



King condoles Saudi monarch, crown prince over attacks on Abha, King Khalid international airports

AMMAN (JT) — His Majesty King Abdullah sent a cable of condolences to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia on Saturday, over the victims of the attacks on the Abha International Airport and the King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh.

In the cable, His Majesty condemned the attacks, and affirmed Jordan's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia, and support for Saudi measures to safeguard the country's security and sovereignty, according to a Royal Court statement.

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

Two-thirds of Jordanians express trust in government — poll

- Confidence in government's ability to handle its responsibilities rose to 64%, up from 62% in previous poll
- 79% of the national sample, 75% of opinion leaders support prime minister's field visits

AMMAN (JT) — Two-thirds of Jordanians express a high or moderate degree of trust in the government, while 64 per cent believe the government is capable of assuming its responsibilities, up from 62 per cent in a 2025 survey, according to a poll released by the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan.

The poll, conducted to mark the second anniversary of Prime Minister Jafar Hassan's Cabinet, also found an increase in the proportion of Jordanians who believe the country is heading in a positive direction.

Hassan's Cabinet was formed in September, 2024.

Prime Minister Jafar Hassan maintained the highest evaluation rating regarding ability to assume leadership responsibilities, while the proportion of opinion leaders who believe the ministerial team is capable of assuming its responsibilities increased to 53 per cent compared with 45 per cent at Cabinet formation.

Among respondents who viewed national affairs positively, 48.2 per cent attributed their view to security and stability, while 20.4 per cent cited ongoing reform and development.



Jordan condemns Houthi attack on Saudi Arabia's King Khalid International Airport

Several injured in attack on Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport — Saudi media

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan has condemned an attack by Yemen's Houthi militia targeting King Khalid International Airport in Saudi Arabia as a "violation of the kingdom's sovereignty, and a threat to its security and stability".

In a statement on Saturday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs called the attack a "dangerous escalation, and a violation of international law and the United Nations Charter".

The ministry reaffirmed Jordan's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and support for all measures it takes to protect its security, stability, national resources, and the safety of its citizens and residents.

Saudi Arabia's civil aviation authority said that an attack on Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport on Saturday injured a number of people in the latest strike targeting one of the Kingdom's busiest transport hubs.

The authority said that operations at the airport had been temporarily suspended while an assessment of the damage is carried out.

"This attack comes amidst ongoing blatant assaults targeting civil aviation facilities in the Kingdom," the authority said in a statement, cited by the Riyadh-based Arab News.

"The attack resulted in a number of injuries, the exact number of which is currently being determined."



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SSIF says its assets reach JD20.1 billion at end of third quarter

AMMAN (JT) — The Social Security Investment Fund (SSIF) has reported total assets of approximately JD20.1 billion at the end of the third quarter of 2026, up from JD18.7 billion at the end of 2025, marking an increase of nearly JD1.5 billion, or 8 per cent, since the beginning of the year.

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A Palestinian man inspects a house that was damaged during a late-night attack by Israeli settlers in Abu Falah village, northeast of Ramallah, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on September 27

Palestinians seek urgent UN action as settler attacks escalate

By Mai Anati

AMMAN — The Palestinian presidency has called for an urgent UN Security Council session and immediate international measures to protect Palestinians, warning that escalating settler attacks and Israeli military operations in the occupied West Bank threaten lives, property and stability.

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Jordan achieves 20 investment reform targets under \$1.35 billion World Bank programme — report

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan has achieved 20 of the 44 disbursement-linked results under a \$1.35 billion World Bank programme aimed at promoting inclusive, transparent and climate-responsive investment, with progress valued at nearly \$316 million between August 2025 and August 2026.

The achievements bring total disbursements under the programme to \$939 million, according to a World Bank assessment report, cited by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

To improve the investment environment, Jordan adopted the Investment Promotion Strategy 2023–2026 and introduced an investor relationship management system at the Ministry of Investment. The system has attracted more than 300 registered investors and is designed to streamline procedures and track investment-related decisions.

The government also simplified licensing requirements in five priority sectors, while work is under way to revise licences in seven additional sectors.

Jordan recorded improvements in data accessibility and statistical performance. Its score in the Open Data Inventory (ODIN) index rose from 66 in 2022 to 78 in 2025, while its Statistical Performance Index score increased from 66.5 in 2020 to 78.1 in 2024.

Digital public services also expanded, with the National Services Registry introduced across 20 government entities. The registry provides access to more than 1,500 service cards through the Sanad digital platform, according to the report.

Regulatory reforms included the issuance of the Good Regulatory Practices Bylaw in February in 2025 and its implementing instructions in November of the same year. "The measures aim to promote evidence-based policy-making and public consultation."

On climate action, the World Bank data showed that Jordan achieved a cumulative reduction of more than 7.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent between 2016 and 2025, exceeding the original targets.

Jordan also made progress in documenting climate finance from private and non-governmental sources, achieving 25 per cent of the relevant indicator while securing 98 per cent of its allocated financing.

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Her Majesty Queen Rania inaugurates on Thursday the 'Layered Becoming' art exhibition, organised by the WUJUD Culture and Art Foundation at Ayla Oasis in Aqaba

Queen Rania inaugurates 'Layered Becoming' art exhibition in Aqaba

AMMAN (JT) — Her Majesty Queen Rania inaugurated the "Layered Becoming" art exhibition on Thursday, organised by the WUJUD Culture and Art Foundation at Ayla Oasis in Aqaba.

Held under Her Majesty's patronage, "Layered Becoming" showcases over 140 artworks created by 10 artists from Jordan, the Arab region and around the world, according to a statement from Office of Her Majesty.

Queen Rania was welcomed at the exhibition by ASTRA Group Chairman Sabih Masri, WUJUD Founder and Chairwoman Sirin Masri, and the foundation's Artistic and Executive Director Iman Hindawi.

Her Majesty toured the exhibition, viewing its different installations and meeting with participating artists, whose works span ceramics, textiles, weavings, paintings, sculptures, spatial installations, and pieces developed through other contemporary artistic and material practices.

The exhibition explores the concepts of becoming and transformation, as well as the relationship between art, material, memory and place, bringing together the experiences of artists from diverse backgrounds and fields.

Based in Aqaba, WUJUD is an independent non-profit foundation, focused on bringing artists and communities together through contemporary art programs, live performances, creative collaborations and interactive cultural events. The "Layered Becoming" exhibition will remain open to visitors at the Moroccan Space in Ayla's Marina Village until December 10, 2026.

Prince Mired receives San Marino's Order of Saint Agatha

AMMAN (JT) — HH Prince Mired, chief chamberlain and president of the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (HCD), has been awarded the Order of Saint Agatha, rank of Commander, by San Marino in recognition of his humanitarian efforts in support of persons with disabilities and military personnel, and his role in making Jordan mine-free.

San Marino's Honorary Consul in Jordan Samer Qawar presented the medal on behalf of the San Marino's leadership and government during an official ceremony attended by HRH Prince Raad Bin Zeid, a number of princes and princesses, Saudi Ambassador to Jordan Prince Mansour Bin Khalid Al Saud, diplomats and officials.

Prince Mired expressed his appreciation to San Marino for the honour, dedicating it to persons with disabilities and reaffirming his commitment to serving them, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

He called for greater international support to ensure comprehensive care, protect civil rights and guarantee



HH Prince Mired is awarded the Order of Saint Agatha, rank of Commander, by San Marino in recognition of his humanitarian efforts in support of persons with disabilities and military personnel

equal opportunities in education, employment and political participation, stressing the importance of inclusion with the support of His Majesty King Abdullah.

He also thanked Prince Raad and the late Princess Majda Raad for their 50 years of service and guidance, pledging to build on their efforts to promote an inclusive environment for persons with disabilities.

Prince Mired also expressed his appreciation to his wife, HRH Princess Dina Mired, his children and family, as well as the HCD,

the Hashemite Commission for the Disabled Soldiers, the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation, and the Royal Academy for Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities for their support and efforts.

Qawar said that the award recognises Prince Mired's humanitarian work in supporting persons with disabilities, military personnel, mine victims and people affected by conflicts, as well as his contributions to international mine action efforts and

cooperation.

He also highlighted Jordan's regional role under the leadership of King Abdullah, and the Hashemite Custodianship over Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem, stressing San Marino's support for the rights of the Palestinian people and efforts to achieve a just peace.

The Order of Saint Agatha is among San Marino's highest official honours. The ceremony underscored the strong ties of friendship and cooperation between Jordan and San Marino.

Amman Design Week expands programme to Aqaba, Iraq Al Amir

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Design Week (ADW) 2026 is expanding beyond the capital, with exhibitions and programmes in Iraq Al Amir, west of Amman and for the first time in Aqaba.

In Iraq Al Amir, exhibitions move out of the city and into a green valley filled with olive terraces, ancient stonework and fig trees, according to an ADW statement.

The area is also home to a longstanding tradition of paper-making and weaving, carried by its women's cooperative. The programme spans several locations, including Qasr Al Abd, the Iraq Al Amir Women Cooperative Society and Naqsh Collective.

At Qasr Al Abd, Dima Srouji's Natural Residents is inspired by a 1904 diary that describes the area's rich waters. The work imagines the landscape as the palace's original residence.

Glass figs and snails, crafted by Palestinian glassmakers, are placed among the ruins to remind visitors



Glass figs and snails, crafted by Palestinian glassmakers, are placed among the ruins of Qasr Al Abd to remind visitors of the springs, creeks and natural life that have supported the Iraq Al Amir area for centuries

of the springs, creeks and natural life that have supported the area for centuries.

Kais Al Rawi and Julia Koerner's Lamella Series in Clay uses local clay and 3D printing technology. Inspired by the intricate structure of mushroom gills, the work explores how forms found in nature can help create more sustainable approaches to design and fabrication.

Iraq Al Amir Women Cooperative Society will host a daily open house from 9am to 3pm. Visitors can join workshops in pottery,

papermaking, weaving and soap making, and enjoy traditional Jordanian dishes made by local women. Activity fees range from JD5 to JD15.

JoNavigators will offer a free guided walk starting from the Hangar in Ras El Ain on October 16. The trail connects Naqsh Collective, the caves, the installation at Qasr Al Abd and the cooperative.

In Aqaba, ADW made its debut at Ayla Oasis in partnership with WUJUD, with a curated exhibition, workshops, and public

programmes exploring design through the city's distinctive landscape and cultural heritage.

Works by bahraini — danish, NEW SOUTH, Tasneem Zraikat, and Yazeed Khalidoun Balqar will be on display from October 8 to 17.

The Aqaba exhibition opened on Friday with a talk and tour led by Khalidoun Hijazin. Designers will guide visitors through the works, followed by an open discussion about the theme "Accumulations" and the oasis as a place for change and exchange.

Based in Ayla Oasis, WUJUD is a non-profit that envisions itself as a vibrant hub for immersive artistic creations and cultural experiences, and as the region's platform where contemporary Arab perspectives and world-class practices inspire, educate and connect a thriving community.

More information on times, locations and descriptions is available at www.ammandesignweek.com.

Swiss Jordanian Business Club marks 20 years of economic ties

By Mai Anati

AMMAN — The Swiss Jordanian Business Club (SJBC) marked its 20th anniversary on Thursday, highlighting opportunities to expand trade, investment and private-sector cooperation between Switzerland and Jordan.

More than 80 guests, including ministers, ambassadors, business leaders and company representatives, attended an anniversary dinner in Amman, celebrating the club's role in connecting the two countries' business communities.

Swiss Ambassador to Jordan Emilija Georgieva said that Switzerland and Jordan shared a long-standing partnership, with both countries offering complementary economic strengths.

"Jordan boasts a highly educated workforce, unmatched resilience, a strong drive for innovation and a strategic gateway to the Middle East, while Switzerland brings world-class research



Swiss Ambassador to Jordan Emilija Georgieva on Thursday addresses attendees of a ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of the Swiss Jordanian Business Club

and development, excellent connectivity and unparalleled quality standards," Georgieva said.

Established in 2006 with the support of the Swiss embassy, the club was founded by businesspeople seeking to strengthen economic relations between the two countries.

Over the past two decades, SJBC has provided a platform for Swiss and Jordanian companies to establish contacts, exchange expertise

and explore trade and investment opportunities. Its activities have also supported wider social and cultural exchanges.

Bilateral trade between Switzerland and Jordan reached approximately CHF850 million in 2025, reflecting the scale of the economic relationship and the potential for further cooperation, according to the club's anniversary statement.

Swiss companies operate in Jordan across several sectors, including pharmaceuticals,

tourism and hospitality, contributing investment, technical expertise and international standards to the local market.

The two countries see scope to build on these ties by expanding business-to-business cooperation, and exploring additional opportunities for trade and investment.

Adnan Talhouni, president of SJBC, and Georgieva addressed the anniversary gathering, reflecting on the organisation's development and the broader economic partnership between the two countries.

As it enters its third decade, the club aims to continue serving as a bridge between the Swiss and Jordanian private sectors, facilitating new partnerships and strengthening commercial links.

The anniversary dinner concluded with a performance by Jordanian singer Jeena Haddadin and a raffle offering attendees the chance to win a return ticket with Royal Jordanian.

Jordan Cultural, Arts & Outdoors Agenda: October 11–17

This week is defined by two major ongoing programmes — Amman Design Week in its second week, and the Jordan Trail regional hikes moving through the highlands of northern Jordan.

October is the ideal month for outdoor activity in Jordan, with temperatures cooling and the landscape at its most vivid.

Ongoing: October 11–17

Amman Design Week — 4th Edition (closing October 17) | Multiple venues across Amman and Aqaba

The final stretch of one of the most significant cultural returns



in Jordan's recent history. A total of 220 designers, makers, and

collectives fill exhibitions and public programming across Ras

El Ain, Jabal Al Lweibdeh, Jabal Amman and Iraq Al Amir — and for

the first time, Aqaba.

This is the last week to experience the installations, workshops, talks and public interventions before the festival closes on 17 October.

Free admission; registration required for some events. Full programme at ammandesignweek.com.

'In Remembrance of Khalid Shoman' | Darat Al Funun, Jabal Al Weibdeh

Running through October 30, this exhibition at Darat Al Funun honours the legacy of Khalid Shoman and his role in establishing and supporting the art

centre.

Still open throughout this week.

Wednesday, October 14 — Saturday, October 17

Jordan Trail — Region 2: Ajloun to As-Salt | Departs Abdoun Mall Garage, Amman, 6:30am

Departing from Ajloun's highlands, the trail moves south through forested valleys and agricultural lands toward the historic city of As-Salt.

Along the way, hikers pass through the village of Anjara and Widyan Asham to the village of Burma, before descending to the expansive waters of King Talal Dam.

Crossing the dam and ascending once more to ridgelines overlooking fertile farmland, the route reaches Rmeimeen, a village where church spires and mosque minarets share the skyline — before a final descent into As-Salt, a city renowned for its layered history, distinctive yellow stone architecture and cultural significance.

62.1 kilometres over four days and three nights. Bus departs Abdoun Mall Garage at 6:30am on October 14, returning October 17, at 7:00pm.

Includes licensed English and Arabic-speaking guide, local

community escorts, transportation and JTA team support. JD420. Registration via jordantrail.org.

Key sites along the route: Ajloun Castle, Burma village, King Talal Dam, Rmeimeen village, and As-Salt City — a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Saturday, October 17

Amman Design Week — Closing Day | Multiple venues, Amman

The final day of the 4th edition.

Last chance to visit the exhibitions, attend workshops, and explore the public installations before the festival closes.

Heavy rain, flash floods expected in southern, eastern regions — JMD

AMMAN (JT) — Unstable weather affecting the Kingdom is expected to intensify on Sunday, bringing short periods of heavy rainfall that could trigger flash floods in valleys and low-lying areas, particularly in the southern and eastern regions, including Aqaba, the Jordan Meteorological Department (JMD) said.

JMD forecaster Tareq Sharaan told Al Mamlaka TV that satellite and radar imagery showed cumulonimbus and thunderstorm clouds moving from the south towards the northeast, bringing moderate to heavy rainfall to parts of Tafilah, Karak and eastern Maan.

The unstable conditions are expected to continue through Monday, with their impact peaking on Sunday afternoon. Heavy downpours over short periods could be accompanied by thunder, lightning and occasional hail, particularly in southern and eastern areas, Sharaan said.

He warned of flash floods in valleys and low-lying areas, as well as reduced horizontal visibility in the Badia, urging the public to stay away from flood channels and exercise caution during thunderstorms.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Local Administration Walid Masri instructed municipalities, joint services councils and municipal affairs directorates to step up readiness, particularly in the eastern and



The Jordan Meteorological Department says on Saturday that unstable weather affecting the Kingdom is expected to intensify on Sunday, bringing short periods of heavy rainfall that could trigger flash floods in valleys and low-lying areas

southern regions.

He also called for close monitoring of early warning system reports and coordination with administrative governors, the Civil Defence Department and other relevant authorities.

Masri urged residents, particularly those living near valleys, and livestock owners to remain alert to flash flood risks and take precautions to protect lives and property.

Ministry of Public Works and Housing Spokesperson Omar Maharmeh said field teams and heavy machinery would remain on round-the-clock alert in the southern governorates over the next two days to respond to weather-related emergencies.

He said that the ministry had prepared 108 field teams equipped with 138 vehicles, with 200 heavy machines from the private sector also on call.

Rainfall over the past 24 hours had not

required field intervention, despite heavy rain in some southern areas, Maharmeh said.

He added that the ministry had carried out dozens of stormwater drainage projects over the summer, including eight major projects at sites damaged during the previous rainy season. The ministry is continuing to monitor stream beds, valleys and culverts, he said.

The Public Security Directorate (PSD) renewed its calls for caution, warning of sudden flash floods, reduced horizontal visibility and slippery roads.

It urged the public not to cross floodwaters or approach valley streams and low-lying areas, particularly in locations experiencing rainfall.

The PSD also advised people to stay away from open areas during thunderstorms and lightning, follow safety guidelines and call the unified emergency number 911 when necessary.

Momani calls for closer Arab media cooperation to address digital challenges

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Government Communication Mohammad Momani on Saturday called for stronger Arab media cooperation, expertise exchange and closer coordination to keep pace with technological developments and serve common Arab causes.

Momani made the remarks during bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the Future of Media and Communication Forum with Palestinian Minister of Information and General Supervisor of Official Media Ahmed Assaf, Lebanese Minister of Information Paul Morcos, Head of Egypt's National Media Authority Ahmed Al Muslimani, Syrian Minister of Information Khaled Zaarour and President of the Arab Journalists Union Moaid Allami.

Momani, who is also the Government spokesperson, said that Arab media face challenges arising from digital transformation and the growing influence of social media and artificial intelligence, requiring closer coordination among media institutions.

During his meeting with Assaf, Momani reiterated Jordan's support, under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah, for the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, foremost among them the establishment of an independent state, while rejecting displacement and the alternative homeland.



Minister of Government Communication on Saturday with Palestinian Minister of Information and General Supervisor of Official Media Ahmed Assaf

The two officials stressed the importance of continued Jordanian-Palestinian media coordination, strengthening the presence of the Palestinian cause in Arab and international media and conveying the facts to global public opinion.

Assaf praised the King's address to the UN General Assembly, saying it highlighted Palestinian suffering and called on the international community to fulfil its responsibilities towards developments in the Palestinian territories.

In his meeting with Morcos, Momani discussed exchanging expertise in media legislation, digital media regulation and the work of media institu-

tions and content creators, as well as combating hate speech and disinformation.

The two officials stressed the importance of continued Jordanian-Palestinian media coordination...

Momani and Muslimani discussed cooperation between Jordanian and Egyptian media

institutions, particularly in modernising official media, digitising radio and television archives, preserving media heritage and making archived content accessible.

During his meeting with Zaarour, Momani stressed cooperation in media development, training and capacity-building. He also affirmed Jordan's readiness, in line with Royal directives, to support Syria in rebuilding its institutions, strengthening security and stability and pursuing development and prosperity.

Zaarour highlighted the importance of developing journalists' skills and combating misinformation to ensure accurate reporting and serve common

Arab causes.

Momani and Allami discussed supporting professional journalism, building journalists' capacities and strengthening the role of Arab press institutions and unions in addressing challenges facing the profession.

Allami stressed the importance of training and expertise exchange to keep pace with professional and technological developments, commending Jordan's efforts to strengthen cooperation among Arab media institutions.

Momani reiterated Jordan's commitment to continued cooperation with Arab countries and media institutions to develop the sector and address its challenges.

GROWTH

ACI exports rise 6.5% to JD5.977b in first nine months

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) exports rose by 6.5 per cent in the first nine months of 2026 to JD5.977 billion, up from JD5.612 billion in the same period of 2025, according to chamber data.

The increase amounted to JD365 million, with exports expanding into non-traditional markets in Africa, Europe and non-Arab Asian countries, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Most industrial sectors recorded export growth, except leather and garments and engineering, electrical and information technology industries, which declined by 1 per cent and 13 per cent, respectively.

The packaging, paper, cardboard and office supplies sector recorded the highest growth at 41 per cent, followed by chemicals and cosmetics at 26 per cent.

Iraq, India, the US



Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) exports rise by 6.5 per cent in the first nine months of 2026 to JD5.977 billion

and Saudi Arabia accounted for a combined JD3.074 billion in exports during the nine-month period.

Exports to Iraq rose by 27.1 per cent to JD882 million, up from JD693 million in the same period of 2025,

making it the largest destination for chamber exports.

Exports to Saudi Arabia increased by 3 per cent to JD655 million, compared with JD636 million a year earlier.

Meanwhile, exports

to India fell by 7.2 per cent to JD826 million, down from JD889 million, while shipments to the United States dropped by 25.1 per cent to JD701 million, compared with JD936 million in the same period of 2025.

Jordan Post ranks among world's top 10 in digital transformation

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan Post ranked among the world's top 10 postal operators out of 192 countries in the Postal Development Index's digital transformation indicators, covering e-government services, e-commerce and cybersecurity.

Jordan Post scored 10 out of 10 in active digital dimensions, 100 in digital coverage breadth and 69.1 in digital development depth, achieving a composite score of 84.5 out of 100, according to the Univer-



Jordan Post ranks among the world's top 10 postal operators out of 192 countries in the Postal Development Index's digital transformation indicators

sal Postal Union's (UPU) 2026 annual statistical report, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The results reflect

progress in developing digital postal services and strengthening cybersecurity, contributing to the modernisa-

tion of the sector.

Jordan Post attributed its international standing to modernisation plans and technical capabilities aimed at improving postal, financial, digital, logistics and e-commerce services in line with international standards.

The index assesses postal operators' digital development based on indicators including active digital dimensions, digital coverage breadth, digital development depth and overall performance.

CRIME

Prosecutor questions suspects over fatal brawl in Amman

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — The Criminal Court prosecutor on Saturday began questioning several suspects in connection with a brawl that left one person dead and two injured in Amman a day earlier, official sources said.

The victim was reportedly shot, while two others were injured in a brawl that broke out

between a group of people in central Amman, Police Spokesperson Lt. Col. Amer Sartawi said.

"The victim was rushed to a nearby hospital but died shortly after being admitted to hospital," Sartawi added.

Meanwhile, a special investigation team was tasked with investigating the incident and "was able to pinpoint several suspects, in-

cluding a man believed to be responsible for the death incident during the brawl", Sartawi told The Jordan Times.

The police official added that preliminary investigations indicated the brawl allegedly erupted from old feuds between the two parties.

The Criminal Court prosecutor will summon several individuals who were present

during the brawl for questioning, a senior judicial source said.

The Criminal Court prosecutor ordered the suspects detained at a correctional and rehabilitation centre for 15 days pending further investigation, the senior judicial source added.

Investigations are ongoing, according to a statement by the Public Security Directorate.



Sanad to introduce AI features next year — minister

AMMAN (JT) — The Sanad government services application will introduce artificial intelligence features next year, alongside plans to establish an artificial intelligence factory, Minister of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship Sami Smeirat said on Saturday.

Speaking during a panel discussion titled "Digital Transformation in Jordan: A Step Towards the Future" at the Future of Media and Communication Forum in Amman, Smeirat said the planned features are part of efforts to use advanced technologies to improve public services, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

He said six laws had been amended to enable citizens to complete government service procedures digitally, from submitting applications to receiving services.

Cabinet decisions are now signed entirely digitally, Smeirat said, adding that legislative amendments

had provided the legal framework needed to improve service delivery and reduce human intervention.

He noted growing demand for the Sanad application as more services become available through the platform, with efforts under way to simplify government procedures and facilitate access to public services.

Smeirat said the application would soon send a congratulatory message to the father of a newborn immediately after birth, offering the option to issue a birth certificate through the platform.

He added that the

ease of use had contributed to an increase in activated digital IDs on Sanad and that a dedicated version of the application for tourists was also planned.

Smeirat said the planned AI factory would support the ministry's efforts to expand the use of advanced technologies and develop digital services.

He stressed that the success of digital services should be measured by their impact on citizen satisfaction and their ability to enable people to access government services easily from home.



This frame grab taken on Friday from AFPTV video footage shows a member of the Yemeni government forces firing a machine gun mounted on a pick-up truck during clashes with Houthi fighters in Hayfan district, south of Taiz, on Thursday

Yemen gov’t forces say advancing against Houthis around key waterway

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AFP) — Yemeni military sources told AFP on Saturday their forces were advancing against the Houthis in areas around the Bab Al Mandab strait but have not yet secured control of the waterway, after the government launched an operation to capture lost territory.

The government last week announced a counteroffensive aimed at retaking all areas held by the Houthis, after the pro-Iran group seized Yemen’s entire western coastline in a lightning offensive.

The Houthis confirmed that government forces had attacked in the Bab Al Mandab area but they claimed to have repelled the assault.

“Saudi-led forces attempted to advance from the Ras Al Ara area in Lahj governorate towards the area south of Bab Al Mandab,” Hizam Al Asad, a member of the Houthis’ political bureau, told AFP.

“However, our forces repelled them outside the Bab Al Mandab zone, inflicting heavy losses in personnel and equipment and forcing the survivors to retreat.

Our forces maintain control over Bab Al Mandab, Mayun Island and the remaining areas along the country’s western coast,” he said.

Sources from the military of Yemen’s internationally recognised government also said Mayun Island — located in the heart of

the strait — remained in Houthi hands as fighting continued.

Clashes in western Yemen, specifically around the strait, had killed at least 63 people in the past 24 hours, military sources from both sides told AFP on Saturday.

Thirty-five members of government forces had been killed, while 28 Houthis had died, the sources said.

On Friday a Yemeni military source confirmed to AFP that their forces had launched a “major operation” in the strait region, supported by air power from Saudi Arabia, which backs Yemen’s government.

After four years of relative calm, Yemen’s civil war reignited in July before the Houthi

gains on Yemen’s western coastline.

Saudi Arabia leads an international military coalition helping the Yemeni government fight the Houthis.

Early on Saturday the coalition said it had destroyed more than 130 Houthi targets in a “large-scale operation”.

In addition to battling Yemeni government forces on the ground, the Houthis have also been firing on targets inside Saudi Arabia, attacking transport hubs, oil facilities, and other civilian sites with drones and missiles.

Riyadh said on Friday that attacks on the Saudi capital’s international airport had killed three people the previous day.

Year later, Gaza ceasefire promises mostly unfulfilled

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — One year after US President Donald Trump declared the war in Gaza to be over, few of the long-term promises of the ceasefire have come to fruition.

Here is a list of some of the key points of the October 10, 2025 ceasefire and where things stand:

Hostages released, calm in Israel

Three days after the agreement was announced, Hamas freed the 20 remaining living hostages seized during the group’s October 7, 2023 surprise attack, the deadliest day in Israel’s history.

The captives’ return was a key priority for Israel, whose public had agonised over their fate.

The ceasefire anniversary also marks one year of quiet for Israel from the Gaza front, with no rocket attacks by Hamas.

The group’s missile inventory was depleted by near-constant Israeli bombardment, which damaged or destroyed the vast majority of buildings in the Palestinian territory.

The US military set up a command post with foreign allies near the Gaza border to monitor the truce.

No Israeli withdrawal or let-up

Israel has reduced its level of attacks but has kept striking Gaza on a near-daily basis.



People search the rubble of a collapsed building following overnight Israeli airstrikes in Gaza City on Friday, before which the Israeli military had warned residents to evacuate the area

Israeli strikes have killed some 1,450 Palestinians since the ceasefire, according to Gaza’s health ministry, which operates under Hamas and whose figures are considered accurate by the United Nations.

Prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is in a tight election race, has vowed to kill everyone involved in the October 7 attack.

Israeli forces were allowed to stay in 53 per cent of Gaza under the terms of the ceasefire, but a year later they control about 70 per cent of it, according to official accounts.

Hamas remains, with weapons

The second phase of the agreement was supposed to include a political transition away from Hamas, and technocrat Ali Shaath was appointed head of

a new National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG).

Hamas announced in July that it was disbanding its governing body and handing over Gaza’s administration to the US-blessed NCAG.

But Hamas effectively remains in charge of security in Gaza, and Shaath has taken a low profile.

The Palestinian Islamist movement elected a new leader, Khalil Al Hayya, in July. Shortly afterwards, the group announced it would give up its weapons, a step hailed by Trump as a breakthrough.

But Israel has been sceptical, with Netanyahu demanding verifiable decommissioning of all weapons down to individual guns.

Hamas has not gone ahead with disarmament and Israel has re-

fused to reciprocate by starting to withdraw forces.

Reconstruction just talk

Trump set up a new global body for the deal dubbed the “Board of Peace”, tapping as key figures former British prime minister Tony Blair and Bulgarian diplomat Nickolay Mladenov, who serves as “Gaza high representative”.

Trump, a critic of foreign aid, in January promised \$10 billion in US funding to the board he controls, and Gulf allies have pledged more, but no money is known to have made its way to Gaza reconstruction.

In September, the board proposed a \$2.45 billion Gaza recovery plan at a meeting of its members and stakeholders, in an effort meant to span over six months.

Spanish PM begins vote campaign overshadowed by housing protests

DOS HERMANAS, Spain (AFP) — Spain’s Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez aimed to pull off another unlikely comeback as he began campaigning on Saturday for a snap vote dominated by housing protests that have shaken the country.

When 87-year-old Madrid pensioner Maricarmen Abascal was evicted from her home two weeks ago, no one could have expected Spain was headed for upheaval that would bring forward a general election scheduled for 2027.

The eviction of Abascal, who became the face of the country’s chronic housing crisis, catalysed nationwide protests that piled pressure on Sanchez’s left-wing coalition to present urgent decrees.

But after the minority government failed to pass its measures in parliament, Sanchez rolled the dice and called an election for November 29.

Sanchez, in power since 2018, has acquired international prominence in recent years as his clashes with US President Donald Trump and Israel endeared him to disillusioned global progressives.

He is a divisive figure at home and trails in most polls to the main conservative Popular Party [PP].

At his rally Saturday, Sanchez vowed to strengthen legislation protecting tenants against “real estate speculation” if his party wins an absolute majority.

“Maricarmen and all those who campaign for her, as well as all those who take action for the just cause of



Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez arrives to a campaign rally in Dos Hermanas, near Seville, on Saturday ahead of the November 29 early legislative elections

housing, have opened the way,” he said, voicing his “affection” for Abascal, who died on Wednesday in hospital.

Wages, pensions, housing

Sanchez chose the symbolic location of Dos Hermanas, a commuter town outside the southern city of Seville and a historic Socialist stronghold, to kick off his electioneering.

He launched his 2023 election campaign from Dos Hermanas and went on to thwart the predictions by retaining office, even though the PP won more seats.

Dos Hermanas was also the scene of Sanchez’s political resurrection after he resigned as Socialist party leader in 2016, following two bruising general election defeats.

As Sanchez began his rally, Isabel Morales, a 67-year-old pensioner in the crowd, told AFP she viewed his term in office as “very positive”.

“He’s done a lot of

things for the working class. He raised wages, raised pensions, enacted a housing law, a lot of things that are extremely positive. Let’s hope he continues,” she said.

‘We want to pull our country out of the ruin, the corruption, the shady practices that we’ve been seeing recently’

Conservatives on the offensive

PP leader Alberto Nunez Feijoo was also rallying his followers on Saturday, in Madrid. He has his sights set on becoming prime minister after failing to form a government in 2023.

“Spain needs a future and he [Sanchez] needs

to be in the past,” Feijoo told a rally in Madrid on Sunday. “We are proposing a total change.”

The PP leader, who tops most polls, has focused his criticism on the government’s handling of a migration crisis in Ceuta, where he held an event on Wednesday promising to restore normality.

More than 70,000 migrants streamed into the Spanish north African enclave from neighbouring Morocco in late July. Thousands have remained for months in largely chaotic conditions, sparking anger among locals.

Yet the polls suggest Feijoo is unlikely to achieve a majority, which could make far-right party Vox, parliament’s third-largest force, a king maker in hypothetical coalition talks.

Feijoo deserves “a chance”, argued Ruben Moscoso, a 31-year-old public-sector worker at the rally.

“We want to pull our country out of the ruin, the corruption, the shady practices that we’ve been seeing recently,” he said.

Housing, long a top public concern, was a topic hanging large over both of Saturday’s rallies as hundreds of protesters camped in Madrid’s emblematic Puerta del Sol square and in other cities demanding more protection for tenants and affordable prices.

The main unions have called a general strike for November 11, the first such stoppage in Spain since 2012, to crank up the pressure over housing and wages before the vote.

India ‘cockroach’ movement says thousands detained during major protest in capital

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian police detained the head of the satirical “cockroach” online movement as well as thousands of protesters trying to take part in a major demonstration in New Delhi against the country’s election commissioner, the group said on Saturday.

The protest is the culmination of weeks of opposition mobilisation following allegations of misconduct during a nationwide voter-roll revision by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke and two other leaders were detained before disembarking from a flight in the capital, according to a statement from the group.

“They’re being denied access to their lawyers and cut off from all contact with others,” it said, adding the trio had been taken to “an undisclosed location”.

The CJP also said that thousands more protesters were detained in New Delhi as they attempted to march to the main Jantar Mantar protest site, defying a massive security clampdown.

“More than 15,000 protesters have been detained,” Ajinkya Shinde, a CJP leader, said at a news conference in Delhi.

Police did not immediately respond to AFP’s request for comment on detentions.

“We will be back, let them fill up all the jails,” Shinde said.

Dozens of protesters shouted anti-government slogans as they were taken away in police vehicles, AFP reporters witnessed.

Calls for the ECI chief Gyanesh Kumar to step down have intensified in recent weeks as opposition parties and critics said his commission’s voter-roll revision could



Police personnel detain a supporter of the Cockroach Janata Party during a protest in Mumbai on Saturday

disenfranchise millions of constituents and benefit Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party.

The ECI has rejected allegations of impropriety, saying the revision was intended to remove duplicate and ineligible voters.

Ahead of the protest, authorities in the capital deployed thousands of police, closed dozens of metro stations, cancelled more than 200 trains and temporarily shut down mobile Internet around the protest site.

The demonstrations are widely seen as a reprise of the “cockroach” movement’s mass mobilisation in July, which led to the education minister stepping down over an examination scandal.

This time, protesters are demanding Kumar’s resignation and a halt to the voter revision exercise.

Fresh challenge

The accusations are a fresh challenge for 76-year-old Modi during his third term in office.

Opposition parties have long alleged that legitimate voters are being struck off lists in India, the world’s largest democracy with 1.4 billion people.

The issue flared up last month when the In-

dian Express newspaper reported that key decisions linked to the revision were likely taken without the approval of two of the three election commissioners.

The ECI, a constitutional body, says all its decisions were unanimous and legally valid.

Demonstrators expressed anger on Saturday, telling AFP their right to protest peacefully was being hampered.

Saransh, a university graduate, walked several miles after navigating security barricades to get close to the Jantar Mantar protest site.

“I am here to protect the constitution,” said the 24-year-old, who gave only one name.

“Why do I need permission to peacefully express my opinion?”

‘Keep protesting’

Amnesty International denounced the “lockdown-like restrictions” and leader of the opposition Congress Party, Rahul Gandhi, called on young people to continue with the rallies.

“Youth of India, I am proud of you. Keep protesting. We are standing with you,” he said.

The Hindu newspaper reported more than 5,000 protesters had been detained, although it was not immediately possible

to verify that number.

Media outlets, including the Scroll and News-laundry, said their journalists had also been detained briefly.

The United Nations’ human rights office urged India to release those “arbitrarily detained” in the protests and expressed concern at reports of mass detentions.

BJP spokesman Sambit Patra said on Saturday the CJP had failed in its attempt to spread “anarchy”.

“What is happening at Jantar Mantar, what you can see on TV and a few social media handles, is not India’s story,” he told reporters.

The voter list overhaul, which began in 2025, has led to more than 133 million names being excluded from draft rolls, according to Indian media reports citing ECI data.

The ECI has said the voter-roll revision identifies fraudulently registered voters and aims to prevent “foreign illegal immigrants” from voting.

Critics say the drive has disproportionately affected marginalised and minority communities.

Members of Modi’s party have long alleged that large numbers of undocumented Muslim migrants from neighbouring Bangladesh have fraudulently entered India’s electoral rolls.

Political analyst Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay told AFP the protest comes at a time when Modi appears to be “at his weakest politically and individually”.

Though India’s next general elections are not slated until 2029, the country’s most populous state of Uttar Pradesh will go to the polls next year.

“I see this becoming a bigger challenge in the coming months,” Mukhopadhyay said.

South African judge Navi Pillay wins Nobel Peace Prize

Pillay calls ICC sanctions ‘unacceptable’

OSLO (AFP) — The Nobel Peace Prize awarded to judge and former UN rights chief Navi Pillay of South Africa drew backlash from US President Donald Trump, who called the decision “disgraceful”.

Pillay, 85, has spent her career defending international law, working against war crimes and crimes against humanity.

But Trump labelled the Norwegian Nobel Committee’s choice as “a disgraceful and embarrassing decision”, telling a rally of his supporters in Syracuse, New York he had “never heard of” Pillay.

“The United States of America, represented by me as your president, should have received the Nobel Peace Prize, but didn’t,” he said.

Pillay on Saturday called recently announced US sanctions on the International Criminal Court (ICC) “unheard of, unacceptable”.

“There is so much tension and anxiety over the continued existence of international courts, mainly the International Criminal Court in The Hague... most importantly, sanctions have been announced by one country against the judges, just for the judicial orders they issue. This is unheard of, unacceptable,” Pillay said via video link from Nuremberg during an event at the Nobel Peace Centre in Oslo.

Since returning to the White House in January 2025, Trump has made no secret of his desire to win the



South African lawyer and champion of international law Navi Pillay is pictured after she was awarded the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize, on October 9, 2026 at the historic Courtroom 600 of Nuremberg's Palace of Justice, venue of the 1945-1946 Nuremberg Trials against leaders of defeated Nazi Germany, in Nuremberg, southern Germany

prestigious award.

Hours after Pillay was named laureate, the United States announced new sanctions against the ICC, provoking swift condemnation from member states and the United Nations.

Pillay once sat on the ICC and in acknowledging the award she condemned attacks on institutions such as the tribunal.

Pillay, speaking from the courtroom in Nuremberg, Germany where the trials of World War II Nazi leaders took place, dedicated her prize to the “survivors of international crimes”.

The judge’s career has seen her tackle al-

legations of genocide in Rwanda, Myanmar and Gaza, prompting a furious response from Israel.

‘If you clap a little bit more, I may share this prize with Trump’

Israel said the award legitimised ‘anti-Israel

hatred”, and that Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels must be “applauding from hell”.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the prize showed the Nobel committee had “lost its moral compass” by honouring “a bigot”.

The Palestinian foreign ministry said giving the prize to Pillay honoured “all those who stand firm in defending international law and justice”.

‘Independence, expertise’

Pillay is currently a judge on the International Court of Justice in a case in which Myanmar also stands ac-

cused of genocide.

She has been “instrumental in ensuring that war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide are prosecuted”, said Jorgen Watne Frydnes, chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee in Oslo.

The daughter of a bus driver in a family of Tamil descent, her career has taken her from South African courts, where she defended anti-apartheid activists, to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda after its 1994 genocide, and the ICC.

Pillay was the UN human rights commissioner from 2008 to 2014.

She headed the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry, which found last year that genocide was occurring in Gaza. It does not speak on behalf of the UN.

Pillay told AFP at the time that her team had shared “thousands of pieces of information” with ICC prosecutors.

Israel categorically rejected the report findings as “distorted and false”.

Pillay’s “independence, her expertise and steadfastness have made her one of the most respected international jurists of our time”, the Nobel committee said.

ICC sanctioned

In Nuremberg, Pillay said world leaders have a “legal obligation to protect human rights and refrain from war”.

“We are living through an era when

international law and human rights are under significant political attack,” she said.

That was “particularly visible with the attacks on the International Criminal Court”, she added.

Trump called on ICC member states last month to quit the body, calling it an anti-American “out-of-control institution”.

On Friday, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Washington would ban transactions with what he called a “rogue court”.

The US sanctions were welcomed by Israel but condemned by the United Nations, the European Union and court member states including Britain, France, Germany, Japan and Canada.

The decision to award the prize to Pillay was “a clear message to those who are putting pressure on these institutions, to those who are sanctioning the judges and are attacking the institutions”, Frydnes told AFP.

Earlier, Pillay reacted to news of the prize with a quip about Trump’s well-documented desire to win the award.

“If you clap a little bit more, I may share this prize with Trump,” she joked during a standing ovation captured on video and posted online.

The award, which will be presented at a formal ceremony in Oslo on December 10, comes with a gold medal, a diploma and a prize sum of \$1.2 million.

Two-thirds of Jordanians express trust in government — poll

Continued from page 1

The survey revealed that 91 per cent of opinion leaders actively follow government actions, while 79 per cent of the national sample and 75 per cent of opinion leaders endorsed field visits conducted by the prime minister to inspect public conditions firsthand.

Positive ratings for public service delivery reached 63 per cent among the national sample and 58 per cent among opinion leaders, while 55 per cent of the national sample and 51 per cent of opinion leaders indicated that the government listens to public feedback.

Regarding regional affairs, 62 per cent of the national sample expressed optimism about government capacity to manage regional files compared with 52 per cent in 2025 poll.

On economic measures, 69 per cent of the national sample and 60 per cent of opinion leaders said that raising the minimum wage by JD30 helps cushion living costs, while 61 per cent of the national sample and 54 per cent of opinion leaders noted that freezing fuel prices eased financial pressures.

The poll showed that 55 per cent of the national sample and 54 per cent of opinion leaders positively evaluated government efforts to stabilise prices of basic commodities, including bread, while 96 per cent supported financial backing and purchasing priority for local products.

In healthcare, 91 per cent of the national sample and 90 per cent of

opinion leaders supported government health initiatives, including expanding cancer care coverage to individuals under age 20 and over age 60, while 72 per cent observed improved medical services following hospital expansions.

In education, 86 per cent of the national sample viewed the construction of 86 new schools as effective in reducing classroom overcrowding, while 97 per cent supported the public school transport project to lower costs and reduce dropouts.

In healthcare, 91 per cent of the national sample and 90 per cent of opinion leaders supported government health initiatives...

Regarding infrastructure, 91 per cent of the national sample and 83 per cent of opinion leaders expressed optimism regarding the National Water Carrier Project, while 89 per cent of Sanad application users noted that digital services saved time visiting public departments.

The poll was conducted between 10 and 26 September 2026, comprising a national sample of 2,012 respondents and an opinion leader sample of 424 individuals.

SSIF says its assets reach JD20.1 billion at end of third quarter

Continued from page 1

In a statement to The Jordan Times, SSIF said that it recorded total comprehensive income of approximately JD1.37 billion during the first nine months of 2026, in addition to an insurance surplus transfer of around JD110 million from the Social Security Corporation.

Total comprehensive income comprised net income of JD879 million and a net increase of approximately JD492.4 million in the valuation of the fund’s strategic equity portfolio, the statement said.

Net income rose by 8.6 per cent compared with the same period in 2025, driven primarily by returns from bonds, which contributed JD511.4 million, equities at JD248.3 million and money market instruments at JD86 million.

Bonds accounted for 56.2 per cent of the fund’s assets, followed by equities at 21.3 per cent, money market instruments at 11.5 per cent, real estate at 5.6 per cent, loans at 2.4 per cent and tourism investments at 1.6 per cent.

Chairman of the So-

cial Security Investment Board Omar Malhas said the fund plays a key role in the national economy, with investment decisions guided by “prudent policies and institutional governance frameworks”.

‘The fund continues to assess investment opportunities in technology, mining and transport...’

“The decisions are guided by a prudent investment policy and institutional governance frameworks, and opportunities are assessed for returns and acceptable levels of risk, balancing investment viability with economic impact,” Malhas said.

He added that the fund was complementing traditional pension fund investments by expanding into major,

long-term projects in water, energy, transport and mining through strategic partnerships with local, regional and international partners.

“This approach supports the sustainability of the social security system by creating jobs, expanding the contributor base and generating investment returns that are reinvested to grow social security funds.”

SSIF Chief Executive Officer Izzeddin Kanakrieh said that the results provide a solid foundation for a new phase of investment that combines growth in existing holdings with entry into new sectors and major projects.

He said that the fund draws on its financial capacity and institutional expertise to evaluate opportunities, pursue new investments and establish strategic partnerships.

Kanakrieh also highlighted the importance of synergies across the fund’s portfolio, noting that some projects can strengthen existing investments by reducing costs, improving efficiency and extending value chains.

Strategic projects

The fund’s recent investment activity reflects its broader strategy of expanding its presence in major infrastructure and industrial projects, the statement said.

“The foundation stone was recently laid for the Aqaba–Al Shidiya–Maan Railway Project, in which SSIF holds a 7 per cent stake in the project company through a strategic Jordanian-Emirati partnership.”

The fund said that the project marks the SSIF’s first investment in rail transport and is expected to support its existing investments in Jordan Phosphate Mines Company and Arab Potash Company by reducing transport costs and improving operational efficiency.

SSIF has also partnered with the Oman Investment Authority to establish the Jordanian-Omani Investment Company, which is equally owned by the two parties and has an investment size of \$100 million, according to the statement.

In the National Water Carrier Project,

the National Water Investments Company, wholly owned by the SSC, was established to acquire a 15 per cent stake in the project company. SSIF is also finalising its direct contribution to the project’s financing through a consortium of Jordanian commercial banks.

The Cabinet has recently approved the fund’s participation through a 20 per cent equity stake in the IPP7 combined-cycle power generation project.

SSIF is also finalising procedures to acquire a 20 per cent stake in the project company developing a purified phosphoric acid plant in partnership with Jordan Phosphate Mines Company and Arab Potash Company.

“The fund continues to assess investment opportunities in technology, mining and transport while seeking strategic partners for new projects. Through these investments, SSIF aims to grow social security funds, serve contributors and retirees, and support economic growth and investment activity in Jordan.”

Palestinians seek urgent UN action as settler attacks escalate

Continued from page 1

The presidency on Friday said attacks on Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps, alongside killings, destruction and forced displacement, required urgent international intervention. Presidential spokesperson Nabil Abu Rudeineh called on the Security Council to fulfil its legal and political responsibilities by providing international

protection and adopting measures to halt further violations.

Abu Rudeineh said 19 settler attacks had been recorded since Friday morning, targeting farmers, olive harvesters and their property. The incidents included burning trees and vehicles, uprooting dozens of olive trees, stealing livestock and crops, assaulting Palestinians and preventing them from reaching their

land.

He warned that the attacks threatened Palestinian livelihoods, particularly during the olive harvest season. He also cited continued military incursions into West Bank towns, villages and refugee camps, raids on homes, property destruction, live fire and land seizures. He accused Israeli forces of protecting settlers, allowing attacks to continue and expand.

According to a letter seen by Reuters, Palestinian Vice President Hussein Al Sheikh informed France that the political, security and economic conditions required for the vote had not materialised. The letter recommended adjusting the election date by several months, proposing the first half of September 2027 as a new timeframe. The recommendation does not in itself establish that

a formal postponement has been announced.

The European Union had expressed readiness to deploy election observers, EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said Palestinians had the right to choose their representatives through credible, inclusive and transparent elections, describing the vote as an opportunity to renew the legitimacy of Palestinian institutions after nearly two decades

without parliamentary elections.

Palestinian factions, including Fateh and Hamas, have agreed to pursue national dialogue. Fatah Central Committee Secretary-General Jibril Rajoub said discussions with Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine would seek common ground on political issues and a fully sovereign Palestinian state on the territories

occupied in 1967.

A source who attended the talks told AFP that the factions had agreed to recommend postponing the vote to allow more time for dialogue and consensus.

Political analyst Amer Sabaileh said another postponement would further undermine the legitimacy of Palestinian institutions, particularly after nearly two decades without parliamentary elections.

He also warned that the political situation could become more difficult as Israel intensifies pressure on the Palestinian Authority.

The developments leave Palestinian leaders facing parallel challenges: Securing protection for Palestinians amid escalating attacks in the occupied West Bank and addressing questions over political representation and the legitimacy of their institutions.

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Oil prices and bond yields: Rising global borrowing costs

By Raad Mahmoud Al-Tal

For the first time in 36 years, the relationship between oil prices and US Treasury bond yields has returned to historically high levels. According to The Financial Times, the correlation between West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil prices and the yield on 10-year US Treasury bonds reached around 65 per cent this month. Estimates suggest that every \$1 increase in the price of a barrel of oil is associated with a rise of about 0.02 percentage points in the bond yield.

This relationship shows that oil prices and bond yields often move in the same direction. However, this does not necessarily mean that higher oil prices directly cause bond yields to rise. Both may be affected by common factors, such as inflation expectations, economic conditions and geopolitical tensions.

The same pattern has been seen in European bond markets. Countries that depend heavily on imported energy have faced rising bond yields as oil prices have increased. Oil is a major driver of inflation because higher energy prices raise the cost of production, transportation, and distribution. These costs eventually affect the prices of many goods and services. As a result, financial markets have become more sensitive to changes in oil prices, especially amid tensions in the Middle East and concerns about the supply of crude oil and refined products.

The impact goes beyond financial markets and directly affects households and businesses. Higher oil prices increase living costs, while rising bond yields can make borrowing more expensive. The yield on 10-year US Treasury bonds is an important benchmark for pricing many long-term financial products, including mortgages. When this yield rises, borrowing costs may increase for households and businesses. If inflation remains high while economic growth slows, the global economy could face a greater risk of stagflation, a situation in which prices continue to rise while economic activity weakens.

For Jordan, the combination of higher oil prices and rising US Treasury yields presents a particular challenge. As a country that imports much of its energy, Jordan faces a higher import bill when oil prices rise. This can increase transportation and production costs, push up prices, and reduce consumers' purchasing power. At the same time, higher US Treasury yields may increase borrowing costs in international markets, making it more expensive for Jordan to obtain new loans or refinance existing debt. These pressures can widen the current account deficit, place additional strain on public finances and make it harder for businesses to invest and expand.

The challenge for Jordan is not only the size of its public debt, but also the cost of servicing it. If oil prices remain high and global borrowing costs increase, the government may face pressure from both a higher energy bill and more expensive financing. This could leave less room in the budget for public investment and development projects. For this reason, public debt management should focus on the timing of repayments, borrowing costs and exposure to interest rate changes.

At the same time, Jordan needs to reduce its exposure to external shocks by diversifying its energy sources, increasing exports, attracting productive investment and improving productivity. These measures can help the economy generate more domestic income and foreign currency, reducing its dependence on borrowing and imported energy.

The key point is that Jordan cannot control global oil prices or US Treasury yields, but it can strengthen its ability to withstand their effects. A more productive economy, stronger exports, and better debt management would help protect public finances, support investment, and sustain economic growth even when global financial and energy markets become more volatile.

Surrounded by frenemies: Prince El Hassan's reading of Jordan and a region in transition

By Layan Mohammad

HRH Prince El Hassan's interview offers more than an assessment of Jordan's geopolitical predicament; it presents an alternative lens for understanding a Middle East in transition, one that places human dignity, regional interdependence, and shared security at the centre of political thinking. Speaking with Yalda Hakim on Sky News' The World with Yalda Hakim, Prince El Hassan reflects on a region undergoing not merely another cycle of conflict, but a deeper transformation in the meaning of security, stability, power and coexistence. His perspective carries the weight of a statesman who has witnessed decades of war, diplomacy, displacement and frustrated attempts at peace, yet, his reflections are directed less towards revisiting the past than toward questioning the assumptions through which the future continues to be imagined.

What emerges is a profound challenge to conventional readings of the region. Security cannot remain synonymous with military power, stability cannot be sustained through containment and geography cannot be reduced to competing spheres of influence. Jordan's position at the heart of regional turbulence becomes, in this reading, a window onto a larger crisis of political imagination. The deeper question is not simply how states protect themselves in an increasingly fractured Middle East, but whether the region can develop a conception of security

in which the dignity and future of people matter as much as borders, alliances, and strategic calculations. It is precisely this question that gives Prince El Hassan's words significance far beyond Jordan.

From this perspective, Gaza is not simply another conflict within an unstable regional system. It has become a test of the assumptions on which that system rests...

Prince El Hassan's description of Jordan as being "surrounded by frenemies" captures a deeper paradox in a Middle East whose political order is being profoundly tested by the war in Gaza. The term reflects a regional environment in which friendship and rivalry, cooperation and suspicion, strategic partnership and competing interests increasingly coexist. Gaza, however, exposes the limits of understand-

ing this environment solely through conventional geopolitics. It reveals how a regional order built around deterrence, alliances, containment, and balances of power can remain deeply insecure when human dignity and human security are treated as secondary concerns.

From this perspective, Gaza is not simply another conflict within an unstable regional system. It has become a test of the assumptions on which that system rests. Security cannot be measured only by borders, military capabilities, or strategic advantage while displacement, deprivation, fear, and the erosion of human dignity continue to cross those same borders. Jordan's position makes this contradiction particularly visible. Prince El Hassan's reflections suggest that the real transformation required in the regional order is therefore conceptual as much as political. A sustainable Middle East demands a transition from competing notions of national security towards shared human security, where the security of one society cannot be permanently constructed upon the insecurity of another.

Reading Prince El Hassan's interview from Washington creates an important intellectual distance between two ways of seeing the Middle East. American policy discourse has long given considerable weight to security, alliances, deterrence, regional stability and strategic interests. Official US approaches themselves, however, have also acknowledged the importance of diplomacy, development, human rights,

and resilient societies alongside traditional security concerns. The question, therefore, is not whether Washington understands the human dimension, but whether that dimension carries sufficient weight when strategic priorities are translated into policy.

Prince El Hassan's reflections invite a different starting point. Instead of asking only how alliances can be preserved, borders secured, threats deterred, or regional balances maintained, his perspective encourages us to ask what these policies ultimately mean for the people who inhabit the region. From Washington, maps of the Middle East can appear as arrangements of allies, adversaries, military assets, corridors and strategic interests. From within the region, those same maps contain displaced families, fragile communities, contested identities, memories of conflict and generations whose futures are shaped by decisions made far beyond their immediate reach.

This is perhaps what Washington risks missing when geopolitics becomes the dominant lens. Stability between states does not necessarily produce security within societies. Deterrence may prevent one form of conflict while leaving its underlying grievances untouched. Prince El Hassan's intervention therefore raises a question that reaches beyond Jordan and Gaza: What if sustainable regional order begins not with managing insecurity, but with recognising that human dignity itself is a strategic interest?

When confidence becomes capital

By Fares Braizat

The Jordan Strategy Forum's latest Investor Confidence Index offers an encouraging assessment of Jordan's economic direction. Rising by 21.9 per cent in the second quarter of 2026, from 153.1 to 186.6 points, the index reached its highest level since the second quarter of 2021, providing substantial grounds for optimism. Its real-economy component climbed from 114.7 to 200 points, signalling a marked improvement in the indicators underpinning investment confidence.

This advance coincides with real GDP growth of 3 per cent compared with the corresponding quarter of 2025, when growth stood at 2.8 per cent. Following 2.9 per cent growth in the first quarter of 2026, the result indicates gradual acceleration. Against the uncertainty surrounding our region, this progress deserves recognition.

The underlying figures give substance to the headline. Foreign direct investment inflows reached JD457.5 million dur-

ing the quarter. Private-sector credit expanded by 1.3 per cent to JD32.74 billion, while the Amman Stock Exchange's weighted index gained 305 points. The quarterly budget deficit narrowed from JD722.3 million to JD550.7 million. Together, these developments present an encouraging picture of economic activity and capital flows.

Behind this progress is a determined prime minister leading a capable economic team. Their attention to investment facilitation, simpler procedures and implementation reflects an understanding that economic confidence is earned through the everyday workings of government. Clear decisions, predictable rules and timely responses give businesses greater reason to invest. Progress in digitising investor services and reforming the investment environment provides practical expression to that approach.

Confidence in Jordan, measured at home, is also being affirmed abroad. The Jordan-EU Investment Conference, scheduled for November 19 at the

Dead Sea under His Majesty King Abdullah's patronage, with the announced participation of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, represents a significant expression of international support for Jordan's potential.

Three per cent growth provides a foundation upon which to build. The next task is to turn improving confidence into sustained investment...

EU Ambassador to Jordan Pierre-Christophe Chatzisavas and the EU Delegation deserve

warm recognition for their work with Jordanian partners to prepare the conference and strengthen investment ties. Such efforts give practical substance to a partnership whose promise extends to productive enterprise and employment.

Three per cent growth provides a foundation upon which to build. The next task is to turn improving confidence into sustained investment, stronger businesses and opportunities for young Jordanians. Faster approvals, dependable institutions and effective infrastructure can help ensure that momentum reaches communities across the Kingdom.

Jordan's resilience has preserved the space for progress. Better economic performance can now enlarge it. The latest JSF findings and forthcoming investment conference offer a timely opportunity to convert encouraging indicators into livelihoods. Confidence becomes capital when investors commit resources; its fullest value emerges when that capital creates opportunities through which Jordanians can build their futures.

Public transport: Building a culture of everyday use

By Zaid K. Maaytah

Jordan is moving ahead with plans to develop and expand its public transportation network, an important step towards improving mobility and supporting economic and social development, a modern, reliable and accessible network can ease traffic congestion, reduce transportation costs and improve people's access to opportunities, yet, the success of these investments will depend on more than the availability of buses and routes, it will also depend on the extent to which citizens embrace public transportation as part of their daily lives.

Changing how people travel, however, is not always as straightforward as providing better alternatives, many people have spent years relying on their private cars, developing routines and expectations around them, even when public transportation becomes a practical option, established habits and perceptions may discourage them from making the switch, from a behavioural

angle, understanding these influences is essential, because improving the available choices does not necessarily mean people will change the choices they make.

Encouraging greater use of public transportation requires a strategy grounded in reliable data and a clear understanding of citizens' travel behaviour, examining the demographic and geographical distribution of current users, alongside those who continue to rely on private vehicles, can reveal where opportunities for greater adoption exist and what prevents people from making the shift, these findings should guide targeted policies and communication efforts, supported by practical measures that encourage people to experience the available services and gradually incorporate them into their daily routines, rather than relying on broad promotional campaigns that overlook differences in people's circumstances, the effectiveness of these efforts should then be assessed through changes in passenger numbers, frequency of use and

travel patterns, allowing the strategy to evolve based on what actually encourages citizens to use public transportation.

Beyond its practical benefits, public transportation can also contribute to greater social cohesion, bringing together citizens from different demographics, social classes, financial circumstances and educational backgrounds in a shared public space, these everyday encounters can encourage familiarity and a stronger sense of community, in a society where daily routines can often keep people within familiar social circles, sharing public spaces can create a greater sense of common experience, reminding citizens that they belong to the same wider community, giving public transportation a social value that extends beyond mobility and accessibility, an aspect worth considering when shaping how the network is presented to the public.

An important part of this strategy should focus on reshaping social norms that associate a person's status with

their means of transportation, one approach worth considering is encouraging senior government officials, elected representatives and business leaders to regularly use public transportation across Jordan's governorates, their visible participation could send a powerful social message that public transportation is a normal choice regardless of income, profession or social standing, particularly when their use is genuine and consistent rather than limited to publicity appearances, leading by example in this way can help change perceptions and gradually establish new social norms around public transportation.

As Jordan invests in its transportation network, it has an opportunity to build the habit of using it at the same time, through careful listening, useful information, firsthand experience and examples set by people across society, the real measure of success will be not only the buses on the road, but the people who choose to ride them, and the connections those journeys make possible.

BUSINESS

Sunday, October 11, 2026



Jordan's Investor Confidence Index rises by 21.9 per cent in the second quarter of 2026 to 186.6 points, up from 153.1 points in the first quarter, according to official data

Economic indicators point to growth, resilience amid regional pressures

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan's economy has continued to show signs of resilience, with several key indicators recording strong growth since the beginning of 2026 despite regional tensions and the ongoing repercussions of war in the region.

The country's Investor Confidence Index rose 21.9 per cent in the second quarter of 2026 to 186.6 points, up from 153.1 points in the first quarter, according to official data.

Jordan's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 3 per cent in the second quarter of 2026, compared with 2.8 per cent during the same period last year, indicating continued economic growth despite challenging regional conditions.

Exports also recorded solid growth, rising 10.3 per cent during the first seven months of the year. Tourism revenues increased 2.9 per cent during the first eight months, reaching approximately \$5.6 billion.

Remittances from Jordanians working abroad continued their strong performance, increasing 14.1 per cent during the first seven months of 2026 to nearly \$3 billion.

Foreign reserves held by the Central Bank of Jordan reached \$28.5 billion at the end of September, enough to cover

the Kingdom's imports of goods and services for approximately 9.2 months.

The Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) also recorded a significant rise. Its general index climbed 38.2 per cent to 4,191 points at the end of September, compared with 3,033 points during the same period last year.

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Activity in the construction and banking sectors also strengthened. The total area of licensed buildings for residential purposes increased 10.7 per cent during the first seven months of the year, while deposits with the banking system reached JD51.61 billion in July, up 3.2 per cent from the end of 2025.

Jordan also improved

its position in the 2026 Global Innovation Index, published by the World Intellectual Property Organisation, ranking 60th globally among 139 economies and fifth among Arab countries. The ranking continues the country's improving performance in the index.

Business activity has likewise expanded. The number of companies registered in Jordan increased 7.24 per cent during the first nine months of 2026 compared with the same period last year.

According to the Companies Control Department, 6,046 companies were registered during the first nine months of this year, compared with 5,638 during the corresponding period in 2025.

The real estate market also remained active. According to the latest monthly report from the Department of Lands and Survey, total trading volume in the property market reached approximately JD5.1 billion during the first nine months of 2026.

The latest figures point to broad-based economic activity across exports, tourism, remittances, financial markets, banking, construction, innovation, business registration and real estate, despite the difficult regional environment.

\$15 billion in investment opportunities to feature at Jordan-EU conference — minister

AMMAN (JT) — More than 40 investment opportunities worth over \$15 billion will be presented at the 2026 Jordan-EU Investment Conference, Investment Minister Tareq Abu Ghazaleh said on Thursday.

The conference will be held on November 19 at the King Hussein bin Talal Convention Centre at the Dead Sea under the patronage of His Majesty King Abdullah, with the participation of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

Details of the conference were announced during a press briefing by Abu Ghazaleh and Minister of Government Communication Mohammad Momani.

Abu Ghazaleh said the conference aims to translate Jordan's strategic and comprehensive partnership with the European Union into long-term investment partnerships and strengthen the Kingdom's position as a regional gateway for investment.

"The conference will present investors with more than 40 investment opportunities worth over \$15 billion," he said.

He said the figure represents the total value of the opportunities being presented, with efforts focused on connecting projects with investors, financial institutions and partners capable of developing, financing and implementing them.

The conference will focus on five key areas: technology, the future of energy, high-value industries, logistics and infrastructure and water security.

The technology agenda will cover opportunities in software, digital services, artificial intelligence, cloud computing, data centres and semiconductors with a focus on leveraging



More than 40 investment opportunities worth over \$15 billion will be presented at the 2026 Jordan-EU Investment Conference, Investment Minister Tareq Abu Ghazaleh says on Thursday

Jordanian talent to strengthen the country's position as a regional technology hub.

The energy pillar will examine opportunities in renewable energy, energy storage, grid development, hydrogen and green ammonia, as well as the regulatory and financing frameworks needed to attract long-term investment.

Discussions on high-value industries will focus on industrial partnerships, technology transfer, value chains and export potential, while the logistics and infrastructure agenda will address transport, railways and strategic projects aimed at supporting trade and access to regional markets.

The water security pillar will explore technologies and projects designed to improve the sustainability and efficiency of water supplies, as well as potential cooperation between government bodies, technology providers and investors.

Abu Ghazaleh said that recent positive economic indicators were contributing to greater confidence in Jordan's investment

environment.

He also highlighted government efforts to strengthen Arab investment and economic integration, develop partnerships, expand market access, attract investment and support shared economic interests.

The conference is expected to attract more than 700 participants, including Jordanian, European and international companies, as well as financial and development institutions, he said.

The gathering will provide an opportunity for investors and other stakeholders to discuss investment opportunities and their commercial, financing and regulatory requirements directly with relevant parties, the minister added.

The EU-Jordan strategic and comprehensive partnership is backed by a financial and investment package of about 3 billion euro for 2025-27, including around 1.4 billion euro in additional investments, as well as grants and concessional financial assistance, according to Abu Ghazaleh.

He said that financial

institutions and development partners would play an important role in identifying financing options, structuring investments and using guarantees, risk-mitigation instruments and public-private partnerships (PPPs) to help make projects financeable and implementable.

Jordan's private sector would also play a key role through business meetings, sectoral discussions and engagement with European companies, Abu Ghazaleh said.

"The aim is to establish investment and trade partnerships and strengthen the integration of Jordanian companies into regional and global value chains," he said.

He pointed to Jordan's stability, strategic location, trade agreements and economic modernisation programme as key factors supporting efforts to attract investment and position the Kingdom as a gateway to Arab and global markets.

Momani said that the conference reflected the depth of Jordan's strategic partnership with the EU and represented a message of confidence

in the Kingdom's investment environment.

He also highlighted the role of media in highlighting Jordan's investment advantages, promoting the opportunities presented at the conference and following up on its outcomes.

The government, he added, was working to facilitate media access to officials, investors and representatives of companies and financial institutions to support comprehensive coverage of the conference.

The conference is also expected to highlight Jordanian human capital and the country's young technology talent, with a focus on investments that can create jobs, transfer knowledge and technology, increase the added value of local production and strengthen its competitiveness.

Abu Ghazaleh said "The programme will include high-level discussions on the Jordan-EU partnership, financing mechanisms and Jordan's role in regional economic connectivity and market access, alongside sectoral sessions and business-to-business meetings."

Clearance companies process over 808,000 customs declarations till September 2026 — AOCTC

AMMAN (JT) — Clearance companies operating in Jordan processed 808,866 customs declarations covering all customs statuses during the first nine months of 2026, the Association of Owners of Clearance and Transport Companies (AOCTC) announced.

The association said the companies completed the relevant procedures at customs and border centres across the Kingdom, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

According to statistical data compiled by the AOCTC, the Aqaba Customs Directorate, which comprises the Aqaba Customs Centre Passenger Ferry Terminal Customs Centre, and the Al Durrah and Wadi Araba border crossings, recorded the highest number of declarations at 183,934.

Al Omari Customs Centre, which links Jordan with Saudi Arabia, ranked second with 174,415 declarations, followed by the Airport Clearance Customs Centres in Amman and Zizya with 123,456 declarations.

The Amman Customs Centre processed 75,207 declarations, while the Jaber Customs Centre,



The Association of Owners of Clearance and Transport Companies announces companies operating in the sector processed 808,866 customs declarations, during the first nine months of this year

which links Jordan with Syria, handled 67,470.

The Zarqa Free Zone Customs Centres, covering goods and vehicles, processed 48,856 declarations, while the E-Commerce Customs Centre handled 35,037. The remaining declarations were recorded at other customs and border centres across the Kingdom.

Citing official figures, the association also reported that 438 vessels docked at the Aqaba Container Terminal during the first nine months of 2026, compared with 446 during the same period last year.

Despite the decline in vessel calls, the terminal handled 786,949 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), up from 738,353 in the corresponding period of 2025, marking a 7 per cent increase.

The number of laden inbound containers reached 411,244, compared with 370,531 a year earlier, an increase of 11 per cent. Laden outbound containers totalled 77,328.

Meanwhile, the number of ships docking at Aqaba's main ports and completing unloading operations reached 1,274 during

the January-September period, up from 1,183 in the same period last year, an increase of 8 per cent.

Of these, 320 ships docked at Aqaba Main Port, compared with 290 a year earlier, representing a 10 per cent increase. The Oil and Gas Port received 126 ships, up from 91, an increase of 38 per cent.

The Passenger Port received 828 ships, compared with 802 during the same period last year, marking a 3 per cent increase.

Cargo handling at Aqaba's main ports totalled 10,878,955 tonnes

during the first nine months of 2026, compared with 7,342,816 tonnes in the corresponding period of 2025, an increase of 48 per cent.

The total covered cargo handled at the main port, the oil and gas facilities, and the passenger terminal.

The association also reported that the Aqaba hub recorded the highest volume of movements across land border crossings and customs centres, at 699,296, followed by the Al Omari Customs Centre with 442,181.

The Jaber Customs Centre recorded 367,011 movements, while the Al Karameh Customs Centre registered 330,711. Other centres recorded varying numbers of movements.

The association further noted that 61,116 vehicles were processed through the Zarqa Free Zone during the same period.

Of these, 22,905 vehicles entered the local market, including 5,787 petrol-powered vehicles, 4,019 diesel vehicles, 5,823 hybrids and 7,276 electric vehicles. The remaining 38,211 vehicles were exported outside the Kingdom, Petra reported.

Trump hails Russia deal to release diesel as midterms loom

WASHINGTON, United States (AFP) — US President Donald Trump said on Friday that he had secured Russia's agreement for a major release of diesel, as he eased war sanctions on Moscow in a push to lower energy costs ahead of midterm elections.

Moscow has been hit with waves of sanctions by the United States and partners since its 2022 invasion of neighbour Ukraine, and President Volodymyr Zelensky criticised Trump for an "unworthy" and "weak" move.

The deal comes weeks before key US elections where Trump's Republican Party risks losing its grip on Congress as voters express frustration over the mounting cost of living.

Prices at US gasoline and diesel pumps have surged since late February, when US-Israel strikes targeting Iran triggered Tehran's blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, a critical waterway for energy transit.

"Russia will immediately supply over 300,000 Tons of Diesel Fuel to the American and Global Marketplace," Trump said on social media after talks with Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

The Kremlin said Rus-



US President Donald Trump waves after addressing attendees during an election rally at the Oncentre on Friday in Syracuse, New York

sia "reaffirmed its readiness to supply oil and oil products to the American and world markets".

Trump added Moscow would supply 500,000 tons in November, followed by one million tons, with further larger releases promised.

Zelensky told reporters: "It is certainly not honest, it is certainly unworthy of our partners, and it is, in my view, a weak decision."

The US Treasury issued a temporary license Friday to enable Russian diesel to flow to global markets through April 2027.

"Lower prices for Americans, especially our Great Farmers, Ranchers, and Truckers, is my Greatest Priority,"

Trump posted on social media.

Conflict stalemate

The average cost of regular US gasoline has jumped more than 46 per cent since late February to \$4.37 per gallon, while that of diesel rocketed 67 per cent over the same period to \$6.28 per gallon.

Trump has blamed Ukrainian strikes on Russian refineries for surging fuel prices, although the US-Israeli war with Iran has been the principal disruptor of global energy supplies.

News of the deal came as Ukrainian and US negotiators met on Friday in Miami in a fresh attempt to break the conflict's stalemate.

TENNIS

Alcaraz through in straight sets on Shanghai Masters opener

SHANGHAI (AFP) — A moustached Carlos Alcaraz beat Juan Manuel Cerundolo 6-3, 6-3 to kick-start his title bid at the Shanghai Masters on Saturday, days after winning the Tokyo Open for his first trophy since returning from injury. The Spanish star, seeded second, put on a dominant show to brush aside the 55th-ranked Argentinian in the second round in just 66 minutes. "Really, really happy with the way I played today. It wasn't easy," said the 23-year-old former number one. "Just had two days of preparation... I came from Tokyo, there were totally different conditions," he added. "Just tried to play the best that I can." Sporting a fresh moustache, Alcaraz signed a camera "Moustache Team" following his win. Asked by an on-court interviewer about the new look, Alcaraz said: "It's gonna stay". It was just about a bet," he elaborated later, telling reporters his team agreed to match moustaches in Shanghai if he won in Tokyo. "I wanted to play with a moustache, trying how I look with it," he said.

CRICKET

Australia strikes early after Renshaw's 190 against South Africa

DURBAN, South Africa (AFP) — Australia struck early in South Africa's innings after Matt Renshaw made a career-best 190 and steered the tourists into a strong position on the second day of the first Test at Kingsmead on Saturday. South Africa was 27 for one in reply to Australia's 390 all out when bad light stopped play. Renshaw's monumental innings, spanning almost eight hours, enabled Australia to add 203 runs to their overnight total of 187 for six. Australia's total looked even better when Josh Hazlewood had Ryan Rickelton caught at third slip in the second over of South Africa's innings before the hosts had scored a run. Aiden Markram (15 not out) and David Bedingham (12 not out) took them to the close. Renshaw, who had started the day on 46 not out, was involved in two significant partnerships. He and captain Pat Cummins put on 86 for the seventh wicket. Even so, an early end to the innings seemed likely when the eighth wicket fell in the second over with the second new ball with the total on 230.

Irbid's derby thrills with Faisali at top

By Rayan Jaafra

AMMAN — Week 4 of the Jordanian Pro League (CFL) delivered high drama, standout individual performances, and crucial breakthrough victories across local venues as the title race began to take shape.

Baqa'a kick off round with emphatic victory over Shabab Ordon

The round opened on Thursday at Petra Stadium as Baqa'a put on a dominant display to defeat Shabab Ordon 3-0. Mo'atasem Al Zoubi broke the deadlock in the first half, scoring directly off a corner kick. Shabab Ordon had a prime chance to level the score early in the second half when they were awarded a penalty in the 48th minute, but veteran goalkeeper Malek Shalabiya denied Khaldoun Sabra's spot-kick. Baqa'a sealed the resounding win through substitute Abdulrahman Jarwan, who came off the bench in the 64th minute to net a late double with strikes in the 83rd and 88th minutes.

Hussein Irbid claim first win in Irbid derby spectacle

On Friday at Amman International Stadium, defending champions Hussein Irbid finally got their campaign off the ground with a 4-1 victory over cross-town rivals Arabi Irbid in the first league derby between the two sides since the 2013/14 season. Kenyan forward Masoud Juma headed Hussein ahead in the



Ahmed Ersan (Faisli) trying to reach the ball

28th minute following an assist from Ali Hijbi. Arabi struck back in the 42nd minute through Mohammad Al Razem, who finished off a precise pass from Omar Mubarak. However, Hussein responded just three minutes later as Masoud Juma tapped in his second goal off a brilliant setup by Ahmed Bani to give the Yellow Giants a 2-1 halftime advantage. Newly appointed Curro Torres' side carried their momentum into the second half as Aref Al Haj unleashed a powerful long-range

strike in the 51st minute that left the goalkeeper stranded. Colombian forward Brayan Riascos rounded off the scoring in the 72nd minute, heading home from a cushioned header assist by national team defender Abdallah Nasib to secure Hussein's first victory of the season.

Nahas era begins as Wihdat bounce back against Jazeera

Also on Friday, Wihdat got back to winning ways under newly appointed Egyptian head coach Emad El Nahas,

edging Al Jazeera 1-0 at King Abdullah Stadium in Qweismeh. The game's decisive moment came early at the 17th minute when Ahmad Sabra received a pass from Mohammad Al Daoud, skillfully beat his defender, and slotted the ball past goalkeeper QaisAbbasi. The victory marked Wihdat's first win following a three-match winless streak.

Ramtha held by 10-man Doqara at Qweismeh

On Saturday, co-leaders Ramtha were frustrated in a 0-0 draw against



Aref Al Haj (Al Hussein) Celebrating his banger

newly promoted Doqara at King Abdullah Stadium. Despite Doqara being reduced to 10 men right before halftime when Ahmad Tannous received a red card in the 45th minute, Ramtha were unable to break down Doqara's stubborn defense and were forced to settle for a single point.

Ersan's late magic keeps Faisali top in dramatic finish

Closing out the round at Amman International Stadium, Faisali maintained their stellar

form and extended their winning streak to three matches with a hard-fought victory over Al Salt. Faisali endured 90 grueling minutes of resolute defending before last season's top scorer, Ahmed Al Ersan, proved to be the hero once again, rising to head home a dramatic winner in the 90+7th minute following a pinpoint cross from national team captain Ehsan Haddad. The late triumph keeps Faisali atop the league standings with 10 points, two points clear of second-placed Ramtha.

Canada's Anne Carson wins Nobel for modern spin on classics

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — The Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded on Thursday to Canadian poet Anne Carson for her modern twists on Greek mythology and antiquity that have inspired new forms of contemporary writing, the Swedish Academy said.

The 76-year-old — who announced in 2024 that she has Parkinson's disease — was honoured "for her bold and inventive oeuvre that, in playful dialogue with the classical tradition, has created new forms for contemporary literature", the Academy said.

The permanent secretary of the Academy, Ingrid Carlberg, said she had briefly spoken to Carson.

"We didn't have so much time to speak. All she had time to tell me was that she is for the moment in Iceland, where she's listening to the wind."

"She was taken by surprise, but very happy. I could hear that in her voice."

Carson has for more than 15 years spent part of the year in Iceland, where she holds citizenship, according to Icelandic broadcaster RUV.

A professor of classics with a background in dead languages, literature, anthropology and



This picture taken on May 8, 2015 shows Canadian poet Anne Carson performing her work 'Antigonick' at the Moderna Museet art gallery in Stockholm, Sweden

history, she was described by The New York Times in 2001 as "one of the great pasticheurs".

Her unique contemporary poetry earned her several key literary prizes in the 1990s, including the 1996 Lannan Award and the 1997 Pushcart Prize.

A year later, "Autobiography of Red: A Novel in Verse" — loosely based on the Greek myth of the monster Geryon and Herakles but transformed into a modern tale of a gay love triangle — received widespread praise.

The Academy called it a "spectacular form of epic poetry with its great lyrical qualities".

'Author for our time'

The Academy said almost

cal Greek, which "may be regarded as independent works in their own right".

Academy member Steve Sem-Samberg called Carson "an author for our time", in an interview with the Nobel Foundation.

"She connects our contemporary ways of living, always through the antiquity."

"She uses the myths, the characters, the stories, the fables from that time to and puts them into a modern context. And the mixture between those two gives an enormous energy to her writing," he said.

Sem-Sandberg told AFP: "When you're inside her work, you immediately recognise her voice and her themes. Nobody writes like her."

Carson spoke of her Parkinson's in the London Review of Books in 2024.

"A symptom particularly mortifying to me was that my handwriting disintegrated."

"I used to take pleasure in writing in notebooks, shelves of them, day after day, year after year. Now the upright strokes bend or break or go in all directions, vowels shrink to blobs, slant loses its smooth smart angle, it all looks embarrassing."

Carson had been men-

tioned as a possible Nobel laureate for years, though some experts said the Academy was unlikely to honour another Canadian so soon after the 2013 prize to short story author Alice Munro.

With her Icelandic citizenship, she is also the country's second author to win the prize after Halldor Laxness in 1955.

Women under-represented

Many literary critics expected the award to go to a woman this year, given the frequent criticism directed at the Academy over the overrepresentation of Western white men among its picks.

There have been just 19 women laureates out of 122 since the Nobel literature prize was first awarded in 1901.

A 2018 sex assault scandal left the Academy in tatters and more than half of its 18 members were replaced.

Since then, every other literature laureate has been a woman.

Last year, the award went to Hungary's Laszlo Krasznahorkai, whose works explore themes of postmodern dystopia.

The Nobel Prize comes with a diploma, a gold medal and \$1.2 million.



Sander Diego uses a damaged refrigerator as a boat to carry groceries on a flooded street in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, on May 26, 2024

Brazil prosecutors sue Shell for \$108 m over deadly 2024 floods

BRASÍLIA (AFP) — Brazilian prosecutors on Friday filed an unprecedented lawsuit against oil giant Shell's subsidiary in the country, demanding \$108 million in compensation over deadly 2024 floods.

Torrential rains sparked historic flooding in southern Brazil in April and May of that year, leaving nearly 200 people dead, 500,000 more displaced and massive damages.

According to the lawsuit, Shell's liability should match its contribution to global warming — estimated at 2 per cent of historical global greenhouse gas emissions.

"This civil suit is aimed at holding the defendant company accountable, in terms of its environmen-

tal and climate-related responsibilities, for collective material and moral damages stemming from the extreme weather event that hit Rio Grande do Sul state," public prosecutors said, according to court documents seen by AFP.

They said the British energy giant should be held responsible because of its past and current greenhouse gas emissions associated with exploration, production and sale of fossil fuels.

The \$108 million in compensation accounts for both material and moral damages. The filing of a new climate-related suit by Brazilian prosecutors — in conjunction with Instituto Preservar, a Brazilian NGO — marks a new

phase in the global battle in the courts against oil giants.

"This is the first time a national public prosecutor is suing an oil major for a climate disaster," Maria Antonia Tigre, the director of global climate litigation at the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law, told AFP.

For Thales Miola, a lawyer at Instituto Preservar, "The costs of climate damage should not fall solely on society and on those who lost everything in the tragedy."

"Major polluters, who contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions and to climate change, must also answer for the losses they help cause," Miola said in a press release.

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