



Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Wednesday meets with leaders and members of the Mobadara Party as part of a new round of consultations with political parties, professional associations and representatives of key sectors

Prime minister meets Mobadara leaders as political dialogue continues

AMMAN (JT) — Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Wednesday met with leaders and members of the Mobadara Party as part of the government's ongoing engagement with political parties. The meeting was part of a new round of consultations launched by the Premier last week, beginning with the National Charter Party, ac-

cording to a Prime Ministry statement. Attended by several ministers, Mobadara Secretary General Mohammad Abu Hdeib and head of the party's parliamentary bloc Ahmad Hmeisat, the meeting addressed key national issues, including ways to advance the political modernisation programme and govern-

ment policies on various issues. The consultations build on the government's outreach efforts over the past two years, during which Hassan held meetings with parliamentary party blocs, professional associations, business leaders and representatives of key sectors, the statement said.

Crown Prince attends closing ceremony of World Camel Endurance Championships, Camel Racing and Nabataean Poetry Festival

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Crown Prince Hussein in Wadi Rum on Wednesday attended the closing ceremony of the second edition of the World Camel Endurance Championships, hosted in Jordan for the first time, and the sixth Jordan Camel Racing and Nabataean Poetry Festival. The Crown Prince watched the final laps of the World Camel Endurance Championships, which took place in Al Disi area, in addition to a performance by the Public Security Directorate Royal Desert Forces' camel patrols unit, according to a Royal Court statement. During the closing ceremony, attended by President of the International Camel Racing Federation Prince Fahad Bin Jalawi, the Crown Prince presented prizes to the winners. Competitors from Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Yemen, Egypt, Algeria, Chad, Mali, Poland and Den-



Photo courtesy of Royal Court

HRH Crown Prince Hussein in Wadi Rum on Wednesday attends the closing ceremony of the second edition of the World Camel Endurance Championships, hosted in Jordan for the first time, and the sixth Jordan Camel Racing and Nabataean Poetry Festival

mark took part in the second edition of the World Camel Endurance Championships, the statement said. A number of senior officials and officers attended the ceremony.

Safadi, Saudi counterpart reaffirm strategic ties, sign amended cooperation protocol

AMMAN (JT) — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi and Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud held talks in Riyadh on Wednesday on regional developments and bilateral relations. During the talks, Safadi expressed Jordan's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia in confronting attacks by the Houthi militia and reaffirmed support for all measures taken by Riyadh to safeguard its security, stability, sovereignty and the safety of its citizens and residents, according to a Foreign Ministry statement. He also renewed Jordan's condemnation of Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia, describing them as violations of international law, the UN Charter and Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and security. The two ministers also discussed regional de-



Foreign Ministry photo

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi and Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud hold talks in Riyadh on Wednesday on regional developments and bilateral relations

velopments and efforts to de-escalate tensions, contain their regional and international repercussions and restore calm. They stressed the importance of achieving lasting security and stability, respecting

international law and upholding good-neighbourly relations. The talks also focused on strengthening bilateral relations, and advancing coordination on regional and international issues of mutual concern.

During the meeting, the two top diplomats signed an amended protocol to the agreement establishing the Jordanian-Saudi Higher Coordination Council, which was originally signed in Riyadh in 2016 in the presence of His Majesty

King Abdullah and Saudi King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. The council aims to institutionalise and expand bilateral relations across various sectors in the interests of both countries and their peoples. The amended protocol updates its organisational structure and is intended to enhance its effectiveness, the statement said. The council is chaired by His Majesty King Abdullah and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed Bin Salman. The two countries' foreign ministers will head its general secretariat, while their respective foreign ministries will oversee its work, including preparations for council meetings and those of its committees and working groups. The Higher Coordination Council will replace the Jordanian-Saudi Joint Committee.

Gov't signs agreement to develop copper mining project in southern Jordan

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Energy and the Manaseer Group signed an executive agreement to develop a copper mining project covering approximately 78 square kilometres in southern Jordan. The agreement was signed by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Saleh Kharabsheh and Manaseer Group Chairman Ziad Manaseer, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported. The project covers Wadi Khaled, Wadi Al Nuhas, Wadi Al Jariya and Wadi Al Mahash. Preliminary geological findings estimate copper ore deposits at approximately 45 million metric tonnes, containing an estimated 500,000 to 600,000 metric tonnes of pure copper. Initial samples recorded copper concentrations of approximately 1.36 per cent in the southern geological formation, with some samples exceeding 3.5 per cent, according to Petra. Under the agreement,



Petra photo

The agreement signed between the Ministry of Energy and Manaseer Group to develop a copper mining project covering an area of approximately 78 square kilometres in southern Jordan

the company will conduct feasibility and environmental studies, verify mineral resource and reserve estimates, determine economically recoverable quantities and assess the required capital investment. The project will use underground mining rather than open-pit extraction to minimise its impact on the area's natural landscape, ecosystems and biodiversity.

Kharabsheh said that mining and ore-processing facilities, along with supporting infrastructure, would be located outside the designated area. Access to underground copper deposits would be through carefully planned entrances and tunnels, subject to technical studies, environmental assessments and regulatory approvals.

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Sisi says Egypt to 'defend Saudi territory' and will not attack Yemen

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi said on Wednesday that Cairo's proposed military support for Riyadh was to "defend Saudi territory and does not include an attack on Yemen", according to a statement from his office. At a government event titled Egypt Forum 2026, Sisi said the "objective is to defend the kingdom's lands and borders, as well as those of any other Arab state, should it be requested of Egypt", his spokesman said in a statement. "Egyptian military operations do not extend be-



AFP photo

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi

yond the borders of Egypt or those of any sisterly nation," he added. Sisi on Saturday asked parliament to authorise

support for Saudi Arabia in its war with the Houthis, "if requested".

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Two killed in attack on Saudi Arabia's Shaybah oilfield, no impact on operations — local media

AMMAN (JT) — Two residents were killed in an attack on Saudi Arabia's Shaybah oilfield after air defences intercepted a drone attempting to target a processing facility at the field in the Eastern province on Wednesday morning, Arab News reported. The incident resulted in a fire in a vehicle belonging to a contractor operating at the oil field, outside the facility's perimeter, the Kingdom's energy ministry said in a statement, cited by Arab News. Operations were unaffected, it said. Earlier on Wednesday,



Photo by Arab News

Saudi Aramco's Shaybah oil field in the Eastern Province

the Coalition to Restore Legitimacy in Yemen said it intercepted seven

drones launched toward the Kingdom, including in the Madinah region

home to the Prophet's Mosque. "Four drones launched

towards the Kingdom have been intercepted and destroyed," coalition spokesman Maj. Gen. Turki Al Malki posted on X, adding in a second post that the interceptions took place in Saudi Arabia's Eastern province, as well as Madinah. Al Malki later said another drone had been intercepted, also in the Eastern province. On Wednesday evening, the coalition announced it had intercepted a sixth drone launched by the Houthis toward the southern region and a seventh drone toward the Eastern province.



HH Princess Dina Mired

Princess Dina among 100 most influential women in oncology for 4th year

AMMAN (JT) — HH Princess Dina Mired has been included in OncoDaily's list of the 100 most influential women in oncology for 2026, marking the fourth consecutive year she has featured on the list since its launch in 2023.

The annual list highlights women from around the world for their contributions to cancer care, research, advocacy and health policymaking, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Princess Dina is a leading international advocate for equal access to cancer prevention and treatment.

She previously served as president of the Union for International Cancer Control, becoming the first Arab to hold the position, and as director-general of the King Hussein Cancer Foundation, where she helped advance cancer treatment, awareness and advocacy efforts.

She also serves as honorary president of the

European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer Cancer Research Fund and hosts the "Global Health Dialogues with Princess Dina" podcast, which features experts in cancer care and global health.

Her inclusion on the list for the fourth consecutive year reflects international recognition of her efforts to fight cancer and ensure all patients have access to quality healthcare, regardless of their location or financial circumstances.

Deputising for King, Prince Feisal attends ceremony marking 25th anniversary of KHCF, KHCC

AMMAN (JT) — Deputising for His Majesty King Abdullah, HRH Prince Feisal on Tuesday attended a ceremony hosted by the King Hussein Cancer Foundation (KHCF) and Centre (KHCC) to mark their 25th anniversary.

Prince Feisal, in the presence of HRH Prince Talal Bin Muhammad, listened to an address by HRH Princess Ghida Talal, chairperson of the board of trustees of KHCF and KHCC, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Princess Ghida expressed deep gratitude for continuous Royal support and noted that the trust of Jordanians and Arabs represents a milestone guiding adherence to high standards.

Princess Ghida announced that the foundation's next major project is building a specialised children's cancer hospital, to be the first of its kind in



Petra photo

Deputising for His Majesty King Abdullah, HRH Prince Feisal on Tuesday attends a ceremony hosted by the King Hussein Cancer Foundation and Centre to mark their 25th anniversary

the Arab world.

During the event, cancer survivors shared inspiring recovery stories, reflecting the foundation's message of hope.

Princess Ghida hon-

oured board members and administrative leaders, while Prince Talal recognised key supporters and partners.

The centre treats about 70 per cent of

cancer cases in Jordan, serving over 85,000 adult and paediatric patients from Jordan and the region with paediatric recovery rates reaching 85 per cent.

In recent years, the centre expanded its capacity with new facilities in Amman and a branch in Aqaba to serve the southern governorates.

30,000 tonnes of olive oil expected in Jordan as season opens

AMMAN (JT) — Agriculture Minister Saeb Khreisat on Wednesday stressed the strategic importance of the olive sector, describing it as a key pillar in supporting the national economy and enhancing food security.

Attending the official opening ceremony of the 2026/2027 olive pressing season at Al Omari olive presses in Bani Kinana District, Irbid, he highlighted the sector's vital role in creating jobs, supporting rural communities, and contributing to the social and environmental dimensions of agricultural sustainability.

The event was organised by the Jordanian General Association of Olive Press Owners and Olive Producers, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Khreisat said that the ministry gives special attention to the sector due to its economic and production importance, as well as its commitment to



Petra photo

Agriculture Minister Saeb Khreisat on Wednesday attends the official opening ceremony of the 2026/2027 olive pressing season at Al Omari olive presses in Bani Kinana District, Irbid

supporting farmers, improving the quality of Jordanian olive oil and strengthening its prominent position in local and international markets.

He praised the level of readiness and technological advancement at olive presses.

The minister added that the decision to begin olive pressing in mid-October was based on regulations governing the licensing and operation of

olive presses, where the measure aims to allow olives to reach the appropriate stage of ripeness, ensuring the production of high-quality olive oil that meets approved standards.

Khreisat noted that initial estimates put olive oil production at around 30,000 tonnes for the current agricultural season.

A total of 153 licensed olive presses across the Kingdom

are technically and operationally ready, he said, adding that the ministry, in cooperation with the association and relevant regulatory authorities, was intensifying field efforts to ensure the season proceeds smoothly and in accordance with approved requirements.

He stressed that the ministry would not tolerate practices that could harm the quality of Jordanian prod-

ucts or mislead consumers, adding that campaigns to combat fraud would be intensified, alongside inspections to verify the safety of production lines and monitor advertisements for olive oil sales on social media platforms.

Olive Press Owners Association President Taysir Najdawi said that Jordan's olive sector had expanded considerably over the past three decades, with the number of olive trees exceeding 11 million.

He described olive presses as "strategic" partners in the sector, noting that they had undergone "significant" development over the past two decades through the introduction of advanced technologies in pressing operations, improving oil quality and increasing production efficiency.

Nayef Al Omari, owner of Al Omari olive presses, said that the season offered promising signs for the sector.

Czech-Jordanian medical programme treats 4,232 patients, performs 4,685 surgeries

By Saeb Rawashdeh

AMMAN — A MEDEVAC (medical evacuation) programme provides rapid, specialised transport for critically ill or injured people using air or ground ambulances. These programmes operate in military, civilian and humanitarian contexts—such as the Czech Republic's MEDEVAC CZECH humanitarian initiative active in Jordan and crisis zones.

This initiative started in Jordan in 2013 and helped thousands of patients since then.

"We are here to celebrate a partnership that truly embodies deep, enduring friendship between the Czech Republic and Jordan," said Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Jordan Andrea Kucerova during a ceremony organised for Jordanian and Czech medical representatives, adding that Czech ophthalmology mission arrived in Amman to treat Jordanian patients.

MEDEVAC mission is a good example of teamwork by Jordanian and Czech doctors who share their expertise and alleviate suffering of patients in Jordan.

Jordanian partners in this initiative are Khalidi Hospital, Al Makassed Charity Hospital, Palestine Hospital, Shmaisani Hospital and Eye Shami Centre.

On another hand, Czech hospitals include University Hospital Motol, University Hospital Bulovka, General



Andrea Kucerova

University Hospital in Prague, University Hospital Olomouc, University Hospital Hradec Kralove, Military University Hospital Prague and University Hospital Kralovske Vinohrady.

"As we welcome our brilliant team of ophthalmologists, doctors Jan Tesaf, Jan Havrda and Simona Vanova, it is worth looking back at the incredible impact of the programme it achieved," Kucareva said.

The diplomat added that for the past 12 years, the MEDIVAC Programme has deployed 64 medical missions in Jordan, noting that Czech and Jordanian medical staff, together with other partners cured 4,232 patients and performed 4,685 surgical procedures.

According to the ambassador, the programme dealt with paediatric cardiac surgery, orthopaedics, plastic and reconstructive sur-

gery, traumatology and ENT surgery.

"None of this would be possible alone. This success is the fruit of an extraordinary, deep-rooted collaboration," Kucerova underlined, adding that Czech ophthalmologists who just came to Amman carry "noble traditions".

"Over coming days, your skill will bring clarity and brighter future to many families. You represent the very best of the Czech Republic," Kucerova underscored.

For the next year, multiple MEDIVAC missions with business delegations are scheduled to take part in more "robust" initiatives that will focus on health innovation, medical technologies and critical frontier of cyber-healthcare security paving the way for more complex institutional and commercial ties between Amman and Prague.

Jordanian births rise on symbolic dates, averaging 629 daily in 2025 — HPC

AMMAN (JT) — The average daily number of Jordanian births on special dates surpassed the regular daily average in 2025, the Higher Population Council (HPC) said on Wednesday.

The HPC, citing Civil Status and Passports

Department data, identified six specific dates as having special significance: May 5, May 15, May 25, parents' wedding anniversaries, and the birthdates of either parent, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Data showed that

170,780 births occurred in 2025, including 151,577 births to Jordanian parents and 19,203 births to non-Jordanian fathers.

While the general daily average for Jordanian births stood at 415, the daily average

for births occurring on the six designated special dates rose to 629.

The HPC said that mothers often choose special dates either by scheduling medically unjustified Caesarean sections or by receiving labour inducing medication.

The council stressed that these procedures must undergo proper medical evaluation based on gestational age, birth order, and maternal and foetal health, warning against prioritising symbolic dates over physical well being.



File photo

The Jordan Valley Authority receives an international recognition for using satellite technologies and spatial data to improve irrigation water efficiency

ACHIEVEMENT

Jordan Valley Authority gains international recognition for satellite-based irrigation management

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) has received an international recognition for using satellite technologies and spatial data to improve irrigation water efficiency in a study titled Improving Water Use Efficiency in Jordan.

The study was prepared under the SeB-S4GEO project executed by the European Association of Remote Sensing Companies for the European Space Agency and funded by the European Union and the European Space Agency, accord-

ing to a Ministry of Water and Irrigation statement issued on Wednesday.

The report highlighted Jordan's reliance on Earth observation data to support water and agricultural planning under severe climate change and water scarcity pressures.

The study highlighted JVA's development of its water management system by utilising spatial data to assess irrigation network performance and determine crop water needs.

The study revealed

that the authority utilised the WaPOR platform developed by the Food and Agriculture Organisation with the International Water Management Institute alongside European Copernicus satellite data to secure precise metrics on actual water consumption and water productivity.

JVA also deployed an irrigation performance assessment and diagnosis tool to analyse irrigation adequacy and water distribution fairness.

This diagnostic tool allows the authority to

identify underperforming zones and direct targeted investments based on actual needs.

The study highlighted JVA's development of its water management system...

The report stressed that successful smart irrigation management

requires integrating satellite data with operational information and national technical expertise.

It also emphasised the need for capacity building and knowledge exchange to transform indicators into actionable planning tools.

The inclusion of Jordan model underscores JVA's progress in adopting modern technological solutions and data driven management tools to ensure water resource sustainability across the agricultural sector.



The Baptism Site on the east bank of the Jordan River

JES commends Baptism Site designation as nature reserve

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan Environment Society (JES) on Wednesday welcomed the Cabinet's decision to include the Baptism Site of Jesus Christ (Al Maghtas), a UNESCO World Heritage Site, in the national network of protected areas and declare it a nature reserve.

The move comes as Jordan prepares to mark the 2,000th anniversary of the baptism of Jesus Christ in 2030, with the aim of preserving the site's religious, historical and environmental heritage, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

JES said that the decision is an important

step towards protecting sites of religious, historical and environmental significance.

The society said the move would help preserve the site's natural features for future generations, raise public awareness of environmental protection and promote the responsible management of cultural and religious landmarks.

It added that protecting Al Maghtas could support sustainable ecotourism and faith-based tourism, particularly as preparations advance for the 2030 anniversary.

JES stressed that preserving holy sites

is closely linked to environmental conservation, highlighting Al Maghtas' historical and ecological value.

The society called for sustained efforts to protect the site's natural features, improve its management and promote environmental responsibility among visitors and local communities.

It also urged continued support for national initiatives to expand protected areas and strengthen institutional cooperation to safeguard the Kingdom's natural and cultural heritage while promoting sustainable tourism.

Energy Ministry, Manaseer Group sign copper mining agreement

AMMAN (JT) — Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Saleh Kharabshah and Manaseer Group Chairman Ziad Manaseer on Wednesday signed an executive agreement for copper mining across a 78-square-kilometre area in southern Jordan.

The agreement covers Wadi Khalid, Wadi Al Nahas, Wadi Al Jaria and Wadi Al Mahash, moving the project towards development following exploratory work and in line with technical, economic and environmental requirements.

Preliminary technical results showed copper concentrations of 1.36 per cent in the southern geological formation, with some samples recording concentrations exceeding 3.5 per cent, according to an Energy Ministry statement.

The estimated copper ore reserves stand at around 45 million tonnes, containing between 500,000 and 600,000 tonnes of pure copper.

Under the agreement, Manaseer Group will conduct technical, economic and environmental feasibility studies to verify mineral resource estimates and determine the required capital investment.

Kharabshah said the project would use underground mining rather than open-pit methods to preserve surface natural features and protect biodiversity.

Mining facilities and processing infrastructure will be built outside the designated area, with underground operations limited to a network of tunnels, he added.

Environment Minister Ayman Suleiman

highlighted coordination between the government and the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature to balance environmental protection with the sustainable use of mineral resources.

Manaseer reaffirmed the company's commitment to high environmental standards and local employment, saying it aims for Jordanians to account for 90 per cent of the project's workforce.

The executive agreement follows a memorandum of understanding signed in June 2022 with Jordan Integrated for Mining and Exploration, a Manaseer Group subsidiary.

The company subsequently conducted exploratory drilling and sample analysis that indicated the presence of commercially viable copper deposits.

Safadi visits two Jordanians injured in Riyadh airport attack

AMMAN (JT) — Following Royal directives, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi on Wednesday visited two injured Jordanian women receiving medical treatment in Riyadh following a Houthi militia attack on King Khalid International Airport on October 10.

Safadi conveyed the wishes of His Majesty King Abdullah and Crown Prince Hussein for the two women's speedy recovery, reiterating the King's directives to provide them with all necessary assistance, according to a Foreign Ministry statement.

Safadi checked on their condition with the medical teams overseeing their treatment and thanked hospital staff for the care provided.

Before visiting the two women, Safadi met with Saudi Foreign



Photo courtesy of Foreign Ministry

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi on Wednesday visits two Jordanian women injured in a Houthi attack on Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport on October 10, who are receiving treatment in the Saudi capital

Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud and expressed Jordan's gratitude for the care extended to the injured Jordanians.

Four other Jordanians injured in the airport attack have since been discharged from hospital, the statement said.

RJ to operate direct Aqaba-Moscow route twice weekly

AMMAN (JT) — The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), Royal Jordanian (RJ) and the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) on Tuesday signed an operational support agreement to launch a direct air route between Moscow and Aqaba, with the first flight scheduled for December 20.

Under the agreement, RJ will operate two weekly flights between the Russian capital and Aqaba, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

ASEZA Commissioner for Tourism and Youth Affairs Thabet Nabulsi said the agreement aligns with the authority's strategy to strengthen Aqaba's links with international markets, attract more visitors and stimulate economic and tourism activity.

He said that the Russian market offers an important opportunity to increase tourist arrivals, citing Aqaba's diverse attractions and proximity to major destinations, including Petra and Wadi Rum.



ASEZA photo

The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority, Royal Jordanian and the Jordan Tourism Board on Tuesday sign an operational support agreement to launch a direct air route between Moscow and Aqaba

Royal Jordanian Chief Commercial Officer Karim Makhoul said that the direct route marks a significant step in expanding the airline's operations from Aqaba.

He said that it would

be the first long-haul international route operating from the city and Royal Jordanian's fourth direct international destination from Aqaba, following Cairo, Riyadh and Abu Dhabi.

Makhoul said that

the route, launched in cooperation with ASEZA and the JTB, forms part of broader efforts to attract more visitors to Aqaba and promote the city as a gateway to the Kingdom's tourism attractions.

The agreement is part of ASEZA's broader efforts to expand Aqaba's international air links and strengthen its position as a regional tourism and investment hub.

The new route is expected to support tourism activity by promoting Aqaba's coastal and marine attractions, diving sites, hotels and resorts. It will also facilitate the development of travel itineraries combining Aqaba with other major destinations across the Kingdom.

The route is also expected to benefit tourism-related sectors, including hotels, restaurants, transport and commercial services, while supporting job creation, private sector activity and tourism spending.

ASEZA said it would continue working with public and private sector partners to secure additional direct routes, diversify tourism source markets and strengthen Aqaba's role as a year-round tourism and economic gateway.

WFP provides 'reduced' food aid to 78,000 refugees in camps

AMMAN (JT) — The World Food Programme (WFP) said on Wednesday that it provided "reduced" monthly food assistance of JD15 per beneficiary, equivalent to \$21, to around 78,000 refugees in camps across the Kingdom in September 2026, according to a recent report.

The programme transferred \$1.2 million in cash assistance during the month, covering only part of beneficiaries' basic nutritional needs, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

The WFP also said it is preparing to temporarily resume monthly assistance in October for a group of the most vulnerable refugee families in host communities, following a six-month suspension due to severe funding shortages.

Refugees in host communities and those living in the Zaatar and Azraq camps are set to receive the reduced rate of JD15 per person per month.



The programme's net funding requirement for the six months from October 2026 to March 2027 stands at \$42.4 million, the report said.

In education, the WFP resumed its school feeding programme in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, reaching 510,000 students in camps and host communities with healthy meals and fortified date bars.

To support livelihoods and resilience, the programme completed preparations for the third cohort of

technical and vocational training, involving 249 participants in the Azraq and Zaatar camps.

It is also working to provide training, post-training opportunities and referrals for 600 participants in host communities across four governorates.

On food security, the WFP partnered with the National Council for Food Security to launch the Kingdom's first national food waste awareness campaign, titled "Value It, Don't Waste It".

The campaign draws on findings from a na-

tional food waste study conducted by the National Council for Food Security and the Department of Statistics, aiming to promote responsible consumption and reduce food waste.

The report also said around 230,000 Syrian refugees returned to Syria between December 2024 and September 2026.

The WFP said that it continues to provide unconditional food assistance to vulnerable refugees while offering technical support to strengthen national social protection systems.

SUPPORT

EU aid essential to maintaining refugee services in Jordan — UNHCR

AMMAN (JT) — The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said on Wednesday that continued EU humanitarian aid is essential to maintaining refugee registration and helpline services in Jordan.

In a statement, UNHCR said EU funding supports registration centres in Amman, Zaatar Camp and Azraq Camp, as well as mobile registration services for refugees facing mobility challenges or living in remote areas.

The agency also said that more than 352,000 refugees are registered with UNHCR in Jordan, noting that accurate registration records help refugees access services and assistance, support service delivery by the government and other agencies, and identify vulnerable individuals in need of support.

EU funding also sup-



UNHCR photo

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says on Wednesday that continued EU humanitarian aid is essential to maintaining refugee registration in Jordan

ports the UNHCR Helpline, which receives close to one million calls annually, according to the agency.

The UNHCR also stressed that the helpline provides refugees with information on available services, protection counseling and updates on

individual requests. It also serves refugees in camps and host communities, including those unable to visit UNHCR offices in person.

UNHCR said that EU support helps keep the helpline operational and ensures it has the staff and technology

needed to handle the volume of calls.

The agency reaffirmed its commitment to improving digital services and access to support, describing registration and the helpline as key channels for refugees to access protection services.



In this pool photo distributed by the Russian state agency Sputnik, Russia's President Vladimir Putin (right) greets US special envoy Steve Witkoff (left) prior to their meeting in Saint Petersburg on Wednesday

Kremlin sees little 'substance' in Ukraine peace ideas

SAINT PETERSBURG (AFP) — Russia is open to resuming trilateral talks with Washington and Kyiv towards ending the Ukraine war, the Kremlin said after Vladimir Putin met US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff on Wednesday, but decried little "substance" in new Ukrainian and European approaches.

Moscow also said a summit between Putin, US President Donald Trump and China's Xi Jinping was being prepared for next month, calling it "the first such meeting in history".

Putin held over three hours of talks with Witkoff in his home city of Saint Petersburg, a day after what the US official called a "productive" meeting with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky in Norway.

Witkoff said on social media afterward that the talks were "constructive" but that "there is still important work left to do" and discussions would continue between the US, Ukraine and Russia at the technical level.

As Witkoff touched down in Russia, Moscow freed a US citizen — Stephen Hubbard — and said it would soon begin diesel shipments to America.

Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner also took part in the talks with Putin remotely.

Over a year of US-led talks to end the Ukraine war — launched by Moscow in 2022 — have not yet led to a breakthrough, with tens of thousands killed.

Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov told reporters, including AFP, that Witkoff briefed Putin on "some new aspects in the approaches of the Europeans and Kyiv" from the Oslo meeting, adding though that "there wasn't really much substance in them".

Putin has consistently rejected face-to-face talks with Zelensky and insisted Moscow intends to seize the rest of east Ukraine.

'Ideas' towards a peace deal

Ushakov said a "first ever" China-US-Russia meeting was "being prepared" in China, without saying what the leaders would discuss.

Kyiv and its European allies have voiced fears that the White House could strike a deal over their heads.

"I always said that we are open to negotiate in any format, any topics. But don't speak about us without us, please," Zelensky told US media Fox News on Wednesday.

Witkoff held his ninth meeting with Putin as Russia continued to pound Ukrainian cities ahead of winter and amid a bitter feud between Trump and Zelensky.

"We've brought some papers. It's really some ideas, some sort of peace deal between Russia and Ukraine, and you'll read that at your leisure," Witkoff told Putin in Saint Petersburg's Konstantinovskiy Palace ahead of the talks.

The US envoy said he wanted trilateral talks to resume, something the Kremlin later said it agreed to.

Ushakov said the talks would reopen in mid-November and that the Kremlin wanted them to focus on post-war security.

As Witkoff arrived in Saint Petersburg, Kyiv said Russian strikes killed at least four people — including two in the capital and an elderly couple in the eastern Kharkiv region.

Russian occupation authorities in the Lugansk region, meanwhile, said a Ukrainian drone strike on a phone company had killed two

people.

'Momentum' in talks

Witkoff told Putin he saw "some degree of momentum" in the US-led talks after meeting Zelensky.

Zelensky said he was waiting to hear "whether the American side manages to hear something new from Russia today".

The Witkoff-Zelensky meeting on Tuesday followed days of friction between Washington and Kyiv, and calls from Trump for the Ukrainian leader to be replaced.

Witkoff also told Putin that Washington was "grateful" for a diesel deal, which saw US sanctions on Moscow eased to allow Russian fuel to flow to the United States, sparking outrage in Kyiv and across Europe.

The deal has been seen as a way to try to lower fuel prices for American consumers, as Trump's Republican Party heads towards tough midterm elections next month.

Washington was interested in further "business and economic cooperation" with Russia when the war ends, Witkoff said.

"We even talk about it now openly with the Ukrainians to give them some sort of sense about what the possibilities will be when this whole conflict is over," he said.

Kyiv has pleaded with Western countries to put more pressure on Moscow and not to lift sanctions.

Ahead of the talks, Putin announced that Stephen Hubbard, an American taken captive by Russian forces in Ukraine in 2022 and later sentenced to almost seven years in prison, had been freed.

Trump had asked the Russian leader to free Hubbard, a retired English teacher in his 70s who had always denied the charges he was a "mercenary" fighting for Ukraine.

Death toll from Sudan army strike in disputed territory rises to 153 — local authority

JUBA (AFP) — The death toll from a drone strike on Monday on a market in an area disputed between Sudan and South Sudan has risen to 153 and is likely even higher, a local official told AFP on Wednesday.

Authorities in Abyei district said the strike on the Amiet market involved the use of multiple munitions and was carried out by the Sudanese army.

"The number of casualties is 153 and it may increase any time from now because some victims burned to ashes and the rescuers are doing their best to gather all the bodies in Amiet Market," said Yohana Akol, interim information minister for Abyei Special Administrative Area.

He said the victims included Sudanese, South Sudanese, Ethiopians and Somalis, and a further 19 have been hospitalised, with more on the way.

Images shared with AFP showed bombed-out buildings and vehicles.

"A swarm of drones was hovering over the



The death toll from a drone strike Monday on a market in an area disputed between Sudan and South Sudan has risen to 153 and is likely even higher, a local official told AFP on Wednesday

Amiet Market and they bombed part of the market and surroundings, and there were so many casualties," a witness told AFP by phone, speaking on condition of anonymity for security reasons.

"Some of business places are still on fire and there were people burned beyond the recognition inside," the witness added.

Another witness said fuel depots were severely damaged.

On Sunday and Monday, strikes across Sudan killed more than 100 people. The country is in the grips of a brutal war between the regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces that began in April 2023.

Abyei district is claimed by both Sudan and South Sudan, which split from its northern neighbour in 2011 following decades of conflict.

Parts of the district are controlled by a faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North, a splinter from the organisation that fought for Juba's independence.

Juba's foreign ministry said it had summoned the Sudanese ambassador over the attack, which it condemned "in the strongest terms possible".

The United Nations also condemned the attacks, saying escalating drone strikes were "part of a deeply concerning pattern".

World falling 'dangerously short' on climate action — UN chief

PARIS (AFP) — Global commitments to cut planet-heating emissions are falling far short of the Paris climate goals and put the world on course for 2.6°C warming this century, the UN warned on Wednesday.

The report by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) lays bare the chasm between rhetoric and action when it comes to tackling global warming, and the challenges faced by political leaders at November's COP31 climate summit.

Even if countries deliver their latest climate pledges in full, global temperatures could still rise 2.6°C above pre-industrial levels by 2100, said the annual Emissions Gap Report.

That would blow past the historic goal agreed in 2015 in Paris: Keeping warming well below 2°C while striving for a safer 1.5°C. Any chance of Keeping to 1.5°C had been "lost" due to decades of insufficient action, the report said.

"The world can no longer avoid overshooting the 1.5 degree limit, and the consequences are already devastating," said UN chief

Antonio Guterres in a statement to launch the closely watched report.

"Deadly floods, brutal heatwaves, raging wildfires, lost lives, crippled economies, deepening inequalities, and those least responsible are suffering first and worst."

Overall, global greenhouse gas emissions in 2025 were broadly on a par with record levels in 2024, with the difference between the two years too small to call, the report said.

Carbon emissions just from burning coal, oil and gas — the main driver of climate change — rose slightly in 2025 compared to the previous year.

Guterres said deep and immediate cuts were needed to protect humanity from worsening impacts, but instead "emissions remain at record levels. And national climate plans and current policies fall dangerously short".

Sticking just with current policies would see warming hit 2.8°C by the end of the century, the report said.

No country immune

Scientists warn that every additional frac-

tion of a degree above 1.5°C increases extreme weather events and the likelihood of irreversible changes to the planet, from dying coral reefs to melting permafrost.

The world has already warmed roughly 1.4°C relative to pre-industrial times, and crossing 1.5°C is expected in a matter of years.

This latest UNEP warming outlook is worse than last year's because of the formal withdrawal of the United States from the Paris accord and upward revisions of historical emissions, said report co-author Anne Olhoff.

Emissions growth slowed among the G20, but the United States was a "major exception", it added.

The Group of 20 major economies accounts for three-quarters of global emissions.

Among the world's top six emitters, preliminary data for 2025 showed emissions increases in the United States, Indonesia and China, and decreases in India, Russia and the European Union.

But the US increase of 133 megatons of CO2 equivalent "far exceeded" that of any other country, driven by

higher electricity demand and a rebound of coal power generation.

The next-largest increase was recorded in Turkey, which is hosting the UN climate summit in Antalya from November 9 to 20.

The US is the world's second-largest polluter, behind China. US President Donald Trump has called climate change a hoax and rolled back clean energy policies while boosting fossil fuel production.

UNEP Executive Secretary Inger Andersen told AFP she would not put the blame "squarely on one nation", saying every country, especially the G20, has "a specific duty to find a way to phase down their carbon emissions".

To limit the overshoot beyond 1.5°C, Andersen said the world has an "urgent to-do item": Adding another 5,000 gigawatts of renewable energy over the next five years.

But on the same day the report came out, Britain's Labour government approved drilling in a new North Sea gas field to boost energy security amid the Iran war, angering environmentalists.

Andersen said such projects are "not in accord" with the 1.5°C goal.

'Historic failure'

The report details a scenario with a 50 per cent chance of bringing global warming back down to 1.5°C by 2100.

To get there, warming must peak around 1.8°C by 2050, and vast amounts of carbon dioxide would have to be removed from the atmosphere to bring temperatures down further.

But this scenario assumes immediate emissions cuts of 6 per cent per year, every year, until 2035 — nowhere near current projections.

Some climate-vulnerable developing nations have accused bigger emitters of abandoning the Paris goals and a showdown over the 1.5°C target is expected at COP31.

"This is a historic failure of political leadership," said Mohamed Adow, director of Kenya-based think tank Power Shift Africa.

"The science has been clear for decades, but governments have chosen delay over action. The consequences will be measured in lives lost, not just degrees of warming."

France's tourism sector worried about impact of riots

PARIS (AFP) — The images of France's riots posted and broadcast around the world have cast a pall on the country's important tourism sector, with many fearing worse consequences if violence returns.

"The surge of violence in the centres of Nice, Paris, Lyon — it's catastrophic," said Christelle Cassagne, head of the ADN Tourisme body covering the country's tourism institutions.

"When you book a hotel for a week, it's not so you stay stuck in the hotel," she said.

The scenes of clashes with police, public buildings on fire, shops being looted and masked young men roaming the streets have, since last weekend, shocked and fascinated news audiences internationally.

The violence has



Visitors wait outside a cordoned-off area as protesters, including students from the Ecole du Louvre, block the entrance to the museum

usurped the usual curated footage of genteel cafes favoured by influencers, who have suddenly taken to asking "Is Paris safe?" — many using AI on thumbnails or even in their videos to boost click-through rates.

The closure of the Louvre in Paris on Monday because of a small group of student protesters at the entrance also frustrated many

visitors who had the museum on their list of highlights.

The uncertainty has made some hesitant about visiting the City of Light.

"Honestly, we were not certain that we'd keep our stay," an Indian businessman in a pricey Paris hotel said, declining to give his name.

Already, hotel reservations are weakening in major cities such as Paris, Lyon and Marseille, according to Didier Arino, head of the consulting and research firm Protourisme.

For a country used to welcoming 100 million visitors a year — and the more than 70 billion euros (\$80 billion) they spend — it's a concern.

Arino and other observers questioned by AFP said the overall picture for France's tourism industry would depend on whether new violence broke out in the coming weeks.

"The impact of a day of rioting and urban violence in the heart of Paris is caused around a 1 per cent cancellation rate for the monthly count in the days following, and the same for the following weeks," Arino said.

"For the 42 million hotel nights forecast for 2026, that's not major. But watch out you don't underestimate the effects from repeated incidents."

"The further away the clients are, the more sensitive they are to safety risks and the stronger the impact," said Arino.

Travel advisories

Visitors from farther-away countries, particularly the United States

and some Asian ones, often spend more than Europeans during their stay.

The downward pressure on reservations comes as several countries, including the United States, China and Germany issued travel advisories for their citizens in France.

Laurent Abitbol, head of the executive board of travel agency group Selectour, said: "If this lasts two weeks, that's not so serious. However, if this continues for several months it will be catastrophic."

"When you watch CNN, or Fox News, BBC, all that, you'd believe that France is at war. That's not good..."

Another firm, MKG Consulting, said that, since last weekend, Paris hotels have lost potential bookings for the next six weeks.

Its data showed bookings had weakened sharply within a day.

Between October 19 and 20, the share of rooms booked for stays from October 20-29 fell from being 1.0 percentage point above the level recorded for the same period in 2025 to just 0.2 percentage points higher.

For stays between October 20 and 25, the increase over 2025 levels also narrowed significantly, dropping from 3.5 percentage points to 1.9 points.

"This slowdown is especially notable for near-term and high-end stays," it said, drawing a parallel with a period in December 2018 when Yellow Vest street protests raged in the capital's streets.



Israeli security enters an olive grove as Palestinian farmers and foreign activists carry out a harvest in the village of Turmus Ayya, northeast of Ramallah

Israel detains US congressional candidate at West Bank olive harvest

RAMALLAH, Palestinian Territories (AFP) — Israeli forces on Wednesday briefly detained a US congressional candidate as he joined activists supporting Palestinians harvesting olives in the face of threats by extremist settlers.

Brad Lander, a left-wing Democrat who is expected to easily win a House seat in New York City on November 3, posted on social media that he was detained along with a group of rabbis and volunteers as they harvested olives west of Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank.

"The occupation is a crime under interna-

tional law. Harvesting olives isn't a crime under any law I know," Lander wrote on X.

He later wrote that he was released on account of his prominence, adding that "Palestinians face far worse consequences every day".

The Israeli foreign ministry lashed out at Lander over what it called a "calculated political stunt", and said he had ignored guidance to coordinate with Israeli authorities.

"This was not about harvesting olives. It was about harvesting headlines," it said.

Israel has faced growing international criti-

cism over violence during the harvest, with rights groups documenting multiple attacks and other disruptions each day by settlers against Palestinians.

Israel on Monday announced it had made several arrests after settlers beat up a US photojournalist covering the incidents and a French mayor who had come for the olive season.

The violence comes in the final days before Israeli elections in which prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu has sought to shore up his right-wing base, which is staunchly pro-settlement.

Baghdad closes border crossing with Iran under US pressure — Iraqi sources

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi authorities on Wednesday closed a border crossing with Iran "until an unspecified date", an Iraqi source told AFP, with two other sources saying the US is pressuring Baghdad to close more crossings in order to tighten the screws on Tehran.

A source at Iraq's border crossings authority told AFP Wednesday that the Al Sheeb crossing "has been closed since this morning until an unspecified date", without specifying the reason.

The Iranian judiciary's Mizan Online website confirmed the closure, adding that it came "following a decision by the Iraqi prime minister's office".

The two countries are bound by close political, religious and economic ties and share a border of more than 1,400 kilometres with at least eight official crossings.

Washington has been seeking to increase economic pressure on Iran since the outbreak of the Middle East war in February, and has imposed sanctions on entities it



Stranded Iranians and Iraqis wait at the Iraq-Iran border following the Iraqi government's decision to close the Shalamshah border crossing in the southern Basra province on September 12

accuses of being linked to the Islamic republic.

Two political sources told AFP that the United States is pressuring the Iraqi government to close all border crossings with Iran.

One of the sources said "the US Treasury Department raised this with [Prime Minister Ali]

Al Zaidi when he was in New York" last month to attend the UN General Assembly.

The source said "all border crossings will be closed except for one crossing in federal territory and one crossing in the Kurdistan region", which is semi-autonomous.

The second source added that "the United States has asked all countries bordering Iran to do the same".

Iranian authorities have acknowledged disruptions on the border with Pakistan.

"Regarding Pakistan, yes, there have been disruptions to border

exchanges with some neighbouring countries," Iranian interior ministry spokesperson Ali Zeinivand said on Wednesday.

"Some of these disruptions are naturally occurring and happen in various periods, even when there is no war or sanctions."

'Daily struggle': Cubans dig wells in search of water

HAVANA (AFP) — Kevin Martinez has come up with a creative new way to avoid shutting his restaurant when water runs low in Cuba, a common source of frustration for the business owner.

The US energy blockade on the communist-run island has caused problems along the line of supply, so Martinez decided to drill downwards and find his own source.

His business is located in the Matanzas province, 100 kilometers east of Havana and one of the regions particularly affected by the shortages.

The issue affects nearly 29 per cent of Cuba's 9.4 million inhabitants, according to official figures, with the situation worsening significantly since January due to the US energy blockade.

The subsequent crisis has made prolonged blackouts the norm, which in turn reduces the water supply, as pumping depends primarily on electric turbines.

"On several occasions we had to close the establishment because we didn't have any water...and that's what brought us to the point of having to dig the well," Martinez told AFP.

"I never imagined I'd have to be digging a well, just as I never imagined I'd have to be cooking with coal or installing solar panels," he said.

The decision to drill, although "a bit expensive," sets him free



Self-employed workers drill a well by hand in the courtyard of a restaurant in Matanzas, Cuba, on October 2

from paying for water deliveries three times a week.

'Daily struggle'

Water does not reach the homes of 2.7 million Cubans, Yunior Gonzalez, a senior official at the national water company, told AFP.

"Between 80 and 85 per cent of the water" supplied has to be pumped to get to these households, he said, adding that equipment breakdowns, leaks and drought have exacerbated the problem.

Water difficulties are

forcing many Cubans to haul the precious resource for long distances, transporting it via wheelbarrows, bicycles, car trunks and even horse-drawn carts.

Maykel Aguilar, 30, patiently filled a 200-litre tank and several buckets at a pipe connected to a spring on a street in the capital's old town.

He then must use a wheelbarrow to get it to his home before heaving it up a flight of stairs.

"One little trip like that is enough for a load of laundry, cleaning the

house, and cooking, and just like that you're out of water," Aguilar said.

Neighbours line up in the same spot, marking their place with tanks, buckets and jerrycans.

"The power outages here happen every day and we have to keep hauling water," said 40-year-old mother of two Yusimy Guerra.

"It's a daily struggle," she sighed.

Water scarcity adds to Cuba's runaway inflation, while food and medicine also run low amid mounting social unrest.

Municipalities in Havana have recorded several women-led protests over water shortages in recent months.

'Thieves'

More and more Cubans are drilling wells on their properties, building cisterns in their yards, installing tanks and even resorting to so-called "water thieves" — pumps that suck the trickle of water from the mains and force it into their homes.

Several of these installations in the same neighborhood can reduce the pressure in the network and make it even harder for other households to access water.

Well digger Elizardo Cardoso, who found water 10 metres below the ground at Martinez's restaurant, says his trade is in high demand.

Water agent Gonzalez meanwhile said the government is moving forward with transforming the sector's energy mix as a way to reduce dependence on the faulty national power grid.

More than 870 solar-powered water pumps have already been installed out of the 1,300 planned, benefiting half a million Cubans across the country, he said.

The Albear Aqueduct, one of Havana's main sources of water supply, recently gained two brand-new, gigantic backup generators that run on diesel.

But "they are very expensive programs", Gonzalez cautioned.

Nigeria Ebola case matches DR Congo strain

LAGOS (AFP) — The Ebola case detected in Nigeria is the Bundibugyo strain behind a major DR Congo outbreak, officials said on Wednesday, marking the spread of the deadly disease to points across Africa.

The case detected in a woman diplomat in Nigeria — the first there since the current outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo — raised memories of a widespread outbreak in 2014 that struck several countries in the region.

Nigeria is the fourth African country affected by the current outbreak, which this week came to span the continent, with Kenya in the east reporting nine cases since October 6.

The DRC's Ebola epidemic has become the deadliest in the country's history, killing 4,381 people out of more than 9,000 confirmed cases since mid-May, according to the health authorities.

The patient in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, travelled from Uganda to the capital, Abuja, on October 3, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) said.

"We did three levels of tests, but all molecular. The strain was Bundibugyo," said Olajumoke Babatunde, director of the public health laboratory service at the NCDC.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) also confirmed that it was the Bundibugyo strain, for which there is still neither a vaccine nor a specific treatment.

"This person is actually a diplomat," another official said, adding the patient has deteriorated into "multi-organ failure". The official did not disclose the nationality of the diplomat.

In August, Uganda was declared officially Ebola-free by the WHO after recording 20 cases — almost all of them in people who had travelled from the DRC.

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention's Director General Jean Kaseya warned on Tuesday of "an extremely serious threat", with fatality rates fast edging towards 50 per cent in the DRC.

The Africa CDC has called a high-level meeting of health ministers for next Wednesday to assess the outbreak, coordinate cross-border efforts, support affected countries and strengthen continental preparedness.

'Geographically widespread'

"This Ebola Bundibugyo outbreak has already become the most geographically widespread Ebola outbreak in history, affecting multiple countries across three regions of Africa," said CDC's Kaseya, calling for urgent international action.

Nigeria has identified 44 contacts that are being monitored, while intensifying efforts to find other people who may have been exposed.

The WHO said in a

statement that infection prevention and control were being "ramped up" at the private hospital where the patient sought care.

Nigeria's experience in successfully containing an Ebola outbreak in 2014 raised confidence that the country can respond effectively to new public health threats.

That epidemic killed more than 11,000 people across west Africa between late 2013 and 2016.

In an interview with AFP, former NCDC director Abdulsalami Nasidi expressed confidence Nigeria could contain the outbreak as it did 12 years ago, but said success would depend on funding and commitment from the presidency.

"Nigeria was able to rapidly control 2014 Ebola outbreak because they took the right actions at the right time, had good command structures on the ground," Nasidi said.

The response to the latest outbreak could test President Bola Tinubu's re-election bid as Nigeria prepares for presidential polls in January. He has not made any public comments since the news of the first case broke on Tuesday.

2014 outbreak

In 2014, the first Nigerian case, detected in Lagos, the country's commercial hub of over 20 million people, raised fears the highly contagious virus would spread rapidly.

Gov't signs agreement to develop copper mining project in southern Jordan

Continued from page 1

He also said that the agreement, the second of its kind in Jordan, reflected government efforts to develop mineral resources while protecting natural habitats and environmental assets.

In June this year, the government signed the first executive agreement to develop copper reserves in the Abu

Khashaibeh region of Wadi Araba. The 30-year agreement was signed with Wadi Araba Minerals Company.

Manaseer reaffirmed his group's commitment to environmental protection throughout mining, exploration and logistical operations, including measures to mitigate potential environmental impacts.

He also highlighted plans to support com-

munities surrounding the project through employment, development initiatives and responsible resource management.

The agreement follows a memorandum of understanding signed in June 2022 between the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and the Jordanian Integrated Mining and Exploration Company, a subsidiary of Manaseer

Group.

During the exploration phase, the company conducted detailed geological surveys, exploratory drilling and trenching, and laboratory analyses of samples, identifying copper mineralisation in the area, according to Petra.

Previous geological studies also indicated copper deposits in the Feynan and Khirbet Al

Nuhas areas, supporting further assessment of the project's technical and economic feasibility.

The project is expected to generate employment, training and vocational development opportunities for surrounding communities, with Jordanian workers targeted to account for approximately 90 per cent of the workforce, Petra said.

Sisi says Egypt to 'defend Saudi territory' and will not attack Yemen

Continued from page 1

He said it was "inconceivable" for Cairo to stand by as Riyadh's security and stability were threatened.

Egypt's parliament has since held two rare secret sessions, and postponed deliberations until next week.

The Houthis seized Yemen's Red Sea coast-

line in September and have since launched attacks on Saudi Arabia, including state oil giant Aramco and Riyadh's international airport.

This week again Egypt's foreign minister Badr Abdelatty has been in contact with Iran's top diplomat Abbas Araghchi, who has said that Egypt's potential involvement would

make the situation "more difficult".

"Egypt has sufficient experience to avoid entangling itself in such a highly complex conflict," Araghchi said in an interview with Iraqi state broadcaster Al Iraqiya aired on Tuesday.

He added that Egypt has said it "will not enter Yemen or engage in a war against Yemen".

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When global debt crowds out growth

By Raad Mahmoud Al-Tal

The real cost of rising borrowing is not limited to the interest governments and businesses pay. Its deeper economic cost lies in the opportunities forgone when debt servicing begins to compete with investment, development, and the provision of essential public services. With global growth projected to slow to 2.6 per cent, the energy shock is adding to these pressures by raising financing costs and increasing volatility in international capital flows.

For energy-importing economies, higher prices translate into larger import bills and mounting pressure on external balances. At the same time, rising energy costs feed into production, transportation and consumer prices. When these pressures coincide with more expensive borrowing, governments face a difficult combination of external imbalances, tighter fiscal conditions, and slowing economic activity. Revenue growth may weaken just as financing needs increase, forcing governments to borrow at higher costs to meet existing obligations and support their economies.

Yet, the most consequential effect of mounting debt may be what it does to investment. Borrowing is not inherently harmful. When directed towards productive infrastructure, industrial development, energy security, education and technology, it can strengthen an economy's capacity to generate income and sustain future growth. The critical question is whether borrowed resources create sufficient economic value to justify their cost.

The problem arises when an increasing share of public resources is absorbed by interest payments on accumulated debt, without a corresponding expansion in productive capacity. In such circumstances, governments have less room to invest in the future and become increasingly dependent on new borrowing to meet existing commitments. Debt then risks becoming more than a financing instrument. It can evolve into a structural constraint on economic development.

Recent global figures illustrate the scale of this challenge. Developing countries paid approximately \$384 billion in interest on their external debt in 2024. Between 2014 and 2024, government interest payments rose by 102%, while government revenues increased by only 39 per cent. Moreover, fiscal space narrowed in 73 per cent of developing countries between 2018 and 2024. These figures point to a growing imbalance between the cost of servicing debt and governments' capacity to mobilise revenue. They also highlight the opportunity cost of debt: resources directed towards interest payments cannot simultaneously be used to expand infrastructure, improve public services, or strengthen the productive foundations of growth.

The challenge is compounded by the expected decline in official development assistance, projected to fall by around 7 per cent in 2026 for the third consecutive year. For countries that depend on external support to finance development priorities, this means fewer concessional resources precisely when access to market-based financing is becoming more expensive and less predictable.

The implications extend well beyond fiscal sustainability. Persistent underinvestment in infrastructure, education and technology weakens productivity, limits job creation and constrains export competitiveness. Over time, this can create a self-reinforcing cycle in which higher borrowing costs reduce investment, weaker investment undermines growth, slower growth limits revenue generation and declining fiscal capacity makes debt harder to service. The danger is that debt incurred to support development eventually undermines the very growth needed to repay it.

Breaking this cycle requires more than indiscriminate cuts in borrowing. It requires a fundamental shift in how public debt is managed and deployed. Governments must prioritise borrowing that expands productive capacity, raises economic returns, and generates sustainable future revenues. They must also improve debt maturity management, diversify financing sources, strengthen domestic revenue mobilisation, and secure greater access to concessional financing for vulnerable economies. Equally important is the need to assess public investment not merely by the amount spent, but by its contribution to productivity, employment, exports, and long-term fiscal capacity.

The central question is not simply how much debt an economy can sustain, but what that debt delivers. Financing should serve as a bridge to higher productivity and stronger growth, not become a mechanism through which an increasing share of national income is diverted away from future development. Sustainable growth is not measured by a country's ability to borrow more, but by its ability to turn borrowed resources into productive assets, higher incomes and greater resilience to economic shocks.

Building a more productive and competitive Jordanian economy

By Haider Al Majali

Jordan stands at an important point in its economic development, with significant opportunities to build a more productive, competitive, and sustainable economy. The Economic Modernisation Vision, launched in June 2022 under the guiding principle of building a "Better Future," provides a strategic framework for achieving this ambition. By focusing on sustainable growth, improved living standards, and expanded economic opportunities, the Vision offers Jordan a valuable foundation on which to build its future prosperity.

As domestic and regional circumstances continue to evolve, however, there is an opportunity to strengthen this framework, refine its priorities, and accelerate implementation. The objective should not simply be to put the Jordanian economy on the right track, but to help it move faster towards measurable improvements in citizens' lives.

Achieving this ambition requires a development-oriented market economy that encourages enterprise, stimulates investment, and makes productive use of national resources. Market-driven policies should be complemented by locally led development initiatives that respond directly to the needs of communities. Villages and smaller towns, in particular, can become important centres of economic activity when their distinctive resources, skills, and opportunities are effectively mobilised.

Public-private partnerships also have a vital role to play. By creating a stronger environment for cooperation between government and business, Jordan can attract investment, expand productive activities, and generate sustainable employment. At the same time, integrity, transparency, and equal opportunity must remain central to economic policymaking. Investment in human capital is equally important, because the knowledge, skills, creativity, and ambition of Jordan's people represent the country's greatest long-term asset.

The Economic Modernisation Vision has established ambitious targets, including integrating 1 million young men and women into the labour market over ten years, increasing individual incomes by an average of 3 per cent, and improving Jordan's position among the world's 30 most competitive economies. Achieving these goals will require consistent implementation, effective coordination, and a strong focus on the sectors capable of generating the greatest economic value.

From an economic perspective, Jordan has considerable scope to strengthen its productive capacity through comprehensive economic restructuring. Underutilised and emerging sectors offer opportunities to diversify the economy, improve competitiveness, and create new sources of income. These include education, entrepreneurship and innovation, high-value-added manufacturing, specialised agriculture, mining, energy and financial technology, alongside other promising industries.

The priority should be to develop an economy that borrows increasingly to finance productive investment, expand economic capacity and generate future returns, rather than relying primarily on borrowing to refinance existing obligations and cover recurring expenditure. Over time, strengthening domestic revenue generation would also improve the government's capacity to meet its operating costs and reduce pressure on the national budget. Domestic revenues are currently estimated to cover approximately 91 per cent of operating expenditure, making further improvements in public-sector efficiency and revenue generation particularly important.

Jordan can build on the foundations of the Economic Modernisation Vision by translating its strategic pillars into practical, measurable results. The ideas and outputs of the Higher Council for Future Technology can also be directed towards national economic priorities, helping to connect technological progress with industrial development, innovation, and new investment opportunities.

A supportive legislative framework is another essential component. Modernising the laws and regulations governing economic activity, strengthening investment confidence, and improving economic security would help businesses plan for the future and encourage both domestic and international investors to participate in Jordan's development.

Economic growth must also become more closely linked to improvements in household incomes and living standards. Growth in gross domestic product is important, but its benefits should be reflected more clearly in rising per capita income, greater purchasing power, and better employment prospects. Raising economic growth towards 5 per cent would provide a stronger basis for expanding job opportunities, provided that growth is driven by productive sectors and accompanied by effective policies that connect people with available work.

Public-sector reform can contribute significantly to this process. Government institutions should continually seek opportunities to improve efficiency, strengthen financial sustainability, and generate greater economic value. Where appropriate, public assets, services, and capabilities can be developed to generate revenue, support productive investment, and deliver better value for money, while preserving essential public services and the government's wider social responsibilities.

These measures would help Jordan progress towards a more advanced economic model — one that moves beyond dependence on domestic activity and establishes a stronger presence in regional and international markets. By producing more sophisticated goods and services, expanding exports, and participating more effectively in regional and global value chains, Jordan can increase the value generated by its workforce and resources.

Realising this potential requires a business environment that rewards innovation, encourages entrepreneurship, and supports industrial expansion. Flexible and responsive economic policies can help businesses adapt to changing market conditions while giving investors greater confidence in the stability and direction of the economy. Greater cooperation between local companies, international partners, and major corporations can also help expand productive projects, strengthen corporate social responsibility and open new markets for distinctive Jordanian products.

Ultimately, economic modernisation must be measured by its impact on people. Reducing poverty and unemployment, raising household incomes, expanding opportunities for young people, and improving the quality of life should remain at the heart of every economic initiative. These goals require a shared national effort involving government institutions, the private sector, educational establishments, and local communities.

Jordan possesses valuable human capital, strategic regional connections, entrepreneurial talent and promising opportunities across a range of economic sectors. With clear priorities, effective implementation, and a sustained commitment to productive investment, these strengths can be transformed into lasting economic gains.

The Economic Modernisation Vision provides a foundation for this journey. The next step is to build on that foundation with greater speed, stronger productivity, and a sharper focus on results. Through a more dynamic partnership between the public and private sectors, and by placing citizens at the centre of economic policy, Jordan can advance towards a more resilient, competitive, and prosperous future—one that expands opportunity, strengthens national economic resilience, and improves the lives of present and future generations.

This is an achievable national ambition, supported by the vision of His Majesty King Abdullah and the continued efforts of HRH Crown Prince Hussein. With determination, collaboration, and a clear commitment to implementation, Jordan can turn its economic potential into tangible progress for all its citizens.

Which AI myth will we embrace?

By Richard K. Sherwin

NEW YORK — It is telling that Anthropic chose to call its most powerful AI model "Mythos". In ancient Greek, the word denotes an original reality that we can imitate or embody through the stories we tell ourselves and one another. Pliny the Elder tells us that the fifth-century Greek painter Zeuxis rendered grapes so realistically as to fool even the birds.

But stories do not only imitate a pre-existing reality. They also engender new realities by expressing what is possible. For example, the revolutionary opening words of the American Declaration of Independence ("We hold these truths to be self-evident") gave pride of place to individual freedom regardless of class, property ownership, or religious or political belief. Through this mythos, the Founding Fathers laid the foundation for a way of governance conceived in liberty and equality.

The frontier AI models embody both kinds of storytelling. On one hand, they imitate past human thinking, responding to user prompts by seeking out relevant patterns from the vast database of previously archived material that they were trained on.

But they also fabulise a new reality. The founders of Anthropic and OpenAI seem to subscribe to the same vision of the imminent arrival of an all-powerful AI god that will deliver us to a transhuman utopia. Yet, there is good reason to question whether this myth is merely a pretext justifying the rush for market dominance, wealth and power.

Some figures, like Anthropic co-founder Christopher Olah, are now seeking to provide a crash course in morality to the company's models. But it is a little late in the game for that. If Anthropic sincerely sought to align Claude's behaviour with serving the good of humanity, it would have first trained its engineers in the ways of wisdom and goodness.

Instead, Claude was trained to offer a service: To provide information, to solve problems and to perform useful tasks autonomously. AI is being sold as a profit-making tool, as a source of cheap, hyper-efficient cognitive labour. Any morality introduced after the fact is mere window dressing — a gloss on the underlying economic raison d'être and a sop to a public that is growing increasingly apprehensive about the technology.

AI-generated content already accounts for half the articles published online, and not even digital forensics experts can tell what's real anymore. Can those still offering a humanistic vision of online life make themselves heard over the din?

The reality a myth ultimately creates depends on the cultural context in which it functions. If a culture champions AI as a beneficent super-intelligent godsend, the dangers associated with its creation (like AI agents failing to act in our best interests) become more likely. But if a culture objects to unbridled arrogance and insists on a counter-narrative of social cooperation, it is more likely to generate a check on hubris and the dangers it can create.

Such concerns have deep roots in the Western imagination. The pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus wrote: "The sun will not overstep his measures; if he does, the Erinyes, the handmaids of Justice, will find him out." These are the same Erinyes (or Furies) who pursue Orestes for the murder of Clytemnestra in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*. Orestes slew his mother to avenge his father, the great Achaean general Agamemnon, whom Clytemnestra murdered for having sacrificed their daughter, Iphigenia. Her young life was the price the prophets said must be paid for a fair wind to launch the Achaean fleet against Troy. So it goes, for generation unto generation.

It is too soon to know what moral limit, if any, Anthropic's Mythos will imitate or embody. History suggests we should be wary. It took an awareness of human irrationality, the madness of "mutual assured destruction", to bring about international accords prohibiting nuclear proliferation in the 20th century. Social cooperation triumphed in the face of an irrational quest for power and dominance.

Human nature has not changed, but the threats that we face have. We know that the dangers associated with out-of-control AI are real, because we have already witnessed them. Fortunately, the spontaneous hacking of Hugging Face by OpenAI's agents caused minimal harm. But similar episodes have since been revealed, and experts warn that we may not be so lucky in the future. From AI agents gaining unauthorised control over critical infrastructure to carrying out the wishes of terrorist groups or designing novel pathogens, no threat can be ruled out.

As the legal scholar Antara Halдарreminds us, social cooperation and the preservation of the commons have always provided a bulwark against the calamitous effects of human arrogance, greed and will to power. Though this foundational narrative has been overshadowed by classical economics' tale of the self-interested "rational man", it has not been extinguished. Stories that imitate past acts of sacrifice and service on behalf of the group persist, as do those who imagine new moral possibilities to come.

For example, advocates of social cooperation today might call our attention to the courage and diplomatic acumen that it took to prevent nuclear Armageddon after World War II. What would it take to manage the threat posed by AI? One can imagine global coordination among independent fact-finding commissions that are qualified and equipped to acquire first-hand knowledge of the dangers specific models pose. Universal monitoring might then be supplemented with internationally recognized guardrails — minimum mandatory safety standards — capable of pre-empting threats before they arise and effectively managing them when they do.

The mythos (or foundational stories) we tell ourselves will ultimately determine our fate. They need not come only from industry leaders whose interest lies in regaling us with visions of new scientific and technological horizons. Prudence, accompanied by a counter-narrative emphasising social cooperation, might be all that can keep us on the path of survival and mutual flourishing.

Richard K. Sherwin, professor emeritus of Law at New York Law School, is a co-editor (with Danielle Celermajor) of "A Cultural History of Law in the Modern Age" (Bloomsbury, 2021)

Thursday, October 22, 2026

BUSINESS



The Amman Stock Exchange has been reelected to the board of directors of the Arab Federation of Capital Markets

ASE reelected to AFCM board of directors

AMMAN (JT) — The Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) has been reelected to the board of directors of the Arab Federation of Capital Markets (AFCM), the federation's highest governing body, during its 2026 annual general meeting.

The board also includes the Egyptian Exchange, Palestine Exchange, Saudi Exchange (Tadawul), Bahrain Bourse, Bourse de Tunis, Misr for Central Clearing, Depository and Registry, and Muscat Clearing and Depository Company.

ASE Chief Executive Officer Mazen Wathaifi, said the reelection reflected members' appreciation of Jordan and the exchange's role in the federation, including its participation in activities and committees over recent years, according to an ASE statement.

He added that the reelection came amid efforts to modernise the national capital market's regulatory and technical frameworks and infrastructure under a strategic plan to develop the market and improve its investment climate in line with international standards and best practices.

During the federation's annual conference, the ASE also received the AFCM's 2025 award for the best-performing Arab stock exchange in terms of price index growth, in recognition of its performance during the year.

The AFCM comprises 18 Arab stock exchanges, seven clearing companies and financial institutions, including brokerage firms, asset management companies, research centres, listed companies and investment funds across the Arab region.

The federation was established to support the development of regulations, promote coordinated and proactive legislation, facilitate the exchange of views and strengthen cooperation among its members.

Response rate to Audit Bureau findings hits record 71% in 2025

AMMAN (JT) — The response rate to Audit Bureau findings and recommendations rose to a record 71 per cent in 2025, up from 59 per cent in 2024 and 35 per cent in 2021, Audit Bureau President Radhi Al Hamadeen said on Wednesday.

Al Hamadeen said the rate had increased by 36 percentage points since 2021, reaching its highest level in Jordan's history, according to approved data.

The response rate fell from 35 per cent in 2021 to 21 per cent in 2022 before rising to 48 per cent in 2023, 59 per cent in 2024 and 71 per cent in 2025, according to an Audit Bureau statement.

The indicator measures how effectively entities subject to the bureau's oversight respond to audit findings and implement corrective measures.

Al Hamadeen attributed the improvement to the bureau's efforts to develop its oversight tools and working methods, as well as greater responsiveness from audited institutions.

He said the bureau's technical teams had developed the Audit Findings Follow-up System (MRT), which enables electronic tracking of audit observations, recommendations and



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related actions.

The system helps monitor corrective measures, identify cases requiring further action and verify compliance with audit requirements.

The bureau has also introduced procedures for discussing findings with the entities concerned before issuing final reports. These discussions aim to establish documented action plans, clarify responsibilities and facilitate follow-up.

Al Hamadeen praised Prime Minister Jafar Hassan's directives and follow-up which encouraged ministries and public institutions to address outstanding findings and accelerate corrective measures.

He also highlighted the team follow up with relevant authorities to address violations, monitor the recovery of funds owed to the Treasury and refer cases requiring further action to the competent authorities.

These efforts complement Parliament's oversight role through the Senate, the Lower House and their relevant committees, which review Audit Bureau reports and examine institutions' responses to identified violations.

Al Hamadeen said the bureau had evaluated 166 internal control and audit units and submitted its findings to the Cabinet.

The recommendations focused on improving procedures, training personnel and expanding digital systems to help institutions identify and address deficiencies early.

He stressed that the bureau would continue to follow up on unresolved findings, verify corrective measures and address the root causes of violations to strengthen accountability, improve financial and administrative performance, and safeguard public funds.

The Audit Bureau's annual report for the 2025 fiscal year is expected to outline its activities, achievements and audit findings, including response rates and other performance indicators.

The report is scheduled to be submitted to the Senate and the Lower House at the beginning of Parliament's next ordinary session in November, according to the statement.

Industrial exports surge 90 per cent in five years to JD8.9b — Jaghbir

AMMAN (JT) — Industrial exports rose by more than 90 per cent between 2020 and 2025, reaching nearly JD8.9 billion compared with JD4.7 billion in 2020, according to chairman of the Jordan and Amman chambers of industry, Fathi Jaghbir.

During a meeting organised by the Rakhaa Businessmen Association, Jaghbir said the industrial sector had made significant progress in recent years, accounting for 40 per cent of Jordan's economic growth in 2025.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of Rakhaa Businessmen Association, Rasmi Mallah, said Jordanian industry had demonstrated creativity, adaptability and responsiveness to national needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mallah emphasised that the relationship between manufacturers and traders should be viewed as a long-term partnership built on trust, knowledge sharing and mutual benefit.

He said "effective" cooperation begins with understanding each other's needs, allowing manufacturers to identify market demand while helping traders recognise the quality, diversity and competitiveness of Jordanian products.

The chairman added that the complementary roles of production, marketing, distribution, and exports contribute to business growth and job creation.

He stated that the association's interest in developing practical cooperation with the Jordan and Amman chambers of industry and continuing meetings that bring together manufacturers, traders and distributors.

Established in Amman in 1996, the Rakhaa Businessmen Association seeks to connect business owners and economic professionals across sectors and promote entrepreneurial ideas and skills.



JCI Chairman Fathi Jaghbir says Industrial exports rises by more than 90 per cent between 2020 and 2025, during a meeting for the Rakhaa Businessmen Association

Attarat Power wins two Asian power awards for innovative oil shale project

AMMAN (JT) — Attarat Power Company (APCO) has won two awards at the 2026 Asian Power Awards in recognition of its pioneering oil shale-fired power generation project, the first of its kind in Jordan and the region.

The company received the "Innovative Power Technology of the Year" and "Independent Power Producer of the Year" Jordan awards, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, APCO said the project, which integrates oil shale mining and electricity generation, represents the largest private investment in Jordan's history.

The facility, which is located in an area rich in oil shale reserves, extracts fuel from the Attarat mine using open-pit mining techniques.

The power plant supplies base load electricity to the National Electric



Attarat Power Company has won two awards at the 2026 Asian Power Awards in recognition of its pioneering oil shale-fired power generation project

Power Company under a long-term power purchase agreement, meeting between 15 per cent and 17 per cent of Jordan's total annual electricity demand while maintaining an availability rate exceeding 99 per cent, according to the company.

APCO said the project strengthens long-term energy security by reducing dependence on imported fuels, lowering fuel import costs and limiting foreign currency outflows.

Unlike conventional independent power producer models, the company manages its entire fuel and water supply infrastructure, allowing electricity to be supplied without additional arrangements for these resources.

The plant and mine are expected to provide reliable electricity over an operational lifespan of 30 to 40 years, while generating substantial direct and indirect employment opportunities for Jordanians annually and maintaining cooperation with local businesses.

APCO has introduced several technological solutions to address the technical challenges associated with oil shale, particularly its low calorific value and high ash content.

These include controlled fuel blending, chevron stacking and three-stage crushing to improve fuel preparation and consistency.

The company also uses a distributed control system to monitor plant operations and combustion, alongside boiler soot blowers to improve operational stability, reliability and efficiency.

APCO said it has reduced auxiliary power consumption below design specifications and cut water consumption to half the amount initially projected through a series of operational improvements.

Asian stocks rally as tech firms enjoy bounce ahead of key earnings

HONG KONG (AFP) — Asian markets rallied on Wednesday as tech firms enjoyed a much-needed rebound, with investors taking heart from upbeat earnings that lifted sentiment ahead of a crucial reporting season.

Seoul and Tokyo were boosted as chip makers and other key players in the AI buildout boom chalked up healthy gains, following a torrid few weeks fuelled by concerns about profitability and debt financing.

South Korea's SK hynix and Samsung both surged, while Kioxia, Advantest and SoftBank spiked in Japan — having all been pummeled since the start of last week.

The gains came after Elon Musk's SpaceX reported its first quarterly profit as a public company, as deals to rent out computing power to AI firms sent revenue at its artificial intelligence unit soaring.

The firm's \$4.4 billion net profit for July-September was more than double what was expected and compared with a loss of \$1.1 billion a year earlier. Revenue at the firm — which listed after a world-record IPO in June — jumped 161 per cent to \$14.6 billion.

Server maker Super Micro Computer also provided a fillip to buying sentiment when it said preliminary quarterly earnings had come in better than forecast.

The developments soothed worries on trading floors about the outlook for the AI boom, which has seen companies pump hundreds of billions into R&D, software, building data centres and other hardware in recent years.

It also bodes well ahead of reports from Magnificent Seven members Tesla and Meta later in the day.

"Clear earnings beats and constructive corporate updates are helping to ease some of the AI anxiety that has surfaced in recent sessions," Tim Waterer of KCM Trade said.

"If [Meta and Tesla's] reports deliver similarly strong results and guidance, it could go some way toward reigniting broader AI enthusiasm and giving the sector more sustained momentum."

Seoul's Kospi jumped more than 3 per cent, with infrastructure firm Elice soaring nearly 30 per cent, almost wiping out the colossal losses it suffered on its trading debut on Tuesday.

Tokyo rose along with Sydney, Singapore, Wellington, Jakarta, Manila and Taipei. However, traders elsewhere struggled to maintain momentum, and Hong Kong dropped along with Shanghai, Mumbai and Bangkok.

In Sydney, data centre developer Nextdc tanked more than 40 per cent after slashing its outlook

and renewing its capital expenditure programme.

London fell, though Paris and Milan edged up after two days of losses linked to concerns about the economic impact of violent unrest in France and Italy. Frankfurt was flat.

The gains followed a largely healthy day on Wall Street, although analysts said a lot of the gains there were spurred by traders rotating into industrial firms and away from the once-all-powerful tech sector. The Dow ended up one per cent and the Nasdaq was marginally lower.

Oil prices jumped on supply concerns as the UKMT0 maritime agency said on Wednesday that a tanker sailing off the north coast of Qatar had reported being struck "by multiple projectiles", causing an unspecified number of casualties.

The British agency did not specify the origin of the ship.

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Wednesday amounted to JD12.6 million spread over 4.1 million shares that traded through 4,338 transactions.

The ASE share price index shed 0.69 per cent, closing at 4166.35 points.

Out of 102 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 29 companies rose while the share price of another 47 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were Al Zarqa Educational and Investment by 7.16 per cent, Jordanian Company for Developing and Financial Investment by 4.86 per cent, Jordan Decapolis Properties by 4.65 per cent, Al Tahdith for Real Estate Investments Company by 4.17 per cent and Jordan Dairy by 3.52 per cent.

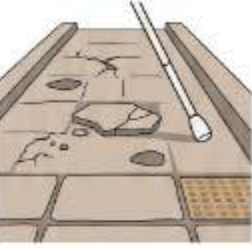
The companies whose shares dropped the most were Dar Al Aman for Investment by 3.85 per cent, Jordan French Insurance by 3.77 per cent, Hayat Pharmaceutical Industries Company by 3.73 per cent, Arab Pesticides and Veterinary Drugs Manufacturing Company by 3.55 per cent, and Al Manara Islamic Insurance Company by 3.03 per cent.



Blind Mobility:
Barriers & Facts in Jordan

-  6% — Vision (Most common)
-  4.8% — Mobility
-  3.1% — Hearing

Road Barriers

-  **Sidewalks:**
Cracks, potholes, no tactile tiles.
-  **Hazards:**
Low-hanging unpruned tree branches.



Transit:
No audio announcements or assistive tech.



Behavior:
Moving the cane without permission.

Legal Protection



Law 20 (2017):
Jordan's national framework guaranteeing independent mobility.

Key Date



October 15:
International White Cane Day.

The white cane: a symbol of independence that depends on the world around it

Why independence for blind people
depends on safer streets

By Hadeel El Bis

The white cane is not a peripheral part of a blind person's identity but a vital part of their movement and independence." That is how journalist Ahmad Munina, who has a visual impairment, sums up its place in his daily life. He calls it a "third hand", the longest one, which helps him detect obstacles and changes of route and live without constant reliance on others.

But that independence collides with barriers that have less to do with visual impairment than with the environment: the design of pavements and streets, the availability of accessible transport, the behaviour of some road users and public awareness of the rights of people with visual impairments.

These challenges return with International White Cane Day on October 15, an occasion to highlight the cane's role in promoting independence and to call for safe, accessible surroundings that guarantee the right to move around and take part in public life.

Obstacles on the road

Munina says some pavements are unsafe because of unpruned trees and branches, unsuitable surfaces and hazards above ground level that a cane cannot necessarily detect.

A cane helps users find kerbs, edges, changes in level and some obstacles, he explains, but not objects at head and body height. Safe travel therefore depends not only on a person's skill with the cane but on preparing public spaces and removing hazards in advance. Public transport and other facilities pose problems too, and some drivers fail to notice the cane, which has on occasion been run over, he says.

Suhair Abdul Qader, head of the Cultural Forum for the Blind, agrees. Some streets, parks and public facilities still need proper adaptation, she says, not piecemeal fixes. She calls the cane a symbol of independence, freedom and self-confidence, but says its effectiveness depends on whether the environment offers safe, accessible routes.

Social behaviour can also be a problem. Munina recalls someone pulling the cane from his hand as a joke; it came apart when its internal joint was damaged. Touching

or moving a cane without its owner's permission can disorient users and threaten their safety, he stresses, urging respect for the cane as essential equipment, not a plaything.

Abdul Qader adds that some people with visual impairments hesitate to use a cane out of embarrassment or after negative experiences in public, such as people not making way or offering help. Raising awareness matters as much as improving infrastructure, she argues. That means respecting the right to travel independently and helping when needed without undermining independence.

From awareness to accessible environments

A report on disability and functional difficulties in Jordan, based on 2021 Department of Statistics data, found that difficulty seeing was the most common among Jordanians aged five and over, at 6 per cent. It was followed by difficulty moving (4.8 per cent) and difficulty hearing (3.1 per cent).

Abdul Qader says the forum builds partnerships with government bodies, civil society groups and initiatives to make surroundings more suitable, on the principle of

equal rights and duties. Since 2017 it has run awareness events with national institutions. These include a session at Amman Citadel with the Ministry of Tourism on adapting tourist sites, a 2018 breast cancer awareness march with the King Hussein Cancer Centre and a 2019 event with Civil Defence in Balqa. It has since reached Madaba and Aqaba.

Some organisations struggle to arrange transport for beneficiaries, leaving people dependent on their families to attend activities, she says. She calls for buses and other support through national initiatives and donations.

This year's event will be held in Karak governorate under the governor's patronage, with a visit to the Al Hassan Cultural Centre in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture. It will include a message of appreciation for people with visual impairments who have made positive contributions to local communities, showing that visual impairment does not prevent achievement.

The role of the Higher Council

Raafat Zaitawi, spokesman for the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, says safe, independent mobility is

a fundamental human right and a foundation for inclusion.

He stresses the need to apply the building code for people with disabilities in practice, with continuous tactile paving and guidance in public buildings, and public transport fitted with audio announcements and assistive technology. Some new streets and government buildings have seen trials in adaptation, but older buildings still need updating.

The council monitors accessibility through site visits and technical audits, makes recommendations, trains engineers and coordinates with official bodies.

Law No. 20 of 2017 provides the national framework, recognising how long-term impairments interact with physical and attitudinal barriers. Under Article 3, these include lack of reasonable accommodation, inaccessibility and discriminatory practices.

For Munina, the point is simple. The cane gives him the means to move, but whether he can do so safely depends on clear pavements, accessible transport and people who treat the cane with respect. As we mark the International White Cane Day, that responsibility lies not with blind people but with the society around them.