Published by the Jordan Press Foundation
www.jordantimes.com
500 Fils
Volume 51 | Number 15357

THE JORDAN TIMES



EDUCATION

Princess Sumaya attends **conclusion** of first **MENA-German** science **symposium**

2



LEGISLATURE

Prime **minister**, Senate **president** discuss **legislative** priorities, economic **projects**

4



DEVELOPMENT

ASEZA introduces property **manager profession** to regulate **real estate** sector, create **jobs**

7



FOOTBALL

UEFA backs **France's Diallo** to stand against **Infantino** in **FIFA election**

8



Tuesday, November 17, 2026 | Jumada II 7, 1448 Hijri



Photo courtesy of Royal Court

HRH Crown Prince Hussein meets on Monday with youth from Maan Governorate

Crown Prince meets with Maan youth

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Crown Prince Hussein met on Monday with youth from Maan Governorate, according to a Royal Court statement.

During the meeting, which took place at Maan's Prince Al Hussein Bin Abdullah II Cultural Centre, the Crown Prince underscored that extremist ideology does not represent Islam and has no place in Jordanian society.

His Royal Highness asserted that extremist and terrorist ideologies will not be allowed to take root and compromise the Kingdom's security or threaten the safety of its citizens, pointing to the unshakeable unity of the Jordanian people.

The Crown Prince also highlighted His Majesty King Abdullah II's directives calling for a review of policies aimed at combating terrorism and extremism, and eliminating their root causes.

His Royal Highness noted that Jordan is making steady progress in its development and modernisation, despite the impact of recent regional challenges.

The meeting also addressed several issues of concern to Maan youth.

King attends King Abdullah II Fund for Development's 25th anniversary ceremony

AMMAN (JT) — His Majesty King Abdullah on Monday attended a ceremony, held at the King Hussein Business Park, to mark the 25th anniversary of the King Abdullah II Fund for Development (KAFD).

The ceremony featured a visual presentation highlighting KAFD's impact across various sectors since its establishment in 2001, spotlighting the initiatives, programmes, and projects driving social and economic development throughout the Kingdom's governorates, according to a Royal Court statement.

During the ceremony, KAFD launched its 2027-2030 strategy, outlining its direction and priorities for advancing development efforts in the upcoming phase.

The event also highlighted the success stories of young men and women supported by KAFD initiatives, showcasing its vital role in youth empowerment and community development.

KAFD announced, during the event, the rebranding of the Jordan Gaming Lab initiative as Emerging Digital and Gaming Engine (EDGE), to reflect the expansion of its areas of focus into broader fields of emerging technologies and digital innovation, and its commitment to keeping pace with rapid developments in gaming and technology sectors.

Prior to the ceremony, His Majesty toured an exhibition showcasing KAFD's key milestones, achievements and flagship initiatives, and was also briefed on the EDGE project.

A number of Royal Family members, Royal Hashemite Court Chief Yousef Issawi, Director of the Office of His Majesty Alaa Batayneh, KAFD Board Chairman Haditha Khraisha, KAFD Director General Samer Mofleh, and a number of officials attended the ceremony.



Photo courtesy of Royal Court

His Majesty King Abdullah attends the King Abdullah II Fund for Development's 25th anniversary celebration

IFC sees strong potential for private investment in Jordan's strategic sectors

- Water, energy and high-value industries key to Jordan's investment appeal
- Jordan's economic stability and regional position offer strong foundations for private capital

By Hana Namrouqa

AMMAN — Jordan is well positioned to attract increased private investment, particularly in water security, energy infrastructure and high-value industries, as its partnership with the European Union opens new opportunities to finance strategic development projects, according to a senior International Finance Corporation (IFC) official.

In an interview with The Jordan Times ahead of the Jordan-EU Investment Conference on November 19, Thomas Jacobs, IFC division director for the Levant, Iraq and Yemen, said the Kingdom's economic stability, strategic location and ongoing reforms provide a strong foundation for attracting long-term investment.

Jacobs said the World Bank Group has mobilised $1.4 billion in private capital for Jordan since 2022, but stressed that further investment would depend on preparing commercially viable projects, maintaining predictable regulations and strengthening partnerships between governments, development finance institutions and private investors.

He identified water and energy security, export-oriented manufacturing, pharmaceuticals and financing for small and medium-sized enterprises as sectors offering the strongest investment potential over the coming years.

The Aqaba-Amman Water Desalination and Conveyance Project illustrates how development finance institutions and private investors can work together on large-scale infrastructure.

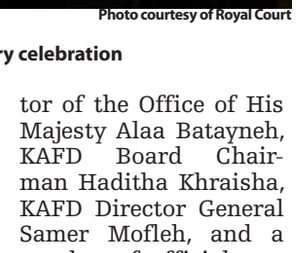
Regarding the upcoming EU-Jordan conference, Jacobs said that the IFC would complement European financing by helping prepare investment projects, structuring financing arrangements, and mobilising commercial lenders and institutional investors from Europe, the Gulf and beyond.

He noted that focused discussions at the conference would address mining and high-value industries, which offer opportunities to create quality jobs.

Jacobs also highlighted Jordan's potential to strengthen its role as a regional trade, logistics and digital services hub, noting that deeper economic integration could expand markets for Jordanian businesses and attract investment in renewable energy, technology and export-oriented industries.

He reaffirmed the IFC's commitment to helping Jordan translate investment opportunities into sustainable economic growth and better employment opportunities.

(See full interview on page 2.)



Thomas Jacobs

CBJ completes JD400m sukuk issuance to finance Amman projects



AMMAN (JT) — The first auction for issuing Islamic finance sukuk in favour of the Amman Vision Investment and Development Company (AVID), allocated to finance Greater Amman Municipality projects at a total value of JD400 million, has concluded successfully, according to the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ).

Structured under an Ijara Muntahia Bittamleek (lease-to-own) contract, the five-year sukuk carry an annual rental return of 5.5 per cent, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The issuance marks the first of its kind in the Kingdom for municipalities, expanding public sector funding sources, deploying Islamic finance instruments for development and service projects, and strengthening the capital market's role in economic development.

Continued on page 5

EU eyes investment opportunities in Jordan as 60 or more European companies express interest — Suica

AMMAN (JT) — More than 60 European companies have expressed interest in investing in Jordan, as the European Union looks to deepen economic ties with the Kingdom, create jobs and support its transition towards renewable energy, the EU's commissioner for the Mediterranean, Dubravka Suica has said.

Speaking to The National on the sidelines of the annual COP31 climate summit in Antalya, Turkey, Suica said that the companies interested in investing in Jordan could number "60, 70 or even more".

"This is why we really want to push Jordan, because they are the most stable country," she said, ahead of the Jordan-EU Investment Conference on November 19 at the Dead Sea.

Suica said that European investment could help create employment opportunities for Jordanians, develop local skills and reinforce the country's economic stability, while also giving European companies access to more affordable renewable energy.



Anadolu via Getty Images

European Commissioner for the Mediterranean Dubravka Suica

She said the initiative was intended to benefit both sides by encouraging young Jordanians to participate in developing their country's economy and energy sector.

"Of course it's not easy, but by doing this we are in fact engaging young people of Jordan to work there, to develop their country," she said. "At the same time they are also electrifying their country and they are producing this energy."

Continued on page 5

2024 election well-run, inclusive — EU observation mission



Photo by Rana Husseini

Zeljana Zovko (centre), head of EU Election Follow-up Mission, on Monday speaks during a press conference in Amman

By Rana Husseini

AMMAN — The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) on Monday said that the 2024 election was well-run and inclusive, in the context of an ambitious reform process.

An EU Election Follow-up Mission said that the 2024 election was the first instance when the new system was tested, said Zeljana Zovko, the head of the mission, during a press conference that was held in Amman.

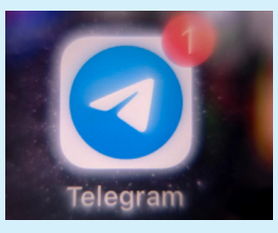
Zovko called for continued momentum in political modernisation to effect legal and administrative electoral reforms in the Kingdom.

"Jordan has undertaken important political reforms since 2021, with amendments to the Constitution made, in tandem with the adoption of the Election Law and the Political Parties Law, in 2022," Zovko said.

Continued on page 5

PSD announces blocking of Telegram in Jordan

AMMAN (JT) — The Public Security Directorate (PSD) has announced that access to the Telegram messaging application has been blocked in Jordan as part of efforts to enhance digital security, protect users and curb unlawful activities linked to digital platforms.



The directorate said the move was aimed at protecting society and preventing the misuse of digital platforms for cybercrimes, threats, extortion and the dissemination of illegal content that could undermine community security. It also cited concerns over attempts to promote extremism and radicalism that could threaten national security, in accordance with applicable legislation, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Continued on page 5

Jordan poised to attract major investment as EU partnership opens up new financing opportunities

- Water, energy and high-value industries key to Jordan's investment appeal
- Jordan's economic stability and regional position provide a strong foundation for private capital

By Hana Namrouqa

AMMAN — With the Jordan-EU Investment Conference set to take place on November 19, attention is focused on translating the partnership into concrete investment projects and mobilising private capital for Jordan's priority sectors. The conference provides an important opportunity to advance bankable projects, secure financing and bring major development initiatives closer to implementation. The World Bank Group, which has mobilised $1.4 billion in private capital for Jordan since 2022, is poised to play a key role in supporting this investment drive.

In this interview with The Jordan Times, Thomas Jacobs, IFC division director for the Levant, Iraq and Yemen, discusses the IFC's role in complementing European financing, preparing investment-ready projects, and bringing development finance institutions and private investors together. He highlights Jordan's potential to attract investment in strategic sectors, particularly water security and energy infrastructure, high-value manufacturing and regional connectivity, while examining how international partnerships and innovative financing can advance major projects, accelerate economic growth and create more and better jobs.

Below is the full interview.

1. The World Bank Group mobilised a record $112 billion in private capital in fiscal year 2026, highlighting a growing emphasis on using development finance to unlock private investment. What does this shift mean for Jordan, and how does the World Bank Group see its role in mobilising private capital for the Kingdom?

For Jordan, it means that much more private investment is within reach, provided we can bring forward projects that are investment-ready.

For years, our shareholders and clients have been clear: The World Bank Group needed to do more, move faster and mobilise substantially more private capital alongside its own financing. The challenge was not a global shortage of capital. Banks and institutional investors manage roughly $280 trillion, yet developing economies receive only a small share of global investment. The key constraint was enabling capital to reach viable opportunities with acceptable risk-adjusted returns.

Meeting that mandate required more than new financial instruments; it required us to change how the institution operates. The results are now visible. In addition to mobilising this record amount of private capital, more than three times the 2022 level, we issued more than $25 billion in guarantees, surpassing our 2030 guarantee target four years ahead of schedule.

Across the Levant, IFC has supported pharmaceuticals, financial inclusion, climate and infrastructure, trade, food security, and small and medium-sized businesses. In Jordan, the World Bank Group has mobilised $1.4 billion in private capital since 2022. But our ambition is greater. We aim to exceed this figure by helping prepare projects that investors can finance, investing our own capital for the long term, and using guarantees and our syndication platforms to bring other investors on board.

More than the numbers, what matters is the jobs this creates, particularly for women, whose labour force participation in Jordan remains among the lowest in the world. Creating more and better jobs is central to our strategy, both here in Jordan and across the globe.

2. Jordan is currently pursuing a number of major investment partnerships and projects in areas including water, energy, transport, logistics, digital infrastructure and manufacturing. How does the World Bank Group assess the current investment pipeline in Jordan and which sectors do you see offering the greatest potential for private sector investment?

Jordan has diverse opportunities, anchored in the Economic Modernisation Vision. We see the strongest near-term potential in water and energy security, export-oriented high-value manufacturing, and financing for small and medium-sized enterprises. These are key sectors in supporting our jobs strategy.

Water and energy are where national needs and investor interest meet most clearly. The Aqaba-Amman de-salination project shows that large-scale water infrastructure can attract private and development finance.

In energy, the next step is to invest in grid flexibility and storage so that Jordan can make fuller use of its renewable capacity. Meanwhile, in manufacturing, Jordanian companies in pharmaceuticals and other export sectors have shown that they can compete regionally and globally. What they need is long-term financing to continue doing so, expand their capacity and reach new markets.

For smaller firms, access to finance remains one of the main constraints on growth and recruitment, and working through Jordanian banks is one of the fastest ways to reach them. This includes improving access to finance for women-owned enterprises.

> Projects of this scale need multiple institutions and instruments working together, with each doing what it does best

Transport, logistics and digital infrastructure also offer considerable potential, but most of these projects need further preparation before they are ready for investors.

Across all these sectors, investors look for the same things: Well-prepared projects, transparent procurement, predictable regulation, and clarity on tariffs and risk allocation. The government has made real progress through its public-private partnership (PPP) framework and reform agenda. The key now is to build on this momentum quickly and turn the pipeline into investment.

Working as one World Bank Group, we can help Jordan turn its reform momentum and sector ambitions into bankable investments by supporting policy and regulatory reforms, preparing projects and public-private partnerships, anchoring investments, mobilising private capital, and using guarantees and blended finance where appropriate to mitigate risk, create more and better jobs, and deliver sustainable growth.

3. Jordan is developing several large-scale infrastructure projects, including the Aqaba-Amman Water Desalination and Conveyance Project and major railway and logistics projects. What role could the World Bank Group play in helping Jordan attract private capital for projects of this scale, particularly through blended finance, guarantees, or partnerships with other development and private sector institutions?

Projects of this scale need multiple institutions and instruments working together, with each doing what it does best.

The Aqaba-Amman Water Desalination and Conveyance Project is a great example. The project is expected to produce 300 million cubic metres of potable water annually and could meet about 40 per cent of Jordan's municipal water needs by 2040. IFC is working alongside other development finance institutions to finance this project, investing its own capital, and bringing in other lenders and concessional financing, which supports financial sustainability. MIGA's guarantees complement the financing structure by mitigating key risks, and giving investors and lenders greater confidence to participate.

This de-salination project is just one part of the World Bank Group's holistic partnership with Jordan, supporting the Kingdom's efforts to create jobs through private sector-led growth, strengthen resilience and develop more sustainable water, energy and urban infrastructure.

Another example is the Jordan Water Sector Efficiency Project, which aims to reduce water losses, improve water distribution and strengthen drought management. This work creates a stronger foundation for IFC's efforts to attract private capital into infrastructure.

Rail and logistics projects have different risks and revenue models, but the same success factors apply: Early preparation, clear allocation of risk and a financing structure that combines public, development and private capital. We and our colleagues across the World Bank Group stand ready to support the government as these projects are prepared.

4. The Jordan-EU Investment Conference, scheduled for November 19, is expected to focus on translating the EU-Jordan partnership into concrete investment projects. What role can



Thomas Jacobs

IFC play in complementing European financing and helping turn investment opportunities presented at the conference into bankable projects and actual investments?

Our role is to work with European and other partners to help turn the opportunities presented at the conference from ideas into investments. IFC complements European financing in three ways.

First, preparation. We need to work together to ensure that investment ideas are ready for investors. IFC can work with the government and project sponsors to assess feasibility and bankability, identify the necessary regulatory steps, and structure transactions, including PPPs where that is the right model.

Second, financing and risk-sharing. IFC can invest alongside European development finance institutions and commercial banks, combining its own capital with European guarantee and blended finance resources. The goal is to structure bankable transactions that can attract private capital.

Third, mobilisation. Through our syndication platforms and investor relationships, we can mobilise commercial lenders and institutional investors from Europe, the Gulf and beyond to participate in transactions, maximising impact and private sector participation.

As part of IFC's contribution to the conference, we are supporting the government in organising focused discussions on mining and high-value industries, two specific sectors that can create quality jobs. This is in addition to our work with the government to improve the policy and regulatory environment and identify concrete investment opportunities.

From an investment perspective, success will depend on follow-through: A list of priority projects, clear government ownership with support from partners and agreed next steps for project preparation and financing. We will be ready to take this work forward with the government and our European partners, drawing on more than half-a-century of IFC experience in Jordan and our global track record.

> Over the next three to five years, we see the greatest potential for private investment in water and energy infrastructure...

5. IFC has identified infrastructure, water security, digital transformation and access to finance for businesses among its priorities in the Levant, Iraq and Yemen. How do you see Jordan's position within this broader regional investment landscape and what opportunities could emerge from stronger regional economic integration?

Jordan is well placed to serve as an anchor and a connector across the region.

It has maintained macroeconomic stability in a difficult regional environment. Real GDP grew by 2.8 per cent in 2025 and is forecast to grow by 2.7 per cent in 2026. In 2024, Jordan received its first sovereign credit rating upgrades in more than two decades from two global rating agencies, with these upgrades sustained in 2025 and 2026, with stable outlooks. Combined with the Economic Modernisation Vision, its PPP framework and its location as a trade and logistics gateway, this gives investors a solid basis for long-term commitments.

As for IFC, Jordan has one of the largest IFC portfolios in the Middle East, with $919.7 million committed across 31 projects to date. Our work with private companies is complemented by a recent World Bank operation: The $700 million Growth and Competitiveness Development Policy Financing II, which focuses on reforms to strengthen the business environment, attract investment and improve access to finance. Together, we aim to create more jobs and accelerate the country's green and digital transition.

Deeper regional integration could widen these opportunities even further, as it helps overcome the limitations of a small domestic market. For example, cross-border power links could open up larger markets for renewable energy and improve security of supply, while experience with large-scale de-salination could benefit other water-stressed economies.

Closer ties with Gulf markets could give Jordanian technology firms access to more customers and capital, leveraging its young, educated and bilingual workforce, which is well suited to developing Arabic-language and AI applications.

Improved integration could also attract investment in logistics, tourism, digital services and export-oriented manufacturing, while helping smaller Jordanian firms expand across borders.

These opportunities closely match IFC's regional priorities.

6. Looking ahead over the next three to five years, what would you identify as the most promising areas for investment and private capital mobilisation in Jordan, and what would need to happen for Jordan to realise this potential?

Over the next three to five years, we see the greatest potential for private investment in water and energy infrastructure, as well as high-value manufacturing, particularly pharmaceuticals and downstream mining. Healthcare, tourism, agribusiness and financial services that support small businesses also offer significant opportunities. Together, these sectors accounted for more than half of the record private capital mobilised by the World Bank Group last year.

Beyond their investment potential, these sectors share another important characteristic: Their ability to create jobs, including for women and young people. This is particularly critical as 1.2 billion young people across developing countries are expected to reach working age over the next 10 to 15 years. For Jordan, creating opportunities for its growing workforce is already a national priority, reflected in its Economic Modernisation Vision and its ambition to create more than one million jobs for young women and men.

Achieving that ambition will require sustained private investment, building on the progress Jordan has already made in improving its business environment. IFC has been a partner in these efforts, helping translate reforms and investment opportunities into tangible results. From structuring pioneering airport and wind power projects to supporting the country's first green bond and anchoring bonds that are helping expand its pharmaceutical industry, our work has focused on mobilising private capital, developing strategic sectors, and creating more and better jobs.

These achievements provide a strong foundation for the next wave of investment, but realising its full potential will require continued efforts to prepare commercially viable projects, maintain a predictable business environment, and bring public and private partners together to mobilise capital at scale.

IFC remains committed to building on this progress and helping Jordan turn investment opportunities into sustainable growth and lasting economic opportunities for its people.

Princess Sumaya attends conclusion of first MENA-German science symposium

AMMAN (JT) — The inaugural Middle East and North Africa-German Frontiers of Science and Technology Symposium concluded on Monday at the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) in Amman under the patronage of HRH Princess Sumaya, president of the RSS.

Organised by the RSS between Saturday and Monday, in partnership with Germany's Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the symposium brought together researchers, academics, and scientific institutions from Germany, Jordan, and across the MENA region to foster interdisciplinary scientific exchange and address shared technological challenges, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.



Petra photo

HRH Princess Sumaya on Monday attends the closing ceremony of the inaugural Middle East and North Africa-German Frontiers of Science and Technology Symposium at the Royal Scientific Society in Amman

Alexander von Humboldt Foundation President Robert Schlögl, German Ambassador to Jordan Bertram von Moltke and representatives from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) attended the opening ceremony.

Princess Sumaya highlighted the depth of Jordanian-German scientific ties and the role of science diplomacy in bridging divides, noting that science provides a constructive framework for collaboration despite differences while praising German scholarships and academic programmes for supporting generations of Jordanian researchers.

The princess said, "Science does not eliminate our differences, but gives us a means of working together constructively despite them," stressing the importance of sustainable international scientific cooperation, particularly in a region facing shared challenges.

Her Royal Highness also highlighted the contributions of German academic and scientific institutions to supporting development and enhancing scientific capabilities in Jordan through scholarships offered by DAAD, as well as academic exchange programmes and university and research partnerships that have helped support generations of Jordanian students, researchers and academics.

She expressed her appreciation to Schlögl and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation for their partnership with and confidence in RSS, praising the role of the German government, the German embassy in Amman and DAAD in supporting scientific and educational cooperation with Jordan over many years.

Schlögl commended the high level of scientific research in Jordan and at RSS, expressing eagerness to expand cooperation through follow up scientific seminars and joint programmes.

The scientific programme explored four core themes, namely artificial intelligence and human centred technologies, smart manufacturing and industrial transformation, circular economy and green chemistry, and climate resilience alongside the water, energy, food and ecosystems nexus.

Activities also included a research poster exhibition, speed networking sessions, tours of RSS laboratories, workshops, a cultural visit to the Jordan Museum, and support for early career scientists and women in STEM fields, building on bilateral initiatives such as the DAAD funded Jordan–Germany Research Chair in Future Water Systems hosted at RSS.



Al Mamlaka TV photo

Initiatives of Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in Jordan aim to restore ecosystems and promote the sustainable management of natural resources across the Kingdom

FAO initiatives produce 3 million seedlings, restore forests, rangelands in Jordan

AMMAN (JT) — The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) has contributed to Jordan's environmental and climate efforts through initiatives that have resulted in the production of 3 million seedlings, the planting of more than 100,000 native trees and the rehabilitation of over 11,000 dunums of forests and rangelands.

These initiatives aim to restore ecosystems and promote the sustainable management of natural resources across the Kingdom, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

FAO Representative in Jordan Thaer Yaseen said that forests cover only around 1 per cent of Jordan's land area, but play a vital role in addressing climate change, combating land degradation, preserving biodiversity and supporting sustainable agri-food systems and local communities.

Speaking at a tree-planting activity organised by FAO in partnership with the British embassy in Amman on Monday, Yaseen said that the organisation continues to support urban greening, ecosystem restoration and climate resilience through initiatives and programmes across the Kingdom.

The activity was held at the Royal Botanic Garden under the patronage of HRH Princess Basma bint Ali, the garden's founder and FAO Goodwill Ambassador for the Near East and North Africa, as part of the 2026 Environment and Climate Month, led by the French embassy in Jordan in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment.

Around 60 students from various schools, alongside representatives of government institutions, diplomatic missions, UN organisations and environmental bodies, took part in the event to promote awareness of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration.

The initiative included planting native trees in an area of the garden recently affected by fires, helping restore the site and strengthen ecosystem resilience to climate change.

The garden's technical team supervised the students' tree-planting activities and briefed them on the importance of native plants in maintaining ecological balance, preserving biodiversity and helping ecosystems adapt to climate change.

Princess Basma stressed the importance of engaging young people in environmental initiatives and providing them with practical opportunities to connect with nature and learn about Jordan's plant diversity, fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility towards the environment.

She said that such initiatives help instil a love of nature and a desire to protect it among students, while providing hands-on experiences and opportunities to engage directly with nature amid the challenges of modern lifestyles and technology.

Hazel Mowbray, British embassy deputy head of mission and development director, said that engaging young people with nature helps them understand the close link between human life and the environment.

Charles-Henri Brosseau, French embassy political counsellor, stressed the importance of protecting biodiversity for future generations through tree planting, preserving plant species and adopting environmentally responsible practices.

The activity comes as part of cooperation between the FAO, diplomatic missions, national institutions and international organisations to engage young people in climate action, ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation, and support sustainable development in Jordan.

KOICA, UNHCR event highlights safer living conditions, lessons from shelter support for refugees



Photo Courtesy of UNHCR

UNHCR and the Korea International Cooperation Agency convene learning and closing event for its-funded project,'From Vulnerability to Empowerment: Building Safe and Secure Communities'

AMMAN (JT) — UNHCR and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) convened a Learning and Closing Event in Amman for the its funded project, "From Vulnerability to Empowerment: Building Safe and Secure Communities".

The event brought together representatives from the government, KOICA, UNHCR, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and refugees to review the project's achievements, discuss lessons learnt, and hear directly from refugee participants in Zaatari and Azraq camps about the impact of improved shelter conditions on their lives.

The project, implemented between 2024 and 2026, addresses shelter needs in Zaatari and Azraq camps, where around 80 per cent of shelters had exceeded their lifespan or been damaged by harsh weather, according to an UNHCR statement.

With support from KOICA, UNHCR has constructed new shelters and rehabilitated existing ones, directly benefiting around 9,000 refugees and improving conditions for approximately 74,000 refugees across both camps.

For refugee families, the project has provided more than shelter repairs. Safe and well-maintained shelters offer better protection from extreme weather, greater privacy and improved living conditions.

By addressing urgent maintenance needs and extending the lifespan of existing shelters, the project has helped vulnerable families remain in safer homes while supporting more sustainable shelter assistance in the camps.

At the same time, the project has adapted to changing needs, including population movements and increased voluntary returns to Syria.

UNHCR has continued to prioritise the most vulnerable families based on identified needs and technical assessments, while exploring more sustainable approaches to shelter and camp infrastructure management.

Assistant Representative for Operations of UNHCR Jordan, Ziad Ayoubi said "Shelter is about much more than a physical structure. It provides privacy, security and a space where people can maintain a sense of normality after years of displacement."

During the event, UNHCR and NRC presented the project's achievements before refugee participants from the two camps shared their own experiences. Participants then reflected on lessons learned during implementation and discussed future shelter needs and priorities.

Deputy Country Director of the KOICA Jordan Office, Jihyun Jeon, stated that "over the past three years, the project has successfully constructed and rehabilitated shelters to directly improve the living conditions of approximately 9,000 households and 74,000 refugees in the Zaatari and Azraq camps".

As the project concludes in December 2026, UNHCR remains committed to building on the lessons learned to further strengthen its support for refugees in Jordan.

ASEZA joins global tourism council to boost Aqaba's international profile



Photo courtesy of ASEZA

ASEZA Commissioner for Tourism and Youth Affairs Thabet Nabulsi says that the membership would help build international partnerships, exchange expertise and promote Aqaba's competitive advantages and investment opportunities

AMMAN (JT) — The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) has joined the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), marking the first such membership in Jordan and opening up wider opportunities for Aqaba to connect with global tourism leaders and international investors.

ASEZA Commissioner for Tourism and Youth Affairs Thabet Nabulsi said that the membership would help build international partnerships, exchange expertise and promote Aqaba's competitive advantages and investment opportunities, according to an ASEZA statement.

He added that the council represents the global private sector in the travel and tourism industry and brings together leading companies and institutions, providing an opportunity to engage with influential stakeholders involved in investment decisions and tourism development.

ASEZA's membership coincided with its participation in the council's 26th Global Summit, hosted by Malta in October, with the participation of government officials, policymakers and tourism industry leaders from around the world.

Nabulsi took part in a panel discussion titled "Public-Private Leadership: The Next Trillion-Dollar Investment", which explored the role of partnerships in stimulating tourism investment, developing destinations and creating an attractive environment for international capital.

He said that the session provided an opportunity to present Aqaba's experience as a special economic zone combining tourism assets with investment opportunities, stressing the importance of public-private sector cooperation in supporting tourism growth.

Nabulsi added that through its WTTC membership, ASEZA seeks to strengthen Aqaba's presence in international markets and enhance its competitiveness as a tourism and investment destination, while supporting sustainable tourism development.

He also invited global tourism industry leaders and investors to explore Aqaba's diverse tourism experiences, from the Red Sea beaches to Petra and Wadi Rum, as well as its promising investment opportunities and take part in shaping the future of its tourism sector.

Interior minister, Austrian counterpart sign security cooperation agreement in Vienna



Petra photo

Minister of Interior Mazen Faraya on Monday meets with his Austrian counterpart Gerhard Karneron in Vienna over ways to enhance relations and expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Interior Mazen Faraya on Monday met with his Austrian counterpart Gerhard Karneron in Vienna over ways to enhance relations and expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

During the meeting, which was attended by Jordanian Ambassador to Austria Mohammad Hindawi, the two ministers discussed ways to enhance cooperation in managing migration and asylum issues, as well as exchanging expertise and benefiting from the experiences of the relevant authorities in both countries.

The talks also covered ways to boost security coordination and information exchange between the two countries' relevant agencies to address emerging security challenges and combat transnational organised crime, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Fraya and Karner also signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance security cooperation between the Public Security Directorate and Austria's Federal Ministry of the Interior, within the framework of the agreement signed between the Ministry of Interior and its Austrian counterpart in Amman on October 4, 2001.

The memorandum covers cooperation in combating terrorism, extremism, drug crimes, illegal migration, migrant smuggling, human trafficking and the online sexual exploitation of children, as well as cybersecurity and cybercrime.

It also provides for cooperation in border security and management, civil protection, natural disaster prevention, forensic examination and handling explosive materials.

Shared infrastructure key to expanding Jordan's green hydrogen sector — energy minister



Petra photo

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Saleh Kharabsheh (left) on Monday speaks during a roundtable on the outcomes of a study on developing Jordan's green hydrogen sector ahead of the Jordan Europe Investment Conference

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan is moving ahead to develop its green hydrogen industry and implement necessary shared infrastructure projects alongside clear commitments from developers and investors, backed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Saleh Kharabsheh said on Monday.

Kharabsheh spoke during a roundtable discussing the outcomes of a study on developing Jordan's green hydrogen sector ahead of the Jordan Europe Investment Conference, noting that shared infrastructure will operate under open access rules to serve current and future developers and attract new investors, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

He added that Jordan has prepared an enabling environment for sector growth by drafting the National Green Hydrogen Strategy, updating legislative and regulatory frameworks, preparing the Gas Law, and establishing investment procedures and incentives to attract developers.

Kharabsheh said that shared infrastructure encompasses hydrogen transmission networks, a water desalination plant, storage facilities, and an export terminal at the Port of Aqaba, stressing that the government is moving ahead with implementing these components in coordination with developers.

He pointed out that the green hydrogen strategy sets clear milestones for 2030, 2040, and 2050 to achieve Jordan's vision of building an integrated green hydrogen sector that benefits the national economy and expands investment opportunities.

Kharabsheh underscored that the project's success requires cooperation and coordination between the government and developers, alongside stronger transparency and information sharing on service costs, fees, and operational needs to unify efforts and equip all stakeholders with effective planning tools.

RJ, Tourism Ministry discuss joint global marketing push

AMMAN (JT) — Royal Jordanian Airlines (RJ) has convened a meeting of its international station managers under the patronage of Tourism and Antiquities Minister Emad Hijazeen to align marketing efforts and boost inbound tourism to the Kingdom.

Held in partnership with the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) and the Jordan Hotels Association (JHA), the talks focused on expanding the "Discover Jordan" initiative, according to an RJ statement.

Participants discussed strategies to jointly market hotels, hospitality services, and local experiences through coordinated promotional campaigns and digital marketing tools aimed at key target markets.

During the meeting, Hijazeen underscored the need for close coordination among RJ's overseas offices, tourism bodies, and Jordanian embassies abroad.

He noted that a unified action plan is vital to enhancing Jordan's global competitiveness, increasing tourist arrivals, and driving up hotel occupancy rates.

Prime minister, Senate president discuss legislative priorities, economic projects



Petra photo

Senate President Faisal Fayez on Monday receives Prime Minister Jafar Hassan

AMMAN (JT) — Senate President Faisal Fayez on Monday received Prime Minister Jafar Hassan at the Upper House, in the presence of members of the Senate's Permanent Bureau.

The meeting focused on coordination and consultation between the legislative and executive authorities within the constitutional framework, particularly on issues and legislation serving the public interest, in line with Royal directives outlined in the Speech from the Throne, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Hassan congratulated Fayez on the renewal of his appointment as Senate president, expressing his appreciation for the Royal trust placed in him.

Fayez stressed the importance of the government's proposed amendments to legislation combating terrorism and extremism, which aim to toughen penalties for terrorist crimes and protect society against Takfiri ideology and promoters of hate speech.

He also called for continued government efforts to implement major economic projects that have a tangible impact on citizens' daily lives, strengthen the national economy, stimulate growth, and help reduce poverty and unemployment.

Senate First Deputy President Abdullah Ensour and Senate Assistants Suhair Ali and Zuhair Abu Fares attended the meeting, while Minister of Political and Parliamentary Affairs Abdulmonem Odat, and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Abdullatif Najdawi accompanied the prime minister.

Jordan-EU investment conference to advance 3b euro partnership package



AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan-Europe Investment Conference on November 19 will mark a key step in implementing the Jordan-EU Strategic and Comprehensive Partnership, which is backed by a 3 billion euro financial and investment package for the 2025-2027 period, according to the European Commission.

The package comprises 640 million euros in grants, around 1.4 billion euros in mobilised public and private investments, and 1 billion euros in concessional loans under the Macro-Financial Assistance programme, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

The partnership was launched in Brussels on January 29, 2025, by His Majesty King Abdullah and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and reaffirmed at their January 2026 summit. It links European support to Jordan's role in promoting regional stability and its commitment to economic reform.

Under the fourth 500 million euro Macro-Financial Assistance programme, signed in August 2025, disbursements have reached 400 million euros.

This includes a 150 million euro tranche released on September 10, 2026, and 250 million euros disbursed in September 2025. A fifth 500 million euro programme remains subject to the completion of reform requirements.

While Macro-Financial Assistance provides concessional loans to support macroeconomic stability, investment mobilisation focuses on financing viable projects in water, renewable energy, digital infrastructure, transport and high-value industries, in line with the second executive programme of the Economic Modernisation Vision.

Supported by Jordanian tax and customs incentives and regulatory amendments introduced in 2026 to reduce administrative costs and licensing times, the conference will examine project financing tools, risk mitigation mechanisms, and the role of development banks and funds in turning investment commitments into projects and job opportunities.

JAF evacuates new group of sick children from Gaza



JAF photo

The Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army on Monday evacuates the 38th batch of sick children from the Gaza Strip for treatment in Jordan

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) on Monday evacuated the 38th batch of sick children from the Gaza Strip for treatment in Jordan, under the Jordanian Medical Corridor initiative, launched under Royal directives.

The latest batch comprised 12 sick children accompanied by 11 family members, according to a JAF statement.

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

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

The initiative reflects Jordan's humanitarian and medical role in supporting Palestinians and alleviating their suffering amid the difficult humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip, while providing essential healthcare to those most in need, it said.

Jordan also operates two military field hospitals in Gaza, one in the northern part of the Strip, established in 2009 following the 2008 war, and another in Khan Younis in the south, established in November 2023 following the outbreak of the Israeli war on Gaza.

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

Through these efforts, Jordan reaffirms its commitment to supporting Palestinians and enhancing the humanitarian and medical response under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah, helping ease the suffering of patients and the injured and ensuring they receive treatment and care, JAF said.

Gov't raises public sector modernisation allocations to JD26.6m for 2027



JT file

General view of Amman

AMMAN (JT) — Government allocations for the Public Sector Modernisation Roadmap are projected to rise to JD26.6 million in 2027, up from JD17.9 million for 2026, according to the 2027 state budget.

Digital transformation accounts for the largest share of the 2027 allocations at JD11.6 million, followed by public sector development at JD6 million, service contracts at JD2 million and computing and automation expenses at JD750,000, marking the first allocation for this item.

The allocations for service contracts remain unchanged from the 2026 reestimates, while indicative figures for 2028 and 2029 are also included in the draft budget, Al Mamlaka TV reported.

A Prime Ministry report on progress under the second executive programme for public sector modernisation during the first half of 2026 showed that 78 of 85 planned outputs had been completed, representing a 92 per cent completion rate for targets set for the period.

Digital government service maturity reached 71 per cent during the first half of 2026, while the number of digitalised services rose to 2,060, accounting for 85.8 per cent of all services eligible for digitalisation. The report also recorded 2.8 million activated digital identities and 16 comprehensive government service centres.

The next phase will focus on measuring the impact of modernisation projects on the quality of services provided to citizens, advancing the transition towards a paperless government and publishing regular national evaluation indicators.

More than 614,000 people used the unified vehicle licence renewal service, which combines payment of traffic violations, compulsory insurance and vehicle licensing.

Mystery shopper assessments also led to 369 corrective measures, alongside improvements to the citizen feedback system.

Authorities digitalised 104 additional services during the first half of 2026, including 35 municipal services.

Covering 2026-2029, the second executive programme includes 185 detailed outputs for 2026. Of these, 78 had been completed, 55 were under way, 49 had not started and three were delayed.

The programme also includes 111 projects, of which 71 were underway and 13 had not yet started.

Jordan-EU Investment Conference promotes Amman-Zarqa gas distribution project



Petra photo

The Jordan-EU Investment Conference 2026 to feature an investment opportunity to develop an urban gas distribution network serving Amman and Zarqa

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan-EU Investment Conference 2026 will feature an investment opportunity to develop an urban gas distribution network serving Amman and Zarqa, aiming to expand natural gas infrastructure and increase use across residential, industrial and commercial sectors.

The project aims to establish an integrated gas distribution utility by extending the Kingdom's existing high-pressure gas infrastructure through new city gate stations, medium and low-pressure networks and connections to end users, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The project includes the development of two main stations in Zarqa and Sahab, supported by 142 kilometres of 16-bar carbon steel pipelines to serve large customers and supply the network, and 440 kilometres of 4-bar polyethene pipelines for small industrial consumers.

It also includes more than 11,000 kilometres of 100-millibar polyethene pipelines to serve residential users, alongside pressure regulators, metering systems and infrastructure to convert end-user facilities to natural gas.

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

Police arrest 160 suspects in 108 crystal meth cases

By Rana Husseini

AMMAN — The Anti-Narcotics Department (AND) announced on Monday the arrest of 160 suspects in 108 cases related to Crystal meth trafficking and dealing in various parts of the Kingdom, according to official sources.

The arrests came during the fourteenth week of a "strict" security campaign and an awareness campaign that was initiated by AND in collaboration with the Media and Community Policing Directorate to combat the use of Crystal meth in Jordanian society.

AND officers seized 1.416 kilogrammes of crystal meth allegedly found in the possession of the arrested suspects, Police Spokesperson Brig. Gen. Amer Sartawi said.

The campaign resulted in the arrest of 52 suspects in 36 cases related to trafficking, smuggling, promotion and the use of Crystal meth," Sartawi said.

Meanwhile, 108 suspects were arrested in 72 cases for using the deadly substance, Sartawi told The Jordan Times.

The campaigns aimed at warning the public about the use of this deadly substance and pursuing individuals who deal with the illicit substance.

Crystal meth is the common name for crystal methamphetamine, a strong and highly addictive drug that affects the central nervous system, according to WebMD.

Sartawi stated that the "campaign is ongoing until it reaches its goals of spreading awareness and pursuing individuals who deal with this deadly substance".

All the detained suspects were referred to the State Security Prosecutor for further questioning and indictment, he added.

Citizens are urged to report any person who deals with Crystal meth by contacting 911, according to a statement by the Public Security Directorate (PSD).

All information will be treated with utmost discretion, seriousness, firmness, verification, and confidentiality, the PSD statement added.

According to PSD 2025 statistics, there were 22,031 drug crimes in the Kingdom.

The number of drug and possession cases was 15,720, while the number of drug trafficking cases was 6,311, according to the PSD statistics.

Jordan, Georgia hold third round of political consultations



Photo courtesy of Foreign Ministry

Foreign Ministry Secretary General Daifallah Fayez and Georgian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandre Khvtisiashvili on Monday co-chair the third round of political consultations between Jordan and Georgia

AMMAN (JT) — Jordan and Georgia on Monday held the third round of political consultations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss ways to strengthen bilateral relations and expand cooperation across several fields.

The consultations were co-chaired by Foreign Ministry Secretary General Daifallah Fayez and Georgian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandre Khvtisiashvili, according to a ministry statement.

The talks focused on opportunities to develop economic, trade, investment, tourism, educational and cultural ties, as well as regional and international developments and issues of mutual interest.



AFP photo

This combination of photos created on Monday shows (left to right) Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on November 11, Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on November 2, and US President Donald Trump in Washington, DC, on November 5

China says Xi, Trump, Putin to discuss 'world peace' in trilateral

BEIJING (AFP) — China said on Monday that President Xi Jinping and his US and Russian counterparts Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin would discuss "world peace" when they hold their first trilateral summit in Shenzhen this week.

The three leaders will hold "in-depth exchanges on safeguarding world peace and promoting strategic stability in major-power relations", Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning told a news briefing, hours after Beijing confirmed the meeting.

"It will be of ground-breaking significance," she said.

The trilateral is expected to happen on Thursday on the sidelines of a summit of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders in the southern Chinese city.

> 'It will be of ground-breaking significance'

The Kremlin and the White House both previously confirmed the three-way meeting.

Trump wants to talk about reducing nuclear arsenals and is also set to bring up his war in Iran, but he is not expected to discuss Russia's war in Ukraine, US officials said.

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said Xi showed "irritation" in a recent meeting when the idea of the trilateral talks covering Ukraine came up.

"He explicitly pointed out that this is a European conflict, in which the Europeans must also be at the table," Steinmeier told ARD.

On nuclear disarmament, China has long insisted that the United States and Russia reduce their own giant nuclear arsenals before it agrees to talks on its own stockpile.

Iran rules out UN inspections of damaged nuclear sites until war ends



AFP photo

This handout satellite image courtesy of Vantor shows the Natanz Nuclear Facility near Natanz, Isfahan province, in central Iran on March 7

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran will not let UN inspectors visit its damaged nuclear facilities until the Middle East war has ended and the United States meets its conditions, a senior Iranian official said.

The remarks came days after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) urged Tehran to take steps towards resuming inspections, which have been suspended since last year's 12-day war with Israel, when the US also struck Iranian nuclear sites.

"We will not grant the IAEA access to the facilities until Iran's conditions are met and the war has permanently ended," Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said in a televised interview late Sunday.

Iranian nuclear facilities were hit again during the Middle East war which broke out on February 28 when US-Israeli strikes killed Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

IAEA inspectors visited Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant in September but have not gained access to other bombed sites including Natanz, Fordow and Isfahan.

Gharibabadi said the agency's request to inspect damaged facilities was "likely aimed at assessing the effectiveness of American weaponry".

Efforts to end the Middle East war have made little headway. Tehran is demanding that Washington unfreeze Iranian assets and lift sanctions, among other conditions, in exchange for reopening the Strait of Hormuz, the vital energy shipping route it has blockaded during the conflict.

Iranian officials have said talks on Iran's nuclear programme would come at a later stage.

Earlier this month, the US military announced a $20 million reward for information on Iran's nuclear programme, a move Tehran called "repugnant".

US airports expected to return to normal after three days of disruption

NEW YORK (AFP) — US air travel was expected to return to normal on Monday after three days of widespread disruption following an extraordinary no-takeoff order issued by US aviation authorities.

The ground stop issued on Friday afternoon was only the second time such a directive had been issued nationwide in the busy US airspace since planes were grounded following the 9/11 attacks, and was blamed by the Trump administration on a faulty upgrade to communications equipment.

As of Sunday evening more than 55 US-related flights — those travelling within, into or out of the United States — scheduled for Monday were cancelled, according to industry tracker FlightAware.

That marked a dramatic shift from the more than 1,960 flights cancelled on Sunday.

The Trump administration sought to reassure weary flyers as questions remained over how such chaos could unfold in the world's largest economy, a country that prides itself on its technological prowess.

Throughout the weekend, stranded passengers wandered through chaotic airports and sat on floors, waiting for updates or to be rebooked.



AFP photo

United Airlines passenger planes are seen at gates at Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) in Newark, New Jersey, on Sunday

Officials blamed Friday's colossal snafu on faulty work to upgrade air traffic control communication cables.

President Donald Trump on Sunday ended uncharacteristic days of silence on the ground stop, but only to blame his predecessor Joe Biden for the debacle.

Trump insisted he inherited a mess from the Biden administration and said Congress, which his party has controlled for two years, must approve funds to upgrade America's outdated air traffic control system.

"The Biden Administration was an FAA disaster," Trump said, referring to the Federal Aviation Administration.

"Everything they touched turned bad. Big money spent unwisely, making an old and broken system worse than when they began," Trump asserted.

FAA chief Bryan Bedford had said Saturday that air travel for millions of Americans stranded at airports would return to normal by the close of business on Sunday.

But Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said on Sunday morning it will actually take longer to get planes, crews and travellers to where they need to be.

"So, in the airspace, we're going to see things come back to normal today, but probably fully normal tomorrow," Duffy said on ABC News.

"We had airplanes and crews out of position because of Friday, so it takes a little bit of time to do that."

'I'm the secretary'

Duffy also flatly rejected calls for his resignation over the travel chaos, insisting he inherited woefully outdated air traffic control infrastructure, such as, he said, radar equipment that dates back to the 1960s.

"So when we do work and things go wrong, of course I'm the secretary. But I also have to acknowledge what was delivered to me," Duffy said in an interview on CNN.

The ground stop not only plunged US air travel into chaos, it also raised serious concerns about the country's aging infrastructure.

Duffy has appealed for $50 billion in funds to upgrade and modernise the air traffic control system and called for Congress, which controls the purse strings of the US government, to "meet this moment".

But Democrats quickly pounced to say Congress under Trump's Republicans could already have done this.

EU eyes investment opportunities in Jordan as 60 or more European companies express interest — Suica

Continued from page 1

Suica also expressed condolences over the terrorist attack on a church in Karak late last month, which killed nine people, and voiced the European Union's support for Jordan.

"We express full support to Jordanian authorities' investigation on this, of course, but we already work closely with them on security matters," she said.

CBJ completes JD400m sukuk issuance to finance Amman projects

Continued from page 1

Participating Islamic banks fully subscribed to the auction, reflecting the capacity of Islamic banking institutions to absorb major financial issuances and mobilise savings towards development initiatives.

The sukuk enable Islamic financial institutions to diversify their investment portfolios beyond conventional government debt instruments while reinforcing their role as partners in local development in line with the Economic Modernisation Vision.

Within the capital market, the issuance is expected to diversify fixed income investment tools and deepen the domestic financial market by opening Islamic investment avenues for insurance companies as well as savings, investment, and pension funds.

It also broadens the Kingdom's base of Islamic sukuk issuers to include public institutions and municipalities, strengthening Jordan's presence in the Islamic finance sector.

Eligible for listing and trading on the Amman Stock Exchange under approved regulatory terms, the sukuk offer investors greater liquidity management flexibility while establishing a new framework for Sharia compliant public project financing.

PSD announces blocking of Telegram in Jordan

Continued from page 1

The PSD urged citizens to exercise caution when using social media applications, avoid engaging with unknown accounts or clicking on suspicious links, and report illegal activities or content through official channels.

It also emphasised the important role of families in monitoring children's use of social media and digital applications, raising their awareness of potential risks and guiding them towards safe and responsible technology use. The directorate also encouraged parents to make use of available parental control tools.

The PSD reaffirmed its commitment to taking the necessary measures to combat crimes and violations committed in cyberspace and safeguard community security and public safety.

2024 election well-run, inclusive — EU observation mission

Continued from page 1

"It is now mid-way through the electoral cycle leading to legislative elections in 2028, a timely juncture to consider further electoral reform," Zovko said.

Zovko, who is the former Chief Observer of the EU Election Observation Mission 2024 and Member of the European Parliament, said that the EU has deployed an Election Follow-up Mission (EU EFM) to Jordan to "assess progress towards electoral reform".

The mission met with a wide range of Jordanian stakeholders, Zovko, who is on her fourth visit to the Kingdom, added.

Zovko told reporters that the mission shared 18 recommendations that were made by the EU EOM in 2024 for legal and administrative change to bring the electoral process further into line with the regional and international human rights standards for democratic elections adopted by Jordan.

Zovko said that the recommendations focused on the importance of promoting the political participation of under-represented groups, both as voters and as candidates.

In addition, the recommendations address diverse aspects of the elections, including the legal framework, election administration, and the political participation of women and youth, according to Zovko.

"While women now hold approaching 20 per cent of seats in the House of Representatives, a record result achieved in 2024, this fails to reflect the demographic strength of women in society," she said.

More women must be empowered to enter Parliament, including through the provision of more preferential seats in the national electoral district /on national lists, Zovko told reporters.

Young people are scarcely represented in Parliament, while persons with disabilities are also "significantly under-represented", she added.

Meanwhile, seven recommendations were identified as priorities, namely voter education, regulation of the election campaign and of campaign finance, decriminalisation of defamation and amendment of the Cybercrime Law, better participation rights for persons with disabilities, and the rights of domestic and international election observers to be enshrined in law, Zovko said.

The head of the mission stressed that the implementation of the recommendations would "increase transparency and credibility in elections, and support informed engagement of voters".

"Reforms of the laws, which impact freedom of expression, particularly the defamation and the cybercrime laws, should be considered," she added.

She also pointed out to the important role of media education and freedom of the media as two essential tools to ensure credible elections.

In addition, Zovko highlighted the importance of considering future amendments to the elections and political parties laws "ahead of the election, to provide clarity and certainty to stakeholders".

The EU Election Follow-up Mission will publish a final report in the coming months, which will provide an updated assessment of the implementation status of each recommendation, she said.

The mission met with a variety of Jordanian dignitaries, officials and local entities, including the Chief Chamberlain and President of the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities HH Prince Mired and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Ayman Safadi.

They also met with Minister of Government Communication Mohammad Momani, Minister of Political and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Munim Oudat and Speaker of the Lower House Ibrahim Tarawneh.

In addition, the mission met with Chairman of the Independent Election Commission Musa Maaytah as well as representatives of political parties, media and civil society.

"We had positive meetings with the stakeholders, including government officials who assured us that the government is continuing with its reform process regarding the elections," Zovko said.

She added: "The EU will also continue to support the government and local entities with its reform process".

THE JORDAN TIMES

An independent Arab political daily, established in 1975

Chairman of the Board
Samih Maaitah

Director General
Hasan Jazzazi

Editor-in-Chief
Raed Omari

Editorial and advertising offices
Jordan Press Foundation

The Jordan Times is published daily except Saturdays

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

E mail: **editor@jordantimes.com**
jotimes@jordantimes.com
Website: **jordantimes.com**

Follow us on X Platform: **@jordantimes.com**
Like our facebook page: **thejordantimes**
Youtube: **thejordantimes**

National Library registration number:
D/1998/2062
Telephone: **5600800 ext. 2392**
Facsimile: **5696183**
Advertising facsimile: **5696183**
Circulation Department:
5600800 ext: **2383**

What these elections teach us



WASHINGTON WATCH

James J. Zogby

This year's midterm elections held surprises and non-surprises.

Democrats were expected to win and they did.

The biggest miscalculation of this election was perhaps President Trump's assumption that he'd be an asset to vulnerable Republicans. As it turned out, his rallies in their states were more about him and his need to be centre stage. He often spoke for almost two hours, overshadowing and ignoring the candidates he was supposed to be helping.

His constant refrain was: "Vote as if I were on the ballot." In the end, as one reporter observed, voters did just that. And Mr. Trump's 32 per cent favourable rating resulted in a poor outcome for Republicans.

Because Democratic candidates were raising more money than Republicans, the GOP turned to superPACs, corporate PACs, and other non-reportable independent expenditure entities to give them an advantage. The result was the most expensive election in history. While the numbers are still being tallied, it appears that more than $14 billion was spent by both parties.

As expected, the issues that dominated this election were the cost of living, immigration, corruption, and foreign wars. Most of these broke in favour of Democrats, leaving Republicans to blame high prices on the Biden administration or shift the discussion to the threat posed by immigrants. Such tactics may have worked in the 2024 election, but the impact of the president's tariffs on many consumer goods and the ever-increasing costs of gasoline, diesel fuel, and home heating took their toll on the GOP.

The issues of US military aid to Israel and the role played by the pro-Israel lobby (AIPAC) in intimidating and silencing politicians played a less significant role in the November election than in the Democratic primaries where support for Israel proved to be the undoing of several incumbents. In Senate races, a number of Democrat victors were clear in their opposition to aid to Israel and their refusal to accept the support of AIPAC, but because they weren't challenged by their Republican opponents, the issue didn't become a central theme in the November election.

The major exception was the Senate contest in Michigan between Democrat Abdul El Sayed and his Republican opponent, Mike Rogers. But it wasn't Rogers who made El Sayed's criticism of Israel the issue. Instead, following the lead of President Trump, Rogers focused on charges that El Sayed was a socialist or Islamic extremist who couldn't be trusted to be loyal to America. The attacks against El Sayed's criticism of Israel were left to the woman he'd defeated in the Democratic primary, who continued to demand that he adopt her positions on Israel. When El Sayed refused to do so, she endorsed Mike Rogers, an act of political suicide which ended up benefiting El Sayed's campaign.

Policy matters aside, one "meta-issue" helped shape this year's contests. Voters on both sides of the partisan debate are fed up with politicians — especially the blow-dried, consultant-shaped characters who've long dominated the stage. Voters want authenticity: Candidates who speak hard truths, whom they feel can be trusted to address their needs. One might argue that this was Donald Trump's appeal in 2016 and Joe Biden's in 2020. And it's the edge that Mr. Trump has lost — with his expensive vanity remodeling projects, shady business dealings, and demonstrated insensitivity to the economic hardships of many voters. If anything, this year was a classic "throw the bums out" election — leading to many establishment Democratic politicians being beaten in the primaries and the GOP's establishment crowd being shown the door in the general.

Lessons must be learned from this election — and it appears the establishment consultants on both sides don't appear to understand. Democrats mustn't assume that this year's victories will automatically repeat in 2028. The consultants who are telling Democrats that the GOP is dead and it's time to move to the center, are wrong on both counts. Voters chose Democrats willing to fight for a change in economic priorities — where health care is seen as a right and affordable for all; where resources are allocated away from war and weapons toward meeting domestic priorities; and where money from corporations and billionaires don't dominate our politics. If Democrats, now in charge, don't address these issues that brought them victory, they may pay a price in 2028.

The writer is president of the Washington-based Arab American Institute

Beyond the numbers: What does corporate transparency in Jordanian companies mean for investors

By Baker Aref Alkrishah

Rising profits may inspire optimism, but they are not sufficient to assess companies' financial solvency or provide reassurance about their financial future.

However promising the figures may appear, they do not, on their own, reveal the extent of underlying risks or guarantee investors a safe path. Investors must understand how companies generate their profits, whether they can convert those profits into cash, and what obligations and risks may affect their ability to continue operating. This issue is becoming increasingly important today, amid the improved results of companies listed on the Amman Stock Exchange during the first half of this year and in an economic and regional environment whose outcomes remain uncertain. The Exchange announced that the net profits of listed companies that had submitted their financial statements reached approximately JOD 1.2005 billion during the first half of this year, compared with approximately JOD 1.0501 billion during the same period in 2025, representing an increase of 14.3 per cent.

Profits in the industrial sector also increased by 17.5 per cent. These figures appear encouraging, as they reflect an improvement in the market's financial performance. However, investors should not base their decisions on the figures alone. Overall growth in market profits does not mean that every company has grown, nor does it mean that every company reporting high profits has a sound financial position. Profits may arise from non-recurring items, operations, or transactions, while companies face operational or financing pressures that are not clearly reflected in the headline figures.

This is where the importance of transparency (adequate disclosure) arises, not as a formal means of publishing financial reports to comply with instructions, but as a tool that protects investors and helps them understand what is happening within a company. High levels of transparency mean providing accurate, clear, and comparable information and disclosing material information that may affect an investor's decision, whether it relates to financial performance, the company's obligations, or the risks surrounding its activities.

This protection is particularly important for small investors. Individual investors do not have access to specialised information channels or advanced financial analysis tools, and they may rely on information available to the public or on what circulates on social media. Therefore, any delay in disclosure, absence of explanatory information, or reliance on rumours may increase the likelihood of hasty decisions based on a single figure or inaccurate news. Conversely, when information is available on time and presented clearly, investors become less susceptible to being carried away by good news or a positive indicator.

In Jordan, disclosure is not limited to the publication of financial reports. The 2017 Instructions on Corporate Governance for Listed Public Shareholding Companies, as amended, regulate aspects of corporate governance and transparency, as well as the responsibilities of boards of directors. In addition, the Amman Stock Exchange's instructions require the submission of reviewed interim financial statements within the specified deadlines.

The Exchange's disclosure platform provides an official channel for accessing financial reports and announcements relating to listed companies, instead of relying on unreliable sources. The Securities Commission also oversees disclosure and protects investors, including by monitoring compliance with the disclosure of material information and significant events. However, the existence of rules and digital channels does not mean that investors are exempt from their responsibilities. Regulatory protection creates the environment, but the investment decision remains the responsibility of the person investing their money. Investors should therefore read before buying, compare before drawing conclusions, and ask questions before following the news.

Disclosure is also no longer limited to profits, debt, and cash flows. In September 2026, the Securities Commission launched the Environmental, Social, and Governance framework, which is to become mandatory for economic entities included in the Amman Stock Exchange Index starting next year, under the "apply and explain" approach. This step is important because some risks do not appear fully in conventional financial statements, such as environmental risks, regulatory changes, management quality and a company's ability to respond to market transformations. Sustainability disclosure does not guarantee a company's success, but it provides investors with an additional window through which to understand the opportunities and challenges that may affect its future.

Ultimately, figures tell us what has happened, while understanding them in context is what protects investors from surprises. The question investors should ask is not simply: How much profit did the company make? Rather, they should ask: How did the company generate its profits? To what extent can it convert those profits into cash? And what risks might affect its future results? Figures alone do not protect investors; rather, it is transparency that makes them understandable and transforms the Amman Stock Exchange from a market where shares are traded into a market where trust is built.

What does an investor really look for?

By Raad Mahmoud Al-Tal

Discussions about attracting investment often focus on tax incentives, exemptions and streamlined procedures, as though these alone determine where investors choose to put their money. In reality, investment decisions are driven by a much broader set of considerations. Investors are ultimately concerned with the profitability, sustainability and risks of their investments, and with whether the business environment allows them to plan and operate with confidence.

At the heart of every investment decision is a straightforward economic calculation: The expected return relative to the costs and risks involved. Investors look for an environment that offers attractive returns without exposing their capital to unnecessary uncertainty. Macroeconomic stability is therefore essential. Stable prices, a predictable exchange rate, sound monetary and fiscal policies and consistent regulations all help investors assess future costs, estimate revenues and make long-term decisions.

Market access is another important consideration. Investors are interested not only in the size of the domestic market, but also in its purchasing power and its potential to serve as a gateway to other markets. In this respect, Jordan has a strategic advantage. Its geographic location and network of trade agreements offer opportunities to position the Kingdom as a production and export base serving regional and international markets.

The cost of doing business is equally important. Energy, water, transportation, land, labour and financing costs directly affect the competitiveness and profitability of investment projects. Equally significant is the efficiency of public administration. Investors need clear regulations, timely licensing procedures and effective coordination among government institutions. Delays, excessive bureaucracy and frequent regulatory changes increase uncertainty and can undermine otherwise viable investment opportunities.

Jordan has made progress in attracting foreign investment, as reflected in recent figures. Foreign direct investment inflows reached approximately USD 2.02 billion in 2025, an increase of 25.1 per cent compared with 2024. In the second quarter of 2026, inflows amounted to approximately JD 457.5 million. Over the same period, the Investor Confidence Index rose by 21.9 per cent to reach 186.6 points. These developments point to improving investor confidence and provide encouraging signals about the investment climate.

However, the volume of investment inflows alone does not tell the whole story. What matters just as much is the nature and economic impact of these investments. Are they creating new productive capacity? Are they generating employment, expanding exports, transferring technology and strengthening local supply chains? There is a fundamental difference between investment that creates new economic activity and investment that simply involves a change in ownership of existing assets.

Despite its progress, Jordan continues to face challenges. Relatively high production costs, particularly in energy and transportation, water scarcity, access to affordable financing, administrative complexity and the need for greater regulatory predictability remain important considerations for investors. At the same time, regional competition for capital is becoming increasingly intense. Investors compare opportunities across countries and direct their capital towards locations that offer the most competitive combination of costs, returns and risks.

For Jordan, therefore, the priority should not simply be to offer more incentives, but to address the underlying factors that influence investment decisions. Tax exemptions may attract an investor initially, but they are unlikely to guarantee a long-term commitment if operating costs remain high, procedures are cumbersome or regulations are unpredictable.

Investors are not necessarily looking for the country that offers the largest incentives or the most generous tax exemptions. They are looking for the country that delivers the best return after accounting for all associated costs and risks. In economic terms, this is known as the risk-adjusted return. It is this calculation, rather than the size of the incentives alone, that shapes investment decisions.

Jordan's ability to attract and retain investment will therefore depend on its capacity to reduce business costs, strengthen institutional efficiency, ensure regulatory stability and improve the competitiveness of its economy. Incentives may open the door, but a competitive business environment is what convinces investors to stay, expand and reinvest their profits. The real competition between countries is not about who offers the most incentives, but who provides investors with the most attractive balance between returns and risks.

An inclusive school must pass the test of an ordinary Tuesday

By Douglas Vandergraph

An inclusive school is not defined by the presence of a ramp in a photograph or by the words printed on its development plan. It is defined by what happens on an ordinary on Tuesday, when a student needs to enter the classroom, understand an assignment, join classmates at lunch and return home without being made to feel like a problem. That is the standard by which Jordan's commitment to inclusive education should be understood.

In October, the National Centre for Human Rights reported monitoring visits to inclusive schools in northern and central governorates. The visits were intended to examine how students with disabilities experience the right to education without discrimination. Monitoring of this kind is valuable because the most consequential barriers can be invisible to an official who only sees the building briefly. Real inclusion is a sequence of experiences rather than a single certificate of compliance.

Consider a family preparing a child for school. Are transport arrangements reliable? Can the child move between the entrance, classroom and washroom? Does a teacher have the time and support to adapt a lesson without separating the student from peers? Is there a safe way for the family to raise a concern without fearing that the child will be labelled difficult? Each of these questions turns a national principle into a practical obligation. They deserve routine attention, not just occasional inspection.

Schools themselves should not be left alone to meet such expectations. Teachers need appropriate training and materials. Administrators need clear budgets and authority to act. Parents and students need accessible channels to explain what has and has not worked. When a problem is found, the monitoring process should produce an understandable response: Who will address it, what will change and how will the result be checked? Without that last step, even careful observation can become a paper exercise.

Inclusion also benefits classmates who do not have disabilities. A student who learns to work alongside someone who communicates differently acquires more than a social skill. The student encounters an everyday lesson in shared dignity. Such learning does not happen through forced gestures of pity. It grows when friendships, responsibilities and activities are arranged so that everyone can participate as a real member of the school community.

My Christian understanding of neighbourly responsibility emphasises the value of people who are easily overlooked. It is not a request to make a classroom religious. It is a reminder that the moral character of any institution is revealed by how it treats someone who needs an adjustment others can do without. In Jordan's plural society, that responsibility can be recognised by families of many convictions and expressed through equal rights rather than special favour.

The most reliable improvement may be modest: A timetable adjusted to match accessible transport; an assessment offered in a usable format; a quiet place to recover from sensory overload; or a staff member empowered to respond promptly to a parent's question. These changes lack the drama of a launch ceremony. Their impact, however, appears every morning when a child enters school expecting to belong.

Jordan's inclusive education efforts will be strongest when monitoring is followed by public learning and practical correction. A school should be able to explain not only how many students with disabilities are enrolled, but whether they attend regularly, participate meaningfully and receive support that changes with their needs. Inclusion should survive the departure of the inspection team. It should still be there on Tuesday.



Photo Courtesy of Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply

Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Yarub Qudah meets with Belgian Ambassador to Jordan Gianmarco Rizzo, a delegation from the Arab Belgian Chamber of Commerce, and Belgian investors to discuss ways to expand cooperation

Minister of Industry invites Belgian firms to explore $15b in Jordan investment opportunities

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Yarub Qudah, on Monday called on Belgian companies to capitalise on investment opportunities presented at the Jordan-Europe Investment Conference, scheduled to be held at the Dead Sea on November 19, and establish partnerships with Jordanian counterparts.

Qudah met with a delegation from the Arab Belgian Chamber of Commerce, in the presence of Belgian Ambassador to Jordan Gianmarco Rizzo and Belgian investors representing several sectors, to discuss ways to expand bilateral economic, trade and investment cooperation, according to a statement by Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply.

Held under Royal patronage, with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen taking part, the conference will showcase more than 40 investment opportunities worth over $15 billion in the energy, water, industry, transport, logistics, technology and digital economy sectors.

Qudah stressed the importance of attracting Belgian businesses to benefit from Jordan's strategic location and network of free trade agreements, noting that the Kingdom's proximity to Iraq and Syria offers opportunities to expand into neighbouring markets, particularly amid growing needs for recovery, reconstruction, infrastructure and logistics.

The minister highlighted government efforts to improve the business environment through legislative updates, simplified procedures, faster licensing, digitalised services, expanded investment incentives and closer cooperation with the private sector to address investors' challenges.

Qudah said the Kingdom's economy grew by 3 per cent in the second quarter of 2026, while total exports rose by 11.2 per cent during the first eight months of the year to JD7.464 billion, including JD6.464 billion in national exports.

Cargo handling at Aqaba ports increased by 12 per cent during the first nine months of the year to reach 19.68 million tonnes, while container handling rose by 6.58 per cent to 786,900 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), he added.

Qudah added that the foreign reserves reached $28.5 billion at the end of September, covering 9.2 months of imports, while inflation stood at 2.26 per cent during the first nine months of the year, reflecting the resilience of the national economy.

For his part, Rizzo affirmed Belgian interest in expanding business ties with Jordan and exploring further cooperation opportunities through the conference.

ASEZA introduces property manager profession to regulate real estate sector, create jobs



Photo Courtesy of ASEZA

The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority on Monday announces the introduction of the 'property manager' profession for the first time in the Kingdom in line with Aqaba's urban and investment growth

AMMAN (JT) — The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) on Monday announced the introduction of the "property manager" profession for the first time in the Kingdom, aiming to enhance real estate management, improve operational efficiency and create specialised jobs in line with Aqaba's urban and investment growth.

ASEZA Chief Commissioner Shadi Majali, said that establishing the profession marks a "qualitative" step towards regulating the real estate sector and opening up a new career path for national talent, amid growing and diverse property investments that require expertise in management, operation, maintenance and services supervision.

Majali said that real estate is no longer simply an asset owned or leased by an investor, but an investment that requires professional management to preserve its value, enhance operational efficiency and ensure the sustainability of services, according to an ASE statement.

This marks a shift from traditional management practices towards an institutional model based on competence and accountability.

He stated that ASEZA has made the appointment of a property manager mandatory for commercial and hotel buildings, as well as residential complexes comprising eight or more apartments.

The appointment remains optional for other residential properties, under approved instructions outlining the profession's administrative and operational responsibilities.

A property manager's duties include; overseeing administrative and operational activities, following up on maintenance, facilities and services, coordinating between owners, tenants and service providers, as well as preparing the required reports within the scope of their mandate, Majali said.

The initiative is expected to create sustainable employment opportunities in a growing sector and enable Jordanian professionals to develop specialised careers in line with Aqaba's continued expansion, he added.

Workers' remittances rise 13.7% to $3.8b in Q3 2026

AMMAN (JT) — Total workers' remittances to the Kingdom rose by 13.7 per cent in the first three quarters of 2026, reaching $3.8 billion, compared with the same period in 2025, according to preliminary figures released by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ).

The data also showed that inbound remittances increased by 7.4 per cent in September, reaching $397.6 million, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The United Arab Emirates topped the list of remittance-sending countries during the first three quarters, accounting for 20.3 per cent of total inflows, followed by the United States at 19.6 per cent, Saudi Arabia at 17.9 per cent, Qatar at 10.4 per cent and Kuwait at 5.5 per cent. Other countries accounted for the remaining 26.3 per cent.

Meanwhile, outbound remittances by non-Jordanian workers rose by 4.2 per cent in September to reach $159.5 million.

Total outbound remittances also increased by 13 per cent during the first three quarters, reaching $1.46 billion.

In terms of geographical distribution, Egypt was the largest recipient of outbound remittances, accounting for 43 per cent of the total, followed by Bangladesh at 11.5 per cent, the Philippines at 4.8 per cent and Yemen at 3.8 per cent. Other countries accounted for the remaining 36.9 per cent

Hybrids make gains in US auto market amid high gasoline prices

By John Biers
Agence France-Presse

NEW YORK — Electric vehicle (EV) growth has hit a speed bump in the United States, but hybrid autos are gaining market share thanks to the jump in fuel prices due to the Iran war.

Rising popularity of hybrids — which can run on either gasoline or an electric charge — has been a source of US sales increases for Japanese and South Korean car makers in 2026, prompting fresh investments from both established and new players in that segment of the market.

Honda, a longtime rival to US hybrid market leader Toyota, announced this week $3 billion to build a new hybrid plant in Ohio and add capacity at plants in two other states.

Nissan, which is launching its first significant hybrid product for the US market this fall, realised its absence in the category was denting sales, said Ponz Pandikuthira, a senior vice president at Nissan Americas.

"We were losing that traffic," Pandikuthira said, adding that many customers want to at least explore and test drive a hybrid even if they end up buying an internal-combustion engine (ICE) vehicle.

General Motors, which avoided the category earlier in the 2020s when it invested heavily in electric vehicles, plans hybrids "in multiple segments, the key segments that we participate", CEO Mary Barra said last month on a conference call.

"We'll talk more about them as we get closer to the launch," Barra said in response to a question from a Wall Street analyst on an earnings call.

Hybrid electric vehicle volumes have risen by more than a fifth since the middle of 2025, resulting in market share of 16.3 per cent at the end of the second quarter, according to Cox Automotive, an auto services and technology provider.

That's a record and up from 13 per cent a year earlier. The increase stood in contrast with declines in the share of ICE and EV vehicles, with the latter suffering from the elimination of US tax credits under legislation signed by US President Donald Trump.

Gasoline prices have been above $4 a gallon for much of 2026 due to the Middle East war. Prices currently average $3.87 per gallon, according to the American Automobile Association.

Nissan's US campaign in the category will begin with the Rogue, a hybrid version of the compact SUV that has been the Japanese automaker top-selling ICE product in the United States.

Nissan has introduced two generations of hybrid vehicles in other markets, but began working a few years ago on a version better suited to US driving conditions.

"When we use the system in Japan and in Europe, they're mostly in urban driving conditions, which just shines because you're doing stop and go traffic," Pandikuthira said.

The new Rogue being unveiled is "optimised for US driving conditions, so that's why it's a home run with climbing, with lots of use on the highway", Pandikuthira said.

The vehicle's other selling point is Nissan's vehicle architecture in which the electric powertrain exclusively drives the wheels, meaning the gasoline-powered engine is only a source of neutrons but doesn't actually propel the vehicle.

That system, which Nissan markets as "e-POWER", is designed for a quieter, smoother ride than other hybrid models that drive on a gasoline-fuelled engine.

In going with the Rogue, Nissan is picking the most popular vehicle segment for hybrids in the US market. Led by the Toyota RAV-4 and the Honda-CRV, compact SUVs account for about 30 per cent of US hybrid sales, said Stephanie Valdez Streaty, director of industry insights at Cox.

Valdez Streaty attributes the growth in hybrids not only to higher gasoline prices, but also to greater vehicle choice on the market following product introductions from more recent hybrid entrants including South Korean brands Kia and Hyundai.

She predicted that additional hybrids in popular vehicle classes like pickup trucks or full-sized SUVs could sell well.

"It definitely has room to grow," Valdez Streaty said of hybrid's market share.

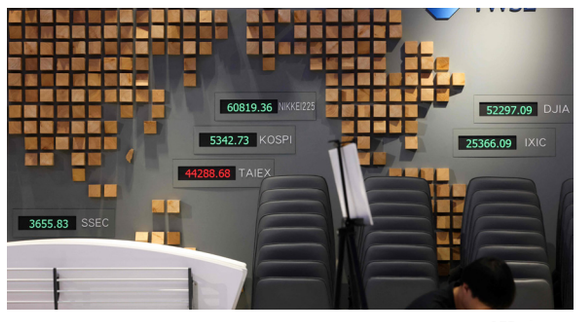
The 10 biggest stock market IPOs

WASHINGTON, United States (AFP) — Anthropic, the developer of the Claude chatbot, is set to start trading on Wall Street on Thursday.

The offering could raise as much as $64.4 billion, which would make it the second-largest IPO in history.

Here is the ranking of the 10 largest IPOs on record, in terms of funds raised. The figures leave out extra shares that underwriters can buy after the sale:

SpaceX — $75 billion. The rocket and AI company listed on the Nasdaq in June 2026, raising almost three times the previous record.



AFP photo

Stock market indices are displayed at the Taiwan Stock Exchange in Taipei on Friday

Saudi Aramco — the Saudi oil giant raised $25.6 billion on the Riyadh stock exchange in December 2019.

Alibaba — at $21.8 billion, the Chinese e-commerce giant made its debut on the New York Stock Exchange in September 2014.

SoftBank Corp — $21.3 billion on the Tokyo Stock Exchange in December 2018.

AgBank — $19.2 billion. Chinese lender Agricultural Bank of China listed on the Shanghai and Hong Kong stock exchanges in July 2010.

ICBC — $19.1 billion. Another Chinese bank, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, also opted for Hong Kong and Shanghai in October 2006.

NTT Mobile — $18.1 billion. The Japanese mobile operator was listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange in October 1998.

Visa Inc. — $17.9 billion. The American credit card network made its New York Stock Exchange debut in March 2008.

AIA Group — $17.8 billion. This Asian subsidiary of American insurer AIG arrived on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange in October 2010.

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

بورصة عمان
Amman Stock Exchange

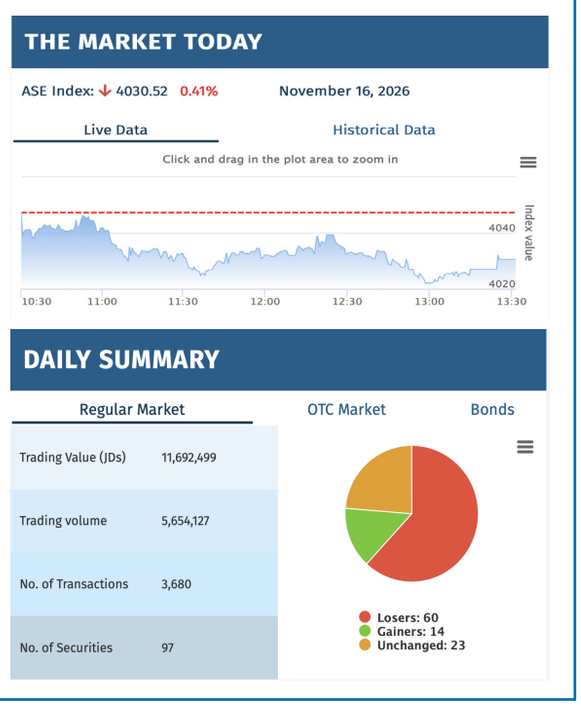
AMMAN (JT) — Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Monday amounted to JD11.7 million spread over 5.7 million shares that traded through 3,680 transactions.

The ASE share price index shed 0.41 per cent, closing at 4030.52 points.

Out of 97 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 14 companies rose while the share price of another 60 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were Jordan Investment Trust by 3.39 per cent, Specialised Jordanian Investment by 2.33 per cent, National Portfolio Securities by 2.17 per cent, Al Tahdith for Real Estate Investments Company by 1.52 per cent and National Aluminium Industrial by 1.43 per cent.

The companies whose shares dropped the most were Jordan International Insurance by 5 per cent, Premier Business and Projects Company Ltd. by 4.91 per cent, Masafat for Specialised Transport by 4.90 per cent, Century Investment Group by 4.76 per cent, and Al Tajamouat for Catering and Housing Company Plc. by 4.6 per cent.



SPORTS AT A GLANCE

TENNIS

Alcaraz sweeps aside Tiafoe in ATP Finals demonstration of force

TURIN (AFP) — Carlos Alcaraz looked in ominous form on Monday as he began his bid to win the ATP Finals for the first time by cruising past Frances Tiafoe in straight sets, 6-2, 6-2. World No.3 Alcaraz took just over an hour to deal with American Tiafoe and show why he is the favourite to win the whole thing in Turin, where he was the beaten finalist last year. Since returning in August from a wrist injury that kept him off the tour for four months Alcaraz has won three of the five tournaments he has entered, most recently the Paris Masters. Tiafoe had a nightmare debut match at the season-ending tournament, the 28-year-old having no answer to Alcaraz's speed and power. Only briefly in the second set did he look like challenging his opponent, a seven-time Grand Slam winner, when at 3-2 down he wasted three opportunities to break back. Alcaraz, 25, can book his place in the semi-finals on Wednesday by beating Italian Flavio Cobolli, who in the absence of former World No.1 Jannik Sinner is the crowd favourite. Cobolli faces Daniil Medvedev, Finals champion in 2020, later on Monday.

Merida replaces Davidovich Fokina in Spain Davis Cup team

MADRID (AFP) — Spain's tennis federation named Daniel Merida as a replacement for Alejandro Davidovich Fokina in their Davis Cup team on Monday. World No. 16 Davidovich Fokina said he had to withdraw from the squad because of fitness problems. "As many of you know, this season hasn't been easy physically, and injuries have forced me to stop several times," he wrote on X. "My body still needs more time before I can compete again." Merida, 22, is ranked 42nd in the world, and joins a strong side led by Carlos Alcaraz and Rafael Jodar. The competition takes place in Bologna, Italy from November 24-29. Last year's runners-up Spain will open with a quarter-final against Austria, before a possible semifinal against Britain or Germany.

UEFA backs France's Diallo to stand against Infantino in FIFA election

PARIS (AFP) — European football's governing body UEFA has given its "unanimous" backing to French Football Federation chief Philippe Diallo to stand against incumbent Gianni Infantino in March's FIFA presidential election, it said in a statement on Monday.

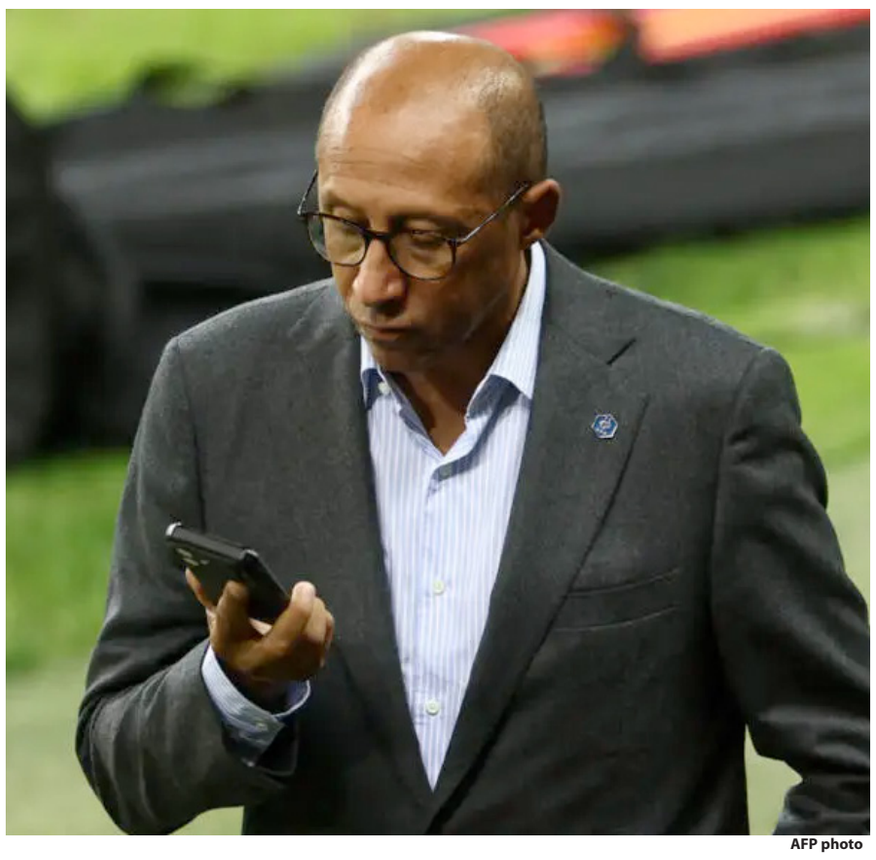
The body said that Diallo had been "invited...to stand as a candidate in the FIFA presidential election in March 2027" and that European national associations had "unanimously pledged their full support".

The deadline for rival candidates to declare themselves is this Wednesday, November 18.

UEFA, which boasts 55 member associations, said Diallo "has accepted the invitation to stand" and that his candidature is set to be confirmed at a meeting of the French federation (FFF) on Tuesday.

Under its Slovenian President Aleksander Ceferin, UEFA has led the opposition to Infantino since his announcement in late July of a project to sell stakes in the World Cup to private investors.

Infantino quickly abandoned the proposal in the face of widespread uproar, but UEFA has since gone to a court in Florida in an attempt to gather evidence for a potential complaint of "criminal mismanagement" against the FIFA president in Switzerland.



AFP photo

French Football Federation president Philippe Diallo has received the 'unanimous' backing of European nations to stand against Gianni Infantino in the FIFA presidential election

UEFA had been struggling to find a credible candidate to stand against Infantino in the election, which will take place at the FIFA Congress on March 18 next year in the Moroccan capital, Rabat.

CONCACAF chief Victor Montagliani had been mooted as a candidate, but the Canadian later announced his desire to stand for a new term as the head of his confederation, which covers North and Central America and the Caribbean.

The Asian Football Confederation, which consists of 47 member associations, announced last month that it was backing Infantino for reelection.

Diallo said in September that the FFF was withdrawing its backing for Infantino in the election.

"We believe that the trust placed in the FIFA president has been betrayed, and that the way in which the governance of world football is envisaged no longer reflects us," he said at the time.

Diallo, the 63-year-old son of a Senegalese boxing champion, has been president of the FFF since January 2023.

He was initially appointed to the post on an interim basis when previous chief Noel Le Graet was forced to stand down following a series of controversies.

Diallo, from Saint-Nazaire on France's Atlantic coast, was then elected to the role by a large majority in June of that year, before being reelected in December 2024 for a new four-year term.

Infantino, a former UEFA secretary general, has been in charge of FIFA since 2016.

CRICKET

Tait, Kusal want extra push for Pakistan-Sri Lanka series result

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan (AFP) — Sri Lankan skipper Kusal Mendis and Pakistan bowling coach Shaun Tait urged their teams to push hard for a result in the second and final Test starting on Tuesday in Rawalpindi.

A combination of bad weather and less penetrative bowling on a seemingly grassy pitch left the first Test without a result.

Sri Lanka twice spurned chances to force a result as they let go a strong position of 404-4 in reply to Pakistan's 434-9 declared, slumping to 446 all out.

They then had Pakistan 57-3 on the final day before dropping crucial catches as the hosts closed the match on 284-8.

Kusal said his team wanted to put pressure on Pakistan.

"We were looking to establish a decent lead to put pressure on the Pakistan but credit must go to Saqib Khan, who bowled exceptionally well and restricted us," said Kusal.

Kusal and Dhananjaya de Silva hit hundreds and added 249 for the fifth wicket, but Sri Lanka lost their last six wickets for a mere 42 runs.

It was Saqib who derailed Sri Lanka with figures of 7-130, becoming the fourth Pakistani to take seven wickets on debut.

Kusal said the wicket for the second Test is green.

"The wicket looks quite green and has similarities to the surface we played on in the first Test so we will assess the conditions before making a final decision."

Sri Lanka may be tempted to bring one from spinners Prabath Jayasuriya or Keshara Nuwantha.

Pakistan is considering handing Test cap to rookie 19-year-old pacer Ali Shabbir for Razaullah.

Tait hoped Pakistan players would make an extra effort to win their first Test series this year.

"That extra push is needed," said Tait, a former Australian pacer.

"I am happy with the way bowlers bowled during the majority of the last Test and want some extra push."

Experienced batter Saud Shakeel missed centuries in both innings with scores of 93 and 97.

Skipper Babar Azam's Test century drought continued with 42 innings without a three-figure knock.

The two-match series is part of the World Test Championship's fourth cycle, with Pakistan (ninth and last) and Sri Lanka (seventh) already out of next year's final.

Influencers, AI, addiction: EU looks to protect consumers online

By Raziye Akkoc

BRUSSELS (AFP) — The European Union on Wednesday put forward new rules to crack down on influencer marketing, ban online features that trick Europeans and force platforms to give users the right to turn off "addictive" features.

The EU already has a raft of laws covering data protection, artificial intelligence and online content but Brussels and campaigners argue there are gaps that leave consumers exposed to harmful digital practices.

Now the bloc's executive is laying out legislation for a much-needed update of consumer rules dubbed the "Digital Fairness Act" (DFA), aimed at giving Brussels the power to slap fines on companies of up to six percent of their annual turnover in large-scale cases.

The financial harms to European consumers are vast: Brussels said it hopes that the new measures could help save EU consumers up to 13.7 billion euros ($15.3 billion) a year.

"At a time when households are under pressure from the cost of living, consumers must be able to trust that the prices they see are the prices they pay, and that they are not being manipulated into spending more than they intend," EU consumer protection chief Michael McGrath said in a statement.

AFP photo

Social media influencers will need to clearly label advertising content under proposed EU regulations

The proposal includes:

A ban on "dark patterns", the practice of tricking users into making unwanted purchases or opting in to certain settings without their knowledge

- Allowing users to disable "addictive features" on online platforms (such as the automatic playback of videos or infinite content scrolling)
- Stricter rules on how brands promote content through influencers, demanding clear labels such as "advertisement" on posts
- Platforms must remind consumers when a free trial period ends with details about the end date and how much it will cost to continue
- A ban on offering minors "pay-to-win" or "pay-to-progress" features as well as "loot boxes", and a requirement for in-game virtual currencies to show their real-world value
- Giving consumers access to human customer service representatives if they demand and guarantee that they use an AI agent to buy a product on their behalf, they have the same rights as if they bought it themselves

The commission will have the power to investigate and sanction companies if the issue affects two-thirds of the European Union's 450-million strong population, McGrath said.

Giving 'back control'-

The European Consumer Organisation's Agustin Reyna said the proposal is a "much-needed tool to give consumers back control of how much time and money they spend online".

Questions have been raised over the EU's expanding digital rulebook after Brussels unveiled plans to ban children under 13 from social media, and force companies to make platforms safe for use by minors — in addition to sweeping rules already in place under the Digital Services Act.

Umbrella group BusinessEurope, representing companies across the bloc, warned the latest measures risk "introducing unnecessary obligations and overlapping requirements that undermine legal certainty and run counter to the EU's simplification agenda".

Leading video game lobby groups the European Games Developer Federation and Video Games Europe also said the draft legislation was "unworkable, unjustified and disproportionate" and would "cripple the competitiveness" of the European industry.

But Spanish EU lawmaker Laura Ballarin Cereza said the proposal aimed to make a "safer online space for everyone, children and adults alike", adding it will "fill the gaps" as "consumer law is meant to act as a safety net".



AFP photo

Social media influencers will need to clearly label advertising content under proposed EU regulations

British singer Raye leads Grammy nominations with 11

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Soulful British singer-songwriter Raye on Monday topped the Grammy nominations with 11 and Spanish superstar Rosalia earned nine in a strong showing for female artists across the board.

Women have historically been underrepresented at the Grammy Awards held by the Recording Academy, whose 69th annual gala will take place on February 7 in Los Angeles.

But recent years have seen women dominate both the industry and the trophies list.

Raye's whopping 11 nominations included the three most prestigious recognising best album, best song and best record for her jazz-inflected blend of pop and R&B.

She was also recognized for her songwriting for both herself and fellow artists, with a nomination for the relatively new best songwriter category.

Rosalia's nine nominations followed a banner night at last week's Latin Grammys, where her sweeping, avant-garde classical pop album "Lux" reigned supreme.

First-time nominee Ella Langley, the crooner behind the ubiquitous smash hit "Choosin' Texas", will enter the evening with seven shots at Grammys gold, as will fellow country star Miranda Lambert, who co-wrote that hit and notably scooped a nomination for producer of the year.

Pop-rock phenom Olivia Rodrigo also earned seven nods, as did the multifaceted musician Phoebe Bridgers, who released her third solo studio album "Lost Weekend" to widespread critical acclaim.

