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DEVELOPMENT

Water minister, **IFC** explore **investment** opportunities in **water** loss **reduction**

2



RECOGNITION

Prince Faisal honours athletes for **'historic'** achievements at **international** competitions

3



COOPERATION

EU approves launch of **investment** facilitation agreement **negotiations** with **Jordan — minister**

7



FOOTBALL

Al Hussein play to **keep** chances alive **in ACL 2**

8



Tuesday, November 24, 2026 | Jumada II 13, 1448 Hijri



Photo courtesy of Royal Court

Their Majesties King Abdullah and Queen Rania receive Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and First Lady Ziroat Mirziyoyeva upon their arrival in Jordan for a state visit

King, Queen receive Uzbekistan president, first lady at start of their state visit to Jordan

AMMAN (JT) — Their Majesties King Abdullah and Queen Rania on Monday received Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and First Lady Ziroat Mirziyoyeva at Queen Alia International Airport at the start of their state visit to Jordan.

HRH Prince Ghazi, His Majesty's chief adviser for religious and cultural affairs and personal envoy, and the Escort of Honour, and HRH Princess Miriam Ghazi, the First Lady's Escort of Honour, were also present to receive the president and the first lady, according to a Royal Court statement.

Royal Jordanian Air Force F16 fighter jets accompanied President Mirziyoyev's aircraft upon entering Jordan's airspace.

Crown Prince meets with Enterprise Ireland executive directors

Meeting explores opportunities for cooperation in start-ups, innovation, business, international expansion

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Crown Prince Hussein on Monday met with the executive directors of Enterprise Ireland, Kevin Sherry and Mark Christal.

Held in Dublin, the meeting explored opportunities for cooperation with Enterprise Ireland in the areas of start-ups, innovation, business and international expansion, in coordination with the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Investment and the Jordan Forward programme, according to a Royal Court statement.

The two sides discussed ways of working with Enterprise Ireland to foster innovation and accelerate start-up growth, alongside establishing Jordan as a strategic gateway for Irish companies looking to grow their footprint in the region.



Photo courtesy of Royal Court

HRH Crown Prince Hussein on Monday meets in Dublin with the executive directors of Enterprise Ireland, Kevin Sherry and Mark Christal

The meeting also touched on Ireland's approach to economic expansion and global competitiveness, the statement said.

Minister of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship Sami Smeirat, Jordan's Ambassador to the United Kingdom Manar Dabbas and Director of the Office of the Crown Prince Zaid Baqain attended the meeting.

Prime minister reviews gov't's two-year achievements, outlines priorities for next phase

- Real economic growth reached 3% in Q2 2026, inflation stood at 2.32% during first 10 months
- Foreign direct investment rose by 25.1% in 2025 to exceed $2 billion, exports increased by 11.2% in first eight months of 2026

AMMAN (JT) — Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Monday reviewed the government's achievements over the past two years and outlined its priorities for the coming period, reaffirming its commitment to advancing Jordan's political, economic and administrative modernisation tracks as a long-term national project that will shape the country's future for generations to come.

Addressing the Lower House, Hassan said that real economic growth reached 3 per cent in the second quarter of 2026, driven by strong performance in productive sectors and exports, while inflation stood at 2.32 per cent during the first 10 months of the year.



Prime Ministry photo

Prime Minister Jafar Hassan addresses the Lower House during Monday's session

He also said that foreign direct investment increased by 25.1 per cent in 2025 to exceed $2 billion, its highest level in a decade, while total exports rose by 11.2 per cent during the first eight months of 2026. The Central Bank of Jordan's foreign reserves also reached record levels.

The prime minister highlighted progress on major strategic infrastructure projects, led by the $6.6 billion National Water Carrier project and the $2.5 billion Aqaba-Shidiya-Maan railway, being implemented in equal partnership with the United Arab Emirates. The foundation stones for both projects have been laid.

Studies for the Aqaba-Maan dry port are nearing completion, while development work is under way on the Risha gas field and a pipeline connecting it to the Arab Gas Pipeline, Hassan said, adding that tenders for the latter projects are scheduled to be awarded in April 2027, alongside tenders for the first phase of Amra City.

Hassan also cited the Jordan-Europe Investment Conference, held at the Dead Sea under Royal patronage, as evidence of strong international confidence in the Kingdom's investment environment.

Continued on page 5



Petra photo

Finance Minister Abdulhakim Shibli presents the 2027 general budget address to the Lower House

Gov't submits 2027 draft budget law to MPs, projecting lower deficit, higher capital spending, domestic revenues

AMMAN (JT) — Finance Minister Abdulhakim Shibli on Monday presented the 2027 draft general budget law to the Lower House of Parliament, projecting a lower budget deficit, higher capital spending and increased domestic revenues, while outlining government priorities for the coming year.

Addressing lawmakers, Shibli said that the draft budget projects nominal gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 5.6 per cent, with total public expenditure estimated at JD13.735 billion, an increase of JD980 million, or 7.7 per cent, compared with 2026.

Current expenditure is projected at JD12.025 billion, up by JD719 million, or 6.4 per cent, from 2026, he said.

The minister said that the increase includes JD156 million in additional allocations for civil service salaries, covering exceptional and regular raises, new positions and vacancies, as well as JD102 million for civil and military pensions, including exceptional increases for retirees, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Continued on page 5

German-Jordanian partnerships create opportunities in technology, industry

- German companies highlighted Jordan's skilled workforce, strategic location, potential to serve as regional hub for technology, engineering services
- GIZ's Bridges to Jordan project aims to connect German, Jordanian businesses, facilitate long-term private-sector cooperation

GIZ photo

Members of the German delegation during a brainstorming session at the Amman Chamber of Industry

By Ilham Darwazeh

AMMAN — A 27-member delegation of German companies and organisations visited Jordan from November 16–19 to explore investment opportunities and strengthen private-sector partnerships in technology, manufacturing, engineering and other sectors.

The visit, organised under the Bridges to Jordan project, implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaftfür Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), included participation in the Jordan-EU Investment Conference at the Dead Sea.

The programme brought together German representatives with government institutions, business associations, universities and potential Jordanian partners to explore cooperation in information technology, semiconductor design, industrial artificial intelligence (AI), transport, agriculture, logistics and water treatment.

The delegation's programme highlighted German companies already operating in Jordan or cooperating with local businesses and institutions.

One example is TechAlamal, founded by German entrepreneurs, which has established integrated German-Jordanian teams in Amman to develop software and AI-based solutions, primarily for Germany's construction sector. Its near shoring model connects European clients with Jordanian technical talent.

The company expanded its operations through Jordan Source, a programme run by the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the programme in January 2025.

TechAlamal Co-founder Alexander Gran said that Jordan's geographical proximity to Europe and cultural links made the Kingdom an attractive destination for German companies.

Continued on page 5



JT file

Syrian refugees at Azraq Camp, around 100km from Amman, in the eastern desert

WFP requires $32.7m to fund operations in Jordan through April 2027

AMMAN (JT) — Operational funding requirements for the World Food Programme (WFP) in Jordan stand at $32.7 million for the six month period spanning November 2026 through April 2027, the agency announced.

Cited by Al Mamlaka TV, the WFP, in its November 2026 country brief, said that it provided assistance to some 620,000 people during October, with females accounting for 50 per cent of beneficiaries, while cash based transfers during the same month totalled $2.8 million.

WFP said that it reinstated assistance to refugees in host communities in October, bringing the total number of beneficiaries receiving cash-based food support to 130,000 refugees across camps and host communities despite reduced transfer values.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the WFP distributed healthy meals and fortified date bars to 510,000 students in refugee camps and host communities during October.

> The WFP, in its November 2026 country brief, said that it provided assistance to some 620,000 people during October...

Regarding regional relief efforts, the programme delivered 3,000 metric tonnes of wheat flour and 142 metric tonnes of date bars into the Gaza Strip during the same month.

The agency added that it continues coordinating with the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation and relevant authorities on a planned shipment of 1,575 metric tonnes of assorted food parcels to Lebanon in November.

According to the brief, 236,361 Syrian refugees returned to Syria between December 2024 and October 2026.

Monitoring results for the first half of 2026 revealed that food insecurity levels among refugees in host communities reached 81 per cent, while standing at 47 per cent inside refugee camps.

The WFP pointed out that the reduced monthly cash assistance value stands at $21, equivalent to JD15, per person, covering only part of their basic food needs.

Water minister, IFC explore investment opportunities in water loss reduction

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Water and Irrigation Raed Abu Saud on Monday met with International Finance Corporation (IFC) Regional Vice President for the Middle East, Central Asia, Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan Imad Fakhoury to discuss ways to strengthen strategic cooperation and expand private sector participation in water loss reduction projects and the management and operation of wastewater treatment plants.

During the meeting, Abu Saud said that the ministry was working, in line with the Economic Modernisation Vision and the Water Sector Strategy, to attract private sector expertise and financing to accelerate the implementation of priority projects, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

He described the laying of the foundation stone for the National Water Carrier Project as a key step towards achieving water security and ensuring the sustainability of the water sector in the Kingdom.

Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Thursday attended the signing of the National Water Carrier Project agreement between the government and lead developer Meridiam

The project is the largest strategic project in the Kingdom's history in terms of construction volume and investment cost, and ranks among the largest water de-salination and conveyance projects in the region and the world.



Petra photo

Minister of Water and Irrigation Raed Abu Saud and International Finance Corporation Regional Vice President for the Middle East, Central Asia, Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan Imad Fakhoury on Monday discuss ways to boost strategic cooperation

The project will cover nearly 40 per cent of Jordan's drinking water needs.

With a total cost of $6.6 billion, the project represents the largest strategic investment in Jordan's history. Its financing is built on a broad national and international partnership bringing together the government, the private sector, Jordanian banks, financing institutions and international donors.

The project aims to provide 300 million cubic metres of desalinated drinking water annually from the Gulf of Aqaba, meeting around 40 per cent of the Kingdom's drinking water demand, with water pumping expected to begin by the end of 2030.

Abu Saud also reviewed the main projects related to the National Water Carrier, highlighting the importance of private sector participation in reducing water losses, managing wastewater facilities and developing their operational systems.

He pointed to plans to expand wastewater treatment plant projects and increase private sector involvement in their management and operation, with the aim of improving efficiency, meeting international standards and strengthening the sector's capacity to address climate change.

Abu Saud commended the IFC's technical and financial support for the water sector, stressing the importance of aligning its programmes with national priorities, particularly maximising the use of water resources, addressing encroachments on water sources and networks, and expanding water harvesting projects.

Fakhoury congratulated Jordan on laying the foundation stone for the National Water Carrier project, noting that the Kingdom is one of the IFC's "key" strategic partners in the region.

He reiterated the corporation's commitment to supporting Jordan's water sector through its financing and advisory services, and to encouraging private sector participation in developing and managing water and wastewater infrastructure to improve service efficiency and ensure sustainability.

The meeting was attended by IFC Regional Director Thomas Jacob, the corporation's Jordan Office Manager Marcel Rachid, and a number of senior officials from the ministries of water and irrigation, and planning and international cooperation.

Youth aspirations, economic challenges take centre stage in new UNFPA report

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Youth Raed Adwan on Monday stressed the importance of empowering young people as a key pillar of Jordan's modernisation process, in line with the directives of His Majesty King Abdullah and the vision of HRH Crown Prince Hussein.

Crown Prince Hussein's vision emphasises listening to young people, understanding their aspirations, investing in their potential and preparing them for future jobs, Adwan said during a ceremony to launch the State of World Population report 2026, titled "Succeeding Generations: Empowering young people to chart the future".

The event also saw the launch of the Arab Youth Demographic Futures Survey, conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in partnership with the Higher Population Council (HPC), Al Mamlakah TV reported.

Adwan said that the report and survey provided insights beyond demographic indicators, helping to understand young people's aspirations and the factors shaping their choices.



File photo

During a ceremony to launch the State of World Population report 2026, Minister of Youth Raed Adwan on Monday stresses the importance of empowering young people as a key pillar of Jordan's modernisation process

He stressed that young people should be regarded as partners in shaping their future and making decisions, rather than merely as statistical figures or beneficiaries of policies.

The minister also added that empowering young people means providing them with the opportunities to shape their own future, particularly in employment and housing, while addressing living costs and ensuring equal opportunities.

He said that the National Youth Strategy 2026–2030 would guide efforts to strengthen youth participation, noting that the ministry would use the report's findings to set priorities and develop evidence-based programmes in cooperation with UNFPA, HPC and national institutions, ensuring their reach nationwide.

UNFPA Representative in Jordan Himyar Abdulmoghni said that young people needed opportunities and a supportive environment to shape their future, stressing the need to invest in Jordan's young population in health, education and economic sectors.

HPC Secretary General Issa Masarweh presented the findings of the Arab Youth Demographic Futures Survey, which covered 108,926 young people aged 18 to 39 from 73 countries and territories, including 10,308 participants from eight Arab countries, 1,001 of whom were from Jordan.

The survey showed that young Arabs placed great importance on marriage and parenthood, but economic and social conditions affected their ability to fulfil these aspirations.

Most respondents aged 30 to 39 without children still wished to become parents.

It also found that young people's outlook on the future was linked to the opportunities available to them, particularly in employment and starting a family, with housing costs, access to healthcare, economic stability and trust in institutions also shaping their decisions.

The launch followed the Cabinet's approval of the National Youth Strategy 2026–2030, which focuses on health and wellbeing, learning and future readiness, economic empowerment and active citizenship.

It also coincided with the Youth Forum for Health and Wellbeing, held under the patronage of HRH Princess Rajwa, with around 300 young men and women from across the Kingdom discussing physical and mental health, digital health, innovation and youth participation in developing community solutions.

The event concluded with a discussion session on "bridging aspirations and reality", which addressed youth employment, housing costs, support for young women in the labour market and trust in institutions.

Participants stressed the importance of involving young people in developing policies and programmes that affect their lives and future.



File photo

The Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority is preparing to introduce 16 electric buses to transport visitors to Petra as part of its efforts to develop sustainable transport and improve services at tourist sites

PDTRA to introduce 16 electric buses to develop sustainable transport

AMMAN (JT) — The Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority (PDTRA) is preparing to introduce 16 electric buses to transport visitors to Petra as part of its efforts to develop sustainable transport and improve services at tourist sites.

PDTRA Chief Commissioner Adnan Sawaeer said that the project to supply and operate the buses was currently out to tender, with the authority completing the necessary procedures to award the contract and start implementation before the end of the year, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

He said that the project is part of the authority's efforts to adopt environmentally friendly transport solutions, reduce the environmental impact of tourism activity and improve visitors' experience.

Sawaeer also said that PDTRA was working on an integrated vision for sustainable transport across the Golden Triangle of Petra, Wadi Rum and Aqaba, including the establishment and operation of a regular bus network linking tourist and archaeological sites in the region.

> The introduction of the 16 electric buses will be the first project of its kind in the Kingdom...

The network aims to facilitate visitors' movement between heritage sites included on UNESCO's World Heritage List under different classifications, he said.

The authority also plans to invite bids to prepare the necessary studies and designs for the network, including identifying its requirements, routes and operating mechanisms, as well as developing an integrated plan to pave the way for the subsequent implementation stages.

The introduction of the 16 electric buses will be the first project of its kind in the Kingdom, dedicated to providing electric transport for visitors to tourist sites.

According to August statistics, the number of visitors to the ancient city of Petra reached 281,123 between January and July, including 109,350 Jordanians and 171,773 foreign tourists.

The figures showed a 3.7 per cent decline compared with the same period in 2025, which saw 291,912 visitors, comprising 79,632 Jordanians and 212,280 foreign tourists.

The Jordan Hotels Association said that Petra recorded the lowest hotel occupancy rates, standing at around 13 per cent for five-star hotels, 5 per cent for four-star hotels and 2 per cent for three-star hotels.

Jordanian researcher wins top scientific paper award at Berlin neurosurgery conference

AMMAN (JT) — Jordanian researcher Ghaith Tawalbeh won the 1st Runner-Up Best Abstract Award 2026 at the 14th International Symposium on nTMS in Neurosurgery and Neuromodulation in Berlin, Germany.

Tawalbeh's study introduces a new methodology for mapping the brain's motor cortex, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Moving beyond traditional techniques that identify movement-controlling regions as isolated points, Tawalbeh's approach constructs detailed functional brain maps using thermal mapping and analysis of electrical muscle responses triggered by magnetic brain stimulation.

The conference, attended by leading neurosurgeons and neuroscientists from top global universities, selected only four standout studies for recognition from all submitted papers, with Tawalbeh's research among the honourees.

Tawalbeh holds a Ph.D. in neurophysiology specialising in transcranial magnetic stimulation.



Petra photo

Jordanian researcher Ghaith Tawalbeh (left)



JHCO photo

The Jordanian Campaign and the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation (JHCO) distribute winter clothing to displaced families in Khan Youni

Jordanian campaign distributes winter clothing to displaced families in Gaza

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordanian Campaign and the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation (JHCO) have stepped up winter relief efforts in Gaza by distributing clothing to displaced families in Khan Younis.

The campaign is part of ongoing Jordanian relief efforts in the Gaza Strip, with aid deliveries and field operations continuing in response to the needs of affected and displaced families, according to a JHCO statement.

The campaign said that previous joint relief operations included the distribution of thousands of tarpaulins and hundreds of tents across the Strip to provide shelter and protection for displaced families amid harsh humanitarian conditions.

Jordan has also maintained its medical and humanitarian support for Gaza through two military field hospitals, one in the northern part of the Strip, established in 2009 following the 2008 war, and another in Khan Younis, established in November 2023 following the outbreak of the Israeli war on Gaza on October 7, 2023.

In addition to the two hospitals in Gaza, the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army established a field hospital in Nablus in late November 2023.

Jordan, in cooperation with the World Central Kitchen, has also sent a mobile bakery to Gaza with a production capacity of 3,500 loaves of bread per hour.

Other Jordanian humanitarian efforts include a land corridor for delivering aid, the Restoring Hope Initiative, which provides prosthetic limbs for amputees, and the evacuation of critical medical cases to hospitals in Jordan.

Prince Faisal honours athletes for 'historic' achievements at international competitions



Petra photo

HRH Prince Faisal on Sunday honoures Jordanian athletes for their achievements at the 2026 Dakar Youth Olympic Games, the 2026 Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games and the 2026 Nagoya Asian Para Games

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Prince Faisal, President of the Jordan Olympic Committee, on Sunday honoured Jordanian athletes for their achievements at the 2026 Dakar Youth Olympic Games, the 2026 Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games and the 2026 Nagoya Asian Para Games.

The ceremony recognised the athletes' outstanding performances, which marked historic results for Jordan at the three international sporting events, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Jordan Olympic Committee Secretary General Rana Saeed said that the achievements reflected the efforts of athletes, technical and administrative teams, and sports federations, expressing hope that the results would pave the way for further success in upcoming competitions.

At the Dakar Youth Olympic Games, Jordan won four medals, including three golds and one silver, its best-ever performance at the event. The Kingdom ranked 16th globally and second among Arab countries.

At the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, Jordan secured 11 medals, comprising two golds, three silvers and six bronzes, also recording its best-ever medal tally at the competition.

Jordanian athletes also won five medals at the Nagoya Asian Para Games, including two golds, one silver and two bronzes.

The ceremony also honoured national taekwondo team head coach Fares Assaf in recognition of his role in the sport's achievements, as well as the Jordan Taekwondo Federation, represented by its president, HRH Prince Rashid Bin El Hassan.

The Jordan Judo Federation was also recognised following Jordan's first-ever judo medal at the Olympic Games. Federation Vice President Khaled Salayta received the award.

Education Ministry launches first national framework for social-emotional learning

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, in cooperation with the International Rescue Committee (IRC), on Monday launched Jordan's first national framework for social-emotional learning (SEL), establishing a unified reference for school programmes from kindergarten to Grade 12.

The framework aims to standardise the definition, priorities and practices of social-emotional learning across schools and educational programmes, ensuring a consistent approach to developing students' social and emotional skills, according to an IRC statement.

Developed by the ministry and the IRC, the framework is based on evidence gathered through around 90 focus groups and interviews involving students, parents and members of school communities across the Kingdom.



Al Mamlaka TV photo

The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, in cooperation with the International Rescue Committee (IRC), on Monday launched Jordan's first national framework for social-emotional learning

The initiative was led by the ministry's Directorate of Educational Counselling, in cooperation with national institutions and international partners, as part of a participatory effort to establish a common national approach to social-emotional learning.

IRC Country Director in Jordan Eka Zhvania described the launch as a national milestone, saying the framework would provide students and teachers with a consistent approach to social emotional learning.

She said that developing skills such as understanding and managing emotions, communicating, taking responsibility and showing empathy helps children participate in classrooms, build healthy relationships and navigate challenges.

These skills are essential not only for academic development but also for children's everyday lives, Zhvania added.

Organisations working in schools and kindergartens have committed to aligning their programmes with the framework to prevent duplication and ensure consistency in how social-emotional learning is defined and delivered.

Before the framework is introduced in classrooms, implementation efforts will focus on eight areas, including policies, age-appropriate curricula, early childhood education, inclusion and diversity, professional development, monitoring and evaluation, community engagement, and the development of learning and training platforms.

Founded in 1933, the International Rescue Committee responds to humanitarian crises in more than 40 countries and 30 cities across the United States, providing support in health, safety, education and economic well-being.

The organisation began its operations in Jordan in 2007 and expanded its work in 2012. It currently works with local partners to deliver programmes in health, protection, education and economic well-being.

Royal Committee welcomes UN vote backing Palestinian statehood

AMMAN (JT) — The Royal Committee for Jerusalem Affairs on Monday welcomed a vote by 162 countries at the UN General Assembly in support of a resolution affirming the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, independence and the establishment of an independent sovereign state.

The committee described the broad international support as a new political and diplomatic victory for the Palestinian cause, reflecting the international community's rejection of the Israeli occupation and its policies of settlement expansion, annexation, forced displacement and violations of Palestinian rights.

Committee Secretary General Abdullah Kanaan said that the vote reflected growing international consensus on the justness of the Palestinian cause and reinforced the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion that Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian territories is unlawful and must end as soon as possible.

He stressed the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination and to establish an independent state on their national soil, with Jerusalem as its capital.

Kanaan also welcomed the adoption of UN resolutions on UNRWA, Palestinian refugee property and Israeli settlements, stressing the importance of maintaining the agency's humanitarian role, preserving Palestinian refugees' rights, particularly their right of return and compensation, and rejecting Israeli measures aimed at altering the demographic and geographic character of the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly Jerusalem.

Kanaan commended Jordan's continued efforts, under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah, to defend Palestinian rights at international forums, mobilise international support to end Israeli aggression and counter plans for displacement, annexation and settlement expansion.

He also highlighted Jordan's humanitarian and relief efforts in support of the Palestinian people and its continued role in protecting Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem, under the Hashemite Custodianship.

Kanaan stressed that Jerusalem would remain at the heart of the Palestinian cause and a key part of its national identity, calling for international resolutions to be translated into practical and binding measures to end the occupation, stop Israeli violations and protect the Palestinian people and their holy sites, leading to the establishment of an independent sovereign Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Jordan condemns drone attacks on civilians, UN building in Sudan

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Monday condemned drone attacks targeting Khartoum, Sudan, including a strike on a United Nations building that caused civilian casualties and damage to civilian facilities.

The ministry said in a statement that targeting civilians and premises of international organisations constitutes a violation of international law, stressing the need to protect the safety of personnel working for these organisations.

The ministry expressed Jordan's solidarity with the government and people of Sudan, while reiterating the Kingdom's support for all efforts aimed at resolving the crisis while preserving the country's security, unity, stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Drones struck Sudan's capital Khartoum, damaging residential homes and a United Nations building on Sunday, according to AFP.

Explosions were heard near Khartoum airport and in other parts of the city between around 2am and 4:30am.

The United Nations said a UN premises with staff inside had been damaged in the attack.

"This occurred in a civilian neighbourhood," the UN's humanitarian office (OCHA) said in a statement posted on X.

OCHA condemned the risk posed to humanitarian workers, saying it was "unacceptable" that UN personnel were being exposed to such danger.

The conflict in Sudan has killed more than 200,000 people, aid workers estimate, and triggered the world's largest hunger and displacement crises.



Al Mamlaka TV photo

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Monday condemns drone attacks targeting Khartoum, Sudan

Aqaba to host AI-powered Planet Brain initiative with 500-year vision

AMMAN (JT) — Aqaba will host an "ambitious" scientific and technological initiative known as Planet Brain, which aims to establish an advanced system integrating artificial intelligence (AI), Earth sciences, satellite data and digital modelling within a long-term strategic vision spanning 500 years.

The project is scheduled to begin its launch phase in 2027, with the ambition of preserving human knowledge, deepening understanding of the transformations taking place across the planet and helping anticipate its future, according to a statement to the Jordan Times.

The project will be established at Aqaba University of Technology (AUT), under the umbrella of Machine Power Technology (MPT), in partnership with Aqaba Education Company.

Mohammad Al Farajat, professor of hydrogeology and environmental geophysics at Al Hussein Bin Talal University, said that Planet Brain aims to develop an AI-powered system capable of collecting and analysing large volumes of data on Earth's natural and human systems, including water, climate, energy, food, biodiversity, geology and environmental change, drawing on satellite imagery, monitoring stations and ground-based sensors.

A key component will be a digital twin of Earth, allowing continuous monitoring of planetary changes, analysis of connections between natural systems and simulation of scenarios to assess possible future developments.

The system is also intended to support policymakers and researchers in managing resources and addressing environmental and climate-related risks, he added.

The initiative will also include a Digital Time Capsule to preserve scientific, environmental and human knowledge through archived data, samples and reference materials for future generations.

Another component, Planetary Peace, will focus on water, energy and food security, examining their links to societal stability and exploring solutions to shared global challenges through scientific research and international cooperation.

MPT will provide the initiative's overarching framework, while AUT will host the project and provide its academic facilities. Aqaba Education Company will contribute to institutional, educational and investment coordination. Cooperation is also expected to expand to international research institutions and specialists in AI, Earth and space sciences, climate, energy and water.

The project is expected to create opportunities in scientific research, specialised education, technology-based tourism and investment, as well as data analysis and simulation services, potentially strengthening Aqaba's position in advanced technology and the knowledge economy.

Planet Brain was conceived by Mohammad Farajat, an expert in hydrogeology, environmental geology and exploration geophysics; Mamoun Al Nawafleh, an archaeoastronomy expert, Hani Al Batach, an AI and futures studies expert who will serve as chief executive officer and Engineer Serei Al Qasem, a blockchain and Web3 specialist.



Petra photo

General view of Aqaba city



AFP photo

A Belgian police officer in riot gear stands next to the fire from a burning vehicle near Brussels train station Gare du Midi during a demonstration as part of national strikes and protests movements against government austerity measures in Brussels, on Monday

New Belgium protests as embattled gov't sets budget deadline

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AFP) — Belgium's prime minister on Monday set a new year-end deadline for his coalition government to agree a cost-cutting budget or face collapse, as tens of thousands of people protested against planned austerity measures.

Prime Minister Bart de Wever's office said he will convene coalition parties to discuss a way forward, after King Philippe granted the Flemish conservative more time to reach a deal.

But he added that if there was no agreement before January 1, when a stopgap budget regime comes into effect, "the government will, in practice, no longer be able to govern, which will end its existence".

The announcement came as a national strike against the planned cuts grounded all flights in and out of Belgium. Public transport, schools and other public services also faced disruption.

In the capital, police said 50,000 people turned out to march, blowing whistles and waving union flags — with signs like "The rich earn more, workers pay more!" and "BDW - Basta!", calling out the prime minister by his initials.

In Brussels riot police fired tear gas and water cannon to disperse some protesters, making at least one arrest, AFP reporters saw. Demonstrators set a vehicle on fire.

> The announcement came as a national strike against the planned cuts grounded all flights in and out of Belgium

'Persevere'

Belgium has seen several strikes and cost-of-living protests in recent months.

Much of the anger has been directed at De Wever's efforts to save 10 billion euros ($10.9 billion) over the next few years to reduce the country's high deficit.

The issue has caused controversy also within the ruling coalition, which has been locked in budget talks for weeks.

De Wever offered his resignation to the king on November 2 over the budget impasse, but the monarch refused to accept it.

On Monday King Philippe told De Wever to continue to work towards a spending deal after he reported — for the third time in a month — that there had been no breakthrough.

"While expressing regret over the lack of significant progress, the king encouraged the prime minister to persevere in order to reach an agreement as soon as possible," the royal palace said.

The prime minister is to report to the king again next week.

To bring down the deficit, which exceeds five percent of GDP, the government is looking at spending cuts notably in healthcare and a VAT increase.

But divisions within the coalition remain with the only leftist party in the mix, as well as unions, pushing for taxes on high earners to offset some of the cuts.

Iran says will use 'all available means' to counter US blockade

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran said on Monday it would use all means at its disposal to counter a US naval blockade that was imposed in retaliation for its own push to block the Strait of Hormuz.

"We will certainly not tolerate these actions and will use all available means to counter US aggression," said foreign ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei in a weekly press briefing.

War broke out between Iran and the United States on February 28 when US-Israeli strikes killed the Islamic republic's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The conflict has since expanded after Iran retaliated with missile and drone strikes across the region and with militant groups it backs in Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq also entering the fray.

The Strait of Hormuz has become the focus of the conflict, with Iran continuing in its efforts to blockade the waterway, vital to global energy supplies.

In response, the US imposed its own counterblockade of Iranian ports. It later announced a raft of economic sanctions and launched a task force to disrupt land routes into Iran.

"You should bear in mind that what the Americans have described as economic sanctions, an economic blockade and a naval blockade undoubtedly constitutes an act of military aggression against Iran," said Baqaei.

"Under these circumstances, Iran is entitled, pursuant to Article 51 of the UN Charter, to use any means at its disposal to defend itself."

Iranian forces have made multiple announcements in recent weeks of ships catching fire attempting to use routes that Tehran considers off-limits.

Diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis remain stalled, especially since the collapse of a June deal that laid out a pathway to a permanent settlement.

Iran has said Hormuz could be open within two days but only if Washington agreed to its list of demands which include the lifting of the blockade.

"If the American side fulfils its commitments, security can be restored to the Strait of Hormuz and the region in the shortest possible time," said Baqaei.



AFP photo

A man and woman rider a motor scooter past a billboard depicting a futuristic scene with the Iranian national flag, displayed in Enghelab Square in Tehran on November 23, 2026

Indian PM Modi offers flood-hit Nepal $1.6 b aid package

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered a $1.6 billion "development cooperation" package to neighbouring Nepal on Monday in the wake of devastating Himalayan floods.

"We express our deep condolences for the loss of lives caused by the devastating floods in Nepal in August," Modi said, standing alongside his Nepali counterpart Balendra Shah in New Delhi.

"To support Nepal's reconstruction, and give fresh momentum to its long-term development, we announce a development cooperation package worth 240 billion Nepali rupees," he said.

Shah is in New Delhi on his first trip to a neighbouring country since taking office in March.

His first overseas trip was to New York in September, where he addressed the United Nations General Assembly as Nepal reeled from a deadly tsunami-like flood, triggered by a high-altitude glacial mountain collapse, that killed more than 1,400 people and left 5,000 missing.

Nepal, a largely rural country that contributes little to global greenhouse gas emissions, estimates reconstruction will cost $4.78 billion.

Shah said it showed the "imperative to address the challenges of climate change through collective action".

Nepal, a landlocked Himalayan nation of 30 million people, has long had to balance its relations with its two giant neighbours, India and China.

"Our commitment will be to help affected families rebuild their lives, create new opportunities and further strengthen Nepal's capacity to deal with future disasters," Modi said.



AFP photo

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (right) speaks with his Nepali counterpart Balendra Shah during the latter's ceremonial reception at the presidential palace Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Monday

Toll from Nigerian reprisal attacks tops 60 — herders' association

MINNA, Nigeria (AFP) — Revenge attacks on Fulani settlements in central Nigeria at the weekend following a raid by armed gangs have killed more than 60 people, an association of cattle pastoralists said on Monday.

Reprisals between communities are common in parts of northwest and central Nigeria, where criminal gangs raid villages, kidnap residents and rustle cattle. The raids often trigger revenge attacks by local vigilantes against the ethnic groups they accuse of harbouring the criminals.

The latest spate of raids and reprisals took place at the weekend in three villages in Borgu district of Niger state

On Saturday, attackers raided Luman Ba'are, a village inhabited by the Kambari ethnic group who were at dawn prayers in a mosque.

The attackers — who locals said were from the Fulani ethnic group — killed 11 people, including the village head, kidnapped others, torched homes and stole cattle.

Local vigilantes then launched fatal reprisals on Fulani settlements in the nearby villages of Wawa and Gadi Oli.

The Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), a predominantly Fulani body, said that more than 60 people had died in the revenge attacks.

"Now over 60 persons have been buried, several are missing while others are receiving treatment in hospitals," MACBAN spokesman Muhammad Nuru Abdullahi told AFP, citing a Niger state minister and the MACBAN's representative there.

He said the revenge attack victims were mostly hacked to death with machetes, although others had gunshot wounds.

"All those killed are from Fulani extraction. They are all Fulani herders living peacefully with people for decades," Abdullahi said.

Killing across ethnic lines

Police have yet to respond to AFP's request for comment.

MACBAN national secretary Bello Aliyu Gotomo said "64 people have been killed", including "young people, children, women and elderly".

"So following that [initial attack], the vigilantes organised themselves and started killing any Fulani persons they saw," he told AFP.

Armed gangs, known locally as "bandits", are thought to be largely made up of Fulani men, fuelling suspicion and reprisals against Fulani communities accused of harbouring or supporting them.

The Kambari vigilantes from Luman Ba'are accused Fulanis in Wawa and Gadi Oli of knowing the identities of the attackers but failing to help stop the violence, said an aid worker speaking on condition of anonymity.

In Nigeria, population growth and climate change have squeezed farmland and grazing routes, resulting in herders and farmers clashing over land, at times killing hundreds across ethnic lines.

In August, vigilantes from the Kambari and Bargawa ethnic groups — who are largely farmers — sacked Fulani herding settlements in Agwara district of Niger state, killing herders, looting their livestock and destroying their homes, according to aid workers who put the death toll at several hundred.

The vigilantes accused the herders of aiding extremists from the Lakurawa ethnic group, who had carried out a spate of kidnappings.



AFP photo

A man stands amidst debris following an attack in Woro, Kwara State

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N. Korea leader highlights 'sovereignty' in ties after Trump no-show

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong-un said his country would seek to expand its foreign relations while safeguarding its sovereignty, state media reported on Monday, days after rebuffing US President Donald Trump's push to meet.

Kim made the remarks at a ceremony to receive credentials from newly appointed ambassadors — including Russia's — in a rare departure from protocol, as the task has traditionally been performed by a senior official rather than Kim himself.

Pyongyang's diplomatic goal is to "expand and develop foreign relations under the ideals of independence, peace and friendship on the principle of defending the national sovereignty and security", Kim said, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

The ceremony followed Trump's unsuccessful attempts to arrange a meeting with Kim during his visit to China for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit last week.

Trump left Asia Thursday after a landmark summit with the Chinese and Russian presidents, without meeting Kim, as Trump had suggested he might.

"The world is now witnessing an unstable security crisis and political and economic chaos round the globe," Kim said at the ceremony, without elaborating.

"The present international situation is bringing about a significant change in our understanding of national sovereignty and security," he added.

"The DPRK neither pursues supremacy nor expansion," he said, using the initials of the North's official name.

Photos released by KCNA showed Kim, dressed in a formal suit and necktie, receiving credentials, with Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui standing beside him.

They also showed Kim delivering remarks and posing for photographs with each diplomat.

Kim's attendance at the diplomatic ceremony, while ignoring Trump's outreach, signals a "shift" in North Korea's diplomatic approach, Lim Eul-chul, a professor at Kyungnam University's Institute for Far Eastern Studies, told AFP.

"By welcoming ambassadors while remaining unmoved by Trump's diplomatic overtures, the North has signalled a shift towards what could be described as 'multipolar sovereignty-based diplomacy'," he said.

It also indicates his willingness "to actively shape the changing international order as the head of a sovereign state", he added.

Kim and Trump's previous summits during the US president's first term sought to curb Pyongyang's nuclear programme but yielded no concrete deal.



AFP photo

This photo taken on Sunday and released from North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency on Monday

NATO vows space defence after Russia nuclear satellite report

BERLIN (AFP) — NATO chief Mark Rutte said on Monday the alliance would defend against threats in space when asked about German media reports that Russia may be preparing to launch a nuclear-armed satellite.

The media reports, citing unnamed German military and BND spy agency sources, said Moscow was thought to be planning such a launch in the coming weeks, giving it the capability to destroy other satellites.

Rutte, asked about the reports while visiting Berlin, vowed: "We will always make sure that we defend every inch of NATO territory and that includes making sure that we are safe when it comes to the space element."



AFP photo

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz (right) welcomes NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte on Monday at the Chancellery in Berlin

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, speaking alongside Rutte, did not confirm or deny the media reports but voiced concern.

"Reports that Russia is planning to introduce nuclear weaponry into space are not new, yet they remain no less shocking," he said.

"They reveal the level of escalation Russia is evidently prepared to pursue," added Merz, whose chancellery oversees the BND foreign intelligence agency.

A German government spokesman earlier said that the reports were being taken "very seriously", though he did not confirm them either and warned against causing "excessive nervousness regarding hypothetical dangers".

Public broadcasters WDR and NDR, along with the Sueddeutsche Zeitung daily, reported that Russia planned to launch a satellite dubbed "Sputnik-S" equipped with a nuclear warhead sometime in the coming weeks.

The outlets, citing unnamed sources, said that the intelligence reports about the plans had recently been shared among several NATO countries and that the German government had been briefed on the matter.

German-Jordanian partnerships create opportunities in technology, industry

Continued from page 1

"It's rather close by, and also culturally, it's not that far away," Gran said, describing Jordan as a hub of stability.

A GIZ briefing also identified Hadi-Plast and Power I.D. among German companies cooperating with Jordanian teams and universities.

During the visit, German SME association BVMW and the Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen cooperation between German and Jordanian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Technology and industrial cooperation in focus

Semiconductor design training and industrial AI emerged as key areas of potential cooperation.

CEO of the Grundig Akademie Group, Jan Kuenne, said that the company saw opportunities to develop semiconductor design training programmes in Jordan and collaborate on industrial AI applications.

"We love to have the real stuff, action on the ground, not talking," Kuenne said, emphasising the importance of turning discussions into practical initiatives.

He said combining German engineering expertise with Jordanian technical capabilities could help establish a hub in Amman serving other Arab markets, including Saudi Arabia.

Jordan's skilled digital workforce was also highlighted during a roundtable at the Dead Sea, opened by Minister of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship Sami Smeirat and GIZ Head of Division for the Middle East Thomas Müller.

According to GIZ, Jordan has more than 45,000 information and communications technology professionals and approximately 200,000 engineers.

The delegation also visited the German Jordanian University's Technology Research and Innovation Park, where members viewed applied student projects. Johannes Brandenburg of German manufacturer Pribil & Co. praised the students' technical capabilities, describing their work as "absolutely fascinating".

Jordan's planned railway and public transport projects attracted interest from German engineering companies.

Arkan Al Sherqatli, head of regional business development at DB Engineering & Consulting, part of Germany's Deutsche Bahn group, said meetings with government institutions had helped the company gain a better understanding of Jordan's infrastructure priorities.

'I think it's very promising. There is a lot of potential, but we need to do our follow-up to further check and evaluate'

He said that German companies could contribute expertise in feasibility studies, design, supervision and operations.

"The unique thing for me here in Jordan is that the projects are still fresh," Al Sherqatli said, pointing to opportunities for German expertise to support the development of the Kingdom's transport infrastructure.

In the water sector, Mansour Iskander of BAMAG, a water treatment company operating in the region since 1922, stressed the importance of adapting German technologies to local needs.

"The interaction with the locals and the adjustment of German technologies to the requirements of the region is an essential success factor, so that the infrastructure we build together can stay for the next 20 and 30 years," Iskander said.

The programme also included visits to Smart Desert Company and the Jordanian Palestinian Agricultural Products Marketing Company in the Jordan Valley, where discussions focused on sourcing, quality standards and cold-chain logistics.

Thomas Derstadt, head of sourcing and markets at the Import Promotion Desk, a German government-financed programme that helps producers access European markets, said the delegation was exploring opportunities in food, fresh produce and digital services.

"I think it's very promising. There is a lot of potential, but we need to do our follow-up to further check and evaluate," Derstadt said.

Private sector seen as key to stronger ties

A roundtable at the Dead Sea, organised by the Ministry of Investment and German Development Cooperation, brought together German and Jordanian SME networks, support institutions and financing partners to discuss opportunities for joint growth through innovation and talent partnerships.

GIZ Head of Division for the Middle East Thomas Müller said international cooperation required private-sector participation alongside government agreements.

"International cooperation depends on government negotiations and agreements, but it also takes the private sector," Müller said.

Through the Bridges to Jordan project, GIZ connects German and Jordanian companies by providing market information, access to institutions and introductions to potential local partners. Commercial decisions and agreements, however, remain the responsibility of the companies themselves.

Gov't submits 2027 draft budget law to MPs, projecting lower deficit, higher capital spending, domestic revenues

Continued from page 1

Operating expenditure is also set to rise by around JD85 million, including an increase of approximately JD40 million in allocations for medicines, medical supplies and consumables.

Salaries for civil and military personnel and public security forces, together with civil and military pensions, account for nearly JD7.185 billion, or 60 per cent of total current expenditure. The share rises to 79 per cent when public debt interest payments are included, he said.

Capital expenditure is projected at JD1.710 billion in 2027, up by JD261 million, or 18 per cent, compared with the restated 2026 figure.

Ministries and government departments will account for around 65 per cent of capital spending, while decentralised governorate and municipal development projects will receive 19 per cent and military and public security projects 16 per cent, the minister said.

Under the second phase of the Economic Modernisation Vision and the public sector modernisation programme, approximately JD504 million, or 30 per cent of capital expenditure, will be allocated to development projects.

2027 draft budget at a glance

- GDP growth: Nominal growth projected at 5.6 per cent
- Total expenditure: JD13.735 billion, up 7.7 per cent
- Current expenditure: JD12.025 billion, up 6.4 per cent
- Capital expenditure: JD1.710 billion, up 18 per cent
- Total revenues: JD11.709 billion, up 9.5 per cent
- Domestic revenues: JD10.925 billion, up 11 per cent
- Foreign grants: JD784 million
- Budget deficit: JD2.026 billion, equivalent to 4.2 per cent of GDP
- 2029 deficit target: 3.3 per cent of GDP
- Domestic revenue coverage: 91 per cent of current expenditure in 2027, rising to 95 per cent by 2029
- Public debt: Projected to fall below 80 per cent of GDP
- Capital development projects: JD504 million allocated, including tourism, the Risha gas field and transport

These include around JD51 million for tourism projects, JD33 million for the development of the Risha gas field and JD22 million for transport, he said.

On the revenue side, domestic tax and non-tax revenues are projected at approximately JD10.925 billion, an increase of JD1.079 billion, or 11 per cent, compared with 2026.

Shibli attributed the expected growth to improved tax and customs compliance, the national electronic invoicing system, the use of artificial intelligence in auditing and analysis, and the automation of government services.

Foreign grants are estimated at JD784 million, bringing total public revenues to JD11.709 billion, up by JD1.013 billion, or 9.5 per cent, from 2026.

"Domestic revenues are expected to cover 91 per cent of current expenditure in 2027, compared with 86 per cent in 2025, with the ratio projected to reach 95 per cent by 2029."

The budget deficit after grants is estimated at JD2.026 billion, equivalent to 4.2 per cent of GDP, compared with a restated 4.5 per cent in 2026. The deficit is projected to decline further to 3.3 per cent by 2029.

The primary deficit is also expected to narrow from 1.4 per cent to 0.9 per cent, while public debt as a share of GDP is projected to fall below 80 per cent.

Shibli said the government settled around JD280 million in arrears in 2024, JD560 million in 2025 and JD480 million in 2026, bringing total settlements over the three years to approximately JD1.3 billion.

"The payments covered obligations in the health, energy, water, education, contracting and industrial sectors, as well as land acquisitions."

For government units, current expenditure in 2027 is estimated at JD1.170 billion, while capital expenditure is projected at JD709 million, bringing total spending to JD1.879 billion, Shibli said.

Against projected revenues of JD1.012 billion, government units are expected to record a net deficit of JD867 million. However, excluding the combined JD907 million deficits of the Water Authority of Jordan and the National Electric Power Company, the remaining units would record a surplus of JD40 million.

Shibli said that the 2027 budget translates the Royal vision and the Economic Modernisation Vision into tangible improvements in citizens' living standards, opportunities, education, healthcare and future prospects, under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah and HRH Crown Prince Hussein.

Prime minister reviews gov't's two-year achievements, outlines priorities for next phase

Continued from page 1

In the energy and industrial sectors, he said that the government opened natural gas stations in southern Aqaba, Quweira, Qastal and Hashemiyeh, helping reduce energy costs for industrial facilities by between 35 and 60 per cent. Two additional stations, in Maan's Rawda Industrial City and Muwaqqar, are scheduled for completion in 2027.

"Incentives, including reduced land and energy prices in industrial cities in Karak, Tafilah, Maan, Salt and Madaba, attracted 34 new companies with investments exceeding JD62 million, expected to generate more than 1,000 jobs," he said.

Through the Industrial Support Fund, 635 companies received support to improve their competitiveness, while 771 benefitted from export assistance, he said.

"In agriculture, eight food-processing factories opened over the past two years, contributing to an increase of around JD160 million in the sector's contribution to gross domestic product in one year. The government also amended the Cooperatives Law and is preparing to host Jordan's first international exhibition and conference on irrigation and agricultural technologies."

Despite regional conflicts, tourism contributed 12.6 per cent of gross domestic product in 2025, Hassan said, attributing the sector's performance to incentives for hard-hit destinations, including Petra, and continued support for low-cost carriers and Royal Jordanian.

He also highlighted several tourism projects, including the Jerash eco-tourism village, scheduled to open next summer, the Azraq eco-tourism oasis, expected to open next April, and upgrades to Afra Hot Springs in Tafilah, due for completion in late 2027.

On public finances, Hassan said the early submission of the 2027 draft budget would allow capital projects to begin at the start of the year. He noted that the government had settled JD1.3 billion in accumulated arrears inherited from previous years, while continuing efforts to contain public debt and gradually reduce budget deficits.

On political modernisation, the prime minister highlighted continued dialogue with parliamentary blocs and the passage of the Local Administration Law ahead of municipal elections scheduled for April 27.

"The law raises women's representation on municipal councils to at least 30 per cent and expands opportunities for the participation of young people and persons with disabilities."

Under the administrative modernisation track, overseen by the National Council for Future Technology under the supervision of HRH Crown Prince Hussein, he said that the government has digitised more than 90 per cent of eligible public services and processed over one million digitally signed transactions.

"The Sanad application has issued approximately 3.5 million digital identities, while the number of comprehensive government service centres has increased from five to 16 across the Kingdom's governorates."

Government responsiveness to Audit Bureau reports also improved, rising from 35 per cent in 2021 to a record 71 per cent in 2025. Hassan also pointed to human resources reforms and the establishment of the Jordanian Academy for Public Administration.

In response to parliamentary demands, the government approved a JD30 monthly salary increase, effective in 2027, for civil and military employees and retirees earning less than JD600. The measure builds on the 2025 increase in the minimum wage from JD260 to JD290.

Social protection programmes were also expanded, with 15,000 additional families enrolled in the National Aid Fund, bringing the total number of beneficiary families to nearly 250,000, he said.

"Allocations to the University Student Support Fund doubled from JD20 million to JD40 million, covering nearly 63,000 students. The government also settled JD80 million in outstanding student fund payments owed to public universities."

In healthcare, he said that a JD124 million insurance programme launched at the King Hussein Cancer Centre in 2025 now covers more than 4.2 million citizens and is set to expand to an additional 300,000 in 2027. "Plans also include expanding the Samih Darwazah Cancer Centre at Al Bashir Hospital and establishing new cancer centres at Princess Basma Hospital in Irbid and in Karak in 2027."

"Other healthcare infrastructure developments include the inauguration of the 500-bed Princess Basma Hospital in Irbid and the Digital Health Centre in Salt, as well as expansion projects at Princess Iman Hospital in Maadi, Maan Hospital and Prince Faisal Hospital in Zarqa."

The Premier also said that the government also expanded outpatient clinics at Karak Hospital and completed the first phase of the new Madaba Hospital under a public-private partnership.

"In education, 252 school construction projects were completed over the past two years, out of 500 planned over five years. These included 120 new model schools and 132 classroom additions, with around 300 further projects planned for the coming years."

The Ajyal and Siraj digital platforms, launched under the Future Technology Council, now serve more than 2.26 million students and 146,000 teachers, respectively, while the platforms have also expanded access to digital educational services to around 1.3 million users.

He said that a free school transport programme launched in the Southern Badia, serving 9,000 students and 900 teachers, is set to expand in February to additional areas in the Southern and Central Badia. The programme aims to serve 30,000 students in 2027.

In public transport, regular inter-governorate bus services have been introduced, while Amman's Bus Rapid Transit system has carried more than 78 million passengers cumulatively, he said.

"Routes connecting Amman with Madaba and Salt transported more than 600,000 and 460,000 passengers, respectively, during 2025."

In the judiciary, amendments to the Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Law and Execution Law have sought to simplify litigation procedures, expand the use of community-based penalties and improve access to judicial services.

The government has also introduced 78 electronic judicial services, established 219 remote trial halls, linked the judiciary electronically with 26 entities and introduced digital signatures for all judges. Further judicial reform legislation is scheduled for 2027.

Hassan referred to recent terrorist incidents in Hmoud, Karak and another attack that claimed the life of a Public Security Directorate officer.

He said that the government had submitted new draft laws to Parliament on Sunday to combat terrorism and extremist ideology and safeguard national unity, under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah and HRH Crown Prince Hussein.

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How can investment be translated into real economic growth?

By Raad Mahmoud Al-Tal

For Jordan, the challenge is no longer simply attracting foreign investment, but ensuring that investment generates tangible and sustainable economic growth. While attracting capital is an important first step, capital inflows alone do not automatically translate into higher output, job creation, or improved competitiveness. The real success of investment policy should therefore be measured not by the volume of investment announced, but by its contribution to domestic value added, productivity, exports and employment.

In this regard, the Jordan-European Investment Conference represents an important opportunity to strengthen economic partnerships and attract new capital. However, its long-term success will ultimately depend on the ability to translate announced commitments and investment opportunities into projects that expand productive capacity and strengthen the role of the private sector in the economy.

The first priority should be to channel investment towards sectors with strong productive and value-added potential. Manufacturing, renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, food processing, information technology and logistics are particularly important in this respect. Investment in these sectors can expand production capacity, strengthen industrial linkages, reduce dependence on imports and create opportunities for higher-value economic activity.

Export competitiveness should also be at the centre of Jordan's investment strategy. Given the relatively small size of the domestic market, sustainable industrial growth requires access to larger regional and international markets. Jordan's strategic location and network of trade agreements provide an opportunity to position the country as a regional production and export hub. The objective should be to attract investors who view Jordan not merely as a market for their products, but as a competitive base from which to serve regional and global markets.

Equally important is the ability of foreign investment to generate broader economic benefits beyond the boundaries of individual projects. These benefits include creating quality employment opportunities, transferring technology and managerial expertise, developing local suppliers and strengthening linkages between foreign investors and domestic businesses. Such linkages can generate significant multiplier effects, allowing the benefits of investment to spread across different sectors of the economy.

However, achieving these outcomes requires a competitive business environment. High energy, transportation, and financing costs remain important challenges for investors in Jordan. Addressing these constraints through better infrastructure, simpler administrative procedures, regulatory stability, access to affordable financing and higher labour productivity is essential to improving the country's investment competitiveness. Attracting investment is important, but retaining investors and encouraging them to expand their operations is equally critical.

Another important requirement is to improve how investment performance is measured. Rather than focusing exclusively on announced investment volumes, policymakers should assess actual capital expenditure, domestic value added, export growth, employment creation, technology transfer and productivity gains. These indicators provide a more accurate picture of the contribution of investment to economic development.

Jordan needs to move beyond an investment attraction strategy towards a strategy focused on maximising the economic returns from investment. Foreign capital should serve as a catalyst for expanding productive capacity, strengthening competitiveness, diversifying exports and creating sustainable employment.

The real measure of investment success is not how much capital enters the economy, but how much additional economic value that capital creates. This is how investment becomes a genuine driver of sustainable economic growth.

Sustainable investments, beyond attracting capital

By Zaid K.Maaytah

The recent Jordan–EU Investment Conference represents an important step in strengthening Jordan's economic relations with Europe, bringing investment opportunities to international attention and opening negotiations on a Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement, alongside the broader economic partnership between the two sides, these developments invite us to consider an important question, how can Jordan ensure that the opportunities emerging from this partnership contribute to economic development for years to come.

Sustainable investment is not simply about attracting capital that remains in the country for many years, but about investment that creates lasting economic value while considering its social and environmental impact, this means looking beyond the initial size of a project to the employment it generates, the skills it develops, the local industries it supports and the way it uses available resources, an investment may be profitable for its owners without necessarily making the same contribution to the wider economy, which is why its long-term benefits deserve as much attention as the capital initially invested.

Achieving these benefits requires looking at investment as a continuing relationship rather than a single transaction, establishing a business is only one stage in a longer journey, during which investors decide whether to expand operations, introduce new activities, develop their workforce or reinvest their earnings, each decision presents another opportunity to deepen the investment's contribution to Jordan, which means that businesses already operating in the country should remain an important part of investment policy, rather than receiving attention primarily when they first enter the market.

From a behavioural economics perspective, these decisions are influenced by more than financial returns and formal incentives, the way investors experience regulations, access information and interact with institutions can affect whether they pursue new opportunities or postpone them, even when expansion makes economic sense, familiar ways of operating and the effort required to navigate change may discourage further action, understanding these influences can help policymakers identify where unnecessary obstacles affect decisions and how a better investment experience might encourage businesses to take the next step.

The proposed Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement provides a timely opportunity to strengthen this approach, its emphasis on clearer procedures, transparency and investment facilitation, alongside environmental and labour considerations, brings together important elements of sustainable development, for Jordan, the challenge will be to translate these principles into an investment environment that supports businesses throughout their operations while encouraging stronger participation by local suppliers, workforce development and responsible use of resources, so that economic growth is accompanied by broader benefits for society.

The Jordan–EU conference has created an opportunity to look beyond the immediate results of investment promotion and consider what kind of economic relationships Jordan wants to build, attracting capital will remain important, but the decisions made after an investment begins can determine much of its contribution to the country, giving those decisions greater attention, and understanding what encourages or discourages them, can help Jordan make better use of the opportunities ahead, with investment policy concerned not only with bringing businesses into the economy, but with the role they continue to play in shaping its future.

Zaid K.Maaytah is researcher in economics and public policy

Protecting Amman's heritage is a national responsibility

By Yazan K. Mahadin

A city can lose a familiar house in a single afternoon. It takes much longer to understand everything that disappeared with it: the craftsmanship in its stonework, the memories of the families who lived there and its place in the life of the neighbourhood. In Amman, caring for our heritage begins with recognising how much a place holds before it is gone.

Amman's archaeological monuments tell one part of its story. Another is found in the heritage houses of Jabal Amman and Jabal Al-Weibdeh, the older streets around downtown, and the gardens and staircases connecting the city's hills. These places record how generations built their homes and shared the city. Much of their significance comes from the everyday life they have accommodated.

This is the intangible dimension of urban heritage. A courtyard may carry the memory of family gatherings; a staircase may recall a daily walk to school. Local names and residents' stories help explain why particular places matter. Recording them alongside architectural drawings and photographs gives conservation a fuller understanding of what it seeks to protect.

The buildings themselves offer lessons. Stone walls, shaded openings, high ceilings and courtyards reveal responses to local conditions and ways of living. Their materials and craftsmanship also reflect the different communities that helped shape Amman. These qualities give heritage houses a cultural value that cannot be measured by age or property prices alone.

Their value also depends on their surroundings. The historic urban fabric is the connected pattern of buildings, streets, gardens, steps and public spaces. Its relationships are spatial, visual and functional: How people move between places, what they see, and how buildings and outdoor spaces support daily activities. A restored house can lose much of its character if the garden beside it disappears or the staircase leading to it becomes inaccessible. Conservation needs to protect these connections.

Adaptive reuse offers a practical way to keep heritage buildings occupied and maintained. A former residence may accommodate a gallery, a studio, a small hotel or a community facility, provided the use respects its heritage significance. That condition should guide every proposal. Alterations for safety, accessibility and services must be carefully designed around the features worth preserving. Financial viability matters, but it cannot alone determine whether a conversion is successful.

Darat al Funun in Jabal Al Weibdeh illustrates how heritage can accommodate contemporary cultural life. Its renovated buildings and warehouses support exhibitions, learning and artistic exchange, with an archaeological site in the garden. The relationship between architecture, outdoor space and cultural activity gives the place its particular character. Renewed use draws strength from that setting.

The effect on the wider neighbourhood matters too. A concentration of cafes and restaurants may change access, increase noise or place pressure on neighbouring homes. Each proposal should be assessed for its contribution to the district's daily life. Conservation should help residents remain connected to their neighbourhoods and allow local services to continue. The people who use these places are part of their heritage.

Landscape deserves equal attention. Mature trees, planted terraces and small gardens record time in ways that new construction cannot reproduce immediately. Their significance lies in how they have grown alongside buildings and become familiar parts of people's lives. A tree that has shaded a courtyard for decades carries both environmental and cultural value. Stone boundary walls, garden contours and views across a hillside also deserve documentation and care.

As an architect and landscape architect, I see these elements as inseparable from the buildings around them. Restoring a house should include consideration of its garden, the pavement outside and the public spaces nearby. Improvements to lighting, signs and access should respect the scale and character of the neighbourhood. Conservation is incomplete when a building is repaired while its surroundings deteriorate.

Continued use can also offer environmental benefits. Where repair and responsible adaptation are feasible, retaining buildings can reduce demolition waste and the need for new materials. Traditional approaches to shade and ventilation may inform improvements to their performance. Rehabilitation should assess these opportunities alongside the upgrades required for comfortable occupation.

Amman has institutional work on which to build. Greater Amman Municipality reports that it has documented more than 1,500 heritage sites since 2009, alongside efforts to protect the urban fabric, rehabilitate public spaces and strengthen heritage within urban planning. These efforts deserve recognition and continued development through cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Department of Antiquities, specialists, property owners and local communities.

Documentation should lead to evaluation and classification. Records need to explain a place's significance, condition and contribution to its surroundings. Classification can then guide what must be protected and what changes may be appropriate. Surveying a site and securing its formal legal protection are distinct steps. Making that distinction clear helps owners and designers understand their responsibilities.

Jordan's Law No. 5 of 2005 on the Protection of Urban and Architectural Heritage provides an existing framework. It recognises urban fabric, public squares, residential neighbourhoods and landscape within its definition of urban sites. It establishes a national committee within the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and provides for a conservation fund and incentives, including specified tax and fee exemptions under the law's requirements. Applying these provisions consistently, and explaining them clearly to owners, can help translate protection into practical conservation.

Owners also need realistic financial arrangements and access to specialist advice. Restoration costs can be substantial, and maintenance continues after a project opens. Technical assistance, suitable funding partnerships and compatible uses can make conservation more viable. Residents and neighbouring businesses should be involved early enough to influence decisions affecting their daily lives.

Decisions about change must rest on careful assessment. Age alone cannot settle every case; cultural associations, architectural quality and contribution to the urban fabric also matter. Where structural problems exist, specialist investigation should establish repair possibilities before irreversible decisions are taken. Interventions must respect the legal protection that applies to the site.

Amman will continue to grow, and its heritage can help shape that growth. A house can find a suitable new use, a public square can welcome neighbours again, and a staircase can remain part of the daily journey through the city. Caring for these places allows people to recognise their own histories in the capital around them. The greatest cities are not those that constantly replace their past, but those that know how to build upon it.

Jordan's demographic dividend: A strategic national window we cannot afford to miss

By Rawan S. Al Hiyari

In a world undergoing profound geopolitical and economic transformation, national strength is increasingly defined by institutional resilience, productive capacity, and the ability to convert human potential into prosperity. For Jordan, the strategic challenge is no longer simply navigating regional uncertainty but transforming its accumulated resilience into sustained economic growth and opportunity.

Jordan stands at a demographic crossroads. Recent research published by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) indicates that 65.1 per cent of its population is of working age, while youth unemployment remains persistently high. This paradox reveals a structural challenge: human potential cannot become national wealth without an economy that can translate capabilities into productive opportunities.

More importantly, the demographic window is narrowing. Jordan's demographic dividend is projected to turn negative from 2040 as population ageing intensifies. Jordan therefore faces a dual responsibility: Harnessing today's youthful population while preparing its economic and social systems for tomorrow's demographic pressures.

The priority must extend beyond job creation to building a competitive, knowledge-driven economy that moves from traditional marketplaces to marketspace. Technology, artificial intelligence, education, tourism, logistics and advanced manufacturing offer opportunities to connect Jordanian talent with international demand. Yet, these advantages require coordinated investment, future-oriented skills, and stronger integration into regional and global value chains.

Equally important is redefining youth empowerment. Young Jordanians must be recognised not merely as beneficiaries of development programmes, but as partners in shaping economic priorities and public life. Development must therefore reach beyond the capital, enabling governorates to become productive centers of investment, innovation, and employment.

Preparing for the post-2040 transition demands strategic foresight: Higher productivity, stronger savings, sustainable pension systems, adaptable healthcare and greater investment in future generations. Today's demographic advantage must finance tomorrow's economic security rather than become a deferred fiscal burden.

Jordan's next national achievement should be defined not only by its capacity to withstand crises, but by its ability to turn stability into prosperity, partnerships into productive investment, and human talent into lasting competitive strength.

Ultimately, the defining question is not whether Jordan possesses a generation capable of shaping its future, but whether it can build, before the demographic window closes, an economy and institutions capable of sustaining that future.

The writer is vice chairman of Jordanian American Business Council (JABC)



Photo courtesy of Investment Ministry

A meeting is organised by the Association of Banks in Jordan under the title 'The Syrian Market and Trade and Investment Opportunities: Study Findings and the Role of the Jordanian Banking Sector'

Minister of Investment urges banks to support Jordanian firms seeking opportunities in Syria

AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Investment Tareq Abu Ghazaleh on Monday called for a stronger role for the banking sector in supporting Jordanian companies seeking to benefit from trade and investment opportunities in the Syrian market.

The meeting was organised by the Association of Banks in Jordan (ABJ) under the title "The Syrian Market and Trade and Investment Opportunities: Study Findings and the Role of the Jordanian Banking Sector".

During the meeting, Abu Ghazaleh said the Syrian market offered further export opportunities for Jordanian products, particularly food and agricultural products, construction materials, chemicals and metals.

Jordan is well positioned to serve as a regional hub for companies and investors seeking to access the Syrian market, benefiting from its geographic location, infrastructure, industrial and logistical capabilities, as well as its existing trade ties with Syria, Abu Ghazaleh noted.

He pointed to Syria's reconstruction needs as a source of opportunities for Jordanian companies in infrastructure, energy, transport, construction, manufacturing and services, according to a statement by the Ministry of Investment.

The priority sectors for Jordanian participation over the next three years include transport and logistics, manufacturing, construction and building materials, food and agriculture, and energy. Medium-term opportunities are also available in mining, pharmaceuticals, financial services and information technology.

'The Syrian Market and Trade and Investment Opportunities: Study Findings and the Role of the Jordanian Banking Sector'

Jordanian banks play a key role in helping companies capitalise on these opportunities through trade financing, letters of credit, bank guarantees, project and supply chain financing, as well as financial services supporting export and investment activities.

Abu Ghazaleh called for closer coordination between government entities and the banking sector to identify priority projects and companies, assess their financing needs, develop suitable banking instruments and address challenges related to financial transfers, compliance requirements and guarantees.

He also highlighted the need for clear mechanisms to link Jordanian companies with regional and international projects in Syria, enabling them to participate as suppliers, contractors and investment partners, while boosting national exports and expanding the presence of Jordanian companies in regional markets.

ABJ Chairman Bassem Salem highlighted the role of Jordanian banks in expanding their regional presence and providing banking services in neighbouring countries, stressing their continued support for economic activity, trade and investment.

Participants discussed opportunities for Jordanian companies in Syria, financing and banking facilities, challenges related to financial transfers and guarantees, and ways to facilitate private sector participation in reconstruction projects.

The meeting was attended by the deputy governor of the Central Bank of Jordan, the secretary general of the Ministry of Investment, and several chairpersons, chief executives and general managers of banks operating in the Kingdom, according to the statement.

EU approves launch of investment facilitation agreement negotiations with Jordan — minister



AMMAN (JT) — Minister of Investment Tareq Abu Ghazaleh, said the European Council had approved the launch of negotiations with Jordan on a Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement, a move aimed at strengthening investment ties and encouraging sustainable investment between the two sides.

Abu Ghazaleh said in a statement on Monday that the announcement, made by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen during the Jordan-EU Investment Conference, marked an important step towards advancing the economic and investment partnership between Jordan and the EU.

The minister explained that the agreement was among the EU's new trade and investment instruments, designed to encourage sustainable investment in partner countries while complementing existing trade and partnership agreements.

He added that the agreement aimed to improve the investment environment and attract more foreign direct investment by streamlining regulatory procedures and enhancing transparency, measures that would strengthen investor confidence and facilitate business operations.

Abu Ghazaleh also highlighted the importance of translating the strategic and comprehensive partnership between Jordan and the EU into practical measures that enhance the Kingdom's competitiveness and create wider opportunities for investment cooperation.

He noted that the negotiations built on the strategic and comprehensive partnership announced in January 2025 and reaffirmed at the Amman Summit in January 2026, as well as a request he had submitted to the European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security last April.

The negotiations are expected to be completed in January 2027.

During the conference, von der Leyen praised Jordan's economic reforms aimed at opening markets and promoting competition, stressing the importance of advancing the negotiations to make investing in the Kingdom easier, safer and more profitable.

She reaffirmed the EU's continued support for Jordan, expressing hope that the conference would open a new chapter of cooperation and shared prosperity between the two sides.

InvoiceQ secures $5m in oversubscribed Series A funding round

AMMAN (JT) — Jordanian electronic invoicing and tax compliance company invoice on Monday has successfully closed a $5 million Series A funding round, attracting investment that exceeded its initial target.

The round was led by Manara Ventures and Next Ventures, with participation from the Innovative Startups and SMEs Fund (ISSF), Orange Ventures and SME Fund Jo, according to an ISSF statement.

ISSF CEO Mohammad Muhtaseb said the investment reflected growing confidence in Jordan's startup ecosystem and local companies' ability to attract investment, drive digital transformation and develop solutions with regional and international growth potential.



Photo Courtesy of Innovative Startups and SMEs Fund

Jordanian electronic invoicing and tax compliance company invoiceQ has successfully closed a $5 million Series A funding round, attracting investment that exceeded its initial target

He noted that invoiceQ had previously received early-stage support from local funds, including Oasis500, Flat6Labs and Propeller, some of which are part of the ISSF portfolio.

"This highlights the role of local venture capital in supporting startups at different stages of growth," he added.

Representatives of Manara Ventures and Next Ventures said invoiceQ had positioned itself at the forefront of electronic invoicing and regulatory compliance in the region, citing its early recognition of market opportunities, regulatory approvals, established customer base and scalable platform.

Orange Ventures and SME Fund Jo also expressed confidence in the company's solutions and regional expansion prospects. SME Fund Jo noted that the latest round marked its second investment in the company.

The founders said the investment represented a strategic partnership that extended beyond financing, supporting the company's growth and expansion into regional and international markets.

Founded in 2020 by Jordanian entrepreneurs Muhannad Tobal, Mohammad Baseet, Fadi Jbaili and Amer Ayyad, invoiceQ provides an electronic invoicing platform that automates invoice issuance and collection, integrates with payment gateways and helps businesses comply with tax regulations across several markets.

The company currently operates in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman, Qatar, Morocco, Egypt and Bahrain, and employs 75 people.

Exports rise 6% to JD6.674 billion in 10 months of 2026 — ACI

AMMAN (JT) — Exports by the Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) rose 6 per cent in the first 10 months of 2026, reaching JD6.674 billion, compared with JD6.321 billion in the same period of 2025, an increase of JD352 million, according to chamber statistics.

The data, obtained by the Jordan News Agency (Petra), showed that the chamber's exports expanded to non-traditional markets in several African and European countries, as well as non-Arab Asian markets.

The figures point to the ability of Jordanian industries to adapt to external challenges in export markets.

ACI figures showed that exports increased across all industrial sectors except mining and engineering, electrical and information technology industries, which recorded declines of 5 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively.

Packaging, paper, cardboard and stationery industries recorded the highest growth, at 38 per cent, followed by chemicals and cosmetics, which grew by 28 per cent. Exports of leather and knitwear remained unchanged.

Iraq, India, the United States and Saudi Arabia accounted for more than half of the chamber's total exports, receiving shipments worth a combined JD3.457 billion.

Exports to Iraq rose 25.1 per cent to JD990 million, compared with JD791 million, making it the leading destination for Jordanian industrial exports. Shipments to Saudi Arabia increased 4 per cent to around JD731 million, up from JD702 million.

Exports to India declined 2.2 per cent to JD953 million, compared with JD974 million, while shipments to the United States fell 25.4 per cent to JD783 million, down from JD1.050 billion.

Contrary to the recent trend, exports to Syria decreased 8.6 per cent to JD321 million, compared with JD351 million.

Exports to China surged 180.9 per cent to approximately JD293 million, up from JD104 million, while shipments to Palestine increased 18.3 per cent to JD162 million, compared with JD137 million.

Exports also recorded increases to Niger, Portugal, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Kuwait, Mexico, Cameroon, Japan, Greece, Angola, Yemen and Austria, among other countries.

By region, Arab countries remained the largest destination, receiving exports worth JD3.384 billion, followed by non-Arab Asian countries at JD1.605 billion and North America at approximately JD837 million.

Exports to European Union countries reached approximately JD414 million, while shipments to non-EU European countries totalled JD232 million. Exports to African countries stood at JD93 million, those to South American countries at JD48 million and shipments to other countries at JD60 million.

The monthly data, compiled on the basis of certificates of origin, also detailed exports by industrial sector.

Mining industries accounted for JD1.510 billion of total exports, followed by chemicals and cosmetics at JD1.405 billion and food, supplies, agriculture and livestock industries at around JD908 million.

Engineering, electrical and information technology industries recorded exports worth nearly JD888 million, while therapeutic and medical supplies reached JD665 million and leather and knitwear exports stood at approximately JD517 million.

Packaging, paper, cardboard and stationery industries accounted for JD314 million, followed by plastics and rubber at JD282 million, construction industries at JD163 million and wood and furniture at nearly JD20 million.

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

بورصة عمان
Amman Stock Exchange

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Monday amounted to JD8.4 million spread over 3.1 million shares that traded through 2,925 transactions.

The ASE share price index shed 0.11 per cent, closing at 3989.09 points.

Out of 92 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 25 companies rose while the share price of another 41 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were Jordan Poultry Processing and Marketing by 4.76 per cent, Al-Tajamouat for Catering and Housing Company Plc. by 4.26 per cent, Al Entkaeya for Investment and Real Estate Development Company Plc. by 3.13 per cent, Century Investment Group by 2.56 per cent, and Dar Al Aman for Investment by 2.17 per cent.

The companies whose shares dropped the most were Jerusalem Insurance by 6.98 per cent, Afaq for Energy Company Plc. by 6.35 per cent, Ihdathiat Co-ordinates by 5 per cent, Deera Investment and Real Estate Development Company by 4.84 per cent and Specialised Investment Compounds by 4.68 per cent.



SPORTS AT A GLANCE

TENNIS

Making history at ATP Finals a 'privilege' — Alcaraz

TURIN, Italy (AFP) — Carlos Alcaraz said it was a "privilege" after becoming just the fourth man to add an ATP Finals title to his career Grand Slam. The 23-year-old Spaniard beat World No.1 Alexander Zverev 6-2, 7-6 (9/7) on Sunday to win the season-ending tournament for the first time in his career. After starting his 2026 season with a first Australian Open win to become the youngest man to complete the career Slam, with victory in Turin Alcaraz now joins Roger Federer, Andre Agassi and Novak Djokovic as the only players to have won all four majors and the Finals. The seven-time Grand Slam winner is the youngest man to have won all five of the titles at least once. "This one is special. This one means the world to me, to my team, to my family," Alcaraz said of winning the title — a year on from his defeat in the 2025 final against Jannik Sinner. "So finally, to be able to lift the trophy here, it's something amazing. It's a privilege, and I'm just really proud." Alcaraz revealed that when he dropped to the floor after sealing championship point with a backhand winner, he was initially worried that his celebrations might be a bit premature.

CRICKET

Bangladesh crash out as South Africa take control of 2nd Test

CENTURION, South Africa (AFP) — South Africa's fast bowlers sent Bangladesh crashing to 91 all out as the host nation took command on the first day of the second Test at Super Sport Park on Monday. South Africa were 88 for one in reply at the end of a rain-shortened day, just three runs behind. Marco Jansen and Kagiso Rabada took three wickets each while Anrich Nortje used express pace to bowl two top order batsmen in the space of three balls. It was the lowest first innings total in Test matches at Centurion. Bangladesh's miseries were compounded when they were on the wrong end of two decisions early in the South African innings — and then dropped a catch. South African captain Aiden Markram was given out leg before wicket against Shoriful Islam in the second over but escaped on review because the ball pitched marginally outside the line of leg stump. In the next over Taskin Ahmed appealed passionately for a leg before decision against first Test century-maker Marques Ackerman.

Al Hussein play to keep chances alive in ACL 2

By Aline Bannayan



Photo of ACL

Al Hussein Irbid teammates celebrate a convincing away victory against Seeb on October 13

AMMAN — Hussein and Faisali restart AFC Champions League Two matches as of Tuesday aiming to stay in contention in the second-tier club competition organised by the Asian Football Confederation.

Both Jordanian teams lost their matches in the earlier round.In this week's Leg 2 Round 5, Jordan's reigning Pro League champs Hussein play an away Group Dmatch on Tuesday against India's East Bengal while Faisali play Qatar's Al Rayyan in Group C in Amman Wednesday.

Hussein need a win to secure their position in second spot with one more match to go in the Group Stages in December. On the other hand, Faisali will be missing key players in the lineup, including the league's top scorer Ahmad Ersan, but the team hopes the home ground advantage will be in their favour as they face the group's second placed team.

Hussein last went down 3-0 to Iraq's Shorta with whom they drew 1-1 in Leg 1. They started the event with a disappointing 2-2 draw with East Bengal, before beating Oman's Al Seeb 3-0.Shorta have secured the top slot from the Group after they beat Al Seeb 1-0 and East Bengal 3-2. Now, the other slot is up for grabs between Hussein and Seeb as East Bengal drew Al Seeb 0-0 before Seeb managed a 2-0 return Leg win.

In Group C, Pro League runner-up Faisali are third after they lost to-Saudi Arabia's Taawoun 3-1 to whom they lost 2-0 earlier. Faisali started offwith an opening 4-3 defeat to Al Rayyan before beating Saudi Arabia's Nahda 2-0. In other results, Al Rayyan beat Nahda 2-0 and 4-1, Taawoun beat Al Rayyan 2-1 and Nahda held Taawoun 1-1.

UAE's Al Wahda lead Group A which includes Kuwait's SC, Uzbekistan's Nasafand Bahrain's Khaldiya, while UAE's Jazira lead Group B which includes Turkmenistan's Arkadag, Bahrain's Muharraqand Iran's Gol Gohar Sirjan.

After Group-Stage matches end December 3, the top two teams from each group will move to the Round of 16. The knockout stage is set to kick off on February 9, 2027 with the final scheduled for May 15, 2027.

Earlier in the season, Hussein played their preliminary round match in the top tier Asian competition — the ACL Elite — losing to Uzbekistan's Pakhtakor 3-0. The early elimination moved Hussein to play in the ACL Two alongside Faisali.

In the 2025/26 season, Hussein had an exceptional season winning their first-ever triple titles: The Jordan Cup, the Super Cup alongside their third consecutive Pro League crown while Faisali won the JFA Shield. This year, Hussein started competitions on a sour note, losing to Faisali in the Super Cup title match. Faisali got off to a good start in the League before stumbling in a series of matches to tie Ramtha at the top leading to the dismissal of their coach while Hussein are now 4th after fluctuating results.

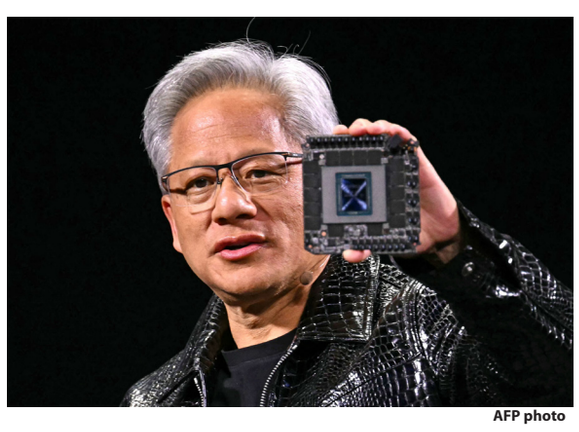
Group C Standings

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
Taawoun	4	3	1	0	8	3	10
Rayyan	4	3	0	1	11	6	9
Faisali	4	1	0	3	6	9	3
Nahda	4	0	1	3	2	9	1

Group D Standings

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
Shorta	4	3	0	0	8	3	10
Hussein	4	1	2	1	6	6	5
Seeb	4	1	1	2	2	4	4
E. Bengal	4	0	2	2	4	7	2

Nvidia's Jensen Huang — the indispensable godfather of AI



AFP photo

Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang delivers a keynote address at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Nevada on January 6, 2025

NEW YORK (AFP) — Chips designed by Nvidia push the boundaries of artificial intelligence, and its leather-jacket-wearing co-founder Jensen Huang built the company into one of the world's most important brands over his 33 years at the helm.

Unknown to the public just four years ago, he rapidly emerged as a public entrepreneur, drawing stadium crowds as he presented cutting-edge components essential to the development of AI tools like ChatGPT.

On November 12, Huang was forced out of the company when a scandal exploded over his personal life as he admitted to having an affair with a woman who US officials believe was working for Chinese intelligence.

But on Monday he was reinstated as CEO in a move that underlined his apparently indispensable role in an industry that has fueled a tech revolution and a global economic boom.

Huang, 63, reportedly had an affair with Alice Huang — who is of no relation — a former executive at Singapore-based Megaspeed which is under investigation for allegedly helping Chinese firms gain access to Nvidia's top-line chips.

Only on Sunday, The New York Times added further details to the allegations, saying Alice Huang was in touch with an official from China's top spy agency during the secret relationship.

Meteoric rise

California-based Nvidia was catapulted to become one of the world's most valuable companies by the insatiable appetite for chips known as Graphics Processing Units (GPUs) that it designs.

Its meteoric rise made Huang one of the world's richest people — worth around $160 billion, according to Forbes — thanks to the roughly four percent stake he holds in the company he founded three decades ago with two friends in a Silicon Valley diner.

He has become a close informal adviser on AI to Donald Trump, travelling with the US president on Air Force One to Beijing earlier this year.

That is an area of concern to US officials who believe he has been involved with the alleged spy, Alice Huang.

The drama of recent weeks is a long way from Jensen Huang's birth in Taipei in 1963, and his life embodies the American success story.

At nine years old, he was sent away with his brother to boarding school in small-town Kentucky.

His uncle recommended the school to his Taiwanese parents believing it to be a prestigious institution, though it was actually a school for troubled youth.

Too young to be a student, Huang boarded there but attended a nearby public school alongside the children of tobacco farmers. With his poor English, he was bullied and forced to clean toilets — a two-year ordeal that transformed him.

"We worked really hard, we studied really hard, and the kids were really tough," he recounted in an interview with US broadcaster NPR. But "the ending of the story is I loved the time I was there".

Brought home by his parents who had by then settled in the northwestern US state of Oregon, he graduated from university at just 20 and joined AMD, then LSI Logic, to design chips — his passion.

Megastar in Taiwan

He wanted to go further and founded Nvidia in 1993 to "solve problems that normal computers can't", using semiconductors powerful enough to handle 3D graphics, he said during an interview on the "No Priors" podcast.

Nvidia created the first GPU in 1999, riding the intersection of video games, data centers, cloud computing and now generative AI.

Always dressed in a black T-shirt and leather jacket, Huang sports a Nvidia logo tattoo and has a taste for sports cars.

One former high-ranking Nvidia employee described him to AFP as "the most driven person" he'd ever met.

He has rejected calls to deliberately slow down AI development even as some insiders warn the technology could threaten human existence within a decade.

"That kind of narrative is dramatic, it gets a lot of attention," but "it's not grounded on facts", he told CBS News in September.

"We should go as fast as we can" on AI, he said.

On visits to his native Taiwan, Huang is received like a megastar, with fans crowding him for autographs and selfies as journalists follow him to the barber shop and his favorite night market.

Nvidia had taken care to project a drama-free image of Huang.



AFP photo

This photograph shows artefacts on display at the newly reopened Old Acropolis Museum during its inauguration ceremony in Athens on Monday

Old Acropolis Museum reopens in Athens after two decades

ATHENS (AFP) — The old Acropolis Museum, located near the Parthenon in Athens, reopened on Monday, nearly two decades since it was closed and its antiquities transferred to a new site near the monument.

The building, construction of which began in the late 19th century, was the first museum to house antiquities from the iconic site of western civilisation dating back to the 5th century BC.

"A new chapter is opening for the Acropolis of Athens with the reopening of the old Acropolis Museum," Culture Minister Lina Mendoni said at the inauguration.

The "historic museum", she added, was "inextricably linked to the history of Greek archaeology and excavations on the Sacred Rock" and would now have a new role as "a space for archaeological knowledge and contemporary cultural dialogue".

The first part of the museum features an exhibition of 750 archaeological objects from the city of Athens, restored and presented to the public for the first time.

The second part, titled "Parthenon Alive", is a three-dimensional digital presentation of about 100 Acropolis monuments, created with the help of artificial intelligence technology.

A third part is dedicated to contemporary art, with an installation by the American-Iraqi artist Michael Rakowitz, introducing the concept of "contemporary artworks interacting with ancient artefacts of the Middle East and southeastern Mediterranean regions", according to the NEON art group.

The renovation of the old museum cost some 10 million euros ($11 million), more than half of which was covered by European funding, Mendoni said.

