature's suffering, and may warrant assessment. But the cause cannot be determined from a single incident or video. It requires knowing the person's history and the context. The behaviour matters even more in children. Harming animals for fun may reflect a lack of awareness or flawed upbringing rather than a disorder, and the family environment plays a major role: A child raised amid violence, or without empathy, may express anger through harmful behaviour. Faroun also distinguished deliberate harm from impulsiveness or poor self-control. Repeated or deliberate torture, where a child understands what they are doing and shows no empathy or remorse, calls for specialist assessment and should not be ignored. Responsibility lies not with fami-

lies alone: A schools and society must promote compassion and intervene early when worrying behaviour appears. What does the law say? Criminal lawyer Salah Jabr said Jordanian legislation contains several provisions on killing or mistreating animals, but penalties vary with the act, the animal and the circumstances. Article 452 of Penal Code No. 16 of 1960 criminalises intentionally and unnecessarily killing certain animals. Killing a pet or domestic animal carries up to three months' imprisonment or a fine of up to 50 dinars. Deliberately beating or wounding an animal so that it cannot work, or suffers serious harm, carries up to one month or a fine of up to 20 dinars. Closest to the footage, anyone who causes an animal's death by setting savage animals on it, or by other means, faces the same penalty. Article 472 covers mistreatment, with up

to a week in prison and a fine of up to five dinars for offences such as leaving a domestic animal without food, severely neglecting it, beating or torturing a pet cruelly, or working an animal unfit for labour through illness, age or injury. Jabr noted that criminal liability is not established by simply describing an incident. It depends on the elements of the offence and proof of the act, with the courts determining responsibility and punishment. The legal framework extends beyond the Penal Code. Animal Welfare Regulation No. 11 of 2010 gives the Ministry of Agriculture, working with other bodies, responsibility for animal welfare and preventing cruelty. It defines cruelty to include causing pain, torture, beating, wounding or mistreatment, and causing an animal to be injured or killed by another animal or given a toxic or harmful substance. Responding to claims that its rules ban the hunting of animals, including stray dogs, the

Ministry of Agriculture said its role concerns health and veterinary matters. Monitoring and sheltering strays falls to the Ministry of Local Administration and Greater Amman Municipality, under Article 16/A/24 of the 2021 Local Administration Law. According to Jabr, animals in residential areas should not be dealt with through individual action, especially by using poison or setting animals on one another, given the danger to residents, particularly children. Faroun added that promoting kindness to animals cannot be separated from wider social values: A child who learns compassion for a weak creature also learns empathy for others, and families, schools and society can reinforce these values from the earliest years. Animal welfare campaigners have urged people on social media to report torture or abuse rather than take matters into their own hands, while the authorities say that tackling the issue of stray animals requires an organised and responsible approach.