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Jordan condemns Iran's attack on Bahrain

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has condemned the Iranian attacks targeting Bahrain, describing them as a flagrant violation of the Gulf nation's sovereignty, a threat to its security, stability, and territorial integrity.

In a statement on Sunday, the ministry slammed Iranian attacks as a "dangerous escalation, and a blatant breach of international law and the United Nations Charter".

The ministry affirmed Jordan's solidarity with Bahrain, expressing full support for all measures taken by the country to protect its sovereignty, security, and the safety of its citizens and residents, according to a ministry statement.

Blasts and sirens rang out over Bahrain and authorities urged residents to seek shelter on Sunday as Iran's Guards said they had attacked the Gulf nation.

The interior ministry in an X post urged "residents to remain calm, proceed to the nearest safe location, and follow news through official channels for the protection of public safety".

Cabinet approves holding municipal, Greater Amman Council elections

AMMAN (JT) — The Cabinet on Sunday approved holding elections for municipal councils and the Greater Amman Municipality Council, with the Independent Election Commission (IEC) set to determine the polling date.

The decision was taken during a Cabinet session, chaired by Prime Minister Jafar Hassan, according to a Prime Ministry statement.

The election date will be announced by the IEC, and the decision will be published in the Official Gazette, in accordance with the law.

The move is based on Local Administration Law of 2026 and of the 2021 Greater Amman Municipality Law, which stipulate that the Cabinet must issue a decision calling municipal and Greater Amman Municipality Council elections, while the IEC is responsible for setting the polling date.

The Cabinet also approved the 2026 bylaw on candidacy and election procedures for municipal membership and electoral appeals, as part of efforts to strengthen the legislative and regulatory framework governing the electoral process, the statement said.



Prime Ministry photo

Prime Minister Jafar Hassan chairs a Cabinet session on Sunday

The new bylaw aims to establish clear and comprehensive procedures for administering municipal elections, ensuring the accuracy of voter lists, clarifying candidacy requirements and streamlining voting, ballot counting and the announcement of results, it said.

Continued on page 5

SSC sentences three men to death over Karak church attack

By Rana Husseini

AMMAN — Three men were sentenced to death on Sunday by the State Security Court (SSC) after being found guilty of attacking the St George Church in Hmoud, Karak, which killed nine people in October.

The three defendants were found guilty by the SSC of nine counts of complicity in committing terrorist acts resulting in death, in the October 23 deadly attack that also left dozens injured.



Photo by Rana Husseini

The State Security Court

The court also declared them guilty of complicity in committing terrorist acts using weapons and ammunition, and complicity in possessing weapons and ammunition with the intent to use them in terrorist acts.

They were also convicted of conspiracy to commit terrorist acts using weapons, promoting the ideology of a terrorist group, and committing acts likely to disrupt public order and endanger public safety and security.

One of the defendants was also convicted of providing funds with the intent of using the funds in terror-related activities.

The court also sentenced two men to six years in prison each after convicting them of possessing and selling weapons and ammunition to the three defendants.

The two defendants had no knowledge that the weapons and munitions they sold to the three other defendants were intended for the church attack, according to lawyer Amer Halaseh.

In commenting on Sunday's verdict, Halaseh told The Jordan Times that justice was served today for the victims' families.

"None of these families were seeking revenge.

> Three of the five defendants were tried via video communication technology...

They only wanted justice for their loved ones," Lawyer Amer Halaseh, who is representing the families of the victims, said.

Three of the five defendants were tried via video communication technology, while the remaining two appeared in court in person.

The court hearing was conducted under strict security measures, and only lawyers and relatives of the victims were allowed to attend.

Sunday's verdict will automatically be reviewed by the Court of Cassation within the next 30 days.

Jordanian navy arrests Israeli who crossed into Kingdom's territorial waters — JAF

AMMAN (JT) — The Royal Jordanian Navy (RJN) on Saturday arrested an Israeli national who attempted to infiltrate Jordanian territorial waters by swimming from the Israeli side.

The marine operations centre detected an individual attempting to swim from the Israeli side towards the Kingdom's territorial waters, an official source at the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) said.

RJN personnel immediately moved to the site, arrested the infiltrator and referred him to the competent authorities, the source added.

Iran says supertanker with 2 million barrels of oil sank in Gulf

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran said on Sunday that a supertanker carrying over two million barrels of oil had sunk after it struck a mine and caught fire in the Strait of Hormuz.

The ship was one of two that hit mines while transiting the vital trade corridor, the Guard said, but there was no independent confirmation of the incidents.

Since the outbreak of the Middle East war in late February, Tehran has heavily restricted traffic through the strategic waterway, insisting vessels use routes authorised by the Islamic republic.

It has regularly targeted ships that transit without its authorisation.

The United States has in response imposed a naval blockade on Iranian ports and helped tankers travel the strait, which normally carries about one-fifth of global oil.

Continued on page 5

IEC, EU mission review recommendations on 2024 parliamentary elections

AMMAN (JT) — Independent Election Commission (IEC) Chairman Musa Maaytah on Sunday met with a European Union Election Follow-up Mission to review progress on recommendations made after the mission observed the 2024 Lower House elections.

The delegation was headed by Member of the European Parliament and Chief Observer of the 2024 EU Election Observation Mission Željana Zovko and included two electoral experts, according to an IEC statement.

The meeting focused on following up on the mission's recommendations, with the aim of improving electoral procedures in line with international standards and best practices.

Maaytah stressed the importance of international election observers, saying the commission gives priority to observations and recommendations made by local and international monitoring missions.



IEC photo

Independent Election Commission Chairman Musa Maaytah on Sunday meets with a European Union ElectionFollow-up Mission to review progress on recommendations made after the mission ob served the 2024 Lowe House elections

He said the IEC regularly reviews their feedback as a means of building on existing strengths and addressing shortcomings in the electoral process.

The IEC had previously received the mission's final report, which commended the commission's administration of the elections and its efforts to facilitate the observers' work and ensure their safety.

The report included recommendations on developing electoral legislation, monitoring election campaigns and their financing, raising voter awareness, broadening political participation and improving access to polling centres for persons with disabilities.

The EU mission deployed 100 observers from EU member states across all electoral constituencies in the Kingdom after receiving an official invitation from the IEC to monitor the 2024 parliamentary elections.



Photo courtesy of KHCC

The King Hussein Award is presented annually to recognise researchers who have made outstanding contributions to cancer research, encourage research efforts, and foster scientific collaboration at the regional and international levels

Deputising for King, Prince Talal honours 2026 King Hussein Cancer Research Award recipients

AMMAN (JT) — Deputising for His Majesty King Abdullah, HRH Prince Talal Bin Muhammad honoured the awardees of the 2026 King Hussein Cancer Research Award, in the presence of HRH Princess Ghida Talal, chairperson of the King Hussein Cancer Foundation and Centre (KHCC), and a number of other Royal Family members.

Princess Ghida gave a speech during the ceremony, saying: "Tonight, we come together to honour and celebrate the winners of the King Hussein Cancer Research Award — Arab scientists who demonstrate that discovery can begin right here, in the Arab world, and for the sake of our patients."

The King Hussein Award is presented annually to recognise researchers who have made outstanding contributions to cancer research, encourage research efforts aimed at improving prevention and treatment, and foster scientific collaboration at both the regional and international levels, according to a KHCC statement.

The ceremony honoured a distinguished group of leading Arab scientists and researchers, selected from hundreds of applicants representing more than 26 countries, in recognition of their significant contributions to advancing cancer research and driving scientific progress.

During the ceremony, Nizar Tannir of The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Centre was honoured with the Award for Excellence in Cancer Research in recognition of his outstanding achievements in kidney cancer research and treatment.

Amer Zeidan of Yale Cancer Centre received the Lifetime Achievement Award – International Track, while the Lifetime Achievement Award – Regional Track was presented to Imam Waked of Menoufia University.

> The ceremony honoured a distinguished group of leading Arab scientists and researchers...

The Young Investigator Award – International Track was presented to Myriam Chalabi of The Netherlands Cancer Institute, while Omneya Attallah of the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport received the Young Investigator Award – Regional Track.

The Promising Researcher Grant was awarded to both Zaid Abdel-Rahman of KHCC and Philippe Kobeissy of the Lebanese American University, to fund their upcoming cancer research projects.

The Professional Development Programme for Cancer Care Excellence was awarded to the Bone Marrow and Stem Cell Transplantation Programme at KHCC, which performs more than 200 bone marrow transplants annually, with success rates exceeding 75 per cent.

The King Hussein Cancer Research Award is one of the most prestigious scientific research awards in the field of cancer across the Arab world.

Established in 2020 in memory of His Majesty the late King Hussein, the award aims to encourage Arab researchers and scientists from around the world to elevate cancer research and advance the fight against cancer and overcome it through cutting-edge scientific approaches.

Since its launch five years ago, the award has contributed to building a strong and established Arab research community, receiving more than 950 applications from over 30 countries, all evaluated by more than 15 international experts in cancer research and oncology.

The 2026 ceremony was also attended by several ministers and members of the Award's Board of Directors, comprising some of the world's leading oncologists, physicians, and researchers, alongside prominent academic and media figures, as well as the award's partners and supporters.

Princess Muna attends annual charity ceremony supporting persons with disabilities

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Princess Muna, honorary president of the Families and Friends Society of Persons with Disabilities, on Sunday attended the society's annual charity ceremony.

The ceremony was attended by HH Prince Mired, chief chamberlain and president of the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (HCD), HH Princess Dina Mired, patron of the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer, Minister of Social Development Wafaa Bani Mustafa, as well as several members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of public and civil society institutions.

Society founder Rima Zureikat stressed the importance of community partnerships and joint efforts by public and civil society institutions to empower persons with disabilities, ensure equal opportunities and promote their active participation in society, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

She said that these efforts aim to safeguard their dignity and rights, praising Princess Muna's continued support for the society and the role of HCD, chaired by Prince Mired, in upholding their rights and promoting their inclusion.



Petra photo

HRH Princess Muna, honorary president of the Families and Friends Society of Persons with Disabilities, on Sunday attends the society's annual charity ceremony

Zureikat also expressed appreciation for the society's partners and supporters, noting that their continued commitment has a lasting impact on the lives of persons with disabilities and their families.

Society President Riham Omaish said that the society continues to empower persons with disabilities and improve their quality of life through programmes that prepare them for the labour market, promote independence and support their inclusion in society.

The participants' presence reflects community support for the rights and abilities of persons with disabilities and the importance of empowering them to become active members of society, ahead of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, observed annually on December 3, she added.

Omaish also highlighted the partnership with HCD in developing services and programmes, thanking national institutions and civil society organisations for supporting the association's work.

The ceremony coincided with the birthday of His Majesty the late King Hussein, with Omaish recalling his legacy and famous saying, "Man is the most precious thing we have," stressing that empowering people is key to nation-building, and that the process of work and achievement continues under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah.

At the end of the ceremony, Princess Muna honoured a number of the society's partners and supporters, including Prince Mired, Bani Mustafa, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the Arab Potash Company, and several national institutions and individuals.

The ceremony also included a charity bazaar and a fashion show by Jordanian designer Maryam Bitar, featuring designs combining traditional Jordanian and Palestinian embroidery with modern fashion.

The proceeds will go towards supporting the association's programmes and projects for persons with disabilities.

Malaysia contributes $300,000 to support 300 Gaza orphans

By Saeb Rawashdeh

AMMAN — Malaysia has contributed $300,000 to Taawon Welfare Association in support of its "Noor" Gaza Orphans Care Programme, marking the country's third contribution to the initiative.

The contribution was presented on Sunday by Ambassador of Malaysia to Jordan and Palestine Mohamad Nasri Abdul Rahmanto to General Director of Taawon Welfare Tarek Emraitah.

The plan is that the contribution, via the Humanitarian Trust Fund for the People of Palestine (AAKRP), will support 300 orphans in Gaza over a period of one year, organisers said.

They added that the assistance will cover essential needs, including food, clothing, healthcare, education, child protection and psychosocial support, with the aim of providing the children with greater stability and opportunities to rebuild their lives.



Photo courtesy of the Malaysian embassy

Ambassador of Malaysia to Jordan and Palestine Mohamad Nasri Abdul Rahman (left) and General Director of Taawon Welfare Tarek Emraitah on Sunday attend a ceremony that marked the initiative to support 300 orphans in Gaza over a period of a year

"The contribution is particularly significant as Malaysia joins the Palestinian people in commemorating the 38th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the State of Palestine on November 15," said Abdul Rahman in a keynote speech.

He noted that the contribution reflects Malaysia's continued solidarity with Palestine and its unwavering support for the Palestinian people's aspirations for freedom, dignity and self-determination.

"Malaysia remains deeply concerned over the humanitarian situation in Gaza, where widespread destruction, displacement and loss of lives have severely affected civilian communities," the ambassador said.

The diplomat added that children, particularly those who have lost one or both parents, remain among the most vulnerable victims of the conflict and require sustained humanitarian assistance, protection and psychosocial support.

Through AAKRP, Malaysia continues to translate its solidarity with Palestine into tangible humanitarian assistance, particularly for those most affected by the ongoing conflict.

"Malaysia remains committed to supporting the Palestinian people's legitimate aspirations for peace, justice and freedom, while ensuring that vulnerable communities, especially the children of Gaza, are not left behind," Abdul Rahman underscored.

Jordanian Relief Campaign, JHCO distribute blankets in Gaza

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordanian Relief Campaign and the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation (JHCO) have continued implementing their humanitarian assistance under the winter campaign in the Gaza Strip by distributing winter blankets to displaced families across northern, central, and southern Gaza.

The initiative comes as part of ongoing efforts to alleviate the suffering of displaced residents, and help them cope with cold weather amid harsh humanitarian and living conditions, according to a JHCO statement.

The step builds upon continuous efforts by the Jordanian Relief Campaign and JHCO to respond to growing humanitarian needs in the Strip, particularly with the onset of winter and the added challenges facing families who lost their homes, and reside in displacement camps and shelters.



JHCO photo

The Jordanian Relief Campaign and the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation have continued implementing their humanitarian assistance under the winter campaign in the Gaza Strip by distributing winter blankets to displaced families in Gaza

The campaign stressed its continued commitment to delivering winter aid to displaced families across various areas of the Gaza Strip, stemming from its humanitarian responsibility and dedication to supporting residents facing the repercussions of war and displacement.

Jordan also runs two military field hospitals in Gaza, one in the Strip's north and was established in 2009 following the war in 2008, and the second is in Khan Younis in the south, which was established in November 2023 at the peak of the Israeli war of aggression on the coastal enclave that erupted on October 7, 2023.

Besides the field hospitals in Gaza, the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army established the Jordanian field hospital in Nablus in late November 2023.

The Kingdom, in cooperation with the World Central Kitchen, had also dispatched a mobile bakery with a production capacity of 3,500 loaves of bread per hour to Gaza.

Other humanitarian programmes include the land bridge for aid delivery, the Restoring Hope Initiative, which provides prosthetics for amputees and the evacuation of critical cases to Jordanian hospitals.

CARC chief, US ambassador explore ways to enhance aviation partnership

AMMAN (JT) — Chief Commissioner of the Civil Aviation Regulatory Commission (CARC) Dhaifallah Farajat on Sunday met with US Ambassador to Jordan James Holtsnider and his accompanying delegation to discuss a number of issues of mutual interest in the civil aviation sector.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed CARC's strategies to modernise and develop air navigation systems and upgrade infrastructure and technical capabilities in line with the latest internationally recognised standards and requirements for aviation safety and security, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

They also discussed ways to strengthen cooperation and exchange technical expertise, particularly in capacity building and the training and qualification of personnel working in the aviation sector, in a move aimed at improving institutional performance and boosting the strategic partnership between the two countries in this vital sector.



CARC photo

Chief Commissioner of the Civil Aviation Regulatory Commission Dhaifallah Farajat on Sunday meets with US Ambassador to Jordan James Holtsnider to discuss a number of issues of mutual interest in the civil aviation sector

Farajat commended the existing cooperation with the US, stressing the commission's commitment to expanding the partnership and benefitting from advanced expertise and technologies to further develop Jordan's civil aviation sector.

The US ambassador praised CARC's efforts in addressing regional developments while keeping Jordanian airspace open to air traffic.

He also highlighted the standing of the Kingdom's civil aviation sector, expressing the US readiness to continue technical cooperation and coordination.

The delegation included the embassy's Commercial Attaché Eric Kash and Economic Adviser Patrick Chow, alongside members of the CARC board of commissioners.

Cabinet approves Roads Law amendment to secure road maintenance funding

- 40m wastewater financing agreement approved to expand networks in Amman, Karak
- Draft internal audit bylaw endorsed to strengthen public sector oversight



Photo courtesy of Prime Ministry

The Cabinet on Sunday approves the 2026 draft amendment to the Roads Law

AMMAN (JT) — The Cabinet, during a session chaired by Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Sunday, approved the 2026 draft amendment to the Roads Law and referred it to the Legislation and Opinion Bureau to complete the constitutional procedures.

The amendments aim to develop the legislative framework governing the roads sector, secure sustainable funding for road maintenance and rehabilitation, and encourage investment and public-private partnerships in road projects, according to a Prime Ministry statement.

Under the draft law, toll road projects would be regulated through a dedicated regulation setting fees, collection procedures and exemptions. Revenue collected by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing would be allocated to road maintenance and improvement, providing a sustainable funding source for developing the road network.

The amendments would also allow toll road projects to be implemented and operated in partnership with the private sector or through other investment models permitted under applicable legislation, helping attract local and foreign investment.

The amendments are also expected to accelerate major road projects, improve connectivity between governorates and economic and commercial centres, enhance road network efficiency and safety, and support economic activity, the statement said.

The Cabinet also approved a 40 million euro financing agreement with the German Development Bank (KfW) for a sustainable wastewater project expected to benefit around 1.45 million people.

The agreement represents the first of three financing tranches aimed at expanding wastewater services across the Kingdom. It will fund sewerage networks in Karak Governorate and the expansion of wastewater networks in eastern and south-western Amman.

The first package in Karak is scheduled to begin in early 2027, while work on the expansion projects in eastern and southwestern Amman is expected to start in the first quarter of the same year.

The projects are expected to benefit around 600,000 people in south-western Amman, 725,000 in eastern Amman and 125,000 in Karak Governorate.

The Cabinet also approved an amended Vehicle Plates Regulation for 2026, allowing distinguished vehicle registration numbers, currently offered through public auctions, to be sold directly under conditions set by the Drivers and Vehicles Licensing Department.

The amendment aims to broaden access to these numbers beyond public auctions and give the department greater flexibility in making them available to meet buyers' requirements.

The Cabinet approved the justifications for a draft Internal Audit Regulation for the Public Sector of 2026 and referred it to the Legislation and Opinion Bureau to complete the constitutional procedures.

In line with Royal directives and the Public Sector Modernisation Roadmap, the regulation aims to strengthen internal controls, governance, integrity, transparency and accountability across public institutions.

The draft establishes a unified legislative and professional framework for internal auditing, addresses differences in existing organisational structures and oversight practices, reinforces the independence of internal audit units, and defines the responsibilities of governance officials, senior management and internal audit directors.

It also sets competency and quality requirements in line with international standards issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors, while providing for a public sector internal audit guide based on international standards and best practices.

The regulation seeks to move internal auditing beyond traditional compliance checks towards an independent, risk-based function that provides objective assurance and advisory services.

It would enable auditors to assess governance, risk management and internal controls identify shortcomings and recommend corrective measures.

The new framework is also expected to strengthen staff capabilities, improve audit quality, reinforce accountability for implementing recommendations and enhance public resource management and government services. It would promote coordination between internal and external auditing while preserving their respective independence and mandates.

Jordan-Europe conference promotes investment in high-value industries

New Amra City offers investment opportunities in tourism, real estate



AMMAN (JT) — Investment opportunities in electric vehicle assembly, automotive components, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment are among the advanced manufacturing projects presented at the Jordan-Europe Investment Conference 2026.

The conference will be held next Thursday at the King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Centre at the Dead Sea under the patronage of His Majesty King Abdullah, with the participation of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. It is expected to bring together more than 700 leaders, investors, decision-makers, companies and financial institutions.

Featured under the high-value industries pillar of the conference's investment portfolio, the projects aim to attract European companies and financing institutions with advanced technologies, technical expertise and access to international markets, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

The portfolio includes a proposed electric vehicle assembly plant with an annual production capacity of up to 15,000 passenger cars, using imported components. The facility would cover body assembly, painting, battery integration, final assembly and testing through international partnerships.

Another opportunity involves establishing an automotive electrical wiring harness factory in Amman Governorate, covering 30,000 square metres, including around 15,000 square metres of industrial and administrative buildings. The facility is designed to accommodate approximately 360 workstations for wire preparation, connector assembly, electrical testing and packaging.

In the pharmaceutical sector, the portfolio includes a facility to produce active pharmaceutical ingredients for oncology medicines, initially covering six compounds with an annual design capacity of 40,000 kilogrammes.

It also features a biosimilar manufacturing plant equipped for sterile filling and quality control, alongside a project to manufacture and maintain medical infant incubators.

Industrial ventures established in development zones are eligible for incentives, including a reduced corporate income tax rate of 5 per cent, exemption from sales tax on required goods and services, and customs exemptions on machinery and production inputs. Additional incentives are linked to local employment, value added and export performance.

New Amra City is also among the projects being presented to European investors at the congerence, offering opportunities in tourism, real estate, sports, logistics and renewable energy.

Located near Amman and Queen Alia International Airport, and close to regional trade corridors, the planned city benefits from access to transport infrastructure, services and regional markets.

Among the proposed investments involves establishing and operating a theme park under the city's master plan, featuring rides, attractions, retail outlets, restaurants, cafes and visitor services.

The theme park's first phase will cover around 290,000 square metres, out of a total planned area of 573,000 square metres. The project is designed under a model that allows specialised tourism developers to undertake its design, construction and operation.

The wider urban development project is expected to create opportunities across several economic sectors, including construction, engineering, industrial materials, transport, energy, water and commercial services, with private sector involvement in developing and operating facilities.

A conference session scheduled for Wednesday, titled "New Amra City: Smart and Sustainable Urban Development Opportunities", will highlight the project's first phase and opportunities for private sector participation in developing and operating its facilities through public-private partnerships.

The initiative is aligned with the quality of life, investment and future services priorities of the Economic Modernisation Vision. It also reflects His Majesty King Abdullah's directives in the Speech from the Throne to accelerate major projects to support economic development and improve citizens' livelihoods.

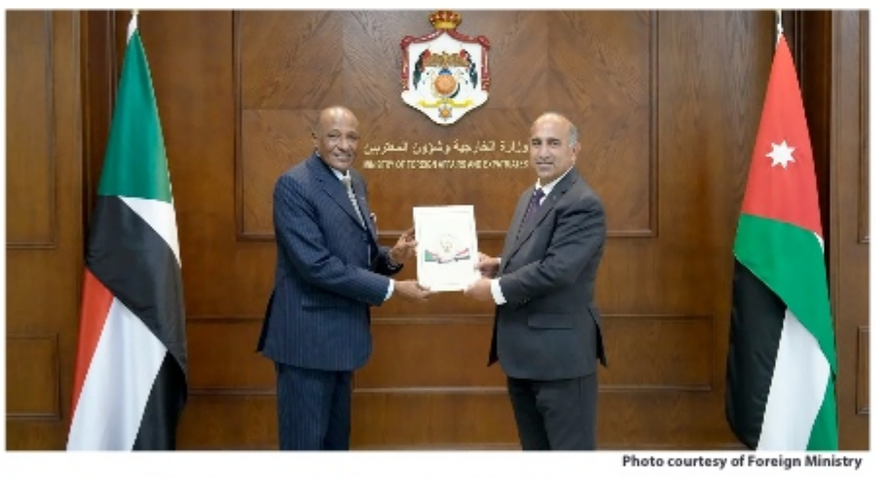


Photo courtesy of Foreign Ministry

Foreign Ministry Secretary General Ambassador Daifallah Fayez on Sunday receives copies of the credentials of the newly appointed ambassadors of Sudan and Sri Lanka to the Kingdom

New Sudanese, Sri Lankan ambassadors present credentials

AMMAN (JT) — Foreign Ministry Secretary General Ambassador Daifallah Fayez on Sunday received copies of the credentials of the newly appointed ambassadors of Sudan and Sri Lanka to the Kingdom.

Fayez received the credentials of Sudanese Ambassador Kamal Ali Taha, who has been appointed as an accredited and resident ambassador to Jordan, according to a ministry statement.

He also received a copy of the credentials of Sri Lankan Ambassador J. M. Vipulathilaka Aponsu, who has been appointed as an accredited and resident ambassador to the Kingdom.

Jordanian exports to EU rise 11.4% in first eight months of 2026

AMMAN (JT) — National exports to EU markets rose 11.4 per cent in the first eight months of 2026, reflecting growing competitiveness and expanding opportunities for national industries in European markets.

Jordan and Amman Chambers of Industry Chairman Fathi Jaghbir said that exports to Belgium rose by 46 per cent, followed by the Netherlands at 45.9 per cent and Germany at 16.3 per cent, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Among nontraditional markets, exports to Denmark surged by 280.2 per cent, followed by Poland at 243.2 per cent and Romania at 143.8 per cent, he added.



JT file

National exports to EU markets rose 11.4 per cent in the first eight months of 2026

Jaghbir said Jordan had untapped export potential worth approximately $926 million in European markets across several sectors, including garments, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, engineering, electrical industries and food processing.

He also pointed to further opportunities in Italy, Spain and Central and Eastern Europe, highlighting the potential to diversify export destinations and increase the presence of Jordanian products across the EU.

Jordan Exporters Association President Senator Ahmad Khudari said the EU's simplified rules of origin agreement had significantly boosted food exports, stressing the importance of expanding Jordanian companies' participation in major European trade exhibitions.

These include Anuga in Cologne, SIAL in Paris, Private Label in Amsterdam and exhibitions across Scandinavian EU countries, which provide opportunities for Jordanian producers to promote their products and establish business links.

European Chamber of Commerce in Jordan Chairman Mohammed Smadi said exports to the EU had reached around JD411 million, while imports from the bloc had declined by 7 per cent, reflecting improving trade dynamics supported by the Economic Modernisation Vision.

Smadi identified promising investment opportunities in pharmaceuticals, fertilisers, textiles, value-added agriculture, cosmetics, information technology, digital services and green energy.

He called on European companies to establish joint manufacturing ventures in Jordan, noting the potential to use the Kingdom as a base for exporting to regional and international markets.

Kazakhstan, Jordan showcase more than 30 years of bilateral ties through photo exhibition

By Mai Anati



JT photo

A photo exhibition documenting more than three decades of cooperation between Jordan and Kazakhstan opens in Amman on Sunday

AMMAN — A photo exhibition documenting more than three decades of cooperation between Jordan and Kazakhstan opened in Amman on Sunday, highlighting key milestones in political, economic and cultural relations between the two countries.

Entitled "The Republic of Kazakhstan and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: A History of Cooperation", the exhibition was organised by the Kazakh embassy, with the support of the Ministry of Culture and the Royal Cultural Centre.

The exhibition features 52 photographs and archival documents showcasing the development of bilateral relations and areas of cooperation since their establishment.

The opening ceremony was attended by Minister of Culture Mustafa Al Rawashdeh and Kazakh Ambassador Talgat Shaldanbay, alongside representatives of Jordanian public institutions, members of the diplomatic corps and the Kazakh community in Jordan.

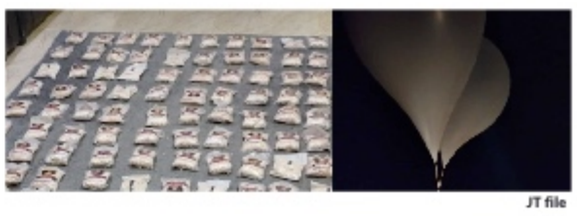
In his remarks, Shaldanbay thanked the ministry and the Royal Cultural Centre for their support, highlighting the longstanding friendly relations between the two countries and their continued development.

He also outlined Kazakhstan's ongoing political and economic reforms, noting that the exhibition aims to introduce visitors to key milestones in bilateral political dialogue, economic partnership and cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

For his part, Rawashdeh praised the embassy's initiative, describing the exhibition as a cultural bridge between the two countries and highlighting its role in strengthening friendly ties and creating opportunities for further cooperation.

Following the opening ceremony, guests toured the exhibition and sampled traditional Kazakh cuisine, gaining insights into the country's cultural heritage.

Army foils drug smuggling, infiltration attempts



JT file

The Eastern Military Region on Sunday foils an attempt to smuggle a large quantity of narcotics into the Kingdom using guided balloons

AMMAN (JT) — The Eastern Military Region on Sunday foiled an attempt to smuggle a large quantity of narcotics into the Kingdom using guided balloons, the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) said.

Border Guard units detected the balloons heading towards Jordanian territory at dawn and intercepted them, bringing them down inside the Kingdom. The seized narcotics were confiscated in coordination with military security agencies and the Anti-Narcotics Department before being referred to the relevant authorities for legal action, according to a JAF statement.

Also on Sunday, the Northern Military Region foiled an infiltration attempt by an individual to illegally cross the border.

Border Guard forces detected and apprehended the individual in accordance with the established rules of engagement before referring him to the competent authorities for legal proceedings, the JAF said in a separate statement.

The JAF reaffirmed its continued efforts to protect the Kingdom's borders and sovereignty and prevent illegal activities that threaten national security.



AFP photo

ASEAN representatives pose for a group photo with the representatives of ASEAN Youth in Manila on Sunday

ASEAN seeks 'calibrated engagement' with Myanmar

MANILA (AFP) — Southeast Asian leaders agreed on Sunday on pursuing a "calibrated engagement" with Myanmar's post-coup government, according to a joint statement, as the regional bloc seeks a path towards normalisation.

Myanmar is still a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), but it has been frozen out of high-level meetings since a military junta seized power in a coup in 2021.

Thailand has been leading efforts to normalise relations with Myanmar since coup leader Min Aung Hlaing was installed as civilian president this year following elections dismissed by monitors as a charade.

Bangkok has called for a "calibrated engagement" with Myanmar in an effort to implement ASEAN's "five-point consensus" (5PC) plan aimed at ending the war between the military and a coalition of pro-democracy rebels and ethnic minority armed groups.

ASEAN leaders meeting in Manila adopted that language in calling for the pursuit of "a calibrated engagement with Myanmar through a phased and progress-based approach, taking into account developments on the ground", according to the joint statement.

"Subject to sustained and concrete progress in the implementation of the 5PC by Myanmar, ASEAN may consider the gradual restoration of Myanmar's full political representation," the statement said.

The five-point plan has yielded little in the half-decade since it was agreed to, with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos conceding at a May summit he had not seen "any progress in Myanmar".

On Sunday, in opening remarks at an ASEAN leaders' retreat in Manila, he repeated a question he had posed to the group six months earlier: "What more can we do for Myanmar?"

"I hope our session leads to practical and forward-looking discussions on how we can further advance the implementation of the five-point consensus, make our efforts more responsive to the realities on the ground, and support a peaceful, inclusive, Myanmar-owned and Myanmar-led process," he said.

The ASEAN bloc's rotating chair will pass at the end of this year from the Philippines to Singapore, a city-state analysts say opposes normalising ties with Myanmar.

In 2028, it will be the turn of Thailand, which shares a long border with Myanmar and is leading the charge for closer relations.

"We believe it's crucial to have someone at the table who can really talk on policy issues because engagement requires that they have someone who can really convey to us the position of Myanmar," Thai Foreign Minister Sihasak Phuangketkeow told AFP in Singapore on November 5.

"This is not about... recognising... upgrading their position. But I think in reality, what is important is that we need someone at the table who can speak on behalf of Myanmar."

Israeli strike in Gaza kills senior member of Hamas military wing



AFP photo

Mourners carry the flag-draped bodies of some of the 70 Palestinians recovered from under the rubble of buildings destroyed in Israeli strikes, in Jabalia, northern Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel said on Sunday its forces had struck a senior militant from Hamas' military wing, which confirmed the death of one of its commanders in Gaza.

Samir Abu Younis, who played a key role in planning Hamas's October 7, 2023 surprise attack on Israel, was killed on Saturday, according to a statement from the Islamist movement's Al Qassam Brigades.

"A short while ago, the IDF and ISA struck a senior terrorist in Hamas's military wing," the Israeli military said in a joint statement with the internal security agency Shin Bet.

It said Younis had taken command of Al Qassam's Rafah Brigade two months earlier after his predecessor was killed in September.

The military accused him of ordering attacks against Israeli soldiers.

"He was killed yesterday evening... in a cowardly assassination operation," the Al Qassam Brigades posted on Telegram.

It said Younis was "among the most important commanders involved in the planning and supervision of the 7 October attack".

A security source told AFP shortly after midnight that Younis died in a strike "targeting him moments ago in Al Mawasi, west of Khan Younis".

Gaza's civil defence spokesman, Mahmoud Bassal, told AFP the agency had received the body of Younis, 53, and said two people were wounded in the strike in Gaza's south.

At his funeral on Sunday afternoon, a crowd was gathered around the body, which was wrapped in a green Hamas flag with a weapon placed on top, AFP footage showed.

Israel and Hamas have accused each other of violating the ceasefire that came into effect in October 2025, after two years of war triggered by the October 7 attack.

While the US-backed truce has largely subdued the fighting, Israel has kept up regular strikes in the territory.

Deadliest day

In recent days, attacks appear to have intensified in Gaza's south, according to AFP journalists.

Six people were killed on Thursday in a bombing at Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis, while seven others died elsewhere in the strip, according to Palestinian emergency services.

The 13 deaths made it the deadliest day in Gaza since Israeli legislative elections on October 27.

Israel's military said the strike on the hospital targeted a senior Hamas official and other members of the group's armed wing, which it accused of using the facility as a command centre.

Israel has long accused Hamas of using medical sites for military purposes, which the Palestinian movement denies.

Since the start of the ceasefire, more than 1,600 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, according to an AFP tally based on data from the territory's health ministry, which operates under Hamas authority and whose figures are considered reliable by the United Nations.

During the same period, the Israeli military has reported the loss of seven soldiers, as well as one civilian contractor.

Former Israeli army chief Gadi Eisenkot is currently locked in negotiations to form a governing coalition but his rival, caretaker prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, remains responsible for the country's military operations.

Announcement for Special Tender No. (10/RFAO/HCC/2026)
For Specialized Training Courses to The Ministry of Public Works & Housing (MPWH) Funded by the U.S Government

1) The Ministry of Public Works and Housing (MPWH) through the Special Procurement Committee (SPC), invites qualified American companies specializing in training and capacity building services to submit proposals for participation in this Tender. The Offeror must be A U.S. Company legally established and specialized in training and capacity building services and have valid American Certificate of Incorporation, Commercial Registration (or its equivalent).

2) Scope of Work: The Ministry of Public Works and Housing (MPWH) is initiating a training program aimed at enhancing the skills and expertise of its engineering personnel, particularly those involved in school infrastructure sector. This effort to advance staff proficiency includes specialized engineering training courses focused on site supervision and various engineering disciplines. Specifically designed for MPWH engineers, these courses will introduce internationally recognized methodologies and standards in both site supervision and engineering in addition to focused management soft skills. This initiative highlights MPWH's commitment to developing a highly skilled workforce capable of applying the latest industry practices and achieving excellence in infrastructure development.

3) The American companies can get a copy of tender documents (**Free of Charge) no later than Thursday November 26, 2026 at (3:00 pm) (Amman local time)** by sending an email to (procuremen.clarifications-itservices@mpwh.gov.jo) with a copy of valid American Certificate of Incorporation, Commercial Registration (or its equivalent).

4) Tender Timeline

Last date to request tender documents	Last date to send the clarifications	Closing date	Opening the technical offers
November 26, 2026 at (3:00 pm)	December 3, 2026 at (3:00 pm)	December 21, 2026 at (12:00 pm)	December 21, 2026 at (3:30 pm)

5) The Special Procurement Committee (SPC), the MPWH or the U.S Government reserves the right to cancel or re-tender the tender without stating the reasons and without thereby incurring any liability to offeror.

6) The Tender is tax exempted, and will be funded through a grant received from the U.S Government, award of any Contract requires compliance with all U.S Government requirements specified in the Contract Documents and subject to U.S Government review and approval.

7) The tender shall be deposited in MPWH building (SPC) hall 6th floor, not later than **Monday December 21, 2026 at (12:00 pm) (Amman local time)**.

8) For further information and to view the tender invitation, please visit the Ministry of Public Works and Housing website www.mpwh.gov.jo

9) Advertising costs shall be borne by the successful offeror, regardless of the number of extensions.

10) Clarifications shall be sent, and responses received, via the following email address: -
procuremen.clarifications-itservices@mpwh.gov.jo

Chairman of the Special Procurement Committee
Eng. Waseem Ismail Aladwan

Peru's Amazon people look to Pope as environmental protector

YARINACOCHA, Peru (AFP) — Fernando Carteiro remembers the good old days when his home in the Peruvian Amazon was lush with wildlife, as lizards darted around on the ground, monkeys frolicked and sloths lazed in thick groves of trees.

Now, thanks to de-forestation, he laments that his children will never see such natural wonders.

Carteiro and other Indigenous people are hoping that a visit on Sunday from Pope Leo XIV will shine a light on the destruction of their once vibrant habitat.

The 71-year-old US-born Pope arrived in Peru on Wednesday as part of a grueling 12-day tour of Latin America even as he recovers from surgery for lung cancer just a month ago.

The Pontiff has visited Lima, rural communities like Santa Cruz de Succhabamba, a remote spot in the Andes at an altitude of 2,000 metres, and even the coastal city of Chiclayo where he used to serve as bishop.



AFP photo

Pope Leo XIV waves outside Cusco Cathedral in Cusco, Peru, on Sunday

And on Sunday he will venture into Peru's huge slice of the Amazon to listen to Indigenous people and stories of deforestation wrecking their lives.

Leo will also bless and water a tree called a shihuahuaco — an Amazon species that can live for more than 1,000 years but is prized by loggers.

Greatest source of suffering

Carteiro, an Indigenous leader, told AFP that deforestation "is the greatest source of suffering that we have in the Amazon, along with mining".

He wears clothes made from the shiny tropical plant fiber called jute, and a crucifix around his neck.

Carteiro and some 200 families live on a river island in an area called Yarinacocha, and get by mainly by receiving tourists.

The island still has plenty of trees, although they are sometimes threatened by forest fires. But one species that used to be abundant is now scarce, because of deforestation: A small bushy riverside tree called the camu camu.

So Carteiro planted camu camu seeds around his house, which is made of logs and perched on tall pillars to stay safe when the Ucayali River runs high.

He wants his kids to have what he did — a wild, healthy rainforest just outside their door, free from fires and loggers.

"I want my children to be able to breathe fresh air. This is my main desire from the Pope. I know he will raise awareness among many people," said Carteiro, who is 53.

From 2001 to 2024 Peru lost 3.2 million hectares of Amazon forest, mainly in the jungle regions of Ucayali, Madre de Dios and Loreto, the environment ministry says.

"The message that he can give is not just to Peru. It will be for the whole world," Carteiro said of the pope.

"And this is what we will most feel. This is what we value, that he will speak on our behalf."

Thousands of Arab nomads ordered to leave SE Niger

ABIDJAN (AFP) — Several thousand Arab nomads from the Mahamid tribe, who have lived for decades in south-eastern Niger, have been told to leave the country by the end of the year, local authorities said on Sunday.

Niger's military regime has accused the Mahamid of supplying weapons and logistics to Boko Haram militants active in the region.

"This is a very firm directive from the country's highest authorities: The Mahamid must return home by December 31, 2026 — a strict deadline," a senior official in Niger's Diffa region told AFP.

The Diffa region, a primary settlement for the nomadic community, has been hit by extremist violence from Boko Haram and its rival faction ISWAP for more than a decade.

Governor General Mahamadou Ibrahim Bagadoma gave the military ultimatum to Mahamid representatives at a meeting on November 8, said a municipal official who was present.

In April, in a message addressed to governors in Diffa and neighbouring Zinder, Niger's interior ministry activated an expulsion plan, citing "serious security consequences resulting from the irregular settlement of the Mahamid".

The ministry asked governors to "carry out an exhaustive identification of the Mahamid" to "systematically withdraw [their] Nigerien civil status documents — national identity card, passports".

It also told them "to organise their repatriation to their country of origin" and to "prevent their return" to Niger.

"Seizures of weapons and various pieces of intelligence gathered from 2023 to 2026 point to the alleged involvement of certain individuals from the Mahamid community in supplying terrorist groups in the Lake Chad Basin with arms, ammunition and other logistical resources," Bagadoma said in August.



Al Mamlaka TV photo

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, the EU and UNICEF launch a 20-million-euro programme to improve learning outcomes in 300 schools across Jordan

Ministry, EU, UNICEF launch programme to address learning gaps in 300 schools

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, the European Union (EU) and UNICEF have recently launched a 20-million-euro programme to improve learning outcomes in 300 schools across Jordan, with a focus on strengthening children's reading and mathematics skills.

The School-based Transformation for Learning Recovery (ST4LR) programme will also support teachers, strengthen the role of families and local communities in education and provide psychosocial support, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

Speaking at the launch ceremony at Jabal Al Shamali School in the Southern Ghor, Ministry Secretary General for Educational Affairs Nawaf Ajarmeh said that the programme offers a practical approach to addressing learning gaps and strengthening students' core skills, particularly literacy and numeracy.

He said the initiative also aims to improve teaching practices and create safe, inclusive learning environments that respond to students' needs and individual differences.

Ajarmeh highlighted the role of schools and their administrative and teaching staff in ensuring the programme's success, describing teachers as the cornerstone of the educational process and schools as the setting where plans and strategies translate into learning outcomes.

UNICEF Representative to Jordan Marc Rubin said children who struggle with reading and mathematics often find it harder to grasp new lessons, adding that appropriate support can help them catch up and regain confidence.

With EU support, UNICEF will work with the ministry to help teachers respond to children's learning needs and enable more students to remain in school and succeed, he added.

Head of the Governance and Human Development Team at the EU Delegation to Jordan Marie Horvers said equitable access to quality education was a core EU priority.

She said the 20-million-euro initiative would support 20,000 children in improving their reading skills and 40,000 in strengthening their mathematics abilities through a structured partnership with the ministry and UNICEF.

The programme builds on previous reading remediation interventions that helped children improve their literacy skills, gain confidence and participate more actively in classrooms, she added.

It also draws on results from a pilot mathematics support project in 12 schools, where evaluations showed improved understanding of basic mathematical concepts.

The launch visit included two classroom sessions and a focus group discussion with teachers trained under the programme at the school.

Through the programme's professional development framework, teachers will strengthen their ability to identify learning gaps and adapt teaching methods to children's needs, including those of children with disabilities.

School principals, teachers and educational counsellors will also work more closely with parents and caregivers to address barriers to attendance, engagement and learning, while supporting children at risk of dropping out.

UNICEF will implement the programme in partnership with the ministry from 2026 to 2029 through ministry systems in six selected education directorates.

Supporting Jordan's Education Strategic Plan 2026–2030, the initiative aims to help children acquire the foundational skills needed to progress in their education.

Francophone summit opens with DR Congo, Rwandan clash



AFP photo

French Ambassador to Cambodia Olivier Richard (left) exchanges an agreement with a Cambodian official during a signing ceremony at the Peace Palace in Phnom Penh on Sunday

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — A summit of French-speaking nations opened on Sunday in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh, with leaders including France's President Emmanuel Macron seeking to avoid a walkout by the group's biggest African member.

The Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), a post-colonial entity resembling the Commonwealth, gathers around 90 states and nations including 53 full members, from the Democratic Republic of Congo to Canada.

But the two-day talks are being overshadowed by tensions between two men, DR Congo President Felix Tshisekedi and Rwanda's Paul Kagame, and a row over the organisation's new head.

Rwanda's Louise Mushikiwabo has led the OIF for eight years and is running for a third term, but the DR Congo is strongly opposed — and has threatened to quit the organisation if she is reelected on Monday.

Kinshasa accuses Rwanda of supporting the M23 armed group's activities inside DR Congo, which Kigali denies.

Last year Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso withdrew from the OIF after successive coups that saw Paris-friendly governments replaced by pro-Russian juntas.

The departure of DR Congo — the second most Francophone country after France with 57.3 million speakers, according to the OIF — would be a major blow.

In his opening speech to an audience that included Cambodia's King Norodom Sihamoni and Prime Minister Hun Manet, Macron called for unity.

The enlargement of the OIF, which promotes economic and cultural cooperation, "requires us to build consensus in order to preserve the union", the French president said.

Warning against "internal fractures" in the organisation, he said: "We must ensure that we preserve what constitutes its strength — namely, its unity."

France's influence

The row has revived debate over the influence of France, the former colonial ruler of many member states and the Francophonie organisation's biggest donor.

Rwanda has denounced Paris's involvement in the election of a new secretary general, saying Macron asked Kagame to withdraw his candidate — a request it said it rejected.

The news raised eyebrows. "With that intervention we're going backwards, to the idea that France decides," one member of a non-African delegation said on Saturday on condition of anonymity.

France had supported Rwanda's Mushikiwabo in 2018 as ties warmed between Paris and Kigali, but had publicly expressed neutrality in this year's contest.

After news of Macron's efforts emerged, his office on Saturday said Paris had suggested both the Congolese and Rwandan candidates withdraw in the interests of unity.

DR Congo has proposed Juliana Lumumba, the daughter of national hero Patrice Lumumba, but said on Saturday it could withdraw her candidacy if Rwanda did likewise.

This would make former Romanian prime minister Dacian Ciolos the favourite, according to summit sources, although Mauritania's Coumba Ba, a former minister, is also running.

Canada — the second biggest donor, providing 25 percent of the budget, represented in Cambodia by Prime Minister Mark Carney — has stressed the need for consensus.

Macron is the first French president since 1993 to visit Cambodia, once part of France's Indochina colonies where just 0.16 per cent of the population currently speaks French, according to the OIF.

Czechs stage huge rally against public-media funding overhaul

PRAGUE (AFP) — Hundreds of thousands of Czechs rallied in Prague on Sunday against the nationalist government's plan to overhaul public-media funding, which critics see as a threat to press freedom.

The government of billionaire Prime Minister Andrej Babis wants to switch from funding Czech TV and Czech Radio through licence fees paid by viewers and listeners to payments from the state budget.

Opponents say the move will stifle media freedom as it will make the outlets more dependent on the state.

"We need to keep media independent. The government is taking steps to control them, cut their funding and affect what they broadcast," computer programmer Jan Snasel told AFP at the rally.

Mikulas Minar, head of the Million Moments for Democracy group organising the rally, said that "between 350,000 and 450,000 people" showed up on the sunny Sunday afternoon.

Many wore triangular paper hats similar to a popular animated character from Czech TV that has become a symbol of the protest, while others sported banners saying "we won't give media away".

Babis's coalition, comprising his catch-all ANO Party, the far-right SPD and the Eurosceptic Motorists, insists the plan will not affect editorial independence or programme content — but broadcasters need to cut costs.

The proposal has already led to several large street protests since Culture Minister Oto Klempir introduced it in April.

Thousands demonstrated last month after the parliament rushed through a bill outlining the plans in a controversial overnight vote in the first of three readings, turning the time of the vote — 4:36 — into another symbol.

On November 3, Czech TV and Czech Radio staff went on a one-day strike, while thousands including university students rallied across the country.



AFP photo

Participants protest against the nationalist government's plan to overhaul public-media funding in Prague on Sunday

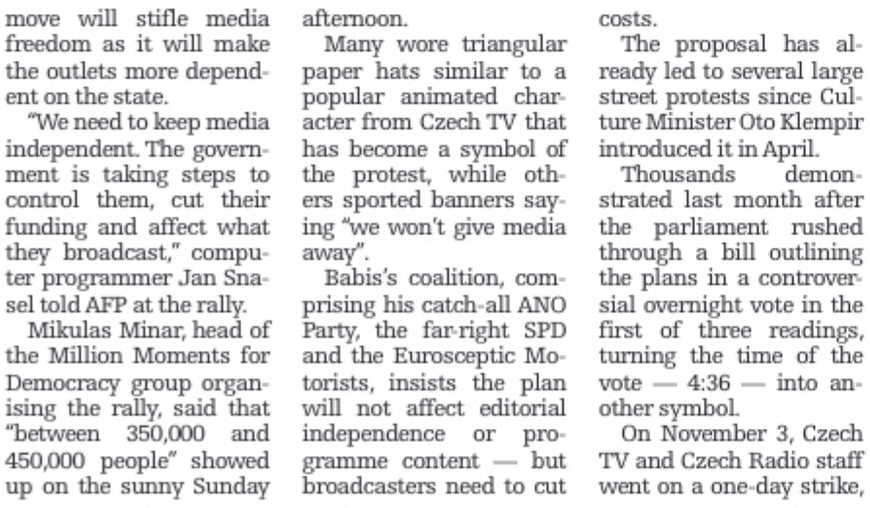
But Sunday's rally spilled over into a broader protest against the Babis government.

"I have come to support free media, Czech TV, Czech Radio, but also culture, environment protection, there are so many issues. It's not only about media," Prague teacher and researcher Lucie Fajfrova said.

Protesters also targeted far-right parliament speaker Tomio Okamura, the SPD chairman.

Minar presented a petition calling on the government to withdraw the media financing bill, but also to dismiss Okamura, accusing his "pro-Russian SPD" of endangering national security.

'Inside Gaza' wins best documentary at Montreal's Cinemania film festival



AFP photo

Palestinian boys ride a raft in the Mediterranean Sea, along the Gaza City on Sunday

MONTREAL (AFP) — "Inside Gaza", a documentary that follows journalists from global news agency AFP after the October 7, 2023 attack, received the Best Documentary Film award at Montreal's Cinemania Film Festival.

Directed by Helene Lam Trong, the 72-minute film follows the daily lives of four AFP journalists who bear witness to the difficulties of reporting in a war-torn territory largely closed off to international media.

The film is compiled from material produced by the team on the ground, as well as from interviews conducted after they left.

Israel launched an enormous military campaign following October 7 attack, pulverizing swathes of Gaza in attacks that have left 73,000 people dead, according to Gaza Health Ministry, whose figures are considered reliable by the United Nations.

The film also won the People's Choice Award at the festival on Saturday.

Adel Zaanoun, AFP's Gaza bureau chief and one of the film's four protagonists, accepted the awards in Montreal.

He dedicated the win to all the journalists "killed in this crazy and dirty war in Gaza" and to those "who still work on the ground without food, without water, without internet, without anything."

He called on people worldwide to "continue to support journalists not only in Gaza," but "everywhere for media freedom."

The film has won multiple international awards and is eligible for Oscar contention.

Cabinet approves holding municipal, Greater Amman Council elections

Continued from page 1

It also seeks to strengthen mechanisms for handling objections and electoral appeals and improve coordination among the authorities responsible for overseeing the electoral process.

The regulation covers all stages of voter registration, including the publication and correction of voter lists, as well as the review and resolution of applications and objections submitted in this regard. It also identifies the courts responsible for hearing electoral appeals, in line with the relevant legal provisions, according to the statement.

Iran says supertanker with 2 million barrels of oil sank in Gulf

Continued from page 1

The American military recently claimed to have cleared all mines from the main routes through the waterway.

"Over the past few hours, two oil tankers travelling along an unauthorised route in the southern part of the Strait of Hormuz struck naval mines, resulting in massive explosions and fire," the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said in a statement carried by state TV.

"One of these vessels — a super tanker carrying over two million barrels of crude oil — sank in the southern waters of the Persian Gulf," the statement added.

It did not specify the names or origins of the tankers.

In recent weeks Tehran has made multiple announcements saying ships had caught fire in the strait, often claiming they struck mines.

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Microsoft's outage exposes cloud concentration risk



Hossam Haddad

Modern economic orthodoxy holds that cloud centralisation is the ultimate engine of corporate efficiency, yet, a global disruption days ago proved how rapidly that engine can become a systemic liability. For more than twenty-four hours, a latent configuration error inside Microsoft's infrastructure severed the primary digital arteries of seventy-four nations, erasing an estimated $7 billion in global productivity. From European stock exchanges forced back onto telephone and facsimile disclosures to public hospitals in the United Kingdom and Canada declaring infrastructure emergencies, the November 2026 outage demonstrated that software dependency has evolved into macroeconomic exposure. What was dismissed initially as a routine network glitch quickly revealed a sobering structural reality: When commercial, financial and sovereign institutions converge onto a single vendor's architecture, a localised technical misstep ceases to be an operational inconvenience and becomes an immediate threat to economic continuity.

At the core of this vulnerability lies the phenomenon of cloud concentration risk, wherein the vast majority of corporate, financial and public institutions rely on a handful of hyperscale providers like Microsoft for mission-critical operations. In an interconnected digital ecosystem, efficiency is frequently purchased at the expense of redundancy. When Microsoft's Exchange Online stalled, the impact was not confined to delayed e-mails; it cascaded instantaneously into scheduling platforms, cloud storage and enterprise AI agents that depend on underlying application programming interfaces to function. Even rival artificial intelligence (AI) platforms experienced collateral disruption, illustrating that the much-vaunted AI revolution rests atop a remarkably narrow physical and software foundation. For economists and financial regulators, the lesson is unmistakable: When a single vendor's network routing table becomes a global single point of failure, technology ceases to be a mere commercial utility and effectively becomes systemic infrastructure.

The economic fallout of this blackout was not distributed evenly across the business landscape. While multinational corporations possessing dedicated technical teams and backup servers managed to improvise workarounds, small and medium-sized enterprises suffered an immediate operational freeze. Lacking the financial bandwidth to invest in redundant software suites, smaller firms saw their invoicing, client communications and inventory tracking halt overnight. Simultaneously, government ministries, border control agencies and judicial courts experienced acute administrative backlogs, demonstrating that cloud disruptions do not merely delay commercial transactions — they stall essential public governance. In effect, systemic downtime acts as a regressive economic tax, penalising smaller businesses and public institutions that have no viable alternative to standardised cloud infrastructure.

Equally revealing is the structural asymmetry embedded within standard cloud Service Level Agreements. Under prevailing commercial contracts, an outage lasting slightly over twenty-four hours within a monthly billing cycle may entitle enterprise clients to service credits worth a fraction of their subscription fees — a token rebate that bears zero relation to the billions of dollars in foregone revenue, stalled supply chains and reputational damage suffered by end users. This mismatch exposes a classic market failure: Hyperscale providers capture the full economic upside of market consolidation, while the tail risks of systemic outages are externalised onto businesses, taxpayers and public institutions. As long as downtime liabilities remain capped at nominal subscription refunds, market incentives alone will remain insufficient to compel the architecture of true, cross-platform fault tolerance.

For emerging economies and ambitious digital hubs like Jordan, this global disruption carries particular strategic resonance. As the Kingdom accelerates its public-sector digital transformation, expands fintech adoption and positions itself as a regional technology exporter, building digital trust requires more than high-speed connectivity and modern software procurement. National resilience demands that critical sectors — especially banking, healthcare, customs and public administration — embed operational continuity into their digital blueprints from day one. Relying exclusively on a single ecosystem like Microsoft without local fail-safes or offline settlement mechanisms, risks turning administrative modernisation into operational exposure during external disruptions beyond national borders.

Addressing this challenge requires moving beyond traditional cybersecurity frameworks — which focus primarily on defending against malicious external attacks — toward comprehensive operational resilience regulation. Central banks and financial supervisors are increasingly recognising that hyperscale cloud providers must be subjected to systemic stress-testing, mandatory concentration limits and strict third-party risk governance comparable to those imposed on systemically important financial institutions. On the corporate level, chief financial officers and boards of directors must begin pricing cloud downtime as a core operational risk, investing in multicloud architectures, out-of-band emergency communication channels and periodic analog drills that ensure vital transactions can proceed even when the cloud goes dark.

In my opinion, the true cost of the November 2026 Microsoft outage will not be measured merely by twenty-four hours of stalled inboxes, but by whether policymakers heed its warning before the next inevitable disruption. From an economic point of view, digital transformation was never meant to strip institutions of operational autonomy. By governing cloud infrastructure with the rigor applied to power grids and monetary systems, economies can secure innovation without risking daily survival.

Jordan and Europe: A partnership investing in the future



ECONOMIC REVIEW

Yusuf Mansur

The Jordan–EU Investment Conference, scheduled for 19 November at the Dead Sea, opens an important door for Jordan's economy. The country's close relationship with Europe offers greater scope for projects and partnerships that bring together finance, technology, expertise and access to markets. Held under the patronage of His Majesty King Abdullah, with the participation of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, the conference gives this effort strong political backing and brings investors and financial institutions together around specific opportunities.

The government has announced more than forty investment opportunities with a combined value exceeding $15 billion, targeting participation by more than seven hundred leaders, investors and decision makers. This figure represents the value of the opportunities on offer, rather than agreements already concluded. It nevertheless conveys the scale of the work being prepared and the areas in which Jordan can attract partners to develop, finance and implement projects.

For an economy of Jordan's size, bringing even some of these projects into operation could make a meaningful difference to production, employment and services. A new factory buys from suppliers, employs workers and needs transport, maintenance, financial and engineering services. A company introducing advanced technology gives its employees experience they may later take to other businesses or use to establish ventures of their own. In this way, the benefits of investment spread through the economy and extend beyond a project's initial financing.

The conference forms part of the Strategic and Comprehensive Partnership launched between Jordan and the European Union in January 2025, backed by a financial and investment package of approximately 3 billion euros for 2025–2027. The package includes 640 million euros in grants, around 1.4 billion euros in additional investment through European financial instruments, and 1 billion euros in concessional loans under macro-financial assistance. Each instrument serves a different purpose, broadening the options available to support reforms, develop projects and attract financing.

The opportunities focus on technology, energy, high-value industries, logistics, infrastructure and water security. There is a clear economic rationale for this selection. A factory seeking to expand needs water, energy and reliable transport; a digital business needs dependable connectivity and skilled people; and an exporter needs a quality product it can deliver on time. Investment across these sectors can therefore reinforce itself while improving operating conditions for existing businesses.

In technology, the conference presents opportunities in software, artificial intelligence, cloud computing, data centres and semiconductors, including design, assembly, testing and packaging. These fields offer Jordanian engineers and programmers opportunities to work with international companies from their own country and gain expertise in specialised activities whose products and services can be exported. We can then export products rather than people — our most valuable asset.

These opportunities become more valuable when investment is linked to training. A company that works with a university or training institution and gives students and graduates practical experience helps connect education with employment. Such partnerships deserve a place in the arrangements emerging from the conference, making skills development part of each project from the outset.

Among the prominent projects to be showcased are the Aqaba Digital Hub and the Aqaba–Amman Water Desalination and Conveyance Project. Both have implications beyond their immediate sectors. Digital infrastructure serves a wide range of businesses and activities, while a reliable water supply allows households and enterprises to plan with greater confidence. A factory or hotel cannot confidently expand if securing water remains a concern.

Water projects also create opportunities for Jordanian companies in engineering, operations, maintenance, treatment and reuse. Partnerships with European firms can provide technologies and expertise that can be applied locally, and potentially offered later in markets facing similar needs. This is one way that meeting a domestic need can help build a specialised economic activity.

In energy, the opportunities include renewable generation, storage, grid development, green hydrogen and green ammonia. Investment in storage and networks can improve the use of renewable electricity, while export-oriented projects offer scope for long-term relationships with European buyers and partners. These projects need sound cost assessments, financing plans and purchase agreements. The conference brings together parties capable of working jointly to put those arrangements in place.

In industry, the areas on offer include pharmaceuticals, chemicals, food processing, electronics and textiles. European partnerships provide an important opportunity to develop products, improve quality and reach more customers. The impact may begin with a supply agreement for an existing Jordanian factory, followed by expanded production lines and new hiring. An ongoing relationship with an international buyer gives a factory greater confidence to plan and expand investment.

Transport and logistics projects support this expansion. The programme covers ports, airports, railways, regional connectivity and infrastructure partnerships. Improvements in transport times, reliability and costs strengthen the competitiveness of Jordanian products. Developing these services also expands Jordan's role in serving neighbouring markets and increases the economic value of its location.

The inclusion of sector-specific sessions and direct meetings between businesses, government agencies and financial institutions is particularly useful. These meetings address the details investors need before making decisions: Target markets, financing, licences, the role of local partners and the allocation of responsibilities. As those details become clearer, projects move closer to implementation.

Jordan's private sector has an essential role to play. Local companies know the market and have relationships and expertise that can make them partners in production, supply or service delivery. Their involvement from the early stages helps extend the benefits to small and medium-sized enterprises and bring investment to more governorates.

The conference's importance lies in placing specific opportunities before partners with finance, technology and access to markets. Jordan brings its own strengths to this partnership: Skilled people, established businesses and projects the country needs. After the meetings comes the work of following through on understandings, developing them and facilitating implementation. When an opportunity becomes a producing factory, an exported service or an operating project employing Jordanians, the partnership with Europe becomes part of people's lives and the economy's future.

The author is a former Jordanian minister of State for Economic Affairs.

No war, no peace : The Iran trap

By Mohammad Abu Rumman

At first glance, Washington's apparent retreat from another military confrontation with Iran seems like a welcome development. President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio increasingly appear to favour economic sanctions and sustained pressure over renewed military action. Yet what looks like a step away from war may conceal a more troubling reality: The emergence of a prolonged confrontation with no credible path to resolution.

The political calculations in Washington have changed. Following the midterm elections, the costs of another military campaign have become increasingly difficult to justify. Rising energy prices, economic pressures and the uncertain prospects of a decisive victory have weakened the political case for further escalation.

But avoiding another war is not the same as pursuing peace.

This is the central contradiction in Washington's emerging approach to Iran. Military force may have lost some of its appeal, but diplomacy has not necessarily taken its place. Instead, the United States appears to be moving toward a strategy of indefinite pressure, designed to contain and exhaust Iran without offering a clear political settlement.

For Trump, this may seem like a manageable compromise. He can avoid the immediate costs of war while preserving economic leverage and military deterrence. For the Gulf, however, the implications are considerably more dangerous. An increasingly isolated Iran may seek to counter American pressure by threatening maritime security and energy flows through the Strait of Hormuz.

The result could be a region trapped in a permanent state of uncertainty, where economic pressure, military threats and strategic miscalculations reinforce one another.

The most dangerous scenario, therefore, may not be another war. It may be an open-ended crisis in which neither side is willing to settle the conflict and neither has a credible strategy for bringing it to an end.

Trump after the midterms: A new political reality and unfinished foreign policy battles

By Amer Sabaileh

The Democrats' victory in securing majorities in both the House of Representatives and the Senate in the November midterm elections places President Donald Trump in a different political environment, one in which his ability to advance his domestic agenda will be increasingly constrained and congressional oversight of his administration will expand. However, the implications extend beyond Washington, raising questions about how the administration will manage its foreign policy priorities as the confrontation with Iran enters a highly sensitive phase, while other issues, including Cuba, remain open to different scenarios.

Until the new Congress convenes on January 3, Trump retains a limited political window to work with the current congressional configuration. He may seek to consolidate certain decisions or accelerate executive measures before Democrats assume control of both chambers. Nevertheless, losing congressional majorities does not automatically give him greater freedom in foreign policy. Instead, it introduces additional constraints related to funding, oversight and investigations, potentially limiting his ability to translate priorities into sustainable policies.

The more important question is how Trump will respond to this reality. Rather than focusing exclusively on containing domestic political losses, he may move towards reshaping his team, redistributing responsibilities and seeking foreign policy outcomes that can be presented as achievements during the final two years of his presidency. This does not mean escalation is inevitable, but it explains why changes within the administration and the positions of key figures deserve particular attention.

A significant distinction is emerging between Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State and National Security Adviser Marco Rubio. Vance has been involved in leading the diplomatic track concerning Iran but has expressed reservations about the costs of war, linking them to the Republicans' electoral losses. Rubio, meanwhile, has emerged as one of the administration's strongest advocates of maintaining pressure on Tehran.

Trump's direct instruction to Vance to step away from the Iranian negotiations and focus instead on domestic issues involving Democratic-controlled states and cities reflects a clear redistribution of responsibilities. It also signals the President's conviction that the Iranian situation requires a different approach, potentially strengthening Rubio's position as the central figure coordinating American policy. Rubio has defended the confrontation as necessary to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, with his approach more closely associated with maintaining pressure to achieve American objectives. This is not simply a difference between two personalities, it reflects competing assessments of the costs of confrontation, the limits of negotiations and the outcomes Washington can ultimately accept.

The Iranian situation is no longer simply a matter of stalled negotiations or the possibility of confrontation. It has become a test of how an ongoing war is managed and whether military superiority and economic pressure can be translated into a sustainable political settlement. Continued pressure on Iran's economy, alongside the naval blockade of its ports and the challenges surrounding maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz, provides Washington with significant leverage. At the same time, however, it increases the costs of confrontation for energy markets, American allies and regional stability. The objective may not necessarily be an open-ended war, but rather the imposition of new negotiating conditions from a position of strength.

Coordination with Israel remains essential, particularly in intelligence sharing, risk assessment and military preparedness. However, coordination does not automatically mean identical priorities or a joint decision to expand military operations. Each side maintains its own calculations regarding security, deterrence and the costs of escalation.

Cuba, meanwhile, may return to the forefront of American foreign policy as part of a broader approach aimed at increasing pressure on Washington's adversaries. However, the instruments available for dealing with Cuba differ considerably from those involved in the Iranian confrontation. The two issues should not be treated as part of the same strategic trajectory simply because they feature among the administration's priorities.

The coming period may therefore be defined by repositioning rather than simply escalation. Trump faces an opposition-controlled Congress, growing domestic pressures and an Iranian situation carrying significant regional and international costs. The question is not whether he will inevitably choose escalation, but how he will balance military power, the preservation of negotiating channels and the pursuit of political outcomes before the end of his presidency.

The challenge is no longer simply moving from diplomacy to confrontation, but determining how American power can be employed to impose new political conditions, and what consequences this approach may have for regional security and stability.



Photo courtesy of Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship

Global Entrepreneurship Week 2026 kicks off in Jordan on Sunday, with nearly 1,400 activities planned across the governorates

Global Entrepreneurship Week 2026 kicks off in Jordan with nearly 1,400 events

AMMAN (JT) — Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) 2026 kicked off in Jordan on Sunday, with nearly 1,400 activities planned across the governorates to promote entrepreneurship, innovation and support for start-ups.

The 18th edition of the week is organised by the Queen Rania Centre for Entrepreneurship (QRCE) at Princess Sumaya University for Technology (PSUT), in strategic partnership with Zain Innovation Campus (ZINC) and the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, under the theme "Entrepreneurs Thrive Here."

According to a statement by Zain Jordan, this year's programme includes nearly 1,400 activities across all governorates, with 190 partners taking part in the initiative.

Minister of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship Sami Smeirat said the week provides an important opportunity to strengthen cooperation among stakeholders in Jordan's entrepreneurship ecosystem and move beyond the exchange of ideas towards building partnerships, and creating tangible opportunities for entrepreneurs.

He stressed that the success of the entrepreneurship ecosystem should not be measured solely by the number of start-ups launched, but also by their ability to expand, create jobs and generate added value for the national economy, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The ministry is working with its partners to improve the environment for entrepreneurship, develop entrepreneurial skills and enable start-ups to benefit from support programmes, incentives, financing and investment opportunities, as well as access to markets, Smeirat said.

He also underscored the importance of ensuring that these opportunities reach entrepreneurs in all governorates and maintaining direct engagement with them to identify their needs and the challenges facing their businesses.

> This year's programme includes training sessions, workshops, panel discussions, networking opportunities...

PSUT President Wejdan Abu Elhaija, said GEW is an international initiative that brings together entrepreneurs, innovators, investors, mentors, policymakers and supporting institutions to encourage entrepreneurship and expand access to knowledge, opportunities and networks.

She said the QRCE leads the initiative in Jordan as a national platform bringing together government, private sector, academic and non-profit institutions, enabling partners to organise activities across the Kingdom.

Launched in Jordan in 2009, the initiative has reached all governorates and attracted more than 450,000 participants since its inception, Abu Elhaija said.

This year's programme includes training sessions, workshops, panel discussions, networking opportunities, competitions and other activities aimed at supporting entrepreneurs and those interested in innovation.

She added that the initiative's added value lies in coordinating existing efforts, enabling participating institutions to reach wider audiences and strengthening links among entrepreneurs, investors, mentors and experts.

Director of QRCE Mohammad Obeidat, outlined five main themes for GEW Jordan 2026; youth and future skills, technology and artificial intelligence, women's entrepreneurship and economic inclusion, green entrepreneurship and sustainability and the blue economy.

Meanwhile, Zain Jordan said its strategic partnership with the QRCE reflects its commitment to strengthening cooperation between the private sector and specialised entrepreneurship institutions, as well as fostering a culture of innovation.

Through ZINC, the company will host more than 40 activities at its eight branches across the Kingdom, covering various aspects of entrepreneurship, innovation and technology.

The activities will be delivered by experts, specialists and university academics, giving young people across the governorates opportunities to exchange knowledge, learn from different experiences and connect with specialists in entrepreneurship and innovation, the statement said.

RJ, Labour Ministry sign agreement to expand aviation job opportunities

AMMAN (JT) — Royal Jordanian Airlines (RJ) and the Ministry of Labour have signed a cooperation agreement to expand employment opportunities for Jordanians in the aviation sector

The agreement also aims to increase the use of the national employment platform "Sajjil", to advertise vacancies and recruit qualified Jordanian professionals.

In a statement Sunday, the ministry said the agreement builds on existing cooperation with the RJ and supports efforts to create career opportunities for young Jordanians in line with the airline's operational needs, future plans and the employment objectives of the Economic Modernisation Vision.

Transport and Labour Minister Nidal Qatamin, stressed the importance of private sector partnerships in expanding employment opportunities, saying cooperation with RJ demonstrates the role national companies can play in supporting employment initiatives and empowering young people, according to a statement by the RJ.



Photo Courtesy of Labour Ministry

He said His Majesty King Abdullah's directives to maintain coordination with the private sector underscore the need for institutional partnerships that translate the EMV into tangible job opportunities.

Royal Jordanian Vice Chairman and CEO Samer Majali, said investing in Jordanian talent remains a central pillar of the airline's strategy and its contribution to national economic development.

He emphasised that expanding cooperation with the ministry would help the airline attract qualified professionals and provide more young Jordanians with opportunities to build careers in aviation.

Majali said the airline's responsibilities as the national carrier extend beyond connecting Jordan with international destinations to supporting the national economy, developing local expertise and strengthening the country's aviation workforce.

Six vocational graduates receive grants to start businesses

AMMAN (JT) — The Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), in partnership with UNICEF and the Business Development Centre (BDC), on Sunday signed grant agreements with six young graduates to help them launch their own businesses under the Isnaa project.

The grants will provide equipment and supplies to four men and two women from Irbid and Karak governorates, according to a VTC statement.

The signing ceremony was held at a vocational training institute in Madaba, coinciding with Global Entrepreneurship Week 2026, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The project combines vocational skills training with entrepreneurship support to help graduates establish and manage their own businesses. Training covers business idea development, planning, financial management, marketing and preliminary feasibility assessments.



Petra photo

Royal Jordanian Airlines and the Ministry of Labour have signed a cooperation agreement to expand employment opportunities for Jordanians in the aviation sector

Speaking at the ceremony, VTC Director-General Raafat Sawafin said the project aims to expand graduates' employment opportunities to include self-employment and entrepreneurship, enabling them to turn their skills into businesses that can create jobs in local communities.

BDC founder Nayef Stetieh said vocational training should be accompanied by opportunities for young people to put their skills into practice and generate sustainable incomes.

He added that Isnaa, part of the Azm programme, supports the objectives of the Economic Modernisation Vision by promoting youth economic participation, entrepreneurship and employment.

UNICEF Representative in Jordan Marc Rubin said the project provides vocational graduates with the support and resources they need to move from training into entrepreneurship and achieve self-reliance.

Under the partnership, the VTC recruits graduates and trainees and links project activities to their vocational skills, while the BDC provides entrepreneurship training and mentoring to help participants develop their business ideas, with support from UNICEF.

Launched in early 2026 under the Azm programme, Isnaa is supported by the Netherlands through the PROSPECTS partnership.

Following the signing of the agreements, the project will procure and provide the equipment and materials needed to launch the graduates' businesses.

AVIATION

Direct Amman-Sharjah flights operated from Amman City Airport

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan Airports Company (JAC) announced the launch of the first direct flights between Amman and Sharjah on Air Arabia from Amman City Airport (Marka), with four flights weekly.

JAC, in a statement Sunday, said the first flights to UAE Sharjah city from the airport are a "new step" to strengthen air connectivity between Jordan and the United Arab Emirates.

Affirming its feasibility, JAC stated the route opens "broader" prospects for travel between the two destinations, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.



Petra photo

Jordan Airports Company announces the launch of the first direct flights between Amman and Sharjah on Air Arabia from Amman City Airport-Marka with four flights weekly

JAC added: "We look forward to more destinations and opportunities that help expand the flight network of Amman City Airport."

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

بورصة عمان
Amman Stock Exchange

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Sunday amounted to JD9.7 million spread over 3.2 million shares that traded through 2,999 transactions.

The ASE share price index shed 0.15per cent, closing at 4047.26 points.

Out of 91 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 28 companies rose while the share price of another 31 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were Jordan Decapolis Properties by 4.65 per cent, Amwaj Properties by 4.35 per cent, Sabaek Invest Company Plc. by 4.00 per cent, Jordan International Trading Centre by 3.67 per cent, and Noor Capital Markts for Diversified Investments by 3.47 per cent.

The companies whose shares dropped the most were Northern Cement Company by 6.25 per cent, Jerusalem Insurance by 5.33 per cent, First Jordan Investment Company Plc. by 5.00 per cent, High Performance Real Estate Investments by 4.65 per cent, and Rumm Financial Brokerage by 4.64 per cent.



SPORTS AT A GLANCE

CRICKET

New Bangladesh star Hridoy hits century after Rabada blitz

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Rising batting talent Towhid Hridoy hit a century on Sunday as Bangladesh recovered from a fast bowling blitz by Kagiso Rabada on the first day of the first Test against South Africa. Hridoy made 137 in a Bangladesh total of 327 for six before being dismissed off the last ball of the day at the Wanderers. He shared partnerships of 99 with Tanzid Hasan (67) for the fourth wicket and 200 with veteran Litton Das (92 not out) for the sixth wicket — a record stand for any wicket for Bangladesh against South Africa. Rabada took the first five wickets for South Africa — three in a devastating opening spell and two off successive deliveries when he returned to the attack immediately after lunch. But he had no further success and finished with five for 51.Marco Jansen trapped Hridoy leg before wicket with a swinging full toss to lift South African hopes of finishing off the innings early on Monday with the second new ball only four overs old.

GOLG

McIlroy wins record-equalling eighth Race to Dubai title

DUBAI (AFP) — Rory McIlroy won his eighth Race to Dubai title to tie the record of Scotland's Colin Montgomerie after a dramatic final round of the season-ending $10 million DP World Tour Championship on Sunday. The tournament itself was a runaway win for England's Tyrrell Hatton (66) but all eyes were on the fascinating battle between McIlroy and Spain's Eugenio Chacarra, playing a group behind. It all came down to the 18th hole, where McIlroy made a disappointing par to finish on 10-under par, but that was good enough for a solo second place. That took his ranking points to 5,044.86. Chacarra also could not get a birdie on the final hole and closed with a 69 for a tied third place at eight-under alongside Finland's Oliver Lindell (65). The European number one crown was secured with a bogey-free round of five-under par 67, but it all came down to the par-4 16th hole, where he hit a magnificent second shot to a foot for the decisive birdie. McIlroy started with a birdie, but the momentum seemed to have been halted over the next four holes, when he burnt the edge on three but could not get a second birdie.

Giannis, Thompson shine as Heat scorch Pistons

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 34 points as the Miami Heat's recent resurgence continued with a 137-117 upset of the Detroit Pistons on Saturday.

Miami, who started the NBA campaign with a dismal four-game losing streak, improved to 7-6 to move above .500 for the first time this season with a burst of scoring either side of half-time.

After outscoring the Pistons 31-21 in the second quarter, Miami followed that up with 35 points in the third quarter to pull clear of the visitors.

Antetokounmpo finished with 34 points, 14 rebounds and eight assists while off-season signing Klay Thompson drained six three-pointers on his way to 26 points.

Detroit star Cade Cunningham — who had scored 52 points in his previous outing on Thursday — led the Pistons with 33 points. Detroit fell to 8-4 after the loss.

"I'm in a great rhythm right now and I'm gonna try and stay in it as much as I can," Miami veteran Thompson said. "I'm having a great time on top of all that."

Thompson's flurry of threes included one directly after a superb between the legs no-look pass from Antetokounmpo that resembled an NFL snap.



AFP photo

Giannis Antetokounmpo #7 of the Miami Heat drives against Kevin Huerter #27 of the Detroit Pistons during the third quarter of the game at Kaseya Centre on Sunday in Miami, Florida

"That was an incredible snap, long-snapper style," Thompson said. "That was testament to Giannis's skill level. People get enamored with his ability to dunk and run, but my goodness — he's like magic at times with his vision. He just knew I was in the corner."

The Chicago Bulls also enjoyed an upset victory, taking down the high-flying Minnesota Timberwolves 117-106 on the road in Minneapolis

The Bulls grabbed only their third win of the season to improve to 3-9 against a Timberwolves line-up looking to extend a five-game winning streak.

Norman Powell scored 23 points with five rounds and three assists while Matas Buzelis had 18 points. Buddy Hield impressed from the bench, draining four three-pointers in a 16-point haul, while Tre Jones also finished with 16.

In Cleveland, Tyrese Proctor's triple-double helped the short-handed Cavaliers claim a 127-117 victory over the Dallas Mavericks.

Proctor finished with 24 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for a Cavaliers side missing their entire regular starting line-up, with the likes of Donovan Mitchell, James Harden and Jarrett Allen all rested due to the team's travel delay caused by the nationwide grounding of flights in the US on Friday.

Proctor, whose points tally included four three-pointers, was backed by 22 points from Mario Hezonja while Meleek Thomas added 20 as the Cavs improved to 7-7.

Special win

Former Cleveland star Kyrie Irving led the Mavs scoring with 34 points — including seven three-pointers — with Cooper Flagg adding 18.

"That's a special team win," Cleveland coach Kenny Atkinson said. "All the circumstances, everything around it — we kind of went with our reserves. It says a lot about our young guys.

"We shouldn't' be surprised — they've been great since the first day of training camp. So it's great to confirm that they've made a real leap."

Elsewhere Saturday, the Denver Nuggets improved to 7-4 with a 116-108 defeat of the New Orleans Pelicans on the road.

Nikola Jokic led Denver with 26 points, 10 assists and eight rebounds while Jamal Murray added 23 points in a comfortable win for the visitors. Zion Williamson led New Orleans' scoring with 24 points as the Pelicans slumped to a sixth straight defeat.

In Memphis, the Grizzlies improved to 9-4 after pounding the hapless Brooklyn Nets (3-9) 129-110.

International women's health and wellness retreat focuses on empowerment, sustainability and heritage

AMMAN — Bringing together more than 100 influential women leaders, activists and media professionals from across the region and beyond, the 12th Women's Health & Wellness Retreat, International Edition celebrated the powerful connection between women's empowerment, sustainability and heritage, this month.

Curated by Nakahat 'Ailiyeh and Family Flavours magazines under the theme of Sustainability and Heritage, the four-day experience, in Aqaba and Wadi Rum, explored how personal well-being, cultural identity and environmental responsibility can come together to shape a more sustainable future.



Photos of Family Flavours

The Islamic City of Ayla is established around 650 AD, during the Rashidun Caliphate under Uthman Ibn Affan



Photos of Family Flavours

The Aqaba Church was built sometime in the late third or the beginning of the fourth century, as indicated by the pottery finds from its foundations

Deputising for Princess Dana Firas, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Cultural Heritage Senator Haifa Najjar highlighted the role of culture in building communities, strengthening identity and safeguarding heritage.

"This Retreat is part of our ongoing efforts to empower women and support and strengthen Jordan's position as a leading global wellness tourism destination," stresses Hind-Lara Mango, member of the Advisory Council for Wellness Tourism and publisher of both magazines.

Field visits highlighting the connection between sustainability and heritage, through visits to Islamic Ayla and the Aqaba Church, recognised as the oldest purpose-built church in the world.

Participants explored the shared history of Muslims and Christians who lived together in peace and harmony, reflecting values of mutual respect and understanding.

Guests included prominent media professionals, such as Dr Nimat Matari of Radio Monte Carlo Doualiya, Jocelyne Elia of the London-based Asharq Al Awsat newspaper and media professional Sally Assad.

Expert-led discussions covered mental health and wellness by Leen Madanat and Rania Saadi, media and sustainability, genetics, with Turkish scientist Dr Serdar Savas, the role of nature in wellness, with Dr Amani Al Zaidan from Kuwait, as well as heritage and sustainability by Dr Sawsan Fakhiry.

The selected Retreat Book of the Year was "The Humdrums of Culture" authored by Sheikha Alyaziabint Nahyan Al Nahyan. The session was facilitated by Eman Malhaswith key contributions by Senator Haifa Najjar, former Minister of Culture. The meeting was attended by a delegation from the United Arab Emirates, retreat participants and local women leaders.

"The book offers readers an enriching intellectual and cultural perspective; it invites readers to question themselves and society through depth, engagement and a reflective, critical mindset," says Najjar.

Site visits were to Wadi Rum and the Arabian Oryx Reserve, where the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) reintroduced the oryx into its natural habitat. This initiative represents an important example of ongoing efforts to protect biodiversity and preserve wildlife.

Retreat participants visited the Disi Women's Cooperative where they took part in planting endangered desert trees and plants and experienced traditional practices such as making shrak bread. These activities offered an opportunity to engage with local heritage and with the local Bedouin community.

The retreat's success was made possible by key partners: Royal Jordanian, ASEZA, Ayla Oasis, the Aqaba Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Antiquities, alongside sponsors and partners from the public and private sectors, including Signature by Cairo Amman Bank, Zain, Hyatt Regency Aqaba Ayla Resort, Grand Hyatt Amman, JETT, NatHealth, RISE AdventurePark, LEGENDA Bookstore, eat Group, Blue Fig Restaurant, Romero Restaurant, Trinitae and Al Burqan Handicrafts.

