Published by the Jordan Press Foundation
www.jordantimes.com
500 Fils
Volume 51 | Number 15352

THE JORDAN TIMES



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Gov't completes 9% of Economic Modernisation Vision projects by Q3 2026 — report

AMMAN (JT) — The government has completed 34 of the 395 projects included in the 2026–2029 executive programme of the Economic Modernisation Vision by the end of the third quarter of 2026, accounting for 9 per cent of the total, according to an official report.

A further 332 projects, or 84 per cent, are currently under implementation and are expected to be completed within their scheduled timelines, according to the Government Performance and Achievement Follow-up Unit at the Prime Ministry, as reported by Al Mamlaka.

The report said that eight projects, representing 2 per cent of the total, are facing delays due to technical and procedural challenges, with efforts under way to bring them back on track.

Meanwhile, implementation has yet to begin on 21 projects, accounting for 5 per cent of the programme, as their scheduled start dates have not yet arrived.

The third-quarter report reviews key achievements across the eight growth engines of the Economic Modernisation Vision, as well as progress in implementing the programme's 395 projects over its four-year period.

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King promotes, bestows Order of Valour on Captain Ananzeh

AMMAN (JT) — His Majesty King Abdullah on Tuesday presented Captain Firas Ananzeh with his new military rank, following the issuance of a Royal Decree promoting him from the rank of Second Lieutenant.

His Majesty also bestowed the Order of Valour and Salvation of the First Degree on Captain Ananzeh, in recognition of his bravery and heroic actions in apprehending a terrorist in Amman and protecting civilians, according to a Royal Court statement.

The ceremony, which took place at Al Husseiniya Palace, was attended by HRH Crown Prince Al Hussein and Ananzeh's family members.

The King also inquired about Ananzeh's recovery following the injuries he sustained while responding to the terrorist attack. His Majesty expressed his pride in Ananzeh, commending the courage demonstrated by the brave members of Jordan's security agencies in the line of duty.



Photo courtesy of Royal Court

His Majesty King Abdullah, accompanied by HRH Crown Prince Hussein, receives Captain Firas Ananzeh of the Public Security Directorate, and presents him with his new military rank following a Royal Decree promoting him from the rank of second lieutenant

The King declared that cowardly acts of terror will never destabilise Jordan, citing the bravery of heroes like Ananzeh and the martyred Corporal Jawad Al Salaita, emphasising that the Kingdom's security is fiercely protected by its own people.

Jordan prepares for EU investment conference with over 700 participants expected — ministry

AMMAN (JT) — The government is finalising preparations to host the Jordan–EU Investment Conference on November 19 at the Dead Sea, bringing together more than 700 government officials, investors and business leaders.

The conference will be held under the patronage of His Majesty King Abdullah, with the participation of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Ministry of Investment said that participants will include senior executives from major international companies, representatives of financial institutions and business leaders from Jordan and abroad.

Jordan will present more than 40 investment opportunities across key sectors, seeking to attract investors and establish new business partnerships, the statement said.



Preparations are underway to welcome international delegations, coordinate business meetings and finalise conference and media facilities at the King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Centre.

Discussions will focus on five priority areas: Technology and the digital economy, the future of energy, high-value industries, logistics and infrastructure, and water security.

Sector-specific events on November 18 will precede the main conference, which will feature high-level discussions on economic cooperation and financing, alongside meetings between investors, companies and financial institutions.

The conference aims to advance investment opportunities towards financing and implementation, foster long-term partnerships, create jobs and facilitate technology transfer, according to the statement.

In a recent press briefing, the government said that a portfolio of investment opportunities worth nearly $15 billion was being prepared for the upcoming Jordanian-European Investment Conference, as the Kingdom seeks to turn its partnership with the European Union into concrete projects, attract foreign capital and support job creation and the priorities of its Economic Modernisation Vision.

The portfolio, covering 15 sectors and subsectors, will be presented to European investors at the high-profile conference.



JT file

Jordan's exports to European Union rose by 11.4 per cent during the first eight months of this year, reaching JD411 million, according to figures released by the Department of Statistics

Jordan's exports to EU rise 11.4% ahead of investment conference

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan's exports to European Union member states rose by 11.4 per cent during the first eight months of this year, reaching JD411 million, as the Kingdom prepares to host the Jordan-EU Investment Conference on November 19.

According to figures released by the Department of Statistics, Jordan's exports to the EU increased by JD42 million, from JD369 million during the first eight months of 2025 to JD411 million during the same period this year.

Exports to The Netherlands recorded the strongest growth among the figures cited, climbing by 46.5 per cent to JD104 million, up from JD71 million during the corresponding period last year.

Meanwhile, Jordan's imports from EU countries fell by 7 per cent to JD1.942 billion, compared with JD2.088 billion during the first eight months of 2025.

Imports from Germany also declined by 12 per cent, dropping to JD397 million from JD451 million during the same period last year.

Continued on page 5

Jordan extends condolences to Bulgaria over pileup accidents victims

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan has expressed its condolences to Bulgaria over the victims of a traffic accident on the highway linking the capital Sofia with Burgas.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed the Kingdom's solidarity with the Bulgarian government and people, extending its condolences to the families of the victims.

The ministry's Spokesperson Fouad Majali reaffirmed Jordan's solidarity with Bulgaria over the incident and wished the injured a speedy recovery.

Twelve people died and dozens were injured on Tuesday in a mass pileup in thick fog on a motorway in southeastern Bulgaria, whose roads rank as the most dangerous in the EU, AFP reported.



AFP photo

This aerial photo taken on Tuesday, shows the wreckage of vehicles following a multiple-vehicle collision on the Trakia motorway near Zinnitsa, south-eastern Bulgaria

Continued on page 5

Real estate trading reaches JD5.7 billion in 10 months — DLS

AMMAN (JT) — Trading volume in Jordan's real estate market reached approximately JD5.712 billion during the first 10 months of 2026, with October transactions accounting for JD601.8 million, according to data released by the Department of Land and Survey (DLS).

Department revenues totalled JD234.3 million during the January-October period, including JD23.5 million in October, according to figures reported by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Total property sales across the Kingdom reached 118,235 during the first 10 months of 2026, including 12,768 transactions in October. The overall figure represented a 6.8 per cent decline compared with 126,817 properties sold during the same period last year.



JT file

October property sales also fell by 6 per cent year-on-year, compared with 13,583 transactions in October 2025.

Corporate property purchases totalled 9,123 during the January-October period, marking a 5.5 per cent decline from 9,659 transactions recorded in the corresponding period last year.

Meanwhile, transactions involving non-Jordanian ownership reached 1,952 during the first 10 months of 2026, with an estimated value of JD186.6 million.

Although the number of transactions declined by 2.7 per cent from 2,006 in the same period of 2025, their estimated value increased by 9.1 per cent from JD171 million.

In October alone, non-Jordanian ownership transactions totalled 216, valued at approximately JD18.3 million. This represented a 16 per cent decline in transaction numbers from 257 in October 2025, while their estimated value dropped by 32.7 per cent from JD27.1 million.

In terms of gender distribution, female ownership accounted for 35.23 per cent of total property ownership, compared with 64.77 per cent held by male owners.



Photo courtesy of the Thai embassy

Thai Ambassador Jiraporn Jirampaikool on Tuesday speaks during a media luncheon marking the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Jordan and Thailand

Thailand, Jordan mark 60 years of diplomatic relations, seek stronger ties

Bilateral trade rise 35% as both countries expand political consultations, investment, people-to-people exchanges

By Mai Anati

AMMAN — The Royal Thai embassy in Amman on Tuesday hosted a media luncheon marking the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Jordan and Thailand, with Thai Ambassador Jiraporn Jirampaikool highlighting growing cooperation and plans to strengthen trade, investment and people-to-people ties.

Speaking at the gathering, the ambassador said that relations between the two kingdoms had grown steadily over six decades, with both sides working to expand political, economic and cultural cooperation.

Jordan and Thailand established diplomatic relations on November 10, 1966.

"Throughout 60 years of friendship, Thailand-Jordan relations have grown from strength to strength," she said, adding that the two countries had built a strong partnership through sustained cooperation and mutual understanding.

On the economic front, Jirampaikool said that bilateral trade reached $239.39 million between January and August 2026, compared with $177.07 million during the same period last year, marking an increase of around 35 per cent.

She highlighted the establishment of a Business Information Centre in Amman, expected to officially open by the end of November, as a step towards facilitating business links and encouraging investment between the two countries.

'People-to-people and cultural relations are equally important'

The ambassador also pointed to the first Thailand-Jordan political consultations meeting, held in Jordan on September 6, following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two foreign ministries to establish a formal consultations mechanism.

Cooperation has also expanded through exchanges of expertise, including visits by Jordanian delegations from the ministries of agriculture and tourism to Thailand, alongside training opportunities for Jordanian officials in health, agriculture and environmental fields.

On tourism and educational exchanges, Jirampaikool said that around 24,000 Jordanians visited Thailand last year, while Jordan remained an important educational destination for Thai Muslim students.

She also highlighted cultural initiatives organised by the embassy, including the annual Thai Festival at Souk Jara, cooking classes and community activities aimed at bringing the two peoples closer.

"People-to-people and cultural relations are equally important," she said, stressing that stronger ties should extend beyond government institutions to include communities and cultural exchanges.

Jirampaikool reaffirmed Thailand's commitment to further strengthening its partnership with Jordan, saying that the 60th anniversary provided an opportunity to build on past achievements and expand cooperation in the years ahead.

Under patronage of Princess Sumaya, PSUT, CBJ conclude 7th META CTF National Cybersecurity Competition



PSUT photo

Minister of Education and Human Resource Development Azmi Mahafzah on Tuesday attends the closing ceremony of the seventh edition of the META CTF 2026 National Cybersecurity Competition

AMMAN (JT) — Deputising for HRH Princess Sumaya, chair of the board of trustees of Princess Sumaya University for Technology (PSUT), Minister of Education and Human Resource Development Azmi Mahafzah on Tuesday inaugurated the closing ceremony of the seventh edition of the META CTF 2026 National Cybersecurity Competition.

Organised by PSUT in collaboration with the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ), the competition was held on the university's campus, bringing together 29 teams representing 11 Jordanian universities, according to a PSUT statement.

The competition featured a series of technical challenges developed by members of PSUT's Cybersecurity Club, covering several specialised areas, including cryptography, digital forensics, web security, reverse engineering and open-source intelligence, besides other advanced topics in cybersecurity.

Chairman of the Social Security Investment Fund Ezzeddin Kanakrieh, CBJ Deputy Governor Khaldoun Washah, and President of PSUT Wejdan Abu Elhaija attended the closing ceremony.

It also brought together presidents of Jordanian universities, officials and representatives of public institutions, as well as students and their supervisors from across the Kingdom.

In a speech delivered on her behalf by Mahafzah, Princess Sumaya said: "Today, we gather to celebrate the conclusion of the META CTF 2026 Cybersecurity Competition, which, since its launch in 2019, has evolved into a distinguished national platform that brings together young talents from universities across Jordan, providing them with opportunities to learn, compete and innovate."

"It also reinforces our confidence in the scientific capabilities and creative potential of our nation and its ability to achieve meaningful accomplishments," Princess Sumaya added.

Her Royal Highness emphasised that this year's competition carried particular significance through its partnership with CBJ, one of the Kingdom's established national institutions, which plays a pivotal role in safeguarding monetary and financial stability, strengthening the resilience of the banking sector and reinforcing confidence in the national economy.

She noted that the partnership reflects a shared conviction that knowledge is the foundation of progress, and that investing in Jordanian people and equipping them with the tools of science and technology is the most effective path towards building a strong, secure and competitive economy.

Her Royal Highness stressed that cybersecurity has become a national priority, affecting every citizen's life, every investor's confidence and every institution's ability to fulfil its mission and ensure the continuity of its services.

The princess added that financial transactions are now completed in moments, while banking services are readily accessible through our mobile phones. Against this backdrop, protecting financial assets, data and systems has become fundamental to economic stability.

She highlighted CBJ's important role in strengthening cybersecurity, safeguarding financial systems and balancing technological innovation with the need to maintain stability.

She further pointed out that the challenge today lies not simply in achieving digital transformation, but in building the digital trust on which that transformation depends. Cybersecurity has consequently become a fundamental pillar of national security, digital sovereignty and economic stability in an era of accelerating technological change.

Her Royal Highness underscored that building an advanced national cybersecurity ecosystem requires genuine integration among higher education institutions, the public and private sectors, and financial and technology institutions. Such collaboration is essential to transforming knowledge into practical capabilities and scientific research into solutions that can be applied in the real world.

Princess Sumaya added that Jordan possesses the expertise and talent needed to become an advanced regional hub for cybersecurity services.

She expressed confidence in the ability of Jordanian youth to turn these capabilities into tangible achievements through knowledge, determination and perseverance.

These efforts, she noted, are aligned with the national modernisation process and the Economic Modernisation Vision led by His Majesty King Abdullah, as well as the special attention HRH Crown Prince Hussein devotes to empowering young people in innovation, entrepreneurship and technology.

Her Royal Highness noted that, since its establishment, PSUT has embraced a vision centred on nurturing talent, encouraging critical thinking, and connecting education and scientific research with the needs and aspirations of the nation.

She emphasised the responsibility of universities and national institutions to prepare generations capable of creating knowledge and driving innovation, rather than merely using technology.

"The META CTF competition represents this approach and is consistent with the university's commitment to providing a stimulating academic environment for creativity and innovation, fostering a culture of excellence and intellectual competition, and enabling students to apply their academic knowledge to real-world cybersecurity challenges," she said.

"It also develops their critical thinking, analytical and teamwork skills, preparing them to become effective national professionals in protecting the digital space and keeping pace with rapid technological developments."

Her Royal Highness concluded her remarks by delivering three key messages to students, "Never stop learning. Academic qualifications require continuous learning, adapting to change and seeking new solutions. Let ethics and responsibility be your compass, and think like future makers rather than merely users of technology."

First place was awarded to Team hypnos from PSUT, comprising Abdallah Dahouk, Ali Sasa, Mustafa Kilani and Hamam Mansi.

Second place went to Team P.R.I.U.S, also from PSUT, comprising Ismael Hindi, Yacoub Yousef, Hamza Alawneh and Omar Shemali.

Third place was secured by Team Gh0st-Bytes from Applied Science Private University, comprising Omar Mohammed, Mohammed Qudah, Omar Hijah and Hamza Hababseh.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Mahafzah, accompanied by Abu Elhaija and Washah, honoured the winning teams on behalf of Princess Sumaya. The supporting companies, OffSec and The Rezon, were also recognised, alongside the organising team, in appreciation of their contributions to the success of the competition.

CRISIS

Rain worsens Gaza conditions as Jordan provides shelter to displaced families

By Osama Alkafri

AMMAN — Heavy rains have worsened the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, flooding displacement sites, damaging makeshift shelters and raising concerns over the safety of thousands of displaced Palestinians as winter approaches, according to a United Nations report issued on Sunday.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that rainfall from the evening of Thursday through the weekend caused widespread flooding across the territory, damaging shelters, humanitarian facilities and learning spaces, while disrupting essential services.

The report said that an infant reportedly drowned, while several people were reportedly killed after a sand dune collapsed on their tents, highlighting the dangers facing displaced families living in fragile shelters and exposed areas

By Sunday, humanitarian partners had received appeals from more than 26,000 households whose shelters or other belongings had been damaged, with the overall impact believed to be greater, according to OCHA.



JHCO photo

OCHA stresses the urgent need for humanitarian funding and Israeli approvals to allow sufficient supplies and equipment into Gaza

Humanitarian organisations had assessed the needs of 1,877 households and provided assistance to 422 households at 29 displacement sites, including non-food items.

Humanitarian stocks of tents, tarpaulins, blankets and clothing inside Gaza were virtually exhausted, OCHA warned, despite more than 150,000 tents purchased by humanitarian partners and member states being ready for dispatch outside the territory.

OCHA stressed the urgent need for humanitarian funding and Israeli approvals to allow sufficient supplies and equipment into Gaza, including vacuum trucks, mobile dewatering pumps, engine oil, hoses and heavy machinery to address flooding and support affected communities.

Meanwhile, Jordan stepped up its relief efforts on Monday, with the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation (JHCO) distributing tents to displaced Palestinian families whose shelters were damaged by the recent weather conditions.

In a post on their social media accounts, JHCO said that the distribution was carried out in cooperation with the Jordanian Islamic Solidarity Zakat Committee under its "For Our People in Gaza" campaign, aiming to provide safer shelter and ease the suffering of affected families amid difficult humanitarian conditions.

Also on Sunday, the Arab Parliament issued an urgent humanitarian appeal to the international community, the United Nations and humanitarian organisations, calling for immediate action to protect displaced Palestinians, particularly children, women and older people, from the dangers of cold weather and flooding.

In a statement published on X, the parliament warned that hundreds of thousands of displaced people continue to face harsh living conditions, with damaged tents and a lack of even the most basic requirements for safe shelter and humanitarian protection.



Petra photo

HRH Princess Ghida Talal, chairperson of the board of trustees of the King Hussein Cancer Foundation and Centre, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society Ambassador Khaled Almaqamis on Tuesday discuss ways to enhance cooperation

Princess Ghida receives Kuwait Red Crescent Society delegation to discuss cooperation

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Princess Ghida Talal, chairperson of the board of trustees of the King Hussein Cancer Foundation (KHCF) and Centre (KHCC), on Tuesday received a delegation from the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), headed by Chairman of the Board of Directors Ambassador Khaled Almaqamis.

The visit aimed to check on the comprehensive medical services provided to cancer patients and discuss ways to strengthen cooperation, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Princess Ghida commended the important partnership with the KRCS, expressing appreciation for its continuous humanitarian support that has contributed to saving the lives of cancer patients over the years.

Almaqamis praised the leading humanitarian and medical role of KHCF and KHCC in offering specialised care, highlighting the centre's prestigious status in the region.

He said that the extended partnership reflects the "deep-rooted" relations between Kuwait and Jordan, alongside their shared commitment to alleviating the suffering of underprivileged patients, particularly Palestinians and Syrians.

He added that KRCS aims to expand cooperation to provide treatment to a larger number of patients, noting that supporting cancer treatment represents a vital humanitarian investment in saving lives.

The visit comes within the framework of a strategic partnership established between KRCS and KHCC in 2016, which has funded treatment costs for over 106 Syrian refugee patients and 69 patients from the Gaza Strip.

The Kuwaiti delegation included Adviser to the Chairman Mohammad Mutairi and Director of Financial Affairs Abdulrahman Saleh.

AID



JAF photo

The Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) on Monday evacuates the 37th batch of sick children from the Gaza Strip

Jordan evacuates 37th batch of Gaza sick children

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) on Monday evacuated the 37th batch of sick children from the Gaza Strip under the Jordanian Medical Corridor initiative, launched under Royal directives.

The latest batch comprised 28 sick children accompanied by 27 family members, according to a JAF statement.

The children were transferred to Jordan to receive treatment at hospitals across the Kingdom as part of the ongoing Jordanian humanitarian and medical efforts to support Palestinians in Gaza.

The evacuation operations, which began in March 2025, were carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation, in accordance with approved medical procedures and standards to ensure the children receive the necessary care.

Jordan also operates two military field hospitals in the Gaza Strip. The first was established in northern Gaza in 2009 following the 2008 war, while the second was set up in Khan Younis in November 2023 following the outbreak of the Israeli war on Gaza.

Other Jordanian humanitarian initiatives include a mobile bakery and the Restoring Hope programme, which provides prosthetic limbs for amputees.

The Jordanian Medical Corridor and other initiatives reflect the Kingdom's continued humanitarian and medical support for Palestinians, under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah, and its efforts to alleviate the suffering of patients and injured people in Gaza.

Princess Basma attends 75th anniversary of Patriarchate Scouts, Guides Group



Petra photo

HRH Princess Basma Bint Talal on Tuesday attends the diamond jubilee celebration of the Patriarchate Scouts and Guides Group

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Princess Basma Bint Talal, president of the Jordanian Association for Scouts and Guides, on Tuesday attended the diamond jubilee celebration of the Patriarchate Scouts and Guides Group at Christ the King Church in Masdar.

The group marked its 75th anniversary under the slogan "75 Years of Giving, 75 Years of Belonging".

Princess Basma said that Jordan's nation-building journey had been shaped by the sacrifices of its Muslim and Christian citizens, who have stood together through good times and hardships, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

She noted that Christ the King Church, built in the 1920s, had been part of Amman's history and collective memory, reflecting the Christian community's deep-rooted presence as an integral part of the Kingdom's national fabric and history.

Speaking in the presence of Jordanian Association for Scouts and Guides Secretary General Mazen Hmoud and Latin Patriarchal Vicar General in Jordan Bishop Iyad Twal, Princess Basma said the group had, since its establishment, served as a school of leadership, service and belonging.

She added that it had helped shape generations of young men and women, building their self-confidence, strengthening their role in society and encouraging them to contribute to their country.

Princess Basma said Jordan was a home that brought its people together through the values of citizenship, respect for others and joint action. She also highlighted the scouting movement's role in promoting belonging, citizenship and volunteerism, and its commitment to these values under all circumstances.

She urged members of the Jordanian scouting movement to preserve its values, legacy and mission to ensure that its spirit of giving continues from one generation to the next.

Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa highlighted the scouting movement's longstanding role in promoting brotherhood, love and mutual respect, and instilling the values of hard work and good citizenship.

He stressed the importance of strengthening loyalty and belonging to Jordan, noting that the scouting movement remained a national platform bringing Jordanians together around their country, leadership and institutions.

Group leader Bashar Muasher said the group, established under the church's care, was Jordan's first and oldest Christian scout group and continues to maintain a local, regional and international presence.

Muasher described scouting as a school of life that promotes discipline, service and good citizenship, expressing the group's commitment to expanding youth volunteerism in line with HRH Crown Prince Hussein's vision of empowering young people to serve their country and community.

During the ceremony, Princess Basma toured an exhibition documenting the group's 75-year history and honoured a number of its supporters and pioneers.

Education Ministry, Syrian counterpart sign two education cooperation programmes



Al Mamlaka TV photo

Minister of Education and Human Resource Development Azmi Mahafzah on Tuesday sign cooperation agreement with Syrian Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Marwan Al Halabi in education, university scholarships and scientific research

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development has agreed on two executive programmes with its Syrian counterpart covering cooperation in education, university scholarships and scientific research.

Minister of Education and Human Resource Development Azmi Mahafzah, accompanied by Secretary General for Education Sahar Shakhatreh, took part in the meetings of the third session of the Syrian-Jordanian Higher Coordination Council, held in Damascus on November 8-9.

Mahafzah discussed areas of cooperation with Syrian Education Minister Mohammad Abdulrahman Tarkou and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Marwan Al Halabi, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

Under the 2027–2029 higher education and scientific research executive programme, Jordan will offer 20 undergraduate study places, five postgraduate study places and five postgraduate scholarships annually.

In return, Syria will offer 16 undergraduate study places, five postgraduate study places, four undergraduate scholarships in human medicine and five postgraduate scholarships each year.

The programme provides for stronger ties between public universities, university twinning agreements, exchanges of faculty members and research delegations, and joint scientific research.

It also encourages the submission of joint research proposals to international funding bodies and cooperation between the two countries' Arabic language academies to standardise scientific terminology.

The second executive programme, covering general education, focuses on developing competency-based curricula, aligning vocational and technical education with labour market needs, integrating digital technology and artificial intelligence into teaching and expanding digital educational platforms.

It also covers cooperation in teacher professional development, school mapping, inclusive education, early childhood learning and student assessment mechanisms.

The two sides will exchange expertise in international assessments, including the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

The programme also addresses electronic examinations, flexible learning models, recognition of academic qualifications, and joint student cultural and sports activities.



Al Mamlaka TV photo

Lower House Speaker Ibrahim Tarawneh on Tuesday meets with Jordan Press Association (JPA) President Tareq Momani

Lower House speaker, JPA president discuss efforts to counter extremist ideology

AMMAN (JT) — Lower House Speaker Ibrahim Tarawneh on Tuesday stressed the media's key role in combating extremist ideology and raising public awareness of its dangers.

Tarawneh made the remarks during a meeting with Jordan Press Association (JPA) President Tareq Momani and members of the association's council, attended by First Deputy Speaker Ayatollah Freihat and MPs Hussein Omoush and Hala Jarrah, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Tarawneh commended the JPA's professional and national efforts to serve the journalism profession and defend the interests of its members.

He said that the current phase requires unified national discourse to strengthen national cohesion and protect younger generations from extremist ideology.

The Lower House recognises the media's mission and its pivotal role in addressing national issues, Tarawneh said, affirming that the House remains open to the JPA's views and proposals and will draw on its expertise when considering media-related legislation to safeguard press freedoms and promote responsible journalism.

He added that the House's National Guidance and Media Committee, once formed, would maintain regular communication with the JPA to strengthen institutional cooperation and address challenges facing the press sector.

For his part, Momani congratulated Tarawneh and members of the Lower House Permanent Bureau on winning the confidence of their fellow MPs, expressing appreciation for the House's role in serving national causes and highlighting the importance of strengthening cooperation between Parliament and the press.

Momani reaffirmed the JPA's commitment to regulating journalistic work, protecting the profession, safeguarding the rights of journalists and media outlets, and upholding professional ethics and standards.

He stressed the importance of working with the Lower House on relevant legislation to advance the media sector and preserve the profession's national standing.

Army chief, German, Australian military delegations discuss cooperation

AMMAN (JT) — Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Maj. Gen. Majdi Harasis on Tuesday held separate meetings with military delegations from Germany and Australia and to discuss military cooperation, joint training and the exchange of expertise.

During a meeting with German Deputy Chief of Defence Gen. Nicole Schilling and her accompanying delegation, Harasis discussed ways to expand joint training and the latest regional and international developments, according to a Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) statement.

He also met with an Australian delegation led by Gen. Colin Bassett, with discussions focusing on military coordination and ways to strengthen ties between the two armies.

Harasis stressed the importance of expanding military cooperation to support regional security and stability.

Both delegations praised the advanced level of the JAF and Jordan's role, under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah, Supreme Commander of the Jordan Armed Forces, in promoting regional security and stability and providing humanitarian assistance.

The meetings were attended by senior JAF officers.



JAF photo

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Maj. Gen. Majdi Harasis on Tuesday meets with German Deputy Chief of Defence Gen. Nicole Schilling and her accompanying delegation

CRIME

Cassation Court upholds 1-year sentence for drug dealer

By Rana Husseini

AMMAN — The Court of Cassation has upheld an April 2023 State Security Court (SSC) ruling sentencing a man to one year in prison after convicting him of possessing illegal narcotics in Amman in December 2022.

The court declared the defendant guilty of possessing illegal narcotics while on the street in the Wadi Rimam area on Dec. 20.

The SSC handed the defendant a punishment of one year in prison and ordered him to pay JD1,000 in fines.

Court documents said the Anti-Narcotics Department (AND) learnt the defendant was in possession of illegal narcotics and placed him under surveillance.

"The AND agents arrested the defendant and found six Captagon pills for personal use," court documents said.

Upon searching his vehicle, the court maintained that law-enforcement officers found "60 additional Captagon pills and a small stash of hashish for his personal use", according to court papers.

The defendant contested the SSC's ruling through his lawyer, who argued that "the punishment was harsh since my client possessed a small amount of illicit drugs".

Meanwhile, the SSC prosecution office asked the higher court to uphold the sentence and the fine imposed on the defendant.

The higher court maintained that the SSC had followed the proper procedures in issuing the sentences against the defendant.

"It was clear to the court that the defendant confessed willingly to possessing the illegal drugs for personal use," the higher court said.

Therefore, the higher court maintained that the defendant deserves the punishment he received.

The Cassation Court bench comprised judges Mohammad Ibrahim, Majid Azab, Hammad Ghzawi, Qassem Dughmi and Mohammad Khashashneh.

Trump 'Board of Peace' says Israel too slow as floods ravage Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — President Donald Trump's "Board of Peace" has said that Israel needed to act immediately to help war-battered Gaza cope with impending winter, saying measures ahead of deadly floods had been insufficient.

"The situation no longer represents simply a threat posed by the approaching winter, but an immediate humanitarian emergency," the Board of Peace said in a statement.

Heavy rain over the past two days has swept away tens of thousands of tents in the territory, where virtually the entire population has been displaced at least once and killed at least five people, according to Hamas-led authorities in Gaza.

> 'The situation no longer represents simply a threat posed by the approaching winter...'

The Board of Peace, tasked with implementation of an October 2025 US-brokered ceasefire announced between Israel and Hamas, said it had been warning Israel, which controls all entry into the territory, of the need to prepare both for the winter and seasonal flooding.

Moments before the statement came out, the Israeli military said it had allowed more than 8,200 trucks to enter the Gaza Strip with supplies including 91,000 tents.

The Board of Peace acknowledged steps being taken by Israel but said that they remain "insufficient".

"We call on the leadership of the current Government of Israel to act immediately to authorise and facilitate the entry of all necessary winterisation and humanitarian supplies," it said.

Israel has taken a biting tone against Hamas over the floods, saying the militant group should have invested in infrastructure instead of weaponry.

The Board of Peace also called on Hamas to abide by commitments under the ceasefire.

Despite the truce, Israel has kept up nearly daily strikes in Gaza.

Prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is fighting for his political survival following tight elections last month, has vowed to kill anyone involved in Hamas's October 7, 2023 suprise attack, the deadliest day ever for Israel.



AFP photo

A displaced Palestinian man attempts to clear a water puddle outside his flooded tent amid heavy rainfall in Gaza City's Al Remal neighbourhood on Saturday

HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN
Water Authority of Jordan
National Conveyance Project (NCP) Readiness
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
for
Provision of Engineering Consultancy Services for the Design of the Water Primary Systems for Amman Governorate
Tender NO. (6/SW/2026)

INVITATION FOR BIDS

In preparation for the integration of NCP water into the national water supply system, WAJ, supported by the United States Government (USG), has launched the National Conveyance Project Readiness Program. The Readiness Program aims to ensure that the bulk transmission, storage, and distribution infrastructure is adequately planned, designed, and sequenced to receive and distribute the additional water volumes delivered by the NCP. This includes upgrading and expanding reservoirs, transmission pipelines, and water distribution networks across the Kingdom.

These bulks are directly related to receiving and distributing water quantities from the NCP and involve the construction of new pipelines, pump station upgrades, ensuring a resilient bulk supply system across the Amman governorates as summarized but not limited to below:

- Upgrade Pipeline DN 400 from Dabouq to Bader upper, Bader lower and Rabahiyye
- Upgrade pipeline DN300 to Bader Upper.
- Upgrade Pipeline DN 700 to Marj El Hamam West Reservoir.
- Upgrade Pipeline DN 400 to Nasour Upper Reservoir.
- Upgrade Pipeline DN 1000 to Kharabsheh.
- Upgrade Pipeline DN600 to Khirbet reservoir.
- Upgrade Pipeline DN 400 to Bader Wadi Agas.
- New outlet DN 700 Pipeline from Dabouq to Badr upper, Bader lower, Al Rabahiyeh and Dabouq DZ.
- Pipeline DN 400 to Dabouq DZ FROM the new outlet.
- Pipeline DN 400 to Bader Upper, Bader Lower and Rabahiyye from the new outlet.
- New Pipeline DN 500 to Um Uthinah new
- Marj Al Hamam West Tank & PS (DZ 39)
- Um Uthaina (DZ 48) Tank & PS 1
- Dabouq Tank & PS (DZ-12)

Optional measures

- New 600 mm pipeline from Dlal to Yadoudeh, Falsiyyeh and Nasur New.
- Pipeline DN 400 from Dlal to Zara New.
- New 600 mm pipeline to Falsiyyeh.
- Upgrade the Pipeline DN 800 from Dlal to Sahab reservoir.
- Upgrade Pipeline DN600 to Sahab washing.
- New Pipeline DN800 from Dlal to Hizam
- Upgrade Pipeline DN 900 to Qwaismah reservoir.
- Pump from Abu Alanda (Dlal) to Qwaismah
- Pump from Abu Alanda (Dlal) to Abu Alanda zone.
- New Falsiyyeh Tank & PS
- Zara Tank
- New pipes DN 500 from Swaqa reservoir to Qastal reservoir
- New Pipes DN 500 from Qastal to Muraqish reservoir
- Pipeline DN 400 to New Rama
- Pipeline DN 400 to Um El Amad
- Pipeline DN 600 to New Jizeh reservoir
- Pipeline DN 150 from the 800 mm to Dameh zone Pump Station to pump the flows to new Jizeh reservoir
- Booster station in Rama reservoir
- Rama Tank
- Um Al-Amad Tank
- Qastal Tank & PS
- Jizeh water tank

Therefore, the Water Authority of Jordan now invites sealed Bids from Bidders for the as specified under request for proposal. The bidding procedure adopted for this tender is International Competitive Bidding (ICB), single stage, two-envelope procedure consisting of a separate Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal. This shall not exclude international bidders with equivalent qualifications from participating.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from:
The Water Authority of Jordan
WAJ Tender Department / Sixth Floor Shmeisani P.O. Box 5012
Amman 11181 Jordan
Eng. Rua Alsoub, Email: Rua_Alsoub@mwi.gov.jo
Eng. Eman Shalan, Email: Eman_shalan@mwi.gov.jo

A complete set of bidding documents is available for interested Bidders. Documents in English may be purchased and collected upon payment of a non refundable fee of 250 JD from 11/11/2026 to 18/11/2026 at (9:00 - 14:00). The method of payment shall be cash.

A pre-bid clarification meeting shall be held on 26/11/2026 at 10 AM in the fifth floor/WAJ. After that, any questions regarding the Bidding documents shall be sent to the Water Authority of Jordan, at the above address. All questions must be submitted in writing, fax or e-mail. No questions will be answered to if submitted through other means. All questions will be answered via addenda and will be sent to all Tenderers. All questions must be submitted and received no later than 9/12/2026.

The Consultant shall submit the Proposal as follows:
(a) The Bid security, in original form, shall be placed in a separate envelope clearly marked "Bid Security".
(b)Technical Proposal: Technical Proposal: one (1) original, one (1) hard copy, one (1) digital copy / flashdisk, marked accordingly;
The original and copy shall be placed in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Technical Proposal".
(c)Financial Proposal: one (1) original, one (1) hard copy, one (1) digital copy (unalterable and printable PDF file on flashdisk, marked accordingly).

If any information related to the Financial Proposal is included in the Technical Proposal (whether in the hard copy or the electronic copy), the bid shall be rejected.
The proposals must be submitted no later than Wednesday, 23/12/2026, 12:00 PM (Jordanian time) to the below address.
The hard copy and digital version must be exactly the same. If there is any difference, the hard copy will be prevail.
Bids will be publicly opened at 13:00 hours Jordan local time in the same day.
The First Public Opening Session shall be limited to the opening of Envelope No. 1 –Technical Bid Envelopes and Financial Bid Envelopes shall remain sealed until the subsequent public opening sessions in accordance with the ITB.
Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Bidders may attend the opening session. Late bids will be rejected and returned unopened.

Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ)
P.O. Box 2412, Amman 11183
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Tender Box First Floor
Attention: Eng. Rua Al-Soub

The bidding shall be carried out in accordance with the WAJ Procurement Guidelines.

The bidders shall provide as part of their bids, an unconditional bid security in the name of His Excellency the WAJ Secretary General in the amount of JOD 10,000. The bid security must comply with the requirements stated in the Bid Documents and shall be on the letterhead of the issuing bank signed by a person competent to bind the bank. Any bid that is not accompanied by an enforceable and compliant bid security will be rejected as not responsive. The Bid Security shall be valid for twenty-eight (28) days beyond the original validity period of the bid (180 + 28) days and must correspond in terms of its text, duration and value to the former in the RFP or shall lead to exclusion.

A missing signed and stamped Declaration of Undertaking shall lead to exclusion.

Eligible Bidders:
Local Jordanian consultant shall be classified as First Grade in Water and Wastewater networks as per GTC Classification.
International Contractors shall at least demonstrate equivalent qualifications by experience for the scope described above.
All goods and items financed under USG shall have their source, and the suppliers of all goods and services financed shall have their nationality, in countries included in Geographic Code 937. Goods and services financed by USG must be available for purchase in the applicable Geographic Code at the time of purchase. Geographic Code 937 includes: the Grantee Country, the United States or a developing country. The intent of these specifications is to allow fair competition for suppliers in these geographical locations.

Or consortium (Joint Venture) (The JV agreement must be Stamped by notary in the GCC as pre condition for awarding) of an international and/or Local Contractor with experiences in equivalent projects. Local Jordanian Contractors shall be classified as First Grade in Water and Wastewater networks as per GTC Classification. International Contractors shall demonstrate at least equivalent qualifications by experience for the scope described above.

If the Bidder or its parent company, or in the case of a JV, any member of the JV or its parent company, is a stock exchange-traded company, insert the following for each company: "The stock of [Name of Firm] is traded on the stock exchange in the name of the stock exchange." If neither the Bidder nor, in the case of a JV, any of its members, is a stock exchange-traded company, insert the following: "We are not a stock exchange-traded company".

The awarded Bidder shall bear the costs of the advertisement in the gazette for one time.

Secretary General of MWI
Dr. Jihad S. Al Mahamid

Drones behind two thirds of child casualties in Sudan — UN

GENEVA, Switzerland (AFP) — Two thirds of all children killed or injured in war-ravaged Sudan this year have been victims of drone strikes, the United Nations said on Tuesday.

A total of 410 children were killed or injured in the country between January and September this year, the UN children's agency UNICEF said.

And two-thirds of those casualties, an estimated 270, were caused by armed drones, UNICEF spokesman James Elder told reporters in Geneva.

"They are bringing the war to places that were once safe," he said, adding that people in Sudan "talk about three things: Safety, education and water. Armed drones are taking all three".

The war raging since April 2023 between the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces and the regular army has killed more than 200,000 people, aid workers estimate, and has triggered the world's largest hunger and displacement crises.

As front lines have solidified, both sides have increasingly relied on drones capable of striking targets hundreds of kilometres away without risking their fighters.

More than 1,100 people were killed in drone attacks across Sudan during the first half of the year, according to the United Nations.

Elder said an escalation in drones targeting civilian infrastructure is also deepening the devastation wrought by the drought gripping Sudan.

"Drones and drought are closing in on Sudan's children from both sides," he warned.

In October alone, as many as 15 drone strikes hit power stations across the country, Elder said.

When a power station is struck, "water pumps stop and water treatment stops. Families are forced onto expensive and unsafe alternatives", Elder said, putting people at risk of water-borne diseases like cholera.

An estimated 825,000 children under five are expected to suffer from the deadliest form of malnutrition this year, he warned.

UNICEF and its partners have provided healthcare and vaccinations to millions of children in Sudan, and repaired and solarised water systems, Elder said.

New Israeli parliament to take aim at Netanyahu as Eisenkot seeks government

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel's new parliament convened on Tuesday with plans to take aim immediately at caretaker prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as his rival Gadi Eisenkot vowed to quickly cobble together a new government.

Eisenkot, leading a broad left-to-right bloc, will control the agenda from the outset in the new parliament with the help of Israeli-Arab parties, although neither he nor the right-wing Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving prime minister, hold a majority on their own.

"I am committed in this complex situation to form a national-emergency government as quickly as possible," Eisenkot, a 66-year-old former military chief who only recently entered politics, said before his swearing-in.

President Isaac Herzog, ceremonially opening the session, called on all sides to work together and avoid a fresh election in a deeply polarised country weary from three years of war.

"Nearly 80 per cent of the people went to the polls and elected you. You must do everything to avoid a repeat election," Herzog said.

"Reach out a hand for compromise, even between rivals."

Eisenkot's allies hope to use their newfound legislative power to move rapidly on key priorities, including a commission to investigate security failures under Netanyahu that allowed the Hamas suprise attack on October 7, 2023.

Herzog on Sunday gave Eisenkot the initial mandate to form a government, starting the clock for him to piece together a coalition within 28 days, with a possible 14-day extension.

Hours before the opening of the parliament, known as the Knesset, Eisenkot's party announced agreements on key people to replace allies of Netanyahu, who has been in and out of office for nearly 20 years.

Eisenkot's bloc announced it had the votes to install as parliament speaker Matan Kahana, a former senior military figure who clashed with ultra-Orthodox Jews during a past stint in government.

Avigdor Liberman, a right-wing member of Eisenkot's bloc who has played a key role in deciding who can enter the government, will be nominated as chair of the foreign affairs and defence committee.

Arab-Israeli lawmakers said they would support Kahana, all but guaranteeing he will take the helm in the parliament.

Parties representing the Arab minority — descendants of Palestinians who stayed after Israel's creation in 1948 — won a record number of seats in the October 27 election on the back of anger at Netanyahu's hard-right government.

But Eisenkot needs 61 votes — a majority — to become prime minister. Liberman has made clear that he will refuse to join a government that relies on Arab-Israelis, even if they stay out of the coalition and prop it up from the outside.

"A minority government would only lead to the return of Netanyahu with 70 members of the Knesset," Liberman told reporters.



AFP photo

Palestinian men check olive trees reportedly uprooted by Israeli soldiers using a bulldozer in the West Bank village of Al Mughayyir, north of Ramallah, on August 24, 2025

Arab-Israeli lawmakers under fire

Netanyahu has accused Arab-Israeli parties of supporting Hamas and accepting foreign funding, allegations the lawmakers deny and call smear tactics.

Liberman, a former aide to Netanyahu turned critic who shares hawkish views, said he would use his new position to investigate allegations of foreign funding to the parties.

Entering parliament, Mansour Abbas, leader of the Israeli-Arab party Raam, rejected Netanyahu's accusations of fraud by Israeli-Arab parties and pointed out that Netanyahu faces corruption charges that could land him in jail if he loses power.

"We will keep up the process of replacing the government," Abbas told reporters. "We aspire to be part of the solution."

Abbas confirmed he supports a two-state solution with the Palestinians, a stance shared by neither Netanyahu nor Eisenkot, who has sought to appeal to the centre.

Shunning Arab-Israelis, Liberman has instead proposed an alliance with ultra-Orthodox Jews, despite his years of bitter denunciations of the community for its singular priority on maintaining an exemption from mandatory military service.

Eisenkot's core bloc has 48 seats, but would achieve a majority if the 19 Arab-Israeli lawmakers either enter the government or, more likely, vote for it without joining.

The two ultra-Orthodox parties hold 13 seats. United Torah Judaism, which has seven, has stopped short of recommitting to Netanyahu, leaving him with 46 seats.

An alliance with either the ultra-Orthodox or Arab-Israelis would likely be fragile, with a small number of lawmakers able to bring Eisenkot down over their particular concerns.

Egypt's military has been in Saudi for months, says FM

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt has had a military presence in Saudi Arabia for months, Cairo's top diplomat has said, two weeks after its parliament authorised helping defend the kingdom from Houthi attacks.

Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty said Egypt was now "strengthening" the deployment, which had not previously been announced.

"We have already military presence there upon request from our brothers and sisters in Saudi Arabia," Abdelatty said in an interview with France24 aired on Monday, adding: "We are strengthening that."

Last month, Egypt's parliament approved President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi's request to send military support to Saudi Arabia, which is under regular attack from Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis.

"Our presence there [began] a few months ago after the attacks and aggressions on Saudi Arabia during the escalation with Iran," Abdelatty said, without giving further details.

He said Egypt's coming deployment was for "defensive objectives", including "air defence capabilities to defend the different sensitive sites in Saudi Arabia, including of course the holy sites and others".

Mecca and Medina, Islam's holiest cities, are in western Saudi Arabia. Saudi authorities have accused the Houthis of attacks in the area.

Abdelatty, who was speaking in Paris during a visit for the G7 foreign ministers' meeting, also downplayed a comment from a member of the Houthi politburo who, after Egypt's parliamentary approval, said the move was a declaration of war.

"If you recall, another senior Houthi official said [that they] appreciate and welcome any role from Egypt to mediate and de-escalate. This is what we are trying to do, because there is no military solution."

Facing near-daily attacks by Yemen's Houthis, Saudi Arabia has received military support from allies including the United Kingdom, which has pledged fighter jets and France, which has said it would help defend oil infrastructure.



AFP photo

This aerial view shows flooded streets after heavy rains affected the city of Trujillo in northern Peru on March 29, 2025

El Nino Watch: The impacts around the world this week

BANGKOK (AFP) — An exceptionally strong El Nino is driving weather disruptions around the globe, stoking food security fears and increasing the chances that 2026 will be the second-hottest year on record, experts say.

Here is how the climate phenomenon has been playing out around the world in the last week.

Heat record

The world is on track for 2026 to be the second-hottest year on record, with the El Nino weather pattern turbocharging human-driven global warming, the European Union's climate monitor said on Friday.

"October has continued the pattern of remarkable global warmth, with record global and surface ocean temperatures," said Samantha Burgess, strategic lead for climate at the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, which operates the Copernicus monitor.

"An exceptionally strong El Nino is adding further heat to a climate already warmed by human activities," she said.

The warming phase of a natural climate cycle, El Nino temporarily raises sea temperatures in the tropical Pacific, triggering changes in weather that can increase the risk of drought and flooding, and exacerbate man-made global warming.

Experts say it could help make 2027 the hottest year on record.

Emergencies in Peru

Peru declared a state of emergency across much of the country on Tuesday, given the "imminent danger" posed by El Nino-linked flooding, authorities said.

It followed Bolivia's decision to announce a national state of emergency over the weather pattern's effects.

El Nino cycles can bring heavy rain to Latin America, and downpours have already inundated parts of Peru's northern Tumbes and Piura regions.

Authorities said more than nine million people — nearly a third of the country's population — was at high risk of flooding and landslides.

Sri Lanka power surge

In parts of Asia, drought linked to El Nino has raised the prospect of hydropower shortages due to hotter and drier weather.

But for now, Sri Lanka's state-owned electricity company has withdrawn a proposed price increase, citing El Nino-linked heavy rain that has improved hydro reservoir storage.

However, the country is expected to face severe drought conditions in the first half of 2027, which officials said would force authorities to turn to more expensive — and polluting — thermal generation.

Currently, about 70 percent of Sri Lanka's electricity demand is met by renewables — mainly hydro and solar — while the remainder comes from coal and diesel.

Philippines' response fund

The Philippines said this week it has set aside over $980 million for an "El Nino response plan" that will "mitigate the impact of the climate risk on agriculture".

Agriculture accounts for about eight percent of the Philippines' gross domestic product and employs one in four Filipinos, according to government figures.

The agriculture department said production of unmilled rice fell 18 percent in the three months to September on impacts from El Nino and the Iran war, which has spiked fuel and fertiliser prices.

In November, the country expects "below normal to way below normal rainfall", the state weather service said on Wednesday.

El Nino in numbers

Three: the number of times a November disruption to the polar vortex has happened since records began in the 1950s. Scientists said this week they were observing an unprecedented early disruption that raises the risk of cold snaps and is likely linked to El Nino.

20: The percentage change that 2026 equals or exceeds 2024 as the warmest year on record, according to the Copernicus monitor.

33: The number of countries that broke October heat records, according to an AFP analysis of Copernicus data.

Food price increases

El Nino disturbs global weather patterns, bringing heavy rain to some regions and drought to others.

Both can impact harvests and production of crops for animal feed.

Floods can be particularly devastating, destroying stored food and damaging the infrastructure and transportation needed to get products to market.

All these elements can push up prices, and the impacts "can emerge well before harvests are completed", said Maximo Torero, chief economist at the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

"Markets react to expectations of future shortages and uncertainty itself can generate volatility," he told AFP.

This year's El Nino impacts are exacerbated by the price shocks caused by the Iran war, which has raised the cost of fuel and fertiliser for farmers, and impacted household spending globally.

"For vulnerable households, even moderate food price increases can have huge consequences," said Torero.

"Poor families spend a large share of their incomes on food and therefore have limited capacity to absorb price shocks and spikes," he added.

PSUT, Japanese embassy hold lecture on future of robotics, avatar technology



Petra photo

The Princess Sumaya University for Technology on Tuesday hosts an online lecture titled 'Avatars and the Future Society,' delivered by Hiroshi Ishiguro from Osaka University

AMMAN (JT) — The Princess Sumaya University for Technology (PSUT) on Tuesday hosted an online lecture titled "Avatars and the Future Society", delivered by Hiroshi Ishiguro from Osaka University.

The lecture was held under the patronage of HRH Princess Sumaya, Chair of the Board of Trustees of PSUT, in cooperation with the Japanese embassy in Amman, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Ishiguro presented autonomous robots and avatar technologies, including remotely controlled robots and computer graphic characters, explaining how these technologies enable individuals to participate in activities remotely without physical presence.

Ishiguro stressed the importance of building an inclusive society for individuals of diverse backgrounds and values, highlighting the potential of avatar technologies to support caregivers and parents by enabling flexible participation in work and social life.

The professor outlined how avatar technologies remove physical, mental, spatial and temporal constraints, allowing individuals to manage multiple virtual personas across employment, education, medical services and social interactions.

PSUT President Wejdan Abu Elhaija welcomed the collaboration with the Japanese embassy, underscoring the role of international academic partnerships in driving scientific innovation and preparing students for rapid technological advances.

Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Hideki Asari expressed appreciation to the university for organising the lecture, reaffirming the embassy's commitment to enhancing academic ties and encouraging students to explore future technological capabilities.

Ishiguro, who holds a PhD from Osaka University and currently directs the Moonshot Research and Development Program and AVITA Corporation, is known for creating the android Geminoid.

His research focuses on interactive robotics, avatar technology, and android science, earning him numerous accolades, including the Tateisi Award and an honorary doctorate from Aarhus University of Denmark.

Pope leads mega mass in Buenos Aires, meets abuse victims



AFP photo

Pope Leo XIV greets Catholic faithful ahead of celebrating Mass at the Monument to the Spaniards in the Palermo neighborhood of Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Monday

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AFP) — Pope Leo XIV led a mass with two-and-a-half-million people in Argentina on Monday, and later urged protection of society's most vulnerable as he met disabled people and clerical abuse victims.

The Buenos Aires mass drew the largest crowd of Leo's papacy to date, as faithful travelled from far and wide to see the 71-year-old less than a month after he underwent lung cancer surgery.

Cheering and waving crowds packed a kilometers-long stretch of Avenida del Libertador, with excitement reaching fever pitch when giant screens relayed images of the pope's journey through the city.

"It was very moving," said mechanic Hector Solis, who travelled cross-country in a three-car convoy for the mass.

"We were at the vigil last night, from midnight, and were surprised by how many people were already there," he told AFP.

Across the capital, vendors sold T-shirts, caps and flags bearing Leo's image, while his likeness appeared on alfajores pastries and jars of dulce de leche as Argentines marked the first papal visit to the country in decades.

"There is a great deal of emotion here," said 60-year-old Carlos Fuentes, who had come 1,500 kilometres.

There were emotional scenes in the evening as well, when Leo appeared on the balcony of the archbishop's residence to wave to crowds gathered below.

"Thank you, Buenos Aires. Thank you, Argentina. May the Lord's blessing reach the heart of each one of you!" he said, leaving many of the faithful wiping away tears.

'Beloved'

The trip is being seen by many as a homecoming of sorts, in honour of Leo's Argentine predecessor Francis, who never returned to the country after becoming pope.

Leo became emotional as he paid tribute to Francis, calling him "our beloved" P ope.

Many in the crowd were visibly moved too. Teacher Gonzalo Trejo said the Pope was prioritising the Church's social doctrine "which Pope Francis championed".

Leo also privately met five victims of clerical abuse, hearing from each individually about their suffering at the hands of the clergy or within ecclesial institutions in Argentina.

The private audience followed criticism from a network of clergy abuse survivors in Argentina who accuse the Church of failing to deliver on its promises of "zero tolerance" of abusers.

Leo expressed his "commitment to strengthening measures for protection" within the Catholic Church and expressed his closeness to other victims he had not been able to meet, the Vatican said.

'Blessing,' not a burden

The US-born pontiff has dedicated much of his 12-day tour of South America so far to defending the rights of the weak and downtrodden.

Earlier Monday, he visited the Pequeno Cottolengo home for people with disabilities in the Buenos Aires suburb of Claypole, where he said a nation's progress should be judged by the way it treats its most vulnerable citizens.

His comments touched on a sensitive issue in Argentina, where disability organisations and church leaders have slammed the human costs of President Javier Milei's austerity drive.

Resident Marta Torres — who is blind, has cerebral palsy and was abandoned by her mother as a child — told Leo how she had long searched for "a place to live".

At Cottolengo "they helped me stop feeling rejected," she said. "Here, I feel so happy."

Leo said disabled people were "not a burden on society" but "a blessing".

He also praised communities that uphold the dignity and inclusion of people often pushed to society's margins.

"Places like this have much to say to our societies, which are often driven solely by the pursuit of economic success or the cult of outward appearance," he said.

Founded by an Italian saint, the 50-hectare Cottolengo complex is one of Argentina's best-known Catholic charitable institutions, described by the Vatican as a "city of charity".

'Indispensable'

The Pope's packed schedule — which Leo refused to reduce following his surgery — saw him also meet Monday with business leaders, workers and trade unions, which are angered by Milei's labor reforms, which limit the right to strike.

Leo praised the "indispensable" role played by unions "when they defend those who have no voice and resist the commodification of labour".

Jordan's exports to EU rise 11.4% ahead of investment conference

Continued from page 1

The rise in exports and decline in imports helped narrow Jordan's trade deficit with the EU by 10.9 per cent to JD1.531 billion, down from JD1.719 billion a year earlier. The deficit decreased by JD188 million.

Beyond its trade with the EU, Jordan also recorded growth in exports to several other economic blocs.

Exports to countries belonging to the Greater Arab Free Trade Area rose by 8 per cent to JD2.733 billion during the first eight months of the year.

Shipments to non-Arab Asian countries increased by 15.8 per cent to JD1.479 billion, while exports to other economic blocs climbed by 23.6 per cent to JD482 million.

In contrast, Jordan's exports to countries covered by the North American Free Trade Agreement declined by 11.3 per cent to JD1.359 billion.

Jordan extends condolences to Bulgaria over pileup accidents victims

Continued from page 1

Crashes snared around 50 cars and trucks heading in both directions of the highway linking the capital Sofia to the Black Sea city of Burgas, regional governor Georgi Chalakov told the BTA state news agency.

Interior Minister Ivan Demerdzhiev said in a statement that a sudden change in weather conditions was the main reason for the pileup.

Visibility was around 70-80 metres immediately before the incident, but dropped to approximately 10 metres within a short period, according to information available to the ministry.

"We are actively working on equipping the toll system gantries with display screens to warn drivers," he said.

The motorway section should have been closed early Tuesday, Bogdan Milchev, chairman of the Road Safety Institute NGO, told public radio station BNR, blaming the government.

Eleven people died at the scene, while another person died after being admitted to hospital, the health ministry said in a statement.

In total, 51 people were admitted to hospitals in nearby cities, with 13 of them critically injured, it added.

Gov't completes 9% of Economic Modernisation Vision projects by Q3 2026 — report

Continued from page 1

The projects are designed to boost economic growth, stimulate investment, improve service quality and strengthen the competitiveness of the national economy, the report said.

They also seek to accelerate project implementation, complete the necessary legislative, regulatory and procedural requirements, and enhance coordination among government institutions and relevant partners.

The report's publication reflects the government's commitment to advancing the Economic Modernisation Vision through an institutional framework centred on monitoring, performance measurement and impact assessment, while ensuring transparency regarding implementation progress and efforts to strengthen Jordan's regional and international competitiveness, Al Mamlaka said.

THE JORDAN TIMES

An independent Arab political daily, established in 1975

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Editorial and advertising offices
Jordan Press Foundation

The Jordan Times is published daily except Saturdays

Published by the Jordan Press Foundation
Queen Rania Al Abdullah Street
P.O. Box 6710
Amman 11118

E mail: **editor@jordantimes.com**
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National Library registration number:
D/1998/2062
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5600800 ext. **2383**

CBJ: Turning risk into readiness

By Hamza Alakalik

A profound divide separates an institution that waits passively for a storm to break from one that builds its fortresses before danger ever knocks on its door. This distinction is measured not merely by the weight of available resources, but by the clarity of strategic vision, the character of leadership and the depth of institutional culture.

When Elon Musk publicly highlighted the Central Bank of Jordan's (CBJ) adoption of Starlink satellite connectivity on X, it drew international attention to a pioneering regional precedent. Yet, viewed through a higher strategic lens, this deployment must not be misconstrued as an isolated technical novelty or a simple vendor partnership. Rather, it represents a vital milestone along a far grander sovereign journey — a continuous effort to forge an adaptive, enduring financial architecture capable of safeguarding public trust under the most complex global conditions.

Subsea cables can be damaged, communications networks can fail and geopolitical tensions can escalate with little warning. For financial institutions, the essential question is not what to do after disruption strikes, but what must be in place beforehand to keep critical services running? Readiness begins when risks are anticipated, plans are tested and responsibilities become operational capabilities.

The Central Bank's establishment and activation of a satellite connectivity gateway through Starlink reflects this approach. In a digital economy, financial stability rests not only on sound monetary and supervisory policies, but also on the resilience of the infrastructure, systems and people that support the flow of money. An alternative communications route can help protect banking services when terrestrial networks are unavailable.

Behind institutional achievements are leaders who identify risks, set priorities and connect strategy with delivery. At the Central Bank, this includes Governor Dr Adel Al Sharkas, executive and technical leaders, and specialist teams whose expertise turns priorities into practical capabilities.

Leadership should be judged not only by the decisions it makes, but by the institution it builds. That requires investment in national talent, multidisciplinary teams and future leaders. It also means creating a culture of shared responsibility, knowledge transfer and performance that does not depend on one individual. Strong institutions preserve expertise, learn from experience and remain capable as people and circumstances change.

The financial sector's cyber incident response team, Jo-FinCERT, offers a practical example. It takes cyber preparedness beyond individual institutions. Through sector-wide coordination and information-sharing, financial institutions can strengthen their ability to identify threats, respond to incidents and learn from emerging risks.

Confidence is built not through a single announcement, but through consistent policies, effective supervision, disciplined institutions and the capacity to meet commitments under pressure.

The Starlink gateway adds another layer to this framework. A satellite backup route diversifies that dependence and provides an additional option if terrestrial communications are disrupted. It is an important safeguard, but Its effectiveness will depend on banks completing the necessary connections, testing failover arrangements, securing reliable power, maintaining cybersecurity controls and identifying essential services. Connectivity is only one part of continuity; it must be supported by resilient systems, trained personnel and clear procedures.

The wider significance of the Central Bank's approach lies in the capabilities built around the technology: Leadership that anticipates, skilled teams that deliver, people who train, and an institution that learns and adapts. This is the difference between acquiring a backup system and building lasting readiness.

The true measure of institutional leadership is not a project's success on launch day. It is whether the institution can perform as circumstances shift, leaders change and crises deepen. By preparing before disruption occurs, the Central Bank helps protect more than banking services. It helps sustain confidence in the economy and strengthen the foundations of long-term stability.

On the occasion of the conference of scientific and space attachés and agricultural experts

Scientific diplomacy is now a fundamental pillar of growth diplomacy. Science is a major driving force behind competitiveness and economic growth. Artificial intelligence, robotics and digitalisation are transforming industry, and Italy must play a leading role in these transformations. Through our scientific attachés, we are turning our embassies into advanced centres promoting Italian research around the world. This is why I have decided to invest increasingly in this network, which we are working to expand across all continents.

Exports are a source of pride for our economy. Last year, we reached a record figure of 643 billion euros. This year, we are growing at an even faster rate, at approximately 6 per cent. Our goal is to reach 700 billion euros by 2027, and scientific diplomacy can make a significant contribution towards achieving this objective.

Italian researchers around the world, who are true ambassadors of Italy's scientific heritage abroad, will play a pivotal role. I am particularly pleased to announce the establishment of a Confederation of Associations of Italian Researchers Worldwide. By bringing this extraordinary wealth of talent together within a single network, Italy will become more influential and more advanced.



Antonio Tajani

Our scientific diplomacy must increasingly place innovation and support for start-ups at the heart of its activities. In the field of advanced technologies, I am thinking of the important work we are doing in artificial intelligence, a priority that we are promoting within the G7, the G20, the United Nations and our relations with international partners, while always keeping people at the centre.

At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we have launched three working groups dedicated to the internationalisation of strategic sectors: Biotechnology and life sciences; cybersecurity and artificial intelligence; and quantum technologies. At the Export Conference dedicated to Southern Italy, held in Bari on 16 June, we launched a start-up laboratory. We are strengthening our commitment across all strategic sectors.

Our objective is both straightforward and ambitious: To continue strengthening the great team working to internationalise Italian research. Our scientific diplomacy must increasingly place innovation and support for start-ups at the heart of its activities. In the field of advanced technologies, I am thinking of the important work we are doing in artificial intelligence, a priority that we are promoting within the G7, the G20, the United Nations and our relations with international partners, while always keeping people at the centre.

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Space is a vital field and essential to the competitiveness of Italy and Europe. I emphasised this at the General Assembly of the Space Economy, which I hosted on Monday at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I am also thinking of our major commitment to critical raw materials, and securing supplies of everything our industry needs. For the first time, Italy now has a genuine foreign policy strategy on raw materials and we have also raised this issue at the European level.

Food security and support for our agricultural sector are also among our key priorities. Agricultural experts can play a decisive role in supporting our export plan and diversification strategy. Expanding access to foreign markets is of strategic importance for our exports.

International partnerships will become increasingly central to our efforts. We will continue to rely on our traditional partners, such as Europe and the United States, but we must also pursue diversification in this field.

Above all, I am thinking of the wider Mediterranean region, which, in my vision, extends to the Gulf, India and beyond, as well as Africa, which is a priority for the government. The government is committed to making this vast region an increasingly important area of stability, dialogue and growth. There are numerous areas for cooperation, including precision agriculture, renewable energy, climate change, water resources and space.

Italy's commitment to strengthening ties between Europe and the Mediterranean region is part of this strategy. We are at the forefront of efforts to advance the major IMEC (India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor), a strategic initiative that will connect Europe with major Asian markets.

This is not simply about ports and infrastructure. In our vision, the corridor is also a major channel for science, knowledge and innovation. We are making our outstanding resources available, including our ports of Trieste and Gioia Tauro, as well as our research centres.

We are therefore particularly pleased with the decision by UNESCO Director General Khaled El Enany to transform Trieste into a global scientific hub.

To make Italy stronger and better prepared for the challenges of the future, a major collective effort involving institutions, businesses and regional authorities is essential.

Speech by Antonio Tajani, deputy prime minister of Italy and minister of foreign affairs

Where are the industrial opportunities in Jordan?

By Raad Mahmoud Al-Tal

Jordan's economic challenge is not simply the size of its import bill, but rather the nature of the goods it imports and the extent to which domestic production could replace some of them. When a country imports products that could potentially be manufactured locally, it incurs more than the direct cost of those imports. It also misses opportunities to expand its productive capacity, create employment, generate higher value added, and strengthen linkages across economic sectors.

In this context, the study "An Assessment of Production Gaps and Alternatives for Import Substitution: Potential Investment Opportunities", prepared by the Jordan Chamber of Industry, provides an important contribution to the debate on Jordan's industrial development. Rather than focusing solely on the conventional discussion of the trade deficit, the study seeks to identify specific areas where import dependence could be transformed into viable domestic investment opportunities. Drawing on Jordan's foreign trade data for 2025, it reveals significant differences in the scale of production gaps across various industrial sectors.

According to the study, imports of products for which no equivalent domestic production was identified amounted to approximately JD9.048 billion. Engineering, electrical and information technology industries accounted for the largest share, with imports valued at JD3.851 billion, representing approximately 42.6 per cent of the total. Mining industries ranked second, at JD1.556 billion, followed by food, provisioning, and livestock industries, at JD1.477 billion.

These figures suggest that potential investment opportunities extend well beyond a single industrial sector. Imports in the chemicals and cosmetics industries amounted to approximately JD524 million, while leather and garment industries accounted for JD491 million and pharmaceutical industries and medical supplies for JD338 million. Construction industries recorded JD257 million, plastics and rubber industries JD243 million, packaging, paper, and cardboard industries JD163million, and wood and furniture industries approximately JD148 million.

Yet, the significance of these figures lies not only in the value of imports, but also in the specific products that account for these gaps. In engineering industries, for example, the study identifies trade gaps of approximately $120 million in industrial valves and fittings and $121 million in air pumps and compressors. These products serve as essential inputs for the energy, water, construction and manufacturing sectors. Developing domestic production capacity in these areas could therefore strengthen local supply chains and reduce the dependence of other productive activities on imported industrial components.

The pharmaceutical and medical industries offer another important example, particularly given their strategic significance. The study identifies a trade gap of approximately $509 million in pharmaceutical preparations and $242 million in human and animal blood products used for therapeutic and diagnostic purposes. Although Jordan has an established pharmaceutical manufacturing base, these figures point to potential opportunities to expand into more specialised and technologically advanced products. Such expansion could enhance pharmaceutical security while increasing the technological content and value added of national industry.

In the food sector, the potential lies partly in strengthening the connection between agricultural production and food processing. The study highlights opportunities in frozen potato production, food processing, and the refining and packaging of vegetable oils. These activities could create stronger links between farmers and manufacturers, allowing agricultural products to be transformed into higher-value goods rather than being marketed primarily in their raw form or replaced by imported processed products.

Nevertheless, the value of imports should not be interpreted as an immediately achievable investment opportunity or as a guaranteed reduction in the trade deficit. The existence of a trade gap does not, in itself, establish that domestic production would be economically viable. Investment decisions must take account of the availability of raw materials, energy costs, capital requirements, technology, market size and the ability of local producers to compete with imported goods. Moreover, some industries may require access to larger regional and international markets to achieve economies of scale and attain competitive production costs.

The policy priority should therefore be to move beyond identifying production gaps and towards developing a clearly defined portfolio of priority industrial investment projects. The selection of these projects should be guided by measurable economic criteria, including the level of domestic demand, the share of local inputs, expected value added, employment generation, the potential to reduce imports and expand exports, and the extent of their linkages with other sectors of the economy.

Input-output analysis and economic multipliers could add an important dimension to this process by capturing not only the direct impact of industrial investments, but also their indirect and induced effects across the wider economy. A factory producing engineering components locally, for instance, could reduce input costs for several other industries. Similarly, an investment in food processing could generate additional demand for agricultural products, packaging, storage, transportation and logistics services. The overall economic contribution of such projects may therefore extend well beyond the output generated by the factories themselves.

Import substitution should not be understood as a return to protectionist policies or as an attempt to shield domestic producers from competition. Rather, it should be viewed as part of a broader strategy to deepen Jordan's industrial base and strengthen its productive capabilities. The objective is not to manufacture everything the country imports, but to identify those products for which Jordan possesses genuine production potential and can achieve competitive advantages.

The real opportunity lies in turning identified import gaps into productive investment, stronger industrial linkages, higher domestic value added and sustainable sources of economic growth.

Othering speech, where hatred begins

By Zaid K. Maaytah

In the aftermath of the recent terrorist events much has been said about hatred, extremism and the need to confront them, but there is another issue that deserves our attention, one that is less obvious and far more familiar, the everyday language through which we divide people into us and them, often without realising how such distinctions influence the way we see our fellow citizens.

It is natural for people to identify with a religion, tribe, family or social community, these identities are part of our lives and often shape our relationships, the problem begins when we use them to judge others, when the actions of an individual become a judgement about an entire community, or when differences become reasons for suspicion, this is othering, and it can exist without any open expression of hatred, in fact, some of these attitudes become so familiar that we barely notice them in everyday conversations.

Othering can weaken our compassion toward those we perceive as different, making us less sensitive to their suffering and more willing to believe negative claims about them, over time, this can create an environment in which hate speech finds a more receptive audience and extremist ideas become easier to spread, the concern is not that every prejudice will lead to hatred, but that repeated divisions can make hostile messages seem more believable than they otherwise would.

This is why confronting hatred should not be limited to laws and security measures, governments can also act earlier by encouraging greater interaction between citizens from different backgrounds, particularly among younger generations, whose views of society are still developing through their families, schools, friendships and daily experiences.

Schools from different areas could organise joint trips and projects, sports clubs could hold joint events and competitions, while municipalities and civil society organisations could bring residents together through volunteering and community activities, much of this can be achieved through existing programmes, with greater attention to bringing together people who might otherwise rarely interact, and ensuring that these encounters are not limited to ceremonial occasions but become a regular part of community life.

These encounters offer something that speeches about tolerance cannot always achieve, the opportunity to discover that people from different backgrounds share similar hopes, concerns and everyday experiences, a child who makes a friend during a school trip, or a young person who meets others through sports, may begin to question assumptions they previously accepted without much thought and such friendships can also influence how they respond when they later hear unfair generalisations about those communities.

This approach is also supported by research showing that positive contact between different social groups can reduce prejudice, particularly when people cooperate and interact as equals, which makes the quality of these activities as important as their frequency, the objective is not to convince people that their differences do not exist, but to ensure those differences do not prevent them from understanding and respecting one another.

Fighting hate speech and radicalisation remains essential, but prevention should also begin before hatred takes hold, by making better use of our schools, sports facilities and community institutions, we can help address the divisions that allow it to grow, and give more citizens the opportunity to form their opinions of others through personal experience rather than inherited assumptions.

The writer is researcher in economics and behavioural policy



Photo Courtesy of Audit Bureau

The Jordanian Internal Audit Association on Tuesday holds a ceremony marking International Accounting Day under the theme 'Accounting: An Evolving Profession in a Changing World'

Internal Audit Association marks Int'l Accounting Day

Event highlights technology, governance, accountability

AMMAN (JT) — Under the patronage of Audit Bureau President Radhi Al Hamadeen, the Jordanian Internal Audit Association on Tuesday held a ceremony marking International Accounting Day under the theme "Accounting: An Evolving Profession in a Changing World".

During the meeting which was attended by experts from both the public and private sectors, Al Hamadeen highlighted the importance of events focusing on accounting and auditing, saying that the bureau's sponsorship reflects its conviction in the vital role the profession plays in institutional and economic frameworks, according to a statement by Audit Burea.

He stressed the bureau's commitment to strengthening ties with professional associations in support of the national interest, welcoming cooperation with the association as a key partner in advancing oversight practices and promoting governance and accountability across state institutions.

Al Hamadeen said that the Audit Bureau, as the Kingdom's supreme audit institution, views safeguarding public funds as a responsibility that extends beyond auditing expenditure and detecting irregularities.

It is also directly linked to ensuring the efficient management of national resources to serve citizens and support the development process led by His Majesty King Abdullah and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hussein.

He stated that effective oversight goes beyond identifying shortcomings to diagnosing their root causes, proposing practical recommendations and monitoring their implementation to curb waste and improve public administration efficiency. He also reiterated that auditing serves as a tool for reform and development, helping to build public trust in state institutions.

> The event featured lectures by academic and industry experts on the evolution of accounting standards, AI applications...

On technological integration, Al Hamadeen said that digital tools, data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) offer significant opportunities to modernise auditing mechanisms. He highlighted the need to upgrade technological infrastructure, strengthen digital integration among government entities and prioritise cybersecurity and data protection.

President of Jordanian Internal Audit Association, Nora Kilani, noted that, since 10 November was designated as International Accounting Day, the profession has undergone significant changes, evolving from paper-based ledgers to digital systems and the integration of AI.

Kilani said despite these technological advances, the core values of accuracy, transparency and integrity remain unchanged. She added that accounting has become a fundamental pillar of resource management, performance measurement and strategic decision-making.

Outlining the association's future vision, Kilani identified three key priorities; investing in human capital through specialised training programmes, strengthening partnerships with the Audit Bureau, regulatory bodies and universities, and driving digital transformation through the development of digital platforms.

The event featured lectures by academic and industry experts on the evolution of accounting standards, AI applications, digital transformation and professional ethics under the standards of the International Federation of Accountants.

The ceremony concluded with an interactive professional competition and the recognition of key contributors to the event's success, according to the Audit Bureau statement.

EU–Jordan economic cooperation: Two decades of partnership



JT file

Economic cooperation between the European Union and Jordan has evolved, over the past two decades, from a trade liberalisation agenda into a broader partnership focused on economic resilience, investment, the green transition and job creation

AMMAN (JT) — Over the past two decades, economic cooperation between the European Union and Jordan has evolved from a trade liberalisation agenda into a broader partnership focused on economic resilience, investment, the green transition and job creation.

Shaped by the Association Agreement, regional instability, the Syrian refugee crisis and Jordan's domestic reform agenda, the partnership has made the EU one of Jordan's principal trading partners and an important source of economic support.

The first-ever EU–Jordan Summit, held in January 2026, and an investment conference scheduled for later this month mark the latest stage in this evolving relationship.

Foundations of partnership

The legal foundations of the partnership were laid in 1997, when Jordan signed the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement with the European Communities and their member states.

The agreement entered into force in May 2002, establishing a framework for the gradual creation of a free-trade area. Tariffs on most industrial goods were progressively eliminated, opening European markets to Jordanian exporters while giving Jordan greater access to European goods, technology and investment.

Trade in agricultural products was liberalised more gradually, with a further agreement covering agricultural and processed agricultural products following in 2006–2007.

In 2010, Jordan was granted "Advanced Status" under the European Neighbourhood Policy. Although this did not offer a path to EU membership, it signalled a deeper political and economic relationship, with expanded cooperation in areas including energy, transport, governance and trade.

Trade and rules of origin

Trade remains the central economic pillar of the partnership. The EU supplies Jordan with machinery, vehicles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and other high-value goods, while Jordan exports chemicals, textiles, agricultural products and pharmaceuticals to European markets.

In 2024, bilateral trade in goods was worth approximately euros 4.8 billion. EU exports to Jordan exceeded euros 4.1 billion, while imports from Jordan stood at around euros 660 million.

This imbalance reflects Jordan's reliance on European capital goods and its relatively narrow industrial export base. Nevertheless, access to the EU market remains strategically important for Jordanian businesses, offering access to a large consumer market, demanding quality standards and opportunities to integrate into European value chains.

A major turning point came in 2016, when the EU agreed to simplify the rules of origin governing Jordanian exports.

These rules determine the extent to which a product must be manufactured or processed locally to qualify for preferential market access. The reform, reinforced in 2018, reduced the required Jordanian content from 60 per cent to 30 per cent for many products.

The initiative was linked to the 2016 Jordan Compact, which sought to support the Kingdom in hosting Syrian refugees while expanding employment opportunities for both refugees and Jordanians. Trade policy thus became a tool for promoting regional stability alongside economic development.

Financial support and reform

Financial assistance has been another important pillar of EU–Jordan cooperation. Between 2014 and 2020, the EU committed 765 million euros in bilateral assistance through the European Neighbourhood Instrument.

A further 126 million euros channelled through the Neighbourhood Investment Platform helped mobilise around 580 million euros in investment.

Macro-financial assistance also became increasingly important after 2013, as Jordan faced the economic consequences of regional conflicts, disrupted trade routes, high energy costs and large refugee inflows.

The EU provided three macro-financial assistance programmes which, together with an additional 200 million euros in COVID-19 relief, brought its support to around 1.08 billion euros. The third programme, adopted in 2020, was worth 500 million euros.

The objective extended beyond providing liquidity to supporting economic stability and structural reform, helping Jordan absorb external shocks while encouraging fiscal discipline and private sector development.

The EU has also invested directly in Jordan's productive sectors, providing more than 200 million euros to around 1,300 small and medium-sized enterprises over around a decade.

In 2020, it launched the "Innovation for Enterprise Growth and Jobs" initiative to promote private sector innovation and strengthen partnerships.

A greener, more strategic agenda

From 2021 onwards, cooperation increasingly focused on long-term priorities. The EU–Jordan Partnership Priorities, adopted in 2022, identified sustainable economic stability, green and digital growth, education, decent employment, governance and regional stability as key areas of cooperation.

Jordan's acute water scarcity and dependence on imported energy make the green transition both an economic necessity and a natural area for closer cooperation with Europe.

In January 2025, the two sides signed a Joint Declaration launching a Strategic and Comprehensive Partnership for 2025–2027.

Economic resilience, trade and investment constitute one of its five pillars, alongside political cooperation, security, human capital and migration.

To support the partnership, the EU announced a 3 billion euros package comprising 640 million euros in grants, around 1.4 billion euros in investments and 1 billion euro in concessional macro-financial assistance loans.

The partnership's first anniversary coincided with a significant political milestone. In January 2026, His Majesty King Abdullah hosted the first-ever EU–Jordan Summit in Amman, attended by European Council President António Costa and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

The leaders reviewed progress under the partnership, agreed to launch a Security and Defence Dialogue and reaffirmed EU support for refugees and host communities.

They also agreed to explore ways of enabling Jordanian companies to make better use of the simplified rules of origin. The summit underscored the EU's view of Jordan as a stable partner in a turbulent region, with both sides agreeing to meet again in Brussels in 2028.

The economic follow-up is scheduled for 19 November, when the EU–Jordan Investment Conference opens at the Dead Sea, with von der Leyen expected to attend.

Announced during the summit and subsequently rescheduled, the conference aims to bring together policymakers, investors and financial institutions to translate the partnership into tangible investment projects.

Flagship initiatives, including the Aqaba–Amman Water Desalination and Conveyance Project and the Aqaba Digital Hub, are expected to feature prominently.

Challenges and outlook

Despite the progress made, significant challenges remain. Jordanian exporters continue to face difficulties competing in European markets, while the trade balance remains heavily tilted in favour of the EU.

The long-discussed Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area has yet to enter the negotiation stage, despite the adoption of negotiating directives in 2011 and the completion of a sustainability impact assessment in 2014.

Simplified rules of origin and substantial financial assistance have provided important support, but have yet to bring about a fundamental transformation of Jordan's export base.

Nevertheless, the direction of the partnership is clear: it has evolved from a focus on tariff liberalisation into a comprehensive agenda encompassing trade, investment, refugee support, renewable energy and digitalisation.

If Jordan can translate improved market access, European funding and the projects advanced in Amman and at the Dead Sea into stronger exports, productive investment and quality employment, the next two decades could see a more balanced and mutually beneficial partnership.

Stocks mixed as investors eye AI outlook; oil drops

LONDON (AFP) — Asian and European stocks mostly gained while Wall Street slipped on Tuesday after rallying from last week's tech-led rout, with AI titan Anthropic revealing staggering revenue growth ahead of an IPO that could come as soon as next week.

Oil prices meanwhile dropped further on rising hopes of a resolution to the US-Iran conflict that has sent inflation surging, forcing central banks to raise interest rates.

Higher borrowing costs could jeopardise the massive AI investments that are now facing growing scrutiny after the Democratic victories in last week's US midterm elections.

Fears of a slower AI data centre buildout sparked heavy selling across the tech sector last week, though buyers have stepped back in, with much of Wall Street opening with further gains on Tuesday.

Nvidia's bombshell revelation of an affair between CEO Jensen Huang and a suspected Chinese spy also continued to roil the sector. The AI chip behemoth is now the subject of an FBI investigation.

Its shares fell a further 5.5 per cent after a 4.3 per cent drop Monday.

The increased AI wariness has taken a toll on Anthropic's IPO plans, after the maker of artificial intelligence chatbot Claude said it would seek to raise up to $64 billion in its hotly anticipated share sale — well below the estimated $100 billion it was seeking just a few weeks ago.

The forecast came in a securities filing in which it revealed that revenue soared to $17 billion in the third quarter, up from just $1.4 billion a year earlier.

"The path is not clear for the AI trade, and it may continue to struggle" even if the Anthropic IPO is successful next week, said Kathleen Brooks, research director at the trading platform XTB.

European and Asian stock markets mostly rose.

The dollar rose as most investors now expect a further interest rate hike by the Federal Reserve is all but certain at next month's policy meeting.

"Inflation remains too high," Fed Governor Christopher Waller said during an address in London, ahead of data showing the US consumer price index rose 0.4 per cent in October from the previous month, more than the 0.3 per cent analysts expected.

That suggested an annualised rate still well above the Fed's target of two per cent.

Yields on US government bonds rose, which also weighed on US equities.

International benchmark Brent crude oil prices fell below $90 a barrel for the first time since August as investors saw reasons for optimism that the US-Iran war could end soon.

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Tuesday amounted to JD8.1 million spread over 3.3 million shares that traded through 3,556 transactions.

The ASE share price index shed 0.49 per cent, closing at 4067.99 points.

Out of 104 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 36 companies rose while the share price of another 37 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were Philadelphia Pharmaceuticals by 7.44 per cent, Northern Cement Company by 6.67 per cent, Amwaj Properties by 4.35 per cent, Comprehensive Land Development and Investment by 4.35 per cent, and Al-Rakaez Investment Company by 3.77 per cent.

The companies whose shares dropped the most were Jordan International Insurance by 4.88 per cent, Al Israa for Education and Investment Plc. by 3.85 per cent, Afaq for Energy Company Plc. by 3.72 per cent, Assas for Concrete Products Company Ltd by 3.36 per cent, and Jordan Phosphate Mines by 3.06 per cent.



SPORTS AT A GLANCE

INVESTIGATION

Former Greek football, basketball stars snared in $225 m tax fraud probe

THESSALONIKI, Greece (AFP) — Former players on Greece's football and basketball squads are under investigation in an ongoing tax fraud case allegedly involving thousands of businesses and hundreds of millions of euros in debts to the state. Euro 2004 football champion Pantelis Kafes and former basketball national team star Panagiotis Liadelis are among those under investigation, police files show. Greek police on Tuesday said international warrants would be issued in the case of some suspects who are believed to have fled the country. Neither of the ex-sportsmen were among those whose detention had been ordered. "Companies were opening and shutting down essentially at the point where debts to the Greek state were incurred," police spokeswoman Constantia Dimoglidou told the ERT state television. Nearly 20 people were arrested in connection with the investigation last week. The illicit racket allegedly recruited fictitious managers — many of them cancer patients — to front over 2,000 shell companies, many of which eventually went bust without paying tax.

CRICKET

Shakeel nears century as Pakistan score 390-6 in first Test

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan (AFP) — Saud Shakeel was edging towards a century on Tuesday as Pakistan reached lunch at 390-6 on day two of the opening Test against Sri Lanka in Rawalpindi. The 31-year-old left-hander resumed on 57 and added 34 to his score in an extended two-and-a-half hour session to be 91 not out off 192 balls at the break, nine short of his fifth Test hundred. Pakistan began the day at 281-5 and lost only Ghazi Ghori for 48 with Arafat Minhas 27 not out at the interval. Shakeel, who has so far hit nine boundaries, put on 96 with Ghori for the sixth wicket. Sri Lanka had hoped for early wickets but on a seemingly hard and green pitch their bowlers struggled despite taking the second new ball after 80 overs. Dilshan Madushanka finally made the breakthrough when Ghori edged him to gully where Pasindu Sooriyabandara held a low catch. Pace bowlers Asitha Fernando with 2-87 and Madushanka (2-97) were the pick of the Sri Lanka attack. The second and final Test is in Lahore from November 17.

Brighton 'can dream' of Premier League title charge after surge to second place

By Steven Griffiths
Agence France-Presse



AFP photo

Brighton players celebrate after beating Manchester City

LONDON (AFP) — Once homeless and destitute, Brighton have defied the odds to emerge as the most unexpected Premier League title contenders since Leicester's fairytale run a decade ago

Brighton head into the international break proudly sitting second in the Premier League after Sunday's 2-0 win against Brentford.

Fabian Hurzeler's side have moved above far wealthier clubs including Manchester City, Liverpool and Chelsea, with leaders Arsenal only five points ahead of the high-flying Seagulls.

Brighton's climb towards the top of the table could easily be written off as a brief blip before the league's traditional powers reassert their supremacy.

But that would be to ignore the rock-solid foundations laid by Hurzeler and Albion's astute owner Tony Bloom, a professional gambler who has transformed Brighton since taking a major gamble when he bought the club in 2009.

Brighton have won seven of their 10 league games this season, a blistering run that included a pair of statement victories.

Swatting aside champions Arsenal 3-0 in September while wearing a commemorative kit to mark the club's 125th anniversary was a memorable afternoon.

But beating City 1-0 in Manchester in October — just days after losing a League Cup penalty shoot-out at the Etihad Stadium — showed Brighton have the bloody-minded streak required to cope with the pitfalls of a title race.

In a season in which City are distracted by their appeal against a guilty verdict for financial breaches, Liverpool and Chelsea are rebuilding under new managers and Manchester United are in disarray, there could be an opening for Brighton to replicate Leicester's fairytale title triumph in 2016.

Catching Arsenal will not be easy but Hurzeler admitted there is mounting excitement around his club.

Asked when supporters could start to dream of a title bid, Hurzeler said: "They should be always excited if they watch our game, and that's our job to make them excited.

"I always say they can dream, they can have high expectations on us, but these are things we can't control."

Hurzeler became the youngest permanent manager in Premier League history when Bloom lured him from St Pauli in 2024.

Born in Texas, the 33-year-old German had a modest playing career before turning to coaching, where he caught Bloom's eye by leading St Pauli into the Bundesliga.

His work at Brighton has been even more impressive, taking them to a pair of eighth place finishes in the Premier League and into this season's UEFA Conference League.

Stampeding bull

Bloom has also been a gleeful disruptor of football's establishment.

When lifelong fan Bloom purchased Brighton, they were languishing in the third tier with significant debts and playing at a ramshackle athletics stadium on the outskirts of the town.

Implementing the ground-breaking use of analytics and advanced scouting technology, Bloom has helped Brighton sign unknown youngsters and turn them into top-level stars.

He brought Brighton back to a purpose-built new stadium in 2011, sparking a golden era that serves as a stark contrast to their chaotic past.

"Anyone walking into Brighton today compared to even 15 years ago would not think it was the same football club," sporting director Mike Cave said.

In keeping with the hipster seaside town's colourful community, Brighton has always been one of English football's more eccentric outposts since their foundation in 1901.

Trophies might have been in short supply on the South coast, but Brighton have a habit of giving their fans unforgettable moments — for better or worse.

A 1983 FA Cup final appearance against Manchester United featured a famous miss by Gordon Smith that could have secured the club's first major silverware.

Brighton were thrashed by United in the replay and crashed out of the top-flight the same season.

An even more catastrophic relegation from the Football League in 1997 was only avoided on the last day of the season after a live bull — used as Hereford's mascot — stampeded onto the pitch during a dramatic draw that saved Brighton from potential oblivion.

The club spent two years in exile, playing their matches 70 miles from Brighton at Gillingham, after the Goldstone Ground, their home since 1902, was sold because of escalating debts.

From the depths of despair, Brighton have emerged unscathed.

"What got this football club through was the determination of its fans. The bucket collections. The protests. The refusal to accept the Albion should disappear," Bloom said.

Whether their dreams of Premier League glory are fulfilled or not, the mere possibility is already a footballing miracle.

UK writer M. John Harrison wins Booker for AI-tinged apocalyptic novel

LONDON (AFP) — UK author M. John Harrison won the Booker Prize on Monday for his enigmatic novel "The End of Everything", which echoes concerns about artificial intelligence in a darkly satirical depiction of post-apocalyptic Britain.

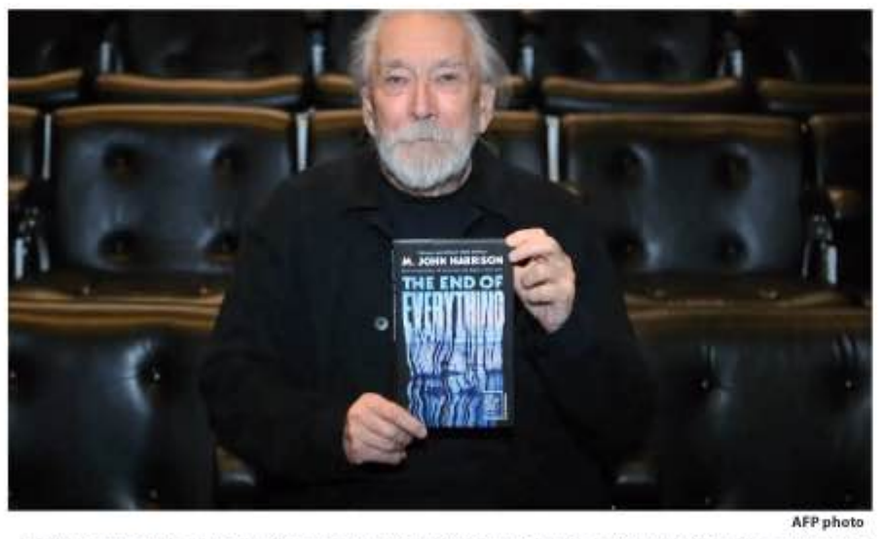
Harrison, 81, became the oldest winner of the award, which comes with a £50,000 ($67,000) prize and a boost in sales and profile for the winner.

A veteran of the British science fiction literary scene, it was Harrison's first time being shortlisted for the coveted prize, which critics have said was long overdue.

He beat shortlisted authors Marlon James, Douglas Stuart, Elizabeth Strout, Luke Kennard and Rebecca Perry, whose entries ranged from a queer epic unfolding in 1980s Kingston to a campus satire set in modern-day London.

"The End of Everything" came out "ahead in terms of both its extraordinary expert writing, but also huge ambition," chair of the judges Mary Beard told a press conference.

Harrison's 13th novel follows the beachcomber Phillip Tennent and his dementia-stricken, free-spirited aunt Marnie, set in the near-future on the windswept English coast invaded by mysterious objects known as the iGhetti.



AFP photo

British author M. John Harrison poses with his book 'The End of Everything' in London on Sunday

An unnamed catastrophe plunges the characters into a murky post-apocalyptic world where the European continent seems to have disappeared and the arrival of the iGhetti, which can imitate humans, evoke interactions with artificial intelligence.

"One main point of the book is that if, or when, such an apocalypse comes it will be incomprehensible," Beard said, adding the book spoke to the present "moment".

"This is the politics of now seen through the lens of the future," Beard said in a statement.

In dream-like episodes this tight, 198-page novel alludes to Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic and the invasion of technology into daily life.

As is often the case with Harrison's writing, which has been described as genre-bending and singular, the plot counts less than the atmosphere, and the author's elliptical and poetic style heightens the feeling of gradual collapse.

AI concerns

"Current affairs provided the themes and the satire," Harrison said of his book. "What happens when all of our expectations and explanations of the world become an ongoing disaster, but we still have to make a life?"

The author previously said he was inspired by the 2008 financial crisis, and wanted to write a novel about the "failure of explanation in society".

Born in Rugby, England, in 1945, Harrison, is the author of numerous science fiction books, including the Viriconium saga (1971-1984) and "Light" (2002), the first volume of a trilogy known as The Kefahuchi Tract, renowned as major works of the genre.

Little known to the general public beyond circles of science fiction enthusiasts, when he was shortlisted, The Telegraph newspaper wrote: "Finally, he's getting his due."

The theme of artificial intelligence has been on the judges' minds through the year-long selection process, which saw them whittle down 163 entries to a shortlist of six novels.

Beard pointed out concerns surrounding AI were "pretty high on this book".

"Phillip has got this object, this artefact, and it's not clear how sentient it is. It's not clear what it is," Beard said in a press conference to announce the winner.

In an earlier interview with AFP, Beard said the prize-awarding panel would have to think about the role of AI in publishing and writing in the coming years.

"I think for the future it's inevitable that that will be on the agenda. You can't bury your head in the sand about that," she said.

'You Can See Everything' captures weirdness of 'post-truth era'

NEW YORK (AFP) — Breakout hit documentary "You Can See Everything" has spawned a cultural moment.

The three-hour-long film plunges audiences into the surreal world of Elizabeth Holmes, one-time doyenne of Silicon Valley imprisoned for fraudulent claims about her supposedly revolutionary blood-testing tech.

A smash box office success, the film — which begins one month before Holmes heads to prison — has spawned ubiquitous internet memes, lookalike contests and commentary from influencers enamored by the darkly comic, deadpan style of her mock inquisitor, Nathan Fielder.

Holmes's legend as a rare woman tech founder has proven fertile ground for numerous media postmortems of her sham business's implosion.

"I've followed this story a lot over the years," said filmgoer Alexandra Lesnik, 29, at a packed afternoon screening in Brooklyn, the first time she had watched a documentary in a theatre.

"This was a new, different perspective of her."

Another cinemagoer, Nathan Sayers, said he had "read a lot about her" ahead of the film's release.

"What brought me was a lot of buzz among friends," added Sayers, 53, who concluded the A24 film was in his "top five movies".



AFP photo

Weaving a web combining reality TV, mockumentary and exaggerated naivety, co-director Nathan Fielder peels back the layers of a convicted liar

Kate Rennebohm, assistant professor of film studies at Lawrence University, said she had "students waiting after class every day to talk about the film — as well as e-mailing me out of the blue".

Weaving a web combining reality TV, mockumentary and exaggerated naivety, Fielder peels back the layers of a convicted liar who nonetheless does everything to convince the viewer, and maybe herself, she is truthful.

Throughout the lengthy immersion in Holmes's weird world, the viewer is invited to grapple with the question of whether the former billionaire businesswoman truly believed she created a medical marvel and whether she was manipulated by others.

"The story just changes in so many ways, and I feel like the villain also changes a lot in the story too," said New Yorker Avery Smith, 27.

'Deny, deny, deny'

"The film has fully transcended the documentary label," said Nora Stone, an assistant professor of film production at the University of North Alabama.

The film, which has generated persistent Oscar buzz and pulled in some $80 million at the domestic box office, has benefitted from the marketing muscle of the A24 studio, she added.

